

Wolves and Dragons of the Blood: Revelations

“No, not really.” Andro spoke. “I just know that this is how you process it all. You find a place like this. Quiet, out of the way, and you think. When I was small... we used to... Elynth and I would follow you and Torma to the top of Dragon Mountain and just watch you as you sat there while the sun came up or went down.”

Martin smiled and nodded his head. “I remember.”

Andro looked at his father surprised. “You knew?” He gasped. “We always thought... we thought we were sneaky to be able to get that close and not have you take notice.”

“We took notice.” Martin said. “We just never allowed it to show. I’m sorry Androcles.”

“Sorry? Sorry for what?” Andro asked.

Martin waved his hand with the bottle around. “This. All of this. What is happening. This is... it is beyond anything that I ever imagined.”

“I think it is beyond anything any of us have ever imagined father.” Andro said. “And I have a pretty good imagination. Just ask Sadi or Carisia. And I have also heard our mothers talking about your imagination father.” He finished with a smile.

Martin laughed and looked at his son. “Yeah... I’m not going there.” He said seeing Andro laugh as well.

“When you and Eli were born I just... I wanted so much more for you. For all of you. I didn’t want this life that we lead for my children.” Martin said turning back to look out the view window.

“Father, do you think for an instant that if this life was not what we wanted that we would be here? Especially now?” Andro asked him. “If you think that, you are wrong. We do this because we want to. We choose this life so *our* children do not have to.”

Martin looked at him. “What about Achilles? Neesia? They did not choose this life. It was chosen for them long before any of us were ever born. It was chosen for me. It was chosen for you.”

“How do you know we would not have chosen this very life if given the opportunity?” Andro asked him. “I have heard so many people tell me it is easier for me than it is for you because I was born like I am. You have had to learn everything as you go father. That is the hardest thing to do. Knowing what you do now, do you think any of your decisions would have been different?”

Martin shook his head slowly. “No. And that is what scares me.” He answered.

Androcles nodded. “Elynth and I had this discussion not so very long ago.” He said. “It was when Dorian was born. His birth, it brought back the dreams as you know and we began... we began to question our purpose once more. But our purpose, it was also somehow clearer to us than before. I know that does not seem to make any sense but it is what we felt within us. Perhaps it was because Dori and Ryner were like us, or perhaps because once he arrived we could finally feel Laren and Ladur in the back of our minds.”

“What did you decide?” Martin asked him.

Andro shook his head and shrugged his broad shoulders. “Nothing. Because it did not matter how it came to be, only that it was.” He answered. “But we also made a vow to one another never again to question the decisions we had made up until then, or the ones that we would make in the future to come. Do we have regrets? Yes. I think we all do. It is how we go forward that determines who and what we are, not the regrets that we may have.”

Martin smiled at his son. "That's pretty good." He said. "Who told you that?"

Androcles met his father's eyes. "You did father. The night before I departed for my Agoge."

Martin chuckled. "I did huh?" He said. "I must have been really maudlin that night." He said with a grin.

Andro laughed softly as well and took another pull from his beer. He moved to the single couch that faced the view window sat down as he too stared at the stars outside. Martin joined him after a moment, grabbing another beer and opening it. Andro looked at him.

"What are you contemplating father?" He asked finally.

"You don't want to know." He replied.

"Perhaps because it is the same thing that I have been thinking." Andro ventured.

Martin nodded his head and looked at him. "Probably."

"And?" Andro pressed him.

"I'm tired *keto*." Martin spoke causing Andro to look at him intently. "I'm tired of our family, our blood being the blunt of everyone's ire and ambition. I'm tired of discovering that I have lost family I did not know I had, without ever being able to know them. I'm tired of your mothers and your brothers and sisters being the target for *midaeus* who want to make a name for themselves because they don't like me or they hate our blood."

"You are speaking of *staania* Reva and *Tenna* Kelia aren't you?" Andro said.

"I like to think of myself as a patient and tolerant man Andro..." Martin said. "...But these last years have stretched that patience and tolerance to their breaking point. I don't know how much more I can take. If what Chiron thinks happened actually took place son, people are going to see a part of me that they have never seen before. A part that I have buried deep for a very long time. A part of me that only your Uncle Danny has ever seen."

Androcles sipped his beer. "Perhaps that is what is needed father." He spoke softly.

"I hope not." Martin said.

"I am not interested in power for power's sake..." Andro said softly after a long minute of silence. "But I am interested in power that is moral, that is right and that is good."

Martin looked at his son. "Martin Luther King Jr." He said.

"Yes. That is also you father, that has always been you."

"The dead cannot cry out for justice." Martin spoke. "It is a duty of the living to do so for them."

Andro got to his feet and handed his beer to his father. "Lois McMaster Bujold." Andro told him. "And that is you as well father." He said before heading for the door. Martin Leonidas looked out at the stars and waited for the sound of the doors opening.

"Androcles?" Martin called out. He felt his son stop and turn to look at his back. "The shackles will come off son. I won't hold back." Martin felt his son nod his head.

"Then so be it father." Andro told him. "So be it."