

Winter

Moonlight made the blanket of newly fallen snow glow softly, filling the quiet slumbering trees that surrounded a large manor house. Dark and sharp contrast the ocean of white that spread out before it, only a few windows showed signs of inhabitations.

Facing the moonlight, a lone balcony stood upon this house. A pair of stout glass doors stood in the middle of wall beyond it. The warm glow of fire light slowly flickered in the frost covered panes of the doors. Inside the balcony doorway was a large room, sparse with furniture. A few scattered chairs and tables mostly covered in worn velvet from much use in the lifetimes. A single couch stood silently against one wall, slightly tattered and covered with clothing. On the opposite wall from the couch, stood a rather large 4 poster oak bed. The blankets had been partly thrown over the end, out of the way of the 2 figures that were on the bed. One of which was sitting partly up, while the other laid close by.

Turning slightly I looked towards the door way, noting that the length of the moonlit pouring through the doorway had grown again. Sighing softly, I reached down and lightly played with his hair. Slightly stirring, turning his head to smile at me. He laid on the bed next to me, one arm draped across my hips as he would every now again run his fingers across my skin and other was tucked under his head.

Across his back, I could see a swirl of colors and figures that were tattooed down his back and beyond. Each one held a dark and unending power, of which only he knew how to use. Starting at the top of his shoulders in the form of a dragon, which seemed to be biting into his left shoulder, to the center were large sigils extend almost to his waist. Each of his legs were totally covered in whirls of unending knot work circles.

The warmth from the mage heaters kept the room a pleasant temperature despite the snowy weather. It had allowed us to remain as we were without need of blankets. Reaching out slightly, I picked up a glass from the table on the right side of my bed. Taking a slow, long drink, I then offered it the man next to me. Shaking his head slightly, he smiled and then pulled himself up onto his hands and knees.

"No, I think I have had enough wine for the night." He spoke softly, making my body shiver slightly as his voice washed over me. "I think I am ready for a bit more of you, Ciera."

"Oh really now...?" I replied, chuckling softly as I replaced the glass onto the table. "And what if I don't let you, Darken? Hmm...? Just what would you do then?" I asked as I lightly traced a tattoo on his left forearm, a graceful black panther that seemed to walk down his arm.

Shimmering slightly, Darken slowly changed into what looked like a shaggy black wolf. Studying the wolf before me for a moment, the illusion finally gave way and I was able to see him grinning at me.

"You, sir, aren't as charming as you think you are." I said as I playfully pushed him off the bed. Following closely behind, I stepped off the bed and stood over him, the illusion gone.

Lying on the floor before me, Darken was stretched out with his hands behind his head, grinning like a Cheshire cat. Another sigil covered his chest, slightly different from the one on his back. Nudging him with my foot, the wealth of my hair spilled over my shoulder. Waist length raven curls caressed my skin which made me shiver. Sitting partly upright, Darken reached up and lightly played with the end of my hair.

"Now love, come on. I do have a reputation to keep up. And how can I do that if my wife isn't enthralled with my good looks and winning personality." He replied as he gave me a cheesy grin.

Chuckling at him, I made my way over to the doors to stand in the moon light. The crystalline landscape stretch out before me like a great white carpet, which simmered under the pale moonlight. I didn't look back as I heard shuffling and then smiled as Darken wrapped his strong arms around me. Kissing my neck, he took in the scenery with before speaking.

"Spring will be here soon." he said absently as if not wanting to admit what we both new. "I wonder what fires we'll have to put out this year." He then placed another soft kiss on my neck as I nodded slightly. "I am sure Selaith already have a long list of things just ready to shove at us. " He finished with a heavy sigh. He then turned me to look into my eyes. "Let's not think of that for now. I would rather focus of something a bit more entertaining."

In one swift movement, he swept me off my feet and carried me back to the bed only to set me gently on it. Climbing in next to me, he did his best to help us both forget the times that were just weeks away.

Dawn was swiftly approaching when we finally had sleep overcome us.