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XADEN'S POV 1

They continued the journey for over two weeks.

The men were all tired and exhausted but had to keep on going.

So far only eleven men remained because they had been attacked so frequently by the wild beasts that led to the Isle of lycanthrope.

Their food supply was running out, and the days were beginning to turn into a year.

Meanwhile, Xaden was now beginning to seriously feel the effect of Jasmine's stab wounds.

A lot of the time, he felt the pain begin to gnaw through him, but he would suppress it and pretend he was okay.

It happened like a joke at first, with just slight pains, and then he would use his wolf to suppress the pain, and then it would subside.

Whenever any of the men in the pack turned to look at him.

He would fake a smile and suppress his pains.

Erik saw him one day leaning against a rock and holding his side. 2



Erik, who was talking to one of the men, tapped his shoulder and said. "I will be right back."

And with that Erik went up to meet Xaden.

Xaden was backing him and then he was apparently in pain.

Erik walked up to him. He could hear fierce breathing and then a small sense of growling.

He minded his steps as he headed up to him.

Then he very gently touched his shoulder, and Xaden immediately turned around.

Erik took a step back and almost stumbled but caught his balance.

"Whoa, do not fall." Xaden cautioned.

Erik stood firm.

Erik looked at him all over, trying to see a trace of anything wrong.

But Xaden seemed fine.

"What is wrong?" Xaden asked him. "Cape to tell me something?" 2

"Yeah I thought that I had heard some noises like growling." Erik said still peering at Xaden taking him in. 1

Xaden gave a laugh. "Gods I am fine."

Erik felt something was wrong.



Like Xaden was definitely hiding something.

Erik paused and looked at him suspiciously but then said. "How is the pain? Is it getting worse?"

"Pain? What pain?" Xaden feigned confusion.

"You know? The pain that you got from Jasmine." Erik said.

Erik had initially started noticing that Xaden felt pain from time to time. He had asked him about it, but he had insisted that he was fine.

"Oh, that, I barely feel it," Xaden said with a shrug that was too reassuring for Erik's liking.

It was only Erik who was aware of the connection that Xaden and Jasmine had. 1

He eyes him suspiciously. "But you have to tell me if things get worse. Marie said that as time goes on, the pain will process on you"

"Trust me. I am fine." Xaden said as he climbed back up the small rock.

Then Erik's eyes caught Xaden's wrist, which was bare due to his rolled-up sleeve.

There was something dark like a tracing of a dark vein in a very ugly zig zag design leading into his arm. 1

Erik could not see the rest of it because his upper arm, which was in turn covered by his



sleeve, had hidden it.

"What is that?" Erik asked.

Xaden quickly pulled down his sleeve, and the mark disappeared like it had never been there.

"Nothing," Xaden said as he hurriedly went past Erik to where the men were.

"Xaden," Erik said, going after him, but Xaden had already gone to the circle of men and was talking to them.

Erik sighed in defeat because he knew that there was nowhere he could confront him openly.

Xaden went up to where they had arranged the stones for a wolf who had died in the afternoon.

Xaden made his final prayers and sent them forth while they stood behind him in solidarity.

When he was done, they opened their eyes.

"Erik, how long will this journey take?" Aden asked.

"We are almost there," Erik said. "We need to keep on moving."

They got back on their horses and returned on their journey.

"We are out of food supplies and even water," Own complained. "Where the fuck can we get



food in this dried-out desert."

"I remember the meal that Jasmine made." Someone said. "With absolutely nothing, she made the best wild boar and soup."

"You forgot about the mushrooms." Someone chipped in.

"Yes, those bloody mushrooms." Someone added. "Up till now, I have never had anything like that. It was as if she was not a wealthy aristocrat. Most of them do not even know how to cook or do anything."

Peter grumbled. "My sister is an elite, and she served her purpose well."

Xaden's pack was not only filled with wolves who were abandoned, attacked, or betrayed.

There were also people like Peter who had left their own packs and from elite wolf families that had joined Xaden's.

The man sighed. "The gods. I will die to have that meal again."

Xaden said nothing, whether it triggered him or not.

They rose in silence and soon came to a valley and a dark tower that hung in the distance.

There were dark crows flying around it and



harping in the air.

The entire atmosphere was warning people to come closer.

The place surrounding it was deserted and alone, and from the distance, it all seemed dark.

The sky over it was red and dark.

"That is the isle of lycanthrope," Erik said.

They all looked up and saw it.

Their fates now hanging in the balance of what they were about to face:

"So we fight," Xaden said as he rose ahead.

But Erik stopped him.

"No, we do not," Erik said. "There is still half a day's journey from here to there. By the time you reach half it would be into the next morning and those paths are filled with dangerous creatures. We rest tonight and ride tomorrow."

Xaden looked skeptical.

And then he realized that his anxiety was reaching up to him more than him being logical.

He sighed and pulled his horse.

"Alright."

