Traded To The Lycan King

by MG Wattsons

Chapter 52

Merikh was right. As we approach the mansion, he no longer needs me to help him walk. Our hands are threaded together by our fingers, my skin prickling as we walk closer to the quiet building. There is a fog that has settled around the garden and the rolling green grass. My wolf pacing within me, ready to jump out at any moment to prove her worth.

"It feels wrong..." I whisper to Merikh, who pulls me closer. I can see how tired he is, the quick healing from his Lycan taking a toll on his energy. He needs to sleep, and to eat something.

"What do you mean?" he asks, worry on his brow as he glances down at me.

"You can't feel that?" I ask him, "It feels...I don't know."

"Tense," He finishes for me. "The enemy is here, in this mansion, and they know we are aware of them. And those not involved...well they are about to be, whether they like it or not."

We walk cautiously, then I see Hayes pacing back and forth, his hands in his hair as he lifts his head and spots us. He rushes over, panic written all over his face, and my stomach falls. Something has happened, something terrible.

"Is it Percy?" I ask, sounding small, feeling small.

Here I had been so sure that my order would work long enough to keep him safe. Had I been that far off? Did he hurt himself or worse, what if he couldn't get them out of his head so he took drastic measures? What if he...my heart stutters and my mouth goes dry with the thought, tears stinging my eyes.

"He was unconscious when we all got back," Hayes tells me before turning to Merikh. "But he is okay for now."

"And your mate?" Merikh asks, my eyes going wide as I look between the two brothers, shocked.

"Mate?" I ask and Hayes nods, a grim look on his face.

"Her name is Leandra. She is a Lycan." Hayes says and Merikh processes what he says. It looks like a silent conversation passes between them before Merikh seems to nod in understanding. "Is she a rogue?" He asks and Hayes shrugs.

"It was hard enough getting her name from her, but she doesn't smell like a rogue, so I don't think so," He admits. "She won't see me. She-uh...she says she has a chosen mate instead."

Hayes looks broken, his eyes filled with tears as he clears his throat and tries to remain in control of his emotions. His heart is being torn to shreds, and there is nothing anyone can do about it. "We will speak with her." Merikh says, reaching out and tugging his hesitant brother in for a hug. "Things will be fine, Hayes. She has been through a lot, I imagine. Let's first get her taken care of so she can feel like she has control over her own thoughts again. One thing at a time, brother."

"I spoke with the elders, watching over the pack in our absence."

"And?" Merikh looks alarmed.

"There has been no activity, no red-eyed wolves, no attacks, nothing." Hayes says, and Merikh nods.

"That is either great news or terrible news," He mutters. I squeeze his hand.

"Anything else happening?" I ask Hayes, who gives me a curious look.

"You feel it too, then?" he asks.

I chew the inside of my cheek, trying to put into words it is what I'm even feeling. Tense? Uneasy? Worried? It could be any number of things easily equatable to emotions running high or just finally being so exhausted from an eventful evening into the night.

"Wait, you feel off too?" Merikh asks, looking worried between us, and Hayes shakes his head.

"No, but Caspian mentioned it when he checked in on Leandra. He says it feels like a storm is blowing in, but I don't think he meant the kind of storm that weather brings."

"Yeah, something feels off. I just can't put my finger on it," I admit, looking around.

I have no idea what I am searching for. Maybe I'm looking for answers or maybe I am hopeful I will catch someone spying on us that will give us a single clue into who is behind all of this. I shiver at the thought of being watched and Merikh frowns down at me.

"Let's get inside. I need to get cleaned up and you need sleep." He tells me.

"I will watch your room tonight so you both can sleep. Penny will be on you tomorrow, so I can sleep during the day." Hayes says and Merikh shakes his head.

"You need to be with your mate," Merikh tells him, but Hayes sighs and shakes his head.

"No, she has asked for space. I need to give her that space."

Merikh gives him a soft smile before leading me to the door, Hayes along with us as we enter in silence. I can hear Florence giggling down the hall, along with a deeper voice chatting and I already know she is with her current best friend Johannes.

I slide a glance up to Merikh who is still bruised and covered in blood, wishing there was another way to our room where we wouldn't run into these two, but there isn't.

Merikh tugs me under his arm, the warmth of him and the sparks of the bond fluttering through me reminding me I am safe whenever am with him. Florence doesn't even take notice until Johannes snaps his head in our direction as we pass the room where they are hanging out twitch the door wide open. I meet his eyes that are wide in shock and his lips mouth the word 'blood'.

He moves in a blur. One second he is sitting and the next he is in front of us, snuffing the air and tilting his head as he looks over Merikh. I expected to find joy there, a sick sense of glee at Merikh's state, but instead, I find curiosity.

"What in the dickens happened to you?" He asks, looking Merikh up and down.

"Move." Merikh bites out, his mood shifting into protective mode as he steps in front of me. Johannes looks at Hayes behind me and must see something he doesn't like and be puts his hands up in defeat, licking his teeth before he steps aside. He flits his eyes over me before he rolls them.

"I really thought I would be the one to kick your ass." He says as we pass him, Merikh's muscles tense, but he doesn't stop, he clenches his jaw and looks down at me, then a soft smile spreads over his lips and he drops a kiss to my head.

"You're welcome, by the way." Johannes hollers behind us, but Merikh keeps us walking. "What? No thanks for saving your ginger Gamma?"

I freeze in my tracks, my face heating and panic brewing in my stomach. I whip my head around, facing Johannes, who is wearing a smirk.

"Poor fool was stumbling down the hallway, pounding his head into the wall." Bile rises and my heart sinks.

"Did you hurt him?" I ask, trying to keep the emotion out of my voice, but he sees past my false show.

"I knocked him out and dragged him to the healers." He says with a frown. "I had the opportunity to kill him, but I didn't,"

"And you want us to thank you for not killing him?" Merikh lifts a brow.

"Your gamma was ready to kill himself to fight whatever demons he claimed were in his head. I figured knocked out was better than dead." he snarks, "You're welcome," he says with a glare and a small smirk tugging hi lips up.

"Demons in his head?" I ask, feigning confusion.

I know what was in his head, what they want and their motives. But does Johannes? Not that he would outright admit it, but I think the fool is cocky enough to drop hints if he was a part of what is happening. "Yeah, he kept saying there were demons and voices in his head. Wrestling with his inner demons or something to that effect. I have heard many humans use that phrase in my lifetime." He shrugs, waving his hand like it's not a big deal.

"And you helped him?" I ask and Johannes groans like he is annoyed. Clearly, he came out to get a rise out of us, but now that he is being interrogated, I can only assume he is now officially bored with us. "I hate your kind, but my problem is specifically with you, Merikh. Not some little Gamma who would hardly be satisfying to kill. So yes, I helped him."

"How very kind of you, Hayes," clips out. I look at the two burly men bristling behind me, ready to go for another round if they could and I sigh. Tired of fighting, planning and plotting, at least for right now. "Thank you, Johannes." I say sincerely, giving him a soft, sincere smile. Then I turn, grabbing Merikh and Hayes and dragging them down the hall.

"Did you seriously thank that fucker?" Merikh growls, low in his anger felt through the mind link, sending shivers through my spine.

"One of us had to act like our status," I say with a teasing brow. He bites back a smile, his anger filtering away as he sighs in defeat.

We make our way back to the room,

Hayes entering first and making sure the room is clear before he exits and gives us a nod. Merikh ushers me in first before stopping to have a quick discussion with Hayes so I head to the bathroom, starting the water for Merikh and grabbing him a towel and a change of clothing. I head out when I hear the door close behind him and he saunters over to me.

"Ezrah stopped by. An emergency council meeting is happening in the morning," he says, cupping my cheeks before he takes my lips in a gentle, loving kiss.

"Mmm, then we should get some sleep." I tell him with a smile. "After you shower."

"Oh, you mean we," he smiles coyly. "You stink too, my little luna."

I scoff as he kisses me again and spins me around, pushing me to the bathroom. I freeze when I see the mirror, my hands shaking, and I watch as Merikh's reflection sees it too.

It wasn't there when I went into the bathroom, but the steam of the shower must have brought it to life, because on the mirror, as if written in a fog, is the word 'Burn'.