

## Epilogue

TEN YEARS LATER

HENDRICK

"This one?" I hold up a coloured book to my daughter as she shakes her head.

"Uh-huh," she sulks, taking her thumb into her mouth.

I reposition her on my arm as I reach for another book. "No... So, this one?"

She shakes her head again, whining as she pushes it away from her.

"Serena..." I sigh, holding up the third one, which we have been reading to her for the last week.

Directing my eyes to the ceiling, I already predict her wriggling in my hold as she holds out her little hands, wanting to have the book.

I click my tongue, giving her the book and she hugs it to his chest right away, beaming happily. "Mama."

"Yes," I say, walking out of the library. "Mama will read it to you."

"Mama," she repeats, and I caress her hair, kissing the top of her head.

"Yes, we are going to show it to Mama."

I reach the stairs, wanting to reach our floor as the door bursts open, and Ace storms past me with a frown.

"Hey, Ace," I greet him, only to get ignored.

He is just like his father.

As I'm expecting, it doesn't take long for an angry growl to boom through the air. "You will come back to the training court, right this instant."

Finnegan walks into the foyer, finding me smiling at him. "You should go easier on the kid, Finnegan."Www.noveL(w)órM.C(o)M

"He can't be the new Alpha if he doesn't learn to get his powers in check. He will risk hurting someone," he groans, reaching me with fast steps.

"He is ten, Finnegan. He will get to it. And as he has inherited your temper, he clearly won't listen anyway," I observe cockily, but he just ignores me, leaning in to Serena.

"Oh, is my princess getting a good night story?" he asks, getting Serena to giggle as she bites onto her fingers while babbling along.

"That's great!" He laughs, taking her out of my arms. "I want a good night story as well."

I shake my head, chuckling as I follow him up to the top floor which is now completely remodelled. The top floor on which Artemisia and Cayden were staying had been transformed into a single apartment, a penthouse if you will, which was holding all the rooms we would need on a daily basis, and of course with a large bedroom as we weren't keen on taking turns or having Missy move to a different quarter constantly.

Logan's floor is now holding the kid's room, and that is a good thing as it gives us and them a bit of privacy. Only the little ones are staying with us until they are big enough to have their own rooms.

Matthew's quarters were the most difficult to change. But in the end, we decided to make it our office space, and just locked the sculptures we aren't exhibiting in the house together with his things into his former bedroom, which remained the same.

Finnegan opens the door to our living room, announcing himself with a loud voice. "We are home!"

"What happened with Ace?" Artemisia asks loudly as she sits up on the couch where she is keeping an eye on Vince, who is colouring at the couch table.

He looks up at us confused and laughs as Finnegan steps closer, tousling his hair. "Damn you and your demonic bond. He attacked Kai on the training court and burned him badly."

Lifting his hand, he stops Artemisia, who jerks up with a gasp. "He is okay. Logan took him to the doctor, and he is going to be fine. He was already attacking him back so..."

"I'm a doctor too! Why didn't you bring my baby to me?" She growls at him, but he holds Serena towards her, making her expression soften instantly.

Ah, what a devil.

"Because we are here for the good night story," he says with a grin, and I slump into an armchair.w (n) vé .(c)D@

Artemisia takes our daughter into her arms, kissing her cheek. "Hello, my love. Let's bring you to bed."

"Come on, Vince, let's get our bedtime story," Finnegan chuckles, following Artemisia into Serena's bedroom.

I get up with a groan, hearing my son ask, "And Ryder?"

"Ryder is having a sleepover with Toby, baby," Artemisia answers making the little pup growl cutely.

"That's so unfair. Why can't I ever go with them," he stomps his foot, and Artemisia turns around, caressing his head as she hugs him to her side.

"Because sometimes big boys have to be for themselves a bit. I'll ask Ramona and we can meet them for breakfast. Would you like that?"

Vince jumps, screaming in joy. "Yeeeeeeeees!"

Lifting his arms, he runs into the room just as I catch up with Artemisia and she flashes me a smile, putting her hand on my shoulder. "Hey, my love. Where is my kiss by the way?"

"Hey," I mirror her smile, kissing her. "I've always a few ones ready for you in case you want them."

She giggles happily as we settle in, and Artemisia sits Serena onto her lap, opening the book to read the good night story. Finnegan and I settle into bean bags, while Vince climbs on the armchair Artemisia is sitting in.

Pulling him up, he sits down next to her, looking at the book as he leans against her.

"Are you seriously starting the good night story without me?" Logan bursts into the room, just as Artemisia is about to begin telling the fairy tale, and we laugh.

Finnegan pulls out another bean bag from behind him, throwing it in front of Logan's feet. "Here, now shut up because it has already begun."

I shake my head as I chuckle and listen to the story about the princess, who travels through rocky land to fight the dragon and save her puppy.

I actually can't believe how strange this situation feels. My heart has never been so full of joy and even if I can't pinpoint what it is exactly, I know that it's just all of it. It has been a few years since I had the last dark and painful flashback and have been able to heal my damned soul properly.

With my mark, I couldn't turn Artemisia, but it got her to age slower, making her ageing adjust to my pace. And as I gave Fynn and Cayden my blood with a strange potion from Corvina, just Logan had to drink the same to have nearly the same effect.

Artemisia shifts, her hair gliding off her shoulder, revealing our marks.VwW.mOvElwórM.coM

It has formed a sort of flower wreath with a flower symbolising any one of us. It seems gleaming as if the flowers were actually real.

Only Matthew's mark doesn't shine anymore, his mark looking like a chain made out of dead diamonds.

I sigh, looking at Logan, who puts his finger on his lips, telling his son silently that he has to sit still as he was beginning to squirm a bit too much, making it difficult for Artemisia to read on.

Settling my eyes back onto Artemisia, I smile contently, sensing that Finnegan has fallen asleep, his huge body looking ridiculously hysterical on the children's bean bag.

I bite back a laugh, smiling at my daughter, who is already about to fall asleep while twirling her fingers into Artemisia's hair.

Who would have ever thought...w@w.ÑóV.ełworM.coM

That I would find paradise in a hell like this.

THE END