

*Del Fantasma*

**Scotch  
on the Rocks**

**Liadan Brodie**



**Aspen Mountain Press**

Scotch on the Rocks [Del Fantasma]  
*by Liadan Brodie*

**Aspen Mountain Press**

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## **Scotch on the Rocks**

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## **Chapter One**

Braeden somehow knew the moment he saw the Del Fantasma, this bar was different. He also had the feeling this was the place he'd either learn where Elizabeth was or if she was dead. He'd agreed to meet Matt, his lover and bodyguard, here though he wanted to continue the search. It felt strange meeting Matt in a public place. For the last six months they'd barely spoken to one another. Braeden remembered why they'd split up to search and frowned. His first order of business would be to beg Matt's forgiveness for the fight that had torn them apart after Elizabeth had been taken. Hopefully Matt would forgive him; it would kill Braeden if he didn't.

He parked his jeep next to Matt's motorcycle. His eyes scanned the parking lot looking for signs of trouble, but there was nothing out of the ordinary—yet. He studied the mission style bar. It looked innocent enough from the outside; he just hoped it would be the same inside. He stepped out of the jeep and raised his nose. All of his senses went on red alert, his nerves tingling. From the lingering scent in the air, the one he was looking for had been here recently and a low rumble began in Braeden's chest. He could feel the energy building in him but he quickly put a leash on it.

He needed to save his rage for when he finally came face to face with his opponent. Matt's scent was stronger so he knew the one they were searching for had left here some time

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ago. Possibly tonight, maybe even the night before. He wouldn't know for sure until he spoke with Matt.

Braeden followed Matt's scent to the door of the bar. He knew as soon as his hand touched the door that many 'people' came here ... humans too. He felt his hopes rise. Could it be possible that he'd find her here as well? He opened the door and walked into a typical bar scene. There were tables strategically placed around the room, stools at the bar and a small dance floor off to one side. The music playing at the moment was Nickelback, although he thought someone just might slip in a country song or two at times. The lighting wasn't as dim as he would have expected but it wasn't overly bright either. The walls were painted a pale tan that accented the pine wood flooring. He did think it strange there were only two windows.

He eyed the man behind the bar, who was around six foot tall and muscular. Braeden would have pegged him for former military even without the fatigues he wore, but what froze him in his tracks were the man's eyes. They were striking and a little unnerving at first. Braeden tipped his head to him, knowing him immediately for what he was: a vampire. That explained why there were only two windows. Matt had said this was a place where they would fit in and he was right.

Braeden walked up to the bar. "Good evening. I was wondering if you'd by chance..."

"You two have been apart for too long. He's over there, and believe me when I say Matthias has missed you." The bartender pushed two glasses of scotch on the rocks across the bar to him. "Go to him."



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Braeden scanned the room until he saw Matt. Matt was sitting by himself at a table close to the wall and out of the way of other patrons. That was good; he didn't really want to be disturbed now that he knew he was on the trail of the man who'd betrayed them. Sean had actually betrayed the entire pack and that was just one of the reasons they were searching for him. They were here to make sure justice was done. Braeden turned back to the vampire. "Thank you."

Matt smiled and stood as Braeden reached the table. Matt shook his hand though the fire in his eyes made it clear he would have preferred more from him in the way of a greeting.

"Too bad that's all I can get from you right now." His eyes seemed to glow as he leaned in closer and whispered. "We've been apart too long Braeden, I haven't been the same without you." Matt looked nervous. "I'm sorry. I never should have started that argument with you. Can you forgive me?"

Braeden's body immediately responded to Matt's closeness and deep husky voice. He was happy to see Matt was affected by him as well. "Matt, I would ask your forgiveness as well. I will forgive you if you forgive me." He leaned in so he could whisper in his ear. "I love you Matthias."

He took a step back and let his gaze roam over Matt's body. Matt was the total opposite of him. Where he was six foot two, muscular, with coal black hair that just barely brushed his shoulders and amber eyes, Matt was an inch shorter and had a swimmer's build with not an ounce of fat on him. Braeden had intimate knowledge of that fact; his hands had learned every curve and crevice of Matt's body. Matt had sandy hair that he kept long enough to pull back in a ponytail,

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green-gold eyes and looked nothing like a man who'd been known to literally rip an opponent in two with his bare hands.

Braeden sat across the table from Matt. "So Matthias, I guess I should be saying how happy I am to see you." He ran his foot up Matt's leg under the table. "Something wrong?" He laughed when Matt squirmed in his seat. "What's wrong Matt?"

Matt signaled to the bartender for another round as he polished off his scotch. "Nope, nothing's wrong." He narrowed his eyes and said. "Just wait 'til we're alone. You're so going to pay for that."

He waited until Cody Warren, vampire and bar owner, came to the table with their drinks. "Braeden this is Cody Warren. Cody, this is the man I mentioned to you earlier, Braeden McInnes."

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Braeden. I'll do all that I can to help with your problem." Cody looked at Matt and then back to him. "However, now that you're reunited with Matthias, I think we can wait for one evening and let you both get 'reacquainted.'"

He shook his hand before walking away.

Braeden watched him walk away. "It's a real shame he's a vamp. You and I could enjoy him together." He returned his attention to Matt, who was glaring. "Hey don't look like that. I said we could enjoy him *together* or didn't you hear that? What's his story anyway?"

Matt shrugged his shoulders. "Don't really know, and he won't say anything about it either. Some of the wolves in the area say he's been here for about 30 years. He's a good guy

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and I trust him." Matt pointed to a table on the other side of the room, "You see those two couples there? Cody put them together. He's a matchmaker and he's darn good at it too." He leaned over the table and got in Braeden's face. "I know you want to hear what I've found out and I'll tell you on one condition."

Braeden tried to swallow, his mouth suddenly dry as he stared into Matt's eyes. "What condition would that be?" His Scottish brogue got thicker the more he thought about what his payment would be. God, they had to get out of here soon.

Matt smiled. "Oh I think you know. But in case you don't ... it definitely involves you and me naked." Matt watched as he had trouble keeping his breathing steady. "Is that payment satisfactory to you?" Matt smiled when he nodded. "Good, now I'll tell you that rat bastard cousin of yours, Sean, was in here earlier this evening. I wanted to jump him as soon as he came in the door but Cody has a rule about no fighting and no shifting in the club. Elizabeth wasn't with him." Matt must have seen the sadness he felt and reached over to grab his hand. "I'm sorry. I know we've thought we were close time and time again. But this time I swear we will find her."

Braeden shook his head. "This is the first time we've been this close to Sean in six months and when you saw him, El wasn't with him. This isn't good, Matt, and you know it. You know what kind of evil streak Sean has running through him. He could have done anything to her by now." He paused for a breath before saying the thing he dreaded thinking about the most. "She's fragile; she's human."

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Matt took his free hand and pushed the glass of scotch closer to Braeden. "Drink that and let me get you another one. What I have to say is going to take a lot more than two drinks." Matt dreaded telling Braeden everything he'd learned since arriving three days ago. Cody had been as helpful as he could but not even he knew much about Sean and the panthers he was hanging with now, other than they frequented the bar. It was up to Matt to tell his oldest, closest, dearest love what a monster he had for a relative. He signaled to Cody who nodded in understanding as Matt raised four fingers.

Matt smiled as Braeden downed the scotch. He knew he hated the ice by the way he shook the glass at him. He laughed when Braeden said, "How many times have I told you? If you have something bad to tell me, don't give me a scotch on the rocks."

"Well, I just thought it might help me ease into what I have to tell you. You know, sort of get you pissed about the ice in your drink before I break the bad news." He sighed. "I know what El means to both of us and I'm just as pissed off about it as you are. We *will* get her back." He knew it was now or never and was glad Cody had brought each of them two glasses of scotch.

"Braeden, the guys Sean is hanging around with these days use humans and non-humans up like they're going out of style. Cody told me earlier at least two of the gang's "toys" haven't been seen since they went home with Sean. I've asked around the bar and I've had trouble getting the non-humans to speak, but the humans are willing to help."

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Braeden looked around the bar; he knew how to get the other Weres to help. He stood up and unplugged the jukebox. Once that was done and people turned to stare at him like they were going to take his head off, he cleared his throat. "Yeah, I know it was a stupid thing to do and I'll probably pay for that later, but right now I have questions I need answers to and I need everyone's help." When one of the American werewolves stood up and asked who the hell he thought he was, he smiled. "Glad you asked. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Braeden McInnes of Pack McInnes of Scotland."

There was silence in the bar as the non-humans realized who he was. Weres that hadn't been looking at him turned and paid attention. The humans had no clue. "I can see some of you have either heard of me, my father or both of us." He pointed to Matt. "I understand some of you have been unwilling to answer questions that were being asked by him." When the others nervously glanced at one another, Braeden knew the smile he wore was a cold one. "You do realize this man is Matthias right?"

Now there was definitely some movement as the shifters started squirming in their seats.

Matt stood and plugged the jukebox back in. He raised his hand before he pulled Braeden to the table. "Not to worry folks, I promise not to harm a hair on anyone's precious hide." He pushed Braeden into a chair none too gently and took his own seat. "Just what the hell did you do that for? You know they'll probably give away their first-born cubs to me now if I asked them to." He ran his hand through his hair, loosening the ponytail that hung down his back. "Jeez Brae,

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half of them are looking at me like I'm a deranged killer and I'm going to go all Braveheart on their asses. I feel the waves of fear coming off them."

He didn't like the way Brae smiled at him. "I thought it would help if they knew who they were dealing with. It's well known who I am, who my father is and also who father's favorite bodyguard is. Everyone also knows who warms my bed. Come on, let's ask some questions."

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## **Chapter Two**

Braeden had just started to stand when a young man came over to their table. He looked him over and decided he was no threat. "Who are you?"

The young man smelled of fear, but he still met Braeden's eyes. "I'm the local wolf pack master's oldest son sir, Andrew Stevens. I need to speak with you, both of you. I have some information you may be looking for."

Braeden offered his seat to Andrew and sat beside him then he leaned closer to Andrew. "We thank you for offering information. What can you tell us about the man we are looking for? Do you know who he is?"

Andrew nodded, "Oh yes, sir, I do. It's not hard to figure out you're looking for Sean McInnes. He's your cousin correct?" Brae nodded and motioned for him to continue.

By the time Andrew was done telling them all he knew, both of them were barely keeping their rage leashed. Matt had a better hold on his temper, so he kept his hand on Brae's arm to remind him they were in a public place. Brae dismissed Andrew from the table with a wave and looked at Matt. "I really hope you have a room somewhere. I need to work off some steam."

Matt's body responded, desire tightening his belly. He nodded. "Yeah, let me pay our tab and we'll go."

Matt walked to the bar and waved at Cody. "Thanks Cody. Sorry about the stunt Brae pulled with the jukebox." He pulled out his wallet. "How much do I owe you?"

Cody pushed on his hands. "Nothing but a promise."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, go take care of your wolf. Stay with him and don't let words said in anger or frustration tear you apart again." Cody left Matt staring at him in shock as he disappeared through the door behind the bar.

\* \* \* \*

They made it to the parking lot and Brae's truck, but just barely, before Brae had him pinned between the truck and his body. Brae's lips were hot, soft and demanding on his as he pushed his body even closer. Brae ran his tongue along the seam of his mouth, attempting to plunder. He groaned as Brae gained entrance, knowing in the back of his mind if they kept this up they'd never make it to the hotel.

Matt gripped the front of Brae's shirt, clinging to him. He couldn't get enough of his taste, his scent ... him. His erection rubbed against Brae's and sent a shudder through his body. He pulled back. "Braeden we need to go to the hotel." When Brae didn't stop, but instead bit his neck, he gasped. "Brae, not here." He threw his head back, which gave Braeden better access to his throat.

Finally, sanity returned. Matt realized they were very close to putting on a show in the parking lot that could get them arrested and pushed hard against Brae's chest. Brae stared at him. His breathing was shallow and his eyes had turned almost golden with his arousal. "No Braeden, not here."

He backed towards his bike. He'd learned long ago when Braeden was like this, you didn't give him your back. He'd



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done that once and had ended up bent over a chair with Braeden's hard cock in him within seconds.

He knew by the look on Braeden's face he wanted him *now*. He wanted to be inside him, to have his scent all over him. His growl was low and he watched as Braeden stopped dead in his tracks. "Now, Matt. I can't wait."

When Brae reached for his belt they both stopped as a scent they recognized floated on the crisp air carried inland by the sea.

Both Matt and Braeden sniffed. Matt looked into Braeden's eyes and saw the desire go from raging volcano to a barely-there flame. "Sean's out and he's got friends with him." He looked at Matt with an evil gleam in his eyes. "So, you want to go say hello?"

Matt shook his head. "We can't, but we can track them as long as they don't see or smell us. Then whatever he's up to, we can report back to your father."

Matt was about to say something else but he snapped his mouth shut and spun around, scanning the area near the bar. Someone was close. Sniffing the air again he knew what was lurking in the dark, a panther. He spun around and pushed Braeden towards the jeep. "Get in the jeep and drive. The hotel, Lookout Suites, is a few miles up the road you can't miss it. Our room is 312," he said as he passed him the room key.

Matt was glad Braeden didn't question him. He knew Braeden trusted him with his life. Matt opened the door and pushed Braeden into the jeep.

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"This is one of those times I hate you're a guard." Braeden said with a frown.

Matt smiled and leaned over, kissing Braeden before shutting the door.

Matt sniffed the air and pinpointed the source of the scent. From what Andrew had told them, Sean had joined forces with the local Werepanthers, and that was what he smelled now. This was bad and meant one thing. Sean probably knew he was in town. If he knew that, then Sean would realize Brae wouldn't be far behind and they'd be looking for him. The grapevine within the shifter world was always up to date and after the show Braeden had put on, Sean would surely know where they were.

Then another thought crossed his mind ... Elizabeth.

He stumbled and almost fell to his knees as he walked towards the side of the bar. He wouldn't put it past Sean to hand El over to the panthers as payment for their help, but he hoped to God that wasn't the case. Neither he nor Braeden would survive if anything happened to her. She was their life ... their love ... their mate.

Matt smiled as he thought about the day he and Braeden had met Elizabeth Maxwell. They had been to the gym in Edinburgh and had stopped to get a late lunch. Elizabeth had been sitting by herself, and the moment Braeden had seen her, he wanted her. He asked the waitress to sit them at the table next to hers. Matt hadn't said anything, but his body had hardened at the sight of her. She was beautiful. She had long brown hair that fell in soft waves down her back and he could just imagine running his hands through it or having it

caress his body. When she looked at them, they'd both been lost. She'd smiled as they took their seats and her forest green eyes had sparkled.

Braeden had leaned across the table, looked at him and said. "I'll back down if you want a shot. But if you lose, she's fair game." He had shaken his head and told Braeden he wouldn't stop him. They had playfully argued about it until El had come over to their table.

She'd leaned down, looked at them and said very calmly. "I'll take you both."

That was how they became friends. It wasn't long into their relationship when El paid a surprise visit to their flat and caught them making love. They were afraid she wouldn't understand or she'd be sickened by it, but she wasn't. She had simply stripped out of her clothes and joined them on the bed.

Matt shook his head clear of the memories as he slid silently along the side of the building. It was dark, but enough light from the street lamp hit the area that he could see. As he neared the dumpster, he was almost overwhelmed by the scent of garbage and blocked the stench as best he could. It was the scent of a scared and frightened panther that pulled him back here. He knew if the panther was injured it would try to attack.

He knelt beside the dumpster and tried to see around to the other side. He inched forward but stopped when he smelled blood. Just great, this was all he needed to deal with on top of trying to find Elizabeth, protect Braeden and hunt

Sean. "I won't hurt you I promise. I just need you to come out where I can see you. I'll get you help."

Seconds later, a small hand came into view followed by a small person. At first Matt thought it was a woman and prayed it wasn't Elizabeth. But upon taking a closer look, he saw it was a boy of about ten or eleven. He sucked in a breath but made no move towards the child.

"What's your name lad?" The boy just stared at him so he tried again. "Where are your parents?" Still no answer, then he asked. "Are you hungry?" The boy nodded and Matt smiled. "All right I'm going to stand up and then I'm going to take you somewhere safe." Again the smell of blood hit him. "Where are you injured and how badly?"

The boy looked at him and sniffed in his direction. With wide eyes he asked, "Are you like me?"

Matt wasn't sure how to answer. He was pretty certain the boy had been through hell and from the look of him and the strong scent of panther that rolled off him, he had undergone his first change. "I'm similar to you. What's your name?"

"Paul ... I think. I remember a lady calling me that but I can't find her now. Do you know where she is?" He was still frightened but he was scooting along the ground, moving closer to Matt.

"No lad, I'm sorry. I don't know her. Would you like to go now so I can take care of you and get you some food?"

Paul looked around the parking lot. "How are we going to leave?" Matt pointed to his bike and Paul's eyes lit up. "Wow! Okay, I'll go with you."

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Matt let out a breath he didn't realize he'd been holding. He held out his hand and as Paul started to stand, he fell to his knees with a cry. "What the bloody hell?" Matt knelt next to Paul. "Let me see. Can you put your legs in front of you so I can see them?"

Paul tried to move his legs but he shook too badly. He grabbed Matt's arm. "They're coming. They're going to hurt me again and they'll hurt you too."

Matt sniffed the air, and damn if the kid wasn't right. Sean and his new friends had been hunting Paul. He looked at Paul. "Can you be real quiet when I pick you up? I know it's going to hurt, but the quieter you are the better it will be for us." Paul nodded. Matt lifted him in his arms and ran for the bike. By the time they were headed to the hotel, Paul's cheeks were wet with tears.

\* \* \* \*

Braeden was relaxing on the bed after a hot shower. He'd called his father to let him know they were close to getting Sean and he was thinking of how he'd rip Sean to pieces when Matt banged on the door. Thank goodness he was at least in his boxers, he thought as he opened the door and moved aside as Matt pushed by him. "Um ... Matthias why did you bring a panther to our room?"

Braeden watched as Matt placed Paul on the bed and began inspecting his injured foot. "Paul was being hunted by Sean and his new buddies."

Braeden had to rein in his desire as Matt looked over his shoulder at him and for just a moment took in the sight of his

all too handsome lover. He knew Matt saw the gleam in his eyes when he said, "Later. Right now I have a feeling we have our hands full with a child who was quite possibly kidnapped and bitten just for fun."

Braeden's expression grew dark. "What makes you say that?"

"Because he doesn't remember much of anything except his name and he's not even sure about that." Braeden's eyes followed Matt's movements as he shrugged off his jacket. "He can sleep in the adjoining room. We need to get him cleaned up and get some food in him. I think he's changed once already. He's so small, he's probably starved."

Braeden smiled at Paul. "I'm Braeden McInnes. I'll get you some clothes and some bandages to take care of your injuries. When you get out of the clothes you have on, I expect them to be thrown out."

Paul, who had been staring between the two men, spoke up. "Why are you two being so nice to me? The others weren't."

Matt sat on the bed beside Paul. "It's because we care about people. We may have beasts inside us just waiting to break free, but we respect all life and that means humans as well. No one should be treated the way you've been. We'll take care of you until we can find a panther clan willing to care for and train you."

Brae had gotten dressed while Matt was talking. "I'm going now, I'll be back as quickly as possible." He paused at the door and looked back. "We might want to think about getting

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him a new name as well. He can't be returned to his human family."

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### **Chapter Three**

Matt ordered room service and got Paul in the tub. They could think about a new name tomorrow. He waited in the bedroom while Paul took his bath and as he sat on the bed, he replayed the whole evening in his mind. Something was just out of his reach. There was a clue in something the Stevens cub had said, but he couldn't remember. He shook his head and answered the door to let room service in. He tipped the server, noticing he was human, and set the food on the table before knocking on the bathroom door.

"Paul are you done?"

"I can't get out of the tub." He sounded tired.

Matt entered the bathroom and Paul smiled. "You should have called out sooner lad." Matt grabbed a towel and lifted the boy with one hand while he tucked the towel around him with his other. "Now let's go get you some food."

They entered the bedroom. When Paul's stomach rumbled, he laughed. "I'll put you at the table so you can eat but you have to promise to keep your foot propped on another chair. The wounds on your foot and leg are bad but don't worry, lad. Brae will be back soon to take care of it." As he placed Paul in a chair, he got a small glimpse of his back. The door opened and his attention was drawn to Braeden as he entered the room.

He knew anger was rolling off him in waves. Paul didn't seem to be bothered by it since he was still eating. Braeden



placed the bags of clothing and first aid supplies on the bed and stood behind him. "What's wrong?"

Matt stepped to the side without saying a word and Braeden tensed behind him. "They bit him so much it brought on his first change." He turned to Braeden with tears welling up in his eyes. "I know what that's like and I swear I'll kill every one of them personally."

He leaned against Brae, accepting the comfort as best he could.

"I agree, Matt. They'll pay for what they've done to an innocent."

Once Paul was safely tucked in his room, Brae and Matt snuggled in bed together. He nuzzled Braeden's neck then rolled on top of him and began to nibble and lick his neck and ears.

He loved it when Braeden's voice became husky, almost a growl

"Matt there's a child in the next room. We can't do this tonight, no matter how much I want you to continue." Brae shuddered after his words were ignored and Matt began a journey down his body.. Braeden gasped as he paid special attention to his already tight nipples.

Matt lightly bit Braeden's nipples, before sucking first one and then the other into his mouth. He lifted his head and smiled. "Should I stop?"

He licked a trail to Braeden's belly button and swirled his tongue around the outside before dipping in to it. He chuckled when Braeden growled. He lifted his head again. "Maybe I should stop now?"

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Brae's eyes narrowed, watching his every move. Matt moved further down until his mouth was above Braeden's hard cock. He felt him holding his breath and smiled. Then he took him in his mouth and moaned as a shudder rolled through Braeden's body and into his.

"Oh God, Matt." Braeden was breathless, enjoying the attention his lover was giving his cock. "It's been months, I don't know how long I'll last."

Matt took all of Brae's hardness until his nose was buried in the coarse, curly hairs at the base of his cock. He didn't know if he could wait to take his pleasure until Braeden had his, but he'd try. He let Braeden's penis slip out of his mouth and wet two fingers, his eyes never leaving Brae. He rubbed his fingers against his rosette until he felt him relax and then slid one finger inside. The sight of his lover arching his back off the bed almost did him in.

"Matt, oh God Matt yes! I want ... I *need* more. I need you."

He was only too happy to oblige as he slid another finger inside and began to slowly pump them in and out. He took Brae's cock back into his mouth and kept the rhythm of his sucking in time with his fingers. He stuck a third finger inside him and knew within seconds he'd be drinking the very essence that was Braeden. He wasn't wrong.

He felt Braeden's hands on his head as he thrust upward with his hips. This is what they'd both needed. He loved the way he knew just what to do, how he knew just what Brae needed. Matt had always known. He knew Braeden better than anyone and accepted him for who he was, no questions

asked. Brae's balls tightened with impending release and he savored the cry as Braeden fell over the edge into the warm sea of ecstasy.

As Braeden came down from his high, he opened his eyes to see Matt on his knees, his cock in his hand. "Matt?"

Matt was stroking his cock slowly, but he needed Braeden to finish him. He knew his eyes were bright with his desire. They'd have gone almost completely green as they always did when they were together. "I need you Brae, I need you now."

Braeden lifted his knees to his chest and Matt moved between his legs. "I know Matt."

Matt pushed against Brae and slipped inside. Once he was past the first ring of muscle he began a slow rocking motion that took him deeper with every stroke. He looked down at Brae and then leaned forward and kissed him deeply. He pushed into Braeden until he was completely sheathed and held still. "Brae, you know I love you and I'd do anything for you. You know I'm yours until you no longer want me. Let's not ever let anything said in anger come between us. I've missed you so much."

He smiled and his heart expanded as Braeden nodded.

"I won't, Matthias. I love you."

Matt noticed as Brae's cock began to thicken again. He rocked back and forth into him until he was sure he would pass out from the pleasure. "Touch yourself, Brae. I want to see you come."

Braeden never questioned Matt. He did as he was asked and began stroking in time. It wouldn't be long. Matt could already feel the pressure building and Braeden's cock

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thickened even more. "Brae..." He began a steady rhythm while Braeden milked his cock and cried out as he came.

Matt watched through heavy-lidded eyes as Braeden emptied himself on both of them. The clenching of Brae's muscles took him over his own edge. He threw back his head and cried out Braeden's name as he poured himself into him. He braced himself on his arms and stared into a pair of golden eyes. "I love you Braeden, more than life itself."

"I love you too Matt. I always will."

\* \* \* \*

It felt like only minutes had passed. Looking at the clock on the nightstand, he knew it had been hours since he had drifted off to sleep with Brae's arms around him when he felt a touch on his shoulder. He didn't see anyone once his eyes adjusted to the dim light of the room. He started to drift back to sleep when a hand came up from the floor to touch him again. He sat up and turned on the light by the bed and looked down. "Paul? What's wrong? How did you get out of bed?"

Paul was sitting on the floor, his legs curled under him. "I slid out of bed and pulled myself along the carpet. I need to use the bathroom but I can't stand up."

Braeden sat up, blinking his eyes. "Is everything all right?"

Matt nodded. "Yeah, everything's fine. Paul has to use the bathroom." He looked at the child as he pushed back the covers and stood up. Too late, he remembered he was naked. He wasn't sure how Paul would react so he didn't make any

sudden movements as he pulled on his boxers. "Why didn't you call out? I would have come to you."

Paul shrugged. "I didn't think about it. I just knew I needed to get in here and wake you up."

Matt picked him up and carried him to the bathroom to take care of his needs. When they returned, Brae was up and in his boxers as well. "Well, what do you think? Too early to order breakfast and about a dozen pots of very strong coffee?"

Brae laughed. "I'm glad to see you're back to your usual self. Don't worry, I knew what you'd want. I've already called and ordered." He looked at Paul. "I've called some people my father mentioned and they're panthers like you. They're willing to take you in since they have no children of their own, but I want them to meet you first and we need to meet them. We won't give you over to someone we don't trust. I told them you'd need a new name but it would be up to you to choose it. Are you okay with that?"

Paul looked sad. "I want to stay with you two. I don't want to go away." He turned tear-filled eyes to Matt. "Why can't I stay with you?"

Matt sat down with Paul in his lap. "Paul we're wolves; you're a panther. Our kinds usually don't mix and are rarely friendly to each other. But you're just a child, you didn't ask to be a panther, you were abused and turned because of the evil of others. We have someone we have to find, a woman we both love very much."

"What happened to her? Was she taken just like me?" Paul was very quiet and his eyes were sad.

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"Yes she was. She was taken by Braeden's cousin, one of the men hunting you last night. We don't know what he's done to her or where he's taken her, but we have to find her before he hurts her." Matt took the picture Brae was holding out to him and showed it to Paul.

Paul smiled at the picture. "She's nice and she has a pretty smile. I like her."

Braeden cleared his throat. "We feel the same way, and that's why we must find her. You must go with the panthers if we all find them acceptable."

Paul looked from one man to the other. "Oh, when I said I like her I meant she was nice to me." He saw the confusion on their faces. "The wolf man said she was rightfully his and she was going to stay with him, with the panthers as well. He kept repeating he was a wolf and her two friends were wolves as well. He told her if she didn't obey him he'd give her to the panthers, but he never did. He did something worse."

For a brief moment, neither Braeden nor Matt spoke. Finally Matt, as gently as he could, asked. "What did he do to Elizabeth?"

Paul looked at Braeden who was now standing and pacing the room, then back at Matt. "He turned into a wolf in front of her and she screamed. Then he bit her twice and left. I wanted to help her but I couldn't. They had me locked up."

There was a knock at the door and all three of them jumped. Braeden walked to the door and sniffed, then turned back to Matt and pointed to Paul and then the bathroom. Matt nodded, took Paul into the bathroom and then joined Braeden

in the bedroom. Braeden opened the door and saw a waiter in uniform. The waiter was a panther.

Matt stood by the table, waiting for trouble. The waiter was nervous; his hands were shaking as he put the food and coffee on the table, Matt noticed. "Why are you so nervous, panther?"

The man looked up, his eyes filled with hatred. "You aren't welcome here wolf. One of your kind is causing trouble for us and he's Scottish just like you. Any new wolves in the area are instantly under suspicion."

Braeden stepped up behind the man and sniffed. The man jumped and he smiled. "So what can you tell us about what my cousin has been up to? We're here to bring him to justice for stealing our mate."

"The woman is yours? Both of yours?" he asked incredulously. "Oh, then this is very bad." He paused and thought for a moment. "If you're here to bring him to justice, then perhaps our leader would be interested in your help. We can help you get the woman too. She hasn't changed yet but she's close. The full moon is only four days away, although she could have her first change anytime before then. We panthers can't handle a new wolf."

Matt stepped closer so that he and Braeden were crowding the man. "Speak to your leader, tell him we come to bring justice to the one who is causing your troubles. Tell him the Alpha of the McInnes pack of Scotland will gladly recompense your clan."

The man swallowed. "Who shall I tell him is here that they can speak for the Alpha of the McInnes pack?"

Braeden smiled. "Braeden McInnes and Matthias."

The man's eyes went wide with fear as he looked at Matt. Matt said, "You've nothing to fear from us unless you mean to tell Sean and the panthers that have joined him where we are. If that is your purpose here be warned now, I will find you and you will not live to see this night." Matt was in his element now. Every Were clan or pack had heard the stories of Mad Matthias and what he could do to an opponent twice his size. Weres all over the world did their best to stay out of his way unless they were looking for a fight. "Are we clear, panther?"

"Yes sir, we're very clear. I'll call my leader when I return to the kitchen."

Braeden handed the man his mobile. "Call him now." He smiled again. "In case he wants to speak with us."

The man made the call. He asked Braeden when they could meet. Braeden looked at the clock. "Not until after eleven this morning. We have a package to deliver, then we'll be free."

The man relayed the message and then asked Braeden if the package was a child panther.

"Why? What does he know about that?"

The man started shaking at the tone of Braeden's voice. "It's the leader and his wife you spoke with this morning. Your father called them as well, they're on their way here to meet you and pick up the child."

"I didn't know he was the panther clan leader. I'll meet him in the lobby." He turned to Matt. "Stay here with Paul. If everything looks okay, I'll bring them up."



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## **Chapter Four**

Matt didn't go to Paul until after Braeden and the panther left. He knew when he'd walked out of the bathroom Paul was frightened. He knew he didn't want to leave them, but there was no other choice. He felt sorry for him, but he was a panther and they were wolves.

He knocked on the bathroom door and called Paul's name. When he didn't get an answer, he opened the door. He paused for a brief moment before slowly entering the bathroom. He held his hands in front of him in a non-threatening manner, not knowing if Paul realized who he was, as he crossed the room to the black panther lying on the bath mat.

"I know you're scared, lad." He spoke slowly and softly. The panther raised his head and gave a low rumble. Matt was on his knees in front of him. He hoped Paul was able to recognize him in panther form. He remembered how hard it was for him at first. Gradually over time and with the proper training, he'd learned to keep the human side of his brain functioning in wolf form. Matt heard the door to the room open and said as loudly as he dared. "Brae, I need one of the panthers in here, now! Paul changed."

\* \* \* \*

Braeden motioned the clan leader and his mate to the bathroom. Paul's head came up at the sight of the new people. He stared at them with his ice blue eyes, then sniffed

the air and slowly stood. He walked towards them, favoring his left back leg. As he came even with Matt, he turned his head and licked his cheek. Paul lay down in front of the clan leader. He and his mate knelt and touched Paul's silky black coat. Paul purred as the air shimmered and wavered around him. The next instant, he was back in human form and being picked up by the clan leader.

Braeden ushered them into the sitting area of the hotel room. He waited for Matt to enter before he made the introductions. "This is Matthias Kendrick. Matt, this is Randall and Susan Mitchell."

Matt shook hands with them and ran his hand over Paul's head, never breaking eye contact with the couple. "I trust you'll take good care of him."

It wasn't a question but not exactly a threat either.

Susan nodded, "You have our promise he will be well cared for. He's been through so much for one so young and he's injured." Matt saw the tears that filled her eyes as she looked at Paul. "He's too young to be changing. I'm surprised he lived through the first time. The ones who did this will pay with their lives."

"They will pay as soon as we find them." He looked at Brae and then back to the couple. "But first, we must find our mate, Elizabeth."

Randall let out a long sigh. "She hasn't had an easy time of it, trust me. The Scottish wolf, your cousin, really is evil. Biting her once would have been enough, but he had to bite her twice. I overheard him telling one of the rogue panthers who joined with him that he needed to make sure she

changed. My guards have put our compound on lock down. No one in or out unless I give the all clear. I managed to kill a few of the panthers who thought they could take over my clan. They were wrong and they were the strongest of the rogues." Matt saw the look that passed between the couple.

"What is it? What's wrong?"

Matt knew the woman was nervous. Her voice shook when she answered him, which was not a good sign.

"We've had to put her in a cage. She's too wild and she's snapped at a few of us. We felt it was safer if we left her in the cage."

\* \* \* \*

Braeden stood. "She's changed already, hasn't she? When?" He shook his head. "Never mind. Tell us when we get there. Please, take us to her now."

Matt and Braeden followed the panthers in Braeden's jeep. The panthers had a compound; a huge house surrounded by high brick walls and security at the gates. Once in the house, Susan took Paul and promised Matt he would be tended to by their physician.

Matt and Brae followed Russell down a flight of stairs that led to the cellar. They were halfway down when Braeden stopped, causing Matt to bump into him. "What is it Brae?"

"Listen, do you hear that?"

Braeden knew the moment Matt heard the noise—the sound of something banging into bars. Then he heard a growl. "It's El. Get moving."

Russell stood at the foot of the stairs waiting for them. There were several cages lined up in a row against the far wall with enough space between them that someone or something couldn't reach the cage next to it. El was in the middle cage; she was in wolf form. "I apologize for keeping her in a cage. I hope you will forgive us, but it was for our own safety."

Braeden nodded and walked over to the cage. "El, hey baby. We're here. I'm so sorry, El. We wanted to tell you the truth, but when we would have, Sean took you from us. We love you, El. We, Matt and I, want you to be our mate."

Elizabeth, still in wolf form, tilted her head and whimpered. Matt stood behind Brae. "El honey, we need you to change."

The wolf lay down and after a moment the air shimmered and Elizabeth was curled up in a fetal position. She looked at Brae and Matt. "What's happening to me? Brae, I'm so scared. Help me."

Braeden looked over his shoulder at Russell. "Get this damn cage open now!"

As soon as the door swung open, Brae gathered her in his arms. "It's all right, baby. Matt and I will take care of you. You'll be with us from now on. We'll make sure Sean pays for what he's done to you."

El raised her head to look at the two men she loved more than life. "I knew you two would come for me. Sean said you wouldn't but I knew." Tears were rolling down her cheeks. "I love you both so much."

Brae gently kissed her lips and looked at Russell. "Do you have a room where she can rest? Matt and I will stay with her."

Brae's next words stopped Russell in his tracks. "We appreciate what you've done. You did the right thing, protecting your clan. There will be no repercussions from us. You need not worry, El will be with us and we'll make sure she's under control."

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## Chapter Five

Russell showed them to a room and left them to rest. Brae lay on one side while Matt took the other. El was in between them. She sighed deeply and rested her head on Braeden's chest. "I've missed you so much. I prayed you'd be able to find me. I'm glad you did. Sean said when he came back for me, he'd mate with me." She felt both men tense. "He hasn't come back, don't worry. I don't understand what's happening. Will either of you tell me what's going on?"

Braeden and Matt shared a look between them before Matt answered her. "Elizabeth, Sean bit you after he'd transformed into a wolf. Being bitten by a werewolf makes you one of us. You're a werewolf now. We didn't want it to happen like this. We wanted to be with you, we wanted to be the ones who turned you and bloody hell, we would have given you a choice."

Braeden caressed her cheek. "Why don't you try to rest, sweetheart? When you wake, we'll leave and go someplace safe."

She shook her head. "No, I don't want to rest." She pressed her body against Braeden and kissed his chest. "You're wearing too many clothes." She whispered and looked over her shoulder at Matt. "You too Matthias."

Matt's body responded to her voice. "El, you've been through a lot recently."

"Matt, I need to know you two still want me. That you still love me."

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Braeden got out of bed and stripped off his clothes. Matt followed his lead and got rid of his as well. They'd both been with her and they knew if this was what she wanted ... what she needed, they would never deny her.

\* \* \* \*

El's eyes traveled over Braeden's body. She didn't think she'd ever get used to the sight of him nude. His chest was lightly furred. But the thing that made her light-headed to the point of almost passing out was the sight of him fully aroused. His cock jutted from the juncture of his thighs, so huge, so perfect.

She turned her head and saw Matt had divested himself of clothing and was just as aroused as Brae. Even though they were almost equal in height, Matt had the bigger cock. She loved when he was inside her, but what turned her on even more was having Braeden inside her while Matt was inside Braeden.

\* \* \* \*

Matt saw the gleam in her eye and knew what she was thinking. He walked around the bed and stood in front of Braeden. He rubbed his cock against Braeden's and felt Brae shudder with need. "This is what she wants, Brae. Let's take care of our mate." Braeden nodded and then Matt's lips were on his.

They were so soft, so warm. He loved kissing Braeden. When he ran his tongue along the seam of his lips, Braeden opened his mouth and their tongues began to duel. He pulled



Brae into his arms, pressing his body against him, their cocks rubbing against each other. He pulled back panting. "God I want you."

Braeden smiled. "Then you shall have me. But first we must take care of El."

The scent of arousal was strong in the air as they both turned back to the bed. She smiled. "You two make me so hot. Just watching you is enough to turn me on."

Braeden sat between her open legs and leaned forward, his nose inches from her dripping slit. "I want a taste." He lapped at her and licked her clit before sucking it into his mouth. Her moans of pleasure nearly brought him to the edge but he wasn't done with her just yet.

Matt watched Braeden and El, while slowly stroking his own hard cock. He knelt on the bed behind Braeden and ran his tongue along his lower back. He groaned at the taste of his lover. He ran his tongue to just below his tight sac. He knew Brae was enjoying it from the low growls he kept hearing. He wet two of his fingers and rubbed against Brae until his muscle relaxed enough to allow one of Matt's fingers to easily slip inside.

Braeden's mouth left El's creamy slit and cried out, "God, Matt, yes!"

El grabbed Braeden's head and pulled him up her body, Matt moving along with them. "Make love to me Braeden. I want you inside me while Matt's inside you. I want to see Matt pumping into you, loving you."

Braeden spread her legs wider and pushed the head of his cock into her.

Matt grabbed his shoulder. "Braeden, tell her before you do this." His voice was thick with need.

El glanced between the two men. "What are you talking about? Tell me what?"

Braeden looked El in the eyes. He knew he had to tell her. He had to do this right. "Elizabeth, if we have unprotected sex with you being a wolf, it will brand you as mine. But as you are both mine and Matt's, you'll need to be with him immediately after me. He won't be able to finish inside me; he has to finish inside you."

She looked at Brae for a long moment and then at Matt. "I'll belong to both of you?" They nodded and she smiled. "Then what are we waiting for?" She held up her hand. "Wait, what about kids? Won't one of you be jealous when I have the child of the other?"

Matt shook his head. "Not at all love. We'll just take turns getting you pregnant."

"How will we know for sure who is the father? What if I get pregnant today?"

Braeden laughed. "It's easy, look at us, we're different enough that we'll know our cubs. Not only that, they will carry your scent and ours as well. There will be no mistaking who the father is." He grew still for a heartbeat. "Elizabeth, will you be my mate?"

"Yes, Braeden, I'll be your mate." As soon as the words left her mouth, he plunged into her tight sheath. "Oh God Braeden!" She arched her back off the bed and met his next thrust, her nails scoring his back as he pounded into her. With his face buried in the crook of her neck, she opened her eyes

and watched Matt. He was sitting behind Braeden milking his cock.

She reached a hand out to him. When he grabbed her hand she pulled him up behind Braeden so he could feel the thrust and be nestled next to them. "Kiss me, Matt."

Matt slammed his lips on hers. His cock was rubbing against Brae's ass and it was hard not to shove himself as far inside Brae as he could. El's tongue danced against his, her kisses stoked a fire so hot he was sure he'd melt from the inside out. He felt Braeden's muscles begin to tense. He knew Brae was close so he broke his hold on El's mouth and turned Brae's face to his. His hands held on to Brae's hips as he kissed him deeply. He wanted to swallow Brae's shout of release.

Brae rolled off El and looked at Matt. "Claim her."

Matt took Braeden's place between El's spread thighs. He was so hard and so near the edge it wouldn't take much to send him flying. "Elizabeth, will you be my mate?"

"Yes Matthias, I will be your mate." With her voice husky with arousal, he knew she'd have another orgasm with him just as powerful as the one she'd had with Brae. They could honestly say neither of them had ever left her wanting.

Matt entered her slowly, his groan of pleasure as he sank deeper into her starting tension building in his balls. He pulled out slowly and then thrust into El. From the corner of his eye he saw Braeden watching as his cock slid in and out of El. He knew it turned Braeden on watching them together. When he saw Brae's cock twitch against his thigh, he knew he was

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going to be ridden hard. Just thinking about Braeden pushing into him took him to the edge of ecstasy.

El grabbed Braeden's hand and placed it on her clit. "Help me, I want to come with him." Her body tensed as Braeden tugged her clit while Matt pumped into her. "Yes, oh yes. Harder Matt, I want it harder."

Matt pumped harder, slamming into her, his release was just seconds away. He pumped, once ... twice and then shouted as he shot inside her clenching pussy. El stiffened beneath him as she rolled over the edge with him.

Braeden was on his knees behind Matt in a heartbeat. "All fours now, Matt! I've got to be inside you." He positioned himself at Matt's entrance and slowly began pushing inside. "God Matt, watching you and El made me want you." He leaned forward, his mouth next to Matt's ear. "Will you be my mate as well?"

Matt pushed back against Braeden. "I'll always be yours." He groaned as Brae pushed deeper until he was fully seated inside him. When Brae began to pull out, Matt gasped. "I love you Brae, don't go slow. I want it hard and fast."

"Thought you'd never ask." He grabbed Matt's hips and began to ride him. Before he wanted it to end, Matt arched back towards him and shot another load which had Brae seeing stars as he came along with him.

\* \* \* \*

The three sated lovers collapsed on the bed, El between Brae and Matt. Sleepily she asked, "What does this mean for us now?"

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Braeden threw his leg over hers and reached across with his hand to touch Matt. "It means, love, you are now considered a princess of the pack. I'm in line for pack master when my father passes and you and Matt, as my mates, will help rule the pack."

Matt linked his fingers with Brae's. "Love, there is still much you have to learn about being in a pack, about being a wolf. Brae and I will teach you all you need to know. We will always protect you."

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## Chapter Six

Hours later they were awakened by someone banging on their door. "You must get up. Mr. McInnes, Mr. Kendrick! Please get up."

Braeden got out of bed and put on his boxers before answering the door. He opened it to find a young woman standing there, shaking. "What's wrong? Why are you frightened?"

"They're here. Sean has come back. He followed the boy's scent here and he's searching for him now. He's tearing the place apart and Russell and Susan are being held in the library by his friends."

Matt had his jeans on and was putting on his shirt when the girl mentioned Paul. "Where is the boy?" When she didn't answer him, he looked her in the eyes. "Do you know who I am?" The girl shook her head. "I'm known in several countries as Mad Matthias. Now tell me where the boy is; I'll protect him with my life."

The girl looked at him. "I'll take you to him but we must hurry. If Sean or one of the panthers with him sees us ... well, I'm sure you know what would happen. We'll be hurt or killed." Her eyes were wide with fright. "I have a son, I've hidden him away but I must live to protect him. They killed his father three weeks ago. I'm all he has left."

Matt nodded as he slipped his feet into his boots. "I understand. You take me to Paul and then get your son and get as far away from here as you can. If you can't leave, you

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come back to this room and stay put. Do you understand?" She nodded and Matt looked at Brae. "Stay here with El. I'll go get Paul. If the panther comes back with her son, protect them." He hugged Braeden. "I love you, if I don't come back get El out of here and protect her." He went to El who was putting on her shoes. "I love you Elizabeth. Take care of Brae he needs you."

He was gone before either of them could say a thing.

Matt followed the panther to what looked to be a regular wall. When she pushed on a small section, the wood slid back and revealed a panel. She entered in a combination and a door was revealed. "Bloody hell, that's sweet. I'll have to remember that for our compound in Scotland."

The girl turned to him. "It's a panic room. Russell and Susan didn't have enough time to make it here. They sent me here with Paul." They walked into a room that resembled a bank vault only it had soundproofed walls and every amenity a person could hope for.

Paul was sitting on a sofa in the corner.

"Hey lad, how's it going?"

Paul threw himself into Matt's arms. "Matt! I'm so glad you came. Can we leave now?"

Matt shook his head. "No, we must get Braeden and Elizabeth. We'll leave with them, okay? Remember when I found you? Remember when you had to be extremely quiet?" Paul nodded and Matt smiled. "Good. I need you to be that quiet for me again. If I hand you to this nice lady here and tell her to run, you be quiet for her too, okay?"

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Paul nodded. "I understand. We don't want the bad guys to find us. But what if they do Matt? What if they see us?"

Matt gave him a smile that had been known to curdle many a Were's blood. "They don't call me Mad Matthias for nothing Paul." He lifted Paul in his arms and looked down at Paul's leg. "I see they didn't put you in a cast. That's good."

"The doctor said it wasn't bad. I just have a sprain that may take a while to heal. He said it helped I changed in the hotel room because that healed it some."

"The doctor was right but you can't be changing all the time just to heal yourself. Remember that okay?" They were at the door to the panic room. "Now I need you to be quiet, all right lad?"

They moved as fast as they could down the hallway. The panther veered to the left down another hallway and Matt stopped. She motioned for him to continue and then whispered that her son was in one of the rooms off the hall. Matt nodded in understanding and continued to the room where Brae and Elizabeth waited.

They were a few doors away when they were spotted. The panther that saw them was far enough down the hall he wouldn't see which room Paul went to so Matt knelt and set him on his feet. "Go to the third door on the left. Knock once, pause, and then knock three times, like this." He demonstrated on the wall. "Now go. Braeden and El will protect you. Tell them I love them."

He stood and stretched to his full six foot one height and turned in the direction of the panther that had seen them. He'd been itching to tear into someone since he'd seen what



they'd done to Paul. The panther obviously didn't have a clue who he was facing and Matt smiled. This was going to be fun.

The panther lunged at Matt, who moved out of his path easily. Matt turned sideways, always keeping his back to the wall. The panther grinned. "You won't leave here alive, wolf."

Matt laughed. "It's not me who will die this night, cat. You don't know who you're dealing with. Ever heard the name Mad Matthias?"

The panther nodded. "Every Were knows of Mad Matthias. It's what we tell our children to scare them."

Matt nodded. "I've heard rumors floating around. But for your information, I happen to love kids."

The panther stared at him. "There's no way you're Mad Matthias. He's at least six foot seven, as wide as a barn and can pull a tractor trailer with one finger."

Matt laughed again. "Shall I show you my ID? I am the one and only Matthias Kendrick." He gave a small bow. "At your service, sir. Shall we commence the game?"

The panther lunged again, missing Matt by inches. Matt smiled. "To beat me, you'll have to do better than that."

The next lunge had Matt pinned to the wall. He tilted his head to the side. "Nice move kitty. But maybe you should try harder." He pushed the panther away from him with one hand. The panther landed on his back and Matt landed on top of him. "I thought cats always landed on their feet. Hmm ... guess that's a lie." The panther hissed at Matt. "Oh, that sounded like you have a hairball. Should I give you some medicine?"

The panther bucked, trying to throw Matt off. "It's not going to work, kitty cat. I'm going to teach you how to play nice with the puppies." Matt nailed his fist in the panther's face. He felt the bone in the panther's nose give way and knew he'd broken it. "Oh what a shame, the kitty isn't pretty anymore."

Matt heard footsteps coming from his right. He was one wolf against a *lot* of panthers. This wasn't going to end well. He prayed Braeden, El and Paul had gotten away undetected. But what if they hadn't? What if they were stuck in the room because he was playing with the cat? Bloody hell! He had to end this fight. It was either he gave his life or the cats gave theirs.

He'd prefer it be the cats.

He turned his head and saw six panthers approaching. One was changing into a cat. Shit. He really didn't want to change. It would be a slaughter if he did. He never had been able to control himself when he was out for revenge if he was in wolf form. He thought about it for a second. If he changed, they wouldn't stand a chance. That was what had made him the man he was. He gave no quarter when he was in wolf form. But he'd always held back, afraid of what his beast would do. Now was the time to let the beast completely free.

To save his mates.

Matt felt the power within him unfurl. He still sat on the panther's chest but the magic danced around him as he thought of the wolf within. He closed his eyes and when he opened them, he saw his paws on the panther's chest. His first thought was 'food' but he couldn't bring himself to eat

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the cat. He had enemies at his back. He ripped out the throat of the cat beneath him. Satisfied that enemy was dead, he faced the others.

One of the panthers leaped and halfway to Matt's position, Matt struck. He ripped through the belly of the panther with one swipe of his paw and the panther fell. He lowered his head and growled, baring his teeth.

Two down and five more to go.

The most important thing was making sure the others didn't find Braeden, Elizabeth and Paul. They were his main concern. He rarely fought in wolf form but this time, he needed the extra strength and speed his wolf's body provided. The panthers still in human form began to change. This would be easy ... so he thought.

The first one to change wasted no time. He jumped and landed on Matt's back. Matt shook his big sand-colored body to no avail. When the next one attacked, Matt went for the back leg. He bit into the tendon and rendered his opponent helpless. The cat couldn't walk much less get up on his three working feet. Matt simply gripped the cat's neck between his teeth and crushed his windpipe. Now he had to deal with the attacker on his back.

The next one to change tried to bite his back legs. Matt kept them out of harm's way. He knew he'd die if he gave them even an inch. Matt happened to glance up and saw that there were two more panthers waiting for him. They were just biding their time.

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He turned quickly and nipped the panther trying for his back legs. The panther hissed and swatted at him. Matt didn't care. All he cared about was keeping El, Brae and Paul safe.

He kept repeating to himself, *two more. That's all. Just two more cats after these two and I'm free to get them to safety.*

A third panther leaped at him and Matt had to meet him face to face. They snapped, the panther hissed and Matt growled. The cats were just biding their time. They were attacking him strategically. One by one, they jumped on him. Whether it was his back, his side, his face or even trying for his belly, they all attacked him. He knew he was taking serious damage but he couldn't stop them.

Out of nowhere, a big black wolf entered the fray. If a wolf could smile, that's what Matt did. He immediately recognized Braeden. As much as he'd preferred Brae staying in the room, this proved to him how much Braeden loved him. He wanted, perhaps even needed, Matt to live.

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## **Chapter Seven**

Together, they fought side by side. Even though Matt wanted Braeden safe and out of sight, he was glad he had his back. But he wouldn't let him fight for long. With Braeden beside him, it gave Matt the advantage he needed. He knew they would try to get Braeden and kill him but that gave him the opportunity to take them down one by one.

When one of the panthers tried to strike Braeden with his claws, Matt saw red and the fine thread of control he had on his temper snapped. He let his beast have free rein. Matt was a blur of sandy colored fur. Attacking with swiftness not many people or Weres ever saw, his jaws clamped down on the panther attacking Braeden. Matt turned his body so he was between Braeden and the cats, never letting go of the panther's neck between his teeth. The panther yowled and tried to shake Matt off, but Matt refused to let go. Matt shook his head twice and felt the skin rip from the panther's neck before the first drop of blood hit his tongue. He tossed the body of the dying panther away as though it were a rag doll.

\* \* \* \*

Braeden was trapped between Matt and the wall. He knew what Matt's plan was; he'd seen him fight enough times to know. Matt was protecting him. He knew Matt would give his life before he let anyone or anything hurt him. Though he loved Matt dearly for that, he didn't want Matt injured or killed. There were three panthers left and Braeden watched as

two of them attacked Matt from both sides. Matt never turned his attention from the panther in front of him. Braeden saw the blood dripping from the mouths of the ones who had attacked from the sides. He saw Matt stumble, but he was helpless to do anything.

Well, not completely helpless.

Braeden braced his back paws against the wall and launched himself at the panther on the right side of Matt. He knocked him hard enough that he'd let go of Matt before he could do any further damage. The cat got to his feet and charged at Braeden but Matt pushed him out of the way before he could reach his goal. Braeden glanced over at Matt and saw his green eyes flash a warning. He shook his head and somehow managed to keep the other panther occupied while Matt had two of his own to deal with.

\* \* \* \*

Matt knew he had to end this soon. Blood was running from the sides of his neck and he was already feeling the effects. His energy was draining but he would stay standing long enough to make certain Braeden was okay. Matt watched the panther in front of him for an opening so he could quickly bring this fight to an end. The other two cats weren't as strong as the one he faced now. Matter of fact, when Braeden had dislodged the one, the other had let go as well. He couldn't wait to give them a taste of their own medicine.

Braeden must have known what his battle plan was because he yelped and drew the attention of the one Matt

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was fighting. He struck with lightning speed and crushed the cat's windpipe in just a few seconds. He spun around and managed to get between Braeden and the other two waiting cats. Matt wasted no time in finishing off the first one. One swipe of his claws had the animal lying in a pool of blood. But he hadn't been fast enough to get out of reach of the other one. He felt a sting and pain in his side. His back right leg wanted to give out on him but he knew if he showed that weakness, he'd be dead.

He turned to face his opponent but wasn't fast enough due to his injuries. The panther pounced and pinned Matt to the floor. He kept his head down and took several nips to his muzzle before Braeden clamped his jaws on the cat's tail and pulled. It gave Matt enough room to raise his back legs and slice open the belly of the panther. The panther fell, breathing his last breath. Matt lay on his side, panting from the pain that wracked his body. He knew the wound on his side was deep but the ones on his neck were mere scratches.

Braeden changed and leaned over Matt. "Hey mate, you know, it's just like you to want all the pussy for yourself." Matt whimpered and Braeden chuckled. "Yeah I know, bad joke. Can you change Matt?" Braeden frowned when Matt whimpered again. "Okay, it's going to be okay. Let's get you out of the hall. I'm going to lift you now and I know it's going to be bloody painful, but I have to move you. I promise you when you're healed, I'll buy you all the whisky you can drink."

\* \* \* \*

Elizabeth's cry sounded across the room when Braeden walked in with Matt in his arms. "Braeden is he alive?" Her voice was shaky.

"Yes love, he's alive but he's hurt too badly to change. I can't look at his wounds until he does. If I tried to doctor him now, he'd undo any bandaging when he changes. It could also cause more damage. We just have to wait." He looked at Paul. "Lad, I need you to go in the bathroom and lock the door. Don't come out until I come and get you."

Elizabeth watched as Braeden laid Matt on the bed. "Why did you send Paul in there?" Her eyes grew wide when Brae faced her. He was aroused and watching her like she was his next meal. She held up her hand. "Brae we can't. Paul's in the bathroom and our mate, our friend and lover, is on the bed in pain. How can you possibly even think about sex at a time like this?"

Brae's eyes tracked El's movements as she backed toward the wall. He grinned; perfect spot. "El love, trust me on this, Matt understands. When we fight or if we do our best not to fight, we become a little randy afterwards. Seeing how Matt wouldn't let me fight, I need to get rid of this energy before I can think of going after Sean."

El pressed her back against the wall, her breath coming in quick gasps. "Braeden."

That was all she could say before he had her pinned, his body pressing into hers. He yanked the sweatpants she'd found in the closet down to her ankles. He entered her with a hard thrust. "God El, you feel so good." He ground out through his teeth.



El grabbed his head between her hands and kissed him.  
"Next time I want Matt doing this with us."

Braeden was too far gone to form words so he nodded and continued pounding into her. "El love, tell me you're close, I can't hold back." He saw her nod and pumped twice more before exploding inside her. He let her feet hit the floor but held onto her waist until she could stand. "I love you Elizabeth, I'll do anything to keep you safe. At the moment, that means I need to find Sean."

El pulled her pants on as Brae walked across the room to get Paul while she went to the bed and knelt beside Matt, lightly stroking his muzzle. "You need to change." She gave a laugh that was full of awe. "I never thought I'd believe there were Werewolves or panthers for that matter. I sure never thought I'd become one." She kissed his muzzle and he licked her face. "I'm glad it happened though. Now I can be with you and Brae for a long time. I know I can handle the changes I'll go through, as long as you're both beside me."

Paul climbed on the bed and gently lay beside Matt. He looked up at Braeden. "I'll take care of him, I promise."

Brae smiled. He'd put his clothes back on because he didn't want to meet Sean as a wolf or have him think he intended to change. "I know you will, lad. I want you to look after Elizabeth as well."

"What are you going to do, Braeden?" Elizabeth's head snapped around so quickly he was surprised she didn't get whiplash.

"I'm going to save Paul's new family and do something that should have been done a long time ago ... I'm going to

put Sean out of his misery." The smile that spread across his face was chilling. This was what he'd been sent here to do. He and Matt were the ones chosen to take Sean down.

Matt growled and moved slowly off the bed. He walked to the door and began whining and scratching, looking back at Brae every few seconds.

"Hell no Matt! You can barely stand and you think I'm going to let you go with me? You must have had your head knocked around a little too much by those cats." Brae bent to pick Matt up and put him back on the bed, but Matt snapped at him, which stopped Brae's movements. "Now don't go getting all nippy with me Matt." When Matt growled again, Braeden sighed. "Fine, I'll make you a deal. If you can change, you can go."

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## Chapter Eight

Matt knew he was weak but if he were going to protect Braeden he'd have to change. Shit, this was going to hurt. He concentrated and felt the beginnings of the change. When he opened his eyes he was sitting on the floor in human form. He heard El cry out behind him and turned to look at her. "El sweets, it's not that bad. Honest. I'm fine."

Braeden frowned. "Matt you haven't seen your side. Jesus, you're lucky you're still alive. They did a number on you." He offered his hand and Matt took it and stood up. Braeden walked around him and when he saw Matt's back he wanted to kill the panthers all over again. "God Matt, your back is damn near split open."

Matt stretched; he could feel the cuts and his side hurt like a bitch. But at least he was standing without help. "I can go with you Brae, just let me get my clothes on." He walked slowly around the bed and Paul handed him his pants. "Thanks lad." He dressed and then sat down next to Paul. "I want you to know how proud of you I am. You did good coming to the room when I told you." He pointed to a closet. "I want you to stay in there until El, Brae or I come to get you. Can you do that?" After Paul nodded, Matt smiled. "Good lad. I know it's a lot to ask of you but I'd die if anything happened to you."

Paul hugged him, careful not to rub against his wounds. "I'll die if anything happens to you too. Be careful, Matt."

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It took all of Matt's strength to stand and leave Paul. He waited till Paul was in the closet then he turned to Brae. "Let's get this over with. Sean has had his fun, now let's go have ours."

Elizabeth hugged and kissed Matt before doing the same to Braeden. "I want both of you back in one piece. I don't know what I'd do without you."

\* \* \* \*

Matt and Braeden checked the hallway and saw it was clear. Braeden let out a small chuckle and Matt looked at him, "What do you find funny?"

"The fact that Mad Matthias is on the loose. I know you Matt, I'm pretty sure I know how you think. You're in the zone as they say. Ready to kick ass and take names."

Matt smiled. "Nope, that's kick ass and ask questions later. But yeah, I'm itching to get my hands on Sean and what's left of his panther buddies. They've hurt me and mine." When he saw Braeden's raised eyebrow he added. "Paul may be a panther, but he's part of my family now. Like it or not, that lad means a lot to me and I think it has a lot to do with how I became a werewolf. I feel connected to him. I know what he's going through and I'd take it all away if I could."

Braeden was smart enough to stay silent. He thought back to when he'd found Matt in the woods. He'd been bitten worse than Paul. He had been six years old at his first change. Braeden was eight when he found him and still hadn't made his first change. He'd run back home and gotten his father. When his father saw Matt, his eyes had turned red, literally.

His father didn't say a word on their way home. Once they entered the house, his mother quickly ushered Braeden into the library and put Matt on the couch.

He and Matt had been friends ever since that day. As they had gotten older, Brae had noticed Matt was always at the gym and asked him why. The answer had surprised him. Matt had told him he would never allow anyone to hurt him again. Not like when he was six. He'd since proved he was a worthy opponent and Brae wondered why Matt never challenged his father. Surely he could take on his dad and come out the victor. Curiosity got the better of him then. "Matt, why have you never challenged my father for pack master?"

Matt actually laughed as they walked downstairs. "Is that how I'm supposed to repay the people who saved my life? Damn Brae, smarten up. You'll be pack master one day and I won't challenge you either. I'm happy as I am. I have a family, I have the loves of my life and at the moment, I'm getting ready to slaughter the bad guys. I'd have it no other way, Braeden."

They rounded a corner and could see the library. Russell and Susan were sitting on the couch while Sean and three of his panther buddies were standing just outside the door talking. Braeden could hear them and smiled. They were wondering what was taking the others so long.

*Oh, he thought, maybe the fact they were dead.*

He almost laughed but caught himself in time. No need to give away their position just yet.

Matt leaned over to whisper, "There is no other way to do this than walk straight across the hall. They'll see us and go

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on instant alert. We must make them believe we mean no harm and that we're not here to fight." He waited for Braeden to nod. "Good, let's go."

They began their walk across the hall. Just as Matt said, they were spotted. The panthers hissed and Sean smiled. "Well, if it isn't my cousin and his lover. I've been looking for you two. I smelled you when I went to Del Fantasma this evening. I knew you were here. So to what do I owe this pleasure?" He tapped his finger on his chin. "Oh, could it be that my dearest uncle has finally sent his killing squad to take care of me?"

"Sean, we just want to talk to you. Is that too much to ask? We want to know why you took Elizabeth, why you turned her?" Braeden was surprised his voice was calm, when all he wanted to do was rip Sean to shreds.

"I think we could talk but on one condition, cousin. Mad Matthias here gets tied up. We can't have him running loose, now can we?" Sean thought he held the power but he didn't.

Matt shook his head. "No way, Sean. You should know I won't allow that and neither will Brae. We came to talk to you, nothing else."

Sean shook his head. "I don't believe you. Why, you ask? I know my uncle well enough to know he wouldn't let you loose unless he had a purpose. He knows I'll challenge Braeden when he becomes pack master. My uncle knows I can't challenge him and live. He sent you to kill me. What other reason could there possibly be?"

Matt laughed. "God you're dumb. You do realize we're here to reclaim Elizabeth? That we are here to claim her as our mate?"

"What? You're kidding! There has only been one time in our entire history a future pack master has taken two mates. Are you telling me you and Braeden have taken that step? Has he asked you to be his mate?" Sean's eyes couldn't have gotten wider.

"Yes, I have Sean. I've asked him and Elizabeth as well. Matt has also asked Elizabeth. The last step is for him to ask me, but we're waiting until our job here is done." Braeden was calm as he spoke. He wanted nothing more than to end this now, but he knew he had to wait. There were too many other lives in danger at the moment.

Sean moved forward and stopped within striking distance. "So, you are preparing to start your family. How sweet. I never pictured you with a female." He chuckled. "Or did you just choose a willing female because you know you have to produce an heir? Will you only sleep with her to get a son or will it be on a permanent basis?" He caught the look between Matt and Braeden. "Oh, you've gotten Elizabeth back, have you? You do know she's a wild one. I had a hard time taming her when I had her."

If Sean had thought to provoke them into a fight, he was wrong. Braeden smiled. "We have Elizabeth. She is safe and protected. We are here to ask you to return to Scotland with us. That is why my father sent us here." He paused. "You're family and we want to help you."

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"Then why is *he* here? He never sends Mad Matthias anywhere unless it's on an assassination mission"

"I'm here for Braeden. We've been looking for you all over the States. We met up here when I caught your scent. You'd been to Del Fantasma. I wasn't going to go there at all. I never would have found the place if some of the local wolves hadn't told me about it. I contacted Braeden and asked him to meet me there. I knew he'd catch your scent. You go there much too often." Matt kept his eyes on the panthers surrounding Sean. He was silently begging them to do something stupid.

"I know better than that. Your main goal had to have been Elizabeth. Your secondary goal was to come after me." He smiled at Matt. "I'm sure you're just dying to get your hands on me after what I had my friends here do to the boy. Did it remind you of anything, Matthias? Did it bring back memories of what my father and his friends did to you?" He laughed at the look of shock on Matt's face. "You never knew, did you? My father and his friends wanted to hunt." Sean's gaze settled on Braeden. "Your father wouldn't allow it. He said we were not to hunt humans. So my father stole a human boy." He pointed to Matt. "My father stole him. His parents were too strung out on drugs to notice his absence. They never even reported it to the police. All my father wanted to do was hunt a human. But you..." he poked Braeden in the chest. "You had to go and find him in the woods. You couldn't leave well enough alone. You wanted to help. You felt compassion for a human. Only he wasn't human by then, was he?"

\* \* \* \*



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Matt was seeing red. He finally knew who had taken him and changed him. They would pay for what they'd done, but first Sean would pay for stealing his and Braeden's mate. He saw one of the Werepanthers move his hand towards his back. He was ready.

The panther stood within two feet of Matt. Matt was ready and willing. When the panther brought his hand around, he was holding a knife. Matt went into fighting mode. His main concern was keeping Braeden safe. The other two panthers didn't have weapons, of which he was glad. The weakened state he was in, he would never beat them if they'd all had weapons. But as it stood, there was a high probability that he could take at least this cat down.

Sean put his arm in front of the Were. "No. Not yet. I'll let you know when to attack." He walked over to Matt and sniffed. "You're bleeding. I assume the reason my friends aren't here is because they're dead. It smells as though they gave the great Mad Matthias a run for his money. I think I'm going to enjoy watching what's left of my friends have a go at you." He walked behind Matt and touched his back. He laughed when Matt's body jerked. "Oh yes, this will be fun."

\* \* \* \*

Braeden growled at Sean. "Leave him alone. Your fight is with me. What do you say we go one on one? Just you and me, no shifting allowed. Not you, not me and most certainly not any of the panthers."

"And what about Matthias? Is he included in the no shift rule? Or will I have to worry that he'll attack me in wolf form while we fight?" Sean asked.

"You have my word Matt will not change." Braeden and Matt were the only two in this group who knew the reason. Matt couldn't change again. He wasn't strong enough.

"Very well." He turned to one of the panthers. "Go and get your leader and his mate and bring them to the courtyard. We'll fight there." He looked at Braeden and smiled. "The winner of this fight will be the rightful heir of the pack. Is that acceptable?"

"It is. However out of courtesy, will you allow me to call my father and inform him? I think it is only fair he knows the stakes."

Sean nodded. "Of course, but put your mobile on speaker so I know it's your father you speak to and not someone else with you here in the house."

Braeden made the call to his father. Although his father was not at all pleased, Braeden knew if the threat to the pack were to end, this is how it needed to be done and he knew his father accepted that as fact. He ended the call and followed the others outside. He was glad Elizabeth and Paul wouldn't be subjected to this. Plus, she'd be a distraction for him. He'd be worried one of the panthers would hurt her. As it was, he was more worried about Matt. If he lost this fight he knew Sean would have Matt killed.

Sean instructed the panthers to stand guard over Matt, Russell and Susan. "If they try anything, if they even think about shifting to join this fight ... kill them."

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\* \* \* \*

Braeden and Sean faced each other. Braeden had taken off his shirt and was pleased to see that he was in much better shape than Sean. He could also smell the alcohol Sean had been drinking; that would make his reflexes slow. Not exactly an even match but he'd take it.

Braeden and Sean began to circle each other. They were each waiting for the other to strike.

Sean lunged at Braeden, intending to grab him around the waist and bring him to the ground but Braeden was quicker and had been expecting the move. He easily sidestepped then lifted his booted foot and slammed it down in the middle of Sean's back. Sean sprawled on the ground and growled.

"You got lucky, cousin. But you won't be so lucky after I'm finished with you." He got to his feet and rushed Braeden again. This time, Braeden didn't move out of the way. Instead he stood in a fighting stance prepared to take the full force of Sean's weight.

Braeden knew Matt was probably wondering what the hell he was thinking. He'd be tackled and Sean would have the upper hand. Only he had a surprise for Sean. When Sean hit him, he didn't stumble or fall. Instead he wrapped his arms around Sean's stomach and threw him to the side.

Braeden smiled. "You must do better Sean. Don't you remember any of the training you and I went through? Never do what your opponent expects. Always have a surprise ready and waiting." Sean stood and Braeden easily covered the distance between them. He had Sean on his back and pinned

to the ground. He punched him three times in the face and stopped. Sean's arm swung up so fast Braeden didn't have time to move. Sean's fist hit its mark on his jaw and he fell to the side.

His jaw was pounding and his back was half turned away from Sean. He didn't see when Sean rushed him. He felt it though. He couldn't get leverage to turn and flip Sean off his back. Sean was punching him and holding his neck so he couldn't turn his head. He looked over at Matt and saw the worry on his face. That look on Matt's face gave him the strength he needed to end this battle. He drew in a deep breath and pushed up on his hands. Sean lost his balance and fell backwards.

Braeden was in the process of turning to face Sean, when he heard Matt yell his name. He didn't look at Matt; he already knew why he had yelled. Sean wasn't playing by the rules. Braeden turned and barely had enough time to jump out of the way. He felt the air move when Sean's clawed paw passed within inches of his stomach. His growl started as a low rumble that got louder.

\* \* \* \*

Matt smiled. *Good. Braeden was pissed now.*

This was what he needed to win this fight. It would end in the next few minutes and Braeden would be the victor. Matt saw Braeden's eyes turn to the gold color he loved so much when they made love. But this time there wasn't softness to them. This time they were hard and filled with anger. Sean still hadn't 'put his paw away' and that was dangerous. One

well placed strike and Braeden could be seriously injured. Damn, he wished he could get in the fight and help him.

Russell moved back a little and tilted his head to the side where one of the panthers was standing. It was the one with the knife. He had it in his hand and was staring at Matt. Well, if he couldn't help Braeden, then he'd have to finish what was started in the hallway.

Matt smiled at the panther. "Want to play kitty cat? I'm up for it if you are."

The cat moved forward a step and stopped, his eyes on something behind Matt. "Oh, don't be trying that old trick. There's nothing behind me." Matt heard a hiss and took a deep breath. He glanced quickly over his shoulder and saw Paul, in panther form, stalking one of the other guards. Elizabeth in wolf form had the other panther backing away from the people they guarded.

He turned to face the panther with the knife and was surprised to see Russell had shifted and had managed to get the rogue panther to his knees, the knife on the ground between them. They were in a very dangerous situation and he couldn't change. He turned back to see Elizabeth standing on the chest of the panther she'd cornered. Paul was doing his best to keep the other one occupied. Matt knew Paul would make a worthy opponent one day. Right now he had to get to El. He slowly circled them until El saw and recognized him. "El, thank you. But you must be careful. May I take over now?"

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El growled low, not threatening, but a growl that let him know this was her kill. He nodded. "Very well, but if it looks like you need help, I'm going to step in."

\* \* \* \*

Braeden wanted to change but he wouldn't. He, at least, would play fairly. He knew Elizabeth and Paul were outside and prayed they wouldn't be hurt. But he had to keep his attention on Sean. Who knew what he'd do next? He didn't have long to wait. Sean leaped in the air and put his foot in the center of Braeden's chest. Braeden had the wind knocked out of him for a second but that wasn't long enough for Sean to take his next swipe.

Braeden caught Sean's arm in his hand and bent it backwards. Sean cried out but Braeden didn't stop. He felt the beginnings of a shift rolling through Sean. "You will not change, Sean. Face me like a man!"

Sean spit in his face. "I'm not a man, I'm a wolf."

Braeden brought his other hand up, grabbed Sean's neck and began applying pressure. Sean was gasping for air and turning red. Braeden knew the moment was soon coming when he would hear Sean's last breath. "You've caused our pack too much misery. It's time to end it."

He squeezed harder and felt Sean's windpipe collapse.

He dropped the body of his cousin and stared at it. He hadn't wanted to kill him; he'd wanted to take him home to be tried by the pack. He realized Sean never would have wanted that. He'd have wanted to die just like this, in a fight. He raised his head when panthers started coming out of the

house. His body tensed, expecting more fighting. He looked for El and Matt and ran to them. "What's going on?"

The panther Russell had been standing over now lay dead, his throat ripped out. Russell was back in human form and walked over to them. "Have no fear. This is the rest of our clan. They will not harm you. You are all friends of our clan." He took Braeden's hand in his. "If you ever need us to stand with you in a fight, you have but to ask." Russell looked down at Elizabeth who was still on the panther's chest. "May we have him, Elizabeth? We would like to bring him to justice ourselves."

Elizabeth moved to let two panthers take the other away, and then shifted back to human form. "You took all my fun away, but I'd rather he have your kind of justice than have to kill him myself." She shuddered and turned to Matt and Braeden. "Can we go home now?"

Matt laughed. "Yes, our sweet, lovely and brave Elizabeth. I think it's time we all went home." He looked at Braeden. "We have a ceremony to finish."

\* \* \* \*

Three weeks later, when both Braeden and Matt had completely recovered from their wounds, they went to his father and asked permission for all three of them to be mated in the traditional ceremony. Braeden's father and mother were delighted, though they were shocked over the fact Braeden and Matt had been lovers for so long and neither had known. But if Braeden was happy, then they were happy and

they welcomed both Matt and Elizabeth officially into the family.

The ceremony took place three nights before the full moon. The rest of the pack stood silently as Braeden, Matt and Elizabeth stood in the center of the circle. Braeden turned to Elizabeth. "Elizabeth, I ask you to be my mate, do you accept?" She nodded. Braeden turned to Matt. "Matthias, I ask you to be my mate, do you accept?" Matt nodded. Braeden kissed Elizabeth first then he kissed Matt.

Matt would wait his turn. He knew what had to be done, they all did and they were all prepared. He sat as Braeden and Elizabeth lay down on the pallet. He admired Braeden's body as he pushed into El. He licked his lips, he couldn't wait to get a taste of that. Their cries of completion had his cock jumping with anticipation.

He stood and walked over to the pallet when Braeden motioned for him. Braeden placed him in between him and Elizabeth. Braeden whispered in his ear. "Ask her to be your mate or do you have cold feet?"

Matt smiled. "Never." He leaned over El. "Elizabeth, will you be my mate?" She smiled and nodded. Matt kissed her and felt Braeden pushing against his entrance. Matt waited until Braeden was fully inside him before pushing into El with one swift thrust. The pleasure built quickly, spreading like fire through his veins. He pushed in as far as he could and threw his head back with a yell. El and Brae followed with their own releases within seconds.

Braeden didn't let him go far, he caressed Matt's cheek. "All you have to do is ask."



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Golden eyes looked deeply into green. Matt was always shocked by how much love he could see in Braeden's eyes. God but he loved his wolf, his mate. "Braeden, will you be my mate?"

Braeden smiled. "Yes, I will be your mate Matthias." He got on all fours, presenting his back to Matt. Braeden was surprised when El slid under him and took his semi-erect cock into her mouth as Matt pushed into him. He was happier than he'd ever been. He had his mates. When El took him deep into her throat, he growled and then exploded in her mouth. He felt Matt reach his release then gently lick his back. This was how life was supposed to be. Happy, peaceful and most of all filled with love.

After the ceremony, as they accepted congratulations from the pack, El looked at them and smiled. She knew they were wondering why she'd been so happy the last few days. They thought it was because of the ceremony, but boy were they wrong. She couldn't wait to tell them of their impending little arrival.

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## **Epilogue**

One year later...

Matt and Braeden were still in shock and it had been six months. Of course Braeden's parents had thought it was wonderful and Elizabeth was completely happy and satisfied. Matt slipped his arms around Braeden and kissed his neck. "They look so peaceful. Let's wake them up."

Braeden shook his head. "No. That daughter of yours has a set of lungs on her that would wake a dead person. I can't believe she's louder than her brother."

Matt laughed. "Yeah she does, doesn't she? But she's so beautiful. Your son is going to be just like you. He's already showing signs of being calm and observant, two of your best traits. He'll be a strong wolf." Matt nuzzled Braeden's neck and ran his hands down the front of his body. "I think you're right. Let's leave them be, I have something else in mind to keep us occupied until they awake."

Braeden turned in Matt's arms. "I was hoping you'd come up with an idea."

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## **Scotch on the Rocks**

Pour a finger width of your favorite Scotch over ice cubes in a short tumbler. Enjoy and drink responsibly.

We hoped you enjoyed this erotic romance by Liadan Brodie. Stay tuned with the rest of the Del Fantasma series and learn more about this fascinating bar for the creatures that stalk the night.

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