



Chapter 8

I turn and walk back to my office without looking back at my Beta and shut the door. The physical separation between me and the rest of the world brings an instant sense of comfort. I take in a deep breath, grateful for the privacy, and look around. Shouldn't I want to be with my pack? A few months ago, sure, but when I rejected Kas, Saint told me it was the end of our spirits' journey. What's the point of trying to put up a good front if it doesn't fucking matter?

Since then, I've been more and more content being alone. Maybe the connection between Kas and me was only because of the mate bond. It was supposed to be forever. What if it was never really love? I've spent months thinking about it and I'm still not sure. Sometimes I wonder if she meant all the things she told me when we were alone. I thought I meant the promises I made to her. I was a fool. 1

The moment Kas died in my arms in that cell in the dungeon, I thought I felt guilty. I thought it was my fault that she died. I was the one who ordered her there and not allow any doctors and only have her served trash to eat, but once the pain of the Luna pack bond breaking eased up, I came to my senses. She betrayed our pack. She let her sister murder mine in front of her eyes and left without a second thought.

"What do you think they could say that would change my mind, Saint?" I lean back in the leather desk chair with a sigh.

"No idea, but they wouldn't bother with your drunk ass if it wasn't important." Saint huffs. "Just hear what they out. It won't hurt anything." 1

I pull a bottle of bourbon out of the desk drawer and I pop the cork. I don't bother with a glass anymore. Might as well cut the middleman. I tip the



bottle to my lips and let the first sip burn. The second sip is warm and comforting. The third time I bring the bottle to my lips, I swallow deeply, letting my mind relax.

When I was in the military, a witch stabbed me with a cursed silver knife. She carved out my eye, then broke the tip of the knife off in my liver. Turns out, it was Kas's sister Leticia in disguise. Kas used her magic to reconstruct my eye and to take cursed silver out of my liver, but it was just a trick to earn my trust. As soon as she had a chance, she turned around and stole the shards from the safe. Who the fuck knows what she did with it?

I don't get drunk as easy as I did when the silver was in my body, but my liver hasn't fully healed yet, so the bourbon sure helps me forget the many memories of her, for a little while, at least. I take a deep breath, but I'm too far away to smell my babies. It puts me a little on edge, but Tyree has orders not to let anyone leave with them unless the nurses or doctors need to take them to the hospital wing. 

I pull out my phone and pull up the photo the nursing staff sent me of them laying next to each other. They are so small and sickly. I wonder which would have been a worse fate for them? Kas slowly poisoning them by eating the spoiled food they gave her or denying them any nutrients at all until she starved to death? I guess it doesn't matter now. She chose the latter. 

My son's name is Andreas. That's my middle name. I don't know why Kas chose it, but I guess in some weird way, I feel honored. My daughter's name is Maya. I named her because of a promise I made to her in her last lifetime. I take another deep swallow of bourbon when I think about her future. She's a Goddess. One of Kas's sisters. Yeah, it's a fucked up situation. When she comes of age, she will become a recluse. Living as



a wolf with her mate in some remote part of the world. How am I supposed to be okay with that?

Saint paces in my head and speaks through the fog of alcohol. "Quit drinking for now. Let's go for a run."

I roll my eyes, put the bottle down on the mahogany desk, and take off my sweater, laying it across the back of the chair. "You better not take me back to Jimmy's BBQ. We know Kas isn't there. She's in the guest suite."

"I'll go where I want and you'll leave me the fuck alone." He growls before he takes over. 2

For the past four months, every time I have let Saint out and given him a choice to run where he wants, he has gone to the same barbeque shack in the middle of nowhere, off of route ninety.

He kept insisting Kas should be there. When she came back, he kept going, saying I should be able to find out answers, but he couldn't explain what questions I should try to find answers for. It didn't matter. There was never anything there. Just the owner Shelly and occasionally her werebear husband, Dave, who is always happy to see me. The food is good, but there's only so many ribs a guy can eat before he wants something else.

"Whatever. You're a billionaire. Just buy the place." He huffs. "Then the nice lady can retire."

"If they retire, who would make the barbeque?" I smirk at him and head down the stairs to the back of the pack house to avoid having to see anyone. As I trudge through the snow to the edge of the woods and sit on the bench, I smell the air. Spring is coming. The river will start



overflowing as ice begins to breakdown on the mountain. I hurry and take the rest of my clothes off, placing them in a basket on the ground quickly so we can shift and Saint can keep us warm with his fluffy white fur.

"This is why you're the Alpha and I'm just a fluffy white wolf." He mocks at the insult about his fur. "Let's go."

I let myself fall back and feel my bones break and skin stretch. The prickly feeling of white fur sprouting through my skin makes me shake as we complete the transformation. He looks around to make sure he's alone before he sprints into the woods.

I sit back and let Saint run for a couple of hours until he reaches the restaurant and lets me shift back. "I thought we agreed not to come here, buddy."

"That's what you wanted." He huffs at me. "I didn't agree with that."

I grab a pair of shorts and t-shirt out of the bin Shelly has left out back for me, then make my way inside. The restaurant is empty except for Shelly and Dave. Dave is wiping down tables and condiment bottles while Shelly is feeding a toddler.

"Oh! Bronx! Come on in!" Shelly waves me over with a big smile. "We're closed, but we have some fixin's in the kitchen. Can you keep Andy busy for me? I'll make you a plate."

"A-Andy?" I look at the blonde-haired little boy. "I didn't know you had children."

"It's him! I fucking knew it!" Saint says triumphantly. "I was right."

"Right about what, Saint?"



"It's HIM. It's the Wraith."

"What the fuck are you talking about? It's a baby. Not a monster."

"Well, we try to keep him out of the way during operating hours." Dave picks up a table with one hand and sweeps crumbs out from under it with a broom in the other hand. His distinctive Plains Cree features are a stark contrast to the baby's fair features. "He turns one next month, don't ya, Chief!" 2

The little boy claps and babbles at me, then picks up a hunk of shredded meat off the high chair tray and stuffs it in his mouth. I sit down on the chair next to him and scoop some green beans on a miniature sized fork. Instead of biting on the fork, he takes the green beans off of it with his hands and shoves them in his mouth before he finishes chewing the meat.

"Wow... Is he always this hungry?" I glance at Dave just as Shelly comes out of the kitchen.

"Whew, yeah." Shelly lays a platter of food down for me. "Dave told me cubs have an enormous appetite, but who knew he would be so ravenous?"

Andy looks at her and blows a raspberry, then laughs at his own noise.

"Andy Latmus Briland! You're being rude!" Shelly feigns being annoyed, takes a dish towel, and wipes the baby's mouth. 1

"I-I'm sorry... what did you just call him?"

"Andy. That's his name." Shelly looks at me, concerned. "Are you okay, Bronx? You look pale. Dave, Honey, can you get Bronx some water?"



"Andy... L-... Andy Latmus?" I swallow hard and look at the happy little boy again. "How did you come up with that name?"

"One of our Gods, Ma-heegun, came to me in a dream with a beautiful woman. She wore a crown made of the crescent moon. It was a few days before Andy was born. They put the name on my lips. The way they said it was with an unusual accent, though. Almost like it should be spelled with an 'e' instead of an 'a'." Dave hands me a bottle of water and claps my shoulder, then pulls the little boy out of the high chair and gives him a kiss on the cheek. Andy grabs Dave around the neck and growls when he hugs him. It's probably the cutest shit I've ever seen. "When he was born, it just fit him. Nowadays, we call him chief, cause he's the boss of everyone. Huh, Chief? Why do you ask?"

"Yep, he's the boss, alright." Saint says with an air of pride mixed with wonder as I watch Dave play with his son.

"Saint, you think this kid is Endymion?" I tilt my head and try to imagine it. "Endymion's wolf's name is 'The Wraith'?"

"Oh, yeah." Saint says with conviction. "We're looking at the first werewolf. He's fucking adorable... for now."

I blink hard, then look at Dave with his little boy. How the Hell do I explain this? "Uh, I, uh... that's... um... it's just that... Kas's dad... h-his name was Andy Latmus."