



196 THE JOURNEY BEGINS

XADEN'S POV 1

As Xaden traveled on the horse with his men all he could think about was Jasmine and her being safe.

Was he going to make it in time?

What had overcome Aurora?! She had always hated Jasmine, but she had gone to

Attack her in broad daylight.

It did not make any sense to him, and rightfully so, he did not understand.

He was so deep in thought that as the men joked and made tales he barely listened.

Then Erik, who had been riding in silence, looked at him and pitied him.

They were not on the best terms, but they were still best friends.

He was still his alpha.

And that came first before anything.

He sighed to himself and pulled his horse to Xaden side.

"Xaden." Erik said.



Xaden slowly turned to face his friend, and Erik saw that his eyes were still blood red.

"It was not your fault." Erik said wisely.

"Gods, I never thought you were one to say things like this."

Xaden laughed bitterly. "Stop trying to make me feel better."

"But truly it was not. How were you going to know? No one saw it coming." Erik said.

Xaden said nothing.

"You are grieving on both sides and we all understand." Erik said as he touched his shoulder firmly in a way of showing him manly support.

It was then that Xaden was able to breathe in.

Their horses stopped and the others went on ahead.

"Even without a heart, I cared for Aurora," Xaden said. "I could have treated her better. I should have. She has been with me in the pack for so long. I am furious with her. I wish I could ask her why she would defy me. Why would she kill her own kin? Because Aurora helped us build the crescent pack from scratch. Despite the things she did, I can not take away the fact that she cared for the pack. I was used to her. And now I



was the one who ended her life, so...." 1

Xaden turned away unable to bear the weight of his words.

"Exactly, you said it yourself" Erik said. "Aurora would never have done something like that. She did a lot of bad things. Left to her, Jasmine would have been dead, but Aurora would never put the members of our pack at risk."

Xaden breathed in heavily.

"For now we have to focus on getting this cure," Erik said. "Jasmine is a fighter. Loren and Marie claimed that the stab wound was lethal, and yet she is still fighting. Even for an unshifted wolf, she is still excelling behind words."

Xaden said nothing.

"We need to find the cure," Erik emphasized. "For you and her. Because time is not on your side either."

It was only Erik who knew that.

The others still had no idea that not just Jasmine's life was at risk but also their alphas.

Xaden nodded. "Thank you Erik. I know what it means for you to come down here and help me."

Erik was originally from the Isle of Lycanthrope. Although he had left when he was a child.



His mother had snuck him out, and he had probably been around the age of seven back then.

But he had not returned ever since.

He did not like to speak about it but for the fact that he has volunteered to come along with them touched Xaden.

Made him wonder why they had been fighting so in the first place.

"Are you two not coming along?" Owen demanded, waving his hands over to them.

The Xaden turned his horse and then he and Erik went ahead to catch up with the others. 1

There were thirty men who accompanied them.

Thirty of his most powerful soldiers.

They all knew the way that led toward the Isle of Lycanthrope.

They would have to reach a bridge that led to the dead forest.

And no one had ever come out from the dead forest.

All except Erik, of course.

They had been on their horses the entire journey and it was almost sun down when they reached the bridge.



It was a rickety long bridge that had been made of wood and had been there for god knew how long. ¹

They stood by the cliff, and then the other end of the bridge was on the other cliff.

"That does not look safe," Rowan said, looking down at the cliff.

There were cliffs beneath, and it was obviously an instant death.

As Rowan was looking down at the cliff.

He felt himself being pushed and then pulled back.

Rowan screamed, and then when he saw that it was just Didi, one of the other soldiers, messing with him, he grew mad in rage.

"What the hell?!" He demanded in rage. "I could have fucking fallen down and died."

"Come on, it was a joke," Didi said, laughing. The other wolves laughed, but Rowan did not find it funny.

Then Rowan smiled. "If that is the case, why not come by this side and see if I could play with you two?"

Didi's face fell, and then he shook his head.

"No come on." Rowan said, drawing closer to



Didi. "Let's do it. Let's play."

And the Didi ran off and then Rowan ran after him. 1

The other men boomed with laughter.

"Cut it out." Xaden said not finding the joke. 1

By then Rowan had already caught Didi by the neck.

Rowan grumbly let him go and then they looked at the bridge. 1

"Who goes first?" Percy asked.

"I will." Erik said.

"And I will go last." Xaden said. "Till at least every one of you has safely gone across. We will take the horses first."

They all looked at the Rickety bridge and were all wondering if they were going to make it across at all. 1

Erik went to the bridge and then took in a deep breath before he stepped on the planks and began going across.

