

## GLOW 1998CE + LOVEDOGS

*It is hard to imagine that Marc Thal expected anything resembling commercial success with this album, but, in the wake of his co-songwriter's death in a motor vehicle accident, Marc's bandmates expressed that he often reached to places that had hitherto been unconventional. Never before, and rarely since, have we seen themes of romance in Thal's work, let alone overt sexuality. Glow, from the year 1998, stands out as being candid as candid can be, not only for the band, but as far as musical statements in general.*

*In Cretton, Thal and Mars had made oblique suggestions that they may have shared some sexual history; in Glow, Thal lays bare the sexual dynamic between him and his former bandmate and their male Rottweiler. Thal sings directly about having at first been confused to feel this way about other male individuals, writing:*

*This joke  
This funny joke we made  
Has gotten out of hand  
Is it real (x8)  
Ejaculating by my friend's hand's touch  
Into his Rottweiler's lapping tongue  
feels pretty damn real to me man  
This is real (x8)  
No one told me it would become real*

*Thal explores feelings of confusion, potential love, and, through all of it, sexual passion.*

*Throughout Glow, Thal does not allude, in words, to Mars's death directly. It is a common analysis of the album that some parts of the lyrics seem to end as things were still in progress, and the solos which follow these cutoffs are intended to convey the unspoken, the death, the pain, of a lover, of a collaborator. Thal has never weighed in about this aspect of the album, only making statements such as, "It's that scene in, you know, in, Ghost, I think it's called? Where the ghost's hands are guiding the woman making a vase. It's like that. I've never seen it. But, the cultural idea of that. It's like that. Mars's work hadn't ended yet. He's in the writer credits we listed."*

*Thal, who came out as bisexual in 2013, when asked if he knew he was bisexual in the time Glow captures, answered, "I knew the thing Mars and Matt and I shared made me gay. Eventually I knew that. It felt like about the most transgressive thing I'd ever done—(laughter). More-so than getting on stage those early times, you know, you're ALLOWED to get on a stage. Doing these things that boys and girls do, with another boy, I considered it gay, absolutely. Eventually I considered it gay."*

*Thal has expressed disappointment about the album's lack of critical success at the time. "Even the zines didn't seem to have heard of it. I have framed in my office now, THE ONE zine that ever name dropped Glow, and it didn't even write a review of Glow, but used Glow as a way of making fun of another album, saying, y'know, at least this one isn't THAT obscure. Like, OKAY, what did I DO to YOU, zine author? Sorry if a show you were at bombed. A lot of times, those days, we were going through a lot. As you could imagine. As you've heard. As you know."*

*Many have considered Glow, a blatant admission of committing bestiality, to be a stain upon Thal's later runaway success. Indeed, Thal has been banned from performing at many venues, sometimes only minutes before he was to go on stage, as seemingly a dedicated group of activists have made it a point to not let the singer live down the times and acts he has candidly spoken of. As to whether Thal considers Glow to be a*

*stain upon his career, he has never publicly made any statements renouncing the work, and the album remains available, right alongside the multi-platinum albums Waker Boy and Habanero...*

—

I realize that I am no longer reading the book that's before my eyes, but am instead thinking back to one of those... documentary features.

Skark and I are lying together in our reading nook. Behind our bed, we have a little square hole cut into the wall, that leads into a secret room. With books. And blankets. Skark is asleep on me, snoring. Skark, a large canid, his coat made up of short grey-and-black hairs, is lying across my chest, his hindpaws and tail to my right side, his forepaws and nose to my left side, and his entire bodily weight weighing down upon me, as his chest bellows in, slllllowly, and then out, slow-slow-slow-slllllowly, with every snore-y breath that he takes. The room is very tall, and has a window high up which is open at the moment, letting in a breeze and the smell of the conifer trees and the nearby lake, and there is a chandelier of partially-burnt-and-melted, presently-unlit candles above us, the morning daylight from the open window providing adequate luminescence to read by. I was reading a book in a very, very, very long and utterly engrossing series of novels that Skark read when he was growing up, and he recommended them to me, and so, I am catching up with him.

Was that piece I was thinking about on 60 Minutes? Maybe. I think that was a different one though. There weren't two 60 Minutes pieces, were there? I swear I would remember that. No. No I think 60 Minutes was once, and was later. Do you have to be on 60 Minutes?; did I show up for something? The exact wording, the exact delivery, of some of these pieces, stays in my head, crystal clear. But, some of the details of that old world, what programs there were and that kind of thing, have really gone away. I swear maybe there was something like 60 Minutes on another network. Or maybe it was YouTube, the Internet. I don't know.

Skark begins running and barking in his sleep.

While lying on top of me, his legs move, in a running canid pattern. He gives light barks, rrrroof roof roof roof roof...

In my periphery, I see someone coming into me and Skark's reading nook. A really tall figure with black fur and glowing green eyes is emerging from the little square entrance to this space, and he stands up, and looks down at me and Skark. Me, lying there on the ground among blankets, and Skark fully over me, across me, running somniciously atop me.

Taking a hand off of my book, I give a tiny wave to Seseikum, and I say, gently, "Hey."

At the slight, brief vibration of my voice, Skark stops snoring, and instead stretches, arching his back, pressing his paws against the ground. He turns into an owl, his canid weight gone from me instantly, and he flaps quickly up to the air above Seseikum's head, and then he turns into a rat, and drops down onto Seseikum's headtop.

Seseikum says, to me on the floor and to Skark atop his head, "Hey hehua al heh, lovedogs."

I set a bookmark into my place in the novel, close the pages, and set the book on the ground. I stand, and I feel my muscles are all stiff from lying in the same position for so long with such a big canid snuggling me. I do a biiiig streeetch, limbering up my digitigrade legs, stretching out my grey-and-rust vulpine arms, spanning out my big fluffy tail. Satisfied with this stretch, I then come to Seseikum and hug him, wrapping my arms around his naked-but-for-the-fur chest, and holding him, cherishing him. He hugs me back.

Skark crawls off of Seseikum's headtop and onto mine, and then in the form of some type of very small skittering critter, he crawls down my back and onto the floor. He then takes on a hominid form, as I can feel I am now being hugged from behind as well. He plants his jawbone on my shoulder, on my collarbone. I nuzzle the side of Seseikum's head, sniffing the inside of his tall canid ear. I am sandwiched between Seseikum and Skark, hugged from all around, being petted.

Seseikum kisses me, giving the front of my muzzle a little lick with his green glowing tongue, which then hangs idly out of the front of his muzzle a little bit. I kiss him in return, first giving a similarly small lick to his tongue, and then tilting my head and

nosing my way into his jaws, which he opens for me. I lick the length of his tongue, lick his teeth, lick the roof of his mouth and the back of his throat. I then leave his maw, and, face wet with small traces of his saliva, I nuzzle the side of his head again.

I say to Seseikum, under my breath, very, very softly, because I am basically all but inside of his ear right now, “Yerrra yerra, he’alanma. Hem.”

“Hem hem hem,” Seseikum teases.

Skark leans forward over me, pressing himself against my back, squeezing me tightly in this Seseikum-and-Skark sandwich I’m caught in, and he licks Seseikum’s face, first giving a few big licks to Seseikum’s closed eyes and the space therebetween, and then moving down and licking the top of his muzzle a few times. At first I just observe, wagging, and then I join in, licking the underside of Seseikum’s muzzle, lapping at the hollow of skin and fur in the space in his jawbone. Seseikum moans—I am all but in his throat, and I can hear, feel, the vibration of this moan very, very well—and all three of us are wagging now.

Skark decides he is done with this, and turns into a little-to-medium-little quadruped perched atop my shoulder, which he then leaps down off of, and scampers out of the square hole that is the exit of this reading nook.

Seseikum and I are still hugging very closely, tummy to tummy, sheath to sheath, nuts to nuts, and we are both still wagging. His expression is very perky and gleeful now. He gives the end of my muzzle another little kiss, which then turns into him nibbling a little at the top of my snout.

I say to him, not quiet-quiet anymore, “Hem lovedogs rerrra,” and then I give the slobbery front of his muzzle a big lick, and I then turn away from him, become a coyote, and trot past his legs, and lower my posture as I walk to slink out of the reading nook’s square exit.

There in me and Skark’s bedroom, Skark leaps onto my back as a rat. I continue walking with him, as he rides me, out of our bedroom, down the hall past all the other bedrooms, and all the other bedrooms’ incredibly varied scents. Spicy foods people brought into their rooms to eat, or scented candles, or dense musks of sex, or the rather plain lavender of clean laundry.

As I walk, another coyote joins rank with me, walking beside me. Seseikum. Skark hops off of me and becomes a coyote as well, and the trio of us head down a flight of stairs, which winds around a corner, and then leads into one of the common rooms. In the room are lots of tables, a communal space for cooking on the far side from us, and, on the close side, right next to where the stairs end, there is a stage with a bunch of instruments. The stage also has beanbag chairs, and cushioned benches, and on one side of the stage there is a mattress that either smells like the rather plain lavender of clean laundry or like the dense musk of sex, depending on whether it's been used for that kind of thing since the last time someone had a mind to wash it.

Right now, a tall hare and a tall badger (Kokom and Hadee) are in the kitchen, Kokom chopping vegetables on a cutting board, Hadee not presently at work cooking anything, just leaning on the surface, chatting with her friend. There is a pack of wolves and a bear all seated at a collection of tables at the center of the room, where they have moved a bunch of tables to be together to all sit with one another as they eat and bark and share laughs. On the stage, on the lavender-or-musk mattress, there is a coyote (Hesh) on her back, getting her cock sucked by her roommate (Yin) who is presently an anthro raven. Yin's beak is wide open, and Hesh's red boner goes into Yin's throat, something Yin is pleased with himself about his skill for. Hesh, lying on her back, seems unable to decide if she would rather be four-legged or an anthro, and she frequently shifts back and forth between the two, one moment a four-legged coyote who gives eager humps into Yin's throat, the next moment an anthro coyote who slowly thrusts in and out of the throat, and scratches the raven's beak with her claws.

Me, Skark, and Seseikum, all assuming anthro forms now, climb up onto the stage, as Hesh and Yin continue what they're doing.

lovedogs is the name of me, Skark, and Seseikum's band.

"Hem" primarily means homosexual, though it additionally means cuddly, cozy, and could sometimes be translated as "I invite you to me." We say "hem" a lot.

I think in a mix of the language that is spoken here (tintin, literally meaning, "talk") and English. A lot of my English words

for things are technically inaccurate misnomers here. Hesh and Yin are not a coyote and a raven, technically. “Anthro” technically implies humanification of an animal species, but there are no humans here, humans are not a cared about part of the spectrum, nothing in tintin describes anything as a contrastion with humanity or as an aspiration towards humanity.

On the stage, Seseikum takes a seat on a bench, and begins tuning a guitar.

“Guitar” is, surprisingly, not a misnomer. A lot of these instruments on the stage were made by me. I had made guitars before on Earth. Six strings, E2 to E4, E A D G B E, stuff I remember, stuff I could never forget.

Actually Seseikum has the twelve string in his paws, not a six string. He does like the twelve string.

I pick up one of the six strings, and sit beside Seseikum on the cushioned bench, tuning my guitar as well.

Skark, a four-legged wolf now, picks up a canvas bag in his mouth, a bag of white ritual powder. He slowly walks along the front edge of the stage, letting powder fall out of the bag, forming a line. When he nears the raven fellating the coyote on the mattress, he stops, sets the bag down, and walks elegantly the remainder of the way up to them, and lowers his head to rest his chin down on the edge of the mattress. He wags. The coyote reaches out and rubs his head. Skark wags quite a bit more, and then he asks the two of them, “Hamba ar hwesay sayhwe?” *In or out?*

The coyote answers, “Hwesay sayhwe,” and then interrupts herself with a loud cry of pleasure as she begins orgasming, her red cock spurting into the raven’s throat. She says to him, “saha, saha, saha, saha,” grabbing his head, and continuing to thrust into him. The raven gladly continues to pleasure her as she rides through the climax and then continues to fuck him afterwards, not done.

Skark climbs up a little onto their mattress, planting his front paws on the edge of it, and cranes his wolf head down and licks Hesh’s face. She rubs her clawed hands up and down through his coat and kisses him deeply back, as Yin continues to pleasure her nethers.

Skark then hops away, picks up the canvas bag of white ritual powder again, and continues making a line with it along the edge of the stage, walking past the coyote and the raven. At the end of the stage, Skark presses his snoot right against the wall, wagging, and the line is completed from one side of the stage to the other. He bounds back to where he'd picked up the bag from, and sets it back down in its place again. He then prances up to the line of powder, lifts a leg, and urinates on it, briefly.

The powder, chalk white seconds ago, begins to glow green instead, all along the line. Above the line, the air wavers, as though looking through an intense heat, though, the temperature remains the very pleasant cool that it already was—on Earth I preferred warmer temps, but, here, under fur and with all the hem hem hem snuggling-wuggling and with all the running around, cooler air is good. There's a lot of other sources of warmth that will be found.

With the powder, Skark has created a barrier. Sound will still pass through it, but very muffled, as though through a wall.

We can SHOUT in here.

We can play LOUD AS FUCK.

And Hesh and Yin will be able to hear us in full, since they opted to be inside of the barrier.

Meanwhile, we won't be a bother to the wolves and the bear and the hare and the badger outside.

Scattered around the ground are a bunch of different guitar picks. I bend down and grab one of them. It's one that I recognize, that I remember well: it's a Goldilocks amount of thickness, sturdy enough to really make noise, and also thin enough to bend a little when I strum with it.

Skark has scampered back to the drums. Seated on the stool there, with the barrier now up, he shouts, "KASSAKA HA HUARRA WUH!" and then begins hitting the drums with his sticks, a lively beat, bobbing his head as he plays, really dancing in his seat.

My guitar is tuned and I'm ready as shit. I stand up from the bench and begin strumming out an aggressive progression to go along with his beat. We're picking up from right where we left off yesterday: yesterday, after a bunch of playing, our last bit was this really aggressive, punk rock, emo kind of thing...



Like old times.

Heh.

I begin playing it again, as though a day hasn't passed, as though we just took a two second intermission.

I wanna wanna wanna wanna wanna

Run! HANDS ON YOU!

RUN AWAY!

GORE AND GROWL!

WHATEVER you say DARLING!

BITE BITE MAKE A HOLE

OVERTIME

TIME IS PASSING, YEAH

IT'S WHAT love is TO ME NOW!

I go on verse after verse, as Sesekum joins in on his 12 string.

It feels so. so. so good. to shout. to yell stuff.

And most of the wolves outside are still engrossed in their own conversations. But two of them have left the grouped-together tables and come up to the tables closest to the stage. Those two of them (Hest and Hicha) are now on their bellies on a table closest to the stage, facing us, wolf eyes watching, wolf ears listening.

Hesh is almost at another orgasm, and is really fucking Yin's throat trying to make it happen.

TOGETHER, ONE!

ONE IS EVIL NOW

WE ARE EVIL NOW

WE DO EVIL ONE BY ONE

TWO BY TWO

TWO is WHAT IT TAKES, MORE

BETTER

EVERY DAY

FEELING WRONG

FEELING LIKE IT IS

FEELING LIKE IT IS  
FEELING LIKE IT WAS TO SEE

WE ARE THE WAY  
WE ARE THE WAY  
WE ARE THE ONES WHO LEAD BY  
WAY BY NOW BY WAY

lovedogs rules.  
Hesh cums again, releasing into Yin.

WE ARE THE WAY  
WE ARE THE WAY  
WE ARE THE WAY  
WE ARE THE WAY

WE ARE THE ONES AND WE  
ARE THE WAY AND WE ARE THE  
ONES  
WE ARE THE ONES

WE ARE ALL YOU SEE  
WE ARE ALL YOU SEE  
WE ARE ALL OF YOU AND ME  
WE ARE ALL you need to FREE

TEETH BITE CLAWS SCRAPE  
TEETH BITE CLAWS SCRAPE  
I AM THE PAIN  
I AM THE PAIN

I leave off on the vocals, and our thing becomes instrumental.  
Yin is now cuddling Hesh and masturbating. Hesh is spent.  
She kind of tries to reach for Yin's nethers, but he just keeps  
pleasuring himself, making cooing noises as he becomes more  
pleasured.

lovedogs keeps playing as Yin eventually cums all over Hesh's  
tummy.

lovedogs keeps playing as Yin and Hesh, in canid forms, lick each other clean, ish.

lovedogs keeps playing as Yin leaves the stage, leaping over the glowing green powder barrier, and down onto the floor beyond.

Hesh comes and lays down on my foot, and she falls asleep as we're playing.

Hest and Hicha come forward from their table, leap up onto the stage, and sit there, right on the inside of the barrier, facing us, listening attentively to our music as we hammer out strums and drumbeats.

At a certain point, the percussion stops, and a wolf leaps forward from behind me, and jumps down off of the stage, past the barrier, and assumes a bipedal form, and jogs to the kitchen, where another anthro wolf has just appeared to make herself something. Skark's sister, Amma.

lovedogs is over, for the day.

Me, Seseikum, Hesh, Hest, and Hicha all sort of come together in a puddle of snuggling and nuzzling and little kisses and petting and comfort. Hem. Ah hemma wennam, ses ra kasim, yarra...

Skark comes back up on stage, and grabs my nape with his teeth, and pulls me aside. Me and him cuddle together, one on one, special.

Not long into it, he says to me, "Emheh heea."

I deflate, over exaggerating, and roll onto my back, and say up to him, "Heea mm?"

He play-bites my throat.

I dart up, and leap past the barrier, out into the room past the stage. Skark follows after me, and soon the two of us are walking together, both taking bipedal forms as we head down some different flights of stairs and different hallways, and eventually, we both exit the castle, and are walking along the blacktop trail, that goes through the conifer trees, around the lake.

We both assume the form of four-legged wolves as we walk. Errra ar hmen-menna. Effira mos eea am, mowa, owm ra. Yarra ses, yarra ses sessa, amchish. Huawey, den, hem, tintin, den rrasa.

And then, as me and Skark enter the loading bay, I look around the big room to see which of the carts we have here available right now to carry everything back with, and how much of a load of supplies there is today, and whether it looks like we got delivered anything fun and out of the ordinary with this shipment. And that's when I see Theodore standing there beside the pallets of comprehensively labeled cardboard boxes. Until now it's been such a good day, but everything happy that I had been feeling within my prancing paws and my wagging tail, that all dies at the sight of him.

I didn't realize seeing a human again would be so horrible.

It's been YEARS.

The INSTANT I see Theodore standing there, I feel sick to my stomach. I feel like I've just learned my house has burned down, or that I've just been sentenced to 60 years in prison; I feel a crushing, dizzying, heavy nausea of bad news. He shouldn't BE here. He looks like a glob of poison dropped into the last chalice of drinking water.

Skark, picking up immediately on my apprehension about the human, leaves his quadrupedal lupine form and takes a tall bipedal lupine form instead, with big green-glowing claws, and he bids me to stay back as he walks up to Theodore.

As Skark approaches, Theodore shows his empty hands, no threat, and says, "I'm here to touch base with Mr Thal, that's all, man."

He's dressed in what looks like the camouflaged uniform of a United States Army soldier, though the color palette is black-and-grey instead of drabs. I admittedly don't know if this color scheme is a new standard, or if it was already happening back around the time I left—I never did know much about the military. He appears to be unarmed. He has a hat, also in the same black-and-grey colors, that looks like the kind of thing someone would go out hiking in, a brim that circles all around to keep off the sun.

Skark continues walking straight up to Theodore. When he arrives at the human he stands just inches from it, cranes down over it, takes a deep breath of the human's odor.

Theodore says, articulating his words very precisely, "My masters and your masters made an agreement, when we

surrendered Mr Thal, that we would get to send an envoy, periodically, to check in on how our son-of-Adam is doing. We did not want to appear to be abusing this privilege by visiting too early, or too often. It has been five years. I am the envoy that has been assigned to touch base with our guy.”

So, the thing is, he is telling the truth.

Theodore alternates between making eye contact with Skark and with me—I have become a small mouse. His hands are still held up, empty, in front of himself. He asks us, “Can either of you take me to Marcus Thal? Marc?”

Time to bite the bullet. I become a quadrupedal wolf, and I say, eloquently with my glowing green tongue, “Theodore, it is no pleasure at all to see you, five hundred years would have been too soon.”

Theodore cracks a grin, and says, “The displeasure is mutual, I assure you.”

I say to Skark, “Alnar al ahm.”

Skark becomes a little cat and rolls on the ground at Theodore’s feet, purring.

Theodore says to me, his hands still raised and open, “Just to be sure I have my guy, could I see your God-given face for just a second?”

I say to him, “No.”

“Shit, yeah that must be you alright. How’s this world been treating you, Mr Thal?”

I assume a bipedal coyote form which matches Theodore’s height exactly, and I cross my fuzzy arms at him. Little kitten Skark rolls away from Theodore’s feet, and then becomes an anthro coyote too, with extra soft and floofy fur, and he hugs me and nuzzles me while I stare down my parole officer.

I say to Theodore, “Nobody has called me Marc Thal in a very long time.”

“Don’t tell me all the boys call you Jennifer now,” he jokes.

Still facing him with my arms crossed, I give myself a row of teats down my stomach, and a glowing green spade, just to prove a point. I caress my vulva, and then sniff my hand. Skark, also with teats and a spade now, cranes her neck forward to take one of my fingers into her mouth. I let her do this, and then I

hug her. I kiss her on top of her head, between her big ears, a space where her fur is extra-extra-extra soft.

I love Skark.

It's... complicated, to say whether or not I miss Earth...

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*In 2009, realm gates began appearing on Earth: upright hoops of intricately lain granite, atop wide, flat granite bases. The first six realm gates appeared all at once, on January 1st, 2009: one in the hills in NorCal, one on an island off the coast of Maine, one among trees at the foot of a mountain in Mexico, one in the middle of a road in a small England town, and two that were 110ft apart from each other in the sand of the Sahara desert. While the exact nature, purpose, and origin of these gates was not immediately clear, it soon became obvious that these circles of granite were portals to other realms, when visitors from these realms began entering Earth through them: the air within the granite circle would fill with a colorful fog, and then from the fog, a visitor would emerge. Some appeared animalistic, while others appeared to be fragile conglomerations of geometric shapes. There were, it turned out, hundreds and hundreds of known, inhabited realms, with different lifeforms, different societies, different technology, and, in many cases, magic.*

*The realm gates were not the same as mere doors, that one could go through at will. Travel from one realm to another could only be orchestrated by the gods. For all the hundreds of realms, and all the millions of hundreds of souls said to be from these other realms, Earth only saw a modest 129 visitors between 1/1/2009CE and 1/1/2019CE. And, in all that time, there was no documented case of a human ever exiting Earth through one of these gates...*

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*A shocking development in the story of Marc Thal, a music idol turned mass shooter. From modest beginnings recording himself playing guitar on home video in his mother's garage,*

*(a brief video clip of Thal playing a guitar and singing: “Love ain’t no little thing / Love is a bird, outstretch your wings”)*

*to the biggest stages around the world,*

*(a brief video clip of Thal playing an electric guitar and singing unintelligibly as a crowd cheers)*

*none could have predicted that Thal’s story would end in bloody massacre.*

*Last Sunday, Thal, from a window in his home, fired fifty rounds from a semi automatic rifle, down the hills into the woodlands below, aiming at a group of hunters who were passing through on the road beyond his property. Far from a spontaneous act, Thal and the hunters had been feuding on social media for weeks leading up to this day, with the hunters posting about their plans to “clear out the wolves once and for all,” and Thal threatening that if they did come, he would shoot them.*

*All fourteen hunters were killed by the time authorities arrived on the scene. While Thal’s house received returning fire, Thal himself was not injured. He was taken into custody an hour after the shooting took place, and refused to make any statements on what transpired.*

*What seemed to be the end for Thal’s life outside of prison walls may, however, now have an unexpected new chapter.*

*Just before dawn this morning, a visitor appeared from the NorCal realm gate, taking the apparent shape of a wolf made entirely of green light. The visitor has requested that Thal be extradited into his custody, and return through the gate with him, back to his own realm, stating that the gods there revere Thal’s actions as heroic and holy.*

*If Thal is surrendered to this visitor, and is indeed able to return through the gate with him, Thal will be the first human to make use of a realm gate. Thal’s wife, singer/songwriter Katana Meadows, has not made any statements to the press regarding what she would prefer to have happen.*

*The question now remains to be answered, will Thal be handed over, just like that? What was one minute a case of cold blooded murder, is now a case to determine interdimensional legal policy, and deciding what tone humanity will set going forward, when faced with ambassadors from the outside...*

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After me and Skark have been all kissy for a little moment, I return my attention to Theodore. Skark turns herself into a very large snake, draped over my shoulders. I keep my bipedal coyote form for now, teats and glowing green spade and all.

I say to him, again, this time with a vulva that is freely shown for him to look at, "Nobody has called me Marc Thal in a very long time."

Theodore, rather than doubling down on an even more transphobic joke about what my new name might be, dials back instead, and says, "Maybe some introductions are in order all around?"

Gesturing to myself, I say, "My name in this place is Raisik, or 'Sik' for short."

Theodore, gesturing to himself, and facing the snake around my neck, says, "My name is—"

The snake drops from my neck and becomes an anthro fox, who takes one skip towards Theodore, then midair turns into a dove and flaps most of the rest of the way to Theodore in a shallow U-shaped arc, and then turns into an anthro fox again right in front of Theodore and does a ballet spin on raised toe pads. He then hugs Theodore, nuzzling up against the human's uniformed chest, sheath and nuts casually touching the human's pants. Skark says, "AND I am Raisik's maywife, my name is Skark and I do so love your pet, I feed him every day and I make sure he pees and gets his sexual urges out. He has taken to his new home very well, as you can see it's as though he's lived here all his life, he is very comfortable here, we have a word for it, 'hem,' which he uses frequently. He gets along with all the other boys and girls, never gets in fights, and has been reading as many of our books as he can get his paws on."

Theodore says, "I—"



Skark continues, "You ask about 'maywife' and what that means: it means that Raisik and I have fallen in love very deeply. It means that when I cast my mind to the concept of eternity, I desire for my eternity and his eternity to be one thing. It means that he has touched places very deep inside of me, and, now, I *may* be his wife. We *may* proceed through the rest of all of time in one another's company, in love, two souls from different origins woven into one another, with no hope ever to pick the two in twain again. That all *may* happen, for I, you see, am his maywife. But alas! From his time in his original world, before ever I knew him, he had found a wife already! Already, he has woven his soul to another! We are all very deeply polyamorous, and it *may* be that Katana and I get along splendidly, and it *may* be that with her blessing, I become Raisik's second wife in full. But we do not know. It remains, indefinitely, a mystery. I do love him, and we have sworn vows that if we ever do attain the permission of his first wife, that he and I will marry. *That* is what it means, that I am his maywife."

Skark then takes a knee in front of Theodore and deeply bows, spreading out his arms to either side.

Indeed. He is my maywife. I do love him to pieces.

Katana steps out from behind the stacks of cardboard boxes here in the shipping bay, and, arms crossed, looks at me and Skark and Theodore.

Oh, uh.

My tail is wagging uncontrollably.

Oh uh, shit.

—

*Oh uh, shit. This is a lot of blood.*

*I'm standing in the daylight, in a park.*

*I'm looking down at my hands that are covered in blood in the daylight, red and shining, with, uh, my own blood.*

*It's from my own body. So it's not real blood.*

*That's not how it works..?*

*It's from my nose, so, it's not real blood.*

*That's... not at all how it works. I know it isn't. But. Whatever.*

*I'm taking steps forward.*

*I'm walking.*

*A lot of people are looking at me.*

*I've already messaged my girlfriend.*

*I sit down against one of the wooden pillars of this pavilion in the park.*

*The next thing I know, Katana has appeared, standing in front of me, and she is saying, "HOLY SHIT," and I say back, "I'm really doing alright," and then I can tell that I've passed out because the next thing I know, I open my eyes and I see that EMTs are here, and that tubing with blood in it is connecting my arm to her arm.*

*My eyes go wide in... shame, apology, gratitude, everything, towards her saving me like this.*

*She leans forward and kisses my feeble lips.*

—

Katana stands there, beside the stacks of cardboard boxes, arms crossed, looking at me as I wag.

She has a deep smile on her face at seeing me.

We both come forward to one another, and hug, and I hold her head in my fuzzy hands and kiss her, and she kisses me back as she runs her fingertips against my throat.

She pulls away from my kisses, and, playfully rubbing my throat, she says, "I am going to tell your new girlfriend every embarrassing thing you've ever done in literally your entire life."

I crane my neck upwards at her rubs, and I say, truthfully, "He knows."

"He might be a keeper then," she says.

I then feel Skark resting on my back, presumably in an anthro form, presumably he is casually leaning onto me and facing my wife.

As Katana continues to rub my throat, I feel Skark rubbing my jawbone, and I hear Skark say to Katana, "Did you know that he wrote a Socratic dialogue between you and his ex's dog, in the form of R.E.M. parody songs, to decide if you and him should date?"

Katana gasps, and says, “I have gotten TWO LINES from The Matt Album.”

“OH we have things to talk about, baby,” Skark says.

I wag as the two of them continue to rub my neck.

Skark then slinks off of me, and begins sniffing Katana from head to toe. She holds her arms out to either side, giving him free access to examine her as an animal might indeed want to.

Turning to Theodore, I ask, “How’s Earth?”

He asks me in return, “Do you care?”

I think aloud, “Let’s see, Katana is here, annnd Mars and Matt are dead, mmmmmno good point, I really don’t care at all.”

He looks thoroughly defeated by me. Exhausted, as though I am a spoiled idiot who he is not allowed to reprimand. Good. I want him to feel uncomfortable here. I want him to leave.

He says to me, “For what it’s worth, I’m not here to take anything away from you.”

“Then why did they send *you*?” I ask.

“Well, that’s what I was trying to get to. My job is just to get to know you again, see how things are going—”

“Intelligence-gathering so that humanity can learn how to freely travel between realms and colonize the multiverse,” I say, not interested in his word games.

He sighs. “Marc—Raisik, I’m sorry—it’s really not like that.”

“Am I wrong?” I ask.

“Yes,” he says.

I shrug, and say, “Well, that’s not a first.”

“Hehheh. Any other found family, besides your maywife?”

“Many critters’ scents are held within my fur, if only you could smell as well as us, you would already know the nature of how well I am loved.”

“Still doing any music, here?”

“Yes. New band. When are you going away?”

Katana calls over to us, “Stop being a prick to Theo, Marcus, he’s on your fucking side.”

“Since when?” I ask her, giving a confused look to the military guy before me.

“Since—AAAHaha!” Katana calls out.

I turn to face her and Skark, and see that the two of them have been working on undressing Katana from all of her black vinyl, and that Skark, wearing her jacket, currently has his muzzle latched onto one of her breasts.

Katana gives me a little wave, and giggles.

He's actually *really* doing her a service, undressing her, and getting his scents all over her, and her scents all over himself. She's going to fit in a hundred times better than Theodore will, if indeed all of us travel back to the castle.

If Theodore is bashful about looking at my partners in undress, he doesn't show it. The two of us stand facing Katana and Skark as we continue our talk.

He says, "To answer your question, when am I going away, I had hoped to see a day in the life. So, I'll be here maybe until tomorrow?" He then puts a hand on my shoulder, and turns in to whisper to me, putting a hand up to his mouth to shield his words from Katana and Skark, "My job, officially, is to determine if Katana Meadows will come back to the United States or will stay here with you. I think universally, it seems like all four of us want her to be allowed to stay. Can you just... work with me on this?"

"Oh."

I give him a hug.

He pats my back.

—

*Theodore enters my cell.*

*I don't say anything. We both stand there.*

*He begins, "So, here's where we're at. Your charges, all of them, are going to remain pending, until..."*

—

He was, *usually*, the bearer of good news back then, when my fate was being legalistically decided by Earth's top kings and politicians.

He was basically my primary point of contact, between my holding cell and the rest of the world. Agent Theodore Collins.

Kind of part “my lawyer,” part “good cop,” but mostly, “This is all unprecedented and this is just how we’re going to do things, alright? I’m a believer in solutions, not in revenge. I want to see you leave Earth, and find asylum in a realm that will be more suitable for you.”

I mostly didn’t believe him, back then.

But. All of that *did* happen. I *did* end up leaving Earth, finding asylum here, in a realm that has been more suitable for me.

Skark, an anthro cat with sandy tan fur, is now fully dressed in Katana’s black vinyl outfit, his fur ruffled and sticking out around the waist and neck. He looks at me, his hands in his jacket pockets, and he says, “Arra tenghey, hm hm?”

I take in a play gasp, and say to him, “Katana! Sound check was supposed to be five minutes ago, where have you been! The studio has been looking all over for you!”

He giggles, and then turns into a blue songbird, flapping towards me, leaving Katana’s clothes to fall to a pile on the ground. He turns into a small cat. I catch him. He nuzzles me.

Cradling Skark, I walk up again to Katana, rest a paw on her back, and I ask, “What’s been going on with you, hm?”

She smooches the front of my muzzle.

I press my nose against the side of her head, and sniff deeply at her hair. My sense of smell has gotten so much better, since I came here, since I took on these different forms, but her hair smells just how I remember, from the early mornings and late nights in bed, my face pressed against her all that time back then too, living among each other’s scents, our bed our little den.

I lick her cheek.

She says, “I have been up to some things, on Earth, but, mostly in a couple of other realms.”

Oh. Is she the *second* human ever to leave, or, are there more of us now?

She reaches out a hand into the air, points at a shovel that’s leaning against a wall, and makes a motion as though beckoning it to levitate: it does levitate, floating in the air for a bit, before she drops her hand, and the shovel falls.

Well. That’s not a power that *I* have.

That's not a power that she, a human, is supposed to *be able* to have, full stop.

She says, "I'll catch you up on all of the boring stuff about my band later, too, but, all things considered, I *dare say* I've had a more exciting five years than even *you*, Mrs Look At My Radioactive Dog Pussy."

I look down at my teats (which little kitten Skark is currently nuzzling) and my glowing green spade. Oh. Right. I nuzzle Katana's chin, and change to a deer/wolf form, with a sheath and short antlers. But. Meh. I'm not really feeling that as much right now. I change back into the coyote, with the 'radioactive' dog pussy.

"Does that hurt?" she asks.

"I'm good at it," I answer.

"Ha," she says. "Cool."

Skark, on cue, leaps down out of my arms, prances away a few strides, and then turns into a stallion. In his equine form, he trots around the loading bay, then stops at one of the empty carts, and looks at us.

Right. We did come here to do our daily chore. In this case, loading up a cart with all of the day's shipments to the castle, and pulling it all back for everyone.

—

*It's the most surreal dining experience. Literally, it does not quite seem real, it seems too fantastical, too bombastically unlike any place I've ever been to before. Founded by a visitor from an aquatic realm, who was one of his planet's most renowned chefs of all history, this restaurant is located on the Indian Ocean's floor. You have to scuba dive down into it, and then, after a chamber to transfer out of your scuba gear, the inside is like a vision of a nexus between all alien worlds. In this candle-lit room, I am astounded by the number of bipedal foxes passing by, or spirits made of pure wisps of light, or tall and quiet spider-like creatures made of stone; I see one guest who is a floating luminescent pyramid, and then he unfolds, the cuts along his surface shift, and he re-folds into the shape of a cube; he is seated at a table with a tripedal robot who is*

*holding a glass of wine, and an elf whose skin is covered in tribal tattoos that make the skin transparent where tattooed, giving the appearance that there are shapes cut out of him, windows into his muscles and other inner workings. I have never before now been in a place so abuzz with conversation where I am one of the only humans.*

*The deal was that if we can get my bleeding condition under control, she would take me on a date here to celebrate. The goal was dauntingly tangible: swim down to the bottom of the ocean and don't drown in your own scuba gear in your own blood.*

*Katana and I are seated at a table in the midst of all of it.*

*We didn't go there meaning to network, but, that's where Katana and I began making connections to the outside world, I guess.*

—

Katana and I, hand in hand, flee up a spiral staircase in the castle, finally getting some time just to ourselves—we have given Skark and Theodore busy work to do in the kitchen, that will, hopefully, keep them fully occupied for at least a few minutes before they realize that we have socially escaped from their gravitation.

When we had arrived back at the castle, a few hours ago, with a cart of everyone's packages AND with two new unexpected visitors, nearly every creature in the entire building came out to say hello, a crowd of animals all morphing into different nimble shapes to try to scamper over top of one another to come up and lift their nose and get some sniffing in on Katana and Theodore. Theodore especially must have felt like he was about to be devoured, with several creatures crawling into his uniform, running up the shirt and then sliding out of a sleeve, or down the neck and then trying to pry themselves into his belt, and taking smaller and smaller forms until they squeezed in and then tumbled out of a pantleg. Katana, already unclothed and with Skark's scent already all over her, did not receive quite the same amount of intense interest, though dozens of little noses did still make passes along her skin. After the initial sniffing

investigation of the newcomers was satisfied, some had remained to pester the two with questions (or, for some, to linger and prolong the sniffing investigation a while longer), while others instead flocked to Skark and I, who, in anthro wolf forms, from atop the cart, began handing people down their packages for the day. Often, before handing a box down, Skark or I (whoever happened to be holding it) would give the box a big close sniff, and give a knowing look to the recipient before handing it over. Exotic cheeses. Drugs. Textiles. Texts bound in books or, if no binding materials could be smelled along with the ink and fiber, then presumably some odd boxes contained texts rolled up in scrolls. Tools, oils, various tinkering-oriented odds and ends. The rare package whose scent could not be discerned at all was always the most curious, and was the only thing that would garner a look of play-suspicion from me or my maywife, before we of course then giggled and handed it right down to the recipient. When the cart was empty, Skark turned into a horse once more, and pulled the empty thing over to a little canopy for the next person's use.

Once inside the castle, things settled down a little bit, though we all still were pulled consistently from person to person, excited topic to excited topic, as everyone was more-than-usually eager to share with us what's going on in the castle lately, who's making what, who's been having what kinds of fun, who's learned what skills.

Now, Katana and I, hand in hand, flee up a spiral staircase in the castle, finally getting some time just to ourselves. At the top of the staircase, we find ourselves in a round room that crowns a tall tower. The walls, floor, and ceiling here are made of stone and cement, the arches of the ceiling coming together in a large dome far overhead. The surfaces of the floor and walls are covered in numerous comforting rugs and tapestries. At the center of the room stands a globe depicting this world, held up in a resin-coated wooden mount of extreme quality. There are four tall windows, no glass, thin green curtains, that look north, east, south, and west from this room. To the north of here, beyond some miles of forests, is an ocean sparkling in the sunlight.



When we are in the room, and see that we are truly and fully alone, Katana pins me back against the wall right beside the window to the north, and she asks me, “How’s your bleeding doing?”

I finally get to tell her what I’ve been so, so looking forward to telling her. I can’t keep the smile out of my voice as I say it. I say to her, “Baby. I’m not technically a human anymore, and I don’t have *any* of my chronic ailments from that body: the bleeding is not only in full remission, it’s no longer even *possible*.”

She shakes her fists excitedly, gives me a huge smooch on the muzzle. My tail thumps against the nearby tapestry as I wag, drumming out a happy *boom, boom, boom, boom, boom...* as she kisses me.

She then pulls back, grabs my muzzle by making a ring around it with her fingers, and she says, “How does it work, what are the details, that you know?”

She lets go of my muzzle.

I answer, “Magic from the gods of this realm. I am in large part what they are, now. Not in all parts. I’m not a god myself. But. The mechanism is that I drank from a chalice of green light, handed to me by them, and it’s allowed me to be what I am now.”

She asks, “Do the gods want anything from you in return?”

“Um. No? Well, do they *want* anything from us, *yes*, but, not in the life-or-death way that I think you’re picturing.”

She looks my canid face up and down to see if I’m withholding anything.

I’m really not.

She asks, “Are the gods pretty hands-off, then, or? This seems *very* different from the realms that I visited. Set the scene here, tell me the big picture.”

I think of where to begin...

I reach out, put a hand on her side, and get up from leaning back against the wall. Together, arms on each other’s backs, we begin walking slowly, idly, across the big room that we’re in.

I tell her, “The gods here are stars. Earth, in contrast, has inanimate superstructures of bright plasma out in space, that are the stars. At least, that’s what *I* understand to be the case, is just that... it’s not a rule across all realms that stars are sentient

gods, and in fact, most of the time, they *are* inanimate, like the ones in Earth's realm. But, here, in this realm, the stars seen in the nighttime sky are green points of light, and they don't seem to hang still either, like I remember back on Earth. Earth would seem so *weird* to me now, like the whole thing was frozen under ice, it's, really unsettling to think about actually. No, here, the stars are lively, constantly pouncing around one another, or some drifting side by side as though floating down a calm stream together, or some engaged in group dances with one another all the night long..."

We arrive at the globe in the center of the room, and continue our stroll past it.

I go on, "And they aren't distant gods. A lot of nights out of the week, one or two will come down to visit us. A creature entirely of solid light. And they share in all of the pleasures that we share with one another, changing their forms, dancing to music, insatiable lusts to take part in our sex—I'm likely saying it backwards. I should say, *we* take part in *their* lust that they have given us as a gift, *we* play *their* music that they have taught us to play for them, *we* aspire to take after the way that *they* are so fluid in their forms. Although... no, that's also putting it wrong."

We are nearly at the window that faces southward: in the far distance, there is a tall mountain. I have never been up it. I am familiar with the base of it, and the forests surrounding it. Skark and I and some others have camped there quite regularly.

Katana and I come to a pause in our walk. I put my head down, and try to think.

I say, "The language around all of it is so... tricky. Sometimes it's simple to talk about it, what these stars and us do together, but then sometimes it's muddy, multifaceted, shifting... and that's not a negative thing about it, even, but it's hard to pin down concisely with words, sometimes. It's like this: we and the gods participate in many of the same things, but not all of the same things; we revel with each other, sometimes in ways that are identical as one another, sometimes in ways that are similar, sometimes in ways that are nothing alike... we can give each other gifts, and sometimes the gifts we give to them seem trivial and fleeting but are everything to them, and sometimes we give

each other gifts the other didn't end up caring about at all, and sometimes they give us gifts we could never have gotten on our own, and sometimes we give each other nothing. We are made of all the same stuff, but in different measures, and sometimes it seems like the differences are small and shouldn't ever be worth thinking about, but then other times the differences are so stark it baffles the mind to wonder how we can even eat any of the same food. And I wouldn't have any of it any other way, and neither would they."

When I'm done talking, Katana says, "So it's bestiality."

I think about what she means by that comparison.

And then I laugh, and I say, "It is bestiality. Wow."

"Cool," she says. "How's it feel for you, to be on this side of it?"

"Baby before ten seconds ago, I just woulda told you it feels good to mount someone and fuck them with a wolf cock after your wolf nose has been perving on their sexy sex smells for the last two hours. Now you've put this whole other conceptual layer on top of it. I *think* I still mainly wanna say, 'baby it feels good to mount someone and fuck them with a wolf cock,' but, the truth is you're gonna have to give me more time to catch up with you here."

She's laughing at me, and then she grabs me by the wrist, and pulls me over towards the southward facing window. We both lean our elbows on the edge, and look out at the distance.

I say, "You."

She lies, "Oh who, me? Same ol same ol, I've mostly been at home watching TV."

"Oh I bet," I lie. I stand up from leaning against the window, wrap an arm around her neck, and then turn into a soft little fox, clinging to her.

She holds me, and rocks me, and cranes her neck down and nuzzles against the back of my head.

I say, held in her arms, "Tell me what you've been up to. Was that real, the comment about traveling across realms?"

"Mhm."

"Is that common to do now?"

"No it is not," she says.

"So you're like—"

“The chosen one.”

I ask, “But like, *are* you? Really?”

“Yes.”

“Baby!” I press my forepaws against her and push back from her, craning back to look up at her, face to face. I ask her, “What’s your quest like! Where have you been! What do you have to do!”

The ground under our feet moves.

I come in close with her again, and she holds me securely with one arm.

The rug we were standing on is rising up into the air.

I see Katana’s free hand making a series of strange gestures, and I realize that she’s controlling the rug, levitating it.

With us atop the rug, she lifts us out of the window, into the open air.

Us being out floating in the air... it’s a little different to be held midair like this in a form without wings, but, I *do* fly as a bird often enough, so, I am not afraid of heights, as such. Katana seems thoroughly non-worried about the whole thing. I guess she’s used to flight too.

I keep pawing at her, and say, “Baby, tell me a little!”

She takes me off of her breast and holds me up under my armpits with one hand, looking at me as I squirm in her hold. She says to her tiny fox husband, half laughing at me, “Baby, there is SO much to go over—I have to catch you up on Earth’s REGULAR history before we even get to MY part. For now, let’s just say that I have two full years of downtime scheduled for here; the best thing I can do *now*, after all I’ve already been cooking on, is to lay low for a little while, let other things that I’ve set in motion fall into place, and not raise too much more attention on myself.”

I turn into a fast spider, crawl rapidly up her arm, and turn into a small fox again clinging closely onto her. My lil fox tail wagging out of control, I pester her, “Can I ask one question?”

“Is it about alien sex—”

“HAVE YOU, or HAVE YOU NOT, fired a laser gun?”

She pets my head, and says, “I have fired a laser gun.”

“You are the bomb.”

“Well, that is what the prophecy says too, decidedly. I mean. In smarter words, it says that.”

I slump over her shoulder, and softly drum my forepaws against her back.

She is the *chosen* one. With *powers*.

She sits down cross-legged atop the center of the rug.

As a fox, I gently nestle in on her lap, settling with my chin resting on her knee, facing forward with her as she takes us on a magic carpet ride.

We do a slow lap around the castle, looking at all of it, her for the first time. I don't bother her with the full rundown of every nook and cranny of the place. There will be time.

It's good to be with her again.

Skark can take many forms, but, that does not make him everyone. He is not the one who saved my life in the park that one day when I was about to bleed out. He is not the one who spent hours, some days, on the phone with venues, labels, and other dickheads in suits, burning connections and favors to keep the bestiality Glow Album musician from being denied a spot yet again. He was not my first new fling after I thought I would never feel any spark of love or lust ever again, after Mars and Matt had been killed in that car crash and I'd thought my own life might as well have ended with theirs. Katana has been all of that. And so much more. Just the idle hours, living in a shitty apartment together in those years before we made it, and then figuring out home ownership together after we made it huge. Ha. A lot of good years. Even the bad ones, with her, were good years, looking back on it all...

...I wake up, realizing I had fallen asleep in Katana's lap, during our magic carpet ride together.

We are back where we started the flight, in the room crowning the tower, the room with the globe at the center, and the four tall windows with thin green curtains. The rug, which we are still on, is now back on the solid floor again, right where it had been picked up from. Katana is lying on her back, underneath me; I, a large wolf, am lying across her chest, my hindpaws and tail to her right side, my forepaws and nose to her left side, and my entire bodily weight weighing down upon her.

I take in a big breath, and sigh.

She pets me.

I wag.

I then roll off of her, becoming an anthro wolf on the way, and I lie side by side with her, both of us staring up at the domed ceiling.

She mentions, "Heads up, Theodore will be up here any minute. He saw us, while we were out circling."

"Mm. He can see. as much. of my wolf nuts as he wants."

She laughs, a real, actually-wishes-she-didn't-find-me-funny laugh.

She rubs my fluffy belly.

I wag.

I then bring something up to her, while we still have a little bit of time alone here...

"Hey, so. About Skark. I really do love him. I think you'll see, if you haven't already, how much we get each other, how much we're bonded. What do you think of him? I know you more or less just met him, but, do you think there's a shot that I'll have your blessing to marry him? And, to be clear, I'm not asking you to be part of it yourself, you don't even really know each other yet."

"Oh, Skark is in the prophecy, I LIKE Skark. We are *both* marrying Skark as *soon* as possible."

I turn into a fox and sprint maximum speed laps and laps and laps around the room. I leap out of a window, turn into a hawk, fly a lap around the castle, and, when I've come back around, I come back into the window, and assume the form of a bipedal wolf once more, wagging.

Katana is standing there to greet me, laughing at me, beaming at me. We take each other's hands.

She asks, "Do you wanna make it official before Theo leaves? Rub Earth's nose in it?"

"I mean, we'll *ask* Skark first," I note.

"He'll say yes."

"He will," I agree.

And then, Theodore arrives at the top of the spiral staircase here, winded, as a coyote with glowing green teeth prances circles around him.

Theodore looks around the room, sees there's no way for us to escape him (he's wrong: all three of us, me, Katana, and Skark, could escape out one of the windows that are positioned in every direction in this room), and, rather than coming up to us and scolding us for running away, he just takes a seat at the top of the stairs, to catch his breath from trying to run after all of these animals.

The coyote trots over to me and my wife.

We propose something to him.

He says yes, and, looking at me, he adds a quick little, "Hem," before he then turns and leans in with Katana, and I watch my wives kiss.

—

*It is with sound mind, all clarity of perception, and sufficient understanding of the circumstances, that I, Theodore Collins, with the consent of Katana Meadows, authorize the release of Katana Meadows from my custody and the custody of the United States of America.*

*Signed,  
Theodore Collins  
Katana Meadows*

*It is with sound mind, all clarity of perception, and sufficient understanding of the circumstances, that I, Theodore Collins, make a record that the husband of Katana Meadows formerly known to be named Marcus Thal is now identified by the name Raisik.*

*Signed,  
Theodore Collins  
Katana Meadows*

*It is with sound mind, all clarity of perception, and sufficient understanding of the circumstances, that I, Theodore Collins, make a record that a person known to be named Skark has been entered as a spouse into the existing ongoing marriage of*

*Katana Meadows and Raisik; A bond of marriage is now extant between all three parties at hand, namely, a marriage between Raisik and Skark is now established, a marriage between Katana Meadows and Skark is now established, and the marriage between Katana Meadows and Raisik remains established.*

*Signed, Skark and  
Theodore Collins  
Katana Meadows  
Raisik*

—

The days pass.

One day, I am waking up, as a wolf, myself and another wolf having both been napping with our slobbery chins rested on a snoring human. All limbs, human and wolf, cozied up with one another in a warm nest of blankets, hem.

One day, Katana joins lovedogs, and she shouts loud as fuck and I shout loud as fuck and we both play our guitars loud as fuck, and wolves come to sit at the foot of the stage to watch the human make songs.

One day, Skark, Katana, myself, and a few of our friends are all on a walk through the forest, heading towards the base of the mountain far to the south; midway there, we make a camp, setting up a communal tent, and then with that done, we spend long hours in the evening and night yapping, laughing, playing in the trees, tending to a little fire, before all cozying up for the night and all falling asleep, so many forms of warmth and fur and scent and tiny noises and breath.

These two years will not last forever.

Katana has shared with me and Skark, the prophecy, and what perils lie in wait for us, after two years have elapsed here, and the three of us venture off far away into less idyllic realms.

Many days we spar, learning techniques for the things ahead.

A day shall come when we leave this realm. But, that day is not here yet. It is closer with every morning; Every time I am sitting and eating breakfast with my wives in the common room



is one fewer time that I ever will. But, a killer tape does not make noise on pause.

The days pass.