



68 THE RETURN OF THE DEAD

"This is the child of the one you killed!" 1

Came the fiercest and sharpest accusation.

Corral's heart began to race.

"No, that's not true." Corral shook her head vehemently.

Cherry said nothing as Corral turned to look at her.

"But you said you killed her." Cherry said as she was trying to control her anger.

"I did." Corral was exasperated.

She had pushed her inside the water; she had drowned; she had seen her go down to the bottom of the sea.

No one had found her body. No one.

"You saw it." She told her aunt Cherry. "They searched for her body, but no one found it. She was dead. I saw her drown. I remember pushing her in."



She turned to Marie. "It must be a mistake. How can my sister have a child?"

"The Cauldron never lies." Marie said, stepping away from the cauldron. "Come see for yourself."

Cherry walked up to the pot and then looked down inside.

Then she raised her head back up.

Her face said everything that needed to be said.

"I told you, the cauldron never lies," Marie said.

Cherry looked at Carrol. 1

"What did you do?" Cherry said. "How could you have been so careless?!"

"Careless!" Carrol said in disbelief at her aunt. "I did as you asked me. Her body was never found." 2

"There you said it. Her body was never found. Somehow she escaped long enough even to have a child." Cherry said. "Do you have any idea what that means?"

Corral could not believe it.

So all this while her sister had been alive, and

they had been made to think she was dead?

She began to shake in fear.

"If she was alive, then why didn't she return?"

Corral asked. "Maybe this is just a stupid mix-up."

Marie's eyes blazed like fire. "I have told you, the cauldron does not lie! Rechallenge it, and I will burn you in it!"

Corral backed out.

"I'm sorry, Marie." Cherry said, giving Corral a glare that told her to shut up. "She doesn't know what she is saying. Please, what can you tell us about her?"

"After insulting my cauldron?" Marie laughed.

"No. The two of you get out!"

"I will pay." Corral said he was trying to make amends. "How much?"

Marie folded her hand, looked away, and thought to herself.

Then she turned to Corral. "I don't collect money. I collect debts."



given birth to Jasmine, who had in turn been brought to the pack as a slave.

"That isn't right." Corral said. "Something isn't right. Jasmine is the daughter of Alpha Bale and his wife, Luna Maria."

"Then she must be an imposter." Cherry said.

"She must have been brought here for a reason."

Cherry turned to Marie. "Does the girl know who she truly is? Did her mother tell her?"

"Not from what I see." Marie said. "The powers of the cauldron are limited. It only tells you what it wants you to tell you and what you need to know."

Marie stepped away from the cauldron and placed a hand on it.

She gasped and threw her head back as her eyes went completely white, and she spoke in a hoarse voice with multiple voices.

"And the child born shall lead the way for all wolves, good or bad. And one side shall be chosen, for the goddess chooses her and will be the greatest Alpha ever lived."

given birth to Jasmine, who had in turn been brought to the pack as a slave.

"That isn't right." Corral said. "Something isn't right. Jasmine is the daughter of Alpha Bale and his wife, Luna Maria."

"Then she must be an imposter." Cherry said. "She must have been brought here for a reason."

Cherry turned to Marie. "Does the girl know who she truly is? Did her mother tell her?"

"Not from what I see." Marie said. "The powers of the cauldron are limited. It only tells you what it wants you to tell you and what you need to know."

Marie stepped away from the cauldron and placed a hand on it.

She gasped and threw her head back as her eyes went completely white, and she spoke in a hoarse voice with multiple voices.

"And the child born shall lead the way for all wolves, good or bad. And one side shall be chosen, for the goddess chooses her and will be the greatest Alpha ever lived."



Then her eyes went normal, and she took in a loud gasp.

It was obvious that it had been a spirit possession.

Corral was unable to hear all of this.

After all her efforts, What had she done?

She ran out of the cabin.

Cherry turned to Marie.

"What can we do?" She asked her.

"You didn't follow my exact orders the last time."

Marie informed her.

"It was my stupid niece." Cherry said. "She didn't do the job well." 5

Marie sighed. "I will consult and speak to the spirits and see what they can tell me. But I assure you, that girl is not normal. She is nothing like I have ever seen or felt before."

Cherry still wanted to be Queen Alpha.

But now that this girl had come into play, her



ropes are going to be different.

She sighed. "Thank you, Marie."

Marie smiled. "You're welcome."

Then, she turned back to her duties as Cherry began to leave.

"The girl with the royal blood." Marie said. "If she is a slave of Xaden, how come she is in the pack? No one, not even him, can defy the law, bring a female, and make her his unless he successfully defeated the pack."

Cherry went quiet. "There has to be only one thing. He bonded with her."

Marie smiled.

Cherry looked at her friends suspiciously. "Why are you interested?" Cherry asked.

She knew Marie.

She didn't just make requests unless they had something to do with her.

"In due time. You will know." Marie said, and she turned her back on Cherry, dismissing her.



As Cherry went out, she wondered how she would take the crown now.

Corral was haunted by the fact that her sister had been alive long enough to have a child.

Marie sat in her chair, fantasising about when she would collect her very old debt from an old friend.