



A
PROPHECY
OF DESTINY

Ancient Prophecy
SERIES

LEILAND DALE

A Prophecy of Destiny

Ancient Prophecy Book 1

By Leiland Dale

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DEDICATION

Thanks to my awesome editors that rushed to get this book done. I know you have tons of things happening all at the same time. You're amazing!

We all have our destiny even if it isn't written in a prophecy. Thank you Reese and El for being on this journey with me. Your destiny's are still being written and I'm sure that in time they'll become reality too.

CHAPTER 1

Before arriving at his grandfather's bookstore, *The Hideaway*, Will Stanton entered the local coffee shop for his morning caffeine fix. He stopped at the counter and gave his order to the young girl who always seemed to be there.

"Hi, can I have a large coffee..."

"With three sugars and lots of milk," the girl interrupted. She smiled at him as she turned away to get his order.

"That will be \$3.50."

Will pulled his wallet out of his back pocket and placed the money on the counter. "Thanks," he said as he took the steaming hot cup of coffee. He waved goodbye as he walked out of the coffee shop and headed towards the bookstore.

It was six thirty in the morning and still too early for most people to be out on the streets. He found the stillness of the empty streets both soothing and peaceful. Will especially enjoyed mornings when he could see the mist slowly rise then disappear to make way for a new day.

Will continued to walk towards the bookstore when two dogs suddenly emerged from the alley adjacent to the bookstore. He watched as the dogs approached.

Although they looked intimidating, Will noticed their thinness and guessed the dogs hadn't had a good meal for some time. He went down on his haunches and both dogs stepped back and growled. Softly, he crooned nonsense words to try and calm them.

After a few minutes, both dogs stopped growling, lowered their heads, and cautiously circled and smelled him as they approached. Instinctively, Will reached out and started to pet them. Both dogs seemed to love the attention Will bestowed on them and rubbed against his legs in appreciation.

"I'll go get the two of you something to eat." Will said as he stood up and walked to the bookstore while both dogs watched him carefully. He unlocked the door and walked inside, closing the door behind him. Going into the kitchen, Will put down his cup of coffee and opened the refrigerator remembering the leftover food he hadn't eaten the previous day. He took two paper plates and divided the food.

The dogs patiently waited outside for him to return. "Here you go guys. Enjoy." As soon as Will placed the plates on the ground, the dogs quickly devoured the food. Will had a deep love for all animals and it seemed all animals loved him in return. Somehow, he found he was always surrounded by them in some shape or form regardless of where he was.

He stood there and watched as the dogs quickly emptied the plates. "That's it for now guys. If you behave, I'll bring something back with me tomorrow for you." Will

watched as the dogs backed away and ran off. He shook his head as he smiled and disposed of the plates. Will knew they'd be back tomorrow.

Picking up the cup of coffee which had cooled down a bit by now, he sat behind the counter and enjoyed the view through the huge front window of the store. He watched as the mist disappeared and the rays of the sun hit the tarmac, announcing another beautiful day. Getting up from the chair, he discarded the now empty coffee cup in the trash, walked over to the door and flipped the sign to "Open."

At the age of twenty-two, Will still didn't know what he wanted to do with his life, but he did know that he loved working at his grandfather's bookstore. He valued the time he spent in the store and with his grandfather, Cory. Most of the books in the store were centuries old, some dating back to the 1700's. He was intrigued to read about the tales of people in the past and their beliefs. He spent so much time reading, his grandfather usually had to drag him away from a book when it was time to go home.

Will slowly browsed the shelves and found one of his favorite books. He pulled it from the shelf and started turning the pages. He lifted his eyes from the book when he heard the bell above the door chime. "Good morning, granddad. It's going to be a wonderful day today, isn't it?" Will asked as his grandfather approached.

"Yes, indeed. It's a wonderful day outside." Cory looked at him holding the book. "You already got your nose stuck in another book?" Cory said as he walked away

smiling and shaking his head. "You and them books, I can never get you away from them."

Will laughed. "You know I like them because they say a lot about what happened centuries ago. We can learn from their mistakes so we don't make the same ones ourselves."

"How did you become such a clever young man?" Cory said with a smile as he sat behind the counter. "Go and make an old man a cup of coffee."

Will slipped the book back on the shelf and made his way towards the kitchen to make his grandfather a cup of coffee.

"Thank you," Cory said as Will handed him a hot cup a few moments later. "So what are you going to do today?" Cory said between sips.

"I've been sorting out the one section over there," Will smiled at his grandfather as he pointed to the far corner of the bookstore. "Those books have been stacked like that on the ground for as long as I can remember."

"We got those a couple of years ago. I can't even remember who brought them in here," Cory said as he rubbed his chin. "I'm going to head into the office and do some paperwork. Just let me know if you need anything."

Will watched his grandfather's old fragile body as he ambled off towards the office in the back. After Will's parents passed away when he was a teenager, his grandparents took him in without hesitation. He worried about his grandfather. He knew, first hand, his grandmother's passing was very difficult for his grandfather. Will

surrounded himself with pictures of both of them throughout his house and office as constant reminders of the woman he loved for so many years. He enjoyed the bookstore, but especially cherished the time spent with his grandfather.

Will took a dust cloth and walked over to the corner where the books were stacked. Picking them up, one by one, he gently dusted the old books off and placed them aside as he sorted them.

The task of organizing the stacks of books took most of the day. Will began sorting the last stack when he noticed a locked trunk hidden beneath one of the piles.

Curiosity got the better of him so Will headed to his grandfather's office, tapped on the door and walked in. He found Cory hunched over his desk, deep in concentration on the paperwork in front of him.

"Granddad, I found this old wooden trunk hidden underneath all the books in the corner." His grandfather looked up at him. "Do you know what's in it? It has an old lock on it."

"Hmm...I actually have no idea what's in it." A questioning look crossed his grandfather's face. Will stood there as Cory got up out of his chair, walked over to an old desk by the side of the room, and pulled out a set of keys from a drawer before handing it to him. "I've totally forgotten about that trunk. Look to see if any of these keys fit the lock."

"Are you sure? I don't want to go into any of your personal things," Will asked as he took the set of keys from his grandfather.

“That trunk never belonged to me, it was your grandmother’s and it’s been there for a very long time. I’m sure there’s nothing personal in there. You go on ahead now.” His grandfather had a weird expression Will had never seen before. For some reason, his grandfather wouldn’t look directly at him.

Will slowly walked backwards out of the office, keeping an eye on his grandfather. His concern was soon replaced by curiosity regarding the trunk’s content. Will walked back to the trunk and tried one key after the next until eventually, the lock popped open.

Will removed the lock and put it down beside him with the key still inside it. He flipped the latch up, then lifted the lid. Will began coughing when the musty smell hit his nose. He brushed away the smell in the air and looked in the trunk to find several old books and a stack of papers with worn away edges. He carefully picked up one book at a time and delicately dusted them off. The books looked to be centuries old and they seemed to be diaries with names written in black ink on the front cover. He recognized one name on the cover, Josie, his grandmother. Will gently rubbed his grandmother’s name and thought how much he missed her. Placing the rest of the books back in the trunk and locking it again, Will walked back to his grandfather’s office with his grandmother’s diary.

When he got to the office he found the door open and walked in. Will’s grandfather was still sitting behind the desk, deep in thought.

"Granddad, I found this old diary with grandma's name on it," Will said softly, "I thought you might want it."

"No," his grandfather sighed heavily before continuing. "That's for you. Take it home and read it. I think it's time you know anyway."

"What do you mean?" Will asked, a confused expression on his face.

"I don't know much, except for what your grandmother told me. When your grandmother died, she told me about that diary. She said to make sure I gave it to you when the time was right." Cory looked at him with concern and worry in his eyes. "I've watched you over the years and I'm sure you've wondered about some things. Like why animals always gravitate towards you, even the unruly ones."

Will looked at his grandfather, shocked that he even noticed the strange behavior with the animals. "Yes, I have but..."

"I don't have the answers you're looking for my child. You'll find them in that book and in that trunk inside there." Cory gestured towards the front of the store.

"Take the diary home and read it. Just keep it safe."

Will was feeling completely bewildered by his grandfather's reaction. "Thank you, granddad." Checking his watch, Will noticed it was time to close up the store and head home.

Will's grandfather got up from this chair and took his arm. On the way to the front door they turned off the lights. Grabbing their coats, Will and his grandfather stepped out of the store, locking the door behind them and headed their separate ways.

CHAPTER 2

Disturbed by the noise outside, Eric Bryce got up from the chair and walked out of his house. When he stepped out the front door, he noticed a couple of his pack females standing huddled together sobbing heavily. From a distance, Eric noticed the pack alpha approaching the group of woman. He sensed his alpha's urgency so he decided to make his way towards the group as well.

The closer he got to the group, the stronger the smell of death assailed his senses. *Dammit, not again!* During the past couple of weeks, pack members had been dying of an unknown disease that perplexed the pack doctor. When Eric looked over at his pack alpha and best friend, Blake Savage, he saw the concern on his face.

Eric first approached Blake, "Is there anymore news about what's causing this?"

"No, but I've been speaking to one of the senior pack leaders. I've gotten some information from them but I don't know..." Blake's voice trailed off as they arrived at the group.

"I'm sorry for your loss, Elmira." Blake bowed his head as a sign of respect. "I can help make arrangements for Tomas's body to be moved and buried if it's too much for you."

Tears streamed down Elmira's face as she gazed up at Blake. "Thank you, Alpha." Elmira answered as she tilted her head sideways, submitting to the pack alpha.

Eric couldn't take much more of the hurt he heard in Elmira's voice or the desolation of the pack resulting from this sickness. As he turned to walk away, Blake called out to him.

"Eric!" He stopped and looked over at Blake. "Meet me at my house in about an hour. There's something I'd like to share with you."

Eric nodded in agreement then continued back to his house. Since the first two pack members died and others became ill, the alpha decided it would be best if the pack moved away from town. They didn't know what was causing the pack members to become ill or even if the condition was contagious. But, Blake thought some form of a safety precaution was needed until they could figure out the cause of the sickness.

They found a huge open piece of land with log houses surrounded by trees in the countryside just a couple of miles out of Lima. The land was isolated so it offered the necessary privacy, but it also provided the open space and accessibility when the need to run arose.

Eric stood at the bottom of the wooden steps leading up to his front porch and looked around. *Who will be next? When will it stop?* He walked up the steps and stopped

on the porch and removed his clothes. He needed to feel free and let the wolf run, to just forget and not worry...even if it was just for a little while. At first, shifting was difficult for Eric but it quickly became second nature as time passed. Taking a deep breath, Eric felt the change begin. Shivers racked his body, his senses intensified, and his bones cracked as they reshaped.

Taking off into the woods, the smell of the ground beneath his feet and the sound of wild animals nearby tantalized his senses. The shadows skittered across his body as he ran through the trees with great speed. He caught a glimpse of the setting sun as he raced through the forest. His wolf felt at peace in the woods. He found himself out of breath and stopped at a pond to drink some water before returning home.

Arriving home, he stood on the porch and shifted, quickly getting dressed again before heading off to Blake's house. As he approached, the front door opened and Blake stepped out onto the porch.

"Thank you for coming." Blake stepped aside welcoming Eric into his home.

Hearing the door close behind him, Eric asked, "So what did you want to share with me?"

Blake sighed as they both sat at the huge table in the centre of the room. "One of the alpha's from another pack told me about an old prophecy that predicted an illness would kill off our pack."

"Did he say anything else about this *prophecy*?"

"The Ancient Ones spoke to him. They say the time has come. What that means, I have no idea." Blake shook his head. "He couldn't tell me much. Only that the illness will kill off our pack members, but he remembered the prophecy mentioned *a chosen guardian of the moon*."

"You know I don't believe in all the fairy tales that have been told to us. Most of it isn't even true." Eric made a huffing noise. "Now you want me to believe this? I don't know."

"I'm not saying I believe him but....if what he told me is true, there is still hope." Eric could see the defeat on Blake's face and in the way his shoulders slumped forward.

"We'll find a way. There must be something or someone who can help." Eric didn't feel very optimistic or hopeful. The Ancient Ones were never clear in their messages and he was dumbfounded on how to solve the prophecy before he lost everyone in his pack.

The silence resonated in Blake's house. "How are you keeping up otherwise? Not too lonely in this house all by yourself?"

Blake erupted with laughter. Eric could tell it was forced. "I'm perfectly fine."

He looked right into Blake's eyes. "No you're not. I feel your loneliness. I can see it. Why haven't you found someone?"

"Oh Eric, right now isn't really the time for romance. I have more important things on my mind. My priority right now is saving our pack." A blank look crossed Blake's face.

“Well, we’re not going to find answers sitting around. It’s getting late and I should be getting to bed.” They got up from the table and Eric leaned forward, grabbing hold of Blake in a hug. “You’re my best friend...and my brother. I’m worried about you. We’ll make it, don’t you worry.” Eric attempted a smile as he pulled away and left.

There were some pack members walking about and children trying to squeeze in a little playtime before going to bed. Even during this time of worry, he enjoyed the free spirited nature of the children and their carefree innocence. It helped ease his worries of the current state of the pack and the uncertainty of their future.

Eric walked up the steps and into his house, closing the door behind him. There was no need to lock the doors in their small private community. The pack members all stuck together and looked out for each other.

He walked into the bathroom, reached into the shower and turned the water on to the right temperature. Eric stripped naked and got under the hot spray of the water, pelting against his back and shoulders helping him relax. He braced his hands against the tiled wall of the shower and closed his eyes.

Most of his life, Eric was a loner by choice. He wasn’t one to go out to bars searching for one-night stands because he knew, all too well, the loneliness would return after a while. It was a lonely life to lead, but he was waiting for his soul mate. For a wolf, it was a lifetime bond that only death could destroy. So the decision was

never taken lightly. He was tough and strong, but inside, his heart and wolf ached for his mate.

Eric moved his hand to his chest, played with his nipples, and tweaked them between his fingers. The combination of pleasure and pain had him gasping out loud. Turning to face the water, Eric cleaned against the cold tiled shower wall as he took his balls in his hand. His cock stood straight out like a flagpole from his body as pre-cum glistened at the tip. Rivulets of water cascaded down his body. He tugged on his balls once more before releasing them to take hold of his hard shaft. His nipples stood out, tweaked to little hard nubs. Slowly Eric started moving his hand up and down his hard shaft, from the base of his cock right to the weeping tip.

“Hmm...” Eric moaned through tightly sealed lips.

He saw an image of a naked man in his mind. The beautiful pitch black hair and light green eyes made Eric’s heart race with desire. Eric imagined the breathtakingly handsome man going down on his knees, lapping at his cock and slowly taking it into his mouth while he watched.

“Oh yeah...”

The erotic image Eric conjured up in his mind brought him closer to orgasm. His cock leaked pre-cum, lubing up his hand and making it glide over the silky skin of his hard shaft.

The man seemed so real to Eric he almost lost it completely the moment he took his shaft into his mouth right down to the root. The wolf inside gave a mighty howl of

happiness which brought Eric to the brink of explosion. Throwing his head back, he shouted, "Oh Fuck! Yes!" He opened his eyes and looked down at the shower floor as stream after stream of cum painted the tiles.

Slumping back against the tiles, Eric tried to catch his breath as the water washed away his release from his flaccid cock and hand. Slowly he reached out and took the wash cloth and soap from the holder and began washing himself. Eric felt relaxed and completely spent. He couldn't remember ever climaxing with such intensity. Eric quickly rinsed off and got out of the shower. He dried himself off and slipped into bed. Eric loved sleeping in the nude. The feeling of the sheets against his skin felt incredible. *If only I had a mate to lay with me.*

Lying in bed, Eric's thoughts returned to the man he imagined while in the shower. Just thinking about him had his wolf pacing with excitement. Eric couldn't understand why his wolf was so unsettled and its unusual reaction to a figment of his imagination.

With the image of the man still in his mind, Eric fell asleep.

Fast asleep, Eric heard a voice in the back of his mind. "The time has come."

Slowly, images appeared and Eric found himself standing in a circular clearing surrounded by trees. Two old men stood a few feet away from him completely naked with wolf skins draped over their shoulders. Looking up into their eyes, he quickly

diverted his gaze realizing he was in the presence of the Ancient Ones. He tilted and bowed his head as a sign of submission.

“What is it you require of me Ancient Ones?” Eric asked timidly.

The one with the long grey hair looked at him as a smile curved his lips. “It’s not what you can do for us, my child, but what we can do for you and...you can call me Goshe and this,” he said as he pointed to the Ancient One standing beside him, “is Koda.”

Confused, Eric’s gaze flicked up and then back down again. “What do you mean? I don’t understand.”

A chuckle escaped from their lips. “Oh my child, you are the *Chosen One*. Even though you’re not the alpha of the pack, you have indeed been blessed.”

Eric looked up questioningly at the Ancient Ones, meeting their gaze. “The *Chosen One*? Are you referring to the prophecy?”

“Yes, my son. I can hear the hesitation in your voice and your reluctance to believe it is true.” Goshe stepped forward. “We know you do not understand why you have been chosen, but it is written. We are here to guide you to your destiny.”

Eric knew, in his heart, Goshe spoke the truth. The wolf inside him was completely at ease. A feeling of acceptance and utter peace descended upon him. “For the good of my pack, I graciously accept your guidance Ancient Ones.” Eric tilted his head and exposed his neck.

“Very good my son but it’s not only for your pack. Your destiny awaits you and what a destiny it is,” Goshe said as he playfully clapped his hands. “You have been truly blessed my son and it seems you’ve already seen him,” he said as he grinned at Eric. “In your hours of rest we will call to you and guide you on your way. For now, you must travel to a small town in Washington State called Carlton.”

Koda stepped forward and continued, “We urge you to be vigilant of the danger that will surround you on your journey.” A grave look crossed Koda’s face. “The Ones of The Night will try and stop the prophecy from being fulfilled.”

Goshe’s expression became somber as Koda continued, “This is no easy task my son, but you have been chosen for a reason. Even though we do not know what the reason is and cannot protect you, we will be here to guide you and warn you of approaching danger. Ready yourself for your journey and be sure to leave by the break of dawn. And most importantly, this journey is yours and yours alone to make. It is now time for you to return to your rest my son.”

Eric accepted his destiny with pride. Being the *Chosen One* humbled him immensely. He returned to a dreamless sleep as his vision turned misty and the Ancient Ones disappeared.

CHAPTER 3

Will walked into his empty apartment, and felt the loneliness envelope him. One-night stands only temporarily satisfied his need. He craved having someone at home to love and hold him.

He removed the diary from his pocket and hung his coat in the closet. Will walked into the kitchen and made a TV dinner. As his dinner heated, he poured himself a glass of Chivas Regal. Will loved the taste of it on his tongue. He recalled trying it for the first time when he went out drinking with some of his friends while still in school. He couldn't handle more than one drink and wasn't a huge fan of alcohol, but he soon grew an acquired taste for that particular liquor. Taking more sips of his drink, he hoped it would soon numb the loneliness which began to consume him.

Will removed his dinner from the microwave and sat on the old couch to watch some TV. His mind kept going back to the diary and the weird way his grandfather reacted. Will felt more and more intrigued to find out what was in the diary and barely paid attention to the television program. He chuckled to himself, perhaps the answer to his loneliness was within the pages of the diary.

He got up from the couch, threw out his finished dinner plate, and picked up the diary he had left on the end table and went to his bedroom, dropping the diary on the bed. Looking at the diary again, he thought better to shower first before reading it. Will pulled out his animal print boxer shorts, a t-shirt, and walked to the bathroom.

Will slowly undressed letting his clothes fall to the floor. After the temperature was right, he got into the shower and let the water cascade down his neck and back. Will closed his eyes and leaned back letting the tension in his shoulders drain away. As his hands traveled over his body, his fingers grazed his nipples. Will slowly started tweaking them into hard little nubs.

His other hand played with his balls and lightly squeezed them. Taking his hand away from his nipples he placed one finger in his mouth and soaked it with his saliva and moved it down behind his back as he played with his hole, nudging at the entrance. Will took his hard cock in one hand and stroked it while he simultaneously entered himself with his finger.

“Aah...”

His mouth hung open and in the next moment, he felt his balls draw up close to his body. An image of a wolf appeared behind his closed eyes. The feeling overwhelmed him. Startled, he opened his eyes and shot load after load onto the tiled floor of the shower coming harder than he ever had before. Will sagged against the cold tiles trying to catch his breath.

“What the hell was that?” he said between breaths. Will grabbed the bar of soap and washcloth and quickly cleaned himself up. He felt rather shaken seeing a wolf when climaxing.

He walked out of the bathroom and saw the diary lying on the bed. He picked it up, pulled down the comforter, and slid into bed.

Sitting comfortably against the headboard, Will opened the diary and began reading.

March 14, 1988

My dear grandson,

Today is the day you were born and the time has come for our legacy to be passed on. I know that, someday, this book will find its way into your hands. If you're reading this instead of hearing it from me, it means I'm no longer around you, physically, but know that I'm watching over you.

I am placing this diary along with other books and documents in a trunk. What you will learn in this diary is everything about our legacy and a prophecy that was long ago predicted. I caution you to keep this diary and everything you found in the trunk a closely held secret. It must be well hidden and protected. You will learn many things about yourself. Please don't be scared of the things you will read.

I wish I were there with you to tell you all this and hold you close. Not only are you special because you are my grandson, you are special because of what you bring to this world and what awaits you.

Will continued reading in stunned silence. The words of his grandmother on the pages swam before his eyes as tears threatened to spill over. The loss of his parents was a lot for a young teenager to handle, but when he lost his grandmother not many years later, Will crept more and more into himself. All that he lost now hit him harder than ever while reading his grandmother's diary.

As with every family tree, you have a heritage that dates back many centuries. What you will find is that our legacy is very different from what you may expect. But, I am certain you will have a greater understanding of yourself once you learn the truth.

Have you ever felt different from others around you? There are reasons for this. I'm sure you have noticed a certain affinity to animals as well. Have you found that, where ever you go, animals are always near and you are at peace with them even if they appear wild or aggressive? You don't fear them as others do.

There is a reason for your kinship to animals. You come from one of two different blood lines, both of which are descendants of werewolves. Yes, my dear, werewolves exist. I know this might sound very unbelievable to you, but it is true. Our heritage spans many centuries. There are two different blood lines of werewolves, ones that shifts into were-form and ones with special powers. Those who are shifters learn to change into werewolves. Those with special abilities do not shift but are granted a gift. They will never know about their gift until united with their soul mate. I found mine in your grandfather, and, like your mother found hers, you will find yours as well. When the time comes, you will know. And your gift will emerge. Embrace your legacy, my grandson. The ancestors and I will be there to guide you.

Will closed the diary as he wiped away the tears running down his cheeks with the edge of the comforter. He wished he had someone to hold him and be there with him as he tried to digest all this information. He had so many questions. Turning onto his side, Will put the diary in the drawer of the bedside table and turned off the lamp. Laying there snuggled under the comforter, his grandmother's words echoed in his mind over and over again. He remembered the alley dogs from that morning. Fear never crossed his mind.

Will thought of the trunk and its other content as he drifted off to sleep.

CHAPTER 4

It was still dark outside when Eric woke to leave the community. Getting out of bed, he grabbed a shoulder bag, packed the necessities, and headed out to his alpha's home.

As he approached the front steps, Blake opened the door smiling at him. "Good morning Eric."

"Morning, Blake," he replied, "I need to leave for a while." Eric hesitantly looked up at Blake.

"I know my friend. I had some very interesting visitors last night," Blake said as he walked down the front steps and pulled Eric into an embrace. "Look after yourself brother," Blake pulled away and looked at him. "You have a lot on your shoulders but I believe in you."

Eric was surprised at Blake's response but he should have expected the Ancient Ones to inform his alpha. "Thank you," Eric said softly, almost inaudibly.

Eric wasn't sure how long his prophetic journey would keep him away from his pack, but he knew he had to leave. He was torn. He loved his pack and had never been

separated from them, but knew everyone was at risk from this unknown sickness. If there was any truth to the prophecy and his role in his pack's survival, he needed to take that chance.

Eric heard Blake clearing his throat. "It's time for you to go. The sun is just about to rise." Blake attempted to smile but Eric knew Blake would miss him just as much as he would miss his alpha and pack. Slapping him on the back, Blake turned away and walked back up the steps.

Eric left and headed over to his car. As the rays of the sun cast a reddish hue of color across the land, pack members began to emerge from their homes. He quickly jumped into his car before drawing too much attention and drove away from the community.

He drove for hours passing through small towns and heavily wooded areas, stopping only when necessary. As nightfall drew near, Eric passed a sign saying *Welcome to Watson*. He drove through the town looking for a motel where he could spend the night before continuing his journey the next morning. A flickering red sign ahead with the words *Hotel 6* caught his attention. Pulling into the parking lot, Eric headed into the reception area.

The building was quaint with a homey feeling to it. The brightly lit lobby caught him off guard and he had to blink a few times for his eyes to adjust. His senses heightened as the scent of another *were* hit his nose. Eric scanned his surroundings and

found only the young woman standing behind the counter. The rest of the place was completely deserted. Eric walked up to the counter and recognized her distinct scent as a werewolf.

"Good evening. Do you have any rooms available?" Eric asked, cautious of her reaction towards him. It was obvious he had entered into another pack's territory.

"Yes, we do." The woman looked up at him and smiled. "It's not often that we have one our kind coming in here for a room. How long will you be staying?"

"Just for the night," Eric replied as he pulled out his wallet and handed over some bills.

"What's your name?" the woman asked as she handed over a key.

"My name's Eric."

She stalled him as he was about to leave and go to his room. "I suggest you stay in your room. The vampires have been very restless since late last night." Eric looked at her over his shoulder. "If you want to go for a run, you can use the woods behind the motel. Just watch your back out there."

"Thanks."

Leaving the reception area of the motel, Eric walked over to his car and grabbed his backpack from the back seat. Looking at the numbers written on the key tag, he headed towards his room.

As Eric approached the door of his room his wolf howled alerting him to danger. The distinct smell of sulfur surrounded him and burned his nose. *Vampire!* Before he

had the chance to react, Eric was flung around and pushed hard against a wall with a hand tight around his throat.

Eric struggled to breathe as the hand clamped tighter around his neck. The vampire with short curly black hair stared at him through ruby colored eyes. "So you are the *Chosen One*?" he sneered as he cocked his head to the side. "And you're all alone?" The vampire's breath sickened Eric as he whispered in his ear. "They didn't choose very wisely now, did they?"

Eric took a deep breath as his anger boiled and his wolf growled. Reaching out, he pulled the vampire by his hair to have the few inches of space he needed to clamp his hand around the vampire's throat. The vampire started wheezing as he struggled to breathe. His eyes began to bulge out and the fingers around Eric's neck began to relax their grip. Eric released the vampire's throat and kicked out, hitting the vampire in the chest and sending it flying through the air.

Shifting quickly into his wolf, Eric ran into the wooded area behind the motel as the vampire followed at lightning speed. As he arrived at a secluded area, he spun to face the vampire.

"So you think you can fight me and still walk away alive, do you?" The vampire snarled at him, unsheathing his talons. "We'll see about that! You're precious prophecy will come to an end tonight and so will the existence of your pack!"

The anger and protective instincts rose inside him. Growling and baring his teeth, Eric lunged forward, flying through the air towards his target. Unsheathing his

claws, Eric struck out with a fierce blow, scraping his claws across the vampire's face. A loud cry of pain came from the vampire as Eric landed a few feet away.

The vampire and Eric circled each other waiting to pounce. A movement at the edge of the trees distracted Eric for a moment. The vampire took advantage of his split second distraction and lunged at him aiming for his throat. Eric tried to evade the attack, but the vampire's talons engraved itself into his side. The pain was so intense he nearly passed out. Lying there, his blood seeped out of the injury and coated his silver-grey fur.

"Look at the little mutt," the vampire mocked with an evil laugh that echoed through the woods. "And you thought you could beat me!"

Eric opened his eyes and looked over at the vampire standing there with a trail of blood running down his face. Slowly Eric got up and was ready to attack when he noticed four wolves approaching the vampire from behind.

"We'll take care of him brother. You're too weak and injured to fight now. You'll be safe now." Eric heard one of the werewolves speak to him telepathically. Bowing his head, he slowly moved back, keeping his eyes fixed on the vampire.

"Aaaw...running away now, are you?" The vampire continued to mock. As the vampire took a step forward, the four wolves emerged from the darkness and surrounded him. His eyes widened in shock as they circled him. Eric felt the ground beneath his paws vibrate as the wolves charged the vampire. Growls emanated from the four wolves as they tore limbs apart, spraying blood throughout the field.

Within moments the vampire was nothing but shreds of ripped flesh. As the wolves shifted back to their human form, one approached Eric and the rest gathered dry timber to burn the remains of the vampire. It was too dark to make out his exact features in the darkness, but the silhouette of the man approaching him was very tall and muscular.

"Don't shift yet, being in your wolf form will help with the healing. My name is Wade," he said, bending on his haunches and looked down at Eric. "I'm the alpha of my pack. We sensed another *were* in our area so we came by to check it out. I'm going to take a look at your injuries, okay?"

Eric whimpered in response as Wade carefully looked over his injuries. "It doesn't look too bad. You should heal quickly." Wade looked over his shoulder to check on the others then looked back at him. "Are you staying at the motel?"

Eric whimpered again in response.

"It's going to hurt when I pick you up." Wade slipped his arms underneath Eric and lifted him gently. They walked back to the motel as the others followed closely behind.

Approaching the door of his hotel room, Eric's backpack and key were still laying on the ground where they had fallen after the attack.

Nodding at one of the others, Wade said, "The key's laying on the ground there, Darren." Wade stepped back allowing Darren to grab the items on the ground and open the door. Wade stepped through the open door and laid Eric gently on the bed.

"Close your eyes and rest now. I'll be here when you wake up." Wade's deep soothing voice calmed Eric into a deep sleep.

Eric awoke in his human form in the dark hotel room. As his eyes adjusted to the darkness, he saw a lone figure sitting in the single chair across from the bed.

"Good morning," Wade's deep voice greeted him. "Did you sleep well?"

"Good morning," Eric mumbled, sleepily. "Yes, thank you." Eric looked down at his naked body and noticed the wounds from the previous night's attack had healed.

"Thank you for last night," Eric said as he diverted his gaze from Wade's.

"It was no problem, brother. We look after each other." Wade got up and walked over to the window. He cleared his throat and asked, "so, umm...you're the *Chosen One*?"

Eric sat up and covered himself with the blanket on the bed. "Yes, I am."

Wade turned away from the window, walking towards him with his hand held out in greeting. "I would say it's nice to meet you, but I still don't know your name." Wade smiled as Eric shook his hand.

"My name is Eric." Hesitantly he continued. "Seems like word traveled fast about me. So, umm...what do you know about the prophecy?"

"Nothing much actually. From what I've heard from the elders of my pack, the prophecy was written centuries ago. It was passed on from generation to generation, but no one seems to know where it is." Wade walked over to the chair and sat with his

elbows resting on his knees as he rubbed his face with his hands. "I remember being told as a child that the prophecy will save us all."

"What do you think that means?" Eric asked with interest.

"I have no idea. We don't have the written prophecy, so we don't know exactly what the prophecy says. If only we knew where..." Wade's words trailed off into the silence of the morning.

After a few moments of silence, Wade looked over at Eric. "We better get going, other vampires will come looking for you. Go get cleaned up, I'll meet you out in the parking lot."

Eric threw the bedcovers off and got out of bed. "I'll be right out," he said as he grabbed a fresh set of clothes and headed into the bathroom. He quickly set the water to the right temperature and got into the shower, scrubbing off all the splotches of dried blood and dirt from his body.

Eric walked back into the bedroom, freshly dressed and feeling rejuvenated. He grabbed his backpack and keys and made his way to the reception desk to checkout.

Walking out of the lobby, he saw Wade standing by his car in the parking lot.

"It was an honor to meet you, Eric. May the Ancient Ones guide you on your journey and protect you," Wade said as he pulled him into a tight embrace then released him.

"Thank you. I really appreciated your help last night," he said as a red tint colored his face in embarrassment.

“There’s no need to thank us and definitely nothing to be embarrassed about. You were injured and we helped.” Wade replied smiling at Eric as he opened the car door for him.

Wade slapped him on the back as Eric got into the car. Waving goodbye to Wade, he drove away from the motel and continued his journey.

CHAPTER 5

Will woke with a splitting headache. The emotional rollercoaster he experienced the night before had taken its toll. Rather than wallow in a pool of uncertainty, he decided to accept his grandmother's words, learn more of his heritage, and see where it led. He was exhausted from a poor night's sleep but was anxious to get to the bookstore and see the other items stowed away in the trunk. He jumped out of bed, took a quick shower and headed off to work.

On his way to work, Will had a very uneasy feeling he was being watched, so he chose to bypass the coffee shop. He hurried to the bookstore, unlocked the front door, and quickly locked the door behind him again. Will looked out the front window trying to see if he noticed anything out of the ordinary. Nothing seemed out of place. *Great, now the paranoia kicks in.* Will headed into the kitchen to make a cup of coffee.

After taking some aspirin for his headache, Will looked out the window as he sipped his coffee. The day was just starting and people were walking about. He waited patiently for his grandfather to arrive before further investigating the trunk's contents.

An hour later, Will watched his grandfather pull up outside the bookstore. He quickly rose from his chair and unlocked the front door.

"Morning, granddad," he said as he greeted Cory with a quick hug.

"Morning, Will," he responded as he took his seat behind the counter.

Unsure how to approach his grandfather, he decided to just be outright open. Will leaned on the counter facing his grandfather. "I started reading grandmother's diary last night," he said as he carefully watched his grandfather's reaction to his words.

"That's good." Cory said, "I'm happy you're getting to know your legacy."

Will was surprised at how calm his grandfather reacted to his statement. "How did you handle it, granddad?"

Cory looked up at Will and met his questioning gaze. "Will, when you love someone, you accept them for who they are and nothing else matters." A smile appeared on his face. "You love them for *who* they are not *what* they are."

"But granddad..." Will started but was interrupted by Cory.

"No, Will. Don't question the truth about it. Believe me, it is the truth." Sincerity shone from his grandfather's eyes. "Accept your legacy and embrace it. It will only make the road forward so much easier for you. Just know that I'll be here for you."

Will remembered how lonely he felt when he read his grandmother's words the previous night. He shook his head trying to dispel the tears that were threatening to

form. He walked around the counter and hugged his grandfather. "I don't understand what this all means yet but thank you for being there for me."

As he pulled away, Will wiped away the stray tear that spilled over, smiled at his grandfather, and walked over towards the wooden trunk. "I think I'm going to go through some more of the things in here. I think I might take it home."

Kneeling in front of the trunk, Will carefully lifted the lid to see what else he could find. He saw numerous books and scrolls of papers safely packed away. Will remembered his grandmother's request to keep everything protected. Will picked up one diary after the other, skimming the pages. He found one diary dedicated to his grandmother by *her* grandfather.

Carefully Will picked up one of the paper scrolls neatly packed in one side of the trunk. He cautiously unrolled the paper and tried to decipher what he saw. Each paper contained something different. Most were old diagrams and pictures he didn't understand. The next paper caught his attention. The writing on it was barely legible. Will stood up with the paper in his hand and walked over to the counter where a desk lamp was switched on. Putting the paper under the light he started to read.

With sickness abundant, numbers will dwindle

A guardian of the moon is chosen

Visions from the past will guide him

When the child of the sun is found, danger will follow

The ones of the night in the dark will come

Battle will commence but victory will prevail

Only through acceptance and a union will the healing begin

Will lifted his head and looked out of the window as the feeling of being watched passed over him again. Nothing outside seemed amiss. *This must be the prophecy his grandmother mentioned in her diary.*

Will was intrigued the further he explored the trunk's contents but became increasingly frustrated by his lack of understanding. Walking around the counter he picked up the phone and called his best friend, Destiny Blaire, a historian. With her background, he thought she would have a better chance of deciphering some of the stuff he had found. Will knew he had to guard the books and papers so he couldn't turn to anyone else for guidance. Aside from his grandfather, she was the only person he trusted. They were best friends since childhood and had always been there for each other, even during the rough years after his parent's death.

"Hi, Will. What can I do for you?" Destiny cheerfully answered the call.

"Huh. You always seem to know it's me. That damn caller id." They both chuckled then Will's voice became serious. "What are you doing tonight?"

"Umm....same as usual, nothing. Why? What's up?"

"Want to come around to my place? I'll grab us some pizza on the way home?"

Will tried to sound happy.

"Hey, what's wrong? You sound...gloomy." Other than his grandfather, only Destiny could tell from his voice when something was wrong.

"We'll talk tonight when you come over. Please?" Will hoped Destiny would listen to what he'd learned about his heritage without fear or reproach. He knew she could probably figure out what some of this stuff was or would know how to go about finding out more information. But he was hesitant. He didn't know what he'd do if he lost her as a friend.

"Okay. I'll come over." Destiny sighed into the phone. "What time will you be at home?"

"Hmm..." Will looked at his wrist watch. "I should be home a little earlier today, say...around six. I'll be dropping off some stuff at my apartment in a little bit."

"Cool. I'll be there just after six then. Today has been one of those crazy days here. I'll see you later." Destiny made a kissing sound over the phone. "Bye!"

"Later." Will hung up the phone and gathered the papers. Walking back to the trunk, he carefully returned the diaries and scrolls back and locked it again, depositing the keys into his pocket.

His grandfather was sitting behind the desk as he walked into the office in the back. "Granddad, can I use your car? I want to go drop off the trunk at home."

Cory looked up from the newspaper he was reading. "Sure, no problem." He pointed to a set of keys hanging by the door. "Just drive carefully, please."

“Oh, granddad,” Will said exasperatedly as he grabbed the keys from the hook off the wall. “You know I drive safe.” He turned and started walking out towards the old wooden trunk. “I won’t be long.”

Will walked towards the front door with his grandfather following behind. Will lifted the heavy trunk and walked to the front door. His grandfather rushed around him to open the door. “Be careful with that. I’m sure it weighs a ton.”

Will carried the trunk out to the car, loaded it into the back seat, then headed out to his apartment.

There weren’t many people around this time of day so the drive to his apartment was relatively quick. He parked the car at the curb closest to the door leading up to the apartment and hauled the heavy trunk up the stairs.

Finally at his apartment, he placed the trunk down by the couch. He felt winded and bent over grabbing his knees as he tried to catch his breath. Finally straightening, Will sensed something out of place.

He quickly walked to the front door and locked it. Looking around his apartment, he noticed his curtains were drawn. He was certain he left them open this morning before leaving for work. Something did not *feel* right.

Will slowly started walking towards his bedroom, cautiously looking in all directions. His movements were especially slow to avoid making any noise. He thought he heard something in his bedroom. Within the next instance, Will saw a dark figure swiftly move towards him. With blurring speed, Will was lifted and flung across

the room slamming his head into the wall with a thud. Will heard the front door closing before everything faded to black.

CHAPTER 6

Eric drove throughout the day and night, only stopping when necessary to gas up again. His wolf was impatient and restless being confined for such a long period of time. Finally, Eric reached the small quaint little town of Carlton, Washington just before the break of dawn.

He pulled into the parking lot of the bed and breakfast located in the center of the town. The town had a charming sort of feel to it, quickly putting him at ease. During his drive, Eric's mind kept returning to the erotic images of the young man in his visions. Eric tried desperately to remember every detail of the stranger's face. After all, Goshe said he had already *seen* his destiny, so Eric assumed this must be the same young man. The mere thought of the stranger caused his wolf to become restless again.

Eric got out of his car with his backpack and headed inside. The place looked magnificent. The living room set and chairs looked welcoming, nothing was over the top. Eric approached the silver-haired lady sitting behind the desk doing a crossword puzzle.

"Hi. I'd like to book a room, please." Eric kept his voice low to not wake any patrons.

"Oh dear!" she exclaimed, clutching a hand over her chest as she looked up. "I didn't hear you come in. My name is Ethel. Welcome to Sunshine Manor," she smiled as she put her magazine face down. "Single or double bed my dear?"

"Umm...a double bed, thank you," he said as a rush of heat colored his face. Eric didn't know how long he was staying or what would happen when he finally found his mate. *Better safe than sorry.*

"How long would you be staying with us young man?" Ethel turned her attention away from the registration sheet to look up at him.

"I'll pay for a week in advance. I honestly don't know how long I'll be staying. I'm in town for business and it might take a while." Eric gave the old lady a heart stopping smile as he took his wallet out of his pocket to pay.

He watched as a blushing Ethel got up from her chair and removed a key hanging from a board behind her. "Here you go. You're in room 4, just down the hall. I hope you enjoy staying with us." Ethel shyly handed the key over to him. Before he walked away, Ethel spoke again. "Oh, I almost forgot, silly old me, breakfast is served in the main dining room area over there," Ethel pointed to an arched opening. Eric could see a couple of tables and chairs and the main table where the food would be arranged. "Breakfast is served between 7 am and 9 am every day. Dinner is served at 6 pm exactly."

"Thank you very much." Eric turned and headed in the direction of the hall and stopped midstride. "Is there a laundromat around here?"

"Yes, dear. You'll find Bubbles Laundromat just down the road, two doors down from the coffee shop." Ethel smiled at him and then turned her attention back to her crossword puzzle.

Eric walked down the hall until he arrived at room 4. The door made a slight squeak as he pushed it open to reveal a beautiful room with an amazing four poster ball and claw Emboya wood bed, thick burgundy curtains at the windows, and a cozy window seat. He turned on one of the glass lamps on the bedside tables and opened up his backpack to get a change of clothes.

He walked into the bathroom and saw an old claw foot tub with a shower head off to one side, towels neatly stacked on a small cabinet, and two thick white terry cloth robes hanging behind the door. He took a quick shower and returned to the room.

Exhaustion almost overcame him as he reached the side of the bed. Eric slipped under the covers and his eyes closed the moment his head hit the pillow.

Just as the tiredness threatened to take him, he heard Goshe's distinct voice whisper to him. "He's here. You will soon meet."

With those words, his wolf howled as visions of the young man filled his mind before drifting off to sleep.

* * * *

Will opened his eyes and felt a bit disorientated. He reached up with his left hand and groaned out loud as his fingers grazed the swollen bump at the back of his head. *What the hell happened?*

Scanning the room, Will took in his surroundings trying to gather his bearings. The front door was closed and the trunk was still next to the couch. Nothing looked out of place. He slowly stood up, steadying himself against the wall with one hand. Will replayed the incident in his mind, suddenly drawing a deep breath.

"Oh no!" Will rushed into the bedroom on unsteady feet as he remembered his grandmother's urgency to keep everything safe. As he entered the bedroom, his eyes immediately looked to his bedside table where he left the diary. Will panicked when he saw the open drawer. He made his way around the bed to the other side. Just as he reached his hand out to the drawer, he noticed something peeking out from under the bed.

Will went down on his knees and reached under the bed. He closed his eyes, letting out a sigh of relief as his hand closed around the spine of the diary. His heart thudded against his rib cage like a thousand drums.

Suddenly, an image of ruby colored irises flashed before his eyes.

The ringing of the phone startled Will back to reality. Reaching up with his other hand, Will grabbed the cordless phone from the bedside table.

"Hello?"

"Hey, are you okay? You've been gone for over an hour." Cory's gruff voice came over the phone.

"I'm sorry, granddad. I just got a little distracted." Will didn't want to worry his grandfather and thought it best to keep the incident to himself. "I'll be there in a few minutes."

"Well, don't take all day. It's almost time to lock up." Cory said as he hung up the phone.

Still clutching the diary to his chest, Will got up from the floor, and walked out of the bedroom. Reaching inside his back pocket, he removed the set of keys and unlocked the trunk, stowing the diary inside before locking it up again. As he walked towards the front door, Will looked over his shoulder towards the bedroom. Flashes of the incident played back in his mind. *This is what my grandmother warned me about in the diary.*

He didn't know what *it* was, but Will wasn't taking any chances. Grabbing his keys from the entrance table, he left his apartment. Locking the door behind him, Will cautiously looked around for anything suspicious on the way to the car. Shutting the door, he turned the key in the ignition, and pulled away from the curb.

Walking into the bookstore, Will was greeted by his irritated grandfather.

"It's about bloody time!" Cory said, getting up from the chair. "I've been worried out of my mind."

"I'm sorry to have worried you, granddad. I just lost track of time." Will walked around the counter and placated his grandfather with a hug.

"I'll be in my office if you need me." Cory growled under his voice.

Will couldn't help but smile. He knew his grandfather loved him very much and was very protective of him. He sat in his chair behind the counter and picked up the book he started earlier in the week.

About an hour later, Will was too caught up in the story he was reading to notice the hairs on his arms standing. He looked out the store's front window and quickly scanned the streets and sidewalks for anything unusual.

His eyes stopped on the most beautiful man he had ever seen. The stranger's wavy dark hair danced around his face in the wind. Will's heart raced as his hands became clammy. His breath caught in his throat when his eyes locked onto the stranger's sparkling pale blue eyes.

A strange feeling overcame Will. It was almost as if he recognized the stranger in some way. A bead of sweat trickled down the back of his neck. He let out an audible gasp when the stranger gave him a heart stopping smile. The stranger's teeth glinted pure white as the sunlight hit him.

"It's time to..." Cory's voice trailed off as he looked over at Will. Following his gaze, Cory noticed the man standing outside. "Will. Will."

"Yes." Will said in a dazed voice as he took his eyes off the stranger and looked at his grandfather over his shoulder.

"Who is that?" Will heard the concern in his grandfather's voice.

"I don't know." He turned to look back at the stranger but he was no longer there. Will couldn't believe his reaction towards a total stranger. *He felt like a stupid school kid.*

Annoyed with himself, Will put the book down and grabbed his keys from under the counter. "Let's go. I think we can call it a day." He said, giving his grandfather a reassuring smile. Will noticed the odd expression on his grandfathers' face. "What's wrong?"

As if in a daze, his grandfather shook his head and absentmindedly replied, "oh, nothing. Nothing at all."

Will sensed something was wrong but didn't want to push him. He gave his grandfather a hug before closing the bookstore for the day, and watched his grandfather until he sat in his car. Will cautiously eyed the people around him and his surroundings until he arrived at his apartment.

There was a knock at the door just as Will finished placing his pizza order. He hung up the phone and looked out the peephole before opening the door to welcome his friend, Destiny.

"Come in. I just ordered pizza."

"Yeah, yeah." she said, giving him a quick peck on the cheek as she walked into the apartment. "Oooh...what's this?" Destiny asked as she raced to the trunk.

Closing the apartment door, Will turned and walked into the living room. "It's an old trunk."

"I can see that, smartass," she said as she rolled her eyes and gave him a sideways smile.

Will laughed, as he always did, when Destiny's sassy side showed. "It's the reason I asked you to come over tonight. I want to show you something."

Will watched as Destiny knelt by the wooden trunk and ran her hands over it. "Wow. This is really old. Where did you say you got it from?"

"I didn't say where I got it from." Will laughed as Destiny threw an imaginary dagger with her glance. Will just couldn't resist teasing her. She was usually reserved around most people, so seeing this side of her helped lighten his mood before telling her about his grandmother's diary. "It belonged to my grandmother. I found it in the corner of the bookstore under a pile of books."

He felt a bit hesitant to tell Destiny about the trunk's content. Even though they were best friends and he knew he could trust her, he wasn't sure how she would react. Will walked into the kitchen, grabbed two glasses, and a bottle of red wine from the fridge.

Before opening the bottle, he shouted from the kitchen to confirm. "Is red wine okay?"

"Yeah, thanks," she shouted back at him just as the doorbell rang. "I'll get it."

Will poured two glasses of wine and walked out of the kitchen just as Destiny placed the pizza on the coffee table and sat on the couch. Will took his seat as he grabbed a slice of pizza.

Cleaning up after dinner, Destiny finally asked, "so...now that you've fed me and kept me in suspense all this time, why don't you tell me what's going on?"

Will quietly walked over to the trunk, unlocked it, and withdrew his grandmother's diary. He held out the old book to Destiny as she reached for it. Without releasing the journal, he said, "you know I trust you with my life, but there's one thing I need you to promise me." Refusing to release the diary in Destiny's hands, Will just needed to make sure she would keep his grandmother's journal a secret. And frankly, he felt scared not knowing how she would react. "Promise me, that whatever you read in this diary, you won't tell anyone."

Destiny looked up at him with concern. "You know I won't. Will, what's going on? You're scaring me."

"The diary was written to me by my grandmother before she died. There are things in there that I didn't know about myself until the other day when I found the trunk." Will took a deep breath and slowly released the book. He sat beside Destiny on the couch, watching her intently as she opened the diary and began reading.

They sat in silence for a very long time until, eventually, Destiny looked at him. Will looked at her blank expression and began to worry when he couldn't gauge her reaction.

"Do you know what the prophecy says?" Destiny asked, breaking the silence.

Quickly, Will got up from the couch and went back to the trunk, retrieving the piece of parched paper with the written prophecy. "Yes, here it is," he replied as he handed over the paper with shaky hands. Will moved to sit close to her again.

"Wow." Destiny turned and looked at him with a look of incredibility.

He didn't know how to ask the question he really wanted to ask. *Will you still love me even though I come from a line of werewolves?* "What do you think?" he asked instead.

Destiny turned to him and pulled Will into her arms. "Oh sweetie! You're my friend and I love you. How can you think anything would ever change that?"

"I...I didn't know what to think. It all sounds so crazy." Will struggled to get the words out around the knot of emotion in his throat. Pulling away, he looked at her.

"Thank you so much. You're my best friend. I just don't want to lose you."

"Hey, come on now." Giving Will a quick hug, Destiny pulled away again and looked down at the prophecy lying on the coffee table. "Do you know anything more about this?" Destiny asked, pointing at the parched paper.

"Actually, no. I was hoping you'd be able to tell me if it's at least somewhat real." Will couldn't help but feel a bit apprehensive. He didn't know what to believe

anymore. "Oh, I forgot to tell you." The tone of his voice brought Destiny's head up with a snap.

"What is it?" she asked with a note of concern evident in her voice. Will sat back on the couch and told her about the incident earlier that evening when he brought the trunk home and how he later found his grandmother's diary lying on the floor in the bedroom.

"My God! Are you okay?" Destiny leaned forward and ran her hand behind his head. When her fingers grazed the bump, Will winced.

"Ow! That still hurts a little but otherwise I'm okay." Will pulled away from her hand. "It moved so fast, I couldn't make out what *it* was. I remember seeing a pair of red ruby colored eyes looking at me. What do you think it could have been?"

"I don't know but I think we need to find out. I'm going to head over to the university's private library to see what type of reference books I can hunt down. I'm sure there's got to be something there." Destiny gave him a peck on the cheek as she got up from the couch. "If there is, I'll find it."

They walked over to the door and with a last hug, Destiny walked out of the apartment shouting over her shoulder, "make sure you lock up the door!"

Will immediately turned the lock behind her and let out a sigh of relief. He was thankful to still have his friend and her unconditional love and support.

CHAPTER 7

For the past two weeks, Eric watched the young man sitting behind the counter in the bookstore. From the first moment he saw him, Eric knew that young man was his mate. Whenever the young man caught him staring at him, he felt a fire burn inside. It took every ounce of energy he had to tame the wolf inside threatening to emerge. He just couldn't stand it anymore. With the late afternoon sun casting its rays of red hue over the street, Eric walked over, pulled opened the door of the bookstore, and approached the counter.

"Hi." Eric's breath caught in his throat as the young man's head snapped up and their eyes met. From a distance he was gorgeous, but up close, Eric found himself enthralled by the beauty of the young man. He was overwhelmed by the pull to mate he felt. He was now convinced, more than ever, this man was his mate.

"Hi." The young man looked up at him with those bright green eyes. The rays of the sun coming through the store's front windows hit the young man's pitch black hair, giving it a bluish glint.

Eric stood there fidgeting, not knowing what to say or do. "Umm...I'm looking for something specific, maybe you can help."

He watched as the young man seemed to swallow hard before getting up from the chair and walking around the counter. It was obvious to Eric the young man was affected by his presence as well. He was flustered with a rosy tint of blush on his cheeks.

"What are you looking for?" the young man asked, barely able to meet his eyes. They were walking down an aisle between two shelves before Eric answered.

"A book on werewolves and," Eric watched the young man closely for his reaction. "A prophecy."

The young man drew in a quick breath and his eyes bulged out. "We...we don't have what you're looking for. I'm sorry, it's closing time."

Before Eric could react, the young man rushed to the front door and opened it obviously waiting for him to leave. Walking up to the front door, Eric paused next to the young man and slowly looked at him from head to toe. He took in the shape of his body, the color of his hair, his skin, and more. He slowly came closer and casually inhaled his scent. His wolf howled with excitement. "Thank you," Eric said breathlessly as he walked out of the store.

The signs of the prophecy were all coming true, but Eric had a sneaky suspicion that he might have just screwed it all up. With a heavy heart, he walked across the street and walked into the alley. Standing in the dark, Eric watched the young man

from the alley just as he had for the past two weeks. He knew, without a doubt, this young man was his mate. The need to be near him and to protect him was overwhelming. He smiled as he saw him move around the bookstore performing his daily store closing ritual. An old man walked out from the back of the store and hugged the young man before they walked outside.

There was a chill in the air that didn't bode well for his liking. Only a handful of people were still about when he left the store, but they soon scurried off to their homes, leaving the streets relatively empty by this time. Eric watched from the darkness as the young man waited for the older man's car to pull away from the curb before walking home.

Eric followed the young man at a distance wanting to make sure he arrived safely. As he followed his mate, he knew he'd have to think of another way to approach him tomorrow. He was concerned by the young man's reaction to the mention of the prophecy and knew he needed to approach him more carefully to not scare him off.

Just as the young man passed an alley between two buildings, Eric saw him forcefully pulled into the darkness.

His heart sped up and his senses went into overdrive. The distinct smell of sulfur hit his nose. In that instant he knew. *Vampire!* Instinctively, Eric raced towards the entrance of the alley. Before reaching the alley he could hear the young man's protests.

"Get your hands off me!"

"Where is it!?!!" the second voice in the alley snarled just as Eric came careening around the corner. Eric's hackles rose and a growl erupted from him when he saw the young man up off the ground against the wall with the vampire's hand around his throat. The vampire turned his head and Eric's gaze locked onto a pair of ruby red eyes.

Without thought of the consequences, Eric's wolf took over. He instantly shifted and charged headlong towards the vampire, leaping in the air at the last moment to gain momentum as he aimed for the vampire's throat. He unsheathed his claws and pulled the vampire away from the young man as he slashed his claws at its throat. The young man fell to the ground from the sheer force of the pull of the vampire and scurried to a safe corner in the alley. Fearing he'd hurt his mate, Eric didn't aim for the main artery in the vampire's throat. The vampire instantly recovered from the initial attack and stood as blood drizzled down its ripped flesh. Eric charged again as the vampire prepared to attack. With lightning speed and extreme strength, the vampire threw Eric against the wall of the building with a loud thud.

The young man retracted further trying to seek safety as he silently watched with eyes as big as saucers. Eric could only imagine the shock the young man must be feeling, but he couldn't worry about anything other than protecting his mate. Comfort would come later, once they were safe.

"Oh you filthy dogs always get in the way!" The vampire snarled at him as he lurched forward.

Eric lay slumped against the ground faking a wounded appearance as he waited for the right moment to attack again. Once the vampire was in striking distance, he reached out and sunk his teeth into its neck. The vampire tried to get Eric off of him with little success. Eric remained clamped down on its throat refusing to lose the battle.

The vampire's body dropped to the ground, as gurgling sounds filled the quiet alley.

* * * *

Will sat on the alley ground as he rocked back and forth with his arms wrapped tightly around his bent knees. Paralyzed by fear, he was unable to take his eyes off the scene in front of him. He saw the wolf release the limp body then watched as it transformed back into the gorgeous man he had spoken to earlier. *What the hell was happening? What was it that attacked him?*

The naked man stood, picked up the body, and discarded it into a dumpster further down the alley. The man walked back over to the pile of clothes lying on the ground by the alley entrance and got dressed.

Will continued to rock back and forth as he stared off into space. He heard the man's voice as if from far away, "it's okay. I'm not going to hurt you."

Will whimpered as the man stepped closer to him with his hands held out. "Come on. We need to get out of here."

He shook himself out of the daze and allowed the man to guide him out of the alley. "What...what was that?" Will asked, barely audible.

"We'll talk when we're somewhere safe, okay," the man replied. The low timber of his voice was a soothing balm to his frazzled nerves.

The man's hand on his lower back both guided and supported him while they made their way back to his apartment. When Will saw him come into the alley, he knew everything would be fine. He didn't understand why he felt this way, but he did not feel threatened by this man nor did he fear him. Rather, he felt safe.

When they arrived at his apartment, Will unsuccessfully tried to unlock the door. His hands were shaking so much he couldn't insert the key into the lock.

"Here, let me." The man gently took the keys out of his hand and unlocked the front door. Closing the door behind them, the man stopped him from moving further into the apartment by placing a hand on his arm. He walked around and stood in front of Will. He softly held his face in his hands. The feel of this man's hands on his skin sparked a fire inside him. He averted his eyes, embarrassed at his reaction to the simple touch.

"Hey, look at me."

Will looked up into the man's eyes.

"Are you okay?"

"Ye...yes. Just a little shaken, but I'm okay."

His thumbs softly grazed Will's cheeks as he released his face. "We haven't introduced ourselves and we've had more action than most." The man said with a short

chuckle, which made Will smile. "I'm Eric," he said as he extended his hand to mock a formal greeting.

"My name's Will," he said as he shook Eric's hand. He felt a trickle of sweat run down his neck. Every touch, however subtle, was driving him insane. Now that they were alone in his apartment, the sexual attraction he felt towards Eric was overwhelming. Eric's gentle grip was in total contrast to the roughness of his hand. He felt his heart race even faster.

Eric released his hand and reach up to gently touch Will's throat. "Your neck is a bit red. It might be sore in the morning."

The gentle caress caused a surge of heat to rise within him. "Umm...I'll be okay." Will cleared his throat and shifted his weight from one foot to the other. "Would you like something to drink?"

"Just some water, thanks."

Will turned and walked towards the kitchen. "Have a seat in the living room. I'll be right out."

As he returned to the living room with two glasses of water, Will stopped midstride when he noticed Eric sitting on the couch looking at the open parched paper on the coffee table. He and Destiny had unsuccessfully tried for hours the prior evening to decipher it based on the research she found. He was so exhausted, he immediately fell asleep after she left and forgot to lock it away in the trunk. He felt like an idiot

standing there holding two glasses of water and not knowing what to say. Now, Eric would know he had lied earlier in the bookstore. And for some reason, he felt horrible about lying to him.

Eric looked up.

Their eyes locked.

Will panicked. "I...I..." he stammered.

"It's okay. You did the right thing," Eric said with a smile.

His smile made his knees weak. Thankful Eric wasn't upset, Will quickly moved to the couch and sat, handing a glass over to him.

* * * *

Eric sensed Will was uncomfortable but didn't know exactly why. He wasn't sure if his discomfort was a result of the attack, his shifting, or the obvious attraction between them. Sitting so close to Will and not being able to touch him was pure torture. The wolf inside him paced frantically, begging to be released so it could claim its mate.

Throughout the bizarre incident in the alley and afterwards, Will hadn't said a word about it. Eric couldn't believe Will had not freaked out when he shifted. He couldn't imagine what Will was feeling or the thoughts running through his mind. "I'm sure you have lots of questions," Eric finally said, hesitantly.

"Yeah." Will looked up at Eric with concern in those gorgeous green eyes which made his body shiver with lust. "What was that? In the alley."

"I shifted. I'm a werewolf."

Will had a look of exasperation on his face. "Umm...DUH! I know that." Will rolled his eyes. "I mean what was that *thing* that attacked me."

"Oh!" Eric sighed with relief. "That was a vampire and before you ask, yes, they do exist."

"A...*vampire*?" Will was visibly shaken. "What do they want from me?"

Eric leaned forward and picked up the parched paper with the prophecy written on it. "This is what they want." Eric didn't want to scare Will, but he had no choice. Will had to know about the dangers and their role in the prophecy. "And you."

"What!?" There was a note of panic in Will's voice. "Why...but...why..." Will stammered and began to uncontrollably shake.

"Hey, come on now. You need to calm down." Eric reached over and pulled Will gently into his arms.

"How can you tell me to calm down? I was just attacked by a vampire!" Will was hysterical. He yanked the prophecy out of Eric's hands. "What does *this* have to do with anything?"

"What do you know about the prophecy? Besides what's written there."

Will pulled away and looked up at him. "Nothing. All I know is what it says and it doesn't say much."

Eric sat there contemplating how much he should tell Will. He was concerned of Will's emotions so he didn't know how much of the truth he could handle. According

to the prophecy and what he was told about it, there was something special about Will and his role in the future. Eric decided to play it by ear and tell Will as much as he could handle. He took the prophecy from Will and started reading it out loud.

With sickness abundant, numbers will dwindle

A guardian of the moon is chosen

Visions from the past will guide him

"That has already happened." Eric looked over at Will. "My pack is extremely ill and they're slowly dying off. The *guardian of the moon*...that's me." Eric watched Will's reaction before continuing to read.

When the child of the sun is found, danger will follow

The ones of the night in the dark will come

"This has happened too. The *child of the sun*..." Hesitantly he continued, "that's you."

"Me? But..." Will looked at him, shocked, and before he could continue, Eric interrupted him.

"The *ones of the night* are the vampires." The wolf inside him begged for release and for the truth to be revealed. Closing his eyes for a moment, he spoke softly. "I know it's you because..." he looked up and their eyes met, "you're my mate and I was guided here to find you."

"Your mate?" Will's voice echoed softly in the apartment. Eric watched Will as the words he'd just uttered finally sunk in.

"I'm sorry. I know this is a lot to take in but..." Eric reached over and took Will's hand in his, "it's the truth and you had to know."

* * * *

Will sat there in stunned silence. He already knew about werewolves and their mates from the diaries he read. He wasn't shocked that werewolves actually existed, he had accepted this. But the existence of vampires stunned him and the fact that they were after him now because of the prophecy was downright scary. Will gasped as a thought struck him.

"He knew. My grandfather knew." Will's gaze locked onto Eric's. "He knew you were my mate. The first time I saw you standing across the street, my grandfather came out of the office. When he caught me looking at you, I saw a strange expression on his face. I didn't know why he looked at me like that but...now I get it."

Will realized Eric was still holding his hand with their fingers intertwined. The touch was comforting and made him feel safe. Looking up, Will smiled at Eric. He could feel his cheeks getting hot as his palms started sweating.

"I think I should go." Eric abruptly stood and started walking towards the door.

He didn't know why Eric suddenly needed to leave. He rose and quickly followed him.

Eric unexpectedly stopped and turned around, catching Will in his arms as their bodies bumped against each other. "I'm sorry. I didn't know you were so close behind me."

"It's okay." Will starting panting for breath, "it was my fault." He looked up into Eric's lust filled eyes and felt his heart skip. The man was breathtaking.

"Oh God." Eric's arms tightened around him and in the next instant their lips met. They stood there devouring each other's mouths.

Will felt the wall behind his back and gasped when Eric's tongue teased his lips. Their tongues performed a dance of their own, tasting and nipping at each other's lips. Eric's hands drove him crazy as they squeezed his butt cheeks.

"Oh! That feels good."

Eric kissed and nipped down his neck as Will pressed himself tight against Eric. He could feel Eric's hard length through his pants. Will let out a groan when he stopped and pulled away. Eric stood there holding Will at arm's length as he breathed loudly.

"I have to go...otherwise, I won't be able to stop myself." Eric said between breaths. Eric finally pulled away and looked at him. "God, you're beautiful."

The last thing he wanted was to have Eric walk out that door. He wanted him to stay and make love to him. It just felt right.

Eric gave him a quick kiss and walked to the front door. Just as Eric was about to take hold of the door handle, Will reach out and put his hand on Eric's arm.

"Please stay." Will pleaded.

Eric looked at him over his shoulder with lust filled eyes. "Only if you're sure."

Will knew it was now or never. "I want you." Will couldn't avoid his obvious desire from showing on his face or the response his body had towards Eric. His shaft was rock hard and begging for Eric's touch.

CHAPTER 8

Eric's senses and emotions were completely out of control. The sweet taste of chocolate and a hint of cinnamon still lingered on his tongue from Will's kiss. His wolf wanted to mate, but Eric knew it was too soon. They hadn't discussed everything yet, what was to come, and what it meant to be a mate.

Turning around, Eric walked up to Will and took him into his arms again. The desire to claim Will was driving him mad. His mind was a hazy fog, his palms were clammy, and trickles of sweat ran down the back of his neck.

"I want you so much but..." Eric shook his head as if to shake away the lust clouding his mind. "I don't want to hurt you."

Will looked up at him. Suddenly, the young man who was shaken and almost hysterical a few moments ago, was replaced by a calm, confident, strong willed being...his mate. "I know you won't hurt me," he said, with firmness.

Will took his hand and led him into the bedroom.

Eric stood just inside the doorway of the bedroom and watched as Will slowly began to undress. He undid one button at a time then let the shirt fall down his arms to

the floor. The tip of his tongue peeked out and wet his lips as he slowly removed his belt. The rasp of the zipper echoed through the room.

Eric stood there, his heart beat like a staccato drum against his chest and his wolf begged for release. Will slipped out of his shoes and dropped his pants to the floor. Eric's nostrils flared at the beauty standing naked before him. Reaching out, Eric ran his hands over Will's torso and back up towards his nipples. His tanned skin was a stark contrast to Will's lighter complexion. "God, you're beautiful."

A rose tint colored Will's cheeks. Eric let out a soft growl as his fingers grazed Will's already hard nipples. Eric leaned forward and captured Will's mouth with his own. The moment their lips met, the passion almost consumed Eric to the point of completely losing control. His hard cock strained against the zipper of his jeans, begging to be set free.

"You have too much clothes on." Will said between kisses as he smiled.

"Uh huh." Eric was so caught up in the moment, he couldn't even talk. They both went for the buttons of his shirt at the same time. Eric pulled away and stepped back, "let me."

Quickly, he undressed. He threw the shirt over his shoulder and his shoes made a loud thud as he dropped them to the floor. Within moments he stood there naked, his hard cock jutting out of the bush of curls surrounding the base. A whimper from Will drew his attention. They were both visibly shaking with lust.

No more words were necessary. They both knew what they wanted. Eric stepped forward and devoured Will's mouth. Their hard shafts rubbed against each other, pre-cum glistened at the tips and leaked down their shafts. Their moans and groans echoed through the room as their tongues dueled and tasted each other.

Will's hands touched him everywhere, driving him crazy. Eric pulled him into his arms, grabbed his butt cheeks, and grinded their erections together. It was pure bliss. Eric slowly walked them back towards the bed and guided Will down. He slowly kissed a trail down Will's neck and past his shoulder. He then ran the tip of his tongue around Will's nipples, teasing them to hard little nubs and latching on to them, sucking each one.

Will arched off the bed as a breathless moan escaped his lips. "Oh, Eric! That feels so good."

Eric moved his left hand down between their bodies, tracing his fingers over Will's hard shaft. Eric continued the assault on Will's nipples as he used his thumb to rub over the head of Will's cock. He felt the pre-cum ooze out of the slit. The scent of Will's essence assailed his senses. Eric moved further down, licking and kissing his way to the root of Will's manhood.

His wolf let out a loud growl when Eric buried his nose between Will's legs, inhaling his musky scent. Eric looked up and saw Will watching him. "God you smell good." Eric stuck out his tongue and licked Will's balls then took each one into his mouth and sucked them one by one.

"Oh...oh...yes," Will panted for breath, his head shook from side to side as his hands clawed at the bed cover.

Taking hold of Will's legs, Eric spread them wider, resting Will's feet on the edge of the bed, then moved further down Will's body. Will's pink puckered hole entranced him. Holding Will down by the hips, Eric lapped at his hole. A kaleidoscope of muskiness exploded on his tongue, igniting a blaze of passion ready to consume him. Eric slipped his tongue in and out of Will's tight hole until he felt the muscles relaxing.

"I want you so much." Eric was shocked at himself for declaring his utter lust for his mate. This was the first time he had ever been at the point of losing control with anyone so quickly.

Moving back up between Will's legs, Eric licked all the way to the tip of Will's hard shaft, lapping up the pre-cum lying in a puddle on his stomach. The taste of Will was pure ambrosia. Will squirmed beneath him like an animal trying to get loose. Eric looked up just as Will reached over to the side of the bedside table, retrieving a condom and a tube of lube.

"Please, I need you," Will pleaded.

"How do you expect me to be gentle when say things like that?" Eric growled. Taking the condom from him, Eric tore at the wrapper with his teeth and quickly sheathed himself. Will's hand joined his, coating his hard shaft with lube.

Will's touch on his hard cock almost had Eric blowing his load right then and there. "You need to stop otherwise I'm going to lose it before I'm even inside you."

Will dropped back onto the bed and pulled his legs up towards his body.

"Watch," Will teased with an evil grin on his face.

Eric sat on his haunches watching as Will reach down and slipped a lubed finger inside his tight hole. Eric groaned out loud when a second finger soon disappeared with the first. "Enough! No more." Eric growled as he leaned forward, their lips mere inches apart.

"I want you so bad, I'm aching all over," Will said between breaths.

Eric leaned forward and nibbled on Will's bottom lip before deepening the kiss. Will's legs wrapped around his hips as Eric's hard cock slipped inside. Pulling back, Eric watched Will's face for any discomfort as he sheathed himself to the hilt inside him. He was overwhelmed by the heated tightness surrounding his hard shaft and the look of pure ecstasy on Will's face.

"You feel perfect. You're so tight."

Will rocked himself against Eric in encouragement. He starting moving his hard length in and out of Will's tight hole and latched onto his mouth as their tongues did a mating dance of their own. Kissing Will's cheek and down his neck, Eric felt his teeth unsheathing and his wolf wanting to take over.

"Yes...yes...harder," Will panted and Eric complied, ramming his cock harder and harder into Will, rocking the bed with the force of his thrusts. "Yes!" Will shouted just as Eric felt Will's hot seed spilling between them and his hole clamping down tightly around Eric's cock. Eric's growl echoed through the room. Pushing his cock

deep inside Will, Eric bit down on the pillow next to Will's head as he filled the condom with his release.

With shaky arms, Eric pushed himself up, slowly pulling out of Will. Getting up from the bed, he walked into the attached bathroom and discarded the used condom. Taking the washcloth hanging over the shower railing he walked back into the bedroom and knelt down on the bed.

Will lay there breathing hard with his eyes closed and a sated smile on his face. Quickly, Eric cleaned him up as best he could and threw the cloth in the direction of the bathroom. Putting his arm around Will, he pulled him close and drew the covers over them.

Eric laid there watching Will. "You're so breathtakingly beautiful."

"Hmm..."

Eric smiled and laid his head down on the pillow, falling asleep as Will cuddled up closer to him.

* * * *

Will woke feeling the heat of a hard body behind him and a strong arm around his waist, pulling him closer. The world was still dark outside his window and not a sound disturbed the silence. Slowly Will turned around in the bed and faced Eric, a smile playing on his face.

"Good morning," Will smiled as he traced his fingers of his left hand over Eric's face.

"Morning," Eric's eyes slowly slid open and peered at him as he leaned forward and kissed him on the tip of his nose.

"I need to get ready for work." Will felt dejecting having to leave the warm confines of Eric's arms. The night was more than he could have ever imagined. It was perfect.

"Yeah, I know." Will watched Eric as he rolled out of bed and started getting dressed. "We still need to talk about something though." The hesitation and insecurity in Eric's voice had Will quickly getting out of bed and getting dressed.

Will followed him into the living room and sat down on the couch opposite Eric. "What else is there that you want to tell me?"

Eric was looking at him with a peculiar expression on his face. "You have to go back with me."

"What?" Will battled with the emotions he felt. Here is this man telling him that they are mates, but now he just expects him to follow? He couldn't deny the pull he felt to Eric, but he didn't understand why he had to leave. "What do you mean I have to go back with you? Back where?"

"Back to Lima, my home town. It's only a day or two's drive away." Eric's brows drew together. "According to the prophecy, you are the key to saving my pack."

"How am I the key?"

"I don't know." Eric shook his head and sounded frustrated. "I'm sure we'll know more if you go back to Lima with me. Please. I know things are moving real fast,

but..." Eric covered his face with his hands. "My pack, *our pack* is suffering. Everyday more and more pack members are dying and we don't know why." Eric looked up at him with pleading eyes.

This was all happening so fast for Will, he started to feel a little overwhelmed with it all. "You'll need to give me some time to think about it. I can't just...just give up everything and leave. I built my life here. Who knows how long it will be before I get to come back. And I can't just leave my grandfather alone."

Eric got up from the couch. "Okay. I understand. I'll come around this afternoon again and walk you home, okay?"

Will's palms started getting clammy and his cock started getting hard just at the thought of seeing Eric later. He hoped Eric would stay the night again. His heart sped up and he could feel the heat creeping up his neck into his cheeks. "Okay."

Will walked with Eric to the front door. Leaning forward, Eric gave him a quick kiss on the lips and smiled at him as he walked out the door. "Later, beautiful."

On his way to work, Will's mind replayed everything Eric said to him. He arrived at the bookstore a little later than usual and found his grandfather sitting behind the counter.

"Good morning, granddad," Will tried to evade his grandfather's eyes, but noticed the concerned look Cory gave him.

"Good morning," Cory said as he put the newspaper down on the counter.

"What happened to you this morning? You've never been late."

Will stopped at the counter and rested his hands on the edge, looking at his grandfather. "Did you know?"

"Did I know what?" Cory moved around in his chair, shifting from side to side.

"Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about, granddad. You knew Eric was my mate." Will was slowly becoming a bit annoyed that his grandfather knew and didn't tell him.

"Who is Eric? I don't know any Eric." Cory got up from his chair and stood.

"Eric! The young man who has been outside watching me every day for the past two weeks." Will snapped then immediately realized his tone. "I'm sorry, granddad. I didn't mean to snap." Will bowed his head, feeling ashamed.

Will looked up when Cory cleared his throat then spoke softly. "I wasn't sure, but I suspected. Why? What's happened?" Cory's expression and tone showed genuine concern.

Will sighed out loud. "We've had a long talk. Maybe you should sit down so I can tell you what's going on."

"Now don't make me wait any longer boy. Spill it."

Will walked to the front door and flipped the sign over to "closed." He walked back around the counter to sit next to his grandfather.

For the next two hours, Will explained everything to his grandfather. He spoke of the prophecy and what Eric had told him. His grandfather listened to every detail without interruption. In the end, Will wasn't shocked to learn that his grandfather was already aware of the prophecy and what it said.

According to his grandfather, not long after his grandparents got married, his grandmother told Cory about the prophecy. It seemed his grandmother, as well as others in the past, had always kept an eye out for *The One*. And, when Will was born, his grandmother sensed he may have been the one mentioned in the prophecy. This was why she felt the need to keep the journals and prophecy for him until he was ready to learn more about his heritage and of things to come.

"He wants me to go back with him." Will watched his grandfather's reaction to the news. He knew the most difficult part was leaving his grandfather behind.

"Then my grandson...what are you waiting for?" Cory had a smile on his face.

"Granddad...I can't leave you." A lump formed in Will's throat as tears threatened.

"Oh my dear boy! Of course not!" Cory stood and pulled Will into his arms. "I'm coming with you."

Will pulled out of his grandfather's embrace, surprised. "But...but what about the bookstore? You can't just leave everything behind."

“Well, then we should start packing don’t you think? I’m sure they don’t have a bookstore like this where we’re going.” Cory had a huge smile on his face. “We don’t have much time. Come on now!”

Will stood there in stunned silence as his grandfather walked to the back of the store to retrieve boxes.

CHAPTER 9

Eric helped Will and Cory pack the bookstore merchandise into boxes to transport to Lima. Now, two weeks later, the day had finally arrived and everything was in place for the move. He crossed the street just as the moving truck pulled up in front of the bookstore.

Standing outside the door, Eric looked at Will sitting behind the counter. He enjoyed watching him. During the past two weeks, they'd spend every day together and grew closer. Two nights after they finally met face-to-face, Eric gave up living at the bed and breakfast and stayed with Will at his apartment. He looked forward to each night when he'd hold Will in his arms in bed until they both woke the next morning.

They would touch, kiss, and make love, but Eric felt the timing wasn't right to claim his mate. They had to get back to Lima and help the pack. He wanted to celebrate finding his mate. He wanted to yell at the top of his lungs and announce to the world he had finally found him. But he knew the survival of the pack was more important right now.

Entering the bookstore, the jingle of the bell above the door brought him out of his haze. Eric watched as the beginning of a smile tugged at the corner of Will's lips when he saw Eric enter the store.

"Good morning. I hope we aren't too early," the truck driver said as he walked into the store immediately behind Eric.

"Not at all young man. We've been waiting for you," Cory replied as he came from the back office of the bookstore. He waved at Eric then began distributing orders. "All the boxes over there need to be loaded. Then these shelves over here, too. Just be careful with those boxes of books. They're extremely old."

Eric walked behind the counter and circled his arms around Will's waist pulling him close. Will leaned back against Eric's chest and lifted his face for a kiss. They stood like this and drank coffee and laughed as they watched the men move the boxes under Cory's direction. The truck driver just smiled and shook his head at Cory's insistence on how things should be done.

The next two hours flew by quickly as the men loaded the truck with the boxes and shelves. Although Cory anxiously packed his belongings the previous day, Eric knew Will was concerned about him and how he was handling the move. He saw the worry on Will's face when he looked over at his grandfather. But all concern was wiped away when Cory was asked if he still wanted to follow through with the move. "I have nothing here anymore. I go where my grandson goes. He's family." That was the response Will needed to feel at peace.

Those words resonated through Eric's mind reminding him of his own pack and his bond to his family. He hoped one day to mean just as much to Will. "Come on. We need to get on the road. It's going to be a long drive. We'll stop for the night in Watson."

Eric watched as Will slowly walked around the empty bookstore before giving his granddad a hug. "I'll be right out," Cory said with a sad smile as Will walked out of the store.

Eric walked up behind him and wrapped his arms around his waist as he spoke softly in Will's ear. "How are you doing?"

"I'm doing okay." Will said in a wistful voice as he took a deep breath and let it out. "I'm going to miss this place."

"I know, baby." Eric gave Will a squeeze, stepped away from him and turned around when Cory came walking out of the store. They stood there watching as Cory locked up and walked towards them.

"Come on now, times a wasting. The sooner we get on the road the sooner we get to our new home." Cory smiled at them lopsidedly.

Eric turned to Will, "you can ride with your grandfather and follow behind me. We'll stop a couple of times to get something to eat and use the restrooms. We should make it to Watson before nightfall."

"Okay. Drive safe." Will gave him a quick kiss and a hug. Eric walked across the street to his car and headed out. He watched Will and his grandfather following behind

in his rearview mirror. It was pure torture not having Will beside him, but he knew it would only be a few hours before he could hold him in bed.

* * * *

Will watched through the window as the little town slowly disappeared in the distance. He knew it was for the best and something he had to do, but it was still difficult. He held on to the belief that he was part of something much bigger in this world, he just wasn't sure what that was yet.

His heart felt heavy with sadness as he left a part of his life behind. Tears welled up in his eyes when he thought back to the previous evening when he had said goodbye to Destiny. She was his best friend and had always been there for him. A ghost of a smile came to his lips. Destiny threatened to break every bone in his body if he didn't come to visit. They hugged each other while tears ran down their cheeks. He'll definitely miss her terribly.

"Why the sad face?" Cory interrupted his maudlin thoughts.

"I'm going to miss the town and...Destiny." Will turned and looked at his grandfather and gave him a half smile.

"I know what you mean, but the time has come for us to move on. You have a very important journey to travel in life now." Cory looked over at him and smiled before returning his attention to the road. "We will always have the memories."

Will turned his head and looked out the window. Tears welled up in his eyes as they fell into a comfortable silence.

Will woke with a start as the engine of the car shut off. Looking out the window, he noticed the flickering neon sign of the motel letting them know they had arrived at their stop in Watson.

"Where's Eric?" Will asked his grandfather, rubbing his hands over his face.

Cory looked exhausted from the drive. Each time they pulled over, Will and Cory would take their turn driving until the next stop. "He's gone inside to get us rooms for the night. He'll be out in a minute." Will watched the front door of the motel's reception area waiting for Eric to return as the cool evening breeze swept in from Cory's open window.

Cory and Will got out of the car as they saw Eric approaching with keys in his hand.

"So are we staying here for the night?" Will looked over at Eric.

"Yeah. I got us two rooms for the night. We'll be on the road again early tomorrow morning." Eric walked to his car and pulled a backpack from the back seat. "Just get what you need for the night and let's get some rest."

Will leaned into the car, grabbed the carry-on, and followed behind Cory and Eric. As Eric inserted the key to unlock the room door, his hand stilled as a growl emanated from him. He reached his arm out and pushed Cory and Will behind him as he looked out into the dark woods.

"Stay behind me."

At first, Will saw nothing but darkness. Eric's growl continued as a low rumble. Within seconds, Will saw four men emerge from the darkness. Standing at least six feet tall with wild and dangerous appearances, Will cringed and took a step back.

"Hey, Eric. We heard you were back and I thought we'd come around and keep an eye out." The stranger smiled and shook Eric's hand.

"Hello, Wade. Thanks. I appreciate the offer." Eric turned towards Will. "Wade, I'd like you to meet Will, my mate and his grandfather, Cory."

"At last we get to meet the one that we've been hearing about for centuries." Wade smiled at Will as they shook hands. "It's nice to meet you Will...Cory."

"Good to meet you too young man. So umm...I take it you're a..." Cory's voice trailed off as he gestured to the four men.

"Yes we are." Wade smiled and laughed. "I'm sorry. Forgive my rudeness. This here is, Darren," Wade nodded his head to the broad shouldered man standing next to him and pointed to the other two behind him, "and that's Ned and Tony."

Eric put his arm around Will's waist and pulled him close. "We'll only be here until the morning," Eric said as he unlocked the door and looked over at Wade, who just grinned at them.

"No problem." Wade and Darren followed them into the room, leaving the other two outside. "We thought we'd do our part and follow you guys the rest of the way home. We look after our own."

"You really don't have to." Will watched Eric as he visibly relaxed.

"We want to brother. Darren and I will stay here with you tonight and in the morning I'll drive with grandpa here," Wade put his arm around Cory's shoulder, "and Darren and the guys will follow behind us."

"Hey, you watch it young man. I can still pull you over my knee and give you a whipping boy!" Cory warned as everyone in the room burst out laughing. Will knew the easy acceptance and camaraderie made Cory feel special.

"Come on. Let's get something to eat at the diner next door," Wade said as he headed for the door. "It's on me."

Dropping his bag on the bed, Will turned to follow everyone out the door, but Eric grabbed his arm, shut the door, and pushed him against it. Will was about to protest as Eric's mouth came down on his. Holding on to Eric, he could feel Eric's hard-on pressing against his leg as their tongues dueled. Eric's taste of spearmint with a hint of musk sparked the need to get even closer.

His heart sped up and his cock reacted, straining against the material of his sweats. Eric's hands were touching him everywhere. Eric pulled away, his forehead resting against his and Will groaned at the loss of Eric's lips against his. Their breath mingled as they both tried to calm down.

"God, you're beautiful. I've waited all day to do that," Eric said breathlessly. "Come on. Let's go before they break the door down." Smiling at him, Eric took his hand and opened the door, leading them to the diner next door.

"You're evil." Will pouted. He couldn't believe Eric would leave him wanting. During the past two weeks, they'd made love every night. Even though neither of them said anything, Will felt himself falling hard for this handsome man walking beside him. There was just something about Eric that made Will feel safe and protected when they lay in bed at night with Eric's arms holding him.

Will sneaked a look at Eric's face. Even with the cool air, his face heated when Eric looked back at him and smiled.

"You tempt fate looking at me like that and you call me evil."

Will blushed even more.

The rest of the guys were sitting at a table when they walked in. From the smirks on their faces, Will knew they guessed the reasons for their delay. He slid into the booth avoiding everyone's teasing gaze. Eric slid in beside him, resting his hand on Will's leg.

A waitress came over and handed them menus. "What would you guys like to drink?" She asked, smiling.

The sensual look she gave Darren as she walked away wasn't missed by anyone. Will squirmed in his seat as Eric continued to rub his leg, moving further up towards his crotch. Will placed his hand on Eric's before it reached his hard aching cock. Will looked over at Eric and glared at him trying to tell him with his eyes, *stop*.

Eric smiled.

Will whispered in Eric's ear, "evil."

It wasn't long before the waitress returned with their drinks and took their order.

When the order finally arrived, Will was ready to dig into his double cheeseburger and fries. He let out a soft hiss through his teeth as Eric's fingers grazed his cock.

"Stop that," Will said as he clenched his teeth. His breathing became more rapid and his heart rate sped up. Once he settled down a little, he finally began to devour his food.

Will finished his burger just as everyone got up from the table and headed back to their room. He shivered as he stepped outside when the cold breeze blew over him.

"You cold? Come here." Eric put his arm around Will's waist and pulled him close. Will snuggled up close and slipped his hands inside Eric's jacket, leaning his head against Eric's shoulder.

Ned and Tony left the group to join Cory in his room, while Wade and Darren made themselves comfortable on the two recliners. They each took their turn using the bathroom before getting into bed. Will knew they wouldn't make love tonight with Wade and Darren sleeping in the same room. Laying there with Eric's arms around him, Will snuggled close and moved his butt against Eric's groin, feeling his hard-on against him. Will fell asleep with a smile on his face as Eric growled in his ear, "who's evil now?"

CHAPTER 10

The next morning, Eric lead the caravan of cars with Will riding shotgun, Wade and Darren with Cory, and Ned and Tony following in a third car behind them on the last leg of the journey to Lima.

Eric watched Will in the passenger seat from the corner of his eye as they drove through the small town to his pack's community. The gorgeous man quietly looked out the window taking in everything about the small town. He was gorgeous and Eric just couldn't keep his eyes off him. He constantly found himself taking his eyes off the road to sneak sidelong glances at Will.

His entire life, Eric lived for two things, to protect his pack and find his mate. Now that he had found Will, he didn't know what role he and his mate would play in the prophecy. He had no any additional contact with the Ancient Ones since that first night when they came to him in his sleep. Right now, Eric needed their guidance more than ever. He didn't want to rush things by claiming his mate and risk losing the man who had stolen his heart or the chance to save his pack.

He hoped Blake was still managing well during his absence for the last few weeks. He was once given the opportunity to become alpha of the pack some years ago, but knew it wasn't something he truly wanted. He knew his best friend Blake deserved it more than anyone and would lead the pack well and make them stronger.

"We're almost there." Eric glanced over at Will and their eyes met. Those beautiful eyes captivated him unlike anything else. And his smile was just as enchanting. When Will smiled at him, nothing else mattered in the world.

As they approached the pack community, Eric's mood darkened as he thought about the growing number of dead and sick pack members. He and Will had gone over the prophecy numerous times, but still couldn't figure out how their pack would be saved or how their union would be a miracle for all werewolves.

Eric startled when Will's hand landed on his leg. "What's wrong?" Will asked with concern in his voice.

"Nothing...I'm just thinking." Eric looked over at Will and shrugged. "We've lost so many pack members already and we're not even close to a solution. I don't know what to do."

"Everything will be okay, I'm sure of it." Will smiled at him and he felt his heart skip.

Eric turned his attention back on the road. "So...what do you think of what you've seen of the town?"

"It's small." Will chuckled, "but I like it. I saw there was a small store on the corner back there that wasn't occupied. Maybe my grandfather can setup his bookstore there?"

"Hey, that's an excellent idea. I'm glad you noticed it." Eric smiled as he took Will's left hand in his. "We can go have a look at it in the next couple of days."

Eric turned off the road, into the community and headed straight for his cabin with the two other vehicles following behind. Children were running and playing outside while some of the adults sat around chatting. Pulling the car to a stop, they exited the vehicle. Eric sensed the desolation in the air around him.

Eric walked around the car and took Will's hand. It felt as if there were a thousand eyes staring at them. Eric heard the shouting and scuffling of feet around them. Pack members started walking and running towards them from all directions. Within moments, they were surrounded by the entire pack, or at least what was left of it, all with hopeful smiles on their faces.

Cory came over and stood beside Eric while the four werewolves formed a half circle behind them. Everyone around them spoke to each other in hushed tones with excitement in their voices. Will stood next to him, their fingers intertwined. Movement from the right caught Eric's attention. Looking over, he caught Blake's eyes as he pushed through the crowd surrounding them.

"What's going on?" Will whispered in Eric's ear.

Eric looked at him and smiled. "They came to welcome us home. More importantly, they came to welcome *you*." Eric saw a flash of terror cross Will's face. "Hey, there's no need to be scared. You're safe here."

"But...but we don't even know..." Will stammered.

Eric turned Will and pulled him into his arms, giving him a quick hug and kiss on the temple before pulling slightly away. "Remember what you told me?" Eric asked as he looked straight into Will's eyes.

Will gave a slight nod. "Everything will be okay."

"My friend, my brother, welcome home." Eric let go of Will's hand and turned to face Blake. He was immediately pulled into a heartwarming embrace. "I missed you."

"I missed you, too." Eric slapped Blake on the back then pulled away. He felt Blake tense. He saw Blake's nostrils flare and his gaze lock on Wade.

"Who are they?" Blake sneered between clenched teeth.

Eric gestured the four werewolves to come forward. "This is Wade, Darren, Ned and Tony." Eric answered as he pointed to each one in turn while he darted his eyes back between the four werewolves and Blake. It was blatantly obvious to Eric that Blake didn't hear any name other than *Wade*.

Both Blake and Wade stood rigidly silent staring and sneering at each other. Before Eric could say anything to defuse the situation, shrill screams and shouts filled the air. The women and children ran to the safety of the main cabin while the men shifted into their wolf form. Moments later, the smell of sulfur assailed his senses.

Eric immediately went on alert. Blake and the other four werewolves must have also caught the scent. They quickly formed a protective barrier around Eric, Will and Cory.

"What the fuck?" The words left Eric's mouth before he could stop them. "I thought they could only come out at night?"

Blake and Darren stood in front of them, with their backs facing them. Blake looked over his shoulder, "I thought so too, but it seems they had a little surprise of their own," Blake sneered.

"Well, I'm not just going to stand by and do nothing." Eric turned to Will and Cory. "Go into the cabin, lock the door and don't come out *under any circumstances*. You'll be safe there." Eric shifted his focus on Will, "Do you understand?"

Eric could see a note of defiance and stubbornness in Will's eyes.

"Please." Eric reached up and touched Will's cheek. "I can't lose you," he said breathlessly.

"Okay." Will answered with a tilt of his chin. "But don't think you're going to talk to me like I'm a child again." Will huffed as he and Cory walked to the cabin. Eric couldn't prevent the smile curving his lips. Oh, his stubborn mate. *You're fucking sexy and ALL man...MY man.*

The males of the pack formed a circle around the main cabin, effectively creating a barrier of protection. Eric, Blake and the four others scanned the area for any signs of the approaching vampires. They looked to the surrounding woods and noticed a slight

movement off in the distance. Instinctively, they all shifted and started running towards the movement with Blake and Wade leading the group.

As they came closer, they saw a small group of about six or eight vampires approaching. They stopped a few feet away and spread out from side to side.

"Something doesn't seem right." Eric spoke to Blake through their mind link.

"I agree. There are only eight of them and they're coming to face us on our turf? In the daylight? Something's not right," Blake replied with a weary tone. *"Keep your eyes open and don't let them get out of your sight."*

The vampires stopped about a foot away from them. They crouched and unsheathed their talons ready to attack. Eric barred his teeth and let out a loud growl. He had one goal in mind, *protect my mate.*

The vampires all attacked at once, leaping through the air at blurring speed taking aim at them. Blake gave the signal and the wolves charged forward ready to attack the vampires. The sound of crushing bones and the rusty scent of blood permeated the air.

Blake jumped to attack the vampire closest to him, colliding in mid air and immediately reaching for the throat. Eric and Wade quickly found their target and attacked as well. The growls and snapping of jaws of the werewolves resonated loudly around them.

A yelp caught Eric's attention in mid fight. Following the cry for help, he saw a vampire on the floor with its neck ripped open and Blake lying next to it with a gash in

his side. He quickly finished off the vampire he fought and rushed over to the rusty colored wolf lying on the ground.

Before Eric could reach him, he saw a wounded Blake get up and attack another vampire. Eric joined him in the fight as another wolf flew through the air and hit a tree with a resounding thud.

Eric heard a commotion behind him and turned to see another ten or fifteen vampires attacking the main cabin. The distraction cost him dearly as the talons of yet another vampire sunk into his side. The searing pain weakened him for a moment and the vampire grabbed him and threw him against a tree. He yelped as he fell to the ground and the intense pain flowed through him almost rendering him unconscious.

"The cabin..." was all Eric could think about. As if in auto-pilot, Eric slowly got up and attacked a nearby vampire who was distracted. His teeth latched onto its throat tearing at it. The gurgling sounds spurred him on as he tore the vampire apart. His wolf instinct was to protect his mate at all costs. He didn't care about himself or the pain which threatened to overtake him, he knew he would heal. He needed to get to the cabin and protect his mate or die trying. Nothing else mattered at that moment.

As if they were one, they all simultaneously turned and headed in the same direction. Eric could feel the healing process begin as he made his way to the cabin. The rushing wind ruffling his fur invigorated Eric. He raced faster as he healed spurring him on to attack again for his mate. The ground beneath his feet vibrated like a thousand cattle pounding through the clearing.

They encountered another group of vampires nearing the cabin. They rounded them and attacked from behind, ripping their necks apart in one fell swoop. Bloodied vampire bodies flew through the air, torn flesh riddled the group, and the coopery stink of blood mixed with sulfur was intoxicating.

Within moments, silence settled over the area. In quick succession, they all shifted and took in the scene before them. They saw fellow pack members lying there unmoving and defeated amongst the dead bodies of the vampires.

Earsplitting cries filled the quiet community as the woman and children came rushing out of the main cabin and looked over the devastation. Some stood in the arms of their mates as others cried over their mate's dead body.

Eric turned just in time to see Will running towards him and falling into his arms with tear running down his cheeks. Eric put his arms around Will and held him tight, kissing his temples and cheeks.

"It's okay. They're gone now." Eric held Will tight against his body. He could feel Will's body shaking from shock and relief.

"I was so scared. I...I was so worried that something would happen to you," Will said while tears rolled down his eyes.

"I'm okay now. Come on. I need to help get these bodies together." Eric pulled away from Will and turned. He noticed Blake standing there with blood slowly seeping out through the deep gash on his side while Wade fussed over him. Eric smiled at

himself. It wasn't going very well. Blake kept swiping away Wade's hands and growling at him.

"Oh my God!" Eric heard Will say just as he started running towards Blake. Eric growled low in his throat when Will stood before Blake and took off his shirt. Eric moved to stand behind Will as he stanching the blood with the shirt and ran his fingers over the wound. Eric looked over at Wade, when he heard a soft growling noise. There was an intense expression on Wade's face. Almost as if, Wade seemed jealous of Will being so close to Blake. *Hmm...interesting.*

Blake let out an audible gasp as his head snapped down to where Will was touching the wound. Eric's eyes riveted on the gash in Blake's side which slowly closed as Will continued to touch it. Will's hands emitted a faint odd glow as they slightly shook. Everyone watched in stunned silence as the bleeding stopped and the wound fully closed within seconds.

Will pulled his hands away and turned to face Eric with eyes as big as saucers. "What...what just happened?"

"I think we just found out what it is you can do." Eric raised his hand and cupped Will's cheek in his palm. "You're what we call a healer."

"But...but I didn't do anything. I just touched him." It was obvious Will was terrified.

"Shush now. You did good. You were perfect." Eric pulled a trembling Will into his arms and held him while the small group gathered around them. "Come, let's see if you can do it again."

Eric pulled away and held onto Will's hand as he led him to another wounded pack member with deep gashes over his stomach. "Do it again." Eric looked at Will and gave him a quick peck on the cheek. "You can do it."

The small group followed them and stood behind Will to watch him. After a few minutes Will turned to him with a look of helplessness on his face.

"It's not working. Nothing's happening."

"You're starting to panic. Relax, baby. Take your time." Eric kept his eyes glued to Will's hands as they flitted over the wound. Eric frowned when nothing seemed to happen.

Eric stepped forward and put his hands on Will's shoulders. "It's okay, baby. Maybe you just can't do too much in one day." Eric's cock started getting hard the moment his hands touched Will's naked flesh. His wolf howled and paced, wanting to mate. "Let's go home."

Eric took Will's hand as he gave his pack member a sad smile. "But...but why didn't it work?"

"I don't know, baby. We'll find out." Eric looked at him with a questioning look on his face. He hoped the Ancient Ones would appear to him again and tell him what was happening.

Eric looked to the side and saw the vampire bodies stacked on top of each other as the flames of a fire engulfed them. Sadness of the loss hung heavy in the air as the male pack members with minor injuries dug graves in the clearing for those who had lost their mates.

Eric was pulled out of his reverie when Blake said, "we need to find out why the vampires were able to come out in the daylight."

"That shouldn't have happened. We need to get to the bottom of this...and quick." Eric and Blake both looked at Wade in surprise.

"So you'll be sticking around for a while?" Eric smiled and couldn't help but notice the hopeful look on Blake's face.

Wade fidgeted and shifted from foot to foot, glancing over at Blake. "Yeah, well...I might as well stick around and help out."

"The more the merrier." Eric shook his head and smiled at Blake. "We're going to head on over to my cabin...*our* cabin and get Will settled in. If you need anything, you know where to find me. I'm sure you'll be able to setup Wade and the rest with a place to stay?"

"Yeah, that's fine. We'll talk again later. They can stay at the main cabin...Cory too," Blake said almost scowling.

Eric let go of Will's hand just long enough to give Blake a hug and a tap on the back. They slowly made their way to where Cory was standing.

"I'm glad you're okay, son. We were worried there for a bit," Cory said as he patted Eric on the back.

"We're a tough bunch. Not much can bring us down." A heavy feeling settled over Eric as he remembered the illness that still plagued the pack. "Blake should be over in a bit. He's making arrangements for you to stay in the main cabin with Wade and the others."

"That's good...that's good. I don't want to intrude on you. You two need a bit of time alone." Cory gave Eric a sly, knowing smile.

"We'll bring over your bag in a bit, granddad." Will stepped forward, letting go of Eric's hand to give Cory a hug. "Thank you for being here with me."

Cory pulled out of Will's embrace. "Oh, get with you! Don't get all mushy with me. You go on home now." Cory shooed them away and headed back to the main cabin before either of them could say anything.

As they walked hand in hand back to their cabin, Eric couldn't help but look at the gorgeous man next to him. His eyes kept going over Will's naked chest and noticed his tiny pebbled nipples tightening up and going hard. Looking up, their eyes met for a brief instant and Eric could swear Will was also checking him out when he noticed a blush creep into Will's cheeks.

Eric's cock got harder the closer they got to the cabin. The wolf inside him was restless and wanted to mate, and so did Eric. Today, the fear of losing his mate was just too much to bear. All he wanted was to hold his mate in the safety of his arms in bed.

He couldn't wait any longer. Nothing else mattered at that moment other than the need to claim his mate.

CHAPTER 11

Will let go of Eric's hand and walked over to the car, grabbed his abandoned bag lying on the seat, then rejoined Eric at the cabin steps.

The bag fell to the floor as the door closed with a thud behind him and immediately Will was grabbed around the waist and shoved against the closed door. Warm, sweet tasting lips locked onto his, lips that could only belong to one magnificent man. Will clung to Eric's shoulders as his naked chest rubbed against Eric's clothed one. His nipples were already two semi-hard little buds from earlier when Eric looked at him with sexual hunger shining from his eyes.

Eric's woodsy scent enveloped him and had his cock stirring in his pants. His heart rate sped up and his hands started getting clammy. Will gasped when Eric's hands trailed down his body and slipped into his pants, enveloping his quickly hardening cock in his hand. Eric's tongue invaded his mouth, their tongues tasting and exploring each other. The taste of Eric was so heady, Will's body went limp and his head spun.

Eric pulled away, breathing hard. "I need you, baby." Will shivered as he looked into Eric's hooded eyes and heard the roughness in his voice.

Eric pulled his hand out of Will's pants, took his hand, and lead them into the bedroom. Stopping next to the bed, Will started undressing Eric. With shaky hands he started unbuttoning Eric's shirt. He knew what this meant and it frightened him a little.

"Will it hurt?" Will gave Eric quick glances as he let his hands move up Eric's naked torso. Eric gasped out loud when Will's fingers grazed his nipples.

"No," Eric hissed through clenched teeth. "But you need to understand, the bond of a mate can only be broken by death. Are you sure?"

"Yes," Will replied in almost a whisper.

Sliding his hands further up Eric's body, Will shoved the shirt off Eric's shoulders. He bent forward and started kissing behind Eric's ear, along his neck, then down his body following the trail left by his hands. Will went down on his knees and with shaking hands started to unfasten Eric's pants. Taking the tab of the zipper between his thumb and forefinger, Eric's body visibly shook when Will's fingers grazed his hard shaft as he pulled the zipper down.

Will hooked his thumbs into Eric's underwear, pulling them down and off as Eric toed off his shoes. Will's hard cock throbbed in his pants undoubtedly leaving a wet spot in his underwear. The moment he lifted his head, Will could smell Eric's musky male scent surround him. He bent forward, burying his nose in the hair

surrounding the base of the hard cock jutting out from Eric's body, and deeply inhaled his scent. It was an aphrodisiac to his senses.

Will held on to Eric's hips to steady himself and he slipped his tongue out and lapped all around Eric's heavy sack. The heavy musky taste exploded on his tongue. Eric's one hand came to rest on Will's head, his fingers gliding into his hair. Slowly he took Eric's balls into his mouth one by one. His tongue traced the contours as he gently sucked one first, then the other.

Eric growled as his body went rigid and the hand in Will's hair tightened. Will would have smiled at that if it was possible. It made him feel 10 feet tall to know he was responsible for his mate's lustful growl. Pulling his mouth from Eric's sack, he gave it one more lick then lightly bit down on the soft skin.

His tongue made a trail between Eric's balls all the way up the hard shaft, tracing the thick vein leading to the tip. Tracing his tongue around the head of Eric's cock, Will slipped the tip of his tongue inside the slit. The heady taste of pre-cum leaking from the tip exploded on Will's tongue. Will lapped at the head like a starved man. He couldn't get enough of the taste of his mate.

Will took the head of Eric's cock into his mouth as he looked up at him. Their eyes met and held onto each other as he let the hard silky shaft slide deeper into his mouth.

"Oh, baby. That feels so good." Will could feel Eric's body shiver under his hands. "God, you're so hot around me."

The silky skin of Eric's cock slid over his tongue as Will relaxed his throat and took the entire length into his mouth burying his nose in the public hair. His lips strained as it stretch to accommodate Eric's huge shaft.

* * * *

Eric caught his breath as his hard shaft disappeared into Will's mouth. It was the most erotic thing in the world. His heart pounded in his chest while his wolf begged to be set free. When Will started moving his cock in and out of his mouth, Eric groaned and held Will's head with both hands, weaving his fingers through Will's hair.

He could feel his orgasm approaching and didn't want to come just yet. He wanted to make love to Will and make him feel just like he was feeling at this very moment. Eric pulled Will's mouth from his shaft, bent down and slipped his hands under Will's arms, lifting him into his arms.

"Come here, baby." Eric slipped his hands inside Will's pants and underwear, hooked his thumbs over the elastic, and slowly pulled them down. Eric turned Will around and lightly pushed him onto his stomach.

"Urgh...You could have warned me." Will let out a groan when he fell onto the bed and looked over at him with a mock scowl on his face.

Eric bent down over Will, his knees resting on the edge of the bed and licked a trail of kisses down Will's body. Eric softly nipped at Will's neck and shoulder, making his entire body shudder. He couldn't believe he'd actually found his mate, this beautiful man beneath him, and had fallen deeply in love in such a short period of time.

Skimming his hands down Will's body, he held down his hips with both hands. Eric's tongue traced circles in the dip of Will's hips just above his cheeks, making him squirm on the bed.

"Oh, please. Please." Eric smiled at Will's breathless begging for more.

"Soon, my love, soon." Eric moved his hands further down and cupped both Will's butt cheeks in his hands, squeezing them lightly before pulling them apart, unearthing the treasure he wanted.

Eric looked down and a growl escaped his lips as he watched Will's hole contract in invitation to his touch. "Baby, you're driving me crazy here. I'm trying to go slow."

"I don't want slow dammit, I want you inside me." Will sounded like a child who hadn't received his candy. Eric smiled. His little mate was impatient.

Eric slipped off the edge of the bed and rested his knees on the floor, his body between Will's spread legs. Darting his tongue out, Eric lapped at Will's hole with a hunger that consumed him. The moment his tongue touched Will's hole, his hips came off the bed.

"Oh my God...that...that..." Will's words were incoherent as he panted to catch his breath. "More please. More."

Eric could smell Will's cock leaking with pre-cum, the scent driving him crazy with lust. He plunged his tongue into Will's hole, the muscle contracting around him and the heat and taste of Will was addictive. Will groaned when Eric slipped his tongue

out and brought his hand to his mouth, slipping two fingers in and slicking them up with his saliva.

Running one slicked up finger around Will's hole, Eric slowly pushed it inside. The muscle clenched tight around his finger as it slipped inside. His palms starting getting clammy and a bead of perspiration ran down the back of his neck as he watched his finger disappearing inside Will.

"You're so beautiful. It looks so sexy, you're hole swallowing my finger whole." Eric wet his lips with the tip of his tongue before bending forward and letting his tongue join his finger inside Will just as he added a second finger.

Will squirmed, his hands bunched up the bed sheet and his hips shot off the bed when Eric's fingers grazed the sweet spot deep inside him. "Eric...oh...more...it feels...so good," Will panted.

Eric pulled his fingers out and reached over to the bedside table, pulling open the drawer and feeling around for the lube. Throwing it on the bed, Eric took hold of Will's hips and turned him onto his back. Will's legs automatically spread open wide for him. Will looked at him with hooded eyes, his chest heaving as he tried to catch his breath. Eric gave him a triumphant smile as he grabbed the lube from the bed and flip open the cap, squeezing some out onto his hand.

"I'll take it slow baby, I promise. I won't hurt you." Eric looked straight into Will's eyes as he slicked up his hard shaft from root to tip. He squeezed more lube onto his fingers and threw the tube onto the floor.

"I know. I trust you." The complete trust Eric saw in Will's eyes made his knees weak. He quickly bent forward bracing himself on his hand on the bed. Looking down at Will, their faces mere inches apart, he slipped his lubed fingers back into Will's tight passage. Eric watched different emotions flitting over Will's face in a matter of seconds.

Eric withdrew his slicked up fingers and positioned the head of his shaft at Will's entrance. Will's legs wrapped around his hips and locked behind his back.

"Open up for me, love." Eric started pushing forward, his cock straining against the tight muscle barring his entry.

He lowered his head and captured Will's lips. When their lips touched, the head of Eric's cock broke through the tight ring. Eric's tongue dove inside Will's mouth when he gasped. Will wrapped his hands around Eric's neck pulling him closer. Slowly Eric slipped deeper and deeper inside Will. The warm passage clutched Eric's cock in a tight embrace. Eric pulled back and looked down into Will's eyes when he was fully seated inside him.

"God, you're perfect." Will's passage tightened around him making Eric snarl and show his unsheathed teeth. "I can't wait anymore, love. I need to move."

"Yes, baby...please."

Slowly Eric withdrew until only the head of his cock was still inside Will. When he pushed his entire length back inside, Will lifted his hips, his cock going deeper inside than before.

"Yes!" Will cried out and bucked up against Eric when the head of his hard cock rubbed over his prostate.

Eric set a slow and deep rhythm pushing in and out of Will. He captured his mouth with his own, kissing him with a hunger he had never felt before. Reaching down between them, Will took his own cock into his hand and started stroking at the same pace. Eric felt his balls draw up and pulled their lips apart.

"Oh, baby, you feel so good. So tight around me. I'm not going to last much longer." Eric moved his head to the side, unsheathing his teeth the rest of the way and nipped at the place where Will's neck and shoulders met. "I've waited my whole life for this."

"Please, Eric, take me. Make me yours." Will begged, breathing hard.

Eric felt the heat shoot down his body and into his balls. His wolf took over just as Eric pushed deep inside Will and bit down, spilling his seed deep inside his mate. Eric was sure the entire pack community could hear Will's cries as he came, painting their chest and neck with streaks of cum.

He felt the mating knot extend, binding him to his mate. His wolf rejoiced at finally being mated. Eric pulled back, lifted his head into the air and arched his back as he let out a long howl letting everyone know he had mated.

Eric looked down at Will and slowly smiled. "You're mine now."

"Always," Will said in a whisper.

Still bound by the mating knot, Eric slowly moved Will's leg from around his hips, turned him onto his side, and carefully positioned himself behind Will as he reached for the covers.

He slipped his arms around Will pulling him closer while pushing his still hard cock deeper inside him.

He lifted his head and leaned forward, whispering the words he'd wanted to say to Will, "I love you."

Will's hand took hold of his and squeezed lightly. He raised Eric's hand to his lips and placed a tender kiss in his palm. He looked at Eric over his shoulder and smiled. "I love you, too."

Eric nuzzled Will's neck as he snuggled closer.

They both fell asleep just as Eric's cock slipped out of his mate.

CHAPTER 12

Eric opened his eyes as if he were in a daze with Will standing next to him. He reached over and took Will's hand in his, a shiver passing through his body.

"Where are we?" Will whispered as he stepped closer to Eric.

"We're in a state of dreaming. It's like we're dreaming but we're really not." Eric looked at Will's confused expression. "We'll be meeting the Ancient Ones."

"The Ancient Ones? I think I might have read something about them in my grandmother's diary but I can't remember." Eric could feel Will's body shiver.

"They're some of our oldest ancestors who have passed on. When we're in need of guidance, they call out to our protectors while we sleep, in my case, my wolf, and in your case, your powers. There's no need to be scared, love, I won't leave you." Eric pulled Will into his arms and kissed his cheek before stepping forward.

The thick fog around them slowly lifted as the Ancient Ones appeared before them. They greeted them with smiles when they noticed them standing together.

"So I see that it has already happened," Goshe said, looking at a smiling Koda. "Congratulations my little wolf. You did well."

"But we do not understand why he can no longer heal. He did it once but couldn't do it again." Eric felt Will's hand resting on his arm soothing his frustration.

"So you've figured that part out, too." Goshe laughed. "But something tells me you haven't figured out the rest of the prophecy yet."

"He could heal once because we allowed it, to enlighten you of his powers," Koda said in a whisper. "Now that you've mated, his powers will emerge."

"You're mating was the last part of the prophecy...for you," Goshe stated, his brows drawing together in a frown. "The rest has just begun."

"What do you mean? There isn't any more to the prophecy," Will said as he stepped out from behind him.

"Oh my, you are beautiful, more so than we anticipated," Goshe smiled at Will. "Welcome home. We've been waiting on you for centuries."

"I don't understand. How do I have healing powers?" Will had a confused look on his face. "I only recently found out that I possessed a gift. How is that possible?"

"Oh, so many questions. Well..." Goshe turned to Koda and nodded. "There are two different bloodlines of a werewolf. There are those that can shift and those that possess a special power, in your case, your blood line is gifted with special powers. For you, your gift is the ability to heal others." Will stood there intently listening. "It is rare, if not impossible, for specials to find their mates."

Eric was confused. "But I don't understand. Other specials have found their mates in the past. Why is Will and his gift part of the prophecy?"

"Let me ask you this question," Goshe said looking directly at him as if he could see straight into his soul. "Have any specials been healers?"

Eric stood in silence as he mentally scrolled through their history recalling the stories, legends, books, and fabled tales. Suddenly, realization blindsided him. Many specials had found their mates and explored their gift, but Will was the only healer in all their history. Eric was rendered speechless. He was in awe of his mate's gift and significance to his kind. He looked at him with immense reverence and love.

"So now you see why he is so special to us," Goshe gazed at them with tenderness.

"He's special indeed," Koda sighed and looked at them with worry. "But your part of the prophecy is fulfilled."

"We are quite aware of your plight with the vampires. Since you have been found," Goshe regarded Will, "it has opened up for some vampires to walk in the day. Your healing powers have put werewolves at an advantage. They still need to protect their own. However," Goshe took a step back, "this is not for you to worry about. Even though your part is done, there is still much that is yet to unfold." Goshe regarded them with mischief in his eyes and glanced over at Koda, snickering. "It truly has begun and it couldn't have worked out any better."

"What do you mean?" Eric looked at them, confused.

"Oh now you little wolf, calm down. Your alpha will need you. You've been a great friend and wolf brother," Koda smiled. "He'll find his guidance, but will need your strength and support."

"Your little one here," Goshe pointed to Will, "with his healing powers, he will heal the sick not only of this pack, but of every animal in need. We cannot tell you how as we do not know, but you've accepted and learned quick, young one."

"We will always be there should you need us. We will know and come to you." Koda stepped forward and took both their hand in his. "May your guardians protect you and protect each other." Koda leaned forward and kiss their intertwined hands then stepped back as the thick fog slowly engulfed them.

* * * *

Will woke to the wafting smell of bacon and eggs. With his eyes still closed, he turned onto his side and reach out his hand. Feeling the bed empty, Will slowly opened his eyes and threw the bedcovers off, sitting up and scooting to the edge of the bed.

Rubbing his face with his hand, Will reach out and picked up the discarded sweats and slipped into them. His mind returned to his dream. He still didn't know if it was real or not but a feeling of peace and acceptance came over him. Will walked to the kitchen and leaned against the doorway and watched Eric as he cooked in front of the stove. A smile pulled at Will's lips. It was obvious Eric wanted to surprise him with breakfast in bed.

Walking up behind him, Will slipped his arms around Eric's waist and rested his head on Eric's back. "Good morning, baby."

"Good morning." Eric leaned back into him. "So...are you ready to try again today?"

He pulled back from Eric. "So last night...it was real?" Turning his back to the stove, Eric took his hands in his.

"Yes, it was real. Does it frighten you to know that it happened?"

"No, it doesn't frighten me. It's just a new experience, that's all." Smiling at Eric, he lifted his hand to cup Eric's cheek and bent forward to give him a tender kiss. "Now it's a good morning. I'm more than ready as long as you're with me."

Eric pulled Will into his arms and kissed his neck before whispering in his ear, "I love you with all my heart."

Will pulled back and looked into Eric's eyes, "I love you, too."

He sat at the table looking around the cabin while Eric served breakfast. The cabin was comfortably decorated with two recliners, a double seat couch and a fireplace on one end with a couple of photos on the mantle. A rug lay on the floor in the middle of the room with an old oak coffee table in the center. Will smiled to himself. *This is my home.*

They sat in silence as they ate breakfast and snuck glances at each other. They finished up and cleared away the dishes. In between Eric washing and Will drying, they would bump their hips together. Eric tried to throw him soapy dishwater while

Will would throw the dish towel. Somehow, they always ended up holding and kissing each other between the bouts of playfulness.

"Come on, love. Let's do this." Eric took his hand and smiled at him.

They walked out of the cabin towards the other side of the community. The cabins were lined in neat rows on either side with the main cabin in the center. Some were in need of repair while others had beautiful flower beds or different wolf sculptures carved out of wood adorning their front porch. As they approached the last cabin on the left, the door to the main cabin opened and Blake stepped out onto the porch.

"Good morning," Blake said with a devilish smirk. "How did you sleep?"

Will's cheeks flushed remembering his cries and Eric's howls when they mated the previous night. Eric pulled him close and put his arm around Will's waist, holding him tight against him. "We slept like little cubs."

Blake burst out laughing and stepped forward, slinging one arm over each of their shoulders, pulling them into his embrace. "Congratulations and welcome to the family. I'm honored to have you as part of our pack." Blake pulled away and looked at them. "Where are you two off too?"

* * * *

"We're going to see Terrance." Eric watched Blake's reaction, a dark cloud of emotion flitting over his face. "It's time. Are you coming with us?"

Blake nodded. Eric took Will's hand in his as they all made their way to Terrance's cabin.

Eric tapped on the door twice and a couple of moments later, it swung open. Victoria stood there with perfectly styled hair and a lopsided smile. Although she tried to look her best, Eric could see her mate's sickness had taken its toll with the new wrinkles on her forehead and around her eyes.

"Morning, Victoria." Eric gave a slight nod. "This is my mate, Will. May we come in?"

"Good morning. Please..." Victoria stepped aside allowing them to enter the cabin, noticing Blake followed behind them as they stepped inside. "Oh. I'm sorry Alpha, I meant no disrespect." Victoria tilted her head down and to the side, acknowledging him.

"No need for worrying, Victoria. It's okay." Blake's hand rested on her shoulder. "We're here to help. Can you take us to Terrance?"

Victoria nodded and led the way into their bedroom, casting quick glances at Will. Eric walked over to the side of the bed where Terrance lay with a blanket covering him. His breathing was labored and heavy as the scent of death lay heavy in the air.

"Hello, Terrance. How are you feeling?" Eric asked as Blake and Victoria stood at the end of the bed.

"I've seen better days," Terrance replied with a little bit of humor.

"This is my mate Will. He's here to help you." Eric pulled Will closer beside him. Terrance looked up at Will as hope brightly shined in his eyes. "Is it okay?"

Terrance gave a slight nod.

Eric turned to face Will and gave him a quick peck on the cheek. "I'll be right here if you need me." Eric walked to the end of the bed and stood next to Blake and Victoria watching Will.

"I'm going to have to touch you." Will's voice quivered. Eric sensed his mate was scared and didn't know what to expect. Nobody did. Everyone was relying on his gift to cure the sick pack members from this disease, but no one knew how this would happen.

Eric watched as Will pulled the bed covers down, exposing Terrance's frail body. His bones were clearly visible. His body looked malnourished. Will placed his hands on Terrance's chest and stomach. A few moments later, his hands began to glow a fiery red and his eyes rolled back in head. Quickly Eric moved and stood behind him, holding onto his hips.

Terrance gasped as the red glow engulfed his body. Blake held Victoria back by her arms to avoid interrupting the healing process. It felt as if several hours had passed when only a few minutes actually lapsed. The glow slowly receded then disappeared. Will's body instantly slumped back into his arms just as Blake instinctively pulled a chair under Eric.

Eric cradled Will in his arms as he sat.

The room was deathly silent. Terrance opened his eyes, his breathing no longer labored. Everyone watched Terrance slowly sit up in bed and rest his back against the headboard. Victoria rushed to his side and began to cry. He was visibly stronger. Terrance smiled at Victoria and tried to calm her and tell her he was better. Everyone was in awe at Terrance's miraculous change. Then, all gazes fell on Eric as he rocked Will in his arms.

Eric looked down at his mate. "How are you doing, baby?"

"Tired," Will replied in a whisper as his eyes slid closed.

Blake walked over looking down at Will with concern. "Is he okay?"

"He'll be fine. He's just tired." Eric lifted Will into his arms as he got up from the chair. "I'm going to take him home to lie down."

Eric walked through the cabin with Blake following behind. Blake reached out and opened the front door for them. A few eyes followed him as he carried his mate through the community back to their cabin.

Eric walked into the bedroom and softly lowered him on the bed. Will moaned and held onto Eric's shirt. He softly pulled the shirt from Will's grip and kissed his cheek before deftly removing his shoes and comfortably positioning him on the bed. He pulled the covers over Will as he slipped in behind him and held him close.

CHAPTER 13

Will woke feeling dazed and a bit confused as he looked around the cabin. Eric's strong arms tightened around his waist, reminding him of his mate's presence. Slowly, Will turned around and leaned over Eric to face him.

"Hi." Eric smiled, looking up at him. "How are you feeling?"

"I'm feeling better. I just got really tired all of a sudden." Will reached out and traced his fingers down Eric's jaw, leaned forward, and gave him a quick kiss on the lips.

Eric pulled Will down abruptly and held his face close to his. In stark contrast, he slowly and gently traced tiny kisses along Will's jaw line, then kissed his lips with tenderness.

Will melted into him as he felt the emotion in Eric's passionate, yet controlled kiss. When the kiss ended and their eyes met, Will knew he had just been kissed by his soul mate. There was no question in his mind that Eric was the man for him, regardless of *what* he was.

"Tell me about it. What happened?" A flash of concern passed over Eric's face.

Will smiled and gave Eric another kiss before sitting up and leaning against the headboard.

"How did you know you had to touch him?" Eric sat up against the headboard and pulled Will into his embrace as he began to softly stroke his back.

"I don't know. It was like...like I just knew." He grew somber as the healing replayed in his mind in slow motion. "I just knew I had to touch him. When I did, I could feel my hands heat up and my mind went into a daze. I could feel the disease coursing through his body, slowly killing him." The tears welled up in Will's eyes as he continued to talk. "Everything around me disappeared. The only thing I could focus on was pushing the disease out of his body. I could see the blackness of the disease." Will turned to look at Eric as tears ran down his cheeks. "I could feel his pain. I felt everything. It was terrible. I was so scared. Not because of what I felt or saw, but I was terrified I wouldn't be able to save him." Will could barely finish saying the last words before breaking down.

"Shhh....shhh...it's okay." Eric softly brushed the tears from Will's cheek and kissed him. "Every special's gift is granted to them for a reason. You are a healer because of your strength. The gift chose you. Many would not have known what to do but you did. You didn't let your fear take control. You controlled it and saved a life because of that. I am so proud of you, baby. I love you so much."

"I love you, too." A teasing smile tugged at the corner of Will's lips knowing damn well what that smile did to Eric.

Eric growled as he grabbed a teasing Will and passionately kissed him until he was consumed with just as much lust as his mate.

CHAPTER 14

A few days later, Eric, Will and Cory went into town to meet, Marjorie, the Estate Agent who was leasing the empty store property. She was an amazing but fierce little woman in her late 50's with light grey streaks. Cory signed the contract and was handed the keys to the store. As always, Cory started giving orders. An appalled Marjorie stood to the side watching, her mouth agape.

For Will, the days turned into weeks and went by quickly. With each pack member he healed, he learned something more about himself and his gift. He became more confident in his abilities and learned how to hone his skills. The pride on Eric's face each time he healed someone was food for his soul.

During the past two weeks werewolves came from far and wide to their little community just to see the healer, each with a different ailment. One incident stood out most amongst them all. Will sat next to Eric on the porch with a smile on his face as he recalled that day.

A few days before, a scruffy looking mutt was running around the community. No one had seen the animal there before. He and Eric were sitting out on the porch when the dog ambled up to them.

The dog was limping heavily, his back leg dangling inches from the ground. Instinctively, Will reached down and placed his hands over the dog's injured leg. The dog yelped softly as the healing began. The red glow settled over his injured leg then receded.

Will sat back with a smile on his face, remembering the moment the dog jumped onto his lap and licked his face. Will held the dog and looked over at Eric. The look of alarm on Eric's face was priceless.

"Oh, no you don't! No way! Don't even think about it."

"Please? He won't be in the way." Will rose from his chair holding the dog under his arm. "Look at him. How can you say no?" He leaned forward and started kissing Eric. His tongue darted out as he teased Eric's lips.

"Okay, but you look after him." Eric admonished halfheartedly, pulling them both into his lap. The dog immediately started licking Eric's face.

Will's hand rested in Eric's as they sat drinking their early morning coffee watching the sun rise over the cabins. Will smiled as he saw their dog, Scruffy, playing with his toys on the grass in the front yard.

The previous week, the moving trucks had finally arrived with the rest of their belongings. Cory was given his own cabin and the bookstore was well on its way to being organized. They expected the last of the boxes to be unpacked and sorted by the end of the day.

Although his grandfather had left his hometown, Cory was adjusting quite well. Will was certain Marjorie was, at least, partially responsible for this. Will softly laughed.

"What's so funny?" Eric was looking at him with a smile on his face and his heart shining in his eyes. Every time Eric looked at him like that, a knot formed in his throat and emotions threatened to overwhelm him. Will had everything he ever wanted...right here with Eric.

"Oh, nothing." Will smiled and stood. "Come on. We need to get down to the store and finish up." He held out his hand and waited for Eric to take it.

Eric took hold of his hand as Will pulled him out of the chair and into his arms. "I love you, my big bad wolf."

"I love you, my little cub."

* * * *

For the past few hours, Cory, Eric, and Will worked side by side unpacking the last of the boxes. The three of them stood there, looking over the bookstore. All the boxes were unpacked and thrown out and everything was in its proper place.

"This is where it all began." Eric smiled at Will as he spread his hands. "In a bookstore."

"It all began in a bookstore." The smile on Will's face and the love shining from his eyes was more than Eric could have wished for.

He had lost hope of ever finding his mate. Will had managed to change everything in Eric's life. He loved his mate unconditionally and would protect him with his life. He was special not only for his gift, but more so because he was kind and generous. Will's true gift was his heart of gold and tender spirit. A gift Eric would forever cherish.

Eric noticed Will's expression changed.

"What are you thinking about?" he asked, curiously.

"I'm just thinking about everything you've changed in my life," Will said as he smiled.

Eric smiled and said, "Me too."

Will looked over at Corey as he stacked away the last of the books on the shelf then looked back at Eric. "I'm not sure what else is to come for us during our lives, but I do know one thing," he said firmly as he placed his hand on Eric's chest. "I go where you go," he said softly.

Eric was overwhelmed with emotion and rendered speechless by Will's affirmation. He leaned forward and gave Will a deep, passionate kiss filled with all the desire in his heart and the love in his soul.

~ THE END ~

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leiland's reading list is exemplary of the evolution of erotic romance. Initially, Leiland began reading Harlequin Romance and Silhouette Desire but later transitioned to Silhouette Nocturne. After reading his first M/M erotic romance, tons of M/M material soon followed. As an avid reader, Leiland decided one day to take a stab at writing a book. These days, when not writing something new, Leiland can be found reading a steamy romance (shifters are a fav!), taking the pet dog for a walk or watching movies such as *A Walk to Remember*. You can find his website at:

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