

## Wolf

Do you see me? I see you. Those colours...red, brown, green, and yellow flowing like waves in the early breeze. They are beautiful. I would see you even if you did not have them, but they will help my pups, thank you. I have three, did you know? Perhaps you do, I saw you looking at them two weeks ago before we moved. They had just arrived. You peered at them from behind the shrubs. They enchanted you and I saw a smile creep across your face. But of course, you were wary, not knowing where I was made you uncomfortable. My pups too were scared, not knowing your intentions and they called for me, but I waited to see what you would do. I followed you for a while before I went to comfort them. You did not see me, just as you do not see me now.

Look there, just to the left of that large rock halfway up the mountain. The one with the deep cracks near the clump of trees. No, the one you looked at earlier. My coat melts into the stones and dirt but look closely and you will see my pricked ears. They break the outline of the trees. And my eyes, can you see them? They stare intently, like emeralds in the morning light.

Look again, here I am! I am smiling now. I saw you long before I heard you. Wandering across the hills and dried up grasslands. I followed you, curious to know you better. To see your manner. You did not believe in me, that I still watch proudly over this harsh land, and I was even tempted to show myself. But here I am now, here we are, all of us. My young ones, they are so excited. Always overeager although I keep them silent. They will watch and wait for the gifts that I shall bring them. Shall it be a lamb? A goat? Or that rock pigeon that lost her way? No, she cannot satisfy us. Better those odd creatures you keep. How peculiar they are, with their swollen bellies ambling across the grasses as you guide them with your stick. You have done them no favour bringing them here. They are so comical as they try to run. They will snort and cough as I introduce myself and their oversized bodies are our playthings. That one, there, half asleep but soon she will bellow like a trumpet. Still, I am merciful. I am kind. You do not know my nature.

What about now, do you see me now? Here, look, I have moved higher up the mountain to just where the snow begins. Perhaps the glare is too much for you? From here I can see for miles around. You have indeed walked far, far too far from your smoking huts and your own rowdy children. Did they not tell you that we survived, that we still exist? You dealt with my brother and my sister. How cruel you are. To the smallest of us you showed no care or kindness. But we sheltered in these holes and made them our den. You have come again, why? Just as you do not wish to see us, you are not welcome here. It is not our way, but we will return to you what you give to us.

Here I am, closer now. Closer than you can imagine. You will see me soon. I smell you. I am no longer smiling. You are not yet afraid because, still, you cannot see me, yet here I am, a mere 10 metres away! You and your creatures are feeble. It will be over soon. Your time is short, your lives are counted in my steps. I am the one that you will tell your kind about. I am the one you fear. Because, I am a wolf.