

## Chapter 172 Bad Wolf

This was obviously not Lucas’s primary cell phone, but it seemed like he did use it. I clicked on the most recent notification and opened up a text thread. The contact was saved as “sz.”

Scrolling up, I saw nothing but brief, repetitive conversations. All just arranging places and times to meet, once every week or two. I scrolled back down and studied the last message Lucas had sent to this person, who was obviously a drug dealer.

This was from the day before my father’s attack.

Lucas: meet up next freak nite?

sz: We’ll be there. How much u want

Lucas: 100

sz: 1200 for 100

Lucas: k

The last couple messages had just come in today. Within the past hour.

sz: 1AM, mezzanine

sz: Bring girls

An internet search revealed that every other Saturday night was “Freak Night” at Bad Wolf, a notorious nightclub out in the middle of an otherwise empty ghost town that was once an ill-fated mining colony. Bad Wolf was known for illicit activity and deviant circus-style entertainment rumored to edge into bloody extremes.

Today was Saturday. This meetup was happening tonight.

“I doubt he’d go out partying while he’s supposed to be in hiding.” As I said these words, though, I doubted them. Lucas was severely stupid, as I’d just confirmed with the password situation.

Fiona echoed my thoughts. “Maybe, maybe not. Makes sense you want to run this down, just in case.”

“And if he doesn’t show, maybe I could get my hands on ‘sz.’ Bring him here and see what else he knows.”

“But Alex.” Fiona shook her head like I was missing something obvious. “You know you cannot go to Bad Wolf yourself. You stand out anywhere, my love. But a place like that—you can’t go anywhere near there. It would be like the cops showing up at a rave.”

She had a point. “Then I’ll send Kayden. And some other officers. I’ll send a team.”

Fiona narrowed her eyes.

“What?”

“Can we bring Nina into the loop about this? You know you can trust her. And she won’t ask questions about anything.”

“Why?”

“She’s kind of an expert on nightclubs. It’s... where she spends all of her time. She’s the only reason I know anything about this place. If you’re going to infiltrate this club, trust me, Nina is the best person to help you.”

“Yeah, I can get them in. But I will have to go with.”

“No, Nina. I can’t put you at risk, putting you in the middle of something like this.”

She rolled her eyes. “You don’t get it. Without me, none of you nerds are even getting in that front door. And mezzanine is VIP. No way in hell are you getting up there on your own.”

Kayden eyed Nina curiously. “But you can get in? You’ve been there before?”

“Oh, boy.” Nina had been bent over the table, scrolling and studying the text messages on Lucas’s phone. She straightened her spine and began pacing my study. “Yes. And I can bring... um, probably like, up to four with me. Maybe five.” She bit her lip thoughtfully and flicked her eyes around like she was visualizing a scenario.

“You sure you’re up for this?” I asked. “Is this place dangerous?”

The look on Nina’s face was unreadable. It seemed like she was avoiding Kayden’s eyes.

“Yeah. But I know my way around. I’ll find your ‘sz,’ you have my word, Alex. And if lil’ bro shows up, I’ll find him too. But your guys will need to follow my lead in there, and I really mean that. It’s very important.”

Third person

Kayden and the four Gammas selected to join their undercover operation were waiting in the parking lot. They were dressed as Nina had instructed, all wearing black pants and tight white tank tops. They loitered in the cool night air, leaning against the limousine in which they planned to drive to the club. A sixth pack warrior was dressed as their driver. He would be playing chauffeur for this first part of the mission and getaway driver for the second.

Just as Kayden was impatiently checking his watch—it was almost midnight—Nina finally made her appearance. The men heard the light, rhythmic patter of her heels before they saw her. Then she glided out of the shadows and all their idle chatter ceased in an instant.

Someone involuntarily whispered “oh, fuck” under his breath as he caught sight of her.

The smoking hot woman striding up to them was wearing a pair of eight inch tall black leather stilettos, tiny white patent leather shorts over abused orange fishnet stockings, a white patent leather push-up bra, and a black leather belt cinched around her tiny waist connected by metal chains to a spiked black leather collar around her neck. A white feather boa was threaded through her elbows.

Nina’s hair was now metallic copper-orange and worn down in voluminous waves. Huge silver sparkles covered her eyelids and refracted light from behind long, dense black lashes. Her lips were painted matte neon orange. Her cheekbones, cleavage, stomach, thighs and wrists shimmered with iridescent body glitter.

Kayden was drawn to her like a moth to flame. “Wow,” he said breathily, coming close and lightly fingering the body chains that draped over and between her breasts.

She wasted no time leaning in and planting a kiss on Kayden’s lips, pressing her body against his and running her hands all over his neck, chest and shoulders. When she pulled back, his lips were orange and his torso was streaked with glitter.

Kayden’s hand drifted up to his mouth, reflexively going to wipe off some of the lipstick.

“Leave it.” Nina put her hands on either side of his face and added, “I’m very sorry, Kayden.”

“What for?”

“For what I’m about to do. And everything you’re going to see tonight.”

She gave him a sad smile, then surprised him by rubbing several sloppy orange kisses into his neck, dusting his jaw with glitter in the process, before turning to face the other soldiers.

“The only way I’m going to bring a whole crew of guys into this club with me is if it looks like you’re all my dates,” she announced in a matter-of-fact tone. “I’m afraid I need to leave some marks on all of you, if we’re going to sell that cover.”

The limo pulled up outside an old warehouse that now served as a six story high nightclub. Thousands of neon clad partygoers thronged the immediate area around the warehouse, but beyond this hub of riotous activity, there was nothing but ruins and spent land for miles.

There was no actual signage on the building’s decrepit exterior. Just tons of overlapping neon graffiti covering every inch of it, all of which read BAD WOLF. The thrumming pulse of bass beats rattled every blacked-out window.

Nina gave some last-minute instructions before they got out. “Anywhere I go, follow. Whatever you see, be cool and go with it. And please, don’t use my real name.”

Kayden was working hard to suppress the jealous, possessive impulses of his wolf that had been triggered while watching Nina kissing and rubbing her body all over his lieutenants. It helped when she quietly told him to put his hands on her body as soon as they were inside and keep them there, and did not give the same task to the others.

She led the soldiers right past the long line leading to the entrance, making a beeline for the door. It was guarded by two humungous men dressed in black.

The bouncers’ eyes zoomed to Nina and the tough-guy expressions they’d been wearing vanished, replaced by lusty grins. They looked up and down the length of her body shamelessly.

“Boys,” Nina cooed in husky voice, walking up to the bouncers with a devious grin of her own.

“Elektra,” they said in unison, their voices deep and grumbly. One of the bouncers pushed back at the line to make room for Nina and her entourage.

“Where you been, baby girl?” asked the other. “Why you not headlining this shit tonight? People been asking about you.”

Nina answered coyly, “Just taking a little time off. Keeping you all hungry for me.”

“Shit. You’ll have ‘em starving soon.”

As if only just noticing all the tall, muscular men surrounding Nina, the bouncer jerked his head up and scanned their faces, noting the glitter and orange lipstick smeared all over all five of them.

“Yeah, heard about your split with, uh... See you’re doing something new here. Okay, okay. That’s cool.” His eyes returned to Nina. “You and your boys have fun tonight, sweetheart. Hope I get to see more of you soon.”

Noise exploded out the door as he swung it open. Bass beats and sirens and screams and chaos. Pitch dark inside was punctuated by spiraling neon spotlights, flickering strobe lights, and the black-lit haze of scantily clad bodies undulating on a tightly packed dance floor.

Nina sauntered in first, leading the way. She reached up and touched the bouncer’s chest with her fingertips and dragged them along his pees as she passed by. He grinned like an idiot, adjusted his pants, and as she looked back and winked at him, snapped his teeth at her playfully.

Kayden grasped Nina’s hand when she reached back for him. The Gammas followed. The door swung shut behind them, and they were swallowed whole by the wild world of Freak Night at Bad Wolf.