

WOLF PACT: Dream Catchers



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CHAPTER ONE

The headlines in the Milwaukee newspapers spread terror throughout the suburbs, as well as the intercity. Three strange deaths in one year, sent tremors far and wide. Parents quit letting their children play outside, and the young men and women around the city's busy college campuses stopped walking alone after dark.

Detective Clay Brookwiler didn't have one lead to who or what was behind the three violent murders. After the first victim was discovered, the news media proclaimed: "*Marquette senior found dead.*" After the second: "*Marquette struck by 2nd grisly murder.*" When the third body was found mutilated, the national tabloids weighed in and the headlines became more sensational. The National Spotlight's lead story asked, "*Is Werewolf stalking Midwest campus?*"

Nobody in the Cossibye clan suspected any of their own might be behind the horrific murders, but the "Werewolf" headline got the attention of W. Jefferson Prescott III and his friends. Naturally, they didn't want a rogue shape-shifter or some other rabid abomination bringing unwanted attention to their secret society, which had survived for generations by spreading good deeds between the two worlds in which they walked, human and canine.

The Cossibye make up a hidden species of wolves that inhabit the northern woods of Wisconsin. They can alter their genetic makeup and shift from canine to human. For generations they shielded their existence and used their shape-shifting ability sparingly, mainly to protect their own and the lands they claimed.

Not all members of the clan possessed shape-shifting abilities. Generally, only black wolves could walk on two legs or four, and they

always shared leadership roles among the wolf packs that dotted the wooded landscape. Brown wolves shared telepathic abilities with their black counterparts and worked jointly in perpetuating and caring for their species.

The appendix, considered to be an unused organ among humans, holds the secret to the Cossibye transformation. It secretes an enzyme that triggers the species' ability to shift metabolically from canine to human. The enzyme, called *Wowasi*, comes alive when a clan member's saliva is transferred via a kiss. It is the *Wowasi* that stimulates and strengthens every organ in the Cossibye body, including the brain, heart and nervous system. It supplies some clansmen with amazing human powers.

As can be expected, the lure of the human world and its modern conveniences have caused countless members of the clan to stray. Most lived normal human lives, hiding their shape-shifting abilities from others and even spouses. No member of the Cossibye clan had ever stepped permanently into the human world and committed any crime. Male and female alike were peace-loving people.

Therefore, when Marquette student James Black, 21, was found outside his Milwaukee apartment with his throat missing on a cold February night, the clan thought little of it.

The Milwaukee Police Department, however, had never seen such a heinous crime. Black was found hanging half in and half out of his 1990 VW. He was naked and lying in a pool of his own blood. The savage tearing of his windpipe was the most gruesome sight responding officers had ever seen. Much of the gory details were withheld from the news media.

When Joclyn Jones, 32, a non-traditional student at Marquette, was found similarly murdered in a university parking lot, there was no way to suppress details. The summer slaying of a single mother made some of the national news broadcasts. Again, Brookwiler was stumped by the lack of evidence.

As fear mounted, he brought in the FBI and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, forensic experts and behavioral scientists. Nowhere was a single lead uncovered but the experienced investigator suspected, as did the news media, the two crimes were connected.

"The two murders are similar," Brookwiler told reporter Mary Wellington, "but we have no evidence to link the two, other than both

victims were students at Marquette University.”

“So, there is no reason for these students to be alarmed?” Mary asked.

“Alarmed is a dangerous word. I’d prefer to use cautious. We don’t know why either of these victims were attacked but I have every available officer working on these cases. My advice to students is the same as it always is. Marquette University is nothing like the quiet little towns many of these kids hail from. It’s located in the middle of a big city that sometimes can be violent. My advice is be alert, be a little less trusting of strangers and refrain from stupid behaviors that might put you or someone you know at risk.

“It’s the same message I offer every freshman class at Marquette. Do they listen? Some do but many don’t. Those who don’t sometimes get to spend a night in our not-so-nice jail downtown.

“As for the unfortunate Mr. Black and Ms. Jones, I urge anyone with information that might point us in a new direction and allow us to find the perpetrator of these heinous crimes to call our Tip Line immediately. Have your people run that telephone number as frequently as possible, if you would, Mary?”

Carl Louder, 25, was the third victim and a graduate student at Marquette. Like the other two victims, Louder’s throat was missing and he was found naked in the bed of a single-room apartment he rented near the campus.

Suddenly, Brookwiler had more than mild-mannered reporter Mary Wellington to deal with. Scores of print and electronic media descended on the tiny campus. “Brook,” as he was called by his friends, was unable to control press conferences. He refused to answer questions about werewolves, zombies and extra-terrestrial beings.

“Don’t be ridiculous,” he answered. “Next question.”

Friends of Marquette University offered a \$25,000 reward for information that might lead to an arrest in the cases, growing colder as each day passed without a breakthrough. The National Spotlight, sticking to its werewolf agenda, offered \$100,000 for a picture of “The Marquette Wolfman.” The bounty created a frenzy. Men with long hair and beards suddenly were being accosted throughout the city. Students were changing their appearance, trimming hair and beards to avoid having their photos taken by anyone who owned a mobile phone.

Fear brought the college community to its knees. Dean Rebecca Bradberry held a joint press conference with Brookwiler with the hopes of calming mounting fears. She announced the university was doing

everything in its power to help the MPD solve the crimes and protect students. Security was doubled, Late-night classes had been cancelled or rescheduled to earlier times and extra-curricular activities curtailed. Even the vaunted Warrior basketball team had rescheduled its games to the daylight hours to protect fans.

“We are doing everything we can to safeguard our students,” Bradberry said. “However, we will not let fear halt the flow of knowledge at this timeless institution. We mourn for the victims but remain resolute in the belief that if we stand together as a community, this evil will not continue. I’ve asked Detective Brookwiler and Campus Police Chief Chester Ross to join me today as a sign of solidarity against a common foe.”

Bradberry lifted a sign over her head the contained four words:

SEE SOMETHING
SAY SOMETHING

“You will see these signs posted across our campus and the city. All I can do is ask everyone out there listening to heed the message. Together we can bring an end to this madness.”

Bradberry, Brookwiler and Ross refused to answer any questions from the press because they could provide few answers. And the questions were becoming more outlandish as time passed. One far-right publication suggested the murders marked the beginning of the end of times. Rapture undeniably hovered on the horizon, and all men should repent, the publication concluded.

When the frenzy reached the dark woods of the Wisconsin Northwoods, the Cossibye Elders became concerned, too. An army of hunters were deployed when a wealthy Marquette alumnus offered a heavy reward for wolf pelts. Gunshots echoed from the Illinois border to as far north as Green Bay. Dozens of wolves were being slain every day.



CHAPTER TWO

New father W. Jefferson Prescott III, wealthy millionaire and leader of the Cossibye clan's New Order, had been watching the drama unfold on television. He was not only concerned but angered when he learned of the bounty placed on canine hides.

Jefferson was the product of a revered Cossibye mother and a human father. Unaware of his mother's shape-shifting abilities, the only son of Mary (*Miakota*) and Jefferson Prescott, had been ordained as the leader of the Cossibye Nation. Unlike clansman of the past, the New Order was populated by a mixed species, offspring of human fathers and canine mothers. The fact most were raised predominantly in the human world, provided uncanny wisdom and new vitality to the secret society.

Having buried both of his parents, Prescott did not learn of his Cossibye origin until his twenty-fifth birthday. When the truth of his ancestry was revealed and he took his first steps on canine paws, he was forever enlightened and transformed. He accepted his new role as leader of the New Order and was charged with helping his companions become accustomed to living full-time in the human world. That was not difficult, because the Prescott fortune provided a huge residence and innumerable luxuries to help their transition be as easy as possible.

However, Prescott wealth could not keep the small group of changelings safe from outside dangers. While each member of the New Order possessed unique abilities society would consider super-human, they remained as vulnerable as any Wisconsin resident. So, they spent long hours at the huge Prescott compound, a place where young and old alike were free to run as wolf or human and hone their unique skills.

They generally socialized as a group and often took on challenges

under the guise of Prescott Security Services, a private investigative agency created to unravel mysteries, solve crimes and ease public unrest.

In light of the mounting mayhem at Marquette University, Jefferson called a meeting of his closest consorts – Sebastian (Sebby) and Scheherazade (Sherry) McKenzie, Arena Regina (Reeny) Wolfe, Michael Mangas Walker and Thomas Woodley.

“I’m sure you all are aware of the carnage that has taken place in Milwaukee over the last nine months.”

“The news media is going crazy over these killings,” Thomas interjected. Woodley was Jefferson’s best friend and caretaker of Prescott’s vast holdings north of Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

“I’ve seen some of the reports on television,” Sebby said.

“How can you miss them,” Sherry added. “They constantly are interrupting regular programming with updates and warnings.”

“Marquette is eighty miles from here,” Michael said. “What has you worried?”

“The National Spotlight has created a frenzy over a werewolf stalking the campus. As a result, a rich Marquette grad has put a bounty on wolf hides. Hunters are taking to the Wisconsin woods and shooting anything that moves.

“We all must be a little more careful, especially your children, Michael. As they become comfortable with their second skin, they also must be aware of this new danger. While ‘No Trespassing’ signs are posted around the perimeter of the property, we remain vulnerable to greedy hunters and trappers.”

“I agree and have spoken to the children. I have forbidden them to wander too far from the house,” Michael replied.

“We both know that is going to be hard to do, Michael,” Sherry added. “They are free spirits, like their father. They love to run on all fours, just as we all do. Like Jefferson. I’m worried.”

“Perhaps it is time for Prescott Securities to step in and see what we can learn of this supposed Wolfman of Marquette?” Sebby said. He was a major force behind the investigative team. He was a natural sleuth. His skills and determination had never failed to produce a positive outcome. Michael provided muscle and force, while Shery was always willing to go undercover in order to use her feminine guiles to disclose sinister plots.

“I agree,” said Jefferson. “But first we must make absolutely sure

this property is safe. We deployed motion-detecting cameras around the perimeter when Danny Joe Wilson posed a threat. I'd like to add another enhancement if we can, Thomas."

"What do you want?"

"Can you use your technical skills to connect the cameras to an alarm system that will sound loudly anytime our perimeter is compromised. I want a horn to warn any hunters or trappers they are on private property. It also will notify us immediately of any invasion."

"I think it's a great idea and no problem to add to the system," Thomas said. "Give me a day to gather the parts and another day for installation and the system will be in place."

"I don't believe in the Wolfman of Marquette, but something or someone is out there wreaking havoc around that campus. I know anything is possible, though. Watching the lot of you shift from human to wolf still takes my breath away."

Thomas was the only member of the Prescott inner circle who did not have Cossibye blood running through his veins. He and Jefferson grew up together. Woodley's father was caretaker of Prescott holdings when Jefferson was a boy. Thus, the two became inseparable and remained so throughout their adult lives.

"The sooner the alarm system is in place, the better," Reeny said. "If anything happened to little Jeffery or the other children, I would not forgive myself."

Reeny, known as *Aponi* in the canine domain, had a human father and was raised in the shadows alongside Jefferson. She had been assigned by the Elders to be his guardian. It was she who informed him of his Cossibye destiny several years ago. Today, she was his wife and mother of their only child, one-year-old Jeffery.

"Since we all agree, let's move forward on both fronts, Thomas with the alarm system and Seby with initiating an investigation into these senseless murders," Jefferson stated. "Michael, I presume we will be calling on your knowledge of Milwaukee and military know-how to support the investigation."

"No problem," he said.

"What about me?" Sherry added, batting her eyelashes and shaking her sizeable bosom to get the men's attention. "I have a pretty unique set of skills, too."

Michael kissed her on the cheek and said, "I wouldn't dare leave you behind, darling."

Like the rest of the New Order, Cossibye blood ran hot through Michael's veins. He was the descendent of a mighty Native American war chief, an ex-Army Wolverine and single father of two children. Single-parenthood was both burden and blessing. Cindy and Jason had been adopted by the clan eighteen months ago when they were rescued from their mother's abusive boyfriend, Danny Joe Wilson. Wilson was a serial killer the New Order helped bring to justice with Michael's assistance.

Walker was a member of a covert Army squadron of shape-shifters that took orders directly from the President of the United States. He fled their clandestine training facility when he learned his children were in danger. He never returned to the military, remaining AWOL and a military fugitive. Nonetheless, he was a beloved member of the Prescott household.

"Put a plan together that will bring an end to this craziness ASAP," Jefferson ordered.

* * *

TWO DAYS LATER the enhanced alarm system was in place, and the Prescott Security team, composed of Sebby, Sherry and Michael, were en route to Milwaukee.

As per Jefferson's instruction, their first contact was Harry Bobco, special agent for the Milwaukee Office of the FBI.

Bobco told them everything he knew about the case, which wasn't much because he had only consulted with the MPD.

"Whatever or whoever – male or female -- is preying on Marquette students is unlike anything I have seen in my years of law enforcement," Bobco admitted.

"You said man or woman. Do you think a woman could commit such heinous acts of violence?" Sherry asked, flashing a seductive smile in order to ensure an answer.

"I don't know what to think," Bobco replied. "Devil worship. Witchcraft. Cult influences. I've ruled out neither man nor beast, male nor female."

"You are not believing this 'Wolfman' theory, are you?" Sebby asked. "There has to be another explanation."

"No, of course not. Whether human or demon, this perp is vicious. I wouldn't face this murderer without a high-powered weapon pointed directly at his or her heart and plenty of bullets. This is savagery beyond

comprehension. If you plan to involve yourselves in this case, be very careful and be well-armed.”

“We don’t believe in firearms,” Sebby said.

“Then, go back home where you will be much safer.”

“We’re not going to do that before we take a closer look. If we can do anything to bring an end to this violence, we will. Thank you for your help,” McKenzie said.

Bobco had told no one of the letters he received from Danny Joe Wilson, who was being evaluated for his mental competence to stand trial. Nobody questioned his attorney’s request for the evaluation because Wilson’s killing spree had claimed seven victims, each killed for no apparent reason.

A secondary cause for Wilson’s evaluation was the proclamation a pack of wolves lured him to the Prescott Estate, where he was apprehended. He claimed the leader of the pack was a shape-shifter who could stand as man or wolf. He had bulging muscles and flaming red eyes, the outdoorsman proclaimed.

Regardless, Wilson faced a death sentence if he stood trial. If he was unfit to mount his own defense, he would most likely spend the rest of his life in a mental institution. So, the outcome of his evaluation was critical.

Wilson’s letters were a blatant effort to find leniency, as exemplified in the most recent communique:

*Agent Bobco,
I can identify the Marquette Wolfman. I saw the viciousness in his eyes when he attacked me. I was an unarmed man who was accosted by a canine army, commanded by Jefferson Prescott and his friends. Convince the Attorney General to take the death sentence off the board, and I will lead you right to him.*

Danny Joe Wilson

P.S. I’m no more insane than you are, Agent Bobco.

When the Prescott investigators left Bobco’s office, he couldn’t help but wonder why they were involving themselves in the case. Could

there be more to Danny Joe Wilson's claim than meets the eye? While he had developed a friendship with Prescott, he knew nothing of the friends who seemed to surround the likeable millionaire at all times. He decided it might be a good idea to look into the brother and sister's background when things slowed down.

