



Warlock

A STRANGE GROVE NOVEL

BJ WOLFF

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Warlock – A Strange Grove Novel

Published by BJ Wolff

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In a quiet town where magic and mystery lie beneath the surface, Colby and Lexie Richards embark on a journey of love, lust, and the supernatural.

When a mysterious hunter, Thomas, enters their lives, he threatens to unravel their happiness. Colby must harness his newfound powers, confront their deepest desires, and fend off ancient forces to protect their love and family.

‘Warlock - A Strange Grove Novel’ explores the boundaries of love and the extraordinary secrets that bind us together.

CONTENTS

[Triggers](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Prologue](#)

[1. One](#)

The Discovery

[2. Two](#)

The Stranger's Revelation

[3. Three](#)

Embracing The Unknown

[4. Four](#)

The Council

[5. Five](#)

Secrets Unveiled

[6. Six](#)

Magic and Mayhem

[7. Seven](#)

Exploring The Depths

[8. Eight](#)

A Surprise Encounter

[9. Nine](#)

Shadows And Secrets

[10. Ten](#)

Double Breakfast

[11. Eleven](#)

Unearthing Secrets

[12. Twelve](#)

Unveiling Obsession

[13. Thirteen](#)

A Double's Duty

[14. Fourteen](#)

An Awakening

[15. Fifteen](#)

New Normal

[16. Sixteen](#)

Something Different

[17. Seventeen](#)

Witch Bitch

[18. Eighteen](#)

Thomas's Report

[19. Nineteen](#)

Shower Thoughts

[20. Twenty](#)

The Council's Decision

[21. Twenty-one](#)

The Ties That Bind

[22. Twenty-two](#)

The Proposal

[23. Twenty-three](#)

The Werewolf's Lament

[24. Twenty-four](#)

Into The Night

[25. Twenty-five](#)

Houseguest

[26. Twenty-six](#)

A Pact With Malik

[27. Twenty-seven](#)

Spells of Protection

[28. Twenty-eight](#)

Unidentified

[29. Twenty-nine](#)

The Potions Power

[30. Thirty.](#)

Emergency Meeting

[31. Thirty-one](#)

A Day In The Woods

[32. Thirty-two](#)

Unmasking Malik

[33. Thirty-three](#)

Hunter's Fury

[34. Thirty-four](#)

The Council's Support

[35. Thirty-five](#)

Juniper's Revenge

[36. Thirty-six](#)

Temporary Refuge

[37. Epilogue](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

MAY CONTAIN TRIGGERS FOR SOME. ON SCENE SA,
PROFANITY, MILD VIOLENCE ARE TOPICS WITHIN
THIS BOOK.

To all those who have wanted to write and share stories but never put pen to paper. You can do this, all of you Queens and Kings. Who cares what anyone thinks, write for you!



Strange Grove, Maine, is a picturesque village with a population of just over 3,300. The center of town everyone refers to as the square holds two small bars along with an ominous old chapel, Town Hall, and a post office. Near the outskirts of town, on the border of the woods, is a large park. The park has walking paths, a lake, and playgrounds. Not much happens in Strange Grove, at least on its initial appearance. When the town was founded in 1723, it is said that the Governor struck a deal with an Abenaki Shaman woman to keep the town safe and prosperous. This of course is just rumor, but every year on September 14th the town holds a festival in the Square called “Pact Day” in memory of this event. Everyone dresses up in olde pilgrim garb, plays carnival games, enjoys the splendors of local vendors and at the end, they have a large town feast.

Strange Grove residents, however, will tell you another story. Unexplainable events often happen, and the locals have learned to just live with it and continue their lives.

Well, most of them...



Colby Richards was one such inhabitant of this small town. He was twenty-eight years old, average height and weight, with long dark blonde hair that was usually kept up in a “man bun,” recently married, and not at all as superstitious as some of his fellow townspeople.

It was another dark evening as Colby pulled into his driveway after another long arduous day of work at PineCo, a local manufacturing warehouse. After days like that Colby wished he could just go inside, crack open a cold beer, and watch whatever bullshit show was on that night. But, just like every other night there was more work to be done at home. You see, Colby had just married his long-time girlfriend, Lexie. They met at Crow’s Tap, a bar on the square; she had just moved there from Augusta the previous summer. Physically, Lexie is fit. She is average height with olive skin, deep brown hair, and green eyes. Colby fell in love the moment he saw her.

After the wedding, Colby went to work at PineCo after his friend Dave told him the job would have him rolling in the cash. Colby and Lexie took the new position as a sign and bought what they thought would be a little fixer upper. Turns out, the little fixer upper turned into Hell House quickly. The water heater needed to be replaced, the roof leaked, and something smelled funny in the crawl space.

Colby got home each night and started on his “To-do” list. The night before, he was clearing the smell from under the house. Turned out Mrs. Hadley’s Yorkie had run as far as underneath their house but hadn’t made it out. That night, Lexie and Colby figured they would start on the kitchen backsplash. At least he could have a cold beer while knocking it out.

“Babe, where’s the beer?” Colby shouted from the kitchen.

“Are there none in there? Guess I’ll have to run to the store in the morning,” Lexie replied from the upstairs bedroom. She was changing into her “house repair” outfit.

Normally Colby found this little tradition cute, but that night he just wanted a damn beer. “Ugh, okay, well let’s get this started then.”

Colby started tearing away the old 1970s era wallpapers the previous owner must have adored, as it was in most of the rooms of the house. Chipping away at the work, bit by bit, Colby and Lexie worked well into the night. They finally decided to stop for the day around midnight.

Colby checked his alarm on his phone and let out a groaning sigh. “Looks like wake up is in four and half hours.”

Lexie replied with a heartfelt, “I’m sorry, love, just think how great this house is going to be when we’re finished with everything though!”

“Better be soon,” Colby said as he and Lexie let out soft chuckles. They gently kissed each other goodnight, but Colby could not resist thinking how great it would be if they just had some help.

It wasn’t a horrible house. Yeah, there was the 1970’s wallpaper in the kitchen, dining room, and living room. But it had its charm. A cute two-story Cape Cod with light blue siding and little shutters that might have been white at one time. Going inside, a quaint foyer greets you with a little wooden table Colby set up with an oblong green glass bowl where he and Lexie could drop their keys.

Straight ahead, the staircase stretched ahead with the original 100-year-old solid wood railings Colby thought were a real find when they first walked through with the realtor. To the right of the staircase was their living room which held their one couch, the TV mounted on the wall, and a coffee table. The kitchen was just through a beautiful Mahogany archway off the living room. It held a nice island for cooking and a stove that well... the stove needed replacing too. The second story held Colby and Lexie's gabled bedroom with a window facing their street, their only bathroom with a nice corner Whirlpool (a gift from Lexie's dad), and a second bedroom that they used as storage for all their tools and materials.



Four-thirty in the morning came with an annoying generic ringtone alarm from Colby's phone. He quietly and begrudgingly got up from the bed and stretched both arms above his head. Making his way to the bathroom to shower, he probably looked like a zombie, stumbling around from lack of sleep.

The shower woke him up a bit, and he dressed and went through the list of everything he needed for the day.

Work clothes? Check.

Phone? Check.

Wallet?

Wait, he thought. *Where the hell is my wallet?* Plundering until he found it downstairs, he grabbed his lunch from the fridge, hopped in his car and pattered down the road to work.

As he climbed out of the driver's seat, Dave greeted him. "What's up, asshole?" He sounded far too well-rested.

"Nothing. Just the same ole shit grind as yesterday. We got some of the backsplash done in the kitchen last night," Colby replied. "These rotating twelve-hour days are killing me."

"Hey, a win is a win, right?" Dave said, taking a swig of his energy drink.

Striking a glaring side eye, Colby replied, “Sure, Dave.”

The two continued their normal morning banter as they got in line to clock in for the day. “Hey, Charlie Jackson is going to be at the club tonight, want to go check it out?” Dave asked.

“Wow, really? He is the funniest dude this county has ever seen. I’ll have to call Lexie later and let her know,” Colby responded.

Dave rolled his eyes as he assumed that meant it’d be the normal response of, “No we have things to do at home.” Colby knew too. They had too many projects at home to work on to spend time out at the bar with Dave. The two of them clocked in and headed to the floor to start their day. Dave was an assembly line worker and Colby took his helm at the desk across the way as the Assistant Foreman for their shift. All that meant was he dealt with all the problems coworkers came up with throughout the day.

Six hours went by as Colby assisted various coworkers with their daily issues. Exhausted already, Colby had thought it was time for lunch. He grabbed his lunch from the communal refrigerator. *Ham sandwich, again*, he contemplated. Nothing seemed to make these days go by faster. Dragging ass for the next six hours, Colby finally punched out for the night, said his goodbyes to Dave, and got into his car.

The phone rang as he dropped into the seat. He saw Lexie’s name on the screen and answered it. “Hey, babe!”

“You’re never going to believe what I found today!” Lexie shouted, barely letting Colby finish his sentence.

“What did you find?” he asked, expecting it to be another dead or missing neighborhood pet.

“Well, I was cleaning out the junk from the bedroom closet. After emptying it out, I started scrubbing the walls, and BAM, the wallpaper started peeling. I tore what I could down, and there’s this crazy little half door in there!” Lexie declared.

“A... what? What the hell is a half door?” Colby replied, clearly annoyed. He couldn’t help but think, *awesome. More*

crap the realtor never told us about.

“I don’t know, it’s like, half of a normal sized door. A half door!” Lexie exclaimed, clearly more enthusiastic about this discovery than Colby. “It’s locked though. I’ve tried every key the realtor gave us. Do we still have that old crowbar?”

He chuckled at that. “Yes, we have the crowbar, but you’re not prying open a half door you found in the closet till I get home! What if there’s a shit ton of mice or bats?”

Lexie was petrified of mice and their flying shithead cousins.

“Bats? Okay, yeah, I’m not going anywhere near our random fucking Narnia door. It’s all yours, babes,” she snorted.

Colby pondered the rest of the drive home. *What the hell was behind the door? It couldn’t be much. There wasn’t a lot of room structurally past the wall.*

Treasure? Jimmy Hoffa’s mangled mummy? Mice and bats? Who the hell knows.

It was the most exciting thing that’d happened to them since coming home from their honeymoon. *Man, how fucking sad is that?* Colby thought as he picked up the pace and hurried home.

Pulling in the driveway, Lexie was already sitting on her chair on the porch waiting, crowbar in hand. Colby killed the engine, gathered his things, and got out of the car. “Hey, love. I see you aren’t wasting any time.”

“Fuck, no. I have a baseball bat inside too in case you unleash little hell spawns throughout the house.” She really hated bats.

“Okay, give me that.” Colby grabbed the crowbar from Lexie’s anxious hands. They walked together to the kitchen, trading ideas of what could be behind the door.

“Oh, I got you beer, babe,” Lexie said proudly. Colby reached inside the fridge and grabbed an ice-cold pale ale with his free hand. Enjoying an end of day beer was just as

intriguing as breaking open the mystery door. He popped the top off on the end of the kitchen table and they started up the stairs to their room.

Colby reached the closet, and their curiosities were at DEFCON1. He delicately wedged the crowbar between the door and frame, and giving it one good yank, the door popped open. He slowly opened the door the rest of the way and the two of them peered inside. The room was bathed in an eerie, dim light and a musty odor, but they both crouched down and stepped inside anyway.

The sight that greeted them was astonishing. The room was very small, no larger than a walk-in closet. It was unlike anything they had ever seen. The walls were decorated with strange symbols, drawn in faded red and black, with what they hoped was ink. In the center of the room, seated on a wooden pedestal, was an old leather-bound book, its pages yellowed with age. Surrounding it were bundles of dried herbs and animal bones arranged in a meticulous manner.

Colby and Lexie exchanged puzzled glances before Colby approached the book with cautious amazement. He reached out and gently opened it to a random page. The text was written in an ornate script that seemed to shimmer in the dim light. Lexie, still in awe, picked up one of the bundles of herbs and crushed it between her fingers, releasing an earthy aroma.

“What the fuck is this place?” Colby muttered under his breath, still trying to decipher the language the book was written in.

“It’s like something out of a fantasy book,” Lexie whispered, her voice filled with wonder.

“Or horror,” Colby retorted.

Colby tried to read one of the words from the book aloud, stopping when Lexie let out a high-pitched shriek.

“What, what is it?” Colby asked her. *Why the hell are you screaming?* he thought.

“Y-your eyes! They’re glowing blue!” she cried.

“I didn’t feel anything?” Fear raced across his face as he patted his body from head to toe trying to feel if anything was out of place.

Colby decided maybe he shouldn’t continue reading the book. He’d seen plenty of horror films that warned him that this was a bad idea. Hours passed as they explored the hidden room, captivated by mysterious artifacts and ancient décor. They were aware they had stumbled upon something extraordinary.

Finally, as evening grew into the witching hour and rain started to tap against the windows, Colby and Lexie reluctantly closed the hidden door.

“You know we have to keep this between us?” he asked her.

“Right. This is... it’s wild and confusing and... well, I just don’t know what to do about it.” Lexie replied.

“Exactly,” he said. *It could be some fucking weird sacrifice room.* He shuddered at the thought.



TWO

THE STRANGER'S REVELATION

“I’m heading to the store, babes,” Colby shouted as he marched out the front door. It had been a week since they stumbled upon the hidden room with the ancient leather book in their old Cape Cod style house. In that time, they had been consumed by curiosity, pouring over the book’s cryptic content.

Every couple of pages, there were weird drawings: some monsters, objects floating from the ground, plants starting at seedling and showing the progressive growth into fields of wheat. Each time Colby attempted to read words from the book his eyes would glow blue, and sometimes he’d get a headache afterwards.

That sunny afternoon, Colby found himself shopping at the hardware store, perusing the aisles for supplies to continue their ever-growing renovations. His mind was preoccupied with thoughts of the book and the enigmatic symbols etched onto its pages. He couldn’t help but wonder about its origins and what the words could mean. *Why the fuck were my eyes glowing*, he wondered.

As he reached for a box of nails, a voice interrupted his thoughts. “Quite a discovery you’ve made there, friend.”

Startled, Colby turned to see a short, bearded man with piercing blue eyes standing nearby. His rugged but stout

appearance and the air surrounding him sent shivers down Colby's spine.

"Uh, they're just nails," replied Colby. Trying to hide his unease, he asked, "I'm sorry, have we met?"

The bearded man grinned, revealing a set of weathered teeth. "No, we have not, but I knew your grandfather. That book you found, it's quite special, isn't it?"

How the hell does he know about the book? And my grandfather? I never even met the man. Colby's heart raced as his head filled with questions. "Who are you? And what book?" Colby demanded, his voice quivering with a mix of fear and curiosity.

The little man's smile widened, and he extended his hand. "Name's Cyrus. I've been searching for you for quite a long time."

Colby hesitantly reached out and shook Cyrus' hand, his curiosity outweighing his caution. "What do you mean, searching for me?"

Cyrus leaned in closer, lowering his voice to a conspiratorial whisper. "The book is no ordinary tome. It belonged to your grandfather and has been passed down in your family for hundreds of years."

Colby couldn't believe what he was hearing. The stranger seemed to know an awful lot about the book they had only just discovered and the grandfather he had never met. "What are you talking about? My wife and I just bought our house. How could this book you're talking about be a family heirloom?"

Shit, I shouldn't have mentioned Lexie. What if this guy is a fucking nutjob? Colby thought looking the stranger over.

"Well, dear boy, that house was owned by your grandfather long before you were a twitch in your father's jeans. As for the book, well, your grandfather and I were in the same—" Cyrus paused for an uncomfortable amount of time before he finished his thought. "—club."

Seemingly pleased with his word choice, Cyrus leaned back, his expression earnest. "I have been trying to track you down

for quite some time, however, the time was never *right*. You see, your grandfather passed before passing this book to your father. The connection to the ‘club’ was lost. It was only when you attempted to read the pages that I could then reach out and find you.”

“How the hell do you know I read the book?” Colby gnarled defensively.

“As I am sure you have noticed, the book is no ordinary thing. You may have experienced strange sensations when saying its words. Or caught your eyes glowing in a mirror. This book holds magical properties. If you choose, I could help you to understand its words?”

Colby considered Cyrus’ words carefully. He knew there was no way in hell he could transcribe the words. According to Google, they weren’t words at all. “Hmph, okay, but no weird shit. Deal?”

Cyrus’ smile grew unnaturally wide. “Deal. This may hurt a bit, but it will subside,” Cyrus said as he simultaneously reached his hand to Colby’s forehead, gently touching it with his old, wrinkled forefinger and middle finger.

“*Specta Omnis*,” Cyrus whispered, and a chilling, sharp pain extended from Colby’s forehead down through his spine and into his gut.

Colby reached for his forehead yelling in pain. “What the fuck?!” But when he removed his hand from his forehead, Cyrus was gone.

Dropping into the car, he Googled the odd words Cyrus had spoken when he had touched him. “*Specta Omnis*” apparently meant “See all”.

Shifting the car into gear and making his way home, Colby couldn’t get the old man’s wide grin out of his mind.

What does that mean? And where did the geezer disappear to? Colby thought.

In no time, he was across town and pulling into their driveway.

“Babes, some weird shit just happened at the store!” Colby said, bursting through the door.

Lexie jolted at the sudden noise, jumping up from clearing the cloth they’d laid out to catch any stray paint from the day’s episode of “Fix this House”.

“You scared the shit out of me!” she yelled back. “And it must have been awfully weird for you to come back empty-handed.”

Colby spent the next few moments recounting the events from the hardware store, pacing the entire time. “And, the craziest part, outside of some dude finger fucking my forehead, was what happened after he said the words. He just fucking disappeared!” he panted as he finished his story.

She let out a chuckle. “Finger fucking your forehead, huh? Well, this is the most off the wall reason for not getting the nails and paint I’ve ever heard.”

“I’m not kidding, Lexie.” At that point, Lexie knew he wasn’t pulling her leg. They never called each other by their first names.

“Okay, okay. But what does all this mean? You never said this house belonged to your family.”

“I have no idea what the geriatric did to me. Also, I had no idea this house had ever been in the family before,” Colby shot back, unintentionally sounding rude.

“The book!” he shouted as he took off, racing up the stairs into their closet, Lexie following suit. Colby dug through the closet like a mad man getting to the hidden door. He flung the door open and burst into the room, grabbing the book, and flipping it open about halfway.

“I, I can read it!” he shouted.

“What do you mean you can read it?” Lexie asked, confused and anxious.

“I can read the book. As easy as if it was English. This page says, ‘Bountiful Harvest’. It reads kind of like a poem.” Reading the page that depicted the growth of the seedling,

Colby's eyes glowed the glorious blue, and he rattled off words in a language Lexie believed he made up on the fly.

"Okay, put that thing down until we know what's going on, please," Lexie pleaded.

Colby agreed, gently closed the pages, and placed the book back on the pedestal. "Woah, I need a drink," he said as they ducked out of the hidden room and headed back downstairs. Colby grabbed two beers from the fridge and guided Lexie out to the front porch. They both dropped into their chairs and popped open their drinks.

"Babes! When did you plant those sunflowers?" Colby cried, staring towards the garden.

"Sunflowers? I put a few seeds down this mor—" Lexie stopped mid-word as she saw twenty sunflowers towering in their garden. "What did you say was the name of that page you read?"

"Bountiful Harvest," Colby replied in awe, taking a sip of his beer. He chuckled in disbelief. "This is fucking wild. Does this make me Harry fucking Potter? I have to find this guy and ask him what the hell he did to me!"

Almost on queue, Cyrus was there, walking up the front steps wearing a fedora. Tipping his hat, he greeted the two. "Hello, you must be the missus."

"And you must be Cyrus. Colby just told me an incredible story about you." Lexie stood up, welcoming their mysterious guest.

"That I am. Colby, is it? I did not mean to startle you with my abrupt absence from the shop. What I did to you took a lot out of me. I could not hold my form. What I wanted to tell you is that you, my boy, are what we in the underground call a warlock," Cyrus explained.

"A warlock? Like in Dungeons and Dragons?" he asked quizzically.

"This is no game, and what you have found is not to be taken lightly. I can see from this astonishing garden that you have already tested your mettle by reading from the book. It is

called a grimoire. It contains incantations collected by your family. Some of which simply grow plants, and others that have devastating consequences,” Cyrus said, his face now transformed from cheerful to troubled.

“Devastating consequences?” Colby asked, puzzled and worried.

“Yes, and it was such an incantation that took your grandfather from us long before his time.” Cyrus’ eyes seemed to be seeing a horrible past event that he could not shake. “But, enough of that. Now you know who you are or at least enough for now.”

Cyrus stood up, placing his fedora back on his head. “In time, I will visit again and reveal more when you are ready.” He bowed, and as if he was never there at all, disappeared again.

Lexie’s jaw dropped as she shot up, looking all over the porch and front lawn. “Where the fuck did he go?” she exclaimed.

“See, and you thought I was going crazy!” Colby chuckled trying to hide his overwhelmed anxiety.

The two finished their beers in silence, staring at the sunflowers. After cleaning up the porch, they headed inside. Colby stopped at the door, looking out one last time, thinking, *I’m a god damned warlock!*



THREE

EMBRACING THE UNKNOWN

In the next few days following Colby's encounter with Cyrus, he stayed on edge, torn between the allure of the ancient book's power, the fear of the unknown, and the stress of work and renovations on the house. Each night, he found himself tossing and turning, haunted by dreams of obscure symbols and mysterious incantations.

One evening as the moon cast a silvery glow through their bedroom window, Lexie sensed her husband's restlessness. She reached out and gently touched his arm, her voice filled with concern. "Colby, you've been distant lately. Is something bothering you?"

Colby hesitated, his gaze fixed on the ceiling. "Babes, it's all bothering me. The book, work, the house, our weird new little friend. It's... it's all just overwhelming."

Lexie sat up, her eyes filled with love and encouragement. "Hun, I know everything is crazy, but as long as we have each other, there's nothing we can't get through. Together."

Taking a deep breath, Colby replied, "You're right, babes. We made an entire garden grow out front in a matter of minutes. If we're careful with it, there's no reason we can't use the book and all this stuff to our advantage."

Lexie looked at him with a mixture of surprise and acceptance. "You. *You* are the one who made the field grow.

My eyes don't glow blue, and Cyrus didn't seek me out. It was you."

Suddenly, her face grew red, and she dropped her voice to a shy, almost embarrassed tone. "And it's, uh, pretty fucking hot."

Colby mulled that over in his mind. *Hot? Being a warlock is hot?*

"Hot?" Colby chuckled. "What do you mean hot?"

"Well, it's exciting and pretty sexy having a husband with magic powers. It's like you were plucked from real life and dropped into some fantasy novel!" Lexie explained excitedly. "I've been so turned on thinking about it and you, a magical man, with his sexy wand."

With that last flirtation, Lexie gave him a coy wink while biting the left side of her lip.

Colby was instantly in the mood, thinking, *God, she knows that lip bite gets me every time.* "Oh, my 'sexy wand', huh?" He threw the bedspread off their legs and grabbed Lexie's waist, pulling her into him and kissing her passionately.

Lexie pushed away, scooping her hair into a ponytail and lifting her shirt up over her head to display her alluring breasts. Her face blushed red in anticipation. Colby took no time to mirror her and remove his shirt, again reaching out and pulling her back into him. Colby thought, *God it's felt like months since we've fucked!*

He gave her one more long, fevered kiss and started working his way down her neck, his tongue gently lashing at her skin. One hand squeezed and tenderly scratched her back as his mouth made its way to her breast. The other hand reached around to keep her pressed against him. Sucking her nipple, he lashed it with his tongue, his hand never leaving her skin.

Lexie's face turned more sanguine, her breath heaving. She worked her hands down his torso, grabbing his "sexy wand" from the outside of his sweatpants. "Mph, I've missed this cock!"

Colby's dick became fully erect at her touch. He continued guiding his lips and tongue away from her nipple, lower, down her torso to her belly, stopping just before her shorts started.

Grabbing each side of them, he hoisted her lower half a foot off the bed and pulled them off in one motion. He quickly laid down and dropped his head between her legs working his tongue on her pussy. After making sure it was nice and wet, he moved his tongue up to her clit and started massaging her, knowing just how she liked it. Inserting his forefinger, he curled it upwards and thrust it deep inside of her. *I love the taste of you, babes!* he thought.

Lexie let out a soft, uncontrollable moan, clenching her legs on either side of his head locking it in place and letting Colby ravish her with his fingers and mouth.

She grabbed at his hair driving him deeper into her. After a second moan escaped, she pushed his head away and guided him up.

“Your turn,” Lexie exhaled, with fiery lust in her eyes.

Colby stripped his sweats and threw them across the bedroom.

She shoved him onto his back and swung around, throwing her leg over his head, and lowered her hips so he could continue eating her out. Grabbing his throbbing cock in one hand, she bent forward and started licking his shaft, working her tongue to the head, and engulfing it with her mouth. Now they were both moaning, pleasuring each other with their mouths.

Lexie released his cock from her mouth with a pop, whipped her leg back over Colby's head, and mounted him, his cock still in hand as she rubbed it along the outside of her pussy.

As they both panted heavily, she took one firm grip and ushered it inside. She gasped as he thrust deep inside. She slowly bounced her hips up and down, riding his cock, watching his face, and waiting for Colby's inevitable tell of, “I'm coming!”

His hands traced up her back, once reaching near her shoulders he curled his fingers and clawed slowly down. Reaching the top of her ass he pulled her forward as he drove his hips up, his cock finding its way deeper into her cunt.

“Fuck, you feel amazing,” Colby ushered out.

Lexie’s face flushed red as she looked down at him and smirked. She reached back pulling his hands from her ass swinging them wide around and over Colby’s head, pinning him in place.

Using the leverage, Lexie rode him faster. Her nipples brushing Colby’s lips with each pass, his warm breath cascading over her chest. She extended her fingers to hold both of Colby’s wrists with one hand, the other reaching for her breast, squeezing firmly as she slid her hips faster.

“Ah, yes give me that wand!” she screamed.

“Babes, now!” Colby struggled to say.

Lexie rode his cock up one last time, letting go of Colby’s wrists, and bounced down off the bed, catching his eruption with her mouth.

Colby laid his hand on the back of her head as she continued to suck until the throbbing ceased.

“Fuck! I missed this!” Colby shouted, trying to catch his breath.

“Me too, my sexy warlock!” Lexie let out, climbing back into the bed, and dropping into his outstretched arm. They both lay there, holding each other, until they fell asleep.



The next morning, they woke up suddenly, startled by the sound of the mailbox clanging shut. Colby shot up, grabbed his sweats, and rushed downstairs to find a sealed envelope with his name written in elegant calligraphy. He opened it, revealing a letter signed by the illusive Cyrus.

Dear Colby,

I trust this message finds you well. I must apologize, yet again, for my cryptic approach, but the nature of our world demands discretion. You have begun to unlock the secrets of the supernatural, and it is my duty to guide you through the path that lies ahead.

We are not alone, Colby. There exists a hidden underground community of individuals with supernatural abilities known as The Council.

But with power comes peril. The Hunters, a secretive organization, are dedicated to eradicating those with supernatural gifts. They see us as a threat, unnatural, and they will stop at nothing to eliminate us.

Colby, your newly awakened abilities will inevitably make you a target. I urge you to meet with The Council in person. I will provide you with more information and help you understand the extent of your abilities and role in this community.

Meet me at Grimstone Park, on the west side of the lake, tonight at midnight. Come alone, and other than Lexie, do not speak of this to anyone else. Your safety and the safety of the ones you care for depends on it.

Sincerely,
Cyrus

Colby's heart raced as he read the letter aloud to Lexie, who listened in stunned silence. The revelation of The Council and the threat of the Hunters added a new layer of complexity to their already fucked up situation.

"Cool, now there are fucking warlock killers?" Colby sighed, thinking, so much for being sexy and powerful.

Lexie's eyes were wide with excitement. "Coolest, shit, ever!" she reached for the letter, examining the almost artistic handwriting.

“I’m glad you’re having fun,” Colby replied, looking around the neighborhood for the sender. “This guy is like fucking Houdini. Just gone, every time.”



Colby arrived at Grimstone Park, the night air thick with an otherworldly stillness. Moonlight filtered through the ancient oak trees as he made his way to the meeting location – the western side of the park’s lake – where the glow of the streetlights seemed not to reach. He glanced at his phone; it was nearly midnight.

Cyrus emerged from the shadows, his presence as enigmatic as ever. “You made it.” He greeted Colby with a nod. “Follow me.”

“You remember when I said no weird shit, Cyrus?” Colby whispered under his breath as he followed.

“This is not even close to weird,” Cyrus said sarcastically. “Yet.”

Colby wondered, *shit, how did he hear me?*

Together, they ventured into the depths of the park, their footsteps barely audible on the damp earth. After what felt like an eternity, they reached a clearing. Before them loomed an imposing manor, reminiscent of something out of a Scooby Doo episode.

“I’ve never seen this place in town before. Where are we?” Colby said, puzzled, as he scratched his head.

“Keep quiet and follow me,” Cyrus replied with a hint of irritation.

The manor was adorned with ominous gargoyles, their stony eyes seemingly following their every move. They ascended the stairs until they reached a gargantuan mahogany double door. As they entered, the candlelit hallways beckoned them forward, casting flickering shadows on the walls. Colby couldn't help but feel a shiver run down his spine as they approached the entrance.

"I must warn you," Cyrus finally said, "not all Council members are human."

"Not all... Human?" Colby countered, very off guard.

"No, my boy. There are ten members of The Council. Four are warlocks, such as you and I. Two witches, two vampires who are cousins and can be quite the aristocrats, one lycanthrope or werewolf – pay him no mind, he likes to stay in human form – and one, well, one special someone who would very much like to meet you."

"Did you say a god damned werewolf?" Colby nearly shouted.

Cyrus let out a soft laugh. "Yes, a werewolf."

Colby nodded, concluding it was a fucking Scooby Doo mansion.

"Welcome to the Council House. The manor has been our place of meeting and solace long before the first brick was laid. The first Council met here in 1723 to discuss the terms of the settlers' pact with an Abenaki Shaman," Cyrus revealed.

Cyrus reached out a bony hand and started to draw the door open. Inside, the manor's grandeur continued. The large dining room, unlike any conference room Colby had ever seen, was arranged with an array of ornate chairs around a polished mahogany round table. The atmosphere was both eerie and enchanting, as if they had stepped into a realm where time held no sway.

Seated at the table, were the ten members of The Council Cyrus had mentioned, an eclectic gathering of beings from different walks of the supernatural world.

There were four males, two on each side of the table, in cloaks and piercing blue eyes. Colby figured these were the other warlocks. Each held a distinct aura of power and knowledge. They greeted Colby with nods of acknowledgement, their eyes revealing a mixture of curiosity and scrutiny.

Two females sat, one on each end of the table halfway around, their presence commanding and mythical, exchanging knowing glances as they observed the newcomer. Their lacey flowing black dresses and matching lipstick reminded Colby of the Goths from High School. Colby thought, *Ah, these must be the witches.*

At either end of the table across the room from one another, there sat two eloquently dressed individuals. One in a black suit, and one in a red hook-and-eye corset and black leather pants. Their skin was stunningly pale, but their beauty was unmistakable. They had slightly pointed ear tips and Colby's mind raced. *Are those fangs? Oh, the vampires!* Colby thought. They watched Colby with an intensity that chilled him to the bone.

At the opposite end of the table sat a grizzly lumberjack looking man, with a beard as thick as a forest, his eyes twinkling wisdom and strength. Colby thought, *that definitely has to be the werewolf!*

And finally, there was the figure that stood out the most – an apparition with a long white beard, seemingly translucent, who emanated an otherworldly aura.

Cyrus motioned for Colby to take a seat at the table, and the room fell into hushed silence. The members of The Council regarded him with a mix of curiosity and expectation.

“Colby,” Cyrus said, “welcome to The Council. We have gathered here to discuss matters of grave importance, and your presence is no accident.”

As Colby settled into his chair, he couldn't help but feel the weight of the situation. The supernatural world had opened its doors to him, and The Council held the key to unlocking the mysteries of his newfound abilities.

“Before we start, I believe some introductions are in order. You know me, and we know you, Colby.” Cyrus gestured his hand around the table. “Our fellow warlocks: Eric Wood, Phillip Campbell, Robert Moore, and Richard Montgomery.”

“Yeah, but we just call him Dick,” the grizzly man in the back shouted, leading to a handful of others laughing.

“And that,” Cyrus responded, “is Ronan Carter, our local comedian.” He continued as he rolled his eyes toward Ronan.

“Our two lovely witch friends are Cassandra Taylor and Juniper Green.”

They both nodded. Juniper, a fiery redhead, gave Colby a quick wink and giggle.

“The two at the ends of the table are, yes, vampires, Jonas and Asra Fieraru.”

Smiling, Cyrus finishes with a surprise. “And lastly, Colbert Richards, your grandfather. Or his spirit at least.”

“My grandfather? Colbert? I had no idea I was named after you?” Colby gasped.

“Hello, Colby,” the ghost bellowed. “I have wanted to meet you for a long time.”

“Yes, yes. Now that the pleasantries have been exchanged, can we get back to discussing why we are here?” Jonas snarled.

“Of course, Jonas,” Cyrus replied. “I have brought you all here so that we may incorporate Colby into the society. It has been too long since we have had a,” Cyrus stuttered, “well, a living Richards on The Council.”

“No one has said Colby is going to be part of The Council,” Cassandra chirped. “This child has been a warlock for what? Fifteen minutes?”

“Now now, Cassie. That’s not fair. The boy had his opportunity stolen from him by those cock sucking Hunters,” Ronan responded. “It’s our duty to help bring him up and get him on the battlefield.”

“We aren’t reverting back to this argument, Ronan. We are not at war, there is no battlefield. Although I very much agree, the boy needs to be reared and taught his lineage,” Asra added in the most beautiful voice Colby had ever heard.

Nervously, Colby let out a short cough. “Um, I don’t mean to interrupt, but I am not a boy. I’m also not a baby or a child. I’m 28 years old.”

At this, the entire table erupted into laughter. “Son, I’ve been 28, four times over,” Ronan bellowed through laughter.

Colby stared at the man who didn’t look a day over 35 and thought, *there’s no way Paul Bunyan is over 100 years old!*

“Colby, most here at this table are well into their second century of life,” Colbert retorted. “Most of these cretins mean no ill feeling when they refer to you as boy. They simply mean you have not been in the know for very long. Trust is and must be hard to win from them.”

“Precisely,” Cyrus said. “Now, back on topic. I will be Colby’s confidant and instructor until he is ready to take a seat at the table. Any objections?”

There were nine *eyes* before Jonas chimed in. “He will be your burden, Cyrus. If this child brings the lurking eyes of The Hunters to town, it is also on you.”

“Understood.” Cyrus bowed, and standing back upright, he tugged at Colby’s arm, guiding him back toward the door. Colby took one last look around the room before following his newfound mentor, catching another wink from Juniper as he turned.

On their way out, Colbert stopped Cyrus and Colby, his presence mysterious yet reassuring. In a more private moment, Colbert re-introduced himself to Colby.

“Colbert, I have to admit, this place is incredible. But I don’t fully understand the whole spirit bound to The Council House thing.” Colby said.

Colbert’s misty apparition hinted at a smile. “It’s a unique connection, Colby. When I was alive, I dedicated my life to

protecting this place. And in return, my spirit found a home here even after death.”

“So, you’re like a guardian spirit?” Colby asked.

Colbert’s face grew softer. “Exactly. I’m here to guide, support, and watch over The Council House and its inhabitants. That includes you now.”

A sense of peace washed over Colby his shoulders grew noticeably more relaxed. “That’s... comforting, actually. I’ve been through a lot, and knowing there’s someone, even in spirit, looking out for me means a lot.”

“It’s a bond that goes beyond the physical, Colby. And it’s not just about protection. If you ever need advice, someone to talk to, or just a friendly presence, I’m here.” Colbert replied.

Colby chuckled softly. “I appreciate that, Colbert. It’s been a wild ride, my wife Lexie said it best, it’s like something out of a fantasy novel.”

“Life, especially when intertwined with magic, can be quite fantastical. But remember, you’re not alone in this. The Council House is a place of strength and support.” Colbert said.

“Thanks, Colbert. Grandpa. I’ll keep that in mind. And who knows, maybe I’ll need some guidance navigating the magical chaos.” Colby replied.

Colbert smiled, his lips almost went ear to ear. “I’ll be right here whenever you do. The journey is yours, but you have allies, seen and unseen, walking beside you.”

With that Cyrus and Colby continued their way out the hall doors and down the wall.

Making their way out the double doors and into the yard, Colby let out what felt like all of his breath. “Okay, you were right. That was the weirdest fucking part.”

“Told you it was going to get weirder,” Cyrus softly said as they continued toward the park. “Now that you have seen the Council House, you must never speak of its whereabouts. It is protected, hidden from humans by a charm. However,

knowing its general vicinity, a Hunter would be able to find it.”

Colby nodded in understanding. “Yes, sir. You’ve got it. So, what’s next?”

Finally making their way back to the west end of the unlit lake, Cyrus replied, “Now, you go home to your beautiful wife. Continue testing your mettle with the book and grow stronger. I will pop in from time to time and ensure everything is going well.”

Cyrus’ eyes dropped. “Whatever you do, keep the attention of humans at bay. That is the fastest way for this story of yours to end, do you understand?”

Again, Colby nodded, “Understood.” And with that, the two shook hands and started off in separate directions. Colby turned around to see Cyrus one last time, but he was already gone. He thought, *I don’t know if I’ll ever get used to that.*



Colby returned home late that night, his mind racing with the revelations from The Council. The drive back was filled with a sense of awe and trepidation. The supernatural world was far more complex and intriguing than he had ever imagined, and the presence of his grandfather as a ghost had left him both bewildered and touched.

As he entered their home and ventured up the stairs, Colby noticed the bedroom light was still on. Lexie had been waiting for him, her eyes heavy with concern. She rushed to him as he closed the bedroom door.

“Babe, you’re back! I was so worried!” she exclaimed, wrapping her arms around him.

He held her close, feeling a deep sense of gratitude for her unwavering support. “I’m sorry I’m late. It was... a lot to take in.”

Lexie pulled back and studied his face, her eyes searching for answers. “What happened? You’ve been gone all night, and you have work in an hour!”

Colby sighed, glancing at the clock on the dresser. He’d been gone for hours. It certainly hadn’t felt that way when he was with Cyrus and his grandfather’s spirit. He settled onto the edge of the bed, and she joined him, holding his hand.

“I met with Cyrus who took me to see The Council,” he said, his voice steady but filled with emotion. “There are so many beings, creatures, and really weird shit we never knew existed. And, babes, I saw my grandpa... as a ghost.”

Lexie gasped, her eyes wide with astonishment. “Your grandpa? A fucking ghost? What did he say?”

“He didn’t say much,” Colby replied, his gaze distant as he recounted the meeting. “But he told me that I had to earn the trust of The Council before they would stop calling me a boy.” He snorted. “And there’s something else. There are werewolves, witches, and vampires.”

Lexie let out a shriek, and Colby thought, *Of course, team Jacob over here eeks at werewolves.* She listened with rapt attention, her disbelief slowly giving way to fascination. “See, it *is* like something out of a fantasy novel,” she mused.

Colby nodded. “It’s all real, babes. And I’m supposed to practice magic with the book we found. It holds the key to unlocking my abilities.”

His gaze shifted from side to side. “There’s more. This whole Hunters thing is also real. Everything needs to be kept secret. I can’t even tell you where Cyrus took me. Honestly, I don’t know if I even know. No telling your mom, your friends. I can’t even tell Dave. The werewolf guy made them sound pretty nasty.”

Lexie squeezed his hand, her support steadfast. “Whatever lies ahead, love, we’ll face it together. You’re my husband, and I love you, no matter what.”

Colby thought, *Damn I picked the right girl. Drop dead gorgeous, supportive, and apparently not scared at all of some secret organization determined to kill us.*

The weight of Colby’s meeting had lifted, and he felt a renewed sense of purpose and determination. He knew that with Lexie by his side, he could navigate the uncharted waters of this new life.



The alarm from Colby's phone stirred the stillness of night. "Shit, time to wake up for work." With no time for a shower, he stripped his clothes from the night before and pulled a fresh set out for work. Gathering his phone and keys, he kissed Lexie and after less than an hour's sleep, headed back downstairs and out the door.

As Colby pulled into the parking lot, the sun barely touched the earth, and he saw Dave standing outside of his car waving him on. Colby nodded to his old friend, pulling into the open spot next to him.

"Hey, man. How were your days off?" Dave greeted Colby.

"They were, uh, different," Colby struggled to get out.

"Jesus, dude. You look like dog shit. Up all-night doing repairs?" he asked Colby, worriedly.

"Oh, yeah. All night." Colby fumbled for what to tell his best friend. "Knocking that backslash out."

"I thought you finished that already?" Dave replied, guzzling his first energy drink of the day.

Damnit man. Just make lying to you easy would ya, Colby thought as he tried to find something to tell Dave.

"I thought so too, but some of it didn't hold." Colby sighed internally, thinking *I'm too tired to make shit up*. "We better head in. This bullshit isn't going to finish itself."

With that, the two headed into the building to begin their long, tedious day. Colby made it a point to not bump into his friend, as he didn't want to have to come up with some other lie. It would be a pretty easy task. The first day back was always a shit show, and there would be plenty to do to keep him occupied.

Colby found himself checking the time far more often than normal and thought, *Dave brought up a good point though, we*

haven't touched anything on the house in days. His new sense of purpose quickly drained from his soul.

Colby's day at PineCo seemed to stretch on endlessly. He could not shake the overwhelming feeling of juggling his job, the house repairs, and the weight of his newfound magical powers. As the day passed, anxiety gnawed at him, making the minutes feel like hours.

At first, Colby had been eager to get back home and delve into the mystical knowledge within the ancient book, but as the day wore on, doubt crept in. Colby convinced himself that their home needed to be worked on before he could truly take on yet another project. And to Colby, at least in that moment, learning to be a warlock seemed like another project. He thought, *what good would mastering magical powers be if we don't even have somewhere comfortable to live in.*

With each passing hour, Colby's anticipation for returning home to Lexie and their ongoing renovations grew stronger. Cyrus' revelations were like a shimmering cauldron of potential, and he could not wait to explore his magical abilities. But for now, his heart yearned for the simple comforts of turning their house into a home, a sanctuary.

Finally, it was time to clock out and leave, and Colby texted Lexie as soon as he made it into his car.

Colby: Babes, get your house repair outfit on!

Lexie: You just want to see me in my short shorts.

Colby: I mean, I'd rather see you in no pants...

Lexie: Well, that can be arranged.

Colby: Mmm. But not tonight babes. I want to tear up the living room. But not in a fun way.

When Colby arrived home, Lexie was already dressed for the occasion, a pair of short shorts and an old paint-stained tank top. But she hesitated when she saw the exhaustion in his eyes. She gently suggested, “Hun, maybe we should just rest tonight. You’ve been up for two straight days.”

Colby, however, was resolute. “No, babes. We have to finish this. I need to do this. It’s important.”

Reluctantly, Lexie agreed, knowing how driven he was. “Okay, love.”

Together, they tackled the remaining tasks, laying the rest of the hardwood floors and applying fresh coats of paint to the living room. The scent of the paint mingled with their determination as they worked side by side, their shared effort bringing them closer together.

Fatigue took its toll on Colby as the night wore on, and he couldn’t keep his eyes open any longer. He collapsed on the couch, using a cloth tarp from the floor as a makeshift blanket, surrounded by the remnants of their home improvement project. Lexie, despite her own exhaustion, watched over him, a soft smile on her face.

She gingerly kissed his forehead. “Guess I’ll finish the painting while you’re at work.” Giggling, she cleaned up the open paint cans. She rolled up the old shag carpet they had pulled out and carried it outside to the trash. Even with her hesitation for the night’s work, a sense of accomplishment crashed over her in waves.



Colby awoke on the couch, feeling groggy and worn out. He didn't want to go to work. His mind still buzzed with thoughts of the magic book, The Council, and the seemingly never-ending home repairs. And that was all on top of work. But duty called, and he reluctantly got up, ready to face another long dull human workday.

Work came and went in a blur, his thoughts constantly drifting back to the unfinished business at home. However, instead of diving right back into house repairs, Colby decided to follow up on Cyrus' advice. He needed to learn more about the magic within the old text.

Colby thought, *Well, after we finish painting, I suppose.* He mulled over the unfinished paint job he had left this morning before work. He brushed through his long dark blonde hair with his hand and put it in a pony as he pondered, *Guess it'll be another busy night.*

He wrapped up the day, wishing his fellow co-workers a goodnight and high-fiving Dave, and got in his car. Colby pulled his phone from his pocket and texted Lexie.

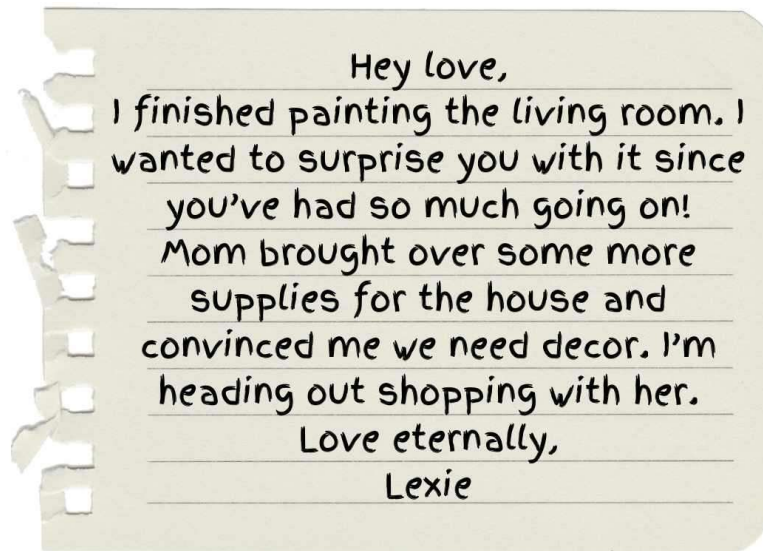
Colby: Hey babes, let's finish up painting tonight?

He waited a few minutes and thought it weird there was no response. With that, Colby pulled out of the parking lot and

headed for home.

Arriving home shortly after, he entered the house, flipped on the light, and was mesmerized. Lexie had finished painting the living room while he was at work. His heart full, he thought, *fuck, I love her so much*. The living room, once in shambles, now gleamed with fresh paint and new hardwood floors, a testament to the hard work he and Lexie had put in for months.

A note on the side table caught his attention. Colby thought, *Huh, this must be why she didn't answer my text*.



Colby decided to use the alone time to his advantage. He grabbed a beer from the fridge, took a sip, and made his way upstairs to the hidden room.

The room felt different today, as if it were alive with anticipation. The book, still resting on its pedestal, beckoned him. Colby carefully opened it, flipping through its pages. He thought, *This massive book of spells and all I've done so far is make the sunflowers grow*.

Thumbing through, he saw spells and conjurations for a wide variety of things: making objects float, lighting candles with a word, casting a ball of energy and hurling it towards something.

Colby found it much more complicated than he anticipated; however, the book was not written as a step by step

instructional, it was written more like a scientific journal, theorizing, and describing outcomes of previous attempts.

Colby tried his hand at levitating a glass ball on a little table to the side of the pedestal. He read the passage what felt like ten times before giving it a go. With the book in one hand and the other outstretched, his fingers curled as if to catch a baseball, he envisioned the sphere floating in his mind. It shook against the table.

Holy shit, he thought. With the object's sudden movement, Colby lost focus and the sphere rested back in place. Colby told himself, *Okay, one more try!*

Again, Colby reached his hand out to catch an imaginary ball, focusing and imagining the globe floating in front of him. Seconds later, it shook slightly, and then just as in his mind, the orb lifted off the table, nearly a foot in the air.

Now, doing the same thing in reverse order, Colby imagined the ball gently lowering back to the table. A split second after the thought, the globe slowly lowered and came to a soft landing on the table.

“Damn, I did it! I fucking did it! Oh, God what’s that smell?” Colby lifted his arm and took a quick whiff. “Oh, shit that’s me.” After a handful of hours of sleep over the past couple days without time for showers, he reeked.

He placed the book back on the pedestal, deciding that’d been enough for one night. Colby left the hidden room, and on his way out, he saw a few boxes in the corner of the closet and decided to pull them in front of the entrance. *Might as well hide our new Batcave*, he thought. He grabbed a pair of sweats from the closet and headed towards the bathroom to wash the days of stench and stress away.

Colby turned on the shower, undressed, left his clothes on the floor, and stepped in. He hadn’t been in any more than five minutes before hearing the front door open and subsequently close. The familiar footsteps of Lexie climbing the staircase warmed his heart.

“Have fun shopping, babes?” Colby called out.

“Always do, love. I got a few things but left them in the car for now,” Lexie replied, making her way towards the bathroom. “I thought we talked about using the hamper?” she teasingly asked, undressing, and throwing her own clothes in the basket.

“I was going to pick them up. Want me to leave the water on? I’m almost done,” Colby responded.

“The hell you are!” Lexie said dominantly, stepping through the glass shower door. She placed her hand on Colby’s chest, pushing him back up against the wall.

Colby let out a deep breath and said in a hushed tone, “Woah, you finished the house chores and now this? How the fuck did I get so lucky?”

“I have low standards,” Lexie jokingly retorted, as she raised herself on the balls of her feet to kiss Colby. Her left hand slowly traced its way to Colby’s cock, massaging it vigorously.

Colby’s muscles tensed, his heart rate, and breathing slowly increasing. They continued their passionate kiss, tongues intertwined, until Colby was fully erect.

He grabbed her waist with one hand and the back of her neck with the other, carefully spinning her around facing away from him. Brushing her hair to one side so he could kiss her neck and squeeze her breast, a grin flashed across his face as he thought, *my turn to be in charge*.

She bent slightly forward presenting her slit to Colby, shaking her ass, taunting her husband to fill her pussy. “Give me your cock.” she demanded.

He immediately grabbed his cock and guided it in. His hand making its way from her hips, higher, Colby carefully grabbed Lexie’s hair and twisted to get a firm grip while his other hand held her hip tightly. He thrust, long deep strokes.

“Fuck, yes, like that! Keep going!” Lexie let out, her hips in sync with Colby’s thrusts.

Lexie reached down, and used her fingers to make quick, circular motions over her clit. Her legs quivered, as she

struggled to keep her own weight up. The cold from the air mixed with the heat coming off of Colby's body and the water tantalized her sensations.

Colby gripped harder on her hip, keeping her steady. "You love taking my cock, don't you?"

"Yes, yes, I'm coming!" she shouted, her body started to convulse in orgasmic bliss. Her fingers curled against the glass wall, her head thrown back, mouth opened wide as groans escaped through heavy breaths.

Colby increased the speed of his thrusts. "Hmph, me too!" he gasped. He released her hair and his tight grip on her waist. He pulled out of his wife, and in one smooth motion, she spun around and grabbed his cock and ran her hands up and down his shaft, keeping the same pace as his thrust.

Colby let out a deep grunt as he came, covering the bottom of Lexie's stomach.

"No babies, yet." She slowed her stride, using the first two fingers of one hand to spoon up some of his seed. She slowly raised it to her lips.

"Good thing we are already in the shower, or I'd need something to clean all this up with," Lexie said breathlessly as she sucked his seed off her fingers.

"Fuck, it's so hot when you do that, babes." Colby exclaimed.

The two finished their shower in peace, washing away their dirty ordeal. When they got out, Colby made it a point to pick up all the clothes and soiled towels and put them in the hamper.

They made their way to the bedroom and grabbed clothes for the night.

"So, babes, while you were out, I tried something pretty fucking cool." Colby said.

"Oh yeah? And what was that?" Lexie replied, slipping on a pair of clean panties.

Colby pulled up his sweatpants and smirked. “I used a spell and made that glass ball thingy float.”

Getting the bed sleep ready, Lexie exclaimed, “You made the thing fucking float?”

“Yeah, it was pretty damned awesome!” Colby bragged gleefully.

“Well next time you do some crazy magic shit, wait for me to get home would ya?” she pleaded with him.

Colby fluffed his pillow, getting ready to lay down in bed, and said, “Of course, babes.”

“Oh! I almost forgot to tell you, I grabbed a latch and padlock for the hidden room,” Lexie said as she got under the bedding.

He chuckled and said, “Ironically, I just pushed boxes in front of the door to hide it. Great minds, and all that.”

They curled up into each other’s arms for a well-deserved rest.



SEVEN

EXPLORING THE DEPTHS

Colby woke up afresh, full of energy, and not just from the steamy fun in the shower with Lexie, but from the growing sense of his own strength and potential. He could feel deep in his soul he was becoming more powerful, even if he was taking things in baby steps. With this burst of energy, he got up, gathered his belongings, and headed out the door for work.

The short drive there was filled with wild thoughts of hurling magical force balls at cans on a fence and creating flames and putting them out. He decided, *ya know what? I'm going to grab some candles on the way home and try that one out!*

There were so many pages in the book, and Colby had only just scratched the surface.

He pulled into PineCo's parking lot, exchanging hellos with his fellow coworkers. Colby walked through the doors thinking he was on top of the world, and nothing was going to bring him down.

During lunch break, Dave gave him a hard time about always being busy and never finding time to hang out outside of work.

"It's always 'no', man. What happened to tearing up the town and grabbing drinks after work?"

“Well, we aren’t 21 with no responsibilities anymore, Dave.” Colby chuckled before his eyes found the floor. “You’re right, though. It’s been ages. I’ll make some time soon, I promise.”

When work ended, Colby rushed to the gas station on his way home to grab a candle or two and an energy drink, his mind filled with the anticipation of returning to the hidden room.

Colby pulled into his driveway, picked up his bag of goodies and hurriedly went inside.

Lexie greeted him with a smile. “Hey, love, what’s in the bag?”

He completely forgot he was holding anything, and said, “Some candles and a Red Bull.”

As he made his way through the door and up the stairs, Lexie yelled a question. “What are you doing?”

As eager as a toddler in Chuck E. Cheese, Colby responded, “Headed to the room!” He opened the closet to see Lexie had already installed the padlock.

“Well, you’re going to need this.” Handing him the key, she asked her question with excitement. “Are you going to do magic again?”

“I’m going to try, loves!” Colby replied as he unlocked the door, and they entered the room together.

Excitedly, Lexie said, “Ah, I can’t wait to see it in person.”

Colby felt a sense of excitement and achievement as he performed the levitation spell, he had practiced the night before. Lexie’s eyes sparkled with delight as she watched the orb float in mid-air, enchanted by her husband’s growing abilities.

“And you didn’t even need to use your wand,” she said, giving him a wink. Clapping her hands in amazement, she exclaimed, “Hun, you’re getting really good at this!”

He smiled, grateful for Lexie’s support and encouragement and thought, *now, for something new!* Colby pulled the candle

from the bag and placed it on the table beside the globe. He flipped through the pages looking for the fire spell he saw the night before.

“And for my next trick, fire!”

Colby read and re-read the page again, wanting to make sure he got it on the first try. The book said he had to fill his lungs with anger and release the anger while saying the word “*Ignis*”.

He thought for a moment, wondering what would fill him with anger? Fuck, the list was long. Work, the house, Dave pointing out he’s been a shit friend lately. He could feel the rage building up inside of him. With that he hissed “*Ignis*” with his arm outstretched, finger pointing at the wick of the candle.

Lexie cheered as the candle’s flame danced to life, casting flickering shadows across the room. “Fucking wild!” she said, clapping at Colby’s accomplishment.

Once Colby was sure he had completed the spell, he said the word to extinguish the flame: “*Exstinguetur.*” The flame obediently vanished, and nothing but a sliver of smoke remained.

He once again sifted through the pages of the book. His excitement grew as he continued through it, listing off spells, remedies, and concoctions to Lexie and discussing their potential.

But then, he stumbled upon a particularly intriguing page, one that had a drawing depicting a man splitting into two separate people, the title simply reading “Double.”

“Woah, babes, check this out,” Colby exclaimed, his finger tracing the image on the page. “This would be a fucking awesome one.”

He proceeded to read the spell’s description aloud. “Cast a double of yourself in every way. Appearance, personality, and knowledge.”

Lexie’s eyes widened with curiosity. “That sounds incredible, love. Could you imagine the possibilities?”

Colby nodded, his mind racing with the potential applications of such a spell. “It could help us with so many things, like going into work for me or even just an extra set of hands to get things done around the house.”

Lexie grinned, her enthusiasm matching his own. “Let’s try it. It could be a game-changer.”

Colby went over the process silently. “Hm, it says here I will need a hair plucked from my head, a vervain blossom, and a carrier oil.”

“Oh, I have coconut oil in the bathroom, and vervain grows out near the park,” Lexie concluded, “but what happens if you try without them?”

“How would I know? Let’s find out.” Colby replied, setting the book on the pedestal. “I suppose I’ll need the hair either way.”

He plucked a single hair from his head and set it on the table.

Focusing on it, he stretched his hand towards the hair and spouted the word “*Geminus*”. Beside the table, a shadow appeared, roughly the height and size of Colby. Slowly the apparition took shape, still translucent like Colbert’s ghost, fizzling in and out of existence like snow or static on an old television.

Other Colby smiled and waved, before finally evaporating into the nether. “Where’d he go?” puzzled, Lexie asked.

“I suppose that’s what we need the other shit for. Oh, tomorrow I’ll grab some of that vervain stuff from the park after work, and you bust out the coconut oil!” Colby shouted, “Let’s clone us a Colby!”

With Lexie’s support and the allure of this new spell, Colby’s excitement continued to build. He thought, *I am going to be able to get so much shit done if this works!*

The two decided to call it a night, and Colby gathered his empty bag and Red Bull. Lexie closed and locked the hidden room as they exited, still shaking her head in bewilderment at the amazing things she had just witnessed her husband

perform. “I’m still having trouble believing what I am seeing. It’s like a god damned fantasy novel!”

Colby let out a soft chuckle. “Me either, babes.” He tossed the can he’d just drained and the bag into the trash.

He quickly changed into his sweatpants and an old T-shirt. Once again, 4:30 a.m. was going to come quickly. But it would be his Friday, and they had a plan for after work that could be the end to some of their stress. They kissed each other good night, turned the light off, and climbed into bed.



EIGHT

A SURPRISE ENCOUNTER

Colby woke up, refreshed, ready to tackle the day with a sense of anticipation. It was Tuesday, but for him, it was his Friday. He and Lexie had a plan for the evening: they would attempt the doubling spell from the book, but with the proper ingredients. Colby would pick up vervain on his way home, while Lexie would gather a bowl and her coconut oil.

As Colby headed into work, his mind was filled with thoughts of the upcoming spell. The mundane tasks at PineCo seemed even more repetitive, and he grew increasingly anxious to get this right, knowing it could potentially double their productivity.

Driving down the road, Colby glanced to his right and could have sworn Cyrus was standing on the sidewalk, under a streetlight, watching him as he drove past. Colby pondered, *what the fuck are you doing, old man?* Moments later, Colby was pulling into the familiar parking lot of work.

As anticipated, Colby's day dragged by. He knew busting his ass twelve hours a day on the job, then another four to six hours at home, wasn't helping him with becoming the warlock he wanted to be. He kept thinking, *This day can be over any time now.*

Dave came over to Colby's side of the building, once again, trying to convince Colby they needed to go out drinking, "C'mon man, it's the end of our work week. I know, I know,

you're busy, all the damned time. But let's go out, just one drink?"

Colby, eager to get home and practice magic, promised, "One of these off days, I'll text you, I swear."

Dave nodded with acceptance. "Okay, I'm holding you to that, man," he said, happy to finally have a commitment from his busy friend.

After work, Colby returned to his car, getting into the driver's seat. As he adjusted his rearview mirror, he let out a cry. "What the fuck!"

Cyrus' face appeared in the reflection, and Colby craned his neck back to look upon the short, bearded man.

Cackling, Cyrus replied, "Ah, I am sorry to scare you, my boy. I only figured it was time to pop in for a visit."

"Yeah, sure. And you thought breaking into my car and waiting for me was the route to go?" Colby questioned.

"I think we both know I didn't have to break into the car to get in the backseat," Cyrus said, emitting a coy smile. "Just drive home as usual. I am only here for a casual conversation."

"Sure thing." Colby couldn't refuse, and as he drove, he and Cyrus discussed the spells Colby had been working on and his plan for the night. Suddenly he remembered, *oh shit, I have to stop at the park.*

"Why are we stopping?" Cyrus asked, glaring in every direction as if his head was on a swivel.

"I have to run over there and pick some vervain." Colby responded, matter-of-factly.

"Oh, do you and the missus have a vampire problem?" Cyrus asked, still confused about the stop.

"Um, no, I need it for the double spell. What does it do to vampires?" Colby asked.

"Why, it burns them of course," Cyrus answered.

"Oh." Shocked, Colby hopped out of the driver's seat and headed towards the garden in the park. He pulled up an image

of vervain on his phone and started looking through the flowers. Once he found them, he plucked a handful by the base of their stems and ran back to the parked car, bouquet in hand.

“You know, you and Lexie should really invest in a garden of your own. Then there would not be a need to pillage the local parks for ingredients,” Cyrus informed Colby. “You already know the harvest spell; it should be as easy as finding the right seeds.”

“That’s a really good idea!” Colby responded.

The rest of the drive was quiet. They were just a few blocks from Colby’s house now. “So have you ever done the double spell, Cyrus?” Colby inquired, trying to break the awkward silence.

“No, my boy, I have not. That was a specialty of your grandfather’s. His father concocted that spell, and I have only seen a Richards perform and perfect it,” Cyrus replied. “However, you must be cautious with it. You cannot let others see or find out you are in multiple places at once.”

“That’s a very good point. I’ll be careful, for sure!” Colby promised.

As they approached home, Cyrus faded into the shadows, leaving Colby just as shocked as the first time the man did it. Colby thought, *as cool as that is, I hate it when he does this. Creepy magic, Batman.* He was ready to get inside and attempt the doubling spell with Lexie.

Pulling into the driveway, Colby’s heart pounded with a mix of excitement and curiosity, and he couldn’t help but wonder about Cyrus. He turned to the empty backseat where Cyrus had been moments ago, and asked aloud, “What exactly are you? And how can you appear and disappear like that?”

There was no response, only the quiet rustling of leaves in the wind. With a sigh, Colby climbed out of the car, feeling enlightened and mystified by his encounter with the enigmatic figure.

Colby walked into the living room where Lexie waited with the bowl and coconut oil ready. Her eyes sparkled with

excitement as she looked up at him.

“Welcome home, love,” she greeted him, a playful grin on her face. “Are we ready to clone a Colby?”

Colby nodded, his enthusiasm matching hers. “Absolutely, babes.”

The two headed upstairs, their footsteps echoing with anticipation as they approached the hidden room. With the key in hand, Colby unlocked the door, revealing the hidden room once more. They entered; the air filled with a sense of mystique.

Colby carefully opened the ancient book, its pages filled with arcane knowledge. He found the page labeled “Double,” with the familiar depiction of a man splitting into two separate figures. Lexie, just as eager, arranged the ingredients on a nearby table: vervain blossom, coconut oil, and the bowl.

With the book before him and the ingredients ready, Colby looked at Lexie, excitement and apprehension in his eyes. “Are you ready, loves?”

She nodded, her determination radiating in her eyes. “Let’s fucking do this.”

Colby poured about two cups of oil into the bowl. He gathered the blossom, crushing it between his palms and dusting it into the oil. Then he plucked a single hair from his head, and taking a last glance back at Lexie, added it to the concoction.

His focus was unwavering as he visualized a mirrored image of himself, every detail down to the smallest feature. With determination, he recited the word “*Geminus*,” his voice filled with power and intent.

In the dimly lit room, the process began, slow and deliberate. A shadowy figure materialized, its form initially hazy and translucent, like a specter. But as Colby continued to focus, the apparition gained substance and clarity, until it stood before him as a perfect duplicate.

Colby reached for, well himself, as Colby 2 was patting his own chest to confirm he was in fact real. It was an awe-

inspiring moment, as the spell had created a living, breathing copy of himself.

Both Colbys shouted simultaneously, “Holy shit!”

Lexie watched in wonder; her eyes wide with amazement at the power Colby had exuded.

All three of them poked each other, still in awe, as Lexie exclaimed, “It worked! I can’t tell the two of you apart!”

Colby 2 responded, pointing at Colby 1. “This is fucking weird. I know I’m Colby, but somehow, I also know I’m not the true Colby. It’s like deep down inside I know I’m just a part of you.”

Colby 1 nodded in agreement. “And you can talk! You’re right. This is fucking weird. You sound just like me. How about memories? Do you remember what happened in Mrs. Baker’s backyard?”

“You mean the time I, I mean we, made out with that red head from Riverton?” grinning, Colby 2 replied.

“Ew, you guys made out with that slut head cheer bitch?” Lexie asked, laughing at the fond high school memories.

“We have two Colbys here now,” Lexie jokingly pointed out, “and I’m not sure if that’s good or bad, love.”

Both Colbys shrugged and let out eerily similar chuckles.

“Alright, it’s getting late. We should revisit this tomorrow,” Colby 1 said, turning to Colby 2 with a look of sadness in his eyes. “I kind of feel bad for disappearing you.”

Colby 2 let out a little smile. “No need to worry. Just like that deep down feeling of knowing I’m not the original, I know I can’t stay permanently.”

“Interesting,” Colby 1 replied. “Well in that case, have a good night, um, me.”

Colby 1 peered in the book, found what he was looking for and with a hand outstretched, whispered, “*Apage.*”

Just as he had materialized, Colby 2 slowly fizzled out of existence, leaving only a lingering sense of the magic that had

brought him to life.

Colby's eyes shone a dim blue. "Holy shit, that was so weird. The few memories he made before disappearing popped into my head. As if they were my own!"

"Woah, that is fucking weird!" Lexie screeched, still amazed by the experience. "That was incredible. Meeting a cloned you was like something out of a dream!"

With the room cleaned and the book back on its pedestal, Colby and Lexie headed to bed. As they lay there, side by side, they marveled at the wonders they had witnessed and the extraordinary journey they were embarking on together.



NINE

SHADOWS AND SECRETS

Not far from the Richards' house, a neglected ranch-style home with faded white siding and worn brown shutters sat in eerie silence. Pale light escaped through tattered blinds, casting unsettling patterns on the overgrown lawn. Inside, a shadowy figure moved about the seemingly abandoned house, his intentions shrouded in mystery.

The man's eyes remained fixated on the Richards' residence, never wavering from his vigilant watch. His room was dimly lit, illuminated by a handful of flickering candles, their flames dancing with each passing breath of air. Frustration and determination marked his features as he slammed his fist down on a nearby table.

"Just one slip up, and you're mine," he muttered to himself, his voice tinged with an ominous resolve.

Suddenly, a phone in his pocket rang, interrupting the tense atmosphere. He answered, and a muffled voice on the other end inquired, "Progress report?"

The man replied, his voice laced with a sense of urgency, "Same as usual. Nothing new to report. For a moment, I could have sworn the old man was in his car, but only the Richards kid exited the vehicle."

"Keep your eyes open, Thomas," the voice on the phone warned. "It can't be a coincidence that another Richards

moved into that house. And soon after Cyrus was spotted in town.”

Thomas clenched his jaw, his determination unwavering. “If this kid is anything like his granddad, he’s as good as dead. I swear my life on it.”

With that, he hung up the phone, his focus once again solely on the Richards’ residence. As the lights in their house were extinguished down the street, Thomas, too, extinguished the candles in his room, shrouding himself in darkness and mystery, ready to continue his watch in the shadows.



TEN DOUBLE BREAKFAST

Colby and Lexie moved through their house with a sense of joy and playfulness, their laughter filling the air as they made breakfast together. The intensity of creating a second Colby the night before was still fresh in their minds, and they could not help but discuss their otherworldly experience.

As they sat down to enjoy their meal of eggs, bacon, and hash browns, Colby broached the subject of Cyrus' visit during his drive home. Lexie's brow raised as she listened to the details.

"He was just standing there, babes," Colby explained, his voice filled with optimism. "Watching me drive by. It's nice knowing someone is watching my back."

Lexie nodded thoughtfully. "So, vervain burns vampires, huh?"

After breakfast, they cleaned up the kitchen and decided it was time to take the double for a test run. They headed upstairs to the room, where the book and last night's ingredients awaited. Colby, once again filled with anticipation, mixed the concoction, and recited the spell, "*Geminus*," and Colby 2 delicately but deliberately popped into existence.

The three of them sat in the hidden room, pondering their options. After a moment, they decided to start tearing down the wallpaper in the hallways, a task that would benefit from an extra pair of hands.

As the afternoon wore on, they worked tirelessly, stripping away the old wallpaper and revealing the potential hidden beneath. Colby 1, however, suddenly remembered his promise to Dave to go out for a drink.

“Shit, I told Dave I would go to the bar with him today,” Colby 1 hollered down the hallway.

Colby 2 nodded. “Oh, yeah, that’s right. We’ve pushed him off for weeks.”

Lexie was giggling a bit farther down the hall. “I don’t know if I’ll get used to this anytime soon.”

The two Colbys looked at each other, and with a grin, Colby 1 suggested, “Let’s flip a coin to see who’s going out.”

Lexie rummaged through her bag and pulled out a quarter, and with the flick of her thumb she sent it spinning into the air. “Colby 1 is heads and 2 is tails,” she called out as it landed with a soft clink on the floor, and they all leaned in to see the result. Colby 1 had won the toss.

He looked at Lexie, his eyes filled with a mix of excitement and reluctance. “Well, it looks like I’m going out for a drink with Dave. You and Colby 2 have the house to yourselves.”

With a quick kiss, he headed back into their bedroom to get changed. Within minutes, Colby 1 was dressed and back in the hallway. “Okay, Colby 2 you know the rule, I guess it’s a rule? Don’t go out and about while the other is out. We don’t want Strange Grove seeing two of us.”

Colby 2 nodded in agreement. “Good point. Staying in the house it is. Have fun, smack Dave in the nuts for me.”

Colby 1 laughed and agreed, heading down the stairs and out of the house. He took one last look up the staircase, thinking, *God, this is fucking weird.*

Colby 2 and Lexie continued to work in the hallway, laying down tarps and applying paint to the walls. It was progressing well, and they both were lost in the task, the vibrant colors transforming the once-dull space.

Suddenly, a mishap occurred, and Lexie spilled a can of paint on her tank top. She let out an exasperated sigh. “Ugh, now I have to change my damned shirt.” Without much thought, she lifted her paint-splattered top, her focus solely on finding a clean shirt.

Colby 2 watched with a mix of surprise and attraction, fully aware that he wasn't the main Colby, but he still felt the same strong emotions towards Lexie. He couldn't help but follow her. His shy curiosity got the better of him, and he thought, *this is wrong, I think?*

As Lexie headed towards the bedroom to change, she was momentarily unaware of Colby 2's presence behind her. It was clearly a unique and slightly awkward situation, but their connection and attraction remained as powerful as ever.

Flashing a coy smile, Lexie asked, “Um, what do you think you're doing?”

In a hushed voice, Colby 2 responded, “I, I know I'm not Colby 1. But I have all our memories, our feelings. Like the shower the other night,” he drifted off, ecstasy from the memory hazing his eyes.

“Fuck, this is weird,” Lexie let out. “Weird, but also a turn on.”

She stood there next to the bed, wearing only her short shorts and a pink bra. “So, since you're also Colby, would this be cheating?”

“Honestly, I'm pretty sure both of me are okay with this. It definitely wasn't the first thing to come to mind when we found the Double spell, but it was up there,” Colby 2 responded.

Lexie wasn't sure if Colby 2 was just saying that or if both Colbys really thought that. Either way, she reached her hand across the void and placed it on the back of his neck. “Well, hun, since both of you are, well, you, I'm choosing to believe you.”

She pulled into him, by the back of his neck, raised up on her toes and landed her lips on his.

Colby 2 felt a surge of desire as Lexie took his bottom lip into her mouth and gently sucked and nibbled on it, their passionate connection undeniable. Her tongue grazed his lip as she pulled away, and her flirtatious smile ignited a familiar fire between them.

He watched, captivated, as Lexie pulled her shorts and panties down together, her actions filled with confidence and desire. Colby 2 thought, *fuck how is the other me really going to feel?*

Colby 2 grabbed Lexie by the wrist, pulling her closer to him, and delicately traced his fingers down her body. He caressed the outside of her pussy as she hugged his arm and pulled in closer. Colby 2 continued until he felt her arousal building, and then he thrust his fingers inside her.

Lexie let out a soft, “Mph.” Filled with desire, she kissed Colby 2, and he drove his fingers deeper and faster, their lips locked in a heated embrace. As their intensity grew, Lexie suddenly broke away, her breath ragged.

“I... I can’t go on. Unless I know how you – well, the other you truly feels about all this,” she admitted, her eyes searching for his reassurance.

“Did we just do something wrong? I mean, I know I’m me, or him. But I know what you’re saying,” Colby 2 responded.

“You said both of you would be okay with this?” She said, as she hiked her shorts up.

“I mean, yeah in our heads, we would like this. But, if I was me, I think maybe some heads up would be nice,” Colby 2 replied, eyes shifting with worry. “Ugh, what will I think when I disappear?”

Silence hung heavily in the room as Lexie dressed, the unspoken tension palpable. Each of them was lost in their own thoughts, unsure of how to navigate the complex emotions that had just arisen.

Amidst the splattered paint and scattered tarps, Colby 2 and Lexie returned to their task of painting the hallway in

awkward silence. The once amorous atmosphere had shifted, replaced by a subtle tension that lingered between them.

With each brushstroke and pass of the roller, they avoided eye contact, their thoughts consumed by the intimacy they had just shared. The walls, once again, transformed under their hands.

A few hours later, Colby 1 returned home, the door opening to reveal a scene he hadn't expected. Lexie and Colby 2 stood together, and upon his arrival, both were adamant that it was time for Colby 2, to "go home."

Perplexed by their insistence, Colby 1 agreed reluctantly, his brow furrowed with confusion. He focused his thoughts, and with the magic word, "*Apage*," Colby 2 blinked out of existence.

The moment Colby 2 disappeared, a flood of memories and emotions surged into Colby 1's mind. It was as if he had experienced everything his double did during their time together; every touch, every kiss, and every shared moment. Overwhelmed by the intimate experience they had shared, Colby 1 backpedaled a few steps, grabbing his head.

"What... the fuck was that?"



ELEVEN

UNEARTHING SECRETS

With a heavy silence hanging over them, Colby and Lexie went to bed that night without discussing the events involving Colby 2. The memories and emotions from their intimate exchange weighed on Colby's mind, leaving him uncertain about how to navigate their new reality.

The following morning, as they sat down to breakfast, Lexie could not bear the silence any longer. "Love, we need to talk about last night. I can't handle you ignoring me."

With a mixture of hesitancy and sincerity, Colby and Lexie delved into a deep candid conversation.

"I'm not sure what to say, babes. Or how to feel about it."

"But you, the other you, said that was something the two of you would be okay with. Plus, well, it was you," Lexie responded, with a shamed look in her eye.

Taking a sip of his coffee, Colby reassured her. "No, no babes, it is, I guess. It was just very unexpected. I'm not mad at you or with the other me." He swirled his mug and gazed deeply into the muddy brown drink, looking for the words to say.

"Honestly, babes, how you found the magic hot, well, I think... I think it was a huge turn on. Yeah, it was me, but it wasn't. It was – is – super hot thinking about you fucking someone else."

Lexie, in turn, expressed her own feelings about the situation. “Actually, hun, thinking about that, the fact that it wasn’t you, really sent me over the edge.”

“Ha, so I saw. I appreciate you stopping it though and wanting to talk with me about it,” Colby said. “For future reference, I’m okay with you and Colby 2 being together.”

After their heartfelt discussion, Colby decided he would take Cyrus’ advice and plant a garden full of potential herbs he might need from the book. Plus, he knew Lexie loved wildflowers. “I’m going to plant a garden out front with flowers and herbs we may need from the book. Then I won’t have to pillage the park anymore.”

Colby headed up to the room, skimming the book for his makeshift shopping list. *Most of these, he thought, should be easy to grab from the hardware store. Vervain for sure, hm what else? Poppy, sage, rue, juniper, but how the hell am I going to get deadly nightshade?*

Flipping through the pages, he found a transmutation spell, where he could transmute any seed into that of another plant. *Well shit, that’s convenient,* he thought. With his list in hand, he headed to the hardware store to acquire the seeds.

Colby returned home, went inside, and turned a packet of pumpkin seeds into nightshade seeds. He gathered his seeds and gardening tools and went out to begin his project.

Colby got to work planting his new garden, carefully tending to each spot where he would place the seeds. As he worked, a man approached him. He was tall, nearly six feet, with a pale complexion and dark, slicked-back hair, with a scar down the entire left side of his face.

“Planting some roots?” the mysterious neighbor asked, a hint of curiosity in his voice.

Colby looked up, a friendly smile on his face. “Oh, yes. The missus and I wanted a nice garden we could enjoy when we sit out front.”

The stranger examined the selection of wildflower and herb seed packets Colby had chosen. “Interesting choice in

wildflowers.”

As Colby observed the stranger’s worn black suit with its frayed and tattered sleeves, it struck him as an odd choice of attire for a casual encounter in the suburban neighborhood. The image of an overworked accountant who had fallen on hard times came, a stark contrast to the serene surroundings of their community.

Curiosity piqued, Colby couldn’t help but wonder about the stranger and what had brought him to their neighborhood. The enigmatic man’s appearance and the air of mystery that surrounded him left Colby with a sense that there was more to their new neighbor than met the eye.

“I picked the ones my wife thought were pretty.” Colby let out a hesitant chuckle. “I’ve never seen you around this neighborhood before. Name’s Colby.”

The stranger extended a hand. “Nice to meet you. My name is Thomas.” After squeezing Colby’s hand, a little too tightly, he continued down the block, leaving Colby with a chill running down his spine. *Weird fucking dude*, Colby thought.

Turning back to the garden, Colby finished planting his seeds. Then, he cleaned up his tools and headed inside, contemplating using the harvest spell to make his flowers grow instantly.

As if trying to read his mind, Lexie excitedly asked, “Are you going to use the spell to make them grow fast?”

“No,” he said with a cautious tone before he told her about the strange new neighbor, and the strange feeling emanating from him. “I don’t want to risk that man seeing the seeds I just planted magically turn into a full crop. It might draw unwanted attention.”

Lexie nodded in understanding, and together they decided to let nature take its course and allow the garden to grow at its own pace.

The remainder of the day flowed seamlessly for Colby and Lexie as they cleaned up the hallway, hung pictures, and decorated until dinner. Colby demonstrated his culinary skills,

whipping up delicious spaghetti and meatballs for dinner, and they dined together, discussing the remarkable progress they had made around the house.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, Colby sat on the front porch, captivated by the glimmering candlelight emanating from the abandoned house down the road. It was an eerie yet intriguing sight, and it filled him with a sense of inquisitiveness and caution. *Weird, I've never seen anyone at that house*, he pondered.

Lexie soon joined him on the porch, wearing a short, revealing sundress and holding two beers. She handed one to Colby. "The new flower beds look super cute. Good job, love."

Her words carried a flirtatious undertone, and with a provocative smile, Lexie leaned in closer to Colby, her eyes locking onto his. "You know," she purred, "our talk this morning about your turn-ons was incredibly hot. It got me thinking about some other ways we could put Colby 2 to good use."

Colby raised an eyebrow, intrigued by Lexie's suggestion. "Is that so?"

"Absolutely so. I have something we should add to our list of firsts." She opened her legs, revealing she wasn't wearing panties, and teased, "How about some exhibitionism?"

God damn, babes! The sight of Lexie's freshly shaven entrance sent all of his blood rushing to his cock, his girth visible through his pants.

"Exhibitionism, huh? Fuck, you're full of surprises today, loves," he whispered as he pulled her onto his lap so that her back was flush against his chest.

Lexie reached between her legs to Colby's bulge underneath her, clenching his cock softly and releasing it over and over again. She continued until his jeans could no longer contain his erection.

As Colby grazed her neck with his lips, Lexie unbuttoned his jeans and worked his zipper down. He shimmied his jeans

down just enough to expose his manhood.

She spat in her hand and stroked his cock between her legs. Colby reached out, stilling her hand for a moment.

“Wait! I learned a new one today. *Sterilis*,” he whispered, glaring at his engorged cock. “Now, no reason to pull out.”

“Fuck, yes. I want you to fill me with your cum until it’s leaking out of me!” Lexie moaned as she fed his cock into her pussy. She rode him in reverse, on the porch for the world to see.

His hands guided her hips as she bounced up and down. He felt his face flush both from his wife gliding on his cock and from the excitement of being out in the open, for the world to see.

Her hands clenched the arms of the chair, fingers digging into the wood as she grew closer to coming.

Colby’s hands found their way from her hips, up her shirt, to her breasts. He squeezed them, using his fingers to play with her hard nipples.

Lexie couldn’t contain herself any longer and stifled a moan by biting her bottom lip. Beads of sweat dripped from her brow as she released her lip, mouth opened wide, silently moaning in bliss.

She felt Colby on the verge of climax, his grip on her breasts tightening, she arched herself backwards, drove her hips forward, grinding his cock inside her.

Moments later, Colby let out an uncontrollable groan, and she felt his cock spasm inside of her, filling her with warm, thick cum, the sensation becoming more intense the more he let out.

Lexie craned her neck back, clasping one hand behind Colby’s neck, and locking her lips to his.

The two sat there, unmoving, cum slowly dripping from her pussy and down his cock. “Fuck, babes, that was amazing!” Colby said, wondering if any of the neighbors enjoyed the show? He hoped so.

“So, do you know the spell to make your cum work again, or...?” Lexie chuckled, catching her breath.

“Yes, but I’ll wait until I’m not inside of you to reverse it,” Colby jokingly replied.



In the dimly lit room, Thomas sat, his gaze locked on the slim opening in his curtains, his face contorted with visible distress. His clenched fists betrayed his inner turmoil as he watched the Richards' house with an unsettling fixation.

His phone rang from his pocket, and he retrieved it, his voice strained as he answered. "Hello?"

"Progress report?" the voice on the other end inquired.

"The boy's name is Colby, after his grandfather, presumably," Thomas reported, his words laced with frustration. "Last night, I followed him to the bar. He got drunk and stupid with a couple of locals. This morning, he was planting a garden."

A low growl escaped Thomas's lips. "Planted some interesting herbs: vervain, poppy, sage, and for some reason, pumpkins."

The voice on the phone responded. "Interesting, not sure why pumpkins, but the rest are definitely used in witchcraft."

Thomas's agitation grew, and he couldn't contain his anger any longer. "My thoughts as well. No sign of the old man. But these perverts just finished fucking on the front porch! Can I just put a bullet in his brain on principle?"

The voice on the other end fell silent for a moment, considering Thomas's request. The obsession and resentment

that Thomas harbored for Colby Richards had grown to a dangerous level, and the path he was on seemed to lead to a dark and perilous outcome. “No, you have your orders. Observe and issue progress reports. Unless you witness him performing magic, we cannot take the chance of killing an innocent, again.”

Thomas’s frustration was evident as he grumbled. “That wasn’t my fault, but fine. I’ll follow the orders. What if the old man shows up? Let him go?”

“For now,” the voice responded, “the Richards are our priority.”

Thomas hung up the phone, his anger simmering just beneath the surface. With a scowl, he blew out the candle and resumed his watch, his obsession with the Richards family driving him further into the shadows of his own dark world.



THIRTEEN

A DOUBLE'S DUTY

Colby woke up the next morning, ready for another day at work. After the passionate night he and Lexie had shared on the porch, an idea crossed his mind. Why not double himself and leave Colby 2 at home with Lexie as a special surprise? Colby performed the spell with confidence, knowing Colby 2 would already be aware of the plan. Once each Colby was dressed and ready for the day, Colby 1 headed out for work.

Colby 2, on the other hand, was on a mission to make breakfast. The delightful aroma of sizzling steak and eggs filled the air, creating a mouthwatering welcome for Lexie. As she descended the stairs, her senses were instantly captivated by the delicious scent. “Good morning, gorgeous,” Colby 2 greeted her with a warm smile. “Colby 1 is at work today, and I’m your special present.”

“Oh, is that so?” Lexie replied, as she took a seat at the kitchen table.

They shared a lovely breakfast together, enjoying each other’s company. At one point, Colby 2 couldn’t resist brushing a stray strand of hair away from Lexie’s cheek. After having sex on the porch for the world to see with Colby 1, the pampering breakfast from Colby 2, and the knowledge that Colby 1 had doubled himself for a specific reason, Lexie’s arousal grew stronger by the minute.

“Thank you for breakfast, love,” Lexie purred appreciatively. Her eyes sparkled with desire as she leaned closer to Colby 2. “Since we’ve had the conversation and everyone is okay with this now, do you care to join me upstairs?” She delivered the invitation with a seductive smile.

Colby 2’s face lit up, mirroring Lexie’s desire. “Yes, very much,” he replied eagerly, and they intertwined their fingers, heading upstairs together, their passion and anticipation growing with every step.

He felt the heat rushing to his face, he has memories of being with Lexie before, but this still felt like the first time. Colby 2’s bulge twitched, growing with just the thought of being with her. “Fuck, I want you so bad.”

Lexie turned and peeked down at Colby 2’s pants. “And I can’t wait to have you inside of me.”

Once in the bedroom, Lexie wasted no time, she dropped her pants and panties to the floor, toed off her socks, and quickly ripped off her shirt. She pulled Colby 2 in close, kissing him.

Colby 2 wrapped his strong arms around her. His heart raced as their lips met, he savored the taste of her. Her tongue swirling around his like she was trying to tie a cherry stem into a knot.

She released from his embrace and laid back on the edge of the bed, legs bent at the knees, exposing herself to her new, yet familiar lover. “Time for your breakfast, in bed.” She chimed.

He showed no hesitation as he lowered himself on his knees to the floor, caressing the outside of Lexie’s thighs with each hand, bowing his head into her delicious pussy.

He made his way lower, his tongue licking her asshole while rubbing her clit with his hand. The wetness from her pussy leaking down onto his tongue like a steady stream urged his hand to rub harder.

She let out a moan, grabbing the back of Colby 2’s head. “Gah!” she shouted with pleasure, pulling his hair, driving his tongue into her ass.

He waited for her to release his head to pull away, removing his shirt while he stood. Colby 2 reached down with one hand, continuing to caress her clit while he removed his jeans and kicked them across the floor. “You taste so fucking delicious.”

While standing at the end of the bed, Colby 2 glanced at Lexie with her legs spread open, tracing her fingers along her opening as she said. “As delicious as you think that tastes, you haven’t had your best until your dick is buried deep inside of me. Now get your ass over here and fill me with that sexy wand of yours.”

Colby 2 stepped forward and rubbed his cock against the folds of her pussy, as he lowered himself to her, gently kissing and licking his way from her navel to the side of her neck.

“Ah, fuck me, babe!” Lexie gasped.

He reached down, and with a firm grasp around his cock, guided it into her.

Matching her thrusts to Colby 2’s, Lexie released multiple gasps, the sensual familiarity of Colby blending with the euphoric, almost taboo, sensation of another man inside of her, sending her into an orgasmic bliss.

He pushed himself up, lifting his torso from hers, arms pushing down on the bed on either side of Lexie’s head.

She grabbed his wrists and directed his hands to her neck, “Fuck me. Fuck me hard.”

Colby 2 grabbed her throat, gently tightening his grip. Lexie threw her legs around his back, interlocking her ankles as Colby 2 continued thrusting and choking her.

As Lexie came, Colby 2 pulled out, working his shaft with his hands until he released himself on the smooth skin just above her stimulated pussy.

Releasing his grip from her throat, Colby 2 slowly made his way back down between her thighs, lapping up the mess he’d made while gently massaging her still sensitive pussy, sending Lexie into another climax.

“Um, that was amazing. What was that thing at the end there? We’ve never done that!” Lexie said breathlessly, retrieving her clothes.

Panting and putting on his own clothes, Colby 2 replied, “Yes, it was. And I’m not sure. At the moment I thought it would be hot?”

Lexie, still flushed red, said, “Oh, it was! You made the mess, and you cleaned it up.”

Lexie and Colby 2 spent the remainder of the day lazily cuddling in bed. Lexie was curious and asked Colby 2 questions about what it was like to be a double. Colby 2 explained, “Most of the time, I feel like the normal me.”

Colby 1 came home, finding the two of them in bed, and couldn’t help but chuckle softly. “I hope you two had fun.”

Lexie replied with a satisfied grin, “Yes!”

Colby 1 and Colby 2 exchanged knowing glances and bid each other farewell. Colby 1 performed the spell, making Colby 2 disappear. Colby absorbed the vivid memories and sensations of the day, and he couldn’t help but breathe a bit heavier as he said, “Damn, that was hot!”

Lexie smiled at him knowingly, fully aware of what he had just experienced.

He grinned as he thought, *I made the mess, and I cleaned it up.*

He’d have to remember that one!



At the ass crack of dawn, just before five, Colby groaned as he tried to wake up for the day ahead. He trudged to the bathroom for a quick shower before attempting to get dressed and ready.

Once he managed to put on his clothes, he sat on the couch in the living room, and contemplated whether to call in sick. After a few minutes of internal debate, he decided he would summon Colby 2 to work for him, sparing himself from a day of exhaustion.

Colby mixed up a batch of the potion in the kitchen, opting not to disturb Lexie by sneaking into the hidden room. Plucking a hair, he dropped it into a cup filled with the other ingredients and spoke the magic word.

“Geminus.”

Colby 2 phased into existence, greeting the original with a playful jest. “You know I’m just as tired as you, right?” he quipped.

Colby 1 chuckled. “Oh, well, yeah. I guess that makes sense now that you mention it. Can you do me this favor, please?”

“Sure,” Colby 2 agreed. “I’ll go to work for us. But we both know what I’m gonna want in return, right?”

He smiled knowingly as Colby 1 nodded, understanding the unspoken request. “You don’t even have to twist my arm,” he

replied, completely on board for them to fuck Lexie at the same time.

With an agreement and a handshake, Colby 1 thought, *It's fucking weird shaking my own hand*, as Colby 2 headed off to work. Colby 1 headed back upstairs and put his sweats back on before slipping into bed beside Lexie, finding comfort in her presence as he drifted back to sleep.

Colby woke up a few hours later to Lexie shaking him, her urgency evident. "Babe, wake up, you're late!"

Colby, still groggy from sleep, rubbed his eyes and replied through a yawn. "Nope, Colby 2 is working for me today."

Lexie looked surprised. "How'd you pull that off?" she asked.

Colby grinned mischievously. "Well, I promised some, um, three of us time."

Lexie's eyes sparkled with fiery lust as she responded, "Oh, hell yes."

The two shared a passionate kiss before getting out of bed and heading downstairs for breakfast. Just as they were about to sit down to eat, Colby heard a soft knock at the back door, which left him puzzled.

Curious, he went to answer it and found Cyrus standing there. He greeted them warmly as Colby invited Cyrus inside.

"You two have done an incredible job on the house," Cyrus complimented them.

Lexie smiled in gratitude. "Thank you. It's so nice to see you again."

All three sat down at the kitchen table, and Lexie asked their guest, "Coffee?"

"I would love a cup," Cyrus responded cheerfully.

Lexie poured the old man a cup and handed it across the table to him. "Cream or sugar?" she asked.

"No thank you. Black is fine." Cyrus said, as he reached for the mug.

Colby proceeded to share the details of his recent magical endeavors with Cyrus, leaving out the steamier aspects and the promise to his double, and mentioned his new garden. Colby thought with a laugh, *Yeah, let me tell my mentor we're planning a threesome with a magical Clone-a-Colby.*

Cyrus listened attentively to Colby's updates and praised him for his growing magical abilities and his mastery of the double spell. He could see the potential within Colby, and it excited him.

However, Cyrus' expression grew more serious as he continued. "I need to warn you both," he advised. "The Council has heard rumblings of a possible Hunter in town. My visits will be more spread out and incognito from here on out, for your safety."

Colby and Lexie exchanged concerned glances, realizing the gravity of the situation. They were now facing potential threats beyond just uncovering Colby's magical abilities. The threat of the Hunters was now a real possibility.

Colby, trying to ease the tension, asked, "More incognito than appearing in the back seat of my car?"

Cyrus welcomed his question with a laugh. "Colby, have you learned any defensive spells?"

Colby admitted, "I can light a fire with a word and hurl an energy ball, but I haven't practiced my aim yet."

Cyrus nodded thoughtfully. "That is a good start, my boy, but we'll need to work on your precision and control. Defending yourself and those you care about is crucial. In the meantime, stay vigilant and keep your magical activities discreet. We do not want to draw unnecessary attention."

Both Colby and Lexie nodded in agreement. "Yes, sir," Colby responded, as Cyrus stood from the table.

"Alright you two, I better take my leave. My presence alone would be cause for alarm to a Hunter," Cyrus said, tipping his hat. As he did, he slowly vanished from their sight.

"See ya later, I guess," Colby tried telling the vanishing Cyrus.

Lexie was left momentarily intrigued. “Woah, he really does just disappear, huh?” She searched under the table, as if expecting him to playfully hide like a child pretending to disappear.

Colby chuckled at her antics. “Like an elderly Batman,” he remarked, amused by the thought.

The rest of their day passed in anticipation, both anxiously waiting for Colby 2’s return. As the evening approached, Colby and Lexie decided to prepare a surprise for him.



Colby dressed casually in his normal sweatpants, his hair loose and down to his shoulders, he knew Colby 2 had his in a bun, adding to Lexie being able to tell the difference. However, Lexie donned a sexy dark red baby doll lingerie set with matching panties, setting the stage for a memorable reunion with the clone.

As Colby 2 walked into the house from the men’s job, he was greeted by the enticing sight of Lexie, seductively sprawled across the couch.

The temptation before him was irresistible, and he couldn’t contain his desire. In a passionate moment, he flung the door shut behind him, tearing his shirt off in a fervent display of longing.

He thought, *Holy shit, I can’t believe we are doing this!* The room filled with palpable energy as the three of them embraced the sensual experience that laid before them.

Colby 1 hesitantly spoke the word, “*Sterilis,*” eyeing his groin and Colby 2’s. “That should do the trick.”

“So, what are you two waiting for?” Lexie asked, taking the lead, as she sat up and reached for Colby 2’s hand. She gently guided him to sit next to her and kissed him passionately, tracing her fingers behind his ears and down his neck.

Colby 1 moved to the couch on the free side of Lexie, he gently caressed her back, leaning in to kiss her neck and

shoulder, goosebumps peppering down her spine.

Her arm reached back and grabbed the back of Colby 1's neck, holding his lips in place at the tender spot between her shoulder and neck.

Colby 2 worked his hand from Lexie's pink hard nipple, down to her already wet pussy. His fingers found their stop at her clit, his hands working with urgency, unable to hide his excitement.

She let out a soft "mmph" before leaving 2's lips and shifting her upper body to find 1's.

Colby 2 continued working his fingers under the lace that covered her pussy. His thumb rubbing against her clit, two fingers slowly coaxing inside her wetness.

Lexie used either hand to work both Colby's cocks over their pants. Burning with desire, she continued going from one to the other kissing them.

Colby 2 retreated his hand from inside of her panties. Both Colbys caressing her curves, grabbing at her flesh. Their minds thinking as one, each looped their fingers through the elastic of her lingerie pulling them down, Lexie kicked them from her ankles across the floor.

She managed to work each cock out of their fabric cages, stroking each one rhythmically. Lexie bent herself over, taking Colby 2 in her mouth while releasing 1 and standing in front of him, her ass in the air.

Colby 1 pressed his face into her soaking wet pussy and stroked her with his tongue. Ignoring his need for air, he lapped at her, and she wiggled her back end digging his face deeper into her recesses.

He pulled his face away and slid his middle and forefinger up and down through her slick lower lips, hitting her clit with each pass.

While she continued to suck Colby 2's cock, Lexie waved on 1 with her hand, prompting him to fuck her.

He followed her command, and with one leg off the couch, he raised himself up and slid his length into her. All three released moans with each suck and thrust. The smell of sweat and sex permeated throughout the room.

She pulled herself from 1's thrusts and released 2's cock from her mouth. "You, lay down on your back." She instructed Colby 2.

Colby 1 moved off to the side so they could adjust on the couch, slowly stroking his rod.

Lexie grabbed 2's cock as she straddled him and drove his length inside of her. She laid down across 2's chest, panting, "Okay, let's see what both of you can do!"

Colby 1 moved up behind her, and throwing one leg over Colby 2's, he spat in his hand and rubbed it on his cock, slowly pressing his head into Lexie's pussy.

Lexie was no stranger to pushing boundaries, she'd used some larger toys in the past. But a second cock still took some work. Colby 1 continued to move himself in, her slit slowly stretching to accept each of them. She winced. "Ah, I feel so full."

Colby 1 thought, *this is the hottest, weirdest feeling ever!*

Both Colby's cocks fit snugly inside Lexie's core, rubbing against the other man's. Soon, it was more than Lexie could take, and she screamed, "Oh, fuck yes!"

Both Colby's were nearing climax, and the only sound in the room was flesh against flesh and the heavy panting from all three.

"Fuck, I'm cumming!" Lexie let out. Soon after, she could feel 2's cock explode inside her. The mixture of warm cum and Lexie screaming sent 1 into an orgasm, filling Lexie with two cocks worth of cum as she continued screaming, "Fuck, fuck, fuck, yes!"

Colby 1 slowly slid his cock out of their wife, and Lexie followed suit and lifted herself off Colby 2. All three took a moment to catch their breath.

“Holy shit, babes,” Colby 1 said, through his labored breaths.

Colby 2, attempting to regulate his own, said, “That was fucking intense!” He slid himself up to sit on the couch.

She smiled, cum peeking from her folds, as she sat open legged in the middle of the couch. “You boys can fill me anytime.”

Both Colby’s looked at each other, a knowing look on 2’s face, and Colby 1 whispered, “*Apage.*”

As Colby 2 evaporated from the world, Colby 1 received all the memories and feelings he’d made that day. The euphoric experience of what had happened coursed through his body for a second time, and it sent him into a second sudden climax.

Lexie let out a giggle. “Yeah, it was definitely amazing.”



After their exhausting sexual encounter, Colby and Lexie cleaned up the living room. “Why are his clothes still here?” Lexie asked, puzzled by the pile of laundry littering the floor.

Colby, just as confused, replied, “Hm, maybe because they weren’t on him when he disappeared? Only thing I can think of.”

Gathering all the laundry, the two headed up the stairs, and enjoyed a hot shower together, passionately kissing and washing each other as they reminisced about what had just taken place.

Thoroughly worn out, Colby and Lexie could not wait to go to bed. Wrapping themselves in each other’s arms, they fell asleep.

However, as the night wore on, Colby’s sleep was disturbed by a haunting dream. In the dream, he saw Lexie running through their house, screaming, and bleeding from her forehead, a nightmarish scenario that left him drenched in sweat and filled with fear. The dream had ended right before someone Colby could only assume was a hunter drove his knife into Lexie’s heart.

When Colby woke just before his alarm was set to ring for work, and the vividness of the dream lingered in his mind,

casting a shadow over his morning routine. He thought, *What, the fuck was that?*

He clumsily prepared for work, unable to shake the newfound fear of the potential killer in town Cyrus had warned them about, and the thought of his family's safety being at risk.

Throughout the slow and anxiety-filled workday, Colby could not escape the haunting grip of his dream. His thoughts were consumed by the vivid imagery of Lexie in danger. Every unfamiliar face on the job site made him uneasy, and he found himself constantly looking over his shoulder, as if trying to catch a glimpse of someone ominous lurking nearby.

Colby's heightened paranoia turned even the most innocuous sound into potential threats, causing him to jump at every loud noise, much like a child who had just seen their first horror movie. The weight of the dream and the fear it had instilled in him weighed heavily on his shoulders, making for an uneasy, restless day.

On his way home, he made a stop at the hardware store, picking up a few shooting targets, and then swung by home to grab a 2x4 and a stapler.

With supplies in hand, Colby kissed Lexie, "Babes, I'm heading out for a while, I have something very important that I have to do."

Lexie nodded, a bit confused, "Okay hun, just be safe, those staples can hurt." She decided not to push further, sensing the seriousness and tension in his tone.

Colby made his way to a field just outside of town, his determination to practice his defensive spells overriding the growing unease in the back of his mind. The vast openness of the field offered him the privacy he needed to concentrate and perform magic without anyone being able to spot him.

He set up his makeshift shooting range, planting the 2x4 firmly into the ground and stapling one of the targets to the top of the wood. He stepped back to ten paces, mentally preparing himself for the exercise ahead.

Drawing upon the knowledge from the pages of the book, Colby assumed a sturdy boxer's stance, positioning his hands in front of his torso and visualizing the creation of an energy ball. He'd read that the size of the ball depended on the strength of a warlock's will, and Colby focused intently, allowing his fear and anger to coalesce into his hands, forming the ball.

As he concentrated, a shimmering blue orb crackling with lightning gradually took shape between his palms. Colby could feel the slight stinging sensation of the sparks and radiant heat emanating from the energy ball. With determination, he pushed both hands forward from his chest toward the target, but to his disappointment, the orb fizzled out abruptly, veering off course and dissipating before reaching its mark.

He thought, *Well, fuck.*

Colby took a deep breath, his frustration mingling with determination, knowing he had a lot of work to do. He steadied himself and prepared to try again.

"I have to do this. I have to save Lexie," he muttered to himself.

His determination burned brighter with each attempt. He knew that mastering this skill would be crucial to protecting Lexie. For nearly an hour, he tirelessly threw energy balls, each attempt getting closer to the target. The field echoed with the sound of his efforts, and he could feel the sweat trickling down his brow.

Panting and clearly exhausted, Colby told himself, *One more try!*

With a deep breath, he summoned all his emotions and visualized the target as the very threat he had seen in his haunting dream. With all the force he could muster, he hurled the ball as if pitching a baseball, and it streaked through the air, hitting the target center mass.

The target exploded into pieces, and the 2x4 shattered, sending splinters scattering into the night sky. Out of breath

but triumphant, Colby let out a chuckle and thought, *Got you, you fucker!*

Colby diligently cleaned up the field, ensuring that no evidence of his magical practice remained. He understood the importance of keeping his abilities hidden from prying eyes. With his task complete, he made his way back home.

The threesome with his clone and Lexie was thrilling, but this newfound sense of power and ability to protect his loved ones made him feel like a true warlock for the first time.

When Colby arrived home, Lexie could see that he was covered in dirt and utterly beat. Concern etched across her face, she asked, “Where the hell were you?”

Colby, too tired to tiptoe around anything, explained his nightmare and how it had haunted him throughout the day. He described his trip to a field where he practiced throwing lightning balls at a dummy, the intensity of his emotions evident in his voice.

“Your dream sounds horrible, love.” Lexie, her concern apparent in her voice. “But look. I’m safe, you can throw magic balls now, and you have work again in the morning.”

She reached over to hold him, offering her comforting presence. “And you need a shower,” she added with a soft laugh.

Colby took her advice and headed upstairs. As the warm water washed away the anxiety, stress, and fear that had plagued him earlier in the day, he felt a sense of confidence and security knowing that he had acquired a valuable skill to protect them.



SIXTEEN SOMETHING DIFFERENT

A week had passed in the Richards' household, with their lives settling into a new kind of normal. Colby 2 continued to alternate with Colby 1 at work, keeping up appearances as best they could. Colby 1 and 2 also took turns hanging out with Dave at the bar after work, enjoying some relaxation and camaraderie.

The absence of visits from Cyrus during the week provided a small but welcome sense of relief, as it eased Colby's mind about the potential threat of the Hunters.

Colby diligently tended to his garden daily, excited to see the fruits of his labor growing. Each night, he ventured out to the field to practice his aim with energy balls, steadily improving his skills with each training session. A few times he brought Lexie along to witness the spectacle.

One night during the week, Colby had an unexpected visit from Juniper, her fiery red hair shimmering like flames in the sunset. She flirtatiously chatted with Colby near his garden, offering compliments about his plant choices and explaining the importance of each herb within witchcraft.

Moments later Lexie had come out to greet their guest, causing Juniper's demeanor to shift noticeably as she turned up her nose in a clear display of displeasure at Lexie's interruption.

Soon after Lexie's arrival, Juniper took her leave, and Lexie could not help but voice her feelings. "A witch, huh? More like a bitch," she muttered, clearly unimpressed with their strange visitor.

"Sorry, babes, I don't know why she acted like that when you came out." Colby apologized, genuinely perplexed by Juniper's behavior.

Lexie's snarl spoke volumes. "Oh, I know. And so does she," she replied with a hint of jealousy flashing across her face. It seemed that the mysterious Juniper had some explaining to do if she wanted to earn Lexie's trust or approval.

Colby offered reassurance to Lexie, telling her there was nothing to worry about. "I barely know her. She's just flirty, loves," he explained, hoping to put Lexie's mind at ease.

Lexie responded with a cautious agreement. "Yea, okay. Well, I'll be watching her," she declared, her protective instincts kicking in. It seemed Juniper had left quite an impression, and Lexie wasn't about to let it go unnoticed.

The week continued for them, free from any further unexpected hiccups or surprises. Finally, Colby had a day off from work, and he decided it was time to tackle the task of clearing out their spare bedroom, which had become a cluttered storage space for tools and materials from their home renovations.

Lexie informed him that she would be spending the afternoon with her mom shopping for a new stove, the last item needed to complete their home improvements. "We'll have to go to Falmouth. So, you will have plenty of time to finish the spare room."

As Lexie's mother arrived, Colby gave Lexie a kiss. "Good luck finding a stove, babes." She returned the gesture, also wishing him luck with his endeavor.

Opening the door to the cluttered spare bedroom, Colby felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of items they had hoarded

in there. He knew it would take him all day to sort through and move everything, unless...

He performed the double spell, and Colby 2 materialized beside him. They quickly coordinated a plan: one of them would stay inside while the other handled moving items outside, ensuring they were not seen.

With their combined efforts, the task that would have taken hours for a single person was swiftly accomplished, making the process much more manageable for both Colbys.

With the spare room now cleared out and devoid of clutter, Colby 2 took a seat on the bed. Colby 1, still amazed at how much they had forgotten was stored there, commented, "Huh, and here I forgot we even had a second bed."

Colby 1 headed down to the kitchen to fetch a couple of beers. He returned to the spare room, handing one to Colby 2, and then sat down on the floor next to the bed.

Colby 2 couldn't help but tease his counterpart, saying, "You always call me out when there's work to do. What happened to all our... other plans?"

Colby 1 chuckled and replied, "Yeah, but would you have done this solo? I didn't think so. Also, Lexie isn't even here for... other plans." They both shared a knowing smile. He went downstairs and retrieved the rest of the case of beer and brought it up to the room. "Well, we have plenty of time, so we might as well relax."

Opening another beer, Colby 2 decided to bring up the subject of Juniper. "She's pretty hot, huh?" he asked, curious about Colby 1's opinion.

Colby 1 nodded in agreement, saying, "She is. Obviously, I agree with me, but Lexie really doesn't like her. So, there's that."

As the two Colbys continued enjoying their beers and reminisced about their time with Lexie, their conversation took an intimate turn. Their shared memories seemed to influence them, and Colby 1 commented, "I think the three of us have

definitely pushed past what we thought sex was. It's more of an act of pleasure than a set rule defining your sexuality."

Colby 2 nodded in agreement, the excitement of their shared experience clearly affecting him as well. "Very profound knowledge we seemed to have gained from one threesome," he said, as he took a swig of his beer.

"Ya know what?" Colby 1 awkwardly continued. "And I know you've thought it because, well you're me, but it would basically just be touching yourself."

"Hm, the fact that we are the same and have both thought this doesn't make it any less weird when you say it out loud," Colby 2 responded. "But, I mean, it would be interesting, huh?"

Colby 1 thought, *I always joked with Lexie that if I had a clone, things would get weird.*

Colby 1 sat up on the bed, near his double, and both took one last drink from their bottles. Both Colbys pulled their pants down. Each took their cocks out and slowly stroked themselves. Neither said a word, each focused on their night with Lexie, the thought of their cocks rubbing against each other inside her warm pussy.

When they were both rock-hard, Colby 1 reached over to grab 2, slowly continuing his strokes as if it was his own, which it was after all.

Colby 2 leaned back, accepting this newfound sensation. It felt no different than him handling himself, but from an angle he could never have imagined. He pushed the original's hand away and took Colby 1's cock in his hand, keeping the same pace his counterpart had just given him.

Clearly nervous, Colby 2 slowly lowered his head, opened his mouth, and began sucking 1's cock. He felt it convulse and throb in his mouth.

Colby 1 let a soft moan escape his lips. Taking Colby 1's rock hard tower in his mouth, he thought this felt like sucking on a thick thumb, the sensation of giving a blow job almost rivaling receiving one.

The heat was getting to him, and Colby 1 tore his shirt off, throwing it across the now empty room. Neither Colby expected to be this into the act they were performing, neither one hearing the front door open or the footsteps leading to the room.

“What... the... fuck... is going on?” Lexie, clearly shocked, shouted. After she realized what she had stumbled upon, her shock quickly turned into a lustful grin. “And where was my invite?”

Colby 2 pulled his mouth from Colby 1’s cock, stuttering to try and find an answer, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand.

Lexie, not wanting to waste a moment, threw her clothes off, adding to the piles across the room. “You always joked that if you had a clone, you’d try something like this,” she teased. She pulled Colby 1 into her chest and the two fell backwards onto the bed. “I want you to fuck me, but I want you to suck him while you do, okay?”

“Holy shit, this is intense.” Colby 1 said, laying over top Lexie, his counterpart stepping up beside them.

Lexie laid there, one hand holding open her lower lips, she reached up and grabbed 2’s cock, slowly stroking it as she pulled it towards Colby 1’s face. “Come on, suck his hard cock, babe,” she moaned.

Colby 1 raised his hand to grab the throbbing cock out of Lexie’s hand and drew it into his mouth. Savoring the taste of his head before he gradually worked his way down the shaft, engulfing more than half. His tongue worked itself around the shaft as he bobbed his head back and forth, feeling the veins of his cock.

Between heavy breaths, Colby 2 proposed, “Do... Do you want to try that thing, 1?”

Colby 1 nervously released Colby 2’s cock. Chuckling anxiously, he said, “Um, okay.”

Upon hearing Colby 1’s acceptance, Colby 2 ran out of the room, returning with Lexie’s small bottle of lube. “Better be

careful,” he jested.

Colby 2 emptied enough lube into his hand to coat his finger, as he slowly found himself behind Colby 1. “Okay, breathe,” he said as he took his oiled-up forefinger and slid it into Colby 1’s ass.

Colby and Lexie had messed around with prostate play before, this would be his first time taking a dick though.

Colby 1 let out a “Humph!” Lexie had done this before but never while he was inside of her, and the feeling was amazing. The pressure in his ass as he thrust forward inside of her was almost too much to handle.

Colby 2 slowly inserted a second finger, the heat from 1’s ass radiated against his palm. He began to curl his fingers inside Colby 1’s ass, rubbing his insides, searching for his prostate.

Colby 1 winced just a bit at the added pressure and initial sharp feeling. His breath heaving at this point in anticipation. He could feel himself on the verge of ecstasy.

Colby 2 could tell by 1’s squirming he was fighting an orgasm and gently removed his finger from Colby 1’s puckered hole. Stroking his own cock, he spread more lube evenly over the shaft and thought, *Here goes nothing!*

“What are you two doing?” Lexie asked, finally opening her eyes from her own bliss. Her eyes widened as she got the answer to her question. “Oh my god, yes, fuck him!”

Colby 2 delicately inserted himself in Colby 1’s opening. The initial entry caused a sharp tinge which soon subsided, and Colby 1 quickly accepted the fullness.

Gentle, slow thrusts at first. All three found the same rhythm, and Colby 2 increased his speed slowly, and his thrusts pushed Colby 1’s cock deeper inside of Lexie.

Lexie’s legs shook, as she screamed, “Fuck, I’m coming!”

Colby 2 couldn’t fight the tight sensation and erupted in 1’s ass, sending Colby 1 into a simultaneous orgasm with the others.

Colby 1 reached back, grabbing Colby 2 by the hip, and pulled him as deep into him as he could. Each Colby pulsating into their partner, wave after wave.

Colby 2 slid out of Colby 1's ass while Colby 1 continued his thrusts inside of Lexie.

She wrapped her legs around his back, pulled him in tight, and kissed his neck. "Fuck yes, babe."

Colby 1 finally escaped Lexie's death grip, the three of them sprawled across the queen-sized bed, all three panting, attempting to catch their breath. Lexie rolled over Colby 1 to lay between her two husbands. "No disappearing, let's sleep here."

Neither disagreed as hot, thick cum leaked from both Lexie and Colby 1. Colby 1 however, hopped up and headed towards the bathroom. "Hold on, I have to do something first."

Lexie peered down the hallway, hearing the sound of Colby's trimmer. "What the hell are you doing?"

"Is that what it feels like for you?" Colby 1 hollered down the hall.

Lexie let out a confused chuckle. "How what feels like?"

"Sucking a dick? I mean it was great, but... very hairy." Colby 1 replied, trimmers still running.

Colby 2 laughed and readjusted on the bed. "He's got a point."

"I guess?" Lexie shouted back, rubbing her hand through her hair. "We just both love the outcome so much I've never thought about it."

The trimmers stopped and Lexie could see the light flick off from down the hallway. Colby 1 burst through the door, hands on his hips, standing in all his glory. "Well now we have hardwood floors! No more worrying about flossing with my pubic hair."



SEVENTEEN

WITCH BITCH

Colby 1 woke up feeling amazing after exploring their wildest side yet. He peered down at Lexie and Colby 2, still fast asleep, naked on the spare bed and thought, *I'd better not wake them.* He decided he would surprise them with breakfast from the diner across town. He quietly slipped out of the spare room, headed for his own bedroom, and got dressed. He pondered, *I wonder what 2 would want to eat? Duh, the same thing as me.*

He arrived at the diner and parked around back. Colby placed an order of pancakes for Lexie and two loaded omelets for himself and the other Colby. However, as he returned to his car, he was taken aback by a surprise – Juniper was approaching his driver's window.

She asked if he had time for a quick chat, and Colby, still somewhat surprised, set the food in the backseat and agreed. She walked around the car and entered the passenger seat.

“I'm sure you've noticed, but I can't help but be attracted to you. The other witches are all about those mangy werewolf boys, but me, mmm, I love a young warlock,” she said as she bit the corner of her lip.

Colby politely replied, “While I appreciate the compliment, I'm married. Happily, mind you.”

“Well, I don't take no for an answer,” she responded with a sly smile.

Before Colby could react, Juniper whispered a word he could not quite make out, and suddenly, his body was immobilized, pinned against his seat. Panicking, Colby struggled against the spell, but couldn't free himself. He was trapped in the car with Juniper. "What the fuck did you do?"

"Nothing too bad. Just a little binding spell. Don't worry, you'll still feel everything," she replied seductively.

"I don't want this, Juniper. Please, let me go," Colby pleaded, feeling a mix of fear and frustration.

Juniper flashed her sly smile again, "Oh, but you will." She unbuttoned Colby's jeans, grabbed the sides, and worked them down his petrified legs. Juniper flicked her wrist and pointed at Colby's lips with the word "*Quies*."

Colby found in addition to being immobilized, now he could not speak. He continued to struggle against his invisible restraints as Juniper delicately traced her fingers over Colby's cock. Even though he was completely against Juniper's advance, he found himself growing hard; between the sensation of her nails tickling his flesh and still being completely turned on from the night before, he could not contain it.

Juniper noticed the erection and smiled. "I told you I'd rock your world." She licked her lips and perched them on the tip of his dick, beginning to massage his head with her mouth.

Colby continued to grow in her mouth, and Juniper continued wetting it.

She released his head from between her lips and licked him from base to tip. "Now for a ride you won't forget." She threw her leg over Colby's lap, lifted her black Cami dress, and slid his cock inside of her.

Juniper let out a gasp. "Gah, so much better than those knotted wolves." She continued to ride him, moaning each time she squatted down on his sexy wand.

As she picked up the pace, Colby could feel himself throbbing, about to come. He tried to tell her to stop, but the silencing spell held firm, as firm as his cock. Juniper giggled

through her moans, “Hmph, yes, fill me!” As if on command, Colby erupted, filling Juniper with his thick, hot cum. He thought, *How do I even have any cum left after last night?*

Juniper sat there, Colby’s cock still inside her, warm cum running down her thigh. “That was great,” she said, as she leaned forward and gave Colby a kiss on the cheek, “but, I’ve got to get going.” She lifted from him and exited his driver’s door. As she walked away, she blew him a kiss, and mouthed unheard words.

Whatever she said released Colby, and he could speak again. He quickly pulled his jeans up, screaming “Fucking psycho!” at her before starting his car.

Colby’s drive across town felt like an eternity, and he thought, *Fuck, what do I do? I have to tell them, I have to!*

He had finally arrived home, still feeling dazed and confused after his encounter with Juniper. He carried the bag of food inside, placing it on the kitchen counter, completely distracted. The weight of the recent events was still heavy on his mind as he headed upstairs, expecting to find Lexie and Colby 2 still asleep.

Halfway up, he heard a knocking sound coming from the spare bedroom, followed by the sound of Lexie’s moan. Curiosity piqued, he continued toward the doorway and gently pushed it open. Inside, he saw Lexie bent over the end of bed and Colby 2 thrusting from behind, her hair wrapped around his wrist. Colby felt a mixture of surprise and intrigue, not upset but rather caught off guard by the scene before him thinking, *Well, at least their experience this morning is better than mine.*

Colby decided to give Lexie and Colby 2 their privacy, choosing not to interrupt their intimate moment. “Someone should have a good time today,” he said, closing the door. He turned and headed for the bathroom, where he took a long soothing shower, hoping to wash away the unsettling encounter with Juniper. The warm water helped clear his mind, providing a sense of solace amid the chaos.

Once he finished his shower, he headed downstairs. He found Colby 2 and Lexie setting out the food he had brought them. “Loaded omelets, how did you know?” Colby 2 joked.

“I know you at least heard us, why not join in?” Lexie asked, winking at him.

Colby joined Lexie and Colby 2 at the table, but his appetite was nonexistent as he thought about the unsettling encounter with Juniper at the diner. “I... I don’t know how to say this.”

Lexie’s face shifted from flirty to worried instantly. “How to say what, love?”

Colby 2 became just as concerned. “What’s going on?”

“I went to get us food... and Juniper was there. She asked me to talk, so I said okay, and she hopped in the car.” The strain of the moment was on his face. “After she got in, she used magic on me, like, chaining me to the seat, and... she raped me.” Tears welled in his eyes, he turned to Lexie, “I am so sorry!”

Lexie grabbed his cheek. “I’m not mad at you, and this is *not* your fault!” She growled with frustration. “If I see that witch bitch again, I’m going to kill her!”

Colby was relieved by Lexie’s understanding and support. He could not help but smile at her fierce determination to protect their relationship. Colby 2 chimed in, saying, “I’m with you on that. No one fucks with us like that and gets away with it.”

The three finished their breakfast, Colby 1 not eating more than a few bites. Lexie continued her threats against Juniper throughout the meal as Colby 2 agreed and attempted to cheer Colby 1 up. Once they finished cleaning up, Colby 1 used the spell to make Colby 2 disappear, waving goodbye as he vanished. The sensations and emotions from the previous night, this morning, and during breakfast flooded Colby 1 with a euphoric burst, but also great anger.

Colby and Lexie decided to relax and take it easy the rest of the day. Both put on sweatpants and lounged on the couch, watching TV mindlessly.



EIGHTEEN

THOMAS' REPORT

The night was still. There had been no movement from the Richards' house for most of the day except the trip to the diner this morning.

Thomas had sent a photo of the mysterious red-haired woman back to headquarters and was anxiously waiting for a reply.

He found himself at his usual vantage point, peering out the window towards the darkened Richards' house, illuminated only by the soft flicker of candlelight. Thomas was in the midst of sharpening a large hunting knife, his thoughts focused on the task at hand.

His phone rang on the table beside him, and he set down the knife and whetstone before answering. "Hello?"

From the other end, a voice spoke, its tone serious and unyielding, "Before your progress report, we have confirmed the identity of the red-haired woman from your photo. She is Juniper Green, a confirmed witch, believed to be part of The Council. She is now designated as Priority Target #3. Terminate if the opportunity arises. Progress report?"

Thomas clenched his jaw, the weight of the orders sinking in. "Understood," he replied with determination. "I'll maintain my surveillance of the Richards' residence and act when the opportunity presents itself."

He took a deep breath, steeling himself for the report he was about to make to the mysterious voice on the other end of the line. With a sense of reluctant duty, he diligently recounted the events he had witnessed between Juniper and Colby at the diner.

“Out back of the local diner,” Thomas reported, his voice steady but tinged with unease. “I observed the red-haired woman, Juniper Green, meeting with the male target, Colby Richards. They appeared to be engaged in a... personal encounter.”

He hesitated for a moment, choosing his words carefully before continuing. “Their behavior was intimate and suggestive, which suggests a closer relationship between the two.”

There was a brief pause on the other end of the line, and then the voice responded with a cool and detached tone. “Noted. Continue your surveillance and be prepared to act when the opportunity arises.”

Thomas acknowledged the command, though he could not help but feel a sense of discomfort at being drawn into his target’s personal lives. He hung up the phone, the gravity of the situation weighing heavily on his mind, as he picked up his knife, continuing to sharpen it, preparing for the inevitable moment when he would be called to carry out his mission. “God damned perverts.”



NINETEEN SHOWER THOUGHTS

Colby found himself in a stage of inner turmoil after the disturbing encounter with Juniper at the diner. The incident had left him feeling off-kilter and deeply resistant to using his magic.

As the days passed, Colby's inner struggle became increasingly evident. He could not shake the memories of that unsettling encounter and was wary of utilizing his magical abilities, even something as simple as summoning Colby 2 to work in his place.

Lexie noticed his distress and attempted to offer comfort and support, but Colby remained distant, trapped in his thoughts. He grappled with the unsettling realization that the world he had been thrust into was far more complicated and dangerous than he had ever imagined.

The house, once a place of magical discoveries and newfound love, now felt like a prison, and the spells that had once empowered him now seemed like a burden.

Each morning, he reluctantly left for work, unable to summon the magic clone to take his place. Instead, he forced himself to face the day with a heavy heart and growing sense of unease.

The days turned into a relentless routine of inner turmoil, and Colby could not help but wonder if the events that had

unfolded in his life were leading him down a dark path from which there might be no return.

The weight on Colby's shoulders seemed unbearable, but a glimmer of hope unexpectedly lifted his spirits one evening when Cassandra Taylor, the other witch affiliated with The Council, paid him an unexpected visit.

"Colby, have you seen Juniper?" Cassandra inquired with a look of concern in her eyes.

Colby hesitated for a moment before recounting the disturbing events at the diner, his voice quivering with unease. "That was the last time I saw her, Cassandra, and I hope I never see her again."

Cassandra listened attentively to his account and then offered a surprising piece of information. "Well, as horrifying as I know that must have been for you, especially telling it all over again, I may have a piece of good news for you. Juniper has abruptly left town with no indication of when or if she'll return. All we knew is that she was seen with you before taking her leave."

The news came as a welcome relief to Colby, who had been plagued by the fear of encountering Juniper once more. Cassandra offered her deep apologies for the event that had transpired.

As Cassandra left, Colby could not help but feel a renewed sense of hope. The darkness that had overshadowed his life was beginning to recede, allowing him to regain control over his emotions.

Colby could not wait to share the news with Lexie. As he entered their cozy living room, he could not help but smile, even before he said a word.

"Babes, you won't believe the visit I just had," he exclaimed. "Someone from The Council paid me a visit just now. Juniper has left town, and it seems like she won't be coming back anytime soon."

Lexie's face lit up with delight. "That's the best fucking news I've ever heard, love. It means we won't have to worry

about me killing that witch, at least not in the immediate future.”

Her joy was contagious, and Colby felt a weight lift off his shoulders. The tensions that had been gnawing at him slowly dissipated. It was as if a dark cloud had finally cleared, revealing a sky full of possibilities.

With a seductive grin, Lexie moved closer to Colby. “You know, it feels like it’s been too long since we’ve had some quality time together,” she teased, her eyes sparkling with desire.

Colby’s apprehension melted away in an instant, replaced by a warm rush of affection. He pulled Lexie close, their lips meeting in a passionate kiss. “I think you’re right, but let’s make it just you and me tonight,” he replied.

Lexie returned the same seductive grin, saying, “No, love, this one is just for you.” She slowly pushed Colby’s back up against the couch and began to rub her hands up and down his thighs. She quickly moved one of her hands to rub Colby’s cock through his pants, using the other to undo his jeans.

“Fuck, babes,” Colby said, his eyes closed, and head laid back.

“What can I say, I missed the taste of your cock in my mouth.”

She pulled his jeans down his legs and teased her fingers up his legs back towards his length. She started stroking his cock, building him up until he was hard as a rock. She pursed her lips and blew softly on his head, then engulfed it, sucking the head hard as she continued stroking him.

She released his head, and her lips made a popping sound. Tilting his cock back towards his stomach, she licked him from root to tip, all while massaging his balls. Lexie took her free hand and raised it to her own mouth.

“Ready for something fun?” she asked, as she began sucking two of her fingers.

“Oh, fuck yes, babes,” Colby replied, excited for what was to come.

She pulled her fingers from her mouth, dripping with spit, replacing them with Colby's cock, and reached her hand under Colby, sliding her two wet fingers into his ass.

Colby jumped a little as she entered, letting moans escape under his breath. She pushed them in to two knuckles, cock in hand, the head in her mouth. Lexie kept this momentum for a minute or so before she drove her fingers deeper and curled them upwards.

"Gah, fuck!" Colby yells. Lexie can feel his boys contracting, he's going to blow like a volcano any minute. Colby grabs the back of Lexie's head, securing a tuft of hair, as if to get a better handle on what's about to happen. He slowly grinds his hips down and out, riding her fingers as she thrusts.

Colby let out a final "Mmph!" as he came in her mouth, and Lexie continued the thrusts in his ass until she was sure she had swallowed every drop.

When she was satisfied she had completed her task, she slowly pulled her fingers out, giving them one last suck of their own. "Your ass tastes amazing, baby."

"God damn, babes, I really needed that!" Colby exclaimed.

"Oh, I know love," she replied, helping him pull up his jeans. "How about a nice hot shower?"

"Deal," Colby responded. And the two headed upstairs to take a relaxing shower.

As the hot water poured over them, Colby and Lexie found solace in each other's arms. The worries of the past few days melted away, replaced by the warmth of their love. The steamy shower rekindled their passion.

"Now your turn," Colby muttered as he dropped to his knees facing Lexie. He pulled her towards his face with her hips.

She leaned her upper body back against the glass wall, giving him a better target. "I said it was for you."

"Ya, but you've been dripping on the floor since we got in the bathroom. Can't let that go to waste."

Her pussy was like a feast in front of him, and his tongue found its way to her vagina as his nose rubbed her clit. Lexie grabbed a handful of Colby's hair as she worked her hips, grinding her clit on his nose while the water lashed at her nipples. The sensations together sent her into an orgasm, and her legs gave out as she fought to stand.

Colby ran his tongue from her pussy, up her body, making sure to stop and gently suck her neck, and finally landed at her lips. "I love you, babes," he whispered.



TWENTY

THE COUNCIL'S DECISION

Colby and Lexie had spent a rejuvenating night together, their bond stronger than ever after the recent turmoil. Both felt refreshed, physically, and emotionally. Colby woke up, feeling renewed as he decided to face the day head-on without relying on Colby 2. Prepared for the day, he thought, *I'm bright eyed and bushy tailed!*

As the day unfolded, Colby's positive attitude remained. He decided to sneak Dave out for an extended lunch. It was a much-needed reprieve from his daily routine with his best friend. The two talked about their last few days. Dave said he'd been drinking at the bar each night, and Colby lied, saying, "We mostly just stayed home and watched TV."

Colby thought, *How the hell would I tell him a hundred-year-old witch raped me behind the diner?*

"Thank you for lunch, man. It's been a long time since we did this," Dave told Colby on their way back to work, his voice sincere and full of gratitude.

Work passed quickly enough, and Colby was in high spirits as he left for the day. But his good mood was short-lived when he found Cyrus waiting in the backseat of his car...again. "Man, what the fuck? Why can't you just text or at least not break into my car?" Colby shouted, shocked at the old intruder.

Cyrus, full of angst, replied, “We have to meet with The Council, tonight, Colby.”

Colby felt an instant dread, worried his encounter with Juniper had further reaching consequences than just on his psyche.

The two made their way to the park, finding a dark secluded spot to park the car, and began their walk to The Council House. Cyrus remained silent for the duration of their walk through to the House.

Colby’s heart raced as he and Cyrus entered the ominous Council House. The weight of the situation pressed down on him like a ton of bricks. His previous visit had been nothing like this, and the tension in the air was palpable.

“Can you at least tell me what’s going on?” Colby pleaded.

“All in time, dear boy.” Cyrus’ voice seemed a bit softer than earlier in the parking lot.

They reached the dining room where all the Council members were present except for Juniper. In her place sat an elderly woman with thinning gray hair. Colby couldn’t help but feel a mixture of relief and trepidation at Juniper’s absence.

The elderly woman regarded Colby with a piercing gaze, her eyes reflecting wisdom and authority. Cyrus led Colby to an empty seat, and the two of them took their places at the large round table.

“Welcome back, Colby,” the spirit of Colbert greeted his grandson. “The woman before you is Esther Milford, eldest witch of the Strange Grove coven.”

Colby turned, nodded his head, and greeted her nervously. “It’s nice to meet you, ma’am.”

“Oh, there is no need to be so polite, young man,” Esther said, with a raspy voice. “You are the reason we are here after all.”

Colby shot Cyrus a worried look. “Me, what did I do?” Colby shot out defensively.

Ronan let out a roar from the other end of the room. “It’s not what you did, boy, but what you have exposed. We all knew Juniper was a no-good slut. And her actions against another supernatural being have secured her banishing from The Council.”

Cassandra directed her gaze at Ronan. “Her actions are irredeemable, Ronan, but name-calling is uncalled for. It’s the reaction of a beast.”

Ronan let out a snarl as he turned to face Cassandra, his eyes filled with fury.

“Enough of these childish antics,” Jonas yelled, all eyes in the room turned to him. “What our fellow sister did was indeed ‘irredeemable’. Furthermore, her recent disappearance only solidifies the evidence of the claim.”

He stopped to take a drink from the chalice in front of him, a red smear staining his bottom lip. “Speaking of evidence, it would seem her actions and recent romp through downtown has raised flags for our Hunter friends.”

Ronan slammed his fist to the table. “It’s about time. So, war it is?”

Richard let out a soft chuckle. “It’s always a fight with you, Ronan. There is no need for war. We must remain vigilant and keep to the shadows. Juniper will sew her own fate. There is no reason to further any bloodshed.”

Colby sat, shocked at the turn of events that he swore was going to be his public hanging and thought, *What the fuck is going on?* “Cyrus warned me there may be a Hunter in town, but what does Juniper have to do with it?”

Colbert tensed up. “You see, son, many of us on The Council have been around quite a while, long enough for the Hunters to know or at least heard of us.” He relaxed a bit.

Colby wondered, *can ghosts relax?*

“So, her roaming around town for all to see and casting magic outside of a civilian diner, those are all beacons for the Hunters.”

“Let us wrap this debate up quickly. All those in favor of continuing as normal and letting fate play itself out, say aye!” Asra boomed.

One by one, starting with the warlocks, each member shouted their aye’s. When the rotation got to Ronan, he snarled. “Aye, but when this turns into a fight, and mark my words, it will, I will be there to tell you all, I told you so.”

“Understood, Ronan. And the ayes have it. Now, for another important matter,” Asra said, the room coming to an eerie silence. “Colbert is not long for this plane, and it has been brought up to The Council to have Colby, his rightful successor, take his seat. Are there any objections?”

Cyrus stood, glancing around the table. “Before we vote, I must say, this young man is talented. He has come such a far way in just a few weeks, even mastering the Richards Doubling spell. It would be my honor to serve this Council with him at our sides.”

Colby’s heart raced as he listened to the Council’s decision. To his astonishment, they voted to admit him into their ranks. His excitement was mixed with a lingering sense of unease, but the overwhelming emotion was one of gratitude and awe.

He stood in acceptance, the weight of the moment hitting him. Before he could fully comprehend what had just happened, he asked the Council for clarification. “Wait, what do you mean, Colbert isn’t long for this plane?”

Philip, another warlock among The Council, leaned forward to explain. “Colbert, while a formidable warlock in his time, has reached the end of his spiritual presence in this world. His time here is nearing its conclusion.”

Colby turned, looking at Colbert’s levitating form. “But, I just met you!”

“Yes,” Colbert sighed, “and even though our time was extremely brief, I could not be prouder of my grandson.”

With a tear forming in his eye, Colby spoke sincerely. “I’ll do my best to continue that, grandpa.”

Ronan, with a broad grin, raised his glass and announced, “And now, we drink!”

The rest of the night was filled with laughter, camaraderie, and shared stories among the Council members. Colby felt like he had truly found a place among them, and he could not have been more grateful for this unexpected turn of events.



TWENTY ONE

THE TIES THAT BIND

Colby awoke to the pulsating beat in his temples, a relentless reminder of the revelry from the previous night. He groaned and thought, *I'm never fucking doing that again.* With a sigh, he rose out of bed to begin his day.

Descending the stairs, Colby found his solace in a steaming cup of coffee. He settled into a chair by the window and stared out at the peaceful morning. The memories of the night before played in his mind like a vivid dream, warming his heart despite the headache.

The Council meeting was both overwhelming and enlightening. Colby had engaged in discussions with the other warlocks about various spells and potions he could experiment with, expanding his magical knowledge. He listened with rapt attention to the Council's anecdotes and insights, soaking up their wisdom.

In a bold moment of bravado, Colby had decided to test his strength and challenged Ronan, the formidable werewolf, to an arm-wrestling match. The outcome had been far from what he expected; Ronan effortlessly pinned him down, sending Colby's body skidding across the room, much to the amusement of the other members.

Cassandra and Esther, the witches, had apologized profusely for the actions of their former companion, Juniper. They pleaded with Colby not to judge all witches based on her

actions, reassuring him that she was an outlier in their community. Colby appreciated their sincerity, and while he could not completely absolve witches in his mind, he understood that not all of them were like Juniper.

But the most touching moment of the night had been the conversation he'd had with his grandfather, Colbert. They had talked about his father, sharing anecdotes about growing up as a warlock, and Colbert had filled in some of the gaps in Colby's own story. He had discovered how proud his grandfather was of him and felt an even deeper connection to his magical lineage.

As the night ended, Colbert had taken a moment to say his final goodbye to his grandson. The whole Council had gathered to witness this touching farewell. With tears in his eyes, Colby watched as his grandfather's spirit gently departed the realm, leaving behind a profound sense of closure and a newfound sense of purpose.

The hours passed, and Colby's headache gradually subsided, leaving room for reflection. He realized that his journey into the world of magic had been full of unexpected twists and turns, but it had ultimately led him to a deeper understanding of himself and his heritage.

Colby savored the last sip of his coffee as Lexie came down the stairs, her presence bringing a warm smile to his face. She greeted him with curiosity in her eyes. "Where the hell were you last night?" Lexie inquired, a hint of playful suspicion in her voice.

Colby chuckled softly, setting down his empty cup. "Oh, it was a long, weird fucking night," he began. As he proceeded to recount the extraordinary events of the special Council meeting, he confessed, "After last night, even with the threat of the Hunters, I feel so much better."

Lexie leaned in, planting a kiss on Colby's cheek. "I'm so glad," she said sincerely, her eyes filled with empathy. "But I'm sorry about your grandpa, babe."

Colby placed a reassuring hand on Lexie's cheek, his love for her shining brightly. "Thank you, babes. It was bittersweet,

but it brought me closer to my roots. And now I feel more connected to him than ever.”

Lexie returned the affectionate gesture, placing her hand over his. “That’s a beautiful thing, hun.” she said, her voice filled with tenderness.

Colby and Lexie embraced warmly, their love a strength for both of them. As they held each other, Colby couldn’t help but steal a glance towards the window, where his garden seemed to have grown quite a bit in the last few weeks. “Babes, the plants seem big enough, if I use the spell now, I don’t think anyone would notice!” he said, his voice full of enthusiasm.

“Go for it, love,” she replied, eager to watch him perform magic.

Colby chanted the incantation for the harvest spell, and the two observed in awe as the plants sprung to life. “Perfect, we were running low on vervain,” Colby remarked with satisfaction.

“Vervain?” Lexie inquired playfully. “Is it a sign that Colby 2 is coming out to play?” she teased.

Colby grinned and replied, “Only if you’re a good girl.”

Lexie’s cheeks flushed with a crimson hue. “And what if I’ve been naughty?” she inquired.

Colby playfully spun her around and delivered a heavy-handed swat to her ass.

Lexie couldn’t help but release a soft, gasping moan.

“Go up to the room. I promise both of us will be up there soon” Colby instructed.

As she ascended the stairs to the room, Colby hurried out to the garden, plucked a vervain blossom, and returned inside to cast the double spell.

“Fuck yeah,” Colby 2 exclaimed with a grin. “Is this round 2? Or maybe 3?”

They each shed their clothes, leaving a trail behind them on their way up the stairs.

Lexie was already ahead of them, sprawled naked across the bed. “Oh, my boys! And two sexy wands!” She yelped in delight.

The men were already at half-mast between the sight of Lexie, exposed on the bed, and the anticipation of another double team round.

Colby 1 laid across her and began fondling her breasts and kissed her deeply. His cock stiffening even more as it brushed against Lexie’s thighs.

Colby 2 gripped his own girth at the base, working it stiff as he walked up to the side of bed. “Ready for another group session, huh?” he asked.

Lexie reached out and secured Colby 2’s cock from his grasp as Colby 1’s fingers found their way inside Lexie’s pussy; he drove three thick fingers roughly into her.

She pulled Colby 2 closer so she could suck his throbbing dick, only seconds later releasing it.

“Hm, you want a taste, babe?” she said, guiding the cock towards Colby 1’s mouth.

“Fuck, yes,” Colby 1 responded, opening his mouth to fit the cock in. He proceeded to suck it, rocking his head back and forth to the rhythm of his fingers that were inside of Lexie. He thought, *See, this is why I shaved*, as he pulled his fingers out of Lexie and used his hand to rub the soft wet lips surrounding her warmth.

Colby 2 reached down to grab Colby 1’s cock and helped slide it into Lexie’s pussy, his cock still in the other man’s mouth.

The original Colby continued to match his thrusts with his bobbing head. Lexie’s heat warming his cock and Colby 2’s cock swelling even more in his mouth, he thought, *God, I fucking love this!*

Colby 1 couldn’t hold out any longer, and after another couple of minutes of thrusting, he filled Lexie’s pussy with cum. Releasing the cock from his mouth, he gasped.

He eased out of Lexie and rolled over to the untouched side of the bed, as Lexie reached in her nightstand for the small bottle of lube. “Fuck you feel so good around my dick and my dick tastes so good.”

“I always told you it did.” Lexie teased as she looked at Colby 2 and gestured for him to come closer with a playful finger wave. She poured a bit of the lube into her hand, grabbed Colby 2’s cock, and slicked it up. “Now fill my other hole, babe,” she moaned and rolled to her stomach.

Colby 2 spread her ass cheeks apart and dove in, driving his tongue into her asshole. His hand slid from her cheek to rub her bud.

Lexie let out a loud moan, “Gah!”

Colby 2 used two of his fingers to scoop some of Colby 1’s cum from her pussy to use as lube and pushed them into her ass. She gasped even louder than before, screaming out, “FUCK!”

She cried out, “Fuck me already!” and Colby 2 slid his fingers out of her and replaced them with his pulsating dick. Each thrust forced cum out of her pussy as she continued to moan.

The tightness of her back entrance had Colby about to explode. He grabbed her by the back of the neck, thrusting harder. Moments later his moan matched hers, “Ah, fuck!” as he filled her asshole with his seed.

Colby 1 watched as his wife and likeness came together, reigniting his own arousal, his cock yearning to be back inside of her. “My turn,” as he climbed to his knees next to them on the bed. “*Apage.*”

His cock still inside Lexie’s asshole, Colby 2 started to fade from existence.

Using the fancy new trick his double had shown him, he slid his cock slowly up Lexie’s pussy then back down, covering it with the leaking cum. He smacked Lexie hard on the backside and then slid his dick into her asshole.

Lexie screamed, “Oh, fuck yes, keep filling me!” and Colby slammed himself into her. He grabbed a handful of her hair, driving his cock hard and fast into her ass. The warm sensation of cum and the tightness of her asshole sent Colby into a second orgasm, and almost instantly dropping back to the unoccupied side of the bed.

Lexie lay on her back, breathless, legs open, and knees bent. Colby watched in awe as his wife spilled cum from her pussy and asshole. He let out a chuckle. “Fuck, babes, three loads.”

“Fuck, I can’t move,” she finally said. “Go start the shower.”

Colby obeyed, getting up from the bed, his half-hard cock swaying as he walked to the bathroom. He started the shower for both of them. A few minutes later, Lexie joined him. The water cascaded over them, washing away the warmth of their passion, cum still making its way out of Lexie.



TWENTY TWO

THE PROPOSAL

After the eventful night with The Council and intense evening with Lexie, Colby found himself rejuvenated and more eager than ever to embrace his magical abilities. His morning began with a sense of purpose. While Lexie still slept peacefully, he headed to his garden, tending to the vervain, poppy, and other mystical herbs. With a few practiced incantations and a gentle wave of his hand, the plants would respond, growing healthier and more vibrant, a testament to his growing mastery.

As the days rolled by, Colby's connection to his magic deepened. He could feel the energy coursing through him like a powerful river under his control. The spells flowed more smoothly, and his confidence soared with each successful incantation. Colby even started experimenting with creating his own spells, drawing inspiration from his conversations with the Council. It was like he had discovered a hidden part of himself, one that held infinite possibilities.

Colby's job, though mundane compared to his magical endeavors, remained an essential part of his life. It helped him maintain a sense of normalcy and provided for him and Lexie, even if half the time Colby 2 was the one who went. He'd often find himself thinking about his grandfather, Colbert, who had emphasized the importance of a balanced life, before he departed. Colby took those words to heart, striving to excel in both worlds.

However, balancing his everyday job with the responsibility of evolving his magic and Council meetings was no small feat. Some days, fatigue weighed on him heavily as again, Colby 2 came in clutch for some of those tasks. Yet, he persevered, determined to push himself.

Lexie, his unwavering source of support and love, proved to be his anchor through these tumultuous times. She embraced Colby's journey with open arms, curious and eager to learn about the world that now occupied a significant part of their lives.

Yet not everything was blissful. Colby could not forget the looming threat of the Hunters. The Council had confirmed their presence in town, and Colby's recent induction had only made him more appealing as a target, if they were to find out. His nights were often spent awake, wondering when the inevitable confrontation would occur.

One evening after a Council meeting, Colby and Cyrus walked back to the car, silence hanging between them. Colby finally voiced his worries, "Cyrus, what do we do about the Hunters? I can't help but think they'll come for me, and I don't want Lexie or anyone to get hurt."

Cyrus glanced at him with a solemn expression. "We'll do everything in our power to protect you and those you care about, Colby. But we can't be complacent. The Council is watching, and we're working on a plan. Just know that you're not alone in this."

Colby nodded, feeling a glimmer of hope. The weight of responsibility pressed on him, but he knew he had a network of powerful allies ready to defend their way of life. He would do whatever it took to ensure the safety of those he loved.

Days turned into weeks, and Colby's life continued to evolve. His magical prowess grew, as did his bond with Lexie; sharing her with Colby 2 seemed to have opened so many doors between them. They explored the intricacies of a new intimate lifestyle, transcending the boundaries of jealousy. It was not a competition or comparison; it was about sharing the

profound connection they had forged. Passion and magic were now the threads that bound their lives together.

Colby found himself relishing moments when both he and Colby 2 could be with Lexie simultaneously. Once hesitant about the complexities of their unconventional relationship, they had come to embrace it fully. Lexie reveled in the unique experiences each Colby brought to their lives. Her enthusiasm filled the room as she teasingly dubbed them the “sexy wands”.

One afternoon, Colby broached a new topic. “Hey, loves, would you ever be open to other partners? Other than just Colby 2?”

Colby’s suggestion hung in the air, a question that had been on his mind for a while. He watched Lexie’s expression closely, knowing that opening their intimate circle was a delicate matter. At first, she hesitated, her thoughts racing as she considered the implications. The bond they shared was unique, but it was also a deep connection built on trust and love.

After a moment of reflection, Lexie finally spoke. “I can see the beauty in what we have, and how it’s broadened our horizons. If we approach it with the same trust and openness that we share with Colby 2, maybe it could work. But it would have to be a person that understands and respects what you and I have.”

Colby smiled; relief washed over him. “I agree completely, babes. It would only work if all parties involved share the same values.”

With that understanding, their world expanded even further. They talked about the possibility of inviting others into their intimate space, not as a replacement or distraction, but to enhance what they had built together.



TWENTY THREE

THE WEREWOLF'S LAMENT

Colby attended the usual Council meeting. However, the atmosphere in the room felt oddly mundane, with most members recounting trivial events. The tone was apathetic, as if the magical world had taken a brief hiatus from its usual intrigues. Colby could not help but feel a hole in his heart as he looked at the vacant spot where Colbert once floated.

Then, in a sudden and dramatic turn of events, the door swung open, and a young man with a beard and short brown hair burst into the room. Blood stained his shirt, and his face was etched with a mixture of fear and anger. The Council members sat up straighter in their seats, their boredom instantly replaced with intrigue.

“What is wrong with you, Malik?” Ronan roared.

“Ronan, someone killed Roger,” Malik blurted out, his voice trembling with emotion. “Roger and I had wolfed out and were just running through the woods outside of the park.” Malik stopped to catch his breath.

Ronan’s hands were throttling against the wooden table. “What happened, boy?”

Through exasperated breaths the young werewolf continued. “It was dark, a shadow darted out from behind a tree as Roger ran past it, then both Roger and the figure fell to the ground. I ran as fast as I could and got there in time to see a man,

dressed in black, with a black mask, pulling a long silver knife from Roger's chest!"

The room fell silent as the horrific image hung in the air. "How could he know the knife was silver in the pitch black?" Colby whispered.

"Werewolves see in a different spectrum when they are in wolf form. Silver has an almost shimmer to it for them." Cyrus hushed his reply.

"Rage and adrenaline took me over, I chased the attacker, but he managed to get away." Malik said, hunching over and placing his hands on his knees.

Ronan, the werewolf leader, could hardly contain his fury at the loss of a fellow pack member and bellowed, "Fuck!"

Colby had been lulled into complacency by the absence of recent disturbances and now a brutal reality confronted him. His world was not always filled with whimsical spells and enchantments, and he thought, *What the fuck! Someone is dead!*

In the ensuing discussion, ideas were thrown around about potential suspects and motives. Some believed it was the work of the Hunters, while others speculated on the involvement of dark magic.

"It wasn't someone using magic," Cassandra chimed in. "Why would a magic user need to kill with a knife? And our rules are clear, no harm to fellow supernatural beings." It was a chilling revelation that their peaceful town faced very real threats.

"No harm to fellow supernatural beings? Wasn't Juniper just excommunicated for that same crime, witch?" Ronan cried out, a tear streaming down his flushed cheek. "Who's to say she isn't back in town with a rogue witch?"

Esther remained poised and replied, "There has been no trace of Juniper and no indication she has returned. Even if she had, why would she or this 'rogue witch' need a silver blade?"

Colby observed The Council's reaction, noticing a mix of anger, fear, and determination in their expressions. He couldn't

help but feel a sense of responsibility. As someone who had recently been admitted to their ranks, he understood that he now shared the responsibility of protecting their community.

He sprang into action and walked over to Malik, offering him a comforting hand on the shoulder. With a supportive arm around him, Colby gently guided Malik to an empty chair near his own, ensuring he was seated comfortably before fetching a glass of water and handing it to Malik.

Ronan rose from his seat, his voice resonating with steely determination. “This might not be war for the rest of you, but for the pack, it is,” he declared resolutely. “We’ll be organizing patrols, and we will find this murderer, be they Hunter or something else, and we will put them down!”

Jonas, the oldest and wisest member of The Council, had been relatively silent throughout the meeting. Now, he turned to Ronan, his expression somber.

“You are right, old friend,” he replied, his voice carrying a weight of experience. “But let us not forget that while justice is paramount, we also must exercise caution. We don’t want your pack to be seen as a group of seven-foot tall Wolfmen; it’s not easy to forget a sight like that. However, our top priority is ensuring the safety of everyone in our community. We cannot afford to let anyone else get hurt.”

Colby listened to the exchange, gaining a deeper understanding of the delicate balance that existed within the magical world. It wasn’t merely about magical abilities and secrets; it was also about the lives and well-being of those who inhabited it. The council members were now faced with the harsh reality that their peaceful town could no longer be shielded from the dangers that lurked in the shadows.

As the meeting continued late into the night, strategies were discussed, alliances formed, and plans set into motion to investigate Roger’s murder. Colby glanced over at Malik; genuine concern etched across his face. “Are you okay?” he asked softly.

Malik, still visibly shaken, looked at Colby with fear and uncertainty. “I...I don’t know,” he replied, his voice quivering.

“Ronan is going to take the pack out to search the woods, but I can’t go back out there, not after what happened.”

Colby, understanding the gravity of the situation, nodded sympathetically. “You need rest,” he suggested. “Why don’t you go home?”

Malik hesitated for a moment. “I can’t,” fear raced over his face. “I live with Roger... lived. What if the killer knows where we stay?”

Colby put a reassuring hand on Malik’s shoulder. “Don’t worry, you can stay at my place. You’ll be safe, and we have a spare room.”

Malik nodded, and with that settled, Colby and Malik left The Council meeting, their steps filled with trepidation. Colby gave Cyrus a nod on his way out, a silent message conveying that he was okay and could handle it.

The two exited The Council House, their senses on high alert. They made their way cautiously through the park, aware that danger could be lurking anywhere. The night air seemed thick with tension, and every rustle of leaves and distant sound seemed to amplify their unease. As they walked towards Colby’s car, their eyes scanned the surroundings, ready for any sign of trouble. He thought, *Well, Lexie, I’m bringing home company.*



TWENTY FOUR

INTO THE NIGHT

Thomas entered the desolate house via its rear entrance, his sinister Hunter's hood stained with crimson splatters. Without a moment's hesitation, he embarked on the grim task of cleaning the grotesque remnants that marred the floor, using an old towel to attempt to clean himself off.

He discarded his bloodied attire, revealing a hardened body, his torso and shoulders covered front and back with scars. Thomas proceeded to the bathroom with a purposeful stride for a cleansing shower, and washed away the bloodstains that clung to his skin.

Emerging rejuvenated from the steam, he donned fresh clothes and settled into a chair in the candle-lit living room, and began meticulously cleaning blood off a large, silver knife.

With his knife in hand, he reached for his phone and dialed a number, placing it on speakerphone while continuing to clean the weapon as he waited for the call to connect.

"Thomas, progress report?" a stern voice demanded.

"I was tracking Colby to the park, but I got sidetracked by something in the woods," Thomas began, his tone calm and focused. "There were two werewolves. I managed to subdue and eliminate one, but the other one escaped."

“Excellent work! But be cautious, those oversized house dogs tend to travel in packs.” the voice cautioned.

“I’ll remain vigilant, sir,” Thomas affirmed before he ended the call, a twisted satisfaction in his eyes as he wiped the last traces of blood from his blade.



TWENTY FIVE HOUSEGUEST

Colby and Malik made it home safely under the cover of night. Lexie, unaware of the recent events, was fast asleep when they arrived. Colby assured Malik that he was safe here and set him up in the guest room with some fresh towels.

As the morning sun began to cast its glow upon their home, Colby and Malik found themselves in the kitchen, sipping on coffee. Lexie descended the stairs, her eyes widening in surprise when she saw an unfamiliar face seated at her table. She approached them cautiously, her gaze fixed on Malik, and then she turned to Colby.

“Babe, who is this?” Lexie inquired; her voice tinged with confusion.

Colby gestured for her to join him in the other room, away from Malik’s hearing. “I know we talked about having fun with someone else, babes, but it’s not what you think,” Colby began, sensing her apprehension.

Lexie’s brow furrowed as she followed Colby into the adjoining room. “I didn’t expect you to just randomly bring someone home,” she said, her voice hushed.

Colby sighed, realizing that he had some explaining to do thinking, *the guy’s good-looking babes, but damn*. “It’s not like that. He came bursting into the Council Meeting last night. One of his friends was killed by someone. I figured here

was the safest place for him to rest while The Council figured this out.”

Lexie listened intently, her initial confusion replaced by empathy and concern as she grasped the gravity of the situation. “Oh, love,” Lexie said softly. “I had no idea. You did the right thing bringing him here. We need to help him.”

Colby nodded in agreement. “I couldn’t leave him out there. He had nowhere else to go.”

Lexie reached out and squeezed Colby’s hand. “We’ll figure this out together,” she reassured him. “We’ll help Malik, and we’ll find out who did this to his friend.”

Colby smiled gratefully at Lexie, relieved that she understood. “Thanks, babes. I knew you’d understand.”

As they returned to the kitchen, Malik, who had been sitting nervously, looked up and spoke with a hint of humor in his voice. “Thank you for letting me stay, Mrs. Richards. Colby did bring me here to be safe, not to be a dragon for you.”

Lexie blushed, slightly embarrassed, as she joined Malik when he chuckled at her response. “Werewolves have remarkable hearing.”

“Well, we’re glad to have you here, Malik,” she said warmly. “And don’t worry, we’re just focused on helping you right now.”

Colby returned to his seat, and Lexie grabbed a cup of coffee and joined them. “Wow, a werewolf. Colby only told me about Ronan, I’ve never actually met one!” she exclaimed.

Malik chuckled again, the tension further melting away. “Well, I’m not exactly Ronan. We’re a pretty diverse bunch, you know. But I promise not to howl at the moon or anything.” He grinned, trying to keep the mood light.

Colby was just as curious. “I’ve never seen you guys in ‘wolf’ form. I have to ask; can you only change during a full moon?”

“Once upon a time,” Malik began, “that was true, but through the centuries, we now have the ability to change at

will.”

Lexie, in awe, asked, “So, obviously, I only know movie werewolves. Do you look like a wolf like from fucking Twilight or like a sexy man beast like in Underworld?”

Malik, still wearing his friendly grin, answered Lexie’s question. “We don’t turn into actual wolves, so definitely like Underworld.”

Colby chimed in, intrigued by the details. “That’s awesome. So, it’s like having the best of both worlds?”

Malik nodded, “Exactly. Enhanced senses, strength, and speed, but we don’t lose ourselves like in the movies. It’s more of a balance.”

Lexie, her curiosity still lingering, asked, “You don’t lose yourself. So, you have full control in wolf form? You know what you’re doing?”

Again, Malik nodded. “Yup, unless you’ve recently begun your transformations. It’s like learning to ride a bike. First, the bike takes you where it wants. But, once you’ve practiced and done it enough, you’re in full control.”

She smiled, delighted at their guests’ openness. “Thank you for teaching me all of this. If I’m breaking any Council rules, you guys just tell me to stop.”

At this, Malik finally shook his head. “Oh, no! You’re fine. Actually, I’ve never had a human I could talk to about all of this, so it’s great.” Malik leaned back in his chair, sipping his coffee, and admitted, “You know, I’ve always wondered about witches and warlocks. The whole magic thing sounds fascinating. What’s it like? Can you do, like, magic tricks?”

Colby chuckled, happy to share his knowledge. “It’s not exactly pulling rabbits out of hats, but it’s an incredible world of possibilities. Magic is about harnessing energy and directing it to create various effects. Spells can range from simple charms to complex rituals. And yes, I can do a few tricks.”

“Oh, Colby’s quite the magician. He can even clone himself. It makes for some amazing behind closed door tricks,” Lexie

teased playfully. She winked, causing Malik to laugh and Colby to blush.

They continued sharing stories, and it became apparent that, despite their differences, they had a lot in common. They were all connected by their supernatural experiences, which made their morning coffee conversation even more enjoyable.

As the conversations flowed, Lexie couldn't help but feel a growing attraction toward Malik. She started leaning in a bit closer, occasionally brushing her fingers against his as she gestured to emphasize her points. Colby, who had been observing the subtle flirtations, couldn't hide his excitement at the newfound connection. He thought, *Oh, maybe this could turn into something.*

Malik, catching onto the flirtatious tone, leaned in slightly and replied, "Well, Lexie, I'm an open book. But I must warn you my secrets are best discovered in person." His voice was laced with a hint of suggestion, causing Lexie's cheeks to turn a deeper shade of pink.

Colby, reveling in the flirtatious atmosphere, chimed in. "Careful, Lexie, I think we might have awakened something here."

After Lexie excused herself from the room for a moment, Malik leaned in closer to Colby, a hint of concern in his eyes. "I hope I didn't overstep or make you uncomfortable, Colby. I didn't mean to be inappropriate with your wife."

Colby, appreciating Malik's sincerity, smiled warmly, and replied, "No need to worry, Malik. Lexie and I have been on a bit of a sexual journey lately, exploring our boundaries and what not. As long as we're both comfortable with it, it's perfectly fine. We appreciate your honesty and respect."

Malik nodded in understanding, relieved that he hadn't crossed any lines with the people who'd taken him in.



TWENTY SIX

A PACT WITH MALIK

The days passed swiftly, and the bond between Colby, Lexie, and Malik continued to deepen. They spent their time sharing stories, laughter, and knowledge about their respective worlds.

Malik opened up to Colby and Lexie, sharing the poignant story of his upbringing and the moment his life changed forever. He spoke of the terror he felt when he first transformed into a werewolf, how he had run and lived in isolation within the depths of Baxter State Park for months. The wildness of the tale mirrored the wild terrain where he sought refuge, and he recounted how it wasn't until Ronan's pack discovered him that he began to understand the new reality. Their acceptance had been a beacon of hope for Malik, eventually leading him to Strange Grove.

As the sun set one evening, casting a warm orange glow over the backyard, Colby decided it was time to introduce Malik to some of the magical wonders of his world.

Colby drove the two out to the field on the edge of town where he set up his makeshift targets. They exited the car, and Colby called out. "Hey, Malik."

He gestured toward a small clearing in the field where he had set up his shooting range. Two targets stood at varying distances. "How about a little demonstration?"

Malik's eyes sparkled with curiosity as he followed Colby to the range. "Sure, what do you have in mind?"

Colby grinned and raised his hand, summoning a shimmering energy ball into his palm. It glowed with a soft, otherworldly light. "Watch this."

With a flick of his wrist, Colby sent the energy ball hurtling toward the closest target. It hit dead center, causing the target to spring from the earth and fly back. Malik's eyes widened in amazement.

"That's incredible!" Malik exclaimed.

"Just wait. There's more." Colby collected the debris, threw it in the backseat and waved for Malik to get back in. They soon arrived home to Lexie waiting for them in the backyard near the newest addition to their house, a firepit Colby and Malik had just built.

"Wait, you can control fire with your magic?" Malik asked, in awe.

Colby nodded. "That's right. Fire manipulation is one of the easier ones it seems."

They joined Lexie, who had been watching them come up the yard, her face lit up with excitement. "You guys, the fire pit looks amazing!"

Colby led Malik over to the fire pit, which had a ring of stones neatly arranged around it. He gestured toward the pit, whispered, "*Ignis*," and the wood inside burst into flames, casting a warm inviting glow around them.

Malik sat down on one of the nearby chairs, mesmerized by the flames. "That was fucking cool."

Lexie settled beside him, her shoulder brushing against his. "Magic can be pretty amazing, huh?"

Malik nodded; his gaze fixed on the dancing flames. "Definitely."

As the evening grew late, they continued to chat, sharing stories from their lives, and learning about each other's

worlds. Colby was fascinated by Malik's experiences as a werewolf.

As they sat under the starlit sky, the flames crackled, casting flickering shadows across their faces. Colby felt a sense of warmth and contentment as he looked at Lexie and Malik. Despite the unusual circumstances, they had formed an unexpected genuine bond.

Lexie broke the silence, her voice soft but filled with sincerity. "You know, guys, I'm glad we all met, even though it was through horrible circumstances. This has been an incredible experience."

Malik nodded, a genuine smile on his face. "I feel the same way. It's not every day you meet such welcoming people."

Colby, his heart full, added. "We're a unique trio, that's for sure."

As the conversation slowed, Lexie found herself feeling incredibly comfortable in this unique trio's company. She nestled back into Colby's chest, her head resting on his shoulder. Feeling a sense of warmth and trust, she extended her legs, gently placing them in Malik's lap.

Colby wrapped his arm around Lexie, pulling her a little closer to him, feeling her warmth against his body. With the fire crackling softly, the stars above twinkling in the night sky, and the gentle camaraderie among them, they all knew this unique bond was something to be cherished.

With the warmth of the fire and the cool night air around them, Lexie couldn't resist turning her body to face Colby, pressing her lips against his in a deep, loving kiss. The intensity of their connection was unmistakable.

Malik felt a twinge of unease as he observed the affectionate exchange between Colby and Lexie.

However, Colby noticed this, and flashed Lexie a sly smile and gave her a subtle nod, silently encouraging her to share her flirtations energy with Malik.

Lexie, with a playful glint in her eyes, shifted her position and sat up, her voice dripping with flirtatiousness. "I don't

want anyone feeling left out,” she purred, leaning toward Malik. Their lips met in a tender kiss, and then Lexie, driven by Colby’s acceptance, deepened the connection with Malik in a passionate embrace. As they kissed, the tension in the air seemed to melt away, leaving behind only the warmth of their shared intimacy.

Even though Colby wanted to join in on the fun, he said, “Unfortunately, I have work in a few hours. You two kids have fun.” He gave them a warm smile before heading inside and making his way to bed.

Malik, still a bit uncertain, paused their kiss for a moment and asked, “Are you both sure this is okay?”

Lexie wrapped her arms around him, her voice filled with reassurance. “You heard Colby; he’s fine with it, and I’m definitely on board with this.”

Clearing his throat, Malik spoke up. “I have condoms upstairs.”

Lexie, emboldened by the heated atmosphere, replied in a sultry tone. “But why? I have a mouth.”

Lexie gracefully moved from the chair to a cozy spot on the ground by the fire. With a gentle finger beckon, she signaled Malik to join her, her eyes inviting.

Malik cast a quick glance around the backyard, taking in the seclusion it offered. None of the nearby houses’ windows overlooked their yard, and the dense, tall bushes surrounding the area provided a reassuring cover, shielding them from any wandering eyes. He raised his shirt, unveiling his well-toned physique, his olive skin gleaming in the warm, flickering light.

Lexie’s visible admiration for his body was evident as she murmured, “Oh, damn.” She then delicately removed her own top.

Malik joined her on the ground, where the damp grass contrasted with the warmth emanating from both the fire and Lexie. He laid down, kissing Lexie passionately, his hand slowly working its way down her body.

Lexie feverishly unbuttoned and pulled down his pants. She quickly went to work, stroking his cock. As it grew, she thought, *it's not as big as Colby's but it'll do just fine*. Without meaning to, she slipped out, "Hm".

He gave Lexie a sideways grin and said, "It's much bigger in wolf form."

Lexie blushed, smiled, and seductively responded, "It's perfect as is," before taking him into her mouth. She grabbed his hips, squeezing as she pulled him closer, taking the entirety of his length.

Malik moaned as he arched back. "Gods, you're such a good girl." His hand reached for her hair, grabbing a fistful, and guiding her head up and down his shaft.

Lexie relaxed her throat, slowly taking all of Malik's cock in her mouth once more, then came up for air, crying out. "Ah, fuck me hard." Using her thumb and forefinger to wipe the sides of her mouth.

Malik hoisted her up with superhuman strength, bent her over the chair, and tore her shorts down her legs. Her body mesmerized him, his jaw slacked "Damn, you're beautiful." Both hands reached out firmly grabbing each ass cheek before giving them a hard squeeze.

"You going to keep looking or are you going to fuck me?" Lexie said, squirming from his tight grasp.

"As you wish." Malik answered grabbing his dick and finding his way into her wetness. He drove his cock into Lexie from behind, grabbing her hips, and thrusting hard. He continued his deep strokes, each time sending Lexie's whole body forward.

Malik continued driving into her for what felt like minutes. Her body began spasming at the relentless assault from his cock. Finally, she screamed out, "Fuck, I'm coming!"

He continued his thrusts through her orgasm, and replied, "Gah, me too!"

Lexie pushed her lover away, dropping to her knees, and stroked his cock fast with her hand. When she felt him pulsing,

she took it into her mouth, and swallowed his sweet, thick cum.

The two collapsed to the ground, both trying to catch their breath. Malik, slightly winded, managed a nod as Lexie speaks. “That was amazing,” she said, looking at the dwindling fire and shivering a bit. “But the fire’s almost out, and it’s getting cold. Let’s head inside.”

They quickly gathered their clothes and made their way back into the house.

Once upstairs, Lexie peeked into her bedroom, where Colby was fast asleep. She turned to Malik and asked, “Do you think it would be weird if I slept in your bed tonight? I don’t want to wake Colby.”

Malik chuckled softly and replied, “Weird is fucking your new friend’s wife in her back yard. You’re more than welcome to sleep with me tonight.”

Lexie joined in the laughter and said, “Fair enough.” The two of them quietly made their way into the spare bedroom.



TWENTY SEVEN SPELLS OF PROTECTION

Colby awoke to the sounds of crickets chirping, but Lexie was nowhere to be found. He felt a twinge of confusion until he remembered the previous night's events. With a fond smile, he decided to let her rest and went about his morning routine, taking a refreshing shower and getting ready for work.

Before heading downstairs, he peeked into the spare room. There, Lexie lay peacefully asleep next to Malik. Colby couldn't help but smile at the scene and think, *Guess you guys did have fun.*

With a sense of contentment, Colby left for work, facing the usual challenges and tasks of his job, passing by like any other. As the hours ticked away, he couldn't help but wonder about Lexie and Malik at home.

After a long day at work, Colby's obligations led him to The Council House, where the members had gathered. The somber atmosphere filled the room as Ronan updated them on the ongoing hunt for the killer. Frustratingly, there were no leads or clues to identify the culprit.

Ronan acknowledged Colby's efforts. "Thank you for keeping our pup safe, Colby."

Colby felt a mix of pride and worry, knowing that danger still lurked in their midst.

Ronan dove right in. “We have eight-teen wolves patrolling around the clock. Six wolves three times a day. Unfortunately, no one has noticed anything out of the ordinary. We are monitoring the woods and in town. The pack is remaining vigilant, and I swear to you all we will find out who killed Roger!”

After the Council meeting, Colby headed back home, his thoughts consumed by the ongoing situation with the killer on the loose. When he arrived, he found Lexie and Malik in the living room, talking and sharing stories. Colby knew he needed to update them on the Council’s discussions.

He joined them, and Lexie immediately noticed the seriousness in his expression. “What happened, love?” she asked, concern evident in her eyes.

Colby took a deep breath and recounted the Council meeting, “Ronan’s pack has no leads on the killer, despite around the clock patrols,” He paused to take a seat on the chair across from them. “The pack is going to continue the search and Ronan promises he is doing everything he can to find whoever did this.”

Malik nodded, understanding the gravity of the situation. “I appreciate you taking me in, Colby, but I need to help Ronan with the patrols.”

Colby considered Malik’s offer for a moment, then nodded. “I think that’s a good idea, Malik. Your experience and knowledge of the woods could be useful. Just make sure you’re safe out there.”

Malik agreed and then gestured toward the other room, silently indicating that he wanted to speak to Colby privately. Colby followed him, leaving Lexie in the living room. Once they were in the other room, Malik looked at Colby with a serious expression.

“Hey man, about what happened last night... I hope it doesn’t complicate things between us. I don’t want to cause any problems.”

Colby smiled warmly at him, placing a hand on Malik's shoulder. "Don't worry, Malik. Lexie and I have talked about it. Well, not you in particular, but we're both on the same page. We're all adults here, and if we communicate openly, I think we can handle this situation just fine."

Malik was relieved by Colby's understanding. "Thanks man. This is a really weird situation, and you guys are oddly comfortable with all of it."

Colby patted his back and chuckled. "No problem. Seeing your clone fuck your wife puts a whole new perspective on things."

They both chuckled at that. "Now, let's go back to Lexie and talk about your plan to join the patrols."

Malik, Colby, and Lexie gathered in the living room to discuss joining Ronan's patrols. After a thoughtful conversation, they reached an agreement. Malik would start his day-shift patrols tomorrow, Colby would send Colby 2 to work to cover for him, and Colby and Lexie would dedicate their time to searching the spell book for anything that could aid in their current situation.

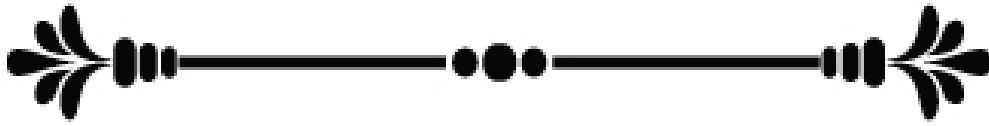
Once their plans were set, they each retired to their respective rooms. In bed, Lexie, turned to Colby and asked with a hint of concern in her voice, "Are you sure you're okay with what happened last night?"

Colby chuckled, finding it endearing that both Malik and Lexie were concerned about his feelings. "Malik asked me the same thing earlier, and honestly, I'm more than okay with it. We're all adults, babes, and as long as we're open and honest about our feelings, I'm on board."

A sly grin crossed Colby's face as he continued. "Actually, it'd make me pretty excited to hear all the steamy details."

Lexie blushed at his seductive tone but didn't hesitate to recount her time with Malik in vivid detail. Colby couldn't contain his growing excitement, and when she'd finished describing the passionate encounter, Colby was rock hard.

“Oh, time for my ‘sexy wand’!” Lexie exclaimed as she pounced on his side of the bed, ready for a steamy night of their own.



The next day, they followed the plan they had discussed. Colby summoned Colby 2, who obediently headed off to work, ensuring the façade of a normal day continued. Meanwhile, Malik set out to meet with Ronan and join the day-shift patrol, ready to assist in whatever way he could.

Lexie and Colby, on the other hand, had their own mission. They ascended to the hidden room. With the ancient book laid out before them, they began to delve into its contents.

After what felt like hours of searching through the ancient tome and translating the cryptic text to ensure Lexie understood each page, their efforts finally bore fruit. They stumbled upon a powerful protection spell, one that could be cast to safeguard their property.

Colby’s face lit up with excitement as he exclaimed, “Hell yeah, this will help us!”

Eager to put the spell into action, they gathered the necessary ingredients. Their garden proved to be a blessing, as it provided the herbs required for the potion. Lexie carefully plucked the plants.

The final ingredient, as indicated in the spell, was a hair from each inhabitant of the house. Colby and Lexie willingly offered their own, but for Malik’s contribution, Lexie headed to the spare room where he had been staying. She carefully retrieved a strand of hair from the pillow Malik had used the previous night.

In the kitchen, Colby skillfully concocted the potion, his hands steady as he followed the ancient instructions. The mixture bubbled and simmered, its potent aroma filling the room as they prepared to cast the protection spell.

With the potion ready, Colby and Lexie carefully carried it to each door and entryway of their home. They splashed the protective brew over thresholds and around windows, following the instructions to the letter. As the potion contacted the house's boundaries, Colby could feel a surging energy enveloping their home, creating an invisible shield that radiated a sense of security.



TWENTY EIGHT

UNIDENTIFIED

Thomas sat alone in a dimly lit room, his laptop open, and the low hum of a ceiling fan providing the only sound. He took a deep breath before issuing his progress report to the mysterious caller, knowing that every detail counted in their mission.

“It’s been challenging tailing Colby Richards,” Thomas began, his voice steady. “He’s been cautious, and it’s difficult to maintain a discreet distance. But I’ve managed to keep an eye on him.”

Thomas paused for a moment, contemplating the situation. “There’s something odd happening in town. There has been a noticeable increase in civilians wandering around, especially in the vicinity of the park. It’s as if they’re searching for something, possibly related to the werewolf’s departure. I can’t determine if they’re part of the supernatural world or if they’re innocent bystanders under spells. It’s a chaotic situation.”

His gaze shifted to a photograph of Malik. “I’ve observed a newcomer in the Richards’ household. An unknown male, appearing to be in his early twenties, approximately 5 feet 10 inches tall. I’m unable to gather any information about him yet, but his presence raises questions.”

Thomas leaned back in his chair, a sigh escaping his lips. “In preparation for any potential threat, I’ve gathered an

assortment of weapons, including stakes, knives, and a sword. I need to be ready for whatever comes my way.”

As he concluded his progress report, Thomas could not help but feel the weight of the impending challenges he faced. The supernatural world was a complex, ever-shifting landscape, and their mission to destroy it was becoming increasingly perilous.

After the call with his superior, Thomas carefully rolled up the assortment of weapons on the table. Each stake, knife, and the sword were meticulously arranged on the mat, making sure they were secure.

With practiced efficiency, he tucked the weapon-laden mat into a closet, ensuring it was well-concealed from prying eyes. The closet door closed with a soft click, and Thomas took a moment to reflect on the path he had chosen. In this hidden world of magic and danger, he knew that preparation and vigilance were his greatest allies, and he was determined to stay one step ahead of whatever challenge lay ahead.



TWENTY NINE

THE POTIONS POWER

The next day, with the house under protection, Colby resumed his work routine, heading to the plant while Malik continued his daytime patrols. Colby spent the morning assisting Dave with a project, focusing intently on the task at hand.

Midway through the day, while engrossed in his work, Colby's phone began to vibrate persistently in his pocket. He ignored it initially; he could not afford distractions. However, when the vibrations and the number of missed calls escalated, he finally retrieved his phone, concern furrowed his brow.

Glancing at the screen, he saw multiple missed calls from Lexie, a growing unease taking hold of him. With trembling fingers, he listened to the voicemail she had left, and his heart plummeted as her panicked voice filled his ears. "Fuck, fuck, fuck!"

"Colby, for fuck's sake, answer the damn phone. Something is happening at home. There was a loud crash, and the entire house is shaking." Lexie's voice quivered with fear before abruptly cutting off as the call ended.

Fear and urgency coursing through him, Colby abruptly left his desk, earning curious looks from his coworkers. He didn't care; his only thought was to get back home to Lexie.

Colby's heart raced as he parked his car and bolted toward his house, dread gnawing at his insides. The sight of the fire in

the front lawn and the words “Dog Fucker” spray painted on the front door sent a surge of anger through him. This was an attack on his home, his sanctuary, and most importantly, Lexie’s safety.

As he approached the front door, the magical barrier still shimmered in his mind, but it was extremely weakened. He whispered, “*Exstinguetur,*” and the small blaze in the lawn obediently choked out. But the ominous feeling in the pit of his stomach persisted.

Just as Colby reached for the doorknob, Malik, breathless and alarmed, arrived on the scene. He had been patrolling nearby and had heard the commotion. Both men exchanged worried glances before Colby cautiously pushed the door open, stepping inside.

The scene that greeted them was chaotic and disconcerting. Furniture had been overturned, possessions strewn across the floor, and a sense of malevolence hung heavily in the air. Colby’s heart sank as he called out for Lexie, panic gripping him.

“Lexie! Where are you?” Colby’s voice quivered with concern as he scanned the disarray, searching for any sign of his wife.

Malik followed closely behind, his senses heightened, ready to assist in any way he could. The tension in the house was palpable, and both men knew that something sinister had occurred.

Malik paused for a moment; his head tilted as he listened attentively to the house’s subtle sounds. “I can hear someone crying upstairs,” he whispered urgently, his instincts kicking in.

Without a second thought, Colby and Malik rushed up the stairs, checking each room meticulously, their worry growing by the second. Finally, Colby’s intuition led him to his bedroom closet, where he pushed open the door to the hidden room.

Inside, they found Lexie in tears, her trembling form curled into a ball. Colby wasted no time, diving to her side and enveloping her in a tight, protective embrace.

“What happened, loves?” Colby asked, his voice filled with concern and on the verge of tears himself.

Malik, standing guard, reassured them, “I don’t hear anyone else in here.”

Colby nodded, relief washing over them. “We should be okay for now. The barrier is still up. It’s weak, but it’s holding,” he said, trying to comfort his wife.

Lexie wiped away her tears and took a deep breath, gradually getting her trembling under control. She began to recount the terrifying events that had unfolded while the two were gone.

“I... I don’t know what happened,” she started, her voice still shaky. “All of a sudden, there was this... loud boom, and the entire house started shaking. It was so bad that furniture was falling over, things crashing to the floor.” Her gaze was distant as she shuddered at the memory.

“It just kept happening,” Lexie continued, her eyes reflecting the fear that had gripped her. “When I was leaving you that voicemail, I could hear something, like a woman chanting. Then there was another crash, and that’s when I ran up here and hid.”

Colby and Malik exchanged troubled glances, a deep sense of foreboding settling over them.

After Lexie had finished narrating the unsettling events, Colby and Malik helped her out of the room and sat her on the bed. Their focus shifted quickly to the mess that had been left behind. Malik grabbed a bucket and soap, heading outside to wipe away the black paint from the front of the house.

As they worked together to clean up the aftermath, the eerie feeling of vulnerability hung in the air. Once they had removed the paint and tidied up as best they could, Colby and Malik found themselves sitting in the kitchen, exhaustion and concern etched into their expressions.

Colby handed Malik a cold beer, and they both took long sips, looking around the room where traces of the chaos still lingered. Colby finally broke the uneasy silence.

“It had to be a magic user,” he said, his tone firm. “I don’t know much about Hunters, but I doubt they have the juice to break through my barrier.”

Malik nodded in agreement; his brow furrowed with worry. “You’re right, man. This reeks of magic.” He took another sip of his beer before deciding. “I’m going to run over to Ronan and inform him about what happened. You should stay here and keep an eye on Lexie.”

Colby gave a grateful nod to Malik, thankful for such a close friend and someone who truly cared for them in this dark time.

As Malik made his way to the front door, something caught his eye. A faint glimmering light emanated from the abandoned house down the street. He furrowed his brow and focused his gaze on the mysterious source. Suddenly, the curtains of the house abruptly shut, concealing whatever had been inside.

A shiver ran down Malik’s spine as he hurried out the door to head to Ronan.



THIRTY EMERGENCY MEETING

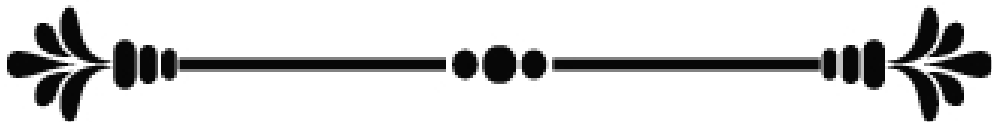
As the moon cast eerie shadows through the trees, Malik tracked down Ronan in the dimly lit woods between the park and The Council House. His breath hung in the chilly night air as he relayed the harrowing events of the evening at the Richards' residence, the clear attack on one of their own Council members.

Ronan's growl of anger seemed to echo through the trees as Malik recounted the details. "A magic user," he muttered darkly, his wolfish eyes narrowing. "We should never have allowed these Hunters to infiltrate our territory."

Malik nodded, his lupine senses picking up on the faint scent of danger that lingered in the air. "Colby believes it was a magic user, too. The shield around their house was weakened, and the attack didn't have the hallmark of the Hunters."

With a snarl of frustration, Ronan decided to act immediately. "We need The Council to convene, Malik. Gather everyone, and I'll inform Colby. We must discuss this attack and what steps to take next."

Malik nodded again and headed back to town. He needed to convey the urgency to all the members.



Colby's phone rang, and his heart skipped a beat when he saw Ronan's name on the screen. He answered with anxiety.

"Colby," Ronan's voice was as serious as ever. "We have an emergency meeting at The Council House. The attack on Lexie cannot go unanswered."

Colby's voice was laced with worry as he replied, "I understand. I'll be there as soon as I can."

He hung up the phone and turned to Lexie, who was sitting on their bed, her eyes still red from tears. He moved closer, wrapping his arms around her tightly. "Don't worry, babes," he reassured her. "Colby 2 will be here, and I promise I'll be back shortly."

She nodded, clutching him even tighter. "Please, be careful."

Colby ran downstairs, prepared the double concoction, and summoned Colby 2. Colby 2 nodded to his counterpart and headed upstairs to be with Lexie.

He arrived at The Council House, a sense of unease hanging in the air. Council members offered their sincere apologies to him as he entered, recognizing the severity of the situation. They gathered in the main chamber, the ancient wood and stone walls bearing witness to countless deliberations and decisions over the centuries.

Ronan, standing at his normal place at the polished table, called the meeting to order. "Colby's assumptions are correct," he began with a deep, rumbling voice. "This was no act of Hunters. The attack on Lexie bore the signature of magic. A weakening of protective shields, and no trace of the usual methods used by our adversaries."

Esther, a wise witch with a reputation for her formidable magical knowledge, nodded in agreement. "I concur. I've encountered Hunters before, and this is not their doing. Their attempts to breach a protection spell usually involve heavy weaponry or sheer brute force."

As The Council members exchanged uneasy glances, the chamber seemed to hum with tension. The threat of Hunters,

the recent killing of a werewolf, and now a magical attack on a warlock had everyone grasping at straws.

Ronan's stern expression didn't waver as he continued to address the Council. "Our patrols in the woods have turned up nothing. We will shift our focus to the town, but we must remain discreet, human form only."

Colby nodded in agreement, his mind still racing with the vile words painted on his front door. The hatred behind those words was a grim reminder of the challenges they faced.

Esther and Cassandra, both seasoned witches, exchanged a knowing look. "We'll investigate the possibility of a rogue witch in the area," Esther said. "If it's a magic user, there's always a trail somewhere, and we'll find it."

Cyrus, ever the vigilant guardian, offered his support. "I'll keep a watchful eye on Colby's neighborhood from afar. My presence may scare off a witch or draw in a Hunter. We do not want any more trouble."

Colby appreciated their determination and unity. "Thank you all for your help," he said sincerely. "I need to get back to Lexie as soon as possible."

Ronan adjourned the meeting, and as Colby made his way towards the exit, Ronan stopped him with a firm hand on his shoulder.

"Colby," Ronan said, his voice low and intense. "I don't particularly trust the witches. Keep your eyes open and your instincts sharp. We don't know who's behind this, and I won't allow any harm to come to you or your family."

Colby met Ronan's gaze with a nod of determination. "I will, Ronan. Thank you." With that he headed out of The Council House and back home with Malik at his side.



THIRTY ONE A DAY IN THE WOODS

After the emergency meeting at The Council House, Colby and Malik returned home, their thoughts weighed down by the recent attack. Colby 2 and Lexie were sitting on the couch, Lexie looking a bit shaken. Colby whispered the incantation “*Apage*” and made Colby 2 disappear, his presence vanishing in an instant.

Malik and Colby took their places on either side of Lexie, offering her comfort and support. Colby began to recount what had been discussed at the meeting, emphasizing the full support they had from The Council members. Lexie listened, finding solace in their presence.

Malik placed a comforting hand on Lexie’s shoulder. “Lexie, we’re here for you. You’re not alone in this.”

Smiling gratefully, Lexie replied, “Thank you, both of you. This is all so overwhelming.”

Colby reached out and squeezed Lexie’s hand gently. “We’re in this together, always.”

As the night wore on, they all retired to their respective rooms, hoping for a peaceful night’s rest.

In the morning, Colby got ready for work as usual. He stepped into the hallway where Malik was waiting for him.

Malik spoke softly, “Colby, I think I should stay with Lexie today, just in case.”

Colby looked at Malik, understanding his reasoning, and nodded. “Good call. No need for Colby 2 then.”

As Colby left for work, Lexie woke up and begrudgingly made her way downstairs. She found Malik sitting in the kitchen having a cup of coffee. “Is there more?” she asked, wiping her sleep-filled eyes.

“Of course,” Malik replied as he grabbed her a cup.

“So, what’s the plan for today?” Lexie asked groggily.

Malik smiled, “I was thinking we could spend some time outdoors. Would you like to come with me to the woods? It’s peaceful there.”

“It would be nice to get out of the house for a bit, Malik. Let’s do it,” she agreed, as she took a sip from her mug.

A few hours passed and Malik decided then was as good a time as any, and the two headed out to the woods near the park. They continued their walk deep into the woods, and once they reached a secluded area, Malik asked, “Lexie, do you trust me?”

“What kind of throuple would we be, if I didn’t?” she replied jokingly.

Malik smiled and nodded. “Good. I want to show you something, but please, don’t be afraid.”

Lexie’s brow furrowed, confused about what he had just said to her. Malik took a few steps back, removed his clothes, and placed them on the ground. She watched, wide-eyed, as Malik fell to all fours, his form contorted and shifted in a mesmerizing yet startling manner. His human body seemed to blur, giving way to something altogether otherworldly. His shoulders broadened, his limbs elongated, and a ripple of sinewy muscles began to take shape beneath his skin.

She could hardly believe her eyes as the once-familiar human face transformed into a magnificent, albeit imposing, werewolf. His snout extended into a long muzzle filled with razor-sharp teeth, and his green eyes gave way to large piercing, yellow orbs, they held a fierce but oddly gentle intensity.

The fur on his body thickened and darkened, covering him like a protective shroud. Lexie watched in rapt fascination as each detail of the transformation played out before her.

Now in his formidable werewolf form, Malik looked down at Lexie with his large yellow eyes. His body language conveyed a gentle demeanor, despite his imposing appearance.

Lexie hesitated for a moment, her hand suspended in the air, inches away from Malik's snout. Her heart raced, but she knew she needed to trust him. Finally, with a deep breath, she gently brushed her fingertips against his fur.

Malik let out a soft, reassuring growl, his eyes filled with understanding. He didn't move, allowing Lexie to decide how close she wanted to get.

"You're... incredible," Lexie whispered, her voice filled with wonder as she stroked his fur more confidently.

Malik responded with another soft growl, almost like a contented purr. It was his way of telling her that he appreciated her trust.

Lexie smiled, her fear gradually giving way to fascination and affection. "Thank you for showing me this, Malik. It's... it's amazing."

Malik's eyes conveyed gratitude, and he gently nuzzled her hand with his snout, an affectionate gesture. Lexie couldn't help but giggle at the endearing sight, feeling a deep connection with the gentle werewolf before her.

He turned around and bent down, gesturing for Lexie to climb onto his back. Eagerly, she did so, picking up Malik's clothes as she settled onto his broad, furry back. With powerful strides, he took off, moving much faster than Lexie had anticipated.

As they raced through the woods, the wind rushing past them, Lexie held onto Malik's fur, her heart pounding with a mix of excitement and apprehension. She trusted him, but the transformation had been awe-inspiring.

Finally, they arrived in a picturesque clearing, the sun casting dappled light through the trees, illuminating a sea of vibrant wildflowers. Lexie's breath caught in her throat as she gazed around, her fears dissipating in the beauty of the moment.

With graceful fluidity, Malik's massive werewolf form shifted and contorted, transforming back into his human self. He stood in the glade, bathed in the sunlight, his olive skin shimmering in the strips of light that penetrated the canopy above. Lexie handed him his clothes, and he dressed quickly, though his eyes never left the beautiful scene.

Lexie could not contain her excitement as she spoke. "This whole experience was amazing, Malik."

He smiled warmly at her, his eyes reflecting the beauty of the glade. "I'm glad I could share this with you. This is my favorite spot in the whole state."

The two spent some time sitting amongst the wildflowers, surrounded by the tranquility of the glade. Lexie admitted that this adventure was much needed after yesterday's ordeal, and Malik agreed, finding solace in the simplicity of the moment.

As the sun began its descent, casting long shadows through the trees, Malik gently interrupted their conversation. "It's getting late. We should start heading back." He removed his clothes once more, effortlessly shifting into his werewolf form, and gestured for Lexie to climb onto his back. With her securely in place, they took off, swiftly crossing the forest until they reached the edge of the woods.

Malik transformed back into a human and quickly dressed. Hand in hand, they began to walk back to the house, their hearts a little lighter after their time together in the serene glade.

They made it home just as Colby pulled into the driveway. Colby stepped out of the car and looked at them with a grin. "You guys have a good day?"

Lexie beamed from ear to ear, her excitement evident. "It was fantastic, and I got to see a werewolf!"



THIRTY TWO

UNMASKING MALIK

After their enchanting day in the woods with Malik's extraordinary transformation, Colby, Lexie, and Malik found themselves gathered in the cozy living room of their home. The golden hues of the setting sun painted a warm glow through the drawn shades.

Colby was the first to break the silence, his curiosity, and a hint of envy evident in his voice. "So, tell me more about your day, you two. I've got to admit, Lexie's enthusiasm has me quite intrigued." Colby thought, *I want to see a fucking werewolf!*

Lexie could not contain her excitement and launched into the tale of their adventure. "Oh my God, it was amazing. Malik's body twisted and shifted into this massive wolf! I rode on his back through the forest to the most beautiful place I'd ever seen, surrounded by all these flowers!" Lexie took a breath and shifted her gaze to Malik. "By the way, Malik, that looked very painful."

"At first it is, but after years of practice, it just becomes second nature," Malik admitted.

As Lexie's words wove together a vivid picture of their day, Colby's initial curiosity shifted into a twinge of jealousy. He hadn't been there to witness the transformation, and a part of him ached to experience it himself.

Malik noticed Colby's envy and gave him a reassuring smile. "Don't worry, Colby. I can show you too." His words held a promise of something extraordinary.

Colby's eyes widened, a mix of excitement and awe reflected in them. "No shit?" He couldn't believe his luck, the opportunity to see a werewolf transform and thought, *Fuck, yeah!*

Malik nodded, his gaze fixed on Colby. "Of course. We're like family now, and I think it's only fair that you get to share in our secret."

Lexie, sensing the moment, suggested, "Let's move the furniture out of the way, draw the shades, and make some space. Then, Malik can show you what he showed me!"

The three of them quickly sprang into action, shifting the furniture to the sides of the room, creating a clearing in the center. Colby drew the shades, casting the room into a dim, mysterious ambiance that seemed fitting for the unveiling of such a mystical secret.

With everything in place, Malik stepped to the center of the room. He took a deep breath, his skin seeming to shimmer in the soft, dim light. Without hesitation, he began to undress, revealing his toned, muscular body. Colby wondered, oh, so that's what Lexie got out in the backyard? His chest was broad and hairy, his arms were sinewy, and his legs were powerful. Malik's transformation had imbued him with an aura of primal strength.

Colby watched, his heart pounding with anticipation, as Malik's body began to change. The transformation was both breathtaking and surreal.

Malik's back arched disturbingly, and his limbs shifted and elongated. He grew taller, and his hands and feet sprouted into large, clawed appendages. His face stretched into a long, fearsome muzzle, filled with razor-sharp teeth. His once-human eyes were now large, luminous yellow orbs.

As Malik's transformation completed, he stood before Colby, an impressive werewolf, his powerful presence filling

the room.

Colby could not help but reach out, his trembling fingers gently touching the muscular, hairy arm of his friend. He marveled at the bristling fur and the warmth of Malik's supernatural form.

"Wow," Colby breathed, his voice full of wonder. "This is fucking awesome. You're awesome, Malik!"

Malik let out a low, rumbling growl, his version of a wolf's purr. He gestured for Colby to come closer, encouraging him to experience this extraordinary moment fully.

As Colby approached Malik, Lexie watched with a knowing smile, proud to see her two favorite men sharing this connection. She could sense the bond deepening between them, and it filled her heart with warmth.

Malik stood before them in all his werewolf glory, Colby and Lexie were both captivated by the sight. The room was filled with an electric tension, and it was clear that their bond was growing stronger with each passing moment.

When Malik eventually transformed back into his human self, he reached for his clothes to cover his modesty.

However, Lexie couldn't contain herself any longer. A playful smile danced on her lips as she stopped Malik with a gentle hand on his arm.

She leaned in closer to him, her voice dripping with seduction.

"You know, Malik, this is the fourth time today I've seen you naked." Her eyes held a wicked glint as she added, "How about no clothes this time?"

Colby couldn't help but be intrigued by the proposal, his own curiosity and desire growing in intensity. He looked at Malik, waiting to see how he would respond to Lexie's playful suggestion.

Malik couldn't help but blush at Lexie's boldness. He stammered slightly. "If that's what you want. But, um, my condoms are upstairs."

Lexie giggled, her confidence shining through.

“That’s fine,” she whispered sensually. “Colby has a no baby spell.” She gave Malik a playful wink, her eyes dancing with desire, as she leaned in closer.

Colby chuckled, his eyes gleamed with anticipation. “I do have a spell for it. It’s reversible, if you want it?”

Malik agreed with a grin. “Fuck it.”

Lexie, her thirst growing stronger by the moment, couldn’t hold back any longer. With a sultry smile, she whispered, “Now, fuck me,” and leapt into Malik’s bare chest. Pressing her lips to his, their tongues engaged in a debauchorous dance.

Colby recited the incantation, “*Sterilis.*”

As the heat intensified, Lexie and Malik found themselves lost in the moment, his hands eagerly removing her jeans and panties letting them pool to the floor at her feet.

Her hands fumbled to find their way to the hem of her shirt, peeling it off over her head and tossing it aside. Malik and Lexie stood in the center of the living room wearing nothing but smiles.

Their fervor led them towards the couch, but in their eagerness, they forgot that they had moved the furniture earlier. With a sudden and rather unexpected thud, they landed on the floor, their laughter mixing with intensity.

Colby, swept up in the erotic atmosphere, couldn’t help but shed his own clothing and took a seat on a nearby chair, his eyes filled with want as he hungrily watched Lexie and Malik’s encounter unfold.

Lexie found her way on top of Malik, grinding against his cock, causing it to throb as it grew. He slid his cock up and down her pussy, lubing it more the wetter she got. She sat up tall, reached behind herself to find his dick, and guided it in, working herself slowly down his shaft.

“Ah, fuck, your pussy feels amazing!” Malik roared, her heat radiating against his groin.

Lexie looked down flashing a smile. She continued to ride him, exhaling deeply with each drive downward. “Grab my ass.” Lexie ordered.

Malik obeyed instantly. He reached behind her, his large palms covering the majority of her ass cheeks. As he found a firm grasp, Lexie began to grind herself deeper down his length.

Colby continued to watch, stroking his own cock, slowly, thinking, *Fuck, babes, watching this is so hot!* As if on cue, Lexie peered over, making eye contact with him. “I fucking love you.” He mouthed.

Lexie let out a moan, as Malik began thrusting up, lifting her. His thrusts increased, as he moved his hands from her ass to her hips and rocked her forward and back. Malik’s hips dropped and his legs stiffened. “Ahh!” she cried, as she came down one final time. After catching her breath, she bent down and kissed him deeply.

Once she sat back up, her eyes met Colby’s once more, who was still working himself in the chair. “Your turn, babe.” She slowly rose off Malik, leaving him on the floor finding his own breath. She slowly and seductively began walking toward Colby, cum dribbling down her inner thigh.

Lexie grabbed the back of Colby’s neck with one hand and his cock with the other. As she sat up on the chair facing Colby, between her wetness and Malik’s cum, she slid it in with ease.

She took charge, laying her hand on his chest and pushing his back against the chair. She began to ride him in. Her fingers traced up his chest and nestled in his hair, tensing tighter with each pass.

Lexie pulled his head to her breast, “I want your mouth on me.”

Colby’s lips found her nipple, and he kissed it before taking her breast in his mouth, working her nipple with his tongue.

Between Malik’s warm cum still inside Lexie’s pussy, her grinding and riding his cock fast, and her hands pulling at the

back of his head and hair, he flew headlong into a massive orgasm. Colby released her nipple from his mouth, “Gah!”

Lexie’s face was flushed red, her breathing heavy, as she cried out, “Fuck yes!” She collapsed into his arms, her legs quivering as Colby continued to fill her with each throb.

All three were left breathless, tangled in the aftermath of their fiery encounter. Malik, still sprawled on the floor, couldn’t help but release a light chuckle. “Well, I’ve never done it with another guy in the same room before.”

Colby, who had been fervently kissing Lexie’s collarbone, joined in the laughter and replied, “Does doing it with your clone count? If not, then me either.”



THIRTY THREE

HUNTER'S FURY

Thomas waited for the familiar click of his secure line as he prepared to deliver his progress report. The voice on the other end, shrouded in mystery, finally spoke. “Thomas, update.”

With a tense undertone, Thomas began his report. “Two days ago, after I followed Colby to his workplace, I doubled back to continue surveillance on his house. Upon arrival at my makeshift residence, I observed a disturbing scene. A small fire had been set ablaze on the front lawn of Colby’s residence. The house bore signs of vandalism with graffiti scrawled across its facade.”

He paused, taking a deep breath before continuing. “But that’s not all, sir. As I maintained my covert watch, I thought I glimpsed a figure fleeing the scene, possibly a red-haired woman. It could very well be Juniper Green.”

The voice on the other end remained silent for a moment, then replied with a hint of urgency. “Thomas, this development is concerning. Our scouts tailing Juniper went dark last week. If she is back in town, something may have happened to them. Continue your surveillance discreetly, and if she shows her face, eliminate her.”

Thomas acknowledged the order, his mind racing with the implications of this latest revelation.

After the conversation with his mysterious superior ended, Thomas hung up the secure line and wasted no time. He knew that with the situation escalating, he needed to be prepared for any eventuality. Rushing to the closet, he retrieved an array of weapons and gear.

His movements were swift and efficient as he checked his arsenal: silver stakes, a crossbow with silver-tipped bolts, vials of protective herbs, a concealed blade, and his sword. Each item meticulously organized, he ensured that he was ready for any confrontation, especially if Juniper Green dared to make another appearance.



THIRTY FOUR

THE COUNCIL'S SUPPORT

The morning sun streamed through the bedroom window, casting a warm glow over Colby, Malik, and Lexie, who found themselves tangled together in the master bedroom. As they stirred, Colby's phone chimed with a message, interrupting the serenity of the moment.

Colby checked his phone and furrowed his brow. "Emergency Council meeting this afternoon," he announced, concern etching his features as he thought, *This can't be good.*

Malik popped himself up on one elbow, his gaze fixed on Colby. "What's it about?"

Colby let out a sigh. "I'm not sure yet, but they need me there. I'll have to go."

Lexie, still sleepy, looked between the two of them. "Is it another crisis?"

Colby nodded. "Fuck. Probably."

Malik leaned in and planted a reassuring kiss on Lexie's forehead. "Don't worry, I'll stay with you, Lexie. Colby needs to be there."

Colby got out of bed and dressed for the day. "Thanks, Malik. I'll head to The Council House and see what's going on."

In the ornate chamber of The Council House, Colby took his seat alongside the other Council members, the atmosphere

tense with anticipation. Jonas, the head of The Council, cleared his throat to address the assembly.

“Members,” he began, “we have received troubling news. One of my contacts from down the coast found two Hunters’ corpses. They seemed to have been killed using magic.”

Murmurs and worried glances passed among the Council members. Esther was the first to speak. “Killed with magic? Retaliation maybe?”

Ronan, the Alpha of the local werewolf pack, added, “I’ve also received a report from one of my scouts. They spotted a woman in town who matches the description of Juniper Green.”

The room grew somber. Juniper Green had become a name synonymous with danger in the supernatural community. She held no regard for the laws they had, and Colby was certain it had been her who had attacked his house.

Eric Wood, another warlock, raised his hand to get Jonas’s attention. “We should be cautious about jumping to conclusions. These events could be unrelated.”

Colby huffed and thought, *Probably fucking not.*

Jonas nodded, acknowledging Eric’s point. “You’re right, Eric. But we can’t afford to underestimate the situation. It could be a Hunter faction looking for revenge or an ally of Juniper’s.”

Cassandra spoke up next. “I’ll scry for more information. Try to pinpoint Juniper’s location.”

Cyrus agreed. “And I’ll scan the minds of some locals, see if we can pick up any unusual thoughts.”

The Council members began to discuss their next steps, their commitment to protecting their community unwavering. With uncertainty in the air and the threat of Hunters and Juniper looming, they knew that working together was their best defense.

Colby, sitting amidst the Council members, felt the need to clarify Malik’s role. “Malik is not only assisting us, but also a

formidable guard,” he emphasized, wanting to ensure Malik received the recognition he deserved.

Cassandra, quick with a remark, couldn't resist the opportunity for a jest. “Oh, like a guard dog?”

Ronan, a fiercely protective Alpha, bristled at her comment. His eyes flashed with anger, and his growl was barely restrained. But before he could respond, Colby's voice cut through the tension like a blade.

“Shut your fucking mouth,” Colby snapped, his posture shifting into a defensive stance.

The unexpected outburst and Colby's unwavering support for Malik seemed to earn him some favor in Ronan's eyes. Cassandra, though seemingly apologetic, offered only a half-hearted, “Sorry.”

Jonas, recognizing the need to diffuse the situation, cleared his throat and spoke firmly. “Enough. We have more pressing matters to attend to. This meeting is adjourned.”

The Council members dispersed, each returning to their responsibilities, while the underlying tensions simmered beneath the surface, waiting for the next spark to ignite.

After the Council meeting concluded, Colby felt a nagging sense of unease. He could not shake the feeling that Juniper's presence in town posed a significant threat. Leaving The Council House, he made a silent vow to protect his family at any cost.

Before heading home, Colby decided to take matters into his own hands. He embarked on an unofficial patrol of his own, determined to uncover any hints of Juniper's whereabouts. His footsteps echoed through the park as he walked its dimly lit paths, his senses on high alert. He scanned every shadow, listened for any unusual sounds, and felt the tension in the air.

Not content with just the park, Colby got into his car and drove through town, keeping a watchful eye on the streets and alleys, looking for any sign of the red-haired woman who had brought so much turmoil into their lives.

As he drove, he thought, *Where are you, witch bitch?* His gaze darted from side to side, hoping for a glimpse of Juniper or any clue that might lead him to her.

As he continued his patrol, Colby's mind raced with thoughts of Lexie and Malik back at home. He could not bear the idea of them being in danger, and the concern fueled his determination. With every passing moment, he grew more resolute in his mission.



THIRTY FIVE

JUNIPER'S REVENGE

As dusk settled over their home, Colby returned from his fruitless patrol through town, his frustration evident on his face. He shared with Malik and Lexie the unsettling news about the dead Hunters and the possibility of Juniper's presence in town. The room felt tense as they considered the implications.

Sitting in the living room, they collectively reached the disconcerting conclusion that Juniper had likely been responsible for the earlier assault on their home. As they tried to regain their composure, the house suddenly trembled with a deafening boom, causing the trio to brace themselves instinctively.

A second, more powerful explosion followed, and Colby felt the protective barrier they had established shatter and diminish.

In the ensuing chaos, Malik slowly approached the front door, only to have it blow off its hinges and send it hurtling back at him. He crashed through the living room, the impact causing a resounding thud.

Fear gripped Colby and Lexie as they raced for the back door, circling around to the front of the house. There, they were confronted by a menacing sight, Juniper standing amidst the debris, her eyes ablaze with burning red intensity. Red,

mist-like energy swirled around her hands, and her hair stood on end as if in defiance of gravity.

Juniper directed her accusatory words at Colby, her voice dripping with anger. “You had me banished!” Her finger then pointed at Lexie. “And you, whore, are fucking a werewolf.”

She glared at them, her eyes narrowing in hatred. “I was on the run from Hunters for weeks up and down the east coast. Finally, I’d had enough. I killed those idiots, and you’re next.”

Suddenly, a deafening howl shattered the tense silence. Malik, now transformed into a powerful werewolf, leaped from the remnants of the shattered doorway towards Juniper.

With a swift motion, she shifted her focus to him and, with a wave of her hand, hurled him with magical force across the lawn, slamming him into the side of the house. Malik struggled to get up, only to have Juniper wave her hand again, lifting him into the air, and slamming him back into the earth. He lay motionless on the ground.

Colby’s heart pounded in his chest as he stepped forward, his eyes glowing with a vibrant blue hue. “Juniper, stop this,” he implored, his voice laced with desperation. “What the fuck is wrong with you?”

As Colby advanced, Juniper’s anger flared. “I’ve lived too long to be brought down by a baby warlock,” she spat, her voice filled with contempt.

With a forceful spell, she sent Colby soaring through the air, crashing through the second-story window, and disappearing from sight.

With Lexie now standing alone before Juniper, the malevolent woman raised her hand once more, the red mist swirling ominously around her. Just as she began to lower her hand, a sudden gasp escaped her lips.

Lexie’s wide eyes witnessed the tip of a large silver sword protruding from Juniper’s chest.

Behind Juniper, concealed beneath his ominous black Hunters hood, stood Thomas. He thrust the sword deeper into

Juniper, causing blood to escape her lips, and she crumpled forward, collapsing to the ground.

Breathing heavily, he coldly declared, “You’re next, magic-loving whore.”

Malik slowly began to stir, his consciousness returning after the brutal blow from Juniper’s magic, as Thomas raised his crossbow with cold precision.

The bolt found its mark, impaling Malik’s back, and he slumped back to the ground, reverting to his human form. Pain and shock filled his eyes as he lay wounded.

Meanwhile, Colby, still dazed from being hurled through the window, regained his senses as he peered out at the chaotic scene below. He saw Malik lying with an arrow in his back, Juniper face-down in the grass with the sword still protruding from her, and the enigmatic man from the garden menacingly pointing a knife at Lexie.

With a surge of determination, Colby raced downstairs, his thoughts racing as he rushed to the kitchen to prepare the doubling spell. Lexie’s desperate cries pleading for Thomas to stop echoed in his ears. He knew he had to act fast. With trembling hands, he recited the incantation, “*Geminus*.”

Back outside, Lexie continued to beg the stranger to cease his violent intentions. His response was a chilling, soft laugh.

In a moment of desperation, she fled inside the house, Thomas close behind her. With a cruel glint in his eye, he raised the knife and thrust it down with brutal force.

Just before the blade could find its mark, Colby’s body intercepted the blow, taking the impact of the knife to his chest. Pain seared through him as he absorbed the vicious strike. But with his remaining strength, he executed his plan. Lexie watched in shock as Colby, knife buried in his chest, still managed to smile.

Thomas, who had been so confident just moments ago, now wore an expression of confusion. Colby, his life slipping away, continued to smile defiantly. Thomas, unable to comprehend the turn of events, inquired, “Enjoying death?”

With his last breath, Colby muttered, “Fuck you,” his resolve unbroken even in the face of death.

Lexie’s scream of despair echoed through the room as Colby’s lifeless body slumped to the floor. “Colby, no!” Confusion still clouded Thomas’s face.

Thomas, initially uncertain about the unfolding events, allowed Colby’s body to fall to the floor. His eyes then locked onto Lexie, a chilling smile curling his lips. “Well, no loose strings,” he declared.

But just as Thomas seemed to have the upper hand, a voice from the kitchen doorway rang out.

“Hey, asshole!” It was Colby, his eyes blazing a magnificent blue, holding a charged energy ball that crackled with blue lightning. Lexie’s fear was momentarily overtaken by awe as she watched Colby’s dramatic entrance, her jaw dropping.

Colby, with unwavering determination, hurled the energy ball at Thomas, striking him square in the chest. The impact sent Thomas flying backwards, crashing into the wall with a shower of debris before landing on the floor.

Colby, gesturing for Lexie to get behind him, positioned himself defensively. With eyes filled with anger and a newfound confidence, he pointed his hand at Thomas and muttered, “*Ignis.*” In an instant, Thomas erupted into flames, his screams of agony filling the room.

Panicking and engulfed in flames, Thomas flailed around the house, inadvertently setting furniture and floor ablaze. Colby and Lexie wasted no time; they rushed out of the back door and circled around to the front of the house, where they found Malik trembling and barely breathing.

As Colby and Lexie huddled together in the yard, holding an unconscious Malik, their dire situation seemed to worsen by the second. However, salvation arrived in the form of Ronan and Cyrus, running up the yard to assess the situation.

Ronan, with genuine concern in his voice, knelt beside Malik and asked, “Aw, what’d they do to you, pup?” His sorrowful expression quickly turned fierce, and he let out a

deafening howl that resonated through the night. Within moments, two other men materialized from the darkness, drawn by the call.

“Get him to the den as fast as you can,” Ronan instructed the newcomers. The larger of the two men lifted Malik over his shoulder, and they swiftly retreated into the shadows, vanishing from sight.

Cyrus, a calculating look in his eyes, surveyed the scene, taking note of Juniper’s lifeless body and the silver weapons strewn about. “Silver bolts, a silver sword? Looks like the Hunters’ work.” He sent Juniper’s body hurtling into the burning house, ensuring it would be consumed by the flames. “Who else is inside?” Cyrus inquired.

Still trembling, Colby managed a reply, “A Hunter and Colby 2, both dead.”

Cyrus nodded approvingly. “Good,” he declared, “when the other Hunters arrive, they’ll find two males and a female body, scorched and unrecognizable. They’ll think their agent and you two are dead.” He then turned his attention to the immediate task at hand. “For now, we must get you two to The Council House before more show up.”

With assistance from Ronan, they loaded Lexie and Colby into Ronan’s pickup truck, which was parked just down the road. Before they sped away, Cyrus reassured them, “I’ll meet you there.”

With that, the truck pulled away from their burning home, leaving Cyrus behind to handle the remaining chaos.



THIRTY SIX

TEMPORARY REFUGE

Colby stirred from a fitful slumber in the spacious and unfamiliar room within the confines of The Council House. Beside him lay Lexie, her own sleep marked by restlessness and dreams shadowed by the day's chaos. It had taken them hours to find reprieve in rest, even within the confines of the luxurious mansion that had seemingly appeared out of thin air. He knew they needed this moment of rest, yet his senses jolted to life as Cyrus stood in the doorway, a sense of urgency about him.

"Cyrus," Colby murmured as he slipped from the bed, the worry etched across his face mirrored in the anxiety that had held Lexie in its grip.

Cyrus beckoned him to the main hall, and Colby followed, each step filled with a sense of trepidation. There, Ronan awaited them, holding an item concealed in what seemed to be one of Colby's own shirts, now charred and damaged. The shirt had seen better days, but what was concealed within ignited Colby's curiosity. He thought, *What the fuck is that?*

With a gentle smile, Ronan pulled Colby into an appreciative hug. "Thank you, Colby. For looking after Malik and for handling both Juniper and the Hunter, filthy pieces of shit. You did an excellent job."

Colby's hands trembled as he took the scorched shirt, unwrapping it to reveal a treasured possession, his family's

grimoire. Tears welled up in his eyes as he peered down at the cherished book, and his gratitude overflowed.

“Thank you,” Colby whispered, his voice filled with heartfelt gratitude.

Cyrus nodded, his features imbued with warmth and understanding. “You’re welcome.”

The conversation took a more serious turn as Cyrus began to outline the measures that would be taken to ensure Colby and Lexie’s safety. “The other warlocks and I will go through town and alter the residents’ memories,” he explained. “They will believe your house burned down, but that both of you are safe.”

Cyrus looked down, anticipating his next move. “But we will have to implant a failsafe. If an outsider were to ask about either of you, the resident will tell them you died in the fire.”

Colby grasped the significance of this endeavor and nodded solemnly. “That’s one hell of a lot of effort.”

Cyrus’s agreement was resolute. “Indeed, it is. Again, safety is paramount, we do not want the Hunters finding out the two of you survived.”

Ronan chimed in with a sinister grin. “Let the Hunters come. They’ll get what that Thomas fella got.”

Colby offered a determined nod, a fierce light burning in his eyes. “You’re right, Ronan. We won’t let them fuck with us or our home.”

Jonas emerged from the shadows, addressing Colby with a serious tone. “You are welcome to stay here for as long as it takes Cyrus and the others to complete their task,” he assured them.

He then added a note of caution. “However, we must remain vigilant. Even though Juniper was exiled, and it was a Hunters’ blade that ended her life, rogue witches can be unpredictable. They might still hold you accountable for her demise, Colby. Witches are fickle like that.”



Colby and Lexie stayed within the secure confines of The Council House, their temporary sanctuary from a world that believed them to be dead. As the warlocks tirelessly worked on altering the memories of the townspeople, the young couple found solace in each other's presence. The luxurious rooms became a temporary home, and while they missed their old life, they knew this was a necessary pause.

Lexie continued to marvel at the opulence of the mansion, and as days turned into weeks, she had the opportunity to learn more about the magical world. The warlocks within The Council House were more than willing to share their knowledge.

Colby, on the other hand, delved deeper into his family's grimoire, studying spells and incantations that had been passed down through generations. With the help of the warlocks, he uncovered secrets and powers within the old tome that had remained hidden for decades. Each discovery brought him closer to understanding the extent of his abilities.

Meanwhile, Malik made a full recovery. The injuries he sustained at the hands of the Hunter and Juniper were nothing more than scars now, reminding him of the battle they had faced. He spent days patrolling the grounds of The Council House and periodically stopping in to keep the Richards' company.

As the warlocks continued their memory-altering work, they kept an eye out for any sign of Hunters. Word reached them that the Hunters had buried their fallen comrade in an unmarked grave, believing that the Richards family was no more. The threat seemed to have receded, but no one within The Council House was naive enough to believe it was truly over.

Weeks turned into months, and the task of changing the town's collective memory was finally completed. Cyrus and the other warlocks had done an exceptional job. No one remembered the attack on the Richards' house, and it was as if Colby and Lexie simply evaded a horrifying accident.

One evening, as the sun dipped below the horizon, Colby and Lexie stood on a balcony within The Council House. The sprawling garden below, a testament to the warlocks' abilities, was a sea of vivid, enchanted colors.

Colby put his arm around Lexie, and she leaned into his embrace, looking up at the starry sky. "We'll need to leave this place eventually, won't we?" Lexie mused, her eyes filled with uncertainty.

Colby nodded, his expression equally pensive. "Yes, but we won't go alone. We have friends here, allies who are willing to help us out."

Lexie smiled, feeling a renewed sense of hope. "Whatever lies ahead, love, we'll face it together."

Colby gazed at the world beyond The Council House, knowing that their journey was far from over. With newfound knowledge, strengthened bonds, and determination, they were prepared to face whatever challenges lay ahead, united by their love and magic, and forever entwined in a world hidden from the eyes of ordinary mortals.



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