

Traded To The Lycan King

by MG Wattsons

Chapter 16

Steam rolls off the glistening pool, beautiful purple petals dotting the surface with sprigs of lavender and other various herbs melding together to make the perfect recipe for calm and healing. It smells amazing and the humid air feels even better in my tired lungs. My **eyes** flutter closed and I inhale the aroma into my lungs, my wolf waking with excitement.

“It feels amazing, doesn’t it? The air?” Penny says, releasing a satisfied groan. Then she moves around me with a plush navy robe and a set of slippers. She **sets** them on a chair near the steps of the water and stands, taking in long pulls of the healing room. “I love the healing waters so much.”

“Is everyone allowed to use them?” I ask her, and she shakes her head.

“Yes, but this one is for the alpha family’s personal use. We all have one in our own homes, but without all the marble and ornate gold displays. Also, much smaller, like ten person bath, not 200 person pool.” She gives me an amused wink.

“I see.” I mutter, moving over to the chair and slipping off my shoes.

Penny apparently figured out my clothing size and sorted out a bikini for me. Not that I’m not grateful, but this might be more revealing than the underwear I own. I’m not quite comfortable in my skin, so I wait for her to give me a nod as she walks out the door, shutting it behind her.

I release a nervous sigh and undress down to my suit before taking one last look at the untouched water. It’s amazing how much it just looks like it will heal me. So I step in, dipping my toes into it first as heat stings my skin. I pull my foot back with a gasp, shocked by the temperature of it.

“Healing water, my **ass**,” I mutter to myself. “More like boiled Colette soup with how hot that is.” I bite my bottom lip, groaning in lead up before I gently step down onto the first step, holding my breath to keep from letting out a squeal.

The liquid burns my skin, the oils and herbs latching onto my flesh as I step down one more and then another. until I am fully in the pool. I bend my knees, allowing the water up to my neck as I exhale in relief, the heat dissipating in seconds as I am wrapped in its healing, warm embrace..

Every Achey muscle seems to meld with the water, feeling like it is just an extension of me. It almost tickles, the way it swirls around my skin and draws out my pain with something as simple as heat and medicinal herbs.

I reach up and pull my hair out of its elastic band and tilt my head back, submerging it up to my hairline as a satisfied gasp dances past my lips and I smile. My wolf is happy. Each moment leads to more relaxation and everything fades away. The pain, the ache, even the visions in my head from my dream the night before. It all just...was
hes away.

For a second I feel the pull to put my head under the water, but my stomach tightens in fear and I decide to give myself a little more time. The last time my head was fully submerged was in my nightmare state. And I'm not sure I am ready to cross that bridge yet...at least not at this precise moment.

Instead, I move to the stairs and sit, resting my head on one of the upper steps as a sort of anchor, then I allow my body to float up. My body is weightless, my mind free as my eyes fall closed and my wolf prances around in my mind.

Since being here, since losing Grady, she has done nothing but hide, only doing what she must to keep me aware of her presence. It felt like we were no longer in sync—
well, for years really, but now, she has allowed me back in. Her presence growing stronger by the second. And my heart and soul feel at ease.

I hum in the large room, my voice echoing back to me. I've never had an affinity for music, but it feels natural to sing when

you are at peace and right now is the most at peace I have ever been. My mind wanders many places, from the dream to my terrible past and back to the present where I am.

Then suddenly, I am suffocating. I sit up, my hand on my throat as I choke on the air, looking around frantically, watching as the room fades away
and I am back in the swamp. I can feel where I am, my hands and legs wet and warm grounding me in knowing I am still physically in the healing waters. But mentally, visually, I am lost and scared. I drop lower into the water, begging it to pull me back and it helps, just a little.

There are no green orbs, no other person other than me, and a voice. Her voice. Then she appears and I watch as my mom takes a seat and rests her head back, closing her eyes and she sings.

“A longing for the tales,
one of legends told,
I’ll sing to you, my love, in the ways of the old,
For when a mate cries out in the dark,
The other must always heed,
the one singular cry in their time of need.
So come to me, my love,
come complete your soul,
Your mate is calling you home
Your mate is calling you home.”

My heart aches at the sadness in her tone, the way the words break her heart, and I watch as tears stream down her face. I reach out, remembering this is all in my mind. Her eyes turn to me, distant at first before they zero in and they look hollow, dead inside as a branch tears through her chest, blood spewing forth.

My knees go weak and I fall, my head plunging into the wetness and my body jolts. The image of my dying mother bleeds from my mind like a memory fading, the thought gone even as I try to conjure it back. And I find myself in the darkness before I find my footing and stand.

I open my eyes, blinking at the steam, my consciousness back in the now. The words of her song resound in my mind. That was no dream, but a memory, one the waters pulled from me. How? I don’t know how, but I know it to be the truth. I can feel it.

The past has always been hidden from me, shrouded in despair and darkness. No matter how hard I **tried**, I could remember nothing from before being in the pack. But now...now I have a voice, an image I thought was made up or thought was just a night mare. And now I have a song.

Her song. My mom’s song.

And I know where I got my singing voice. I smile to myself. Because she sure as shit wasn't phenomenal. That fear I held, the one of the water, is replaced with a reverence. This is where I found her again, where my soul felt comfortable enough to open up and allow little bits of me to seep out.

I close my eyes, a smile on my lips as I head to the steps again, and sit. I never want to leave this room. It feels sacred now. Like a connection between what was lost and what I now have. A bridge from my past to my future.

The words to her song tumble out of me, echoing through the room as it makes me feel closer to her. I sing it on repeat, familiarizing myself with the tune she used and the words I heard, refusing to forget them as I sing to commit them to memory.

My voice echoes off the walls, bouncing back to me, and the water around me moves with the vibrations as if it's dancing to my words. Then I feel a shift. My eyes snap open, squealing out in shock as leaning back as I stare up at the looming shape of Merikh who now stalks toward me in the water.

"W- where did you come from?" I ask, clutching my chest. He looks pained as he moves closer, like he was injured. and is seeking healing, but from me.

"Don't stop singing." He says, his voice a husky whisper as he continues to stalk me down like prey.

I furrow my brow, confused, but I repeat the words, slowly and softly. Merikh reaches under the water, finding my hand as he pulls me up and drags my body flush to his. He holds me, looking down at me with lust filled eyes.

I finish the verse, unsure if I should continue again. So Instead, I hum the tune and he leans down, pressing his forehead to mine. Merikh inhales deeply, consuming my scent as he groans in satisfaction.

"I am sorry for being a jackass." He mutters. "Forgive me,"

His apology catches me off guard, and I pull back, looking up into his sincere face. He looks distraught, like someone died and worry leaches into me. I slide my hand up his neck, cupping his cheek.

"I shouldn't have asked about her..." I breathe.

He shudders as the sparks seem to whizz through us, weak still, but growing stronger. I force him to look at me, but his eyes fall to my lips before coming back to my eyes. I stare at his green, watching the desire and unbridled lust that stir there. It nearly

bowls me over to see it, to think he could want me and my body burns in places I've never felt before.

"I want to kiss you, Colette." He admits, the tip of his nose teasing mine and then nudging my cheek.

"What's stopping you?" I ask, feeling bold as my heart nearly pops out of my chest. He freezes, eyes boring into me, searching for any resistance on my end, resistance he won't find because I want this. I want his lips against mine and his undivided attention. So after a mere second Merikh closes the distance, his lips pressing against mine in the most perfect **way** as he tangles his hand in my hair, and pulls me close.