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Branna (F): Angry and overconfident young Fang who follows Niall

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Keeva (F): Hot tempered and stern sounding old woman

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Keeva: [snarky old woman] Why don't you come inside the hall then, and speak with us like civilized adults?

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Keeva: [scolding] You forget your teachings, Young Fangs. The Mist has come before. It is the origin of our people. During an eclipse, the rare Double New Moon, there is no moonlight for Moon Tree to absorb and so the magic it brings hangs in the air as the Mist.

Emmet: Our ancestors had an ancient song that would distill the Moon's magic from the Mist. It was a lullaby they sang to their children at night, and over time the magic gathered into their bodies and gifted to them the Wolf's Blood that allows us to transform.

Keeva: But the Mist has never before come without an eclipse. This Double Full Moon is not natural. The moons are to rise and set, to pass each other in the sky each lunar- and we, the Wolvega, we are to wax and wane in phase with them. This is the way of the wild, this is who we are.

Riordin: But with both Moons high in the sky, how can the Mist appear? Should they not be making the forest stronger with their bright light?

Emmet: You are right, it should. But....that does not appear to be the case. I do not know how the Moons stay in the sky day and night, but I truly fear what it means.

Riordin: [serious]...it means the trees are dying. That is why the Mist appears and why the seeds are barren of wild magic, right? Because they cannot absorb the Moon's magic.

Emmet: Indeed, Young Fang.

(pause as Niall thinks)

Niall: Can they be restored?

Branna: Why would we want them to?!

Emmet: [ignoring Branna] Well, I must inspect the trees. I fear they may be beyond saving at this point. If we could concentrate enough power from the Mist, then perhaps the seeds could be restored----

Keeva: [interrupting, angry] Not anymore they can't. That magic was lost to us generations ago. The last person who may have remembered any such a spell was Elder Sibeal, who you foolish curs killed when you took over the village and forced us into the Meditation Hall.

Niall: [defensive] That was an unfortunate accident, but we did ask that you not resist. You are trying my patience, Old Woman.

Branna: But why should we fear? The Mist surrounds us, and it is full of power! Can't you feel it? We still have our powers- this means we don't *need* the Moon Tree. We are stronger than ever now that we are not shackled by it.

Niall: Branna is right. You told us the last time the Mist had come was during the War of the Wolves. The night of the eclipse, the remaining Wolvega launched their final attack against the clerics and their undead army. It was the Mist that gave them the power they needed to overcome the enemy. The Mist is the only reason why our kind still survives today.

Riordin: If it made you strong back then, it will make *us* even stronger now.

Keeva: For a time, yes, you are right. But we are meant to be Wolvega, not wolves. If you do not respect the natural cycles of the wild, even your own magic will twist your mind and body. We are to ebb and flow with the Moons. As they push and pull this world, so do our hearts and minds flow in their rhythm, guided by their light in the night sky.

Riordin: [hesitant] And...what of the rest of the forest? Surely the magic that is normally taken up by plants of the forest is eaten by animals- if the Moon Tree dies and the forest is devoid of magic, what will become of all the plants and animals that live here?

Emmet: And what of the Halflings? You have made an enemy of our friends, Young Fang. The fen borders the Wolfwood and they too rely on the Selune's magic both in their trade and their customs. We owe them much for their aid in the war----

Branna: [interrupting] Have you forgotten the casual murder of my baby brother not six months ago? The halflings traders on the road simply watched the clerics slaughtered him.

Riordin: Have you forgotten the clerics' spells that poison our crops? Of the hanging of your own son last year simply for selling herbs on the road outside of Vierenovska? Where were the halflings then? They are just like the humans. They profess to be our allies, and then have the nerve to run to Vierenovska for protection when we fight back.

Niall: [interrupting] I've heard enough! We will use the Mist to protect our home and drive out the humans and the halflings for good. I don't care what happened 40 years ago- we don't owe anyone anything. We have been subjugated for too long and it ends now during the Long Night.

Reference: Selune is the Moonmaiden, goddess of the moon and light. Shar is her counterpart, mistress of darkness.

Niall: Young Fang who has taken over the village

Branna (F): Angry and overconfident young Fang who follows Niall

Riordin: Angry and overconfident young Fang who follows Niall

Keeva (F): Hot tempered and stern sounding old woman

Emmet: Saddened old man

Niall: [rudely] Elders, come! We must speak with you.

Keeva: [snarky old woman] Why don't you come inside the hall then, and speak with us like civilized adults?

Riordin: [snarls violently] You know very well why we were forced to restrain you, old woman. We will not come in, and you will not come out. If you will not use your Wolf's Blood for the good of the Wolvega, then you do not deserve to have it. None of you are true Wolves, you have all gone soft in your old age.

Niall: Silence, Riordin. [he cuffs the other wolf]

Emmet: [seriously, cautiously] What is it, Young Fang?

Niall: We encountered some strangers at the bridge and again at the western outpost. They are not from this area, except for a gnome who seemed to know his way around the Wood.

Keeva: [surprised, slight grin] A gnome, you say? I only know one gnome who knows his way to western outpost. You might too if you were old enough to wean from your mother's milk.

Emmet: [to Keeva] You think Freischutz has returned?

Riordin: You mean the Freeshooter? My father said he was a coward. That Tail was never worthy to live with our pack.[spits]

Branna: Nah, it was the other one, Maeve's father, who was the coward I think. I don't remember, we were pups but I say good riddance. We don't need outsiders in the village.

Emmet: What happened between him and Maeve's father was years ago, and leaving was his own choice. Why would he return now?

Keeva: [shrugs] I don't know, but these are extraordinary times. Perhaps he knows something about what's going on with the Wolfwood.

Niall: [impatient] Enough. I don't care who they are. They had a Moon Seed in their possession. Clearly, they have been trying to attack Selune's trees.

Riordin: I don't know how they eluded our Paws for so long. Some of the youngsters are going to be punished for this. But it was easy enough to catch them.

Emmet: How fare the trees? I have been praying since you brought me the last seed. I fear...I can hear the forest dying. Please, let me out so that I can visit them. I must see to their health. We may need to perform the sacred rituals if they are afflicted by this cursed darkness, or Selune save us all.

Niall: [bangs the front gate on the door] Don't you dare speak of curses, old man! As if even *your* mouth is filled with the filth of the human clerics who preach that our Wolf's Blood is a curse. You have let them walk all over us. Have you no spine? You have let Shar's darkness into our house.

Riordin: You don't have the courage to take back the Wolfwood and seek vengeance upon our enemies. That is why now is time for the Young Fangs- see how the double Full Moon hangs high in the sky all day and night? This is a sign! The magic of the wilds has gifted us the Mist which hangs about the forest, each drop of moisture full of the Moons' magic. Of *our* magic.

Keeva: You children are foolish. We have had peace for decades, only for you to ruin it because of some false pride you carry from war you did not even fight. A war you were not even born to witness. And now you claim to understand the Wolfwood, to have mastery over the wilds, over Selune's domain--but you do not understand the power you are trifling with.

Branna: Why should we not use our gifts to their full extent? Why should we not be masters of our domain? You would shackle us, but I welcome the Mist! We will strike back against the humans who come to cut our forest and kill our pups, who call us evil beasts. We shall be cowed by them no longer! (you hear snarls and barks and shouts from all the Young Fangs)

Keeva: This not a natural Mist, Young Fang.

Branna: What is unnatural about a double Full Moon? [haughty] I think you are afraid of your Wolf's Blood, afraid to live as a wolf, as we should.

[tense pause]

Emmet: How many seeds have you found now, just the two? This is a terrible sign. See how the seed is black in your palm? It has no magic within it to make it shine. The sacred trees of the forest absorb the moonlight, spreading the Selune's magic out through its roots into the rest of the forest. The largest of these is the great Moon Tree to the NE. It keeps the forest alive.

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