



## The Wolf Lord

*Ann Aguirre*

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## **The Wolf Lord** Ann Aguirre

Roguish. Reckless. Unreliable.

Raff Pineda has a certain reputation among the Animari. He's the one to call if there's a party starting, not the man to rely on when all hell breaks loose. Though he's nominally the leader of the Pine Ridge pack, he defers to his second on the tough calls. Raff prefers to live fast and hard and keep his heart hidden, but a certain Eldritch princess won't fall for his usual tricks, and their contract political marriage may be anything but convenient.

Ambitious. Elegant. Isolated.

Princess Thalia Talfayen may not have been raised by a witch in a tower, but she's spent the last few decades locked up for a failed insurrection. Plotting and scheming comes naturally to her; personal connections do not. Since she's come this far in her unstoppable quest to claim the silver throne, she won't hesitate to do whatever it takes to unite her people, even if that means giving herself to the big bad wolf...

## **The Wolf Lord Details**

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Ann Aguirre

Format :

Genre : Romance, Paranormal Romance, Fantasy, Paranormal, Shapeshifters

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## From Reader Review The Wolf Lord for online ebook

### Lee says

Very interesting worldbuilding! Raff and Thanlia are wonderful for each other, and the secondary characters are memorable too. People have complicated relationships- friendships, familial, and romantic, and Aguirre highlights all of these beautifully and with sensitivity. The action sequences are clear and exciting. My quibble was that the question of who the baddies were seemed a bit obvious to this reader.

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### ? Irena ? says

Each *Ars Numina* book adds something valuable to the series.

In *The Wolf Lord* princess Thalia Talfayen is left with only Raff Pineda since the demon prince married someone else and the bear is a monk who doesn't have 'time for this shit'. She is prepared to whatever is takes to deal with the aftermath of her father's actions.

I liked Thalia, both the icy princess and behind the curtains one.

Anne Aguirre seems to write the heroes even better; at least, in paranormal romance genre she does. You cannot *not* love Raff. He won't let you, as simple as that.

The way he treats her is perfect. The way he deals with hypocrisy is also perfect:

"I'm glad the Animari did away with such antiquated bullshit. It's asinine to believe that competent leadership is a quality that runs through bloodlines." "But...once a family takes power, it's still rare for it to shift, even in our culture," Raff said gently. "A Pineda has led Pine Ridge since my great grandfather's day, and I believe it's much the same for the Ashers who lead—" "I got it, shut up already," Mags muttered.'

If Magda is the heroine of the next book, she'd have to go through something pretty devastating to be likeable to me. I'm afraid she's just the type of female character I despise. We'll see.

The plot is decently done. Thalia has to deal with treason, assassination attempts from other noble houses. Fortunately, she has one big bad wolf on her side.

The book has a few errors, but the story is good enough for them to be just a minor nuisance ('If that was wrong, she'd surely correct him.' or 'I hope you don't mind if eat?').

(view spoiler)

The story and the characters make up for most of the nitpicks.

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### Tani says

I had high hopes for this book, as I've really been enjoying this series and marriages of convenience are one of those tropes that I like best, but unfortunately, it ended up being my least favorite of the series so far. It was still a good romance and a solid addition to the series, but something about it just didn't click for me.

This romance features Thalia and Raff. Thalia is an Eldritch princess trying to win leadership of her people, and she believes that the best way to do that is to join with someone else powerful in marriage. None of the other Eldritch will have her, so she looks outside the Eldritch and ends up with Raff, lord of the Wolf Clan.

I feel like all of the building blocks of a really great romance were there, but they didn't quite gel together. For example, Thalia wants to lead the Eldritch and believes that she's the best choice because of her progressive ideologies, but we rarely see her ideologies, and I spent a good part of the novel wondering if her leadership was worth all of the death that ensues. Part of that problem may be that this is the first time we've seen the Eldritch lands, and most of the book takes place in an isolated fortress. The scene that made the strongest case for her rule actually didn't happen until about 90% of the way through the book, which is a shame.

Likewise, Raff is a quintessential playboy with a heart of gold. He has a tortured past, self-confidence issues, and a firm belief that he will never fall in love, but I never quite got behind him. In theory, these are all components that I should have enjoyed. Again, I think the problem is that I never really saw most of those elements in action. His flirtation with Magda did a little, but I wish that we could have seen more of the source of his emotional issues, rather than just being told about them.

I guess what I'm saying is that I actually would have liked the book to be longer. I think it would have been more effective to have illustrated each character's issues within the story, rather than just telling us about them. I think that would have made the story more enjoyable for me. Looking back, I can see a few points where Aguirre tried to do that, but I think they came a bit late in the story for me.

Which isn't to say that I didn't enjoy it. I certainly did. I liked both Thalia and Raff, and I'm glad that this book continued with the fun mix of action, romance, and politics. The romance was nice and steamy and continued to buck convention with its sex. I liked the opportunity to see a bit more of the world that Aguirre has built, and I hope that she continues to expand on the Eldritch in the next book, as I think their part of the world has a lot of potential for the story. (Also, I'm quite excited for who I think that the next one will center on.) This series will certainly continue to be a pre-order for me.

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## **Sarah says**

Thalia is a princess of the eldritch but her father was a traitor and she's spent the last decade locked away from the world. She's determined to claim her rightful place as queen and prevent her people falling into civil war, all she wants is to be a fair ruler and fix the damage caused by her father and the people he allied with. She can't do it alone though and she doesn't have enough of an army to claim the throne so she proposes a marriage alliance with the leader of the Pine Ridge animari wolf pack. Raff is leader in name but has spent years putting off taking as much responsibility as he could, letting his second make all the important decisions. He only became Alpha after the death of his older brother and has never felt worthy of the position so he prefers to spend his time partying. A war is coming though and if he can help bring he eldritch and animari together then they might stand a chance of winning against their common enemy.

This series is just getting better and better, what starts as a marriage of convenience between two strangers quickly morphs into so much more as Thalia and Raff get to know each other. They're both wary initially but the treachery they are surrounded by forces them to work together in dangerous situations and that builds bonds fast. I love how respectful Raff is of Thalia, she's more pragmatic and willing to do things just because she feels they need to be done but Raff doesn't want her forced into a corner and is willing to wait for things to develop naturally. They're both very different characters, Raff is much friendlier and warmer while Thalia is initially quite cold and she has been taught from a young age to keep everyone at a distance but once you

get past the surface they have a lot in common and she's much more caring than you realise.

Each story in this world does work as a stand alone from a romance point of view but the world is constantly expanding as we learn more about both the eldritch and the animari so I'd recommend reading the series in order. There are lots of world developments here that are going to have an impact on future stories and I'm looking forward to seeing which couple is up next, I have a feeling I've guessed the hero but I'm not 100% sure so that always keeps things interesting.

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### **Kathleen (QueenKatieMae) says**

The third installment of Ann Aguirre's continuing stories about the skin shifting Animari and the ancient magical Eldritch, while very similar in scope, is darker than the first two books. The Ars Numina stories take place in present day, utilizing jeeps and drones and war machines, but the magical beings remain hidden away in pockets of wilderness so that the shape shifting wild cats and wolves and bears and reptile people and the Eldritch do not interact with humans. All have waged war against one another at some point in their history. Now they are in a war against Tycho, a megalomaniac who wants to rule them all.

In *The Wolf Lord*, the Eldritch princess, Thalia, reaches out to the leader of the Pine Valley wolf pack. She proposes a marriage of convenience; a political joining that will bring her one step closer to the Silver Throne of her people. The wolf lord, Raff, agrees to the merging of the two clans, a contract is drawn up and the two marry. Tragedy strikes and the independent Thalia finds herself relying on Raff more than she had anticipated. And the carefree Raff who does not consider himself a true leader, finds himself growing more protective of Thalia and her people.

In the beginning, Thalia is humorless and rigid and I felt the easy-going Raff got stiffed in the deal. His Animari interact more lovingly and playfully with one another, like canines do. The Eldritch, with their long life span, spend hundreds of years backstabbing, poisoning and deposing each another, a waste of life to be sure but that is their way. So, with their backgrounds and personalities as such, this couple could not be more diametrically opposed and I was ready for Raff to take a run on his Eldritch bride. Many times. I mean, they argued about sex on their so-called honeymoon. Not the best start. But, as she grew within her relationship with Raff, she grew more likable.

Raff is likable from the beginning. He gets a little too protective at times but that's the nature of the wolf Animati. It's also interesting to note that while Aguirre has named her books after the male characters, the men share the stories with their romantic female leads. Especially *The Wolf Lord*. I found this one more fifty-fifty on sharing story than the other two books.

The story is tropey and predictable but that does not detract from the reading enjoyment. The first two books contained some rather large battles between all the clans but *The Wolf Lord* does not. It has some skirmishes but focuses mostly on the growing relationship between Thalia and Raff. The usual political intrigue is there. The mistrust among the clans is there. And it would just not be an Ars Numina without the soft-core porn so that is definitely there. I checked. Many times.

These are some fun books set in an interesting world with some memorable characters so I know I will finish this series. I really want to see what happens with the monastic bear warrior. Hard to have a romance when you have taken vows of celibacy.

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## **Payton (Payton's Book Thoughts) says**

I received this book from the author in exchange for my review. This has in no way affected my thoughts/feelings/rating of the book.

I FREAKING LOVE THIS SERIES! The Ars Numina series is one of my all time favorites and if you haven't read it yet, WHY ARE YOU SLEEPING ON THIS SERIES???? STOP IT! READ IT NOW!! Yes, I will force this series on everyone I know because it's just that freaking amazing!

I just want to gush about this book and not give a comprehensive review and just say that it was amazing, I loved it, you should read it, why haven't you read it, read it now, what are you waiting for, stop what you're doing and read this, etc BUT I WILL TRY to form my thoughts into something more cohesive than that.

This book is the third in the series and it was long awaited because I waited like a whole year to learn more about Raff and Princess Thalia. I've been so invested in every book, on every character, in every love story and this one was no different.

I absolutely loved getting to know these characters more in depth, of course they made appearances in previous books, but this one was all about them AND I LOVED IT! Raff and Princess Thalia's characters were so complicated and fleshed out, not that I would expect anything different because the other books were amazing as well.

I love that each of these stories build off of the previous one but still seem so unique. I was so invested in the outcome of this book and the problems they were facing. I just ship these characters so hard! Like they are perfect for each other. They balance each other out and they are exactly what the other one needs.

Raff's unwavering loyalty to Princess Thalia from pretty day one is so freaking swoon worthy. He never doubted her, which was so freaking precious I just cant even.

They did hit so many trials and tribulations throughout the novel and there were curves balls thrown at them from just about everywhere but I never lost faith in them.

This book wrapped up so nicely, but left me anticipating the next book. LIKE I NEED IT NOW! I'm pretty sure I know who the next couple will be and let me just say I AM SO FREAKING EXCITED AND I WILL SHIP THEM SO HARD TOO!

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## **JG says**

Fantastic worldbuilding, well thought out plot both the overarching and the main one. Rafe and Thalia as a couple took a different take on the marriage of convenience plot from the first book and this displays attention to individual characters bringing something different to each romance.

The Wolf Lord is the third book in the Ars Numina series by Ann Aguirre. All three books are set in a world where the shifters and other paranormal beings are on the verge of war with each other after the failure of their peace treaty. The wonderful mix of contemporary technology with an almost feudalistic form of socio-political society was such an interesting mix that it would make you keep reading and reading until you might ask for the next book ASAP. The Leopard King sets up the overarching story, while The Demon Prince brings the readers to the frontline of war. In The Wolf Lord alliances are made between two cultures

that basically are total opposites of each other but in order to win peace must be done. Both Rafe and Thalia had childhoods ruled by fathers who has scarred them and directed their way of life. Rafe is content to cruise through life but the oncoming war has made him rethink his position and step up to the challenge of living his potential. While Thalia has to bear the burden of infighting between her own kind to bring peace and prosperity to them. This third book has a steadier pace but it basically reflects the overall plots "the quiet before the storm" phase. The romance like the previous books, is really hot and erotic and it did not seem out of sync with the main plot. I definitely love the book and where the story is headed and cannot wait whose turn it is to fall in love and how our protagonists will win the war.

\*Copy provided\*

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### **Sabrina says**

Princess Thalia wants to unite her people and bring peace but knows there is a lot of fighting to come before her plans can be realised. She comes from a line of royalty and believes she is the true leader. In order to strengthen her position she wants to find the right husband who will help her without trying to take over but this is much harder than she imagined.

As I had not read the first 2 books so I was happy to see 'the story so far' at the start of the book, however I soon realised I actually didn't need the background, the book works well as a standalone.

Raff and Thalia are great characters. Thalia is like an ice queen while Raff is charming and his cockiness is funny without being obnoxious. There is just the right amount of romance between them.

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Timitra says**

I'm truly enjoying this series, all the intrigue, politics, treachery, betrayal and love. The love is my favourite part. I love watching these characters fall for each other amidst that backdrop and cannot wait to see what happens next.

ARC provided by author in exchange for a honest review

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### **Sunny says**

ARC Review:

In my mind, I associate Ann Aguirre with action, adventure, and a little terror (If you have read her Dred Chronicles or Razorland series, you will know what I mean.) My expectations are high for Ars Numia and I am happy say I am not disappointed. If want a paranormal series with political intrigue and action, this is for you. But if you are looking for great characterization and romantic relationships this is also for you. What I enjoy most is the parity between the characters - the are both alpha personalities with the ability to defend themselves and each other. They match each other in status, intellect, and wit. THE WOLF LORD is a well-balanced and highly entertaining read.

*I am reviewing this book voluntarily. I have made no promises to anyone and haven't received any type of compensation or gift in exchange for the review.*

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## **Margo Collins says**

### **Thalia & Raff! I love them!**

This is one of my favorite series—I'm delighted to see Thalia and Raff working together. He's the sweetest wolf lord ever!

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## **(Tori-Smexybooks) smexys\_sidekick says**

Favorite Quote: "Maybe a marriage of convenience to a wicked wolf wasn't so bad after all."

The third story in Aguirre's highly charged adventurous paranormal romance enchants readers with a marriage of convenience that begins as a political strategy and ends as a true love match. Witty, romantic, and yes, jam-packed with intrigue, suspense, and plenty sword swinging, lightning striking, wolf chomping battle scenes. I've been a huge fan of this series since its first installment, *The Leopard King*. A world filled with shifters and other supernaturals co-existing find themselves at war when an extremist faction decides to break the peace treaty in an attempt to rule them all. Aguirre introduces the world and arc in book one, steadily expanding both while building a single couple romance in each installment.

Heavily character driven, Aguirre slides readers into this new installment with nary a bump as her latest couple must not only overcome races issues but also personal ones if they want to survive. Princess Thalia Talfayen is Ediritch (think fae) and is one of four house that rules their people. Locked up by her father for her failed attempt to overthrow him after he broke the peace treaty, she is now free and determined to save her people from more war. She must marry soon in order to secure her throne and avoid a forced marriage to her enemy. After being turned down by the cats (book one), the demon lord (book two) and the bears, Thalia turns her attention to the wolves and their leader, Raff Pineda.

"...she was prepared to do whatever she must to consolidate her hold on Eldritch leadership."

Raff Pineda, Leader of the Pine Ridge wolf pack, has been the leader of the pack ever since he was forced to commit his father. Considered nothing more than an ignorant playboy who avoids responsibility, Raff is taken back but intrigued by the invitation from Princess Thalia and decides to head to her home to discover what game she is playing.

"The wolf is at your door, Lady Silver. Will you let him in?"

Aguirre does a fantastic job of building the slow burning romance, allowing Raff and Thalia ample time to get to know one another while expanding the arc and moving it in the direction needed. We are given more information on Thalia's people and her father's court. Thalia and Raff are perfect together though it takes them a while to see that. Both used and abused by insane fathers, they subconsciously seek different ways to avoid being hurt by anyone again. Raff with his many bed partners and Thalia by holding herself aloof from those around her. Their soft attraction gains in strength with their witty banter and a set of conflicts that force them into life and death situations. Despite Raff's reputation, he proves himself to be quite the kinky protective romantic and does everything he can to prove to Thalia she is worthy of love.

“The way she trembled against him roused every ferociously protective instinct. Somewhere, there were assholes who wanted to slaughter this bright, lovely creature. Then and there, Raff decided they all had to die, no mercy, no exceptions.”

New faces are introduced while old faces demand our attention. Aguirre makes a few interesting matches as she lays clues towards book four and the possible coming outcome. Amusing dialogue stands out in contrast against the story’s bleak landscape as these two very different races try to find some common ground to build a relationship on.

“The Eldritch are secretive, even when it comes to shit we’d consider common knowledge. Took me damn near ten minutes this morning to get the staff to tell me where the fucking bathhouse is.”

The violence tinged conflict weaves its way in and out of the story though the focus remains heavily on our protagonists and their journey to healing themselves and their people. I was shocked at how easily Thalia’s nemesis was dispatched in the end but applaud the methods.

Once again Aguirre gives readers an action packed romantic adventure well worth the wait and I am looking forward to the next on in the series-The Shadow Warrior.

Grade: B+

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### **Carol (bookish\_notes) says**

This book is definitely not a standalone and should be read as part of the Ars Numina series, first with The Leopard King and then with The Demon Prince as the second book. I did really like the quick synopsis at the beginning of this book about what has happened in the story so far, and brings the reader up to speed on the major highlights of the series. That certainly helps if you're not reading the books back-to-back. So, while the last book was heavy in battle scenes, this book takes a small step back from that. Not to say there isn't *any* fighting, because there *is*, but I found that this book focuses a little bit more on political maneuvers and the romance aspect of the story.

*The Wolf Lord* is about an Eldritch self-proclaimed princess named Thalia, who wants to win the throne and become queen. The Eldritch have been always been divided between houses and have never been able make a stake for the throne to rule over the Eldritch as one. Thalia needs an alliance. Her people aren't enough to win her the throne and marriage prospects are slim in which to support her cause. That leaves her with the wolf shifters and their leader, Raff. Raff is certainly not her first choice, but it's the best she has.

This book does have a slow start as we're introduced to the characters. They've made appearances in previous books, but this is the first time we're in Thalia's territory and this is in the aftermath of what her father has done. There's no reason for the Animari to trust someone with the Talfayen name, but Raff agrees anyways. Compared to Thalia's almost 300 year existence, almost 60-year-old Raff is young in her eyes. And in some aspects, Raff still acts young and brash. He relies on others to keep Pine Ridge running, and spends most of his days playing around rather than ruling like a leader should.

This is a marriage of convenience, and a slow burn romance at that. There's also a forced proximity scene in this story, and it's like this book is trying to kill me by putting all my favorite tropes into this one book. <3

Thalia initially comes off as the ice princess she pretends to be, but we soon see that's a mask she hides behind because that's what she's been taught. She leads a very lonely life, and my heart breaks for her. Raff is

impulsive, but we see that he has insecurities as well and his playfulness is the mask he puts on in front of others.

I mentioned that there are fewer battles in this book, but that's due to how the Eldritch work. This is a group of people who rely more on poisons to gain power than all-out war. It's underhanded political maneuvering rather than hand-to-hand combat like we've seen in the previous books. However, we still have shocking betrayals and deaths that still really make an impact. One minute, everything's fine, and then everything can go to hell on the next page. The story is an exciting one that keeps you on your toes.

We don't see much of the previous love interests in this book. They have no allegiances to Thalia and Raff, so that makes sense. Moving forward, I would expect to see a little more of them though, or at least with book four. I'm guessing the next book is about Gavriel. He all but vanished in this book, and seems to have developed something with the cat shifter, Magda. It'll be interesting to see what happened to them in their time away from Pine Ridge and Daruvar.

What's the status on Slay? Unknown. He doesn't make an appearance in this book, and I swear I'm *dying* with anticipation for book six when we finally get his story. He's going to get his own book, so he can't have turned evil, right? RIGHT? Not to say he's not undercover of something to help overthrow the bad guys, but AHHHHH I NEED TO KNOW.

My favorite parts of this book is CONSENT. Consent in books is very important to me and I love that Thalia and Raff communicate openly about their desires and check-in with one another. And this doesn't just apply to sex! I especially loved the scene where Thalia sees Raff shifted as a wolf for the first time and hesitates and makes sure it's okay with Raff for her to pet him or not. Another one of my favorite moments is where Thalia is learning what to call the different Animari. Instead of guessing and offending someone, she asks Raff if wolves are referred to as "packs" and what the correct verbiage is for the other shifters. He replies that it's always "best to inquire about someone's preferences to prevent giving unintentional offense." And I definitely teared up a little at that.

I do think the ending was a *tad* rushed. Everything happens very quickly from about 80% onwards, to be honest. It's a blink-and-you-miss-it moment. I did wish the ending could have been expanded a little more, but I think I'm just keen on a fight that goes on for pages and pages. And evil villain monologuing, because why not? \*shrugs\*

Overall, I really loved this book and I loved reading Thalia and Raff's story. It was heartfelt and manages to balance a lot of darker moments in the book with some levity as well. This is my favorite story of the series so far, and I can't wait to read the next book in the Ars Numina series!

\*\*\*Thank you to the author for providing me an ARC in exchange for an honest review\*\*\*

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## **Krystal M says**

Forget book boyfriend! Raff is book husband material!

I started with this book first in the series and while normally I would be lost there is a fantastic intro to the world right in the beginning. Gave me the info I needed to proceed.

A marriage of convenience sounds as romantic as you would think but with these two it morphs into something neither of them expected. Thalia is a princess by claim and is working to earning that title

completely. She needed a husband to help with that title and Raff stepped up to the plate.

Alpha of his pack, he felt like he could help her but didn't realize what he was getting into. After getting to know Thalia he knew his decision was best and WANTED the relationship. They are pretty much two peas in a pod with their upbringings but couldn't be more different in race and personality yet they mesh extremely well. Where Thalia loses her temper Raff remains calm. Where Raff feels incompetent she shows him that he is more than even he believes. They are both formidable in their own right and that's what makes them work, I think. They don't only take from each other but give back as well.

So when Thalia is threatened Raff has no problem stepping up and doing what needs to be done. Getting to know each other and their enemies at the same time is trying but makes them stronger as a couple. They boost each other and that's what makes them capable of overcoming everything thrown at them.

The writing is fantastic, detailed, and flows very nicely. I will for sure be going back and buying all of these for my bookshelf!

\*I received an ARC from the author in exchange for an honest review\*

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### **Kelly says**

Oh my GOODNESS, I love this series. Much like Raff and Thalia's romance, the world is a little rough and tumble with a dash of elegant technology thrown in to keep us on our toes. I kinda love it.

Speaking of Raff and Thalia, on the surface these two are as different as night and day. Raff is the party boy with a reputation for recklessness. Thalia is the icy, untouchable princess with a driving force to unite the Eldritch houses. Thalia's offer of marriage to Raff was a desperate gamble to secure allies for herself and I don't think anybody really thought she and Raff would end up being such a perfect match.

Especially not Raff. But then, Raff has a tendency to think pretty poorly of himself thanks to a lifetime of being told he's less than nothing by his father. In truth, Raff is quick and intuitive and once he gives his word to someone he stands by them through everything.

Raff teaches Thalia to let her hair down and Thalia gives Raff the confidence to start believing he's not the massive let-down his father convinced him he is. (As an aside, Raff's issues intrigued me. The guy rules his pack, but he doesn't think much of himself. The self-doubt his father planted in him about his own worth makes him slow to see that it's him and his actions to and for his people that are what his people respect and love. \*HEART EYES\* Oh, Raff.)

I've loved every one of the books in this series and I'm EAGER to watch the next story unfold.

-Kelly @ Reading the Paranormal

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