

— A FISTFUL OF —

*Short
Stories*

Mae L. Strom

This is a work of fiction. Names, anthropomorphised animal characters, places, and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is entirely coincidental.

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Content warning: Contains romance, violence, sexual imagery, and themes of predation.

(18+)

lambswool



My mother always warned me not to fall in love with wolves.

‘Don’t be fooled by their words sweeter than honey,’ she used to say. ‘Their smiles so sly, they don’t even have to dab the blood from their lips first. All the creatures of this world yearn for companionship. All creatures, save for that of the wolf. There is only one thing that wolves yearn for. It’s all they ever think about. Never let them have it. Swear to me, child...’

It’s one thing to make promises about beasts you’ve never seen before. It’s quite another to meet one in the wild. He was tall, dark and handsome, intense like a storm in a bottle. We met down at the local watering hole.

‘Is this your first time?’ the wolf asked me, surveying the menu.

I nodded. I asked him the same question, and he laughed.

He told me it was his thirteenth. ‘Don’t be afraid,’ he reassured me with a smile. ‘It’s daunting for everyone, at least at first, but it gets easier with every conquest. Once you know what really whets your appetite, why settle for anything less?’

Drinking together, we talked long into the night about our hopes, dreams, and hurts. The wolf didn’t eat a bite, but he claimed the company was delectable enough. We’d never spoken before, and yet he seemed

to know everything about me.

Before we parted ways, he invited me to dance with him in the moonlight. ‘Will I ever see you again?’ I asked him, as the evening drew to a close.

‘I’ll make sure of it,’ the wolf replied.

Over time, our feelings grew stronger. The next time we met, we shared our first kiss. In all his enthusiasm, he nicked me with a fang, and I tasted myself on his tongue for the first time. It tasted good.

The passions of one of us never failed to ignite a frenzy in the other. Before long, our kisses turned to bites, as slow, tender strokes gave way to claws. I wore the tokens of his affection under my coat, just as he wore the tokens of my affection on his. Ours was a colour too vibrant for the rest of the world to understand, as slow to fade as it was quick to stain, and so I concealed it.

But it wasn’t enough.

‘I’m dying,’ the wolf told me one night, when the moon was bright and high. ‘Slowly but surely, I’m wasting away to nothing. It’s a wolf’s lot to wither in this cruel, unrelenting pit, cursed by hungers too nuanced to satisfy, yet too urgent to renounce.’

I asked him if there was anything I could do, and he smiled like someone offered salvation.

‘Why, my dear, you might be just what I’m looking for. You see, a wolf is born with very... particular needs. Pretty words and flower crowns are good for stoking hearts, but it’s not enough to feed the flames when the rest of the body starves. One must also tend to the needs of the flesh, if one intends to tend another day, and mark my words, dearest, sweetest heart, I intend to. There’s a chasm deep inside of me, a bitter, tender ache, and you’re the only one that can help me. What say you, master of my fate?’

I told him that he could have anything he wanted, just say the word. ‘You.’

A shiver ran down my spine. The wolf melted up to me like a shadow,

placing my hand over his chest. ‘Feel this heart,’ the wolf commanded. I did so. ‘Can you feel it beating for you? Bleeding for you? Can you feel me throbbing for you? Howling for you, wild as the night? It was yours the day I met you, just as you were mine. I took you into my heart knowing the agony it would cause me, and yet I demanded nothing in return. Is it too much to ask that I might live to see tomorrow?’

I told him that it wasn’t. His heartbeat echoed my own.

‘All this time I’ve known you, I’ve resisted my true calling,’ he said to me. ‘Every moment of every day, even as I grow longer and longer in the tooth. Is it too much to ask that for a single night, you resist yours? What are you so afraid of?’

I told him that I was afraid of losing myself. He laughed.

‘My dear,’ the wolf confessed, ‘I lose myself every time you walk in the room. It’s not as scary as it seems. There were others that came before, oh yes. They were scared of losing themselves too, but what they found was so much more. Now, their hearts all beat as one, more powerful together than they ever were apart. I see you admiring the lustre of my coat, the glimmer of my fangs, the deftness of my claws. All that I am, I owe to those that loved before. So love me now, my love, and let me love you in return. Let me show you what my first twelve lovers taught me. I promise not to waste a thing.’

At that moment, my mother’s voice resounded in my head. Warnings echoed from years past, and yet the only sound to emerge was a single word, as sweet to the tongue as the wolf himself. ‘Okay.’

He lowered me onto the bed with such tenderness as I had never seen. His claws followed the contours of my body, tracing the lines we made together as he sheared me from my coat. Before long, I lay bare before him. I asked him if it was going to hurt.

‘It always hurts,’ the wolf replied. ‘But never for very long.’ Then he smiled, and kissed the rest of my worries away.

We started slow. A nibble here, a nip there, until my thighs were slick, and his snout was stained and red. As a tutor, his lessons were

numerous, and not all of them were cruel. He showed me how my body worked. I never knew how skin, so impossibly taut, could be so soft. The freckles, bumps and grooves that I'd so often overlooked became a maze we both grew lost in, only where I brushed along those sacred walls, the wolf plunged through without a second thought.

Under the light of the full moon, a wolf's hunger is endless. The less I had to give, the more he wanted.

I raised my hand to slow him down, and he inched it back to the bed like it was nothing. 'Now, now,' the wolf spoke softly in my ear, saliva dribbling down his fangs. 'You know what we agreed. It's my turn now. If the pain becomes too much, just let me know, and I'll nibble at your neck. You always used to like that, didn't you?'

Then he kissed me. For as long as I had lips, he knew I'd kiss him back, but this time, when he kissed me, I tasted only wolf.

The more he carved me out, the more I spread across the bed. Nothing escaped his attention. 'You have such beautiful fingers,' I heard him whisper. The wolf bent down to suckle them, exploring from top to bottom, only when his kisses stopped at the knuckle, so too did my fingers. The crunch was soft, like silent pads on newly fallen snow.

'That's it,' he growled, as whimpers turned to cries. 'Raise your head, my love, and let us howl the night away!'

And howl I did, as loud as any wolf, until the howl became a scream, and his fangs enclosed my throat. A final kiss, and all was said and done.

True to his word, nothing went to waste.



author's note

Thank you for reading my short story. I hope you enjoyed it.

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Until next time, stay safe, stay kind, and as always, especially during these difficult times, remember to stay hydrated!