

# Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future

Chapter 188



## Chapter 56

Kas's POV "Good morning, Luna!" Tyree chimes in a sing-song voice and gives me a toothy grin when I open the door. Lenora and Marco are right behind him, looking just as happy, "Ha HA! Today's the last day! We get to go home tomorrow! Come on, time for breakfast. The sooner we finish, the more time we have to relax later."

"Yeah! Last day! I can't wait to get it started!" I smile at his enthusiasm and let him in the room with the to-go boxes of food.

"I noticed they didn't have a whole lotta fruit in the deliveries. I swiped this from the kitchen for you," Marco pulls a banana from his jacket pocket before he cuts up his pancakes. 1

"Thanks, Marco," I reply gratefully. I eat the banana first, then cut the rest of my food, thinking about what needs to be finished today.

"Earth to Kas," I hear Lenora say.

"Huh? What?" I look up at her.

"You've been poking at that same piece of food for ten minutes. Have you heard anything I've said?" she looks at me, concerned.

"I-uh, no, honestly," I drop my shoulders, "I am just a little preoccupied guys. Sorry."

"What's wrong, Luna?" Tyree tilts his head.

"Tyree, is there any way I can get you to call my Kas when we are not in public?" I ask, trying not to whine. 2

"Sorry Luna, my mom would banish me herself if she ever found out I didn't call you by your title. And that woman has eyes and ears everywhere. I can't risk it," he has a faraway look in his eyes as he thinks about the consequences of having to face his mother. He shakes the feeling and goes back to eating his breakfast.

Marco chuckles and raises his eyebrows as he sips his orange juice, "I've met his mom. She would do it. I wouldn't mess with her."

I sit back in my chair and sigh, "It's just that I have to go into the dungeon today. I know it will be a quick walkthrough. There isn't anything down there except maybe my old furniture, but still. Just thinking about it gives me the creeps."

I stare at my plate until I realize the room has grown quiet. When I look up, I see Lenora and my guards looking at me with pity. I don't want anyone's pity. I'm not a slave anymore. I'm a Luna.

"I can do it for you," Lenora offers. She's giving me her 'mom' look. The one she gives Codi when Codi can't tell her why she's crying but Lenora wants to fix whatever's wrong. I push down my feelings and clear my throat before I give her a serious look.

"No," I say with resolve, "It's my responsibility. Besides, I need to show myself there is no reason to be afraid of being down there."

I make myself eat a couple of bites of food, but I'm too nervous to be hungry, "Sorry, Marco, you're going to have to tell the Alpha that I refused to follow orders this morning. If he gets upset with you, I'll deal with him."

"Don't worry, Kas. I'll figure out a way to step around the truth this one time," he says quietly. Lenora and Tyree nod in agreement.

I take another big breath, "Alright, let's talk about business. I don't want to talk about emotional crap anymore."

We come up with our plan of attack to get everything done as quickly as possible. Lenora will finish registrations. She also confirms Ashley has arranged for moving trucks and coach busses to take the first families to Blood River in four days. The few pack members who have cars will follow behind the busses. All families have young daughters who have been pulled out of school to work in the packhouse.

Lenora also lets me know that Nurse Diane has generously volunteered to go to the closed up hospital wing and collect medical records for the families who are being transferred. Knowing how important Diane is to me, Lenora schedules her to be part of the first group of transferees. She will act as a liaison between the families and the Blood River hospital staff. I'm glad the Silver Moon families, especially the young children, will have a familiar face to speak with during the physicals and check-ups they need before they can attend school.

Marco volunteers to make sure the first families are ready to go, answering questions for people still tentative about the move and to speak with the last few pack members who haven't decided whether they should go to Blood River or seek asylum with other packs.

Tyree escorts Elder Randall and me around the building. There is only the main floor, the basement, and the dungeon left. I estimate we should finish by midmorning, then we can help Lenora.

"Let's finish with the dungeon. I already know there's nothing down there, so it's really just a fast walkthrough. The kitchen will be a better place to start," I advise Elder Randall.

"That sounds fine, Goddess," he audibly sighs with relief at my order.

We make our way through the main floor and basement where the weight room and laundry rooms are, making notes and determining what we can keep, sell, or have destroyed. There are no big surprises. There are a lot fewer items we can use or sell than I initially expected.

The longer we inspect, the more uncomfortable Elder Randall looks.

"Elder Randall, are you alright? You seem a little, uh, nervous?" I ask, trying to dismiss his behavior as my overactive imagination.

"Oh yes, Goddess," he waves his hand toward me, "Last night's late dinner is still wreaking havoc on my insides. That's all."

"Would you like to take a break before we keep going?"

"That's unnecessary. We're almost done," he replies quickly.

When I finally can't stall anymore, we make our way to the top of the dungeon stairs. Randall fidgets nervously as he finds the key to the door.

"Is there a problem, Elder Randall?" I ask.

"Oh, no, Goddess, it's just, you know, who enjoys wandering around in a dungeon?" he laughs nervously as he tries to find the correct key. I see a little bead of sweat slide down the side of his face.

I raise an eyebrow at his crass statement before I lean forward and snatch the keys out of his fumbling hands with a little growl.

"Elder Randall, this dungeon was my home for thirteen extremely long... extremely painful years," I pull my hair to the side and yank the collar of my shirt back, exposing a portion of the scars on my neck and upper back, "I have the scars to remind me of that fact every damn day. If a fifteen minute walkthrough of my former home is too much for you, Tyree and I can go on our own." 1

Randall looks mortified. I called him out and now he's trying to find words to respond. When he can't, I pull the well-worn dungeon key from the ring and slide it into the lock. The lock clicks open easily. As soon as I open the door, the scent of fresh blood assaults our noses.