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Tsvetana Alekhina

The diary of the Tambov Wolf



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Alekhina T.

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Friendship with a predator is dangerous, wonderful, it's addictive. The main character voluntarily gets captured by the white wolf, without thinking about the consequences. To be alone with a predator and look into his eyes is, of course, something, and not a little important if this predator is a female werewolf.

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«Don't you believe in these fairy tales?

When suddenly you give a heart to a wolf,

The Tambov wolf is not a beast to you,

The Tambov wolf is your comrade.»

Vladilen of Olives

CHAPTER 1

Autumn is a wonderful time of the year. It is a beautiful time. Especially if it is a warm autumn. I still do not want to return home from the street as it happened in the summer. Hot, fun, noisy time of the year it was replaced by a warm, beautiful, autumn coolness. The golden color of the trees fascinates with its beauty, makes you think. Someone is sad about the past summer, and someone about the past life. The autumn forest is beautiful, especially if this forest is Tambov. I walked slowly, knowing this forest like the back of my hand. Despite the fact that I was born and raised in Tambov, I did not believe in the existence of the Tambov wolf until I met him personally. I took the expression «Tambov Wolf» with humor, considering that this phrase sounds like a harmless joke.

October 1, 2015. Late autumn. It was getting dark early. My walk today was short-lived, and I did not go as far as the previous times. I wanted to get home as soon as possible, drink tea with raspberries and wrap myself in a warm blanket. Indian summer lasted all September. The cold snap started from the first days of October. The trees did not have time to shed their leaves before the onset of cold weather, their bright crowns fascinated with their beauty. A red maple leaf with an orange border slowly swirled in the air and fell right at my feet. I bent down to pick it up, perhaps it was my fate, with which this beautiful maple leaf brought me, but it was when I picked it up that I saw a product that I did not understand lying on the dry yellowed foliage, and only when I picked it up I realized that it was a wolf's fang. – How did he get here? I felt uneasy, I looked around trying to find people walking in such a non-walking place, but knowing Knowing in advance that I was alone here, I decided to leave the twilight-shrouded forest as soon as possible. Thrusting the fang, along with the torn cord into my pocket, I almost hurried to the car left on the side of the road. I do not know why, but my heart was pounding with fear, and my legs carried me to my car by themselves. It was only when I slammed the door and started the engine that I felt safe. The dark blue sky spoke of the coming of night, but it was nothing compared to what I heard... I heard a wolf howling. Exactly the howl of a wolf. I did not believe in the existence of wolves in our forest, believing that such animals do not inhabit our Tambov forest. After hitting the gas, I sped off along the Rasskazovskaya highway towards the city.

My house was located on Moskovskaya Street, not far from the Rasskazovsky highway. My parents and I have lived all our lives in a one-room apartment, the windows of which looked directly at the highway that led into the forest. My father taught me to walk in the woods from early childhood. He did not like to walk on the children's sites, considering that there is nothing good in this. Maybe he was right. My mother often had to work on weekends. It was a duty at the children's hospital, and we were alone with my father. If the weather was warm on the weekend, it meant that we were going to the forest. My father's name was Yura, and my mother loved him so much that she named me after him. Childhood flew by, and with it youth, youth, maturity came. My parents went to live in the village of Streltsy, leaving me this apartment with a view of the suburban forest. My personal life did not work out in my youth, and over time, I did not notice how I turned into a loner walking through the Tambov forest.

When I got home, I hastily took off my shoes, without taking off my jacket, went into the kitchen and turned on the kettle. The apartment was warm. I warmed up quickly. Taking out of my pocket what I was so interested in all the way and putting it in the palm of my hand, I brought the strange thing to the light. – It looks like a real wolf's fang. Is he real? I turned the amulet in my hands. The silver casting attracted attention much more than the fang itself. This old silver tip. But the fact was, this little silver head was so old. At first glance, even for the most inexperienced historian, it was possible to understand that this thing, and with it the lace on which it hung, belongs to ancient times. Considering the amulet, I did not pay attention to the white fluff, or rather the wool left on the black leather cord. Touching the fur with my fingers, and finally deciding to smell it, I realized

that it did not fall from the dog's neck. – What is it? The kettle had been boiling for a long time; the muddy sediment was visible through the thermal glass. Throwing the charm on the table, I took off my jacket and washed my hands. – What should I do about it?

Being an only child, of course I was selfish, and I was not used to sharing with anyone. Deciding to keep everything a secret, I decided to wait until morning and go to the same place in search of evidence. Well, or to my regret, or the owner of the amulet herself.

Night came. But I didn't feel like sleeping. I twisted the fang in my hands. Realizing that I had a real wolf's tooth in my hands, or rather a fang, I felt that I had found something very valuable, and very significant, but of course, I did not understand this value, and most importantly its purpose. Putting the amulet under my pillow, I tried to fall asleep, but I could not. I tried to imagine our meeting with the owner of this amulet, and how proud I am to return this pendant to him. Finally, not imagining the image of this man, I sighed easily and lay down from my back on my stomach. Putting my hand under the pillow, I squeezed the fang. – I will keep it for myself. What fell is gone. This is mine now. With these words, I fell asleep. The hand on the clock has long past midnight.

– «Do you have any idea what you've done?» Take back what doesn't belong to you. A woman's voice woke me up and made me afraid. The voice was imperious and menacing. When I opened my eyes, I realized that I was safe; my hand was clenched into a fist, a fang in my hand. The feeling of fear continued to overwhelm my subconscious. The pounding of the rain outside the window did not let me fall asleep. A well-developed intuition told me that something was wrong. I understood that in my hands there is a talisman, an amulet, or maybe just a pendant from which I inflated a whole story, but whatever it was, this thing has a valuable value for its owner. The white fluff on the leather cord gave me no peace.

Scrolling through the different options in my head, I settled on a more plausible one. – This fang belonged to a white collie dog. She lost it while walking. There is no other excuse. But walking for several days in a row in the same place, I did not see any people, much less dogs. I did not hear the barking. It seemed to me all the time that I was the only one going into such a depth, considering this forest a second home. But, nevertheless, the fact was the following, the hair on the string was quite tough for the collie breed, and how to explain the wolf howl that I clearly heard when getting into the car. There was only one thing left, to return to the scene of the accident. Throwing the bad dream out of my head, I went to the kitchen and turned on the kettle. White Fang was lying motionless under the pillow, I forgot about him for a while. Small raindrops dripped from the window. This fine frost foreshadowed the arrival of winter. After putting on warm clothes, I went outside and began to warm up my Renault.

Early morning of October 2. Fifteen minutes away, and I am there. The path ended a long time ago; I walked into the depths of the forest without looking back. This time I felt a sense of fear. Straining my ears, I tried to catch outsiders. Even if this fang decorated the dog's neck, the owner had to return with his pet. But to my regret, I didn't hear anything. The cloudy morning did not have its hospitality; I put my hands in my pockets and squeezed harder. These movements enveloped me with heat from the inside; I realized that I had forgotten the fang under the pillow. – What a fool I am. How could I. Returning to the car left on the side of the road and experiencing a great sense of chagrin, I had to return home.

Midday. Lunchtime. I had no appetite, satisfying my hunger with a cigarette, which I took out only occasionally, in extreme cases, I walked busily around the kitchen, fiddling with a fang in my hand. – And what if I tell my father about everything that happened. I am sure he knows the value of this pendant. Alternatively, an antique dealer's appraiser. Holding the phone in my left hand and the cord in my right, I walked into the bedroom and found myself in front of the wardrobe mirror. My reflection of me is quite satisfied. I thought I was attractive. Height of one meter eighty. White skin, thick black hair, combed on the right side. A sharp nose, thin lips, wide cheekbones, and gray-green eyes attracted the attention of girls. Bringing the lace to my neck and putting it close, I watched how

this thing would look on me. Throwing the phone on the bed, I made an irreparable mistake; I tied the shoelace into a knot while looking at my toes. Raising my head, I recoiled from the reflection; a black wolf with gray-green eyes was looking at me, standing on its hind legs. Not believing in what I saw, I touched myself with my hands, my hands and body remained the same, human. Coming closer to the mirror, a wolf was walking on its hind legs in the reflection; I stretched out my palm to the glass. A wolf's paw touched me through the glass, and I felt cold. – What is it? How is that? I did not believe what I saw, and began to take off this fang. But to my surprise, I did not succeed. The knots were too tight. A wolf's howl rose in my ears, an animal instinct took over my body in a split second. I wanted to tear up anyone who comes to hand. The craving for war, and with it for victory, called me to feats. I wanted to fight. Howl and fight. I did not even feel hungry, as a wolf usually feels. Continuing to try to remove the lace, I came to the kitchen and took a knife to cut the tourniquets that bound my neck. The incoming stop signal forbade me to do this. Driven by wolfish instincts, I went downstairs and started the car.

October 2. Evening. Suburban forest. My feet brought me to the place where I found the ominous thing yesterday. The howling in his ears displaced all extraneous noises. – You are doing great! He came alone. A woman's voice silenced the howling of wolves. Silence. I could hear my heart pounding. – No outsiders are needed here. Now give it to me. After these words, she appeared in front of me, a white wolf with human eyes. But, most of all me I was struck by the fact that she and I had the same gray-green eye color. The she-wolf was slowly coming at me, wagging her hips. If she had been in human form, she would not have left any man indifferent. Her strong paws slowly touched the wet foliage, she walked as if on a tightrope, smoothly and without fear. Her pale pink tongue licked her thin lips, revealing teeth as white as snow. There was nowhere to run, and there was no point. I could only wait for her approach, and then...

Jump and I am on my shoulder blades. I remember her open mouth in front of my face. Her tail was banging against my legs. The paws pressed me to the ground with such force that I managed to estimate the weight of this individual. About eighty kilograms. Her teeth closed around my neck, and I thought this was the end. But she just threw a black leather cord over her fang and jumped off my half-dead body with lightning speed. Here, of course, there was magic, the lace untied itself, it did not have to be torn, and especially cut with a knife. The wolf disappeared as suddenly as it appeared. I remained motionless for about five minutes. Not believing what I saw, I felt my neck with my hand, trying to find the shoelace. Finally making sure he was not there, I got to my feet. Looking at myself, I realized that this was not a vision, and not a hallucination, and I did not even go crazy. Her paw prints were left on my jacket. White fluff covered my jeans and jacket. Apparently, this female changes her fur coat for the winter. For a moment, I realized that I was lost and did not know in which direction to go back to the car. The trees seemed the same. The foliage merged underfoot into one big spot. Frost covered my hair with a nasty cold. Finally coming to my senses, I slowly walked to the exit from this thicket of the forest. I did not want to go home. I realized that I had lost something very valuable, and I would never be able to get this thing back for myself. My wolfish instincts disappeared like lightning with the loss of this amulet. The wolf disappeared along with the amulet, and I did not hear her howling reluctantly getting into the car. And I really wanted to see her again. I realized that she was not dangerous. – What is it? Who is it? The adventure in the autumn forest touched my subconscious. I decided to get to the truth.

Late in the evening, I got to my apartment. Despite the fact that it was hot in the apartment, I began to shake from the cold. Without taking off my warm clothes and without turning on the kettle, I took a hundred-gram bottle of whiskey from the kitchen cabinet and drank it in one gulp. At that time, it was the best cure for the stress experienced over the past 24 hours. The kettle turned on, my hands washed in hot water warmed up, my body is outside. Going into the bedroom, I forgot myself and I went to the wardrobe to get clean clothes, when I saw my reflection, I recoiled from the door and peered into my face. It seems like everything is the same as always, but something was wrong.

My longitudinal nose looked like a wolf's, my eyes burned with a wild fire in which savages danced around the fire. – What is it? When will it all end? The answer was not long in coming. A soft female whisper ran along the wall of my room.

– It's just started.

Clean clothes, clean hands. Delicious and hot dinner. Anyway, the white wolf did not leave my head. She was beautiful, graceful, strong, and at the same time gentle. I will never forget how she carefully removed the leather cord from my chest by impaling it on one fang. Comparing the facts, I realized that the female voice that I heard belongs to this wolf. She was talking to me. — What then?» What is the conclusion? Is she a werewolf? This is a female werewolf. And most likely a blonde werewolf with gray-green eyes. Does this happen? No. There are no werewolves exists. This is a myth from horror movies. Since ancient times. The word of ancient times shocked me. So is the fang that I found yesterday from ancient times. Is it true? I was sitting on a stool leaning against the wall and could not believe my thoughts. Ancient times. Witches. Werewolves. Amulets. Witches were burned at the stake. There are no werewolves. But I saw him. And this werewolf is blonde. I wish I could see her in human form.

Sleepless night. I could not get a wink of sleep. I did not know what to do. To share with someone about what happened or to keep everything a secret. Realizing that no one would believe me, and I did not want to let anyone into this secret, I decided to keep silent. My father called all morning, I did not give myself away by answering the call. The secret remained a secret. The image of the white wolf continued to haunt me, and I mentally tried to establish contact with her. Of course, I was more interested in her appearance. – What a wolf she is with human eyes. The weight of eighty kilograms is certainly noticeable. I imagined a plump girl with a long braid and lush breasts, round gray-green eyes, pupils running and burning with fire and a white, long, thick braid.

The days spent in the apartment served my already depressed state. I used to enjoy my loneliness. After all, I could go to the forest, and I did not need anyone. Now I was afraid to go into the forest, and I did not know what to do with myself for a whole day. My best friend went on vacation. I am not going to work until tomorrow. I worked for three days. And all three days of the weekend I always had something to occupy myself with. I loved my job, for me it was something like social recreation. More precisely, I loved my team more, because there was always a line between work and weekends between the team and weekends, and, probably, I loved this line more, which did exactly what I needed from work so well. I was lonely and at the same time, I had a team and a salary, which I also loved so much. This time, the day spent at work lasted the equivalent of a week. Barely surviving the shift, I flew home even without smoking a cigarette with a colleague. And we loved doing it so much after work. Talk about different things and smoke near my car. Sometimes I gave him a ride home. When he asked for it.

October 5. This morning I did not notice how I found myself in my car. I did not notice how I ended up at home. How I cooked breakfast and swallowed it in two minutes. Which was not there before. I always ate food slowly, listening to music or watching TV. My gait changed, my hearing became more acute, although I did not complain about it anyway. For the first three days, it seemed to me that everything that happens to me, including my appetite, is the consequences of going to the forest. My next shift at work was not easy for me. It was hard for me to be around people, they annoyed me. Although there was no such thing before, I always went to work with pleasure. The team was not unimportant to me. At the same time, three days spent at home had no less detrimental effect than a day at work. I could not understand what was happening to me. My best friend was supposed to be back from vacation in a day. I was waiting for him so much to go to the forest with him. I just could not show up there alone. The team argued my aggressive state by the fact that I had not been on vacation for a long time. They thought I needed to rest, go to the sea, or Moscow. In general, a change of scenery is what, in their opinion, I lacked. But they are right. I have not been on vacation for a long time.

October 13. Morning after shift. This day, like the last three, I did not go out. I was looking forward to a friend. Being in voluntary imprisonment, I made phone calls so as not to go wild. They were mostly my parents. I behaved as adequately as possible, trying not to attract suspicion in any way, and I succeeded. Periodically, I approached the mirror, of course, each time with caution, but I approached and he stared at his reflection. At first glance, it would seem that nothing has changed, but still the past incident in the reflection made itself felt, and I found fault with every hair. Sometimes I just saw a wolf's face in my face. But this is nonsense. And I understood that. The arrival of a friend dispelled my fears, and I completely forgot about my reflection. Misha told me how he had a good rest, and I listened to his story in silence, and did not say a word about the white wolf.

– So, what happened here?

– Yes, nothing special. Just a cold autumn. Dull.

– Yes. It is a tragedy for you, I understand. Hiking in the forest has been significantly reduced.

– «Something like that. Misha did not say a word about my unsaid. I could tell by the look on his face that he was waiting for this.

– Yurok! Let us go to your forest tomorrow. I was so excited about his offer. I didn't even have to ask him about it.

October 14th. A walk through the autumn forest is a wonderful pastime. It was warm weather, and we spent the whole day in the forest. Having bought strong alcohol and a light snack, we visited several forest clearings, the time flew by cheerfully and not noticeably, and our last stop was the «Svyatovo» lake. During the completely fun day, I never mentioned my adventure, so as not to overshadow the walk. I could not wait to share my encounter with a werewolf with a friend, but the circumstances turned out so that I did not mention it, and I considered it a sign of secrecy. Since my parents moved to the countryside, I have been used to walking in the woods alone. Of course, the appearance of the white wolf put fear in my subconscious, and Misha's company came in handy. Returning home in the dark evening was like an ordinary walk along the embankment. We had a lot to talk about, and there was even some alcohol left. It was a long way to the bus stop, and we stopped for a drink. Our sweet communication was interrupted by a wolf howl. So clear and lingering, it could not be confused with anything. Misha said hoarsely and inquiringly at he looked at me. I nodded approvingly, and we trotted towards the bus stop. When we reached the roadway, we slowed down. – It is crowded here. We are safe here. I also nodded approvingly. Misha looked at me sideways, wanted to say something, but did not dare. The bus pulled up, and we drove in silence to my house. My friend, after a long walk, wished to continue his vacation with me. We went to the «Magnet» and bought the necessary products. – Tell me, you knew, didn't you?

– Yes, I knew. I said ironically.

– I immediately realized that something was wrong. And how long has this wolf dwells there?

– From where do I know? I only heard the howl once.

– «I didn't know there were wolves in this forest.»

– Me too. I said dryly.

Our afternoon walk smoothly turned into an evening get-together. After drinking a glass of vodka, Misha uttered a speech with relief. – I noticed that you had changed, but I did not think it was because of the wolf in the forest.

– «You're right. I have changed. And the wolf is to blame for this. I could barely keep my tongue from slurring from alcohol. —You know I practically grew up in this forest. But this wolf spoiled my walks. I began to appear there less often.

– You said she-wolf! Misha laughed. – There is also a woman involved. Tell. You know you can trust me. Realizing that I had stirred up too much, I had to get out of it.

– Yes, it seems to me that this is a wolf. The howl is too long.

– Here you have determined! Misha continued to laugh. Your ex was here along the way. Well, if you do not want to, do not tell me. I did not want to offend my friend.

– No. The exes are finished. It is just the fear of going into the woods.

– To be afraid of wolves is not to go into the forest. The uttered expression sobered my mind.

– But he is right. I thought. My consciousness was transferred to a forest clearing, where I was standing alone, on a carpet of fallen leaves, the trees were shrouded in fog, and I was waiting for her, peering into the tree trunks. Silence. I cannot see anything. A split second and a white shaggy dog with an open wolf's mouth flies at me in a jump. I shuddered.

– What is wrong with you?

– Nothing. Vision.

– You know what.

– What?

– For now, tie up for a while with your trips to the forest. Judging by your condition, you have a serious fright. As a last resort, we have parks. Friendship Park, for example, or «Okhlyabinovskaya grove».

– Are you laughing?

– I am serious.

We sat up all night discussing Tambov wolves. From where they appeared, and when they were last seen here. In fact, wolves have not lived in the Tambov Forest for a long time. This kind of animal has long since exterminated itself, or rather it has long been exterminated.

– «Tambov wolf», a funny expression! I could not stand it and laughed with Misha. – Where did this expression come from at all?

– I remember my father telling me several versions about the origin of this expression.

The first one has its roots in the middle of the XVII century, at the time of the emergence of the Tambov fortress, founded to protect the borders of the Moscow state from nomads. Criminals were exiled to a distant fortress, away from the capital, who were called «wolves» for their dashing temper. In a land famous for ferocious wolf-animals, such an association could not fail to take root.

The second option, less bloodthirsty, comes from the time of Peter the Great, and according to him, «Tambov wolves» English merchants called Tambov merchants magnificent wolf skins, which enjoyed particular success with the royal cavalry, who used beautiful and thick wolf fur to insulate their guards cloaks. Since the vocabulary of foreign guests was small, going out to bargain, they simply shouted «Tambov wolf».

According to another version, in pre-revolutionary Russia, residents of neighboring regions called peasants of the Tambov province «Tambov wolves», who, upon completion of fieldwork, came to work in nearby cities and took on any work for a song. It is clear that such «wolves», knocking down prices, could no longer be comrades, grumbled: «Again Tambov wolves are prowling around the yards; the price is being knocked down.»

The last assumption about the origin of this saying is associated with the twenties of the last century. During the civil strife, Antonov's peasant rebel detachments were hiding in the Tambov forests, hunted by the Red Guards. For the special style of conducting guerrilla warfare, similar to the actions of a wolf pack, Antonovites were nicknamed «Tambov wolves» by local authorities.

– I learned a little history. Your father has trained you well.

– Yes, I spent my whole childhood with him.

– Ask him if there are wolves in the Tambov forest. Maybe it is just a dog for everything. And there are no wolves.

– Of course I will ask. Not today. The night flew by not noticeably. We did not notice when morning came. The day spent in the company of a friend cheered me up and made me perceive the appearance of a wolf in my life in a different way. Michali was right. I am done hiking in the woods. Especially now, when part-time jobs have appeared at work, and my best friend has arrived from vacation.

October 31. Cold autumn. The trees have lost their foliage. Bright colors were replaced by a gray landscape, forced to put on warm clothes. A thick layer of damp foliage stuck to the shoes, slightly irritating. I was not bothered by this phenomenon. I was more concerned about the disappearance of the she-wolf. Why don't I dream about her anymore? I cannot hear her howling. I would not confuse her howl with anything. It was like a woman crying. Not believing in the existence of wolves in the Tambov forest, and even more mysticism, I was still sure that this wolf was a woman. And of course I wanted to find the key to solving this mystery. I did not know where to start, wanting to do everything right and kind, I listened to the advice of a friend and went to my parents in the village. Largely, this trip was connected with a conversation with my father. I knew that my father would help me find the answer to many of my questions.

November 1st. Sunday frosty morning. Frost-covered grass. Quiet sound of tires, muffled engine. This time, no one met me on the porch, as in the old days. Perhaps it was due to the onset of cold weather, or old age crept up on the mother, and she could no longer stand at the porch on duty. – I have arrived! I heard from the doorway. – We thought you had forgotten about us. I have not actually come to this village since summer time.

– Mom. I got a part-time job.

– Did you abandon the forest? The father asked with bitterness in his voice.

– Of course not. I just started walking a lot less often.

– You do not think about anything but the forest. Mom blurted out.

– And you are talking about work. Father barked. I knew how to defuse a tense situation.

– I am hungry. I said loudly. The altercation is over. The father went outside. The mother ran into the kitchen. A house in the village, away from the hustle and bustle. What could be better? Especially if your parents live in this house, to whom you can always come. A delicious and hearty lunch prepared by the mother's hands. A heated house before the heat. A simple atmosphere is exactly what takes the soul and warms with its simple and cozy warmth. A house in the village is a kind place where, it would seem, you can die of boredom when you were born and grew up in the village, but at the same time, you do not want to go back to the city, into the vanity of vanities. Every time you come to your parents and go back, during this period, a period is measured that is waning. It is as a whole epoch is measured, before arrival, and after departure. With each visit, I become more mature or even older. Anyway, I have always loved coming here.

In the evening, my father went out to smoke, I went out with him.

– What makes you think?

– I see. I see even more than you think do, it happened in the forest.

– It is just an extra workload at work.

– Wow, I was wrong. I thought you were having trouble in the woods.

– What makes you think that?

– «Work has never meant anything to you. It was more of a hobby than a job.

– So I am growing up.

– In the fortieth year of life. Made me laugh. Rather, you have a personal life.

– It ended a long time ago. Both personal life and work are incompatible. Better tell me about the Tambov wolves.

– What do you mean? Didn't I tell you about them?

– I told you. Now, Dad, tell me about the wolves themselves. What do you know about them? The word dad hurt the elderly man, and with a sigh, he sat down on a log lying behind the house especially for personal gatherings, lighting a second cigarette. I sat down next to him.

– The wolf is a noble animal in itself. For example, when feeding a family. The concern for the offspring of wolves is pronounced. In addition to the parents, the whole flock is engaged in nursing the cubs. Feeding the kids is the main concern. These animals make every effort to ensure that the young grow up healthy, strong and adapted to the difficult life in the forest. As for the Tambov wolf,

the old man paused, puffing on a cigarette, examining the clouds of smoke, he continued. – The Tambov wolf is hospitable if he considers you his friend. If, on the contrary, friendship did not work out, and the Tambov wolf turned out to be your enemy, then in the future this wolf will attack you, this is the essence of the Tambov wolf. But if the Tambov wolf has become your friend, then he will open all the doors for you, and take off his last shirt. Well, as far as I know, now there are no wolves in our Tambov forest, they have been exterminated for a long time. So, what happened to you?

– It is nothing special. A controversial issue at work. That is all.

– You have a strange question.

– Just one friend confused a wolf with a dog, and was very scared.

– It is no wonder. Such inhabitants were in our forest. A study was conducted and it was established that the «Tambov wolf» is an independent unique subspecies obtained by crossing dogs that lived near the settlements of the ancient Tambov Mordvins and wolves. Judging by the fossils, for the first time wolves appeared on the territory corresponding geographically to the Tambov region approximately 4 000 – 5 000 years ago. The oldest wolf skull found in the Tambov region is about 5,500 years old. The remains of this wolf dog aged from 5,000 to 2,500 years are often found in the northern parts of the Tambov region.

– Dad, you said that a wolf is a noble animal. But what is the nobility? My father was finishing his cigarette and looking up at the dark blue starry sky.

– Being a wolf is the ability to find your pack, define your territory, and stay in your body with full understanding of it and with pride, regardless of its perfections and limitations. This is the ability to act and speak on your own behalf, to remain vigilant and attentive, to resort to the innate forces of intuition and sensitivity, to develop with dignity and achieve maximum awareness. Did I answer your question?

– You can, so to speak. The old man's eyes flashed slyly. Without saying anything, he waited for more questions from me. But I was already far from reality. I was hooked by the words «ancient Tambov Mordvins», and the crossing of wolves and dogs.

– There is something in it.

– In what?

– Yes, nothing. Wolves and dogs, brunettes and blondes! I sang and laughed.

– The only thing I understood from our dialogue is that a woman with a dog is to blame for your strange condition. I do not know which of them is a brunette and which is a blonde, but they scared you well.

– «You're right. With an idiotic laugh, I said after my departing father.

– The first sleepless night in the parents' house. I have always slept well on my favorite couch. I considered this sofa my own, because no one else slept on it except me. The moon shone through the curtains, and despite the heat in the house, I felt chills. I wanted to get up and run to the forest, to the place where she, my wolf, was waiting for me. I thought she was an owl. I was sure that no one else had seen her. Maybe it was, but I wanted to make sure of it. I have imagined her image more than once, if it were a girl, she would be cheerful, always laughing with clockwork eyes. Of course, I would like to see this girl in human form. I did not doubt for a second that this wolf was a young girl. I could tell by her beautiful, mischievous walk. I fell asleep with these sweet thoughts.

I slept more than usual. My mother did not wake me up, she still surrounded me with parental care, as if I was not forty years old, but four years old. As soon as I left the room and appeared in the kitchen, she immediately began to set the table. The breakfast was so varied and hearty, it could even be called a gala dinner. – Mom, why such abundance?

– You tell me who she is.

– Who are you talking about?

– About your wolf.

– That is what a broken phone means. There is no wolf.

– Don't tell me if you do not want to. Eat, eat. The mother went into the room. I realized that she was offended.

– That is what it means to eavesdrop on other people's conversations. I thought, finishing a pancake with sour cream. After a delicious breakfast, I left quickly, without listening to lectures, and without letting me pack food with me.

– What happened?

– I will come back later. I have things to do. My father waved his hand. The mother was standing with her arms crossed on her chest.

– I wish I had pancakes. She squeezed out through her tears.

– Mom, do not start. Pressing on the gas, the car screeched away from the house.

I was not interested in pancakes and my parents' speculations about a certain woman with a dog who appeared in my life. I needed to find historical data about the settlement of the ancient Tambov Mordvins. Five hundred years ago. This is exactly what I need. This wolf fang is about the same time. Having crawled the Internet, I did not find anything suitable. Not a big article formed not a big essay in my concept of my hometown before the arrival of civilization: from the very beginning of Russian history until the XVII century, our region was called the Meshchersk side. He occupied the lower reaches of the Tsna and Moksha with all the small rivers flowing into them. This swampy, «koltun» polesie was inhabited in ancient times by Mordovian tribes: Moksha, Muroma, Meschera. The last two are rarely mentioned in the chronicles, but Moksha villages are found throughout the vast expanse from Oka and Tsna to Penza and Insar quite often. I realized that during the raids of the Tatars, Tambov was one big forest. There were no roads, villages, there were villages, and these villages lived near the river. Having formed a picture of ancient Tambov in my imagination, I was interested in the following question. In what century did all this happen? Transformation from a girl into a werewolf. Wondering this question, I did not notice how I believed in her transformation. That I believe in a werewolf.

CHAPTER 2

November 4. The day spent at work distracted me from the thoughts eating my human consciousness. The spirit of the forest beckoned me to visit with terrible force. I suppressed this feeling in myself, because the feeling of fear and the feeling of curiosity were uniform. I did not want to involve Mikhail in this story, considering that this story belongs only to me. Of all the above, the sense of ownership outweighed. This fantastic collision belonged only to me. The wolf, the wolf's fang, my reflection in the mirror, but most of all I was driven by a feeling of jealousy. I was afraid that my friend would squeeze into our invisible connection with my wolf. Maybe he will be able to establish contact with her ahead of me. And what if she likes him more than me. I could not bear to even think about it. I was already preparing for a fight to some extent, just not with her, but for her. My fang and my wolf. This I have firmly decided for myself.

November 5th. Evening. My trip to the forest in the middle of the week. I did not tell anyone about it. This hike, like all the subsequent ones, was no longer connected with the love of the forest, instilled in me from childhood, but with the desire to see a she-wolf. Before her appearance in my life, I loved the forest as my home, or even more at home. I cannot say that I stopped loving the forest; it just faded into the background. His inhabitant displaced him. I walked purposefully, that is the very place where we met for the first time. I was sure I would see her. After standing in the clearing for about half an hour and nervously shuffling the leaves, I waited for her appearance. But she didn't show up. Realizing that she would not come, I did not give up, and continued on my way deeper into the forest. I walked for about an hour, and I could not figure out where I was. The vanity of vanities is left behind. There was no city noise, no cars passing on the highway. Silence. Humid air. Dirty foliage underfoot. I was waiting for her. Like the first time, she crept up not noticeably. It seemed that she was walking through the air without touching the ground. Hip swaying. Pink tongue. White teeth. Grace itself. The white shaggy wool swayed with such beauty, it was like a fashion show of fur coats. I whispered. The she-wolf came close to me, stood up on her hind legs, and looked down into my eyes. Her height on her hind legs exceeded mine by three centimeters.

To be alone with a predator and look into his eyes is certainly something, and it is not a little important if this predator is a female werewolf. A small child lives in every person, when this child falls asleep, a predator wakes up. These two raging flames periodically replace each other. When the beast wakes up, he is ready to sweep away everything in his path, subsequently a person gets tired of the war and a truce comes, that is where the child wakes up, who wants to be pitied, to indulge, to attract attention to yourself. Being in the arms of a predator, I did not feel fear, I was looking for it, I came voluntarily, and I found what I was looking for. Looking into each other's eyes, we made contact. There was a close connection between us. The human eyes of the wolf-girl said that she was glad to meet, and trying to say something, she wagged her tail amiably like a dog. This time she looked like a mischievous dog. I briefly examined her adorable canine body standing on its hind legs, and from the wolf's fang, hanging from her neck could not escape my field of vision. A shot rang out. My white and fluffy friend has disappeared. – What is it? The shots continued and I had to hide in the truest sense of the word. I pressed my back against the aspen tree.

– She ran away, a wolf. I heard a man's voice swearing. What I saw horrified me. Four men in camouflage clothes were wandering through the forest. I immediately understood who they were and why they were doing it.

- «Are you hurt?» One of them shouted at me.
- No. I answered in an annoyed voice.
- «Have you seen her?» Where did she run?
- Who are you talking about?

– Buddy. Don't you know that we have a wolf in the forest and she keeps closer to people? Locals complain about the howling of wolves.

– No. I have never heard of it. And I didn't see anyone.

– We remember you. And we know your father. How is he? By an effort of will, I had to maintain a dialogue with some people who are trying to kill my white and fluffy girlfriend.

– I visited him on Sunday. They are fine.

– That is nice. Do not go that far in the meantime. First, we will catch her, and then you will go for a walk.

– «What makes you think it's her?» And is she the only wolf in the forest?

– She is too beautiful. And as research has shown, there have been no wolves in this forest since two thousand and twelve.

– Wow, what a shame. I said with a sigh.

– Do you want to be in the mouth?

– Of course not. I just feel sorry for them. A wolf is a friend.

– This is a dog friend. And no matter how much you feed the wolf, he still looks into the forest. Let us go. We will ensure your safety.

My trip to the forest was ruined. Moreover, my peace was disturbed. Now I could not live in peace knowing that my four-legged friend could be killed at any moment. I just did not expect such a turn of events. I just did not know what to do.

Trying to calm myself down, I scrolled through different options, choosing the right words. She is strong, she is brave, and most importantly, I realized that either she is not alone, or she has supernatural abilities. After all, someone tied a shoelace around her neck. I saw it clearly. Who could have done this? Either she's someone's well-groomed dog, or she is a mystical creature, and this explanation suited her much better. I distinctly remember her taking off that shoelace. He literally put himself on her fang, her jaw closed, and she seemed to disappear. Werewolf and wolf fang amulet, how to link it? Wolf and wolf fang, what does it mean? I wanted so much to ask for a friend's help, but having overcome myself, I decided to act alone.

After reading the information on the Internet, I did not find an answer to my question. From the articles I read and briefly leafed through, I realized that the wolf's fang is an ancient amulet that was used not only in Slavs. According to the description, this amulet is more male than female. Women also used it mainly in love magic, protection of the family, and their lover. The more I learned about the wolf's fang, the more I wanted to enter into an open dialogue with my wolf. I have not been in the woods for more than a week; I just did not have time. All this time I have been thinking about her, and her safety. I was interested in the only question – is she alive? Had she been murdered? Finally, having plucked up the courage, I decided to go to the forest at night. I realized that this is the only way to see her one-on-one and no one will interfere with us.

November 18. On a dark autumn night, the forest is not as beautiful as in the beautiful summer season. I would even say dangerous. The cold, the darkness, the bare trees, all this is nothing compared to the wolf coming at you. Especially when you know that, this wolf is a werewolf. The wolf came by herself, I did not have to call her and wait. We were standing alone, in a clearing not even illuminated by moonlight. Her white fur looked like a walking lamp in the shape of a dog. She was like a soft glowing toy. However, if you throw away all these charms, then I was scared, and I did not know what to expect. The question matured in my head – how are we going to talk?

There was a smell of smoke in the air. The trees surrounding the edge were enveloped in a transparent shroud, like a thin vacuum. The forest edge was surrounded by a small, barely noticeable flame of fire in the form of an outlined circle. The flame broke out by itself, despite the state of shock, I heard a quiet crackling of burning foliage and dry branches. My state of shock was subjected to even more stress when the wolf spoke to me in human language. Her voice was rough. I did not expect this. I was hoping to hear an affectionate the girl's voice. Matching her beautiful

fur. – Why did you squeeze into my space? The predator said in a dissatisfied voice. Although her amazingly intelligent and beautiful eyes shone amiably in the silence of the night.

– I did not know. I always walk here.

– That is not what I am talking about. Why did you pick up the pendant? I wanted to talk myself out of it. To make myself look innocent, but I did not argue with the predator in the night. – It is not yours. I should not have done that. Now you know my secret. Before she could finish, I interrupted her speech.

– Who are you?

– «I belong to a noble family.

– It is noticeable by your beautiful fur coat! I said with a laugh. The fear passed, and I felt equal to her. If you discard her wolfish image, then it was equivalent to sitting around the campfire in the company of her best friend. My chuckle disappeared with a sharp attack on me by my charming predator.

– Such a fur coat belongs only to my family. You will not find one like this anywhere else. Hissing through her teeth, the enraged predator uttered. This time I was seriously scared, realizing that I had shaken up the wrong thing.

– I wanted to make a compliment.

– A compliment? What is a compliment? By the accent of my interlocutor, I realized that she was not at ease with spoken speech. Only I could not figure out where this accent was coming from, from what edges.

– Where are you from?

– I am a local resident. And I'm older than you think. Do you think I am seeing you for the first time? You're wrong.

– What is your name? The wolf laughed a perky, girlish laugh. At that moment, I wanted to see her in a female form.

– «You don't have to know my name. Now you need to protect yourself from ours.

– Protect? At that moment, the flame went out. Dawn came. I did not notice how the night flew by. The wolf, waving her tail, ran away into the depths of the forest. The fairy tale is over; it is a gray, autumn day. The adventure in the night was the best ridiculous incident in my life. I was talking to a wolf.

If I had told anyone about this, I would have been recognized as crazy, including my best friend Misha. Honestly, a talking wolf is funny; my friend moved her tongue so ridiculously, trying to pronounce human words. The information received was mixed up in my head. A noble family is of course from antiquity. More than I think years. How much is interesting? Of course, it is not customary for women to ask their age, but still. The keeper of these places. So she's local. This pleased me. My compatriot! I said with pride, and went to bed. In the truest sense of the word, I fell into a dream. This time I was not overcome by insomnia or nightmares, perhaps it was because I slept during the day.

After what I had seen, of course I did not want to go to work anymore. The forest again beckoned me with its mystery, or rather its keeper. There were many questions in my head, and I could not wait to ask them. Having taken care of everything in advance, I took time off from work. I wanted to spend as many nights as possible in the forest with my wolf. After the night I spent, I considered this predator to be mine, I was sure that no one else had contact with her except me.

December 1st. December came, but the snow still did not fall, Tambov residents believed that Queen autumn had not yet ceded her rights to Queen winter, and the snow would have time to attack by the new year. At night, the edge of the young, waning moon barely illuminated the way. The dark sky and bright stars decorated the winter night. Minus five degrees, noticeably noticeable, especially in the forest. I did not feel cold, only my cheeks burned with fire. The internal heat burned my body. My blood was boiling and my body was on fire. I could not explain my condition to myself, but

I myself believed that it was from excitement before the upcoming meeting. This time I already knew where to go. Our edge was waiting for us; the sleeping trees formed a circle like stone idols. It was in this space that I felt safe. – Where is she, my beauty? The wolf crept up as always silently. Floating through the frosty foliage like a rook. She came, so she is alive. She was not killed, and that is the main thing. Her white fur fluttered in the frosty wind. Gray-green eyes shone like two sparks, looking into those eyes, I felt our souls talking. It is a pity we could not read each other's minds, at least me.

My white, shaggy friend walked around the entire edge of the forest, as if closing the circle. I could not help noticing it, but I did not know why she was doing it, and I kept watching. Sitting in the center of my circle, the wolf made a nod of her head, inviting me to sit down next to her. I obeyed her invitation and squatted down next to her. At the same moment, my legs straightened up, and I found myself in a sitting position, on a log of an old, dry tree. The forest changed its appearance, December was replaced by Indian summer, and there was a whiff of warmth. The flames of the campfire raged next to us, enveloping us with its heat. The bright orange colors of the fire reflected the color of golden leaves. I did not look back freely, trying to figure out where I was. It seemed that the forest was the same, and even some trees remained unchanged, but this was not the case. How to put it in my own words, I do not know how, but I found myself in an ancient dense forest. The swampy swamp, moss hummocks, and the thickness of the trees emphasized this.

– So it is! There was a loud laugh from my friend. Her thin nose, resembling a collie breed, convulsively imitated laughter, but it was not funny to me.

– Where am I? I yelled this question like a wild lion.

– I would not scream like that if I were you. Do not draw attention to yourself. Otherwise, you will not get out of here. And even I can't help you.

– «Even you?» I squeezed out this question with such amazement. Until recently, I thought my girlfriend was something supernatural. To some extent invincible. But, the words she uttered are «even me.» They clipped my wings. – Who are you?

– «You don't want to know yet.

– Yet?

– You ask many questions.

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