

Lykos Redemption

Ch. 4: Redux de Réunion

Coulter DarkClaw

The two brothers walked endlessly for what felt like years to them, but they knew was only days. Every night Nyctimus would look at his brother, now with no need to commune with the wolf, watching the man continue to meditate, 'In order to keep [his] humanity intact.' It was interesting as much of what Nyctimus had thought about his brother had been true, to an extent. He was indeed a strong, kind, gentle soul. He had just feared his younger brothers a little more than was rightfully just. It was two weeks until the next full moon, and Nyctimus couldn't help but think of Artemis' warning. *Will he revert to that wolf I found him as forever? Will He have to start this all over again?*

"Nyk, stop worrying. I will be fine." Melaeneus said. He looked annoyed with his brother. Since the night of the fight with Lysaea he'd been irritable to the point of scaring Nyctimus into treading lightly in every conversation with his brother. Melaeneus was more self-assured and confident in his actions than ever before in his life. It was good to see him this way, but it was also alien. It was a vast departure from the Melaeneus of Nyctimus' childhood.

"Mel, it is just...it is just that you are so different now. It is almost as if you have been replaced by someone completely different. Yet I know that cannot be. I am also worried about what Lysaea and Artemis have said about you. I worry if I am indeed safe around you. I will not abandon you, but it is only natural that I worry for my own safety. I also worry that all the work that we have achieved will disappear on the night of the full moon. I worry that you will change into that monster and won't change back. I love you Mel, you are my brother and I will not allow you to go back to that monster. I just wish we knew how this all worked a little more intimately. I am sorry, brother. My head is filled to the brim with 'What if's. 'What if he does not change back?' What if he has to start all over again?' 'What if someone finds him that night?' and so on."

"Brother, we will cross that bridge when we come to it. I currently am human and I hope to continue to stay that way while searching for my brothers. Which is what we should be concentrating on anyway. It isn't right to leave them be. They are a danger to themselves and to the other humans at the moment. In my present state I should be able to sniff them out. And every night I will howl. Try to see what kind of responses I get. I can still howl like a wolf, so hopefully I can get the attention of our brothers. Nyk, I understand this is an alien concept for you not to be in the lead. However, it is my right as the eldest to lead. I will lead us to our brothers and we will heal them as much as they allow themselves to be healed. They must be redeemed. It won't be as simple as my salvation but it will be all the more redeeming because of that."

"In that is the truth, Melaeneus. However what of those of our brothers that are truly terrible people? Those who will be less willing to redeem themselves? Those who see no reason to do so?"

"They will have to realize upon seeing me that it is the only way. It is the only way to regain their meagre humanity." Mel replied sternly. His voice was strained as if he were holding back an emotion unbeknownst to Nyctimus. He knew however that Melaeneus had been afraid of his younger siblings

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and that they were wont to torture him for being 'less of a man' than they were. So Nyk had some inkling of what it could possibly be. He just wasn't sure.

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A howl pierced the night. Reverberating around the Grecian mountainsides and flowing like water over a damn into the subconscious as Melaeneus tried to find his brothers. He paused, focusing on his hearing. He tried in vain to hear any response coming from the countryside. And he howled again, a long, lonesome cry, emanating from deep within his throat. A howl so deeply disturbing for Nyctimus.

It reminded him of a childhood of stories. Stories of man-eating, blood-thirsty creatures that would haunt his dreams and make it near impossible for him to sleep. Zeus' dinner hadn't helped for him. It only reaffirmed the cruelty of his family and he still had trouble sleeping. He'd dream of the Fields of Asphodel and how he hadn't done enough good in his life in order to achieve Elysium. How he had indeed seen the gates of Elysium but the judges determined that because of his family and their history that Nyctimus had to have done something terrible. That they couldn't rightly see what it was, but he was a son of Lycaon, they were all terrible people. So even with all of the good he'd done in his short thirteen years, practically living the life of a priest, a good priest. He'd been punished just slightly because of his family. He remembered the listlessness of the Fields of Asphodel. Of what it meant to be trapped there for an eternity despite the promises of Elysium. His father was bound to pay for his cruelty in an ungodly way. He didn't rightly know how, but he knew it would be cruel. Then to be given life again without a second thought. To be given another shot of Elysium. However no one goes through Hades unscathed. Neither did he.

He was driven out of his reverie when he heard a long, low, mournful howl in the distance. "That has to be them. If I remember correctly, Lysaea's howl was much higher in pitch and much more to the point."

Mel growled an affirmation. He looked at his brother and his eyes flashed a golden color. Nyk balked at that. It was the week before the full moon, and as it approached, Melaeneus had been acting more and more like an animal. Which was fine, though slightly disturbing at times. The look he was being given was one of asking permission. So Nyctimus nodded. Melaeneus did something that quite surprised Nyctimus. He became something else. His mouth pushed out into something that looked like the amalgamation of a wolf muzzle and the mouth and nose of a man. His eyebrows grew thicker and his sideburns grew ridiculously. His fingernails grew dark and elongated into claws. The toenails weren't far behind. His body became hairier and engorged with muscles. The expression on his brother's proto-muzzle was one of bliss. He was *enjoying* turning into this monstrosity.

"What in Hades?!?" Nyctimus shouted as he stumbled back. He fell on his backside as he watched his brother revert to the thing that he'd transformed into the day he returned to him. He watched as the *chiton*\* ripped off and fell to the ground. The small lotus flower brooch that Nyctimus had bought his brother from his meagre earnings fell to the ground with his *chiton* and Nyctimus looked to his brother. What he saw disturbed him greatly. In front of him stood something that wasn't quite a beast, but wasn't quite man. Even down to the genitalia. He had a canid phallus, which was currently erect. Nyctimus was too shocked to look away from his brother. Melaeneus was panting fiercely as if he was fairly close to erupting from lust. Then it happened. Mel's tail grew in. It started as just a tube of bony

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flesh which started wagging just as fiercely as Melaeneus was panting and then it started to grow hair. Or fur, Nyk reminded himself. And when that happened, Melaeneus howled as in that same moment his canid penis erupted in pulsing, bouncing spurts. His balls emptying onto the grass in front of him. Nyctimus knew more than he let on about sex, but this was completely out of the blue and completely abnormal. He'd never heard of someone bringing themselves to orgasm without manual stimulation.

The transition from human to wolf-man must have come with an intense bout of pleasure. That was the only explanation to what had just happened. Melaeneus looked again to Nyctimus, who was still in shock at his brother's open display of sexuality. Mel shook his head and laughed, "Brother, you look like you have just seen a ghost. If this form..." Mel followed Nyctimus' line of sight and saw that Nyk was staring blatantly at his penis. Mel growled in surprise, "Oh, right...Sorry. I did not know that it would feel so *immensely* pleasurable. I could not help it. I am sorry if I have disturbed you in some way."

"For what do you have to apologize, Melaeneus? Lycanthropes are sexual creatures. More so than humans. You should not be afraid of that." Said an alluring male voice. Melaeneus looked over Nyctimus' head—who turned in response to the voice—to look at the god. The god wore a garish red *himation*** held up by a red gold brooch. The brooch was in the shape of a giant heart. He had wings and looked like a thirteen year old boy. On his back was a quiver and over his chest rested a bow.

"Eros? My lord why are you here?" Nyctimus inquired as he bowed. Mel followed suit, albeit slightly awkwardly.

Eros just chuckled boyishly. "Love is everywhere, young Nyctimus. Your brother needs to know just how seriously he needs to listen to his heart. But first, he needs to find that wolf. Go Melaeneus. Find your brothers." At that Mel left like an arrow from a bow, "Nyctimus you also must know the importance of love. Unfortunately Aphrodite had too much to do. So it falls to me to explain what it is to be 'in love'."

"What?" Was all Nyctimus had to offer at the present state of the conversation. He was completely lost as to why Eros chose *now* of all times to but in on his life.

"I will eventually land an arrow in your heart, Nyctimus. However, I want to know why you keep denying to which gender that arrow will belong. Your brothers are undeniably bisexual. They have never denied that of themselves. Though they may have misused their sexuality, they never seemed to care the gender of the hole they were using. You, no matter how hard you have tried to show otherwise, are only attracted to males. I want to know why you continue to deny that."

"I have never denied my sexuality, my lord. I just don't affirm it either. I'd rather not lose my right to vote in elections and other such functions. My lord, I would rather die alone than lose what little power that I have."

"Love is not just about sex, young one. It is about caring for another human being to be willing to go to the ends of the earth and back just for that person. It is about being willing to die for another person, because you love them. It is about being there for them when they are happy. And being there when they are sad. It is about oh so much more than just sex, Nyctimus. Even I one of the many gods of love, do not understand it in its entirety. But I can tell you that you will find love. Indeed you will." Eros looked at Nyctimus long and hard, "Most would have gone mad just by looking upon my visage, but you

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Lycaonids are much more resilient than that. I must tell you that your brother will find his true love, soon. When he does, Zeus, my great nephew, will turn her by Melaeneus' hand. Thus begins a curse anew. Though Zeus had originally cursed them, your brother's resilience and ability to become human again, well of human form. He is no more a human than I. As you have just seen. It has made Zeus rethink the curse. Seeing Melaeneus change his ways has given him hope for your family."

"Yes. I have. However, he is still my brother. I love him so much that I indeed promised my life to protect his. I will do the same for all of his kind."

"Then take my blessing, young Nyctimus and know that you will feel my presence again before too long." The god of lustful love vanished in a cloud of red smoke.

"Alright, let me see I have now been visited by...Zeus, Hera, Hades, Artemis, and now Eros. What other Gods wish to involve themselves directly in my brothers' and my lives."\*

In the next minute, the once-again human form of Melaeneus came into view. Behind him was a large, very frightened, very intimidating, darkly-colored, mangy wolf. Its head was down, its tail between its legs and it dragged its feet. It was acting fairly submissive, which was a good sign in a way. It meant that with Melaeneus here the wolf wouldn't try anything. "What in Hades happened? That wolf looks like it is in trouble. It looks like it is afraid of you. What did you do to him?"

"I showed him who is boss." Mel replied plainly. He then grabbed the tattered remains of his *chiton*, and the lotus flower brooch.

"Again remind me, brother. What is the significance of the lotus flower?"

"It is a symbol of tranquility and the danger of peace. It is to remind us that while peace and tranquility are things of beauty they can enthrall us and cause us to lose the will to live. The Odysseus saw as much when he encountered the *lotophagoi*\*\*\*."

"I see." He handled the brooch like the actual flower. It was interesting to see such delicacy from someone who could be so brutish and monstrous with his actions. The wolf looked nervously from Melaeneus to Nyctimus and then there was a sudden change in his demeanor. His tail wagged some more than it had and his ears perked up. He opened his mouth and his tongue lolled out. He looked *happy* to see Nyctimus.

The wolf trotted up to Nyctimus' side and started to lick his face. Nyctimus laughed. "Hey, big guy. Who are you?"

"That is Demeas. I am sure of it. He certainly uses similarly underhanded tactics as he would. I barely managed to win this fight. He is a skilled fighter, for a wolf." At his name the wolf 'woof'ed and started wagging his tail with more vigor.

"He has yet to change back. Why?"

"He has a long list of crimes for which he must atone. The least of which was butchering your dead corpse." Melaeneus replied.

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"I'm alive now. He's shown me at least some kindness. He recognizes who I am. He has redeemed himself that much in my eyes." At that the wolf yipped in pleasure at hearing recognition of his good deed. In fact, He started to shrink visibly and became less hairy. His eyes grew darker to a natural hazelnut brown. His muzzle became shorter and his ears started moving down the side of his face.

"He has much to go, unfortunately. His submission to me has yet to make me feel he has redeemed himself. It will take much more than a lick to the face for me to feel he has redeemed himself."

The wolf growled slightly at Melaeneus and bared its fangs. Mel replied by staring the wolf down, his eyes flashing gold. "Here is our first project, Melaeneus. Get him to redeem himself to the point where his human side wakes again."

"This will indeed be a *project*. He will not be easy." Melaeneus agreed as he sat down. He took the brown cloak from Nyctimus' bag and laid it down on the ground for a makeshift blanket. He lay his head down on a pillow and went to sleep not seconds later.

"Good night, Demeas. I still love you." Nyctimus said as he lay on the bare ground and also quickly fell asleep.

The wolf that was Demeas quickly fell asleep soon after.

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