

## Chapter 5

**A Wolf in the Blood***5th October · 6.38pm*

The potion worked! The howl hadn't come from Gran because she hadn't turned into a wolf. She was staggering about a bit though, and her eyes were spinning.

“Ooh, I need a nice sit down, dear,”

said Gran as she plonked herself on a garden chair and promptly dozed off.

Jacob was staring at me, and so were Stamper and his men. Staring in terror and excitement. Then I realised, with blood-curdling fear, that it wasn't me they were staring at but something behind me. I could hear it, smell it and feel its growling breath on my neck. I wheeled round to find myself gazing into the ferocious red eyes of a werewolf.

That is, ANOTHER werewolf – one that wasn't Gran.

Just my luck, I thought. I've cured one

werewolf and now another one turns up in its place.

Stamper flashed his torch in its face. There was something more than a little familiar about it... the brown fur, the nose, the eyes. Suddenly, it dawned on me. This werewolf was my mum!

The werewolf glared at Stamper, baring its fangs, its jaws dripping with drool. Stamper sneered back.

“Let’s get it, lads!” Stamper yelled. He pulled out a small, shiny metallic device – a kind of stun gun – from his back pocket. His men whirled their silver tubes around,

popping loops of silvery cord out of the top.

I felt a sharp pain as the wolf swept me aside and dived towards the men. Stamper’s goons lassoed the wolf round the neck. It clawed at the looped cord but the men just pulled tighter and tighter.

“We’ve got it!” laughed Stamper, taking aim with his stun gun.

“MUM!” I cried.

Just as Stamper was about to pull the trigger, Jacob pounced on his back.

“NO!” he shouted. Stamper dropped

his torch and spun around, trying to shake Jacob off. The werewolf roared and shook its head from side to side, yanking the two men off their feet. Then it twisted round, dragging them in circles. One man crashed into the coal shed, the other into a stack of pots.

Stamper finally managed to throw Jacob off. “Ouch!” moaned Jacob, landing with a thump.

Stamper took aim once more. Now, it was my turn. I didn’t care if Mum was a werewolf – I wasn’t going to let him shoot her. I dived at his legs, trying with all my

might to force him to the ground. But it was no use, he was too strong. He simply swatted me aside.

The wolf saw this and seemed to get angrier. It roared again, this time more ferocious than ever. Now, I knew my mum was in there somewhere – she was protecting me!

This was enough for Stamper’s men, who shrieked: “I didn’t sign up for this, I quit!” And they scrambled frantically out the garden door.

“Wait!” yelled Stamper. “Don’t be scared!”

The werewolf stalked right up to him and opened its jaws. This time it didn't even roar, it just hissed – a terrifying, gut-wrenching hiss. Stamper's hair turned from brown to white, and his face aged ten years.

“Oh!” his lips quivered. “I dunno though.” He dropped his stun gun and fled after his men.

At that point, Mum could well have eaten me because I passed out!

*6th October · 7.40am*

Morning came and we sat round the kitchen table in awkward silence, drinking cups of strong tea. I was nursing a sore head and a grazed arm. Mum, who was no longer a werewolf, sat with Jacob, who'd changed out of his wolf onesie into normal clothes.

He was holding his hands out in a cradle while Gran coiled wool round his fingers.

“Thank you, dear boy,” she said. “Now, let me go and brew some more tea.”

She fluttered her eyelids at him and

he looked horrified. Then, she hobbled off with the teapot.

“I think you have a new member of your fan club, Jacob,” I smiled.

Mum coughed, her cheeks flushing red. “I probably owe you all an explanation.”

“Oh, you think?” I replied.

“You see, being a werewolf runs in our family.”

“WHAT?” I croaked. “Bu-bu-but, does that mean...”

“Shoosh-shoosh-shoosh!” Mum made

a gentle patting motion with her fingers. “It usually skips a generation. I have it and my own grandmother had it. It was she who taught me everything I needed to know. But you don’t have it, Jess. And your gran – my mum – didn’t have it. Well, not until recently. I’m not really sure why she’s got it now.”

I told Mum about my theory, that Gran got it from the cat bite before the last full moon. Mum only shrugged. “Maybe. Perhaps we’ll never know.”

“At least your gran is cured now,” said Jacob, looking rather pleased with himself.

“My potion worked.”

“No, I’m afraid not,” said Mum. “I tried that potion myself many years ago but it only works once. Next month, the werewolf will come back.”

“Oh.” Jacob’s shoulders sunk. “I guess I’d best go and rewrite my book then.” And, with that, Jacob got up and left.

Gran tottered back in from the kitchen with the now steaming teapot in her finest tea cosy. She looked round, disappointed.

“Where has that lovely young man gone?” she asked.

“I don’t get it,” I whispered to Mum. “How have you managed to keep this a secret for all these years?”

Mum leaned closer, her whisper even fainter than mine. “On the night of the full moon, I don’t go to work. I have this little place I go to instead.”

“Little place?”

She nodded. “I’ll show you.”

*9.30am*

Mum led me through some thick brambles into an ancient, overgrown graveyard. It didn’t look as if anyone had

been here in ages. Some of the moss-covered gravestones were hundreds of years old. I remembered that saying 'silent as the grave'. Now, I knew what it meant.

Mum stopped outside the door of a large, domed tomb.

“Here we are,” she said, lightly. “Home from home.” She undid the padlock and the door creaked open.

“THIS is where you go?” I said with disbelief, listening to my words echoing around the walls. Mum flicked on a torch, aiming it down at a rusty grate on the floor.

“Down there,” she said, pointing. Beyond it, a set of steps led into blackness. “There’s an old crypt underneath – it’s been in our family for generations. It has a solid iron door. Once it’s bolted shut, there’s no way for the wolf to get out. That’s where I spend the full moon, and that’s how I’ve kept the family secret for so long. Except tonight, I had a feeling that the full moon would have some surprises in store. Your gran has been behaving very strangely, so I hid on the railway embankment.”

I could feel the shivers creep up my

spine, then creep back down and tap dance all over my back.

“I won’t take you any further,” Mum added, with a smile.

“What about next month?” I asked. “If Gran isn’t cured then...”

“Oh, don’t worry, dear. I had to share the crypt with my own grandmother. I’m sure our two werewolves will get on famously.”

*4th November · 4.10pm*

The days are shorter now and the

night of the full moon has come around again. I can hardly believe it was a month ago that me, my mum (the werewolf) and a man in a fake wolf costume fought off Stamper and his goons.

I’ve just waved Mum and Gran off as they left for the crypt. Gran seems fine, although I don’t really think it has sunk in for her yet. She insisted on taking a flask of tea with her, and a Tupperware box full of cheese and pickle sandwiches. I didn’t have the heart to tell her I didn’t think they would be the food of choice for a respectable werewolf.



Jacob phoned to say he has given up writing about werewolves. He's now writing a book about vampires instead. I wished him well.

*4.25pm*

Sunset is two minutes away, and I keep thinking about Gran and Mum in that old crypt. I hope the two werewolves get on together.

I'm feeling a bit woozy, so I think I might go to bed. I've had this sore head all day and my throat is dry. It feels like my bones are aching – almost like growing pains, except much worse.

*4.26pm*

OK, this is weird. I've just plucked a massive wiry hair out of my left nostril. My fingertips and the tips of my toes are all tingly and raw, too.

*4.27pm*

Sunset.

The backs of my hands are all hairy, plus my toenails have just sprouted through the ends of my socks! Oh – and that graze on my arm – I think I see what's happening now.

It's not good.

Not good at all.

I can't...

I c-an't...

I c-c-c-c...CA...

HOOWWWWLLLLLLLLL!

**Text copyright © David Macphail 2017**

The right of David Macphail 2017 to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted.

Please note, this PDF is licensed under the Terms of Use which can be found on the Fiction Express website [www.fictionexpress.co.uk](http://www.fictionexpress.co.uk)