

Lykos-Redemption

\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\Act III\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\

Ch. 1: La Espada

Coulter DarkClaw

"It has been a year, dear brothers. A year since I slew the hero, Perseus. It has been a year since Demeas left us. And it has been over a year since your humanity was returned to you." Nyctimus looked around the pavilion to each one of his thirteen remaining brothers. Nodding subtly to Melaeneus and Agape. Agape, holding a three month old pup in her arms. It was swaddled in the finest skins from one of Mel's kills. Harpalykos also had a new mate, who'd refused the bite. She was turned through...other means. Phineus looked at him with depression still etched deep into his eyes. He'd accidentally killed his mate. A man by the name of Alkaios. Mantineus leaned against his mate, a smith's son. The love they held for each other was permanently binding. Nyk saw no way that they would ever separate. He looked to Lykon, his closest brother in age in Mel's pack. The man looked utterly lonely. He sat there and twiddled his thumbs idly as his elder brothers and their mates shared their affections amongst each other. "And in that time, many of us have found our partners. Those with whom we wish to spend the rest of our lives. Some of us," he pointed to Melaeneus and Agape. And to Harpalykos and his mate, whose name was Agathe, "Are welcoming new members to their families. Others have lost their partners in this time, too.

"Love is not a fair force in this world. I have realized. Aphrodite seems to play favorites even," Apollo appeared behind Nyctimus and Nyk fell into him. Allowing the god to take some of his weight, "gods seem to have to work amongst themselves to find their love.

"That is not what we have come here, for. To discuss love. We've come to discuss our future. How bright it seems, and how dark it could be."

"We do not wish to speak of him and his pack. He is not welcome here. In person or in spirit. He gave up that right the moment he attacked Alpha Mel." Orestheus pointed out. His mate of six months nodding alongside him. The rest of the brothers murmured amongst themselves as Nyctimus—who had gained a lot of bearing—bore his eyes into Ori's sole. The wolf shrunk back.

"To not discuss him, *Ori*, would be our death. Understand?... Good. Demeas, right now, poses a major threat. He will not rest until his ambitions are fulfilled. Which means that Melaeneus is in *danger*."

"And what are we to do about him?" Boukolion questioned sheepishly. He was the pack's omega. He didn't have much of a backbone. So it wasn't a surprise to anyone when his mate ended up being the one 'in charge'. His mate used to be a slave before Boukolion came to him and had worked up the courage to actually ask the man if he'd had any interests in males. When Nyctimus looked to him—not unkindly, he shrunk back into his mate whose name was Dorian.

"That is why we are here. To discuss the possibilities for dealing with the problem which is Demeas' pack." Nyk looked around the room again, "It will not do to feud amongst ourselves while a third party will come down on us shortly. They will come because of the death of Perseus. They will come to avenge their king."

"Makareus! Bring me the map of Attica." Demeas yelled. He was looking out on the countryside of Arcadia, marveling at its wondrous nature. His arms were crossed behind his back. His back as straight as it would go. His gaze was distant and his mouth was pursed. It was obvious to anyone looking in that the man was deep in thought. And those thoughts were sure to scare any mortal man.

"So this is truly your intent, Demeas? To kill Melaeneus? Are you that cruel?" Said a voice that approached the Alpha from behind.

"Lord Zeus, to what do I owe the pleasure?" Demi asked the King of the Gods as he stood abreast of him.

"As your brother's Father-in-law I have to ask you not to do this. If you kill any of them, my son's husband will die. As much as it pains me that he ended up with a man, I love him just the same. It would pain me to see your youngest brother die." Zeus pleaded.

Demeas' response surprised and angered the god: He laughed heartily, maniacally. "Zeus, what do you think? I kill in cold-blood? No. I will end my brother's life quickly. *He* will not live to see another full moon, when next we meet. I am not going to kill Nyctimus with my own hands, Zeus. His oath will do that for him. Why? Why did he swear on the Styx? Why didn't Hades, Hecate, Apollo, or even *you* stop him? Doesn't he know that that oath will be his death?" Demeas' eyes began to tear up, "Why, Nyktimus? Why did you have to do that?"

Zeus actually put his hand on Demeas' shoulder. Understanding—though he didn't want to—what it was to know one would lose more than one family member. Know that while they could do something to stop one death, they couldn't stop them all. "Why instigate this, Demeas? You know what it is to lose family. You have already lost more than half of your brothers. Why would you wish to lose even more of your family?"

"Because they are in my way! Melaeneus was too strong for me to defeat alone, so I will kill him with my army. I will be alpha over all lycans."

Marakeus came in a second later and handed Demeas a map before exiting the room. Demeas was left to himself. Looking upon the map he saw a good approximation of the City-State of Athens. It was time that the world knew what they truly were. It's time that he showed them what it was to be a lycan. They were designed to kill or be killed and so he would rather be the one doing the killing not the other way around.

Perseus looked around himself. The field of the damned wasn't ever where he thought he'd end up. He thought he'd done good with his life. He thought he'd end up in Elysium. It was as though the gods had turned on him. It was as though attacking the Lycaonids was the worst, most atrocious thing that he could have done. Yet he knew that he was in the right. They were monsters, so why did Hades put him here.

He screamed in agony as the flames around him got particularly intense. It was funny in a way, the pain of constantly being burned, followed by the constant re-healing of his body, had grown to a monotony

in the first few days. It had become just a dull ache. He wouldn't exactly recommend this to anyone, but it wasn't that bad after a while. He knew that he could redeem himself if he could explain to Zeus, Hades, or Apollo why he'd done what he'd done. He could stop this perpetual burning that were the Fields of Punishment.

Nyk was curled up in Apollo's arms as Apollo watched his husband sleep. He'd decided that the life he wished to live was there with Nyctimus. He'd told his father and they had arranged the marriage in a fortnight. As nontraditional as the wedding was—man and man—they still took their vows and became husbands and with the marriage came a decision for Apollo and Nyctimus: Did they wish to go to Olympus and live eternally with the Gods of Olympus, or did they want to live mortal lives with Nyctimus' brothers and their slowly growing family. He'd chosen to live with Nyk among the mortals. It was because of this that he'd been stripped of his duties. Helios was, of course, perfectly fine with this decision as it meant that he was to fly across the sky himself. That had been a rough discussion in the council. Apollo was none too shy to admit that he was bored of the council. That he'd finally found somebody to whom he wanted to give the rest of his life. This caused even more of an uproar. Nyk didn't know that he'd given up his immortality for him. He knew that he was around more, but he didn't realize the significance of his presence. He still remained in control of some of his abilities, but most had been stripped from him.

Apollo kissed the top of Nyk's head and lay his head down to sleep. It was obvious to him that Nyk was going to need him more now than at any other time in his life. The Crook would help Nyctimus, but he'd need a seasoned war veteran for what was coming. "I will be your sword, my love. I cannot be a shield for your heart." Apollo whispered as he kissed Nyk's forehead, "That is something of which only your mind is capable."