

Wolves Paranormal Romance

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Wolves

Paranormal romance

By

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The

Black Wolf's Mark

By

Pet Torres

Book 1

Of the Black Wolf's Mark Series

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Dedicated

To my parents

To my sisters

To my nephews

Acknowledgments

To my dear readers

Antichrisis band

I got enthusiastic about its music.

“The black wolf’s curse awakes every time that a full moon points in the middle of the sky.”

The black wolf’s mark; Pet Torres

Synopsis

When the seventh male son from a same family is born, it occurs ‘the black wolf curse’ over this child.

And this baby must be sacrificed for the good of all humanity.

Or the black beast will awake after 277 full moons.

Prologue

The black wolf legend began millions of years ago and has extended from generation to generation among divers villages.

One of the better known legends is the black wolf’s mark. That occurred at the time of the birth of a little boy, the youngest child among seven brothers.

Every time that this occurred, the child’s death followed right after his birth.

Map

Chapter 1

Vistancia Village

A mother has given birth to her seventh male son and as soon as he is born she is hindered from breast-feeding or suckling.

However, that woman cries as soon as several men from her village arrive and take the child from her arms.

“MY SON, NO! NO!”

She cries losing her self-control and her husband hugs her with zeal and says.

“Darling, we cannot stay with this child.”

“He is our son!” she insists, fearing to lost her son forever. She gazed down at her son’s face and perceived she loved him so much. He was a part of her and she should try to save him from harm.

“He is cursed!” her husband insists and makes plane his wife’s hair.

With that the little boy that ended up coming to light is carried to a house in the village where a group of ten men are waiting for him.

“Here he is,” a grizzled haired man says, bringing the little boy in his arms.

“Give an end to this child’s life! He cannot remain among us,” the village leader orders while he verifies the state of the child. “But first of all, he needs to be marked.”

They take the child to the outside of the house and they walk to a lit bonfire. The village leader holds a steel stick and brings the lance’s tip into red - hot fire. After some time he pulls the lance and walks in the direction of the grizzled haired man, who is holding the child.

“Turn him around!” the leader orders him.

Then the man turns the child onto his belly and his delicate lung is exposed to the elements, because the child is rolled up in an old cloth.

And the entire village listens to the boy crying after the leader leans the hot lance against his left lung and marks him with the wolf symbol.

The mother of the boy hugs her husband as soon as she feels and listens to her son's crying and she cannot do anything to save him.

At that moment, the boy is carried by the grizzled haired man, who is assigned a duty to eliminate the boy some distance from the village.

The man walks with the child to the edge of a river and his most important function is to throw that boy into the river's dark water.

His death is inevitable.

But before he has the courage to do so, he holds the child as if it was his own son and a guilty feeling torments him. Then the gray haired man gazes in front at a piece of wood and suddenly he has an idea.

"I'll leave his life to destiny's account," he says gazing at the child that is fastened on to the piece of wood.

"If you survive this it is because destiny wishes you to remain in this world."

After those words the man holds the wood with the child and places it carefully into the river's water.

The river's dark water continues to flow taking away the wood and also the child to an uncertain destiny.

"Your luck is cast, boy!" the man says still gazing at the boy that is moving ever more into the distance with the help of the river's little waves.

Chapter 2

21 years later

"He is coming back! He is near!"

Amarilis exclaims while she runs from side to side keeping her hands on the house walls. She really fears her own visions. Something terrible is to take place and she cannot do anything to hold back it.

Her aunt holds her and she looks for refuge in her arms as Amarilis insists. Her voice sounds trembling.

"He is coming back, aunt! I can feel it!"

"Feel what, my dear?" she questions and kisses the long black hair of her blind niece. Lira fears her

niece is having hallucinations.

But Amarilis is resolute.

“He is coming back.”

“Amarilis is going crazy!” her cousin Norton says while he turns a water can into his mouth. He looks so little troubled about her.

“Norton, believe me!” Amarilis insists, even though she cannot see her cousin. Nevertheless she glances in his direction.

“Only one who is crazy believes in a blind girl,” the dark haired youth says and leaves his house.

Lyra patiently walks her niece to a seat in the living room and she with composure sits at her side. The girl, with her black hair and white eyes, fixes her gaze in a particular direction while her aunt caresses her long black hair again. That way asking her.

“Now, tell me, who is coming back?”

Amarilis fixes her blind eyes in one direction and answers back.

“THE BLACK WOLF.”

Chapter 3

Three days later

The village receives new workers to extract minerals in the region and adjacent areas there and due to this the village begins to receive new dwellers in that place. These dwellers have children, girls, women, old men and boys, that is, every man has brought his family.

Among them is a boy in dark clothes and he is carrying a bundle of clothes. However, he looks alone while he walks among the crowd of people.

Minutes later he gets a lodging to dwell in while he stays in that village. That is, he'll share a house with more than twenty men, some of them are his age and others are older than him.

He decides to take a stroll by the village to try to get to know the place. He sees several people entering a tavern and he asks for the same as the others, a red wine mug. He sits down at a wooden table.

By his side are some men drinking and talking. But that same boy is not yet able to go out of his place and try to make friends.

When he leans his mug against the table he feels someone sit down on the other side of his table. He glances up and sees a boy about his age also holding a red wine mug.

"Hello!" The dark haired youth says.

"Hello!" He also says.

But the young man insists, trying to prolongate the subject. He looks quite curious to know more about the foreigner. "I see you are new here in this village."

Almost immediately Zidane responds, sounding to be educated. "I ended up getting here after a long journey."

"Welcome to our village!"

"Thanks!" in a little while he drinks more from his wine mug and glances away.

"My name is Norton." Friendly he persists and shows a little smile in his lips.

"Zidane."

Before long Norton starts saying. "Well, Zidane, I think we can be very good friends." He smiles again and drinks his wine after his words.

Zidane shakes his head positively and drinks his wine too. He imagines Norton looks like a good young man that he can believe in. Norton is the first person that looks for his friendship in that place.

Serenely, the two youths walk through the village and Zidane observes the houses with their doors marked with a circle and an x.

The foreign youth is not able to control his curiosity and asks his new friend, "What are these designs on the house doors?"

"Don't you know the black wolf legend?" Norton says raising his eyebrows at his new friend.

"BLACK WOLF LEGEND?" His eyebrows move over his forehead. Really Zidane looks quite surprised at his terms.

Soon Norton starts explaining his new friend with wise words. "The black wolf legend goes through the villages in the entire world. And due to this, people here seek to be secure from this legendary creature through certain rules.

"I already heard talk about wolves but I confess I don't believe in this foolishnesses." Zidane says shaking his head and gazes down at his own dark top boots.

After that, Norton puts his hand on his friend's shoulder and advises him. Norton had paid attention to that legend since he was child.

"Believe me friend, wolves exist and they can be nearer to us than we imagine, truly."

Chapter 4

At nightfall, Norton takes his friend to his house after asking him to have dinner at his home and meet his unique family.

The two youths are walking in the direction of Norton's house, but before they arrive at the front door, a female voice says from the inside the house, "He is coming!"

Amarilis runs to the door and pushes it with her own body. She also fastens her dark nails up on the door wood trying to impede its opening.

"Aunt, don't let him enter!"

Her aunt makes a grimace as she looks at her niece pushed up against the door.

"Amarilis, no one is coming here."

"He ended up coming here!" the young blind woman affirms still behind the door, she starts to breathe hardly in panic.

Lyra abandons the plates on the dining table as soon as she hears knocking from outside the door.

Soon she walks toward the door and holds her niece's arms.

"Who is it?"

"Mother, it's me."

"Amarilis, it is your cousin," she says glancing at Amarilis's face, her anxiety alleviated.

"He is not alone."

The dark haired young woman becomes alert to the noises behind the door. Lyra pulls Amarilis by the arm and takes her away from the door.

"Your cousin needs to come in."

The door is opened and Lyra sees her son standing next to a boy with dark hair and ruddy skin. However, she is amazed at her niece's insistence that she felt somebody was in the company of her cousin Norton.

“Mother, this is my new friend Zidane.”

“Hello, I am ☐ Lyra.”

She raises her hand and the boy holds it strongly.

“Happy to meet you, Madam.”

“Please come in!” says Lyra using her hand to guide the two boys inside.

They enter into the house and Zidane gazes at the lass in a long black dress with her dark hair and white eyes. She is standing in the middle of the living room.

Amarilis senses every movement of the boy and at that moment she has a vision of a little boy being marked on his back with an iron lance.

She glances frightened to all sides, at the roof and also at the ground.

And her cousin approaches her with his friend and says in exultation, “This is my cousin Amarilis.”

“It's him!” Amarilis shouts and she runs to her bedroom, but her body slams against a cabinet in the house and throws down some objects.

Lyra goes after her niece and Norton stares at his friend with bashfulness after the savage attitude of his cousin before his guest.

“Pardon Zidane, I forgot to inform you that my cousin is ☐ blind.”

“I understand,” Zidane says after he has looked at the ground, trying to comprehend the unusual attitude of the young woman. He has never seen anyone behave like that before, acting as if he were a ferocious dog.

However, despite this initial awkward moment, the three dine in Amarilis's absence. The young woman refuses to dine with the unexpected house guest. She prefers to remain locked in her humble bedroom.

Lyra asks the boy many questions during dinner and he looks well disposed to answer all of them.

After dinner, Zidane takes his leave from his friend's home; after all he didn't feel well during the entire dinner, as he was imagining that the blind female cousin of his friend refused dinner because she objected to his presence.

The two boys step out of the house by the front door and they stop just outside the house.

“I thank you for dinner.” Zidane finally expresses gratitude while he rests his hands on his waist.

“I offer my apologies to you once again for my cousin's discourteousness.” Norton says after that.

“Don't worry, I am not annoyed.” Zidane tries to look normal, but he feels disturbed about it.

"But you were troubled."

"Oh, I confess I have never been received this way, being treated like a ferine." Zidane declares.

"My cousin Amarilis, over and above being blind also gets hallucinations, you know!"

At this instant, Zidane glances at his friend house's side and sees the white eyes of the young blind woman through the window.

Even though he knows she is completely blind he still feels she can see him in some way. Then he comes back to face his friend and says to him,

"I am going home! I'll see you tomorrow."

"Good night, friend."

"Good night."

The youth in dark clothes walks away and his friend enters his home again. But Zidane's thoughts remain imprisoned to Amarilis's image at the window.

Chapter 5

Fire festival

Every year a great event called a fire festival occurs in the village. The town people use this feast to celebrate the winter's arrival.

The village's dwellers celebrate this day with lively music, folk dance, food and drink.

Several bonfires are also lit on all sides of the village.

The full moon adorns the sky for the revelers.

Zidane is seated on a stone beside his friend Norton and both are holding a red wine mug. They observe the people around them drinking, talking and dancing around the bonfire.

"Don't you want to dance with the people?" Norton asks his friend.

"No, I don't. I prefer to stay far, looking at people having fun for me."

"Well, then in that case I'll have to abandon you for some time. I'll dance near the village girls."

Norton rises from the stone and walks from front to back, "I think you should do the same."

"If I itch to dance □ keep calm, I'll look for you." Zidane mocks in a good temper as he keeps his gaze in Norton's direction.

"All right, just don't spend the entire night trying to decide."

The boy turns his back and walks away.

Zidane stays far from people for some time. He thinks of his family, whom he doesn't know. And he also thinks of his new life in the village. The new friends and companions he has already made there.

He gazes at the full moon in the sky again and he feels something familiar rising inside him. After some time, he glances at a bonfire on the other side of the village. The area around this bonfire is empty because there is only one person standing before it, a young woman standing with her back to him, with her long black dress and dark hair.

"FIRE! FIRE! DANGER!"

Zidane hears these words that come out of the mouth of the dark haired young woman, while he approaches her carefully. After all he already knows a little about the girl's temperament.

"DANGER!"

She says and glances back, but she doesn't see the friend of her cousin before her holding only a wine mug, but she senses his presence before her.

"You!" she exclaims turning her white eyes from side to side and Zidane remains gazing surprised at her delicate face.

"How do you know it's me?" immediately he says staring at her face over again.

"I can smell your scent," she answers thunderstruck and her hands reach out but touching nothingness.

The boy approaches more and the young woman tries to run away, but he catches her arm and he impedes her from going away.

"I don't want to do any harm to you," he confesses gazing at the girl's scared countenance.

Nevertheless, she remains immobile for a time and she whispers in a low voice,

"FIRE! WOLF!"

Zidane wrinkles up his brows and compresses his lips trying to understand what she wants to say with those loose words.

"Fire? □ Wolf?" He insists, "What do you want to tell me with this?"

Amarilis shakes her head from side to side and doesn't answer him, but Zidane senses she wants to say something important with that.

At last, she gets to take her arm out of the boy's hand and she runs away frightened of him. She disappears into the midst of people that are dancing around another bonfire.

Chapter 6

The majority of the village men are returning from their jobs in the forest. The majority of them are going straight to the tavern with the intention of alleviating their stress from an arduous days work with a good dose of red wine.

As always, Norton sits down at a table with his friend Zidane.

"What happened to you?" Norton asks his friend as he perceives he is with his head down all the time.

"I am suspicious of something." Finally Zidane says him and scratches his chin for some instants.

"Tell me what!" Norton insists and gazes up at Zidane's face.

"Your cousin says words that I can't get out of my mind." He confesses and glances away. Zidane looks really intimidated by Amarilis's words.

Nevertheless Norton stares at him with apprehension. "What did Amarilis say to you this time? Where did you meet her?"

"I approached her last night, she continually said □ Fire! Wolf!"

Norton shakes his head and twirls his wine mug over the table and says, "Amarilis is not normal."

Zidane raises his head and stares at the face of his friend and Norton continues talking. "Besides being blind she is a witch."

"Witch?" Zidane's voice sounded surprised and he stares at his friend and his lips pressed together in a firm line.

Zidane stared at Norton as he explained. "Therefore she was born blind."

Before long Zidane shook his head, grimacing at this instant, "Wait a moment! Explain to me the entire story!"

Norton takes a gulp of wine and looks at his friend and begins to relate the story from the

beginning.

"Amarilis was born blind, and all the people in the village believe she was born this way because she is a witch."

"That is absurd!" Zidane says shaking his head.

"But she is a witch because her mother was also a witch."

"Then that's why she has that strange behavior," Zidane concludes, looking at the table's dark wood.

"The worst in all this, you don't know yet."

Zidane stares into his friend's eyes hoping he will tell him the worst part of the story.

"Amarilis is condemned to die in the prime of her life."

"How so 'condemned to die'?" he crosses his arms in front of his chest and his eyes seemed to get a little bit darker. Zidane looked confused at all.

"She'll be burned as soon as she comes of age."

Zidane's gaze widens as he listens to the words of his friend that is weaving the story.

"Won't you and your mother do anything to prevent this?"

"We cannot do anything; the people in this village are still generous to her because she is blind. If it was not for that, she would have been dead a long time ago."

"She is a defenseless person. What harm would she do to anyone? The poor girl is blind!" his voice echoed with indignation and repulse.

"The people here don't see her as a poor blind girl, but as a witch."

"She doesn't deserve to die this way □ I feel she is a good person."

"And she is, but her destiny is traced with fire and we cannot change that."

Norton shows himself to be realistic.

"Then, that's the reason why she says the word 'fire' all the time."

"She does not know this yet, that she'll be burned by fire. My mother and I feel it's better to spare her from this suffering."

"You need to spare her from this stupid death too. She does not deserve this sad end."

Zidane drinks the rest of his wine and strongly thumps his mug over the table as if he is giving a final point on the death sentence of the poor blind woman.

"Nothing can be done □ she'll face her death like her mother did."

Chapter 7

One afternoon, Zidane is walking by the village and some children are playing outside of their homes.

He observes the children for a time and after that he looks in front and sees Amarilis coming, walking slowly trying to feel the ground with her own feet. The children stop playing and they look at the witch that is approaching with some flowers that she brings from the prairie. Then a rain of stone falls over the young woman because the children throw all the objects that they see straight ahead against the blind girl.

“BLIND WITCH!”

Zidane runs up to the girl and protects her from the stones and wood pieces that the children throw towards her.

“Stop it!” he shouts annoyed. “Go into your homes!”

The children run desperate to enter their houses. And Amarilis glances at all sides, trying to calm herself from the fright she just received.

Zidane touches the afflicted face of the young woman and asks gently, “Are you okay?”

She holds his hand with all her strength and answers, “I think so, yes.”

“Come, I’ll escort you back to your home.” He holds the blind girl’s arm and she continues holding her flowers. Zidane perceives her face is like an angel’s.

He leaves her in front of her door and she gazes in the direction of the boy. For an instant he thinks she can really see him with her white eyes. He feels sorry for the girl when his mind remembers about the stupid death sentence hanging over her head.

He looks at the ground and his throat makes a strange noise while his hands go into the pockets of his dark pants. He thinks he looks confused before her.

“I find you can confide in me now.”

The witch’s white eyes become anxious and at that moment her head seeks the direction of his voice before her. And she sees in her mind a great black wolf, with his pointed teeth, coming in her direction, trying to devour her.

“The beast is coming!” She exclaims startled and enters into her house slamming the door shut. Zidane squeezes his dark eyes at the same moment the door slams shut. He turns his back and

walks in the direction of the village's main avenue.

Chapter 8

"I feel myself a monster every time I am in front of Amarilis." Zidane says in loud voice while he walks by the forest near the village. His mind is a little hazy after the excessive wine doses he put into his body.

He sits down on a dry grass thicket and gazes at the nebulous sky and also at the first quarter of the moon. Once again he feels a familiar sensation move through him as he looks at the moon. His thoughts are divided between the moon and Amarilis.

"Why do I frighten her so much?"

His voice sounds loud again.

"I have never wounded her □ I just want to help her."

After some time, he ends up falling asleep on the grass and next to him is his red wine mug. He is very lucky because his mug is completely empty. If not he would have spotted his own clothes with red wine.

Zidane squeezes his eyes two or three times after he is forced to awaken from his deep sleep as he lies on the grass thicket. Suddenly his body feels the delicate hands of a woman caressing him lightly from waist down.

"It is time to wake up," she says with her gentle voice like the swing of a plume.

He stares at the face of the young woman with her black hair and white eyes and then he asks her very surprised, "You! What are you doing here?"

Amarilis' hands pass lightly over his belly and go in the direction of his powerful chest, while he stares at her. He looks quite stunned seeing her seated at his side in her long black dress.

"This is the time for you to awaken this beast that exists within you."

Zidane's heart begins to speed up more and more as soon as he opens his dark eyes and faces the nebulous sky above. He raises his head, gazes in the direction of his feet and realizes he is lying on the grass and Amarilis is not present in that place. It must have been a strange dream.

Perhaps he has dreamed of the young woman because he fell asleep thinking of the moon and

also her fate. He feels intrigued, however, at the last phrase that was uttered by the girl, 'It is time for you to awaken this beast that exists within you.'

Chapter 9

Mrs. Lyra is startled by two knocks on her front door. She walks in the direction of the door and opens it. However, she is surprised at the unexpected presence of her son's friend.

"Good evening, Mrs. Lyra."

"Good evening, my son is not here," she says quickly, gazing on Zidane's Face.

"I didn't come to talk to him." In next to no time Zidane declares and turns his gaze aside.

Lyra frowns at him asking herself – "why is he here then?"

"In fact, I came to talk to your niece."

"Well, □ Amarilis already is lying down."

"Excuse me, I will come back tomorrow."

Zidane says and tries to turn his back to leave. But something prevents him from doing that.

"I am up."

A female voice comes from behind Lyra. Then she glances over her shoulder and sees her niece and says, "I thought you were sleeping."

"I cannot sleep," the young woman says keeping her hands on the house walls.

Zidane enters the house after Lyra asks him to come inside and she walks to other room leaving the two youths alone to talk.

"I beg your pardon! I came here and disturbed your sleep □"

"You didn't disturb my sleep because I was already awake."

"Amarilis, I confess I am deeply impressed by things you have told me."

The witch is seated by the side of the boy on an old straw chair.

"What more do you know about me?" He asks her, holding the girl's right hand. She feels his despair through the touch of his hands.

"I see much fire!"

"Just fire?" he insists.

She gazes at the walls and continues saying as she feels Zidane at her side.

"I see a black wolf."

Immediately He frees the young woman's hand and asks her then, "Black wolf?"

Carefully Amarilis touches her fingers on the boy's face and tries to warn him. Her blind eyes move from side to side.

"You run, danger!"

"What danger?" he insists, gazing at her sweet countenance.

"I don't know □ but you are in danger."

At this moment Norton enters the house and Amarilis takes her hand away from the boy's face before her cousin can see.

"Zidane! You're here!"

"I came to talk to your cousin."

Norton lifts up his eyebrows and walks in the direction of the two of them. Amarilis senses her cousin approaching just by the sound of his accelerated footsteps over the floor. And her male cousin kisses on top of her head.

"I don't want to disturb your conversation."

"We already said everything we needed to say – I am going to my bed now."

Amarilis says and rises slowly from the couch. Zidane tries to help her but she refuses his help, saying to him, "Don't worry about me □ I know how to do this perfectly."

The young woman rises and moves in the direction of her bedroom and leaves them in the living room. Zidane's vigilant gaze follows the slow movements of the blind girl.

Norton perceives the careful gaze of his friend over his cousin and he asks him,

"Zidane, are you interested by my cousin?"

Zidane stares at his friend's face and he shakes his head before he answers him.

"Absolutely not."

He looks at the ground and tries to explain to him.

"I just feel sorry for your cousin."

"It's too bad, as you already know Amarilis has little time left. I wouldn't enjoy seeing a friend

mine suffering for love.”

“And what if your cousin lives despite her impending fate?”

“Not even by a miracle can this be possible.”

Zidane remains silent and Norton remembers something.

“There is a feast in the tavern – let’s go there?”

Norton passes through the tavern’s main door side by side with his friend Zidane. Both of them see a crowd of people in that place. Men are raising their wine mugs beside some women with few clothes on and some of them have their breasts uncovered.

Norton and Zidane raise their eyebrows surprised at the stunning beauty of these women.

“This here today is a flower-garden!” Norton jokes. Zidane agrees giving him a modest smile and they walk discreetly to a table, sit on two wooden chairs and ask for drinks.

The two boys gaze in the direction of two women that are on the other side leaning on a counter. They smile at the two boys and Norton makes a sign with his forefinger inviting them to his table.

After some time, Norton and Zidane ask for more wine and something for them to eat in the company of the two women both of them have long hair and they are dressed in odalisque clothes.

02:45 am, they leave the tavern and Norton and Zidane still accompanied by the two women, go to an empty barn where there is just dry grass and several wood pieces that are piled up in a corner.

However, Norton hugs a woman and they walk to the other side of the barn, while Zidane and the another woman remain where they are.

The woman begins to get rid of what few clothes she has as soon as she sees herself alone with the boy. Zidane approaches bit by bit, enchanted by the hallucinatory beauty of the female with long dark hair.

His hands touch the pair of voluptuous breasts of his female companion, while his lips pass lightly over her neck making her breathe heavily.

At last she feels the hands of her partner around her waist pulling her close and he devours her with a scorching kiss. Their undressed bodies completely meld together over the dry grass.

Hours and hours pass and they remain insatiable in their carnal desires, their unique witness is the full moon peering through an open window.

Towards the end of their sexual encounter, Zidane rests his body on his partner’s and she lightly passes her hands over his back and he receives some tender kisses along his neck and also his ear.

Suddenly the woman is surprised as her gaze falls on a mark on the boy's back, a dark design over his left lung.

"What's this on your back?" she asks.

"Nothing interesting, it is just a mark."

"One mark? I want to see it!"

She makes the boy turn his back to her and she slides her fingers over the enigmatic design.

"What does this signify?"

"I don't know. I just know I've had it from the time I was a child."

"I have never seen this symbol before." She gazes more intently at the figure, "It seems that there are numbers."

"277." Zidane says immediately.

"That's it!"

"Perhaps I am the property of someone." He turns to the woman and pulls her to him. Their eyes meet as he declares. "Of some woman."

"Umm, this is interesting!" she says bringing her lips to his.

"Who knows, maybe I marked you many years ago and I don't remember it."

She jokes and he shuts her up with another voracious kiss.

Chapter 10

Zidane walks slowly by the florist and the dense bush is as high as the thickness of his dark top boots. But that doesn't hinder him from following the path ahead and going beside that green place.

Later on, he reaches a lawn with some flowers of several different colors. He stops before a mirage he didn't expect to see, not there, in the middle of the jungle.

His sight goes slowly from the shoeless feet, a long black skirt, and also a familiar face whose eyes are closed and her long black hair is scattered over the grass.

He walks five more steps towards her and the young woman opens her eyes, however, she remains lying on the ground with her arms open from side to side.

Her blindness impedes her from seeing who is approaching, but it doesn't impede her from

feeling his unmistakable presence.

"I know you are here." She says looking at the sky so completely blue, even though she cannot see it.

"It impresses me how you're able to walk up to here □"

"Without being able to see."

She completes the boy's words, however, he shuts up and she continues talking.

"I know the road well."

Zidane sits down beside the young woman's body and she immediately sits up too and they gaze in the same direction, that is, in front.

"There is a female fragrance on your body," she says innocently.

However, Zidane wrinkles up his brows, bites his lips and scratches his nape after the shameful comment of the young witch.

"Answer me one thing," he says after that.

She continues looking in front, waiting to hear the boy's question.

"By any chance have you had a vision about me last night or today?"

She senses the young man's embarrassment through his voice.

"No, I haven't. I slept the entire night."

She answers honestly and he breathes a sigh of relief. Zidane reflects he doesn't know why he didn't want Amarilis to imagine him in bed with a woman.

"That is very good." He murmurs in a low voice.

"Who is she? Your sweetheart?" She persists.

Zidane glances at the profiled face of the girl and his head shakes negatively.

"No, she is just –." He looks confused at all.

"A female dancer," she finishes.

"How do you know?" he asks surprised.

"Norton loves going out with female dancers and they have this same smell."

Zidane smiles delicately and looks up at the blue sky and says, "Your wisdom impresses me."

"I find that my wisdom rewards my physical deficiency."

"Perhaps your blindness makes you a special person."

“When I was a child, I had difficulty understanding this □ I found it is not correct that I cannot see people, nature, the sun, the moon, the stars and everything that is beautiful in this world.

“You don’t see with the human eyes, but you see with the eyes of the soul and this is surprising.”

He holds her chin and makes her gaze in the direction of his face and she feels his breath against her face.

“Gazing into your eyes, sometimes I feel as if you can really see me,” he says gazing into the white eyes of the blind girl.

She quickly pulls his hand from her chin and she turns her face to the other side and adds, “Please, never touch me again.”

“Why?”

She has embarrassed him again.

“Your energy doesn’t make me feel good.”

“Why?” He insists not convinced by her weak answer. Zidane tries to fix his eyes on Amarilis’s blind eyes. He feels very well gazing in them.

“I feel shivers – shudders,” she confesses.

He smiles knowingly, already understanding the reactions of Amarilis’s body.

“Okay,” he agrees. “I’ll touch you no more.”

They remain a long time in silence and a butterfly flies in their direction and Amarilis holds the butterfly with her hands and that impresses Zidane even more.

“How did you catch this butterfly?”

“I could feel the movements of its wings.”

Zidane opens his eyes wide. “That’s impressive!”

“What does she look like?” Amarilis asks him while she passes her fingers lightly over the butterfly’s wings.

“She is black with white with yellow spots.”

Amarilis smiles and frees the butterfly that flies away and then the witch turns to her left where Zidane is seated and she has a vision of the engraving on his back.

“You have a mark on your back.”

Zidane stares at her face frightened and he asks her, “How do you know that?”

“I just saw it now.”

He immediately grabs her arms and says, "If you are able to see my mark you are also able to see my face."

The girl shakes her head quickly and Zidane frees her arms at the same time as he remembers his promise.

"Excuse me! I won't touch you again."

Amarilis rises to her feet and she takes a leap when she has another vision of a black wolf rising up in her direction.

"There is a beast within you!" She declares and walks in a hurry through the forest and leaves Zidane behind in a confused state.

Chapter 11

Springtime Festival

The village is in festival mode again during the night. People are celebrating the arrival of the flower season and women adorn the village with flowers that were harvested at the woodland.

Men are drinking and women are dancing all around the bonfire. Every woman holds a flower and place them in their own hair.

Norton and his friend Zidane are accompanied by two female dancers that they met some time ago. Zidane walks beside the woman while her arm is interlaced with his and she looks quite happy at his side, the complete opposite of him. He looks distant and thoughtful. Nothing here amuses him, not the food, the drink or the people around him.

He stops walking when he glances in the other direction and sees Amarilis in the middle of all these people. She is by herself while her aunt is helping some women to put more food over an enormous wooden table in the fresh air.

"Wait a moment!" Zidane orders his female companion.

He walks to a flower arrangement that women made to decorate the place and he picks out a red flower. Then he walks in the opposite direction to his female companion.

Amarilis looks at the ground when she feels that someone approaches her.

"All women have a flower in their hair and so I brought a flower for you to put in your hair too."

She smiles at the ground trying to imagine the flower that is in Zidane's hand.

"What does the flower look like?" she asks him.

"The flower is red like an apple."

"Apples are red?" she queries.

"Some of them," he answers and puts the flower on her dark hair, above her ear. She touches the flower with her fingers and feels the delicacy of its petals.

"Thanks."

"You look beautiful!" He exclaims gazing at the gracious face of the blind girl. She feels he is observing her and automatically her hands catch the long skirt of her black dress.

"I need to go □ someone is waiting for me." His voice sounds melancholic. "Take care!"

Amarilis lowers her head, feeling a slight bitterness at the young man's retreat.

"You too," she says after some time but Zidane doesn't hear her saying that because he is well ahead going back in the direction of the female dancer.

"What have you gone to do to that witch?" the female dancer asks him as soon as he arrives at her side again.

"I went to put a flower in her hair □ after all, she was the only woman that was with no flower in her hair."

"She is blind and wouldn't be able to see that anyway!" she says injured.

"She is blind but has feelings, has a heart."

"I can't believe you waste your precious time with that blind witch! She does not even deserve to have come to the world!"

Zidane gazes seriously at her face and he says between his teeth, "Get another male companion for yourself to spend the rest of the feast with because I feel like being alone."

He walks in front and leaves the woman behind. She looks at his back and shouts at him, "Keeps company with that blind witch!"

"That is not a bad idea!" He says in a loud voice while still walking forward.

"You and she deserve each other!" She retorts in anger and Zidane smiles to himself upon hearing those words.

"Two imbeciles!" she murmurs between her teeth and walks to the other side of the village.

Amarilis is standing with her face against the hangar wall. Someone approaches behind her and leans his hand against the wall and another hand passes lightly over the hand of the young woman that is rested on the wall too. She turns immediately as soon as she senses the stranger's presence.

Her face confronts the boy's face and that always provokes the same shudders.

Zidane holds the young woman's arms and leans her against the wall and Amarilis is immobilized before his potent body.

"Please Amarilis, ask me for anything in this world but don't ask me to stay away from you."

His nose touches the young woman's hair and he inhales her scent with pleasure.

"And don't ask me to never touch you again."

His voice trembles at her ragged breathing. She feels her lungs get more and more narrow when he is so close to her.

He passes his hand lightly over her black dress, a little below her breasts and asks her gazing into her eyes, "Aren't they good? □ the shudders I provoke in you?"

She says nothing because there is no time for that as Zidane loses his control and kisses her on her lips, dominating her as if she was a savage animal.

Zidane awakes from his thoughts when he gazes through the bonfire. He is seated on the ground holding a red wine mug. His glance reaches people round him and he makes innumerable grimaces and squeezes his eyes several times since his mind is expelling the enormous wine doses in his blood.

Some seconds later, he decides to rise and holds his wine mug that is almost empty. And his twisted steps take him in another direction.

He throws his wine mug to his left as soon as he stops facing a person. Zidane's hands hold Amarilis's face with excitement, bringing her face next to his.

"What are you doing?" She asks thunderstruck at the unexpected closeness of the tipsy boy.

"You smell like booze!"

"It's not right what you are doing to me. I don't want to do harm to you □ I'll never do harm to you," he insists.

"You're drunk!"

"I am □" his nose leans against hers and their breathing melds into one.

The female dancer observes them from far-off and she can see that Zidane is almost kissing the witch's lips.

Immediately, she runs up to a tall strong man and whispers something in his ear. The man glances over at Zidane and Amarilis.

"I am"

Zidane tries to say something to Amarilis again however, in that same moment a hand comes upon his shoulder with a strong grip and removes him from Amarilis.

When Zidane turns to the tall strong man, he receives a violent blow to his nose.

"You miserable....! I'll show you who is idle here!"

And the boy receives another blow to his face and he falls down on his knees.

Amarilis looks frightened, already feeling Zidane is wounded.

Norton and a crowd of people run to see the tumult.

"What's happening here?" Norton asks with irritation.

"This guy attacked me suddenly," Zidane says trying to stand up and rubs the blood in the corner of his mouth.

The tall man takes off his shirt and throws it down at his side and the female dancer smiles to herself. She is in high spirits knowing that she is the cause of a dispute between Zidane and the strong man.

"Come boy! Our business isn't finished yet!"

The shirtless man yells while he moves his fingers in the direction of Zidane challenging him to a duel.

Zidane looks at his friend and Norton shakes his head for he doesn't like the idea of a fight against this giant man.

Zidane doesn't pay attention to his friend's advice. He rises himself up to his full height and also tears off his dark shirt from his body and throws it out to his left. Amarilis catches his shirt while it's still in the air.

A white haired old man sees the engraving on the boy's back and then he points towards it and bellows in a loud voice, "THIS YOUTH CARRIES THE BLACK WOLF'S MARK!"

The crowd gasps upon hearing this.

"HAHA AHAHHAHA!"

Everyone shuts up at the old man's order.

Zidane glances at everyone there and he sees that their faces look at him in shock. He also stares at his friend Norton, and subsequently to Amarilis who hugs his shirt and utters nervously, "FIRE! WOLF! DANGER!"

When Zidane glances round him he sees that the men are holding wooden pieces and torches with flames.

“CAPTURE HIM! THIS BOY CANNOT STAY ALIVE!

“LET’S KILL HIM!”

A man bawls at everyone and they attack in the direction of Zidane and Norton cries out to his friend desperately, “FLEE □ZIDANE!”

Zidane stares desperately at his friend and after that he stares at Amarilis among the people. She is agitated saying, “FIRE! □WOLF!”

And Zidane runs to the other side and the people run after him, holding wood pieces and torches in flames. Some of them throw wood pieces against the boy, stones and also torches with flames.

Zidane runs to the forest and they run after him.

The young boy leaps on an enormous rock and he crosses over a little puddle. He steps on a snake, but he continues running. However, he glances back all the time and compares the distance between him and the people after him.

They look like they are moving more and more near him. Then Zidane continues running and his heart is beating faster as the seconds go by.

But he has no time for a rest as this can cost him his life.

Finally he arrives at the road’s end, and then he stops before a precipice and turns his head and glances back and sees men approaching him. Rest is not an option now. The only alternative is leaping down that precipice and facing the dark frozen water of the river.

When the people approach the abyss, they stare down and see Zidane’s body going in the direction of the river’s water. However, no man has the courage to go after the boy and one of them says in an elevated voice, “HE WON’T SURVIVE FOR A LONG TIME! ALL THE PEOPLE THAT LEAPED IN THIS ABYSS DIDN’T COME OUT OF IT WITH THEIR LIVES.”

The people throw out their wood pieces into the river and they begin to commemorate with squeals the boy’s supposed death.

Hour later, Norton returns home and sees his mother and his cousin in the living room waiting for news of the boy.

The young boy closes the door behind him and he walks quite annoyed in the direction of his mother and his cousin.

“People in the village said Zidane leapt from a precipice, and most likely he won’t come out of it alive.”

Amarilis runs as she upholds her body against the wall and she locks herself in her bedroom.

The young woman walks in the direction of her single bed and holds the boy’s black shirt firmly.

“You cannot die! Do you hear me? You can’t!”

She brings the shirt up to her face and this soothes her despair while she inhales his smell.

Chapter 12

The following morning, people in the village continue the search around the abyss and also around the river. However, they don’t find any tracks regarding the boy and due to this they think the boy really didn’t survive that fall or the river waters.

Quite far from the village a boy opens his eyes and he sees a brown color before them. Then, he closes his dark eyes and opens them again soon after.

As he looks around him he sees the ceiling of a cave. His hands touch his own body and he realizes he is completely nude.

“My clothes?”

He asks at the same time as he stares at himself and a faraway voice answers, “Your clothes are drying.”

Zidane glances to his left and sees an old man with long grizzled hair and his extensive beard goes down to his stomach and his clothes are as old as he is.

“I want to advise you that I found you with no shirt.”

“Who are you?” Zidane asks impatiently. “Give back my clothes! I’m not used to being without them!”

The old man with the long beard catches an old mantle and throws it in the direction of the boy and Zidane holds firmly the rough fabrics and he makes a grimace.

"What's this?"

"These are your provisional clothes."

"Are you serious? Are you? I won't cover my body with this! I just want my pants and my boots back!"

"And you'll have them back □ you just need to wait till they are entirely dry."

When the old man finally convinces Zidane to put the old mantle over his body, then the boy wraps the cloth round his waist and hides his private parts.

"How did you find me?" Zidane asks after some time.

"I was walking early in the morning around the forest and then I saw you were unconscious near the river's edge." He holds some red apples. "Are you hungry?"

"What did you find?" Zidane sits on a seat that was sculptured of stone.

"Catch this!"

The old man exclaims and throws a red apple in the direction of the boy and he holds it firmly with his hands. And Zidane gazes at the apple in his hands and that makes him remember a person.

"What does the flower look like?" Amarilis had asked him.

"The flower is red like an apple."

"Apples are red?" she asked.

"Some of them."

And Zidane awakes from the memories of his past in the company of Amarilis, when he feels another apple reach his forehead.

"Ai! That hurts!" Zidane mutters as he stares at the old man.

"I gave you this apple to bite it and not to admire it as if it was a beautiful woman before you."

The boy bites the apple and looks down at the ground. His thoughts looked depressing. He stares at his apple as he spoke.

"This red apple made me remember a person."

Murad raises one eyebrow at Zidane, "I bet you half a crown that this person is a woman."

"Have you seen a man yet remembering another man?" Zidane replies, glancing back at him. His voice sounds annoyed.

"Perhaps you could have remembered your father," the old man deduces and smiles to himself as he says that.

The boy gazes at the apple and confesses in an unhappy voice, "I didn't know my father."

"I already knew that." The old man says as he looks at the boy and Zidane raises his head, stares at the old man and asks him in surprise, "How did you already know that?"

Murad faces him gravely. "I knew when I saw the black wolf's mark on your back."

Chapter 13

Zidane is seated on the top of a rock beside the long bearded old man, and Zidane is dressed in black pants and also in his boots.

They are drinking an herbal tea that the old man prepared in a bottle gourd. They swallow this liquid through a straw that was made from a stalk of a plant.

"Have you never known what this mark on your back signifies?" The old man asks him.

"Not until last night." Zidane answers giving a cough, after he takes a huge gulp of the herbal tea.

"You're a boy in luck!"

"Luck? Me?" His voice was ironic. "I have no family, I am being hunted like a savage animal because of this cursed mark, and the girl I love is sentenced to die before her twenty first birthday."

"Perhaps you could be dead, without the knowledge of the people and mainly this girl for whom you have strong feelings."

"What do you understand about my life? □And also about this mark on my back?" he asks as he looks annoyed at the old man.

The wise old man answers him with a rude gaze like one who has lived more time than him.

"I know much more than you can imagine."

"Upon my soul! Then you start telling me all that you know!"

"Are you sure that you're ready to hear the entire truth?"

"Start! I'm ready to hear it."

The old man stands up, walks to the boy and stops behind him and his hand touches the engraving on the left side of his lung and the old man starts saying, "You have the black wolf's mark."

"That is nothing new □ the entire village yelled this in my ears last night."

"You were marked as soon as you were born."

"And who marked me with a hot iron?"

"Likely an elder of any village," he explains.

"And why did he do this to me?"

"It's because you're the seventh male son from the one family."

Zidane gazes at the mountains in front of him and he tries to imagine his family, his six brothers he has never seen.

"You carry the black wolf's curse."

The old man's fingers go through the numbers on the boy's ruddy skin.

"When you have finally concluded 277 full moons, the beast that is within you, it'll awaken and you'll be a black wolf."

Zidane's eyes become full with tears while he assimilates the entire truth in his brain. He is just a poor young man, condemned by his curse.

"That means I'll be transformed into a wolf."

"Exactly, a black wolf."

Again Zidane remembers Amarilis, as she spoke the words - "FIRE! WOLF!"

"She always knew about my fate! She saw this," he says in a loud voice.

"Her? Who are you talking about?"

Zidane lifts his head and gazes at the cloudy sky and he also gazes at the endless mountains.

"What should I do now?"

"You should withdraw from people □ soon you'll be an extremely dangerous creature. Or people will kill you, or you'll kill them with no piety □ you weren't born to live in civilization," he confesses.

"Where will I live?" he asks as he glances at everything around him.

"You'll live with me here □ I'll know to work with your curse. You just need to trust me."

Chapter 14

A month later

Amarilis is in her bedroom still holding the boy's dark shirt. She brings this piece of clothing to her nose and her eyes close at the same time as she deeply absorbs the boy's smell.

She still has hope he is alive at some place, even if it is very far from her. Her hands go down in the direction of her breasts, still holding the dark fabrics, where she presses the piece of clothing against her chest and prays in silence for everything to be well with him.

And at that moment she has a vision of the boy, where he is on the top of a mountain, carrying some fire wood, and she feels that this vision is real.

Then a smile appears on her afflicted face while she exclaims in a low voice,

"He is alive! He is alive!"

Hours later...

"Murad, I already guarded all the firewood."

Zidane reports to him, as soon as he enters into the cave. He is replete with sweat and his dark shirt is wound round his head.

"Your food is on the table," the old man advises and sits at a rock table.

The boy gazes at his aluminum plate and sees a strange food, however, he doesn't protest and then he sits at his place before the table.

"What are you preparing with those steel bars?"

Zidane questions as he glances at the cavern corner and sees several steel pieces on the ground.

"When your time comes, you'll know what I'm preparing."

In the late afternoon, Zidane sits on the top of a rock at the top of a mountain, and he looks at the orange sky as the sun is setting on the horizon.

He leans his right elbow on his knee and his fingers are holding a small stone.

His right hand swings several times while he thinks of his past, his present and also his future.

And once more he feels alone before a gigantic silent mountain.

At the same time he feels the lack of a family he never had but he wishes to have, he also feels the lack of friends and a female companion.

Within him there is an enormous desire to be in love and be loved by a special woman that opens her arms and receives him like the one and only man of her life and her eternity.

Then, the small stone is shot out of his hand and reaches the firm land. At that moment he realizes that this'll never be possible.

First □because he is sentenced to live away from people and this includes women.

Second – the woman he desires at that moment doesn't have much time to live.

And his countenance wrinkles at his anguished feelings that supply him every day, every second, and every instant.

Then he thinks it would have been better if he hadn't come to this world and not to have experienced the bitter sensations in his atrocious life.

Chapter 15

04:04 pm

"Where are you going?" Murad questions as he stares at the cavern opening and sees Zidane is standing, covering his body in a long black cape.

"I need to see someone," Zidane answers as he is fitting the fabrics to his left fist.

"You cannot return to live together with people!" Murad insists annoyed and moves toward the young men.

However, Zidane remains resolute at his plan as he gazes on Murad's face and affirms.

"I need to know if that person is well."

After that he turns his back to Murad and walks out of the cavern, but before he declares.

"I'll come back soon."

Murad runs to the opening and sees the boy walking towards the forest, then his squeal echoes among the trees.

"Take care! And don't permit them to see you!"

Zidane, even from the back, raises his hand and waves goodbye to the old man that still observes him going away.

He walks through a mount and stops in front of a landscape below him where he sees the entire village.

That is, houses, people passing through there, animals in the pasture and some children playing in an area in the fresh air.

Then his gaze runs in the direction of Norton's house and he tries to approach more and more, but before that, he takes care of himself and puts his hood on his head.

The young boy walks slowly among more than a few people and he stops between two houses that are from the other side of Norton's house. A few minutes later, he sees two women that are leaving their homes.

Amarilis is walking beside her aunt and her arm is leaning on Lyra's arm.

Zidane tries to hide behind the wall of a house for fear that Lyra might see him there. But his gaze is still fixed on Amarilis's image, as usual in her long dark dress.

The girl stops walking as soon as she glances to her right and says, "I know this smell."

Lyra stares at the face of her niece and asks, "What smell Amarilis?"

"He's close by," Amarilis says in a low voice so Lyra cannot hear. "He's here."

The young witch glances at all sides and up and down and her agitation is clear to Zidane, and he knows she feels he's near.

At that moment he gazes at the witch once more and then he runs to the back of the house and goes away from the village.

11:45 pm

The yellow fire grows more and more at the same time as Zidane puts little by little some firewood pieces on it. Thereupon, he sits on top of a rock and Murad is already seated on the other side of the bonfire facing Zidane.

"You're silent today."

The old man says as he sees the boy's downcast face.

"Didn't you get to see who you wanted to see?"

"Yes, I did," the boy answers as he looks at the ground and then back at the reddish fire.

"From a great distance."

"Do you mean you didn't like what you saw?"

Zidane confesses. "I need to go to that village again."

Murad shakes his head after Zidane's affirmation. "You cannot run the risk of going back even for a person."

"I need to talk to her." Zidane says looking into the old man's eyes.

"You are risking your life too much and it's all for a skirt tail.

But Zidane looks resolute. "I'll go back to that place □ even if that is the last thing I'll do in my life."

Murad observes Zidane's countenance and he stays silent as soon as he feels that his good advice won't change the mind of the bewitched boy.

Chapter 16

09:20pm

The village is having a feast to celebrate the birth of a child in the village.

Women are dancing and a greater number of men are toasting and drinking with their wine mugs.

Zidane approaches the village, hidden in his black cape and his hood over his face, impeding people from recognizing him.

He walks directly among some people and later on he sees Norton together with some men and women. On other side he sees Mrs. Lyra is helping the women serve up.

However, his search continues incessantly because who he wishes to see is not there among those people.

09: 54 pm

Amarilis comes out of her home and she walks through the village avenue in the direction of the feast in the open air. A small gasp comes out of her mouth when she feels somebody holding her arm and pulling her with brutality in the direction of the back of a house.

She feels herself being pressed against a hard wall, coerced by the brute strength of the individual that holds her lips, for she doesn't shout again to attract people there.

The young witch feels that the stranger's hand is removed from her mouth and she has the liberty to say something.

"It's you!" Her hands touch the boy's face that is hidden in a black hood. Amarilis feels happier for having Zidane back in her life.

He also holds her face with his hands and smiles happily at her. He strokes the tips of his fingers across her left cheek as his gaze examines carefully her countenance, her blind eyes and her attractive lips.

"I felt you were alive," she continues saying while her white eyes move from side to side and she feels Zidane's body's warmth against hers.

"I needed to see you." His face comes close to hers. "You needed to know I am alive."

Soon Amarilis falls into panic, "But you cannot stay here! They think you are dead."

"I know." He gazes at her with tenderness and becomes silent. He loves gazing secretly at her appearance.

Amarilis shakes her head, "You cannot come back here. They'll kill you!"

"I'll not come back here again. I just needed to see you once more."

His fingers trace the contour of the blind woman's face and he gazes at her face for some time. Zidane feels happy for seeing Amarilis again and touching her as well.

"You cannot come to me, but I can come to you."

Amarilis says after some time and Zidane is stunned at the girl's insinuation, because she also wishes to meet with him another time. However, he shakes his head when his common sense takes over his mind again.

"No, that's dangerous for you."

"But I want to run that risk."

"No, Amarilis, you cannot go after me alone." Zidane glances away.

"Is it only because I am blind?" she compresses her lips, sulky. "I know the forest very well."

"It's not only the forest that offers risks to you." His eyes run through her beautiful pair of breasts and go up in the direction of her neck and stop at her luscious mouth.

"Soon I'll be an indomitable beast."

"You're not able to do me any harm, I can feel that."

And both of them shut up when they listen to Lyra's voice shouting. "Amarilis!"

"I have to go," she says desperately.

Zidane passes his forefinger over his own mouth and after that he passes his forefinger lightly over Amarilis's lips saying farewell to her through his affectionate gesture.

She remains still and he leans his nose against hers and says in a low voice,

"I'll be in the forest tomorrow afternoon." Then he separates himself from the young woman and says again, "Meet me there."

Another shout echoes on the other side of the house. "Amarilis!"

The lass smiles and goes running behind the house as she keeps her body on the house wall trying to go in a hurry to her aunt.

Chapter 17

03:00 pm

Zidane puts his hand over the trunk of a tree and he walks round the tree several times, due to his anxiety that consumes him as he awaits Amarilis's arrival there. For an instant he looks down at the ground and he thinks she won't come to the meeting.

Exactly a second later, he hears somebody approaching and when he glances over his right shoulder, he sees the lass walking with her hands over the tree trunks.

The boy runs in the direction of the lass and hugs her strongly. Amarilis rests her head on his chest and her delicate hand moves to the boy's back. She feels the fear of losing him and he also feels

the same while he smells her long black hair. *

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