

Wolf Tales 2 -- Alexandria

Kate Douglas

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Chapter 1

The black Mercedes took the steep mountain road without effort. Alexandria Olanet struggled to keep her eyes open, but the journey had been long and difficult, emotions between her and the enigmatic man sitting beside her practically off the chart.

He'd been silent the better part of the trip, an uncommunicative partner on a quest that would likely change both their lives at the most elemental of levels. She studied him -- sitting there next to her on the wide back seat -- through half-shuttered eyes, almost afraid to let herself consider what lay ahead.

It was difficult enough to explain what had already transpired. When she'd called her office and informed her partners she was leaving on an extended sabbatical, there'd been very few questions. Of course, they thought she was still smarting over her failed engagement. Little did they know how thankful she was to have gotten out of a disaster in the making.

Now, she wondered if she were about to enter another. Stefan Aragat was more than a mystery -- more than a man, for that matter. He stared out the window, one elegant hand resting beneath his chin, the long fingers and neatly trimmed nails supporting a face that was, for want of any other description, pure wolf. Grizzled muzzle, sharp canines, fur-tipped ears pointed forward, searing amber eyes... even though his body was tall and strong and almost completely human, beneath the tailored slacks and dark gray silk shirt was a coat of black fur tipped with silver and the strong, violent heart of the wolf.

And, of course, a most amazing cock.

Xandi almost laughed out loud. She would never grow tired of that amazing tool of his, all part and parcel of a package caught halfway between

wolf and man. She'd fallen in love with a creature beyond anything her imagination might have created, a creature hell-bent on changing himself back to human.

Would it be the same, making love to Stefan as a man? Merely thinking of the wolf taking her, of that amazing cock penetrating her, swelling inside her pussy and trapping them together in unbelievable orgasms, made her hot. Made her pussy weep and her muscles clench in frustrated need.

What was wrong with her, she wondered, that she would desire the wolf as much as, if not more than, the man?

Stefan stared blindly out the window, thinking of the man they were rushing to meet... and of the woman beside him. Xandi had been unusually quiet as they wound their long way up the mountain in the chauffeur-driven limo. Of course, so had he, though there was so much he wanted to say to her.

She'd turned his life upside down over the past two weeks, ever since she'd literally stumbled into his world. Alexandria Olanet -- Xandi, of the sweet lips and even sweeter body, a woman as fascinated by his bestial qualities as she was by the man inside. How was she going to feel when he returned to his human form? Would she love him as much? Would her fascination and insatiable sexual appetite remain just as powerful after he found his humanity, or was it the wolf in him that excited her?

Even more worrisome... what was she going to think of his darker side? The desire and passion even he didn't understand? The needs he felt, even now, with a lovely woman close beside him.

Desire linked to Anton.

Stefan's shoulders dipped and he closed his eyes. He would know the answers to all his questions once this long journey ended. He'd contacted the wizard, his mentor Anton Cheval, told him he was returning, but nothing more.

He'd reached the wizard through a spell of his own making, using the amazing mental link he had with Anton... the same link he shared with Xandi.

He still hadn't admitted to the woman he loved that their ability to read one another's minds wasn't unique. Nor had he told her of the dark desire he felt for Anton. Of the dreams that awakened him night after night with his cock erect and his body wanting another man. Would she still love him, or would she think he was... Hell, even *he* didn't know what he was. Man? Beast? Bi? Gay? Straight?

Damn. He was such a fucking coward! For five years now he'd lived as part man, part beast, tortured by erotic dreams of another man and so afraid of those dreams he'd chosen half a life rather than face the desire he felt for Anton.

Anton. Shit. What was wrong with him? He'd never lusted after a man, never thought of another man sexually. This need, though... this sexual desire was somehow intrinsic to his very existence, to his nature. How could he explain it to Xandi, when he didn't understand it himself, the dark desire, the sensual need and the overwhelming hate that seemed to coexist with every thought of the man who had been his mentor? His master?

The man who had cursed him.

He'd told Xandi there would be penalties to pay, punishment to endure, but he hadn't told her everything. Fear of his own desires, pure and simple, had kept him away from Anton. That same desire now moved him forward. Stefan felt a growing sense of expectation, a dark, purely sexual need for subjugation -- a desire to submit totally to Anton.

He pictured the wizard -- darkly handsome, his lean face and amber eyes mesmerizing, intensely intelligent. Thoughts of Anton had haunted his nights for five years now, filling Stefan's dreams with a combination of carnal longing and murderous intent. Five long years of celibacy, of waking in the dark of night sweating, panting, painfully erect and thinking of Anton, of his elegant hands on Stefan's body, of his mouth, his cock. Dreams that shamed him, excited him, confused him.

Was that unnatural desire part of the curse that left him half man and half beast, or was it a truth about his nature he'd not known before Anton?

When Xandi entered his life and made love to the beast, she stilled the dreams. Stilled them, but didn't end them. He shuddered, feeling Xandi close beside him, sensing the wizard up ahead. Would she hate him when she learned the truth? When she discovered a side of him he still couldn't admit to himself?

As the car drew closer to Anton's home, his sense of dread grew and expanded. This wasn't going to be easy, not with Xandi beside him. Since the first time he saw her, he'd loved her, had reveled in their sexual and mental compatibility. She made him more powerful, more male. More in control.

Was he about to lose all of that to Anton? Would he lose Xandi as well? He swallowed and felt the muscles in his throat constrict, as if someone were choking him, cutting off his air.

I can do this. I will beg his favor and submit. I have to.

I want to.

Oh God, how I want this.

It went against his nature, against everything that defined him.

A dark thrill coursed through his body. His cock swelled against the restricting fabric of his slacks. *No. What defines me has changed. I have changed. Xandi loves me as I am. Her love empowers me, yet Anton's love draws me. Must I lose one to gain the other?*

Must I lose who I am now to regain my humanity?

He took a deep, steadying breath. Held it. Let it out and felt his shoulders relax.

Sighing, he took Xandi's cold fingers in his and held her hand tightly against his thigh. Afraid, anxious, expectant... confused. But not alone. No longer alone.

Xandi remained quiet as the car followed the twisted road to the wizard Anton's home. High in the mountains of Montana, the location was a mere X on the map Stefan had found on his breakfast table this morning.

Neither of them had any idea how Anton had placed the map and instructions in Stefan's home. The simple sheet of handwritten directions and the map, located discreetly next to the salt and pepper shakers had merely hinted at the wizard's power.

Stefan was his usual silent self, but Xandi sensed conflicting emotions roiling beneath his outwardly composed exterior. Relaxed he might appear, but she knew he was as tense as a well-strung bow. She sensed his raw power tempered by an underlying hint of fear. He reached over and took her hand, squeezed her fingers, then held them against his thigh.

She sighed and moved closer to him. He might not say anything, but she knew he needed her, for companionship, if nothing else. Why did he seem so conflicted? Something else bothered him, something she couldn't quite sense. She squeezed his hand and settled close against his side.

Xandi was still contemplating his moods when they pulled into the drive of the wizard's home. Palatial in design, the house managed to look as if it had been hewn from the very trees and mountains that protected it, as if the rock had grown out of the earth, not been laid by the hand of man.

She felt Stefan's resolve strengthen as the car rolled silently to a stop. He straightened his shoulders and lifted his chin, then nodded with almost regal bearing when the driver opened the door for them. An old servant in a faded blue robe met them at the top of the broad staircase leading to a large, intricately carved wooden door. He bowed and stepped aside, leaning heavily on a carved staff. With a terse nod, he invited them in.

Stefan strode through the door like a man with a mission. Xandi followed quietly, curious at Stefan's unexpected show of bravado. He'd been almost

humble when he'd cast the spell to contact Anton the night before. Humble and penitent, as if well aware of the pain his arrogance had brought him.

Xandi realized she preferred that side of him. This attitude, as if he were looking for a battle, put her off, unsettled her.

The old man abruptly appeared just ahead of them, blocking their path. His voice trembled as if with palsy, his hand on the head of the staff shook. "Stefan Aragat. You seek the wizard. Why?"

Stefan drew himself up, standing straight and proud, glaring down his long, lupine nose at the old man. "You can look at me and ask that? I want him to return me to my human form."

"Ah. I see." The old man moved closer to Stefan. He tilted his head and looked up, frowning. "Do you truly regret your hubris? Do you accept your blame for his actions? Do you understand humility? That is the lesson he wished to teach."

"Of course I do, but I wish to discuss this matter with Anton, old man. Not with his servant."

Xandi drew away from Stefan. She shivered in a sudden chill and her gaze shifted nervously from the proud tilt of Stefan's head to the answering gleam in the old man's eyes. She backed against the wall, sensed a building power within the room, an aura of shifting light and darkness. Didn't Stefan feel it? How could he be oblivious to the anger, the darkness, the seething cloud settling all around them?

Then she saw it, the slight curl to Stefan's lip, half smile, half snarl... the same expression on the old man's face as he nodded in understanding.

Suddenly it all came clear to Xandi. Stefan challenged the old man! He *wanted* a fight. What the hell was he doing?

Stefan recognized his mistake the second the words left his mouth. He'd stormed in here, all full of bullshit and bluster, his heart pounding in his chest,

his passions running high and hot. *Wrong*. So damned wrong he wasn't even close to right. He needed to get the hell out of here, now, not force the issue while Xandi stood beside him. What the *hell* was he thinking? He turned and reached for her, but a voice filled the room, reverberated within the walls, bounced off the high ceiling and left his sensitive wolf's ears ringing.

Stefan spun around. The old man held his staff high. Power flashed in a sparkling aura around his body. There was no weakness in him now.

Of course! Stefan had wondered if the old man was Anton. He had his proof, now. Wasn't this exactly what he'd wanted? At least what one side of him wanted. Stefan blinked, recognizing his desires for what they were, finally understanding how powerful his needs had become.

"Have you learned so little, Stefan Aragat? Have the last five years taught you nothing? I had hoped better of you. You truly are an arrogant bastard."

The depth of his error struck home with the precision of a radio-controlled missile. *Oh shit*. He never should have pushed Anton with Xandi here. He barely had time to raise his hands in apology -- the shift was instantaneous. One moment he faced an angry old man in a faded blue robe, the next Stefan cowered beneath the snapping fangs of a ferocious black wolf. Before he had time to react, the wolf caught Stefan's shoulder between powerful jaws, twisted his body and bore him to the ground. Stefan landed, face down, hard, the air rushing from his lungs in a powerful gust, leaving him dazed and disoriented.

Snarling and snapping, the wolf caught his shirt and ripped it away from his back, clawing at Stefan's flesh, rending it with his sharp claws. Stefan's pants went next, stripped from his writhing body as he fought desperately to stop the vicious, snarling attack.

Abruptly, he stilled beneath the wolf as understanding slammed into him. This was exactly what he'd wanted all along. Not merely to submit, but to be *forced* to submit, forced to take the punishment due him. Forcing absolved him,

allowed him to exorcise the wizard from his mind, the dark desires from his dreams without admitting his acceptance.

Xandi screamed. The sound cut off sharply in mid howl. Frantic, Stefan twisted his body and saw her, unexplainably naked, caught against the far wall as if by invisible shackles, her arms raised, her legs spread wide, her mouth open in shock and fear.

Xandi! He must protect her... now was not the time to deal with conflicted passions and dark dreams. Stefan twisted beneath the wolf, turned and snapped his own jaws, reached for a hand-hold on the thick fur. Each grasp was torn loose, each twist left him more at the mercy of the beast. Stefan felt a sharp probing between his legs. Something hot and wet jabbed his balls, the soft flesh near his anus.

He'd expected this, feared it, wanted it, but not now, not like this, not with Xandi watching.

Not with a wolf!

Desperate, he twisted harder, writhed and jerked in a frantic attempt to shake his attacker loose, but a heavy paw forced his head to the ground, another, claws extended, raked his back and thighs and he felt the screaming agony of penetration, felt the creature's thick cock forcing entrance.

"No! You bastard... no!" Snarling, snapping impotently, he fought the more powerful wolf, his hips twisting and turning to shove the beast off, but the creature thrust harder, his thick cock stretching and tearing to find entrance. Pain, burning, stabbing pain took his breath, forced the air from his lungs. Gasping, twisting impotently, his actions only drove the creature's huge cock deeper into his virgin ass. He threw his head back in an agonizing cry...

... and looked directly into Xandi's gray eyes. Caught there, her gorgeous body held against the wall by invisible bonds, her eyes wide, her lips parted.

The creature slammed against Stefan's buttocks and he felt the agonizing length of the wolf's cock piercing deep and hard, the pulsing inside his own body as tissues and muscles adjusted, accepted.

He bowed his head, his shame complete. Xandi would watch his subjugation, stand witness to his weakness. Stefan ceased his struggle in a tacit admission of defeat. He should never have fought this, should have knelt and accepted what was his due... what he'd desired all along. He dipped his head further, closed his eyes as sharp claws caught his naked hips, as the creature behind him pressed home with short, jabbing thrusts until his huge cock found its home, seated deep within Stefan's body.

The beast went still. Stefan felt almost preternaturally aware of the solid cock pulsing hot and hard inside his ass, of his bare knees resting on the thick carpet, his trembling arms supporting his own weight as well as that of the wolf. He held his breath, afraid to move, afraid to bring back the agonizing pain just now beginning to subside.

He took long, slow breaths through flared nostrils, controlling the expansion of his lungs. As his body shifted and adjusted to the intruder, a familiar warmth suffused his skin, heated his loins. He felt the first stirrings of desire, fought the impulse to spread his legs wider, to welcome the cock deeper, to press his hips closer.

Shamed, humiliated beyond belief, Stefan fought the all too familiar hot arousal pulsing through his blood, the ache in his balls as his cock rose, stretched, engorged in response to the unfamiliar fullness, of a thick cock penetrating his ass. The creature withdrew slowly, pulling back so the head of his penis teased the tight ring of muscle, then carefully slipped back inside, pressing hard and deep. The wolf found a slow and steady rhythm, sliding in and out, deeper, with each careful thrust intended now to arouse, not to punish.

Shamed, betrayed by his own body, Stefan recoiled as the creature's testicles brushed against his own, a stark reminder of his position beneath the

more powerful male. His mind roiled with memories, thoughts of pride and arrogance, of fear and desire, all brought down to this, to the steady thrust and grind of a hard cock filling his ass, of hot breath against his back, all while Xandi watched. He wanted to weep for the shame, but at the same time his body reacted, adjusted, accepted... submitted.

Memories of dreams filled his head, dreams so much a part of his nights these past five years, he'd learned to welcome them. Dreams of Anton and the passion he'd felt for the man, the admiration for his mentor, the hatred. So many conflicting emotions, swirling now, filling his head, his heart.

Sharp claws scraped Stefan's sides. The cock drove deeper, each powerful thrust threatening to topple him forward, a further reminder of the other's strength. A reminder of his own responsibility, of his own failings. Would Xandi still see him as a man? Would she want him after this?

Will it even matter?

Mastered by the stronger wolf, Stefan bowed his head in complete submission. He adjusted his stance, holding steady against the powerful assault.

Then it was a man taking him, a man's muscular thighs pressed against his, a man's belly rubbing against his buttocks. He wanted to feel revulsion, to experience disgust, but his own cock grew harder, stronger, his own body reacted as it found a rhythm to match Anton's. Moaning, more aroused than he could ever remember, Stefan shuddered beneath the steady thrusts, no longer able to deny his nature or the passion clouding his mind.

He raised his head. Xandi watched him, her eyes wide, lips parted, hands trapped against the walls, her naked breasts rising and falling with each labored breath, her nipples pointing at him, proudly erect. A suspicious glistening shimmered now between her legs, dampness clumped the reddish pubic hair covering her mons. No! It couldn't be... she wouldn't... but she *was* aroused, deeply aroused, as aroused as he was, a participant, not merely a witness to his shame.

Stefan shuddered. He should feel betrayed, shouldn't he? Betrayed by the woman who found his humiliation exciting?

He should, but he wasn't. His gaze locked with Xandi's -- his mind a confused and twisted mass of sensation, of lust and passion, of humiliation and pain, and he realized she was there, her own thoughts twisting with his, struggling to understand the myriad sensations, the emotions and passions that engulfed him.

She experienced this act with him! He was aroused and she knew it, felt it, reveled in it. He shook his head, looked back at her, felt her grow stronger in his mind, the link they'd discovered during lovemaking building now, filling his thoughts, feeding his passion. The cock plunging deep within his bowels no longer burned with each stabbing thrust. Now it caught him in a dark, carnal rhythm, a rhythm that seemed to take on the beat of his heart, the rush of blood through his veins, a rhythm he shared with Xandi. A rhythm he knew, deep in his heart, knew in his body as well as his mind.

He knew! Somehow, his body knew this act, knew the deep bonding between males of his kind, understood the place Xandi played in who he was, what he was yet to become. Accepting, welcoming, knowing this was the Master's way, the only way that Stefan might learn and understand.

Anton was there, his thoughts mingling with Stefan's, sharing his knowledge, his understanding, answering more questions than Stefan knew to ask. So many lessons. So much to understand. So many unknowns, all tied to the Master imposing his will on Stefan, imposing his will in the way of their kind. A great glow seemed to surround them, a glow that grew out of the tableau of watching, sharing woman, subjugated male and Alpha wolf. Finally, Stefan knew and understood. He spread his knees wider, braced his hips to meet Anton's deep, penetrating thrusts. Eyes still focused on Xandi, shoulders straining to hold himself steady, he welcomed the man's cock into his now

willing body, welcomed the subjugation, welcomed both Xandi and Anton in his mind.

A hand grasped his swollen cock. Strong, masculine fingers encircled his sensitive flesh, stroked him in fierce counterpoint to each stabbing penetration. The other hand stroked his flank, then grasped his testicles, so that he was totally governed by his Master, completely under Anton's control.

Flexing his shoulders, Stefan strengthened the mental link with Anton, felt the deep love and admiration of the other man, the passion as well as the need and confusion in the woman. He felt the first contraction in his balls, the tightening of his muscles, the huge knot growing in his wolf's penis as his orgasm slammed into him.

Anton's hand closed tightly around his cock just behind the knot. His other clamped down on Stefan's balls, squeezing him to the point of exquisite pain. Arching his back, he felt the hard pulse of the wizard's climax, the hot seed filling him, the fast, hard thrusts as Anton mastered him. Shuddering through his own climax, shaking with his release, arms trembling with passion spent, Stefan collapsed.

Anton released his grip on Stefan's genitals and backed away just as he fell. The wizard's flaccid penis slipped easily from Stefan's body. Without a word, Anton turned and left the room.

There was no pain beyond the rhythmic clenching of his muscles in the aftermath of orgasm. No humiliation. No feeling of any kind, other than the knowledge that what had happened, had to happen. What Anton had done to him was not meant to humiliate or destroy. No, it had been a lesson. A very graphic lesson, an act of love as much as an act of dominance, a sharing of knowledge that had more than rocked his world.

Stefan raised his head, almost afraid to look at Xandi.

Free now of whatever spell had trapped her, she knelt before him, her knees spread wide, her nether lips pouting and moist. She reached her hand out

and touched his shoulder. Stefan felt the link strengthen between them and knew immediately that the knowledge Anton had given to him had not been shared. Xandi didn't know. Still, he sensed compassion, love, need -- overwhelming need.

There was no pity. He couldn't have borne pity. He needed her passion. It was his, not Anton's. She could have chosen the Alpha wolf. She chose Stefan. She needed him. He felt desire rolling off of her in waves of heat, in the racing beat of her heart pounding in his ears, in the ripe, musky scent surrounding her body.

He covered her hand with his, pulled her fingers from his shoulder and kissed them. Then he carefully stretched her out on the thick carpet and knelt between her legs.

She moaned when he covered her labia with his mouth. Arched her back and cried out when his lips suckled her clitoris, then raised her hips to meet his mouth as his tongue swept the weeping walls of her vagina. He licked and suckled, scraping tender flesh with his teeth, lifting her hips with his fingers spread wide across her buttocks.

He found the cleft between her cheeks and probed gently with clasping fingers, lifting and licking, letting his thoughts of love and passion mingle with hers, drawing her closer to him, mentally and physically, until his wolven tongue stretched deeply inside, licked the walls and tissues, covered the sensitive bud, bathed the fleshy lips.

Her body stiffened. She cried out, a long, low keening wail that reminded him of a wolf's howl, a desperate, needy cry that turned to choppy, whimpering sighs and pants. He brought her down slowly, steadily, his tongue a silken caress on sensitized flesh. Her thighs quivered, her hands grabbed for his head, his shoulders... stroked his back, fluttered over his scalp, across the tips of his wolven ears.

Finally he knelt over her and drove his cock slowly into her waiting folds. She welcomed him with raised knees and thighs spread wide. He thrust into her once, twice, then buried himself as she climaxed once more.

The clenching, grabbing undulations of her pussy caught his swollen cock, sucked it deep and hard until his own orgasm burst out of him, the huge knot at the base of his penis slipping through her tight opening, linking them, holding them together.

He felt her thoughts in his mind again, her mental sighs of release, her love, her myriad questions. He lowered himself to one side, their bodies still tied, his cock pulsing in rhythm with her muscular contractions. Her slim arms wrapped around his shoulders. Her face burrowed into the hollow between his neck and shoulder. He heard as much as felt the soft exhalation of moist breath against his muzzle.

He brushed her hair back from her face. Nuzzled her forehead, her lips, the closed lids protecting her eyes. Why didn't she look at him? The link was gone now. The sense they'd been two bodies with one mind, then a single body, a single mind. Now she closed her eyes and sighed against his throat and he wondered if she felt shame for him. Felt pity. Regret.

"I love you," she said. Her lips moved against his throat and he wanted to weep. "I'm not sure what happened here tonight, I'm not sure I even *believe* what I saw, but I do love you."

He couldn't ask for more. Not now. Later, maybe. Later he would tell her what it meant to be part of the pack. What it meant to be female when the Alpha male demanded his rights.

What would happen when Anton decided it was his time to claim Alexandria?

Chapter 2

His clothes were shredded, hers just gone. Xandi sat up and covered her breasts with crossed arms as the door at the far end of the room opened.

"Oliver? What the hell..." Stefan leapt to his feet as the familiar figure of his servant crossed the room carrying two terrycloth robes. "You're supposed to be visiting your family. What are you doing here?" He took the robes Oliver offered and handed one to Xandi. She was thankful Stefan stood in front of her, providing some protection from Oliver's view.

"This is my family, sir." Oliver refused to meet Stefan's eyes. Instead, he nodded his head and turned away, giving them both privacy to cover themselves. "The Master will explain. First, though, I will show you to your room. Follow me." On that cryptic note, Oliver directed them to a staircase leading to the upper floors.

At the base of the stairs, Xandi placed her hand on Stefan's forearm. "Are you okay?"

He laughed. "Other than a really sore ass, you mean?"

"I..." She closed her mouth. *Awkward* didn't begin to describe how she felt.

He covered her hand with his own. "It's okay. There is so much I need to tell you." His eyes were very bright, his expression almost carefree. "I'm fine. Now." He leaned over and kissed her. "I know you don't understand, but what Anton did was inevitable. It makes sense now. Eventually, it will to you, too."

She hoped so. For now, nothing made sense. She knew she must be in shock. She'd seen an old man turn into a wolf. That was impossible, wasn't it?

But so was the man she loved. *Impossible*. There was no such thing as half man, half wolf... yet Stefan walked beside her. Made love to her.

She should have felt outraged over what was essentially the assault of her lover, yet in the midst of the act, she'd sensed Stefan's desire, had actually felt his passion even as he submitted.

She'd been every bit as aroused as Stefan.

Shaking her head, confused and filled with questions, she followed Stefan and Oliver up the stairs.

* * *

An hour later, freshly bathed and dressed in a soft, deep red velour pantsuit she'd found waiting for her in the bathroom, Xandi held tightly to Stefan's arm as they once more followed Oliver. He led them down the stairs and along a wide hallway to what appeared to be a library on the lower floor.

A man sat in an overstuffed chair by a large window, his face partially hidden in shadow. He was impeccably dressed, his black hair swept back from his forehead and tied in a neat queue at the back of his neck. His elbows rested on the arms of his chair and he held his long fingers steepled in front of his lips. He nodded to Stefan, acknowledging his presence, then smiled at Xandi.

His beauty when he smiled almost took her breath away -- an ageless beauty she would never have expected from a man capable of doing what he had done to Stefan. Then she'd seen only the predator, the wild eyes and snarling visage of one man showing his supremacy over another. She'd not seen this man as she saw him now, but still she knew it was the same person, the wizard Stefan seemed to both love and fear.

Anton greeted them with a reserved nod of his head, the sweep of his hand directing them to a low couch near his chair.

Following Stefan's lead, Xandi sat close to him on the comfortable couch. "Master." Stefan inclined his head in greeting, but there was no subservience in his manner. Xandi did, however, sense the respect Stefan held for the other man.

A respect she'd certainly not noticed in him earlier.

"Please introduce me to the lady." Anton's eyes, eyes the same unusual shade of amber as Stefan's, focused directly on Xandi. His voice was deep, melodious. Powerful. Surprisingly, she sensed a subtle link, the same link she'd learned to associate with Stefan. Xandi knew her surprise showed on her face, though she tried to keep her expressions under control.

"Master, I would like to introduce Alexandria Olanet. Alexandria, this is Anton Cheval, the wizard I've told you of." As if the scene in the great room had never occurred, Xandi found herself shaking hands with the wizard. His grip was firm, the flesh warm. He held on, covering her hand with both of his when she would pull away.

"My dear, it is a great pleasure to meet you. I sense your questions and I understand them. They will all be answered." He glanced at Oliver, waiting quietly in the doorway. "Wine for my guests, please Oliver?"

Still holding on to Xandi's hand, Anton turned his gaze on Stefan. She was surprised by the honest concern in his voice when he said, "I must ask you. Are you all right?"

Stefan dipped his head, this motion a subtle acknowledgment of the other's superiority. "Yes, Master."

Anton gave a quick nod and Xandi realized that, with this brief exchange, the two men had put the morning behind them. Forever. She wondered if she would ever do the same. The image of Anton fucking Stefan, first as a wolf, then as a man... the look of pure animal lust on the faces of both men... no, this would stay with her.

Her pussy clenched and she closed her eyes, willing her restless body to be still. Anton's fingers stroked her hand. He tilted his head and looked deeply into her eyes.

He knows. He knows what's in my mind. She shuddered, preternaturally aware of a deep pulsing in her vagina, the taut points of her erect nipples against

the soft velour shirt. Anton looked away, but there was a slight smile on his full lips. A look of satisfaction.

Once more he addressed Stefan. "Does the word *Chanku* mean anything to you?"

Stefan shook his head. "No. Should it?" He glanced down, as if studying Xandi's hand still cupped in Anton's, then reached over and carefully pried her fingers free of Anton's grasp. "No disrespect intended, Master."

"None taken. She is quite beautiful. She is also very special. More special than you realize."

Oliver entered the room with a chilled bottle of white wine and three long stemmed glasses.

"Thank you, Oliver. I will pour." Anton nodded and the smaller man left the room. "Oliver has been in my employ for almost ten years."

He paused, as if giving Stefan time to consider the implications. Xandi watched the play of emotions on Stefan's face, read his understanding and acceptance.

"So, you have watched me all this time?" The corner of his lip curved up in a wolfen smile. "At least it explains the map. I wondered how you placed it on my table. I wondered if your powers had grown beyond all understanding." Stefan took the glass of wine Anton offered him and handed it to Xandi, then took a second for himself. "So, Oliver never was my servant. He was your spy. Why?"

"Because you are *Chanku*. You are the most powerful one I have been able to find and I could not risk losing you." Anton's eyes blazed and he took a swallow of his wine, as if to calm himself. "I will explain, something I should have done five years ago when I confirmed what you were. My only excuse is that I was still learning, then. Still trying to understand all the implications."

Anton paused, set his glass down and clasped his hands in front of him. "There was an ancient race, a wolven race, that co-existed with early humans in

the Himalayas, long before the advent of villages and towns, before man had begun to settle in communities. Legend calls them *Chanku*, but they no longer exist as the people they once were."

"What do you mean, *wolven*? Animals that co-existed, the way dogs do now with people? Or are you talking werewolves? They don't exist." Xandi clutched her wine glass. She already knew Anton's answer. Sensed exactly where this conversation was going. But why? How should she know? Why should she know the word, the name *Chanku*?

Know that the *Chanku* were much more than wolves, much more even, than humans.

Anton nodded and she was certain he read her thoughts. "No, my dear. Not werewolves. Those are mere creatures of myth and legend. Still, I knew you would understand." He turned to Stefan. "You do, as well. However, you are more stubborn than the woman." He smiled once more at Xandi, and sighed. "He'll believe me, eventually. It's okay." When he looked back at Stefan, he was smiling as if he'd just shared a private joke with Xandi.

"The *Chanku*, like the fabled werewolves, have the power to shift their bodies from human to wolf and back again. In our case, though, it's nothing paranormal, not supernatural. We don't need a full moon or any type of spell, nor must we remain under cover of darkness. It's physical, actually, all based on a small part of the brain near the hypothalamus, an extension of that organ that exists only in the *Chanku*, an insignificant bit of flesh that, without certain nutrients, loses its ability to function."

He stood up, as if the information spilling out of him controlled his movements. "I discovered the history of the *Chanku* during my studies of arcane sciences, learned of the grasses once common to the area that is now Tibet, grasses that have the ability to draw certain nutrients from the soil in precise percentages -- nutrients perfectly formulated to stimulate this small organ. It, in turn, exerts influence on the functions in the body needed to shift."

Anton wheeled around and pointed his finger at Stefan. "You thought I turned you into a wolf as punishment for your arrogance. You were only partially correct. I gave you the nutrient in sufficient quantities to allow you to make the shift. You didn't understand how or why it happened, nor did you understand the changes in your very nature. It frightened you. I frightened you... so you blamed me and left before I could explain. Without the nutrient, you were unable to shift back to human form. It wasn't your magic that helped your partial shift, it was the residual effect of the nutrient still in your system. Not enough to complete the shift, it left you caught between man and wolf."

Anton paused in his tirade, took a deep breath and faced Stefan, once more in control. "I frightened you, then. I was wrong, but I let my own arrogance get in the way of truth. I exposed you to your nature without explaining the background that might have allowed you to accept what you were. I won't make that mistake again. You will stay here. You and Alexandria. You will learn the way of our people. You will both be given proper amounts of the nutrients and you will find your true selves."

Stunned, Xandi turned to Stefan. "Selves?" She licked her lips, stared up at Anton hovering over them. "Selves? I... I don't understand."

"Yes, you do. You understand much more than you're willing to admit." Anton knelt in front of Xandi and took her chilled hands in both of his. "How do you think Stefan found you? Lost, dying in a blizzard? He sensed you. Sensed a kindred spirit. You carry the genes of the ancient ones. The link when you make love to him?"

Xandi blushed and turned her head. How could he possibly know?

"Don't hide from me, Alexandria. I felt you. I know you were there, a part of both of us, both Stefan and myself. When I covered Stefan, when I penetrated his body, what did you feel?"

Xandi blinked. Her eyes stung with unshed tears. How could he know?

"Xandi?" Stefan turned her so that she had to face him. "It's nothing to be ashamed of. If anyone should feel shame, it would be me for dragging you into this without proper warning. I suspected what might happen with Anton. I wanted it. I should have told you. I am so sorry." Stefan brushed her hair back from her eyes. "You were there. In my mind, so much a part of the experience that I felt your desire. Your passion."

"I was there." Tears were coursing along her cheeks and she felt the sense of brotherhood as well as the desire. Desire from both men? It was too much, too powerful. She looked from Stefan to Anton, then back at Stefan, at his beloved wolverine features. Looked at him and felt the sense of kindred, of belonging, she'd not known before.

The words came tumbling out of her. "I should have been horrified, but I wasn't. I watched the old servant turn into a wolf, saw the wolf force you to the floor, tear your clothing from your body and I couldn't move. It was the wizard's power holding me against the wall, but instead of fear, instead of the horror I expected... oh, Stefan! I was getting so turned on I could hardly stand it! When he entered you, I felt you inside me -- felt your cock filling me. When he shifted to human form, my senses seemed to shift and I felt Anton's cock deep inside me and I didn't care! Stefan, I didn't care that another man was fucking me!"

She burst into tears and Stefan pulled her into his lap. Anton sat back on his heels and brushed her long hair back from her face, his free hand resting on Stefan's shoulder.

"It's okay, sweetheart." Stefan rubbed his muzzle against her hair. "It's okay. I think you were supposed to feel this way. Anton? Maybe you need to be more specific. There are things I think I understand, but I'm not sure if I can explain it to Xandi."

Anton sat close beside them, one hand still on Stefan's shoulder, the other hand brushing the hair back from Xandi's face. She found it oddly soothing,

comforting, to be curled tightly into Stefan's lap, yet sharing connections with both men.

"The *Chanku* are a polyandrous race. I found old writings that corroborate what my instincts tell me are true. We mate for life, but we share our mates within the pack. The Alpha male rules by physical domination when necessary, but it's usually the female who leads the pack, whether in human or wolverine form. It's her decision as to whom she will take for sexual pleasure, whether it be only one or all the males. Often the women had sexual encounters with other females in their group, though they loved one male above all others. *Chanku* females can only be impregnated while in wolf form, and then they can choose when to reproduce. I have no idea how that works."

"How do you know these things?" Xandi took the handkerchief Stefan pressed into her palm and wiped her eyes. "How do I know you're not just making it up?"

"I can show you the scrolls. You might even be able to decipher the language. Is it necessary? Alexandria, look at Stefan. Isn't he proof enough? You saw me shift from man to wolf and back to man. Look into your heart and deny the truth of what I'm telling you." Anton stood up and paced restlessly about the room.

"I know my assault, my domination of Stefan frightened you. I apologize to both of you, but it was necessary. Fear, anger, passion... all those emotions were necessary. I had to find a way to overload both of you at the same time, create such a backlash of emotions that you wouldn't fight the link. It's the only way I could make you understand. The only way to make you feel your true self."

He stopped in front of Stefan. "You wanted what happened today. Wanted me to fuck you, to take the responsibility out of your hands and turn your fantasies into reality. You've wanted me all these years, just as I've wanted you. I've felt your need at night, sensed the passion in your soul on those

sleepless nights when you raced through the forest. I wanted to explain, but you had to come to me. Do you understand?"

Stefan's shoulders drooped. He sighed audibly and nodded. Anton continued his pacing. Xandi felt Stefan's acceptance as well as her own. This was just one more side of the man she loved. Anton turned abruptly, knelt before Stefan and Xandi. Grabbed their hands in his and held them tightly. "You are both *Chanku*. As am I. We are among the few of a dying race. We must find the others. We must give them their legacy before it's too late. Please. Rest. Stay with me as my guests, as my brethren. My only family. Learn your heritage and help me save our people."

He bent slowly, placed a kiss on each of their hands. His amber eyes glittered with unshed tears and his voice cracked, overcome with emotion. "Save me, as well," he said, raising his head. "Please. I need you both."

Chapter 3

Xandi heard Stefan's footsteps just outside the door. He'd been down there with Anton for over two hours now, while she'd spent the time in their room, overwhelmed by the events of the day. She still wasn't certain how to deal with her conflicted emotions, her attraction to both Stefan and Anton, but she'd sensed Stefan's need to spend time with the wizard, to find answers for many of the questions she knew he had. How to complete the shift from wolf to human, for one thing. How to master the ability to shift, something Anton obviously did with great ease.

How to explain the obvious sexual desire coursing between two seemingly heterosexual men?

Questions she'd never once dreamed of asking, not in her life before Stefan. Questions -- and answers -- that now deeply affected her. The door opened quietly. "It's okay," she said. "I'm awake." She stepped out of the shadows near the window. Stefan crossed the room quickly and drew her into his arms.

"I didn't want to wake you. Damn, Xandi. I am so sorry to have dragged you into all this."

"I asked to come, remember? If what Anton says is true, I had to come." She kissed his throat, the side of his muzzle. She had seen him as a man, not a beast, from the beginning. If what Anton said were true, it explained so many things -- her ready acceptance of a beast as her lover, for one thing. They truly were kindred spirits. "Did Anton answer your questions?" She didn't add, *did he answer mine?* She didn't need to.

"The combination of minerals our bodies need to shift have to be a regular part of our diet. We should both be capable of shifting within a few days. Me ahead of you, most likely, as I've had the stuff before. Anton is an amazing man."

"You're very forgiving." Xandi slipped away from Stefan's embrace. "You've obviously forgiven Anton his assault on you. I'm not so certain I can forget what happened this morning."

"Are you able to accept what happened?" Stefan ran his hand across the smooth fall of her hair and pushed it behind her shoulder. "Will you accept me?"

Xandi thought about it, about the throbbing intensity of her reaction to what she would always think of as Anton's rape of Stefan. She looked at Stefan and blinked back the thick flow of tears, then her words tumbled out, one after the other. "My problem is accepting *me*."

She grabbed his shoulders, holding on to him as if he were a lifeline. Her one remaining grasp on reality changing with each beat of her heart. "Don't you understand, Stefan? I wanted to be part of it. Oh God, I thought he was attacking you, and I still wanted both of you inside me. I wanted to feel what you were feeling, to feel Anton fucking me hard and fast the way he fucked you. I'm aroused now, just thinking of it. I can't get the image out of my mind. It's like a disgusting porn flick, only I see it through eyes of love, of lust and desire like I've never felt in my life! What's happened to me, Stefan? Why would I react like this?"

She burst into tears, sobbing in great, ragged gulps for air. Stefan's arms held her tight, his breath warm on her cheek, and she wondered if she would ever understand what had happened.

"Anton explained it, my love. You heard him. It's our nature. The nature of the *Chanku*. We are extremely sensual beasts. It explains so much! We are what we will be. You could no more keep from becoming aroused by what you saw than I could control my arousal when Anton penetrated me. I was afraid to tell

you, but I've wanted him since I first met him, felt drawn to him, but I didn't understand it. Hell, I'm not gay. Men don't turn me on, but Anton did and it scared the shit out of me. I came here, knowing full well I was going to get fucked. Anton was right. I wanted him to force me because I was too afraid of admitting what I wanted."

He sighed and his breath was warm and moist against her neck. "I love you, but there's another thing you need to know as well... Anton wants you, too. Not as his life mate, but to solidify the bond within the pack. I should be jealous as hell, but I'm not." He laughed and rubbed his muzzle against the side of her face. "He didn't expect you. Oliver never suspected you were *Chanku*. Anton had been trying to figure out how to separate us, until he met you and recognized your nature. I think you were a shock for him. The choice, of course, will be yours, but you have two men who want to make love to you."

He tilted her chin up so that she was forced to look at him. Her body trembled, but there was no fear in her. Not now. Not with Stefan holding her in his arms, telling her with his calm, understanding voice, that she would finally, after years of wondering, discover her true nature. She thought of his words, of the deep conviction he shared with her, and realized she accepted the truth.

Just as she would soon accept Anton.

* * *

Stefan watched as Xandi dug into her rare steak with obvious relish. He'd watched her carefully over the last week, well aware of the subtle alterations taking place within his own body as the added nutrients in his diet wrought the desired changes. Obviously, the minerals worked just as well with Xandi.

She'd eaten very little meat when they first met. Now she preferred her beef blood rare, just as Anton and Stefan did. She'd taken to long days in the woods, disappearing for hours on end. When she returned to the house, she said little, but it was obvious from the flush to her skin and the sweat soaking her jogging suit that she had run long and hard.

Both of them had noticed increased perception, better hearing, a more sensitive sense of smell. At night, they'd come together almost frantically, their sexual encounters lasting for hours and leaving the two of them spent and exhausted. There'd been no further mention of Anton joining them, but Stefan knew it was just a matter of time.

The wizard master had become the proverbial elephant in the parlor, though in this case, Stefan thought of him as the wolf at the bedroom door.

Waiting. Ever patient.

Stefan had run out of patience. He was eager to attempt the shift, felt the strength coursing through his veins and wondered when Anton would say he was ready. Wolf, first. Then human. Finally, he would once again be human.

He wondered what Xandi would think when she finally saw the real Stefan Aragat, when she would feel the need to shift as well. Wondered what it would do to the two of them. As a wolf, she would become the leader of this small group. She fought it now, fought the rightful position Anton had explained she would soon hold. A position where even Anton would defer to her needs, her wants.

Would she still want him? Stefan shifted his gaze away from Xandi and caught Anton watching him. The wizard blinked, then smiled and nodded.

Stefan felt the stirring in his mind, the tentative thoughts as Anton linked with him.

You grow stronger every day. I don't believe Alexandria is ready, but I feel the strength of Chanku running through your body. Tonight. After she sleeps. We would not want to frighten her, should you have any problems with the shift.

Stefan nodded. *I agree. I'll come to you once she's asleep.*

* * *

Xandi seemed distracted tonight. Stefan watched her from his side of the bed as she carefully slipped into her silk gown, turned out the lights and crawled

in next to him. She reached for him in the darkness. He wondered if her night vision had grown as acute as his had over the past few days.

"Yes," she said, snuggling close against him. "I don't need the lights at all." Nor do I need words. I can hear your thoughts, my love. In my mind.

I wondered. Then, that means you've kept yours blocked from me. Why?

Because I'm afraid. I know what you and Anton intend to do tonight. I heard him asking you to meet him, after I fell asleep. How am I going to sleep, knowing the danger you risk?

If you're there, I'm afraid you'll distract me.

He ran his tongue slowly along the line of her jaw, showing her exactly the kind of distraction he feared.

You're right. I know that. It's something you have to do alone. Please, Stefan. Distract me more?

He sat up next to her and slowly removed the gown she'd just slipped on. Her body shimmered golden beneath his enhanced vision, the perfect circles of her nipples and the triangle of dark hair between her legs drawing him like a magnet.

He leaned over and licked a trail from one taut nipple to the next. Xandi sighed and arched her back. He trailed his fingers along her slightly rounded belly, parted the curls guarding her vagina and dipped one finger inside her moist center. The muscles immediately grabbed him, held his finger inside. He added another finger, slipping very slowly in and out, licking and sucking at first one nipple, then the other.

She reached for him, but he caught her hand. "No," he whispered. "This is for you. Only for you. Anton said I would be better prepared if I remained celibate tonight. He didn't say that applied to you."

He opened his thoughts, letting Xandi feel what he felt when he touched her, taste what he tasted as his tongue made a licking, lapping journey across her

breasts, along her torso, across first one thigh, then the other before he settled himself on his knees between her upraised legs.

Her knees were bent and he pushed her heels almost back to her buttocks, opening her wet heat to his searching tongue. He knelt there a moment, knowing the night breeze would cool her hot, moist skin, sharing the sensation of need and desire coursing through both their bodies.

When he knew she could wait no more, he dipped his head and ran his long, canine tongue the full length of her pussy, ending with a tight swirl around her engorged clitoris. She bucked her hips and whimpered when he sat back on his heels. Her hands fisted the cool sheets. She raised her hips, silently begging for more.

This time he lifted her buttocks in his hands, palming her fleshy cheeks, forcing her legs wider apart until she was completely open to him, her labia red and swollen, her sex weeping with need. His own cock had become a thing apart -- hard as stone, thick and erect. He felt it brush against his belly.

Damn. He wanted nothing more than to plunge into her, to bury himself in all that heat and moist womanly flesh, but on this he would obey the wizard. Instead, he dipped his head between her legs and licked her long and hard, his tongue plunging into her slick vaginal passage, his teeth resting sharply against her clit. He inhaled her scent, the deep musky smell of woman and desire. His cock wept and his hips thrust shamelessly, but he ignored his own need and feasted on the woman.

Her knees pressed against the sides of his head and she arched against him. He grabbed her buttocks in a bruising grip, kneading the flesh with strong fingers, holding her close against his mouth.

His tongue plundered her spasming muscles, swept the inner walls of her pussy, lapping and licking through her first orgasm, bringing her almost immediately to a second, higher peak. She cried out, a long, low keening wail. Her entire body went rigid.

He glanced up to watch her face. Her lips were parted, her eyes tightly shut, her hair plastered in strings about her face and neck. He'd never seen anything more beautiful, more arousing, than Xandi in the throes of her climax. His cock and balls ached and it was all he could do to control his own longing to mate, to fight the almost overwhelming desire to plunge deep into those hot, wet, ripe tissues.

He sighed, willing his raging erection to behave itself. He gentled his licking, suckling assault on her pussy, careful to caress her over-sensitized clit with the lightest, softest pressure possible. She held her knees tightly against him, then slowly allowed her body to relax. Her legs fell limply away from his head. Her breath came in long, satiated sighs, the aftermath of passion and pleasure.

Stefan felt her questing thoughts once again, experienced a sense of laughter. When he raised his head, his muzzle soaked with her fluids, she was smiling at him. "I am so thankful Anton only needed *you* to remain celibate tonight. Thank you, my love."

She reached out and touched his brow, swept his hair back over his ears. "Be careful. For me."

He covered her body with his and kissed her lightly on the throat, nuzzled her ear, then planted a kiss on her lips. Her tongue came out and licked the side of his mouth, and he sensed her tasting herself. Stefan kissed her once more then rolled away from her inviting body. It was the hardest thing he'd done in a long time.

All that Anton promised couldn't compare to the sweet gift of Xandi's love. "I promise," he said, dressing quickly. "I'll be back as soon as I can. Wait for me." He leaned over and kissed her once more, then left their room. When he closed the door behind himself, Stefan felt Xandi's love surrounding him, protecting him. Smiling, he went to meet the wizard.

* * *

Xandi turned the faucets on in the large shower and stood beneath the pounding water for a long time after Stefan left. She'd learned it was one way to separate herself from the constant barrage of thoughts within the wizard's home. She doubted either man realized the extent of her mental acuity. After just one day of Anton's special nutrients in her diet, she'd begun hearing the others' thoughts. Even Oliver's mind was an open book.

She'd learned quickly to block out things she didn't want to hear, but it was impossible to completely prevent herself from eavesdropping on private mental conversations between the men. She'd already admitted to Stefan that she'd learned tonight he would shift, that Anton would help him. She knew Anton didn't believe she was ready.

Xandi hadn't tried it yet, but there was no doubt in her mind she was ready. Her skin seemed to crawl at times. Her bones felt almost fluid, liquid, until she brought her errant body under control. Only one thing held her back. Her period was due any time, but Anton had told her to expect very little blood.

Now that her body was becoming more and more *Chanku*, her reproductive organs would be changing. Instead of shedding the unneeded lining of her uterus, she would be sending out powerful pheromones, making her irresistible to the males. Though reproduction was by choice -- the female *Chanku* must consciously act to release an egg for fertilization while in wolf form -- males of the species were attracted by a female in heat, much as any canine male would be to one of its own breed.

She understood that shifting for the first time would be easier during this time because her body's hormones and basic chemical make up would be perfectly aligned for the change, but once she gained her lupine form, the men would come -- both of them. They would come for her. Two drop-dead, gorgeous men, unable to fight their need to mate the Alpha female.

She would have the final approval of a mate, but her own lust would be running high and hot. Did she want to risk something she knew to be inevitable?

Sex with both Anton and Stefan, whether in human or animal form? Two virile, handsome men, intent on giving her pleasure?

Laughing aloud, Xandi tilted her face up to the stinging spray and let the water cascade over her throat and breasts. She must be mad. She had to be completely insane, to think she'd even hesitate over such an amazing possibility.

Chapter 4

Stefan stood facing Anton, picturing the sight they must make -- two powerfully built men of similar height, one covered completely in a coat of silver tipped fur, the other sporting the standard male hair-growth pattern -- chest, belly, groin, legs. He should have felt uncomfortable, naked, alone with the man who had introduced him to his first homosexual experience, the two of them together in the midst of a small clearing surrounded by towering pines -- he should have been, but he wasn't. Instead, he was filled with anticipation. Excitement thrummed through his veins, pounded in his chest.

He'd been erect, his cock as hard as stone since leaving Xandi's side. When Anton directed him to disrobe, the wizard had glanced at Stefan's cock and nodded approval. There'd been nothing sexual in his perusal, merely the acknowledgment that Stefan was ready to attempt the shift. Anton's cock had been only partially tumescent, yet Stefan's erection was proof his blood was running hot and high, that his entire system was primed and ready to explode.

Moonlight cut between the trees, bathing the area in a silver glow bisected with stark shadows. Stefan put his clothes aside and followed Anton's directions, to empty his mind of all thought, to sense the forest around him, to open his mind to Anton's.

I want you to join me, to be a part of my thoughts when I make the shift. Feel what I feel, sense what I do. Then do exactly the same. Don't fight the sensation. You will feel vertigo, a massive distortion of perception as your body adjusts. It's normal. Remember -- do exactly as I do.

Anton's words sounded loud and clear in his mind. Stefan nodded his agreement. His breath caught in his throat. There was something totally elemental about this moment, this sharing with the man he'd grown to love.

He felt Anton's hands resting lightly on his shoulders. Stefan reached out and placed his own palms against Anton's warm flesh.

Close your eyes. Concentrate on what I feel. What my body does.

Stefan's fingers trembled against Anton's shoulders. He sighed, took another deep breath. Opened his mind, forced his body to relax.

Felt Anton begin to shift.

* * *

Naked, Xandi watched the two men from her hiding place in the thick ferns that grew beside the small meadow. Her enhanced night vision made the moonlit meadow as bright as day. Her perceptive mind picked up Anton's thoughts as if he spoke aloud.

She closed her eyes and felt the changes within Anton's body as well as Stefan's, then mimicked them with her own. Her limbs turned loose and fluid, her muscles lost their tone, her bones no longer shaped her frame. It felt like it took hours, but lasted mere seconds, the subtle changes blossoming, racing through veins and arteries, crossing synapses, altering flesh and bone in a million different ways, re-patterning her body, her blood, her very brain.

Disoriented, she shook her head, suddenly aware she viewed the ground beneath her long muzzle. Sitting back on her haunches, Xandi held one large paw up to her face, inspecting the thick toenails, the dark pads. Her coloring was not the same as Stefan's. The fur covering her body was a deep russet, the same shade as her own hair. She stared at her foot for a long time, mesmerized by the difference from its human counterpart, then realized the night around her had come alive with sound and movement and life. She blinked, turned her head, aware her long ears shifted to catch the sounds from the meadow.

Moving with quiet stealth, she rose slowly to her feet and peered through the shrubbery. Two dark wolves stood nose to tail in the midst of the meadow, sniffing one another like a couple of large dogs. She would have laughed if she hadn't felt the urge to join them. Stefan's identity was obvious, the silver tips of his fur already familiar to her, the wolven head essentially unchanged.

Anton was black all over. Only his eyes gleamed amber in the moonlight. He raised his nose and sniffed the air, turning to stare directly at Xandi. She held perfectly still, well aware her scent could give her away. She'd taken the gamble, hoped that her period would wait until tomorrow. She hadn't considered the fact her scent might already be loaded with the pheromones Anton had warned her about.

She drew back into the shrubbery, hoping to remain hidden. Stefan still seemed unaware of her presence, but Anton knew. His voice came into her mind, his thoughts directed solely at Xandi.

Are you sure this is what you want? You have put yourself at great risk, Alexandria. I sense your heat is only hours away. It will be hard enough for us to control our lusts in human form. Impossible as wolves.

Xandi took a deep breath and stepped out of the thick overgrowth. *Let me run with you tonight. I promise to shift back before it's too late. Please?*

Xandi? Stefan's hackles rose. He stepped between her and Anton.

It's okay, my love. I couldn't wait. She opened her mouth, her long tongue lolling out in her closest approximation of a flirtatious grin. *I want to run with the wolves tonight.*

She turned and dashed into the forest, her tail waving high as a flag. Anton and Stefan raced close behind. Leading the two males, running through the thick woods with her senses alive and her instincts more powerful than she'd imagined, Xandi finally knew the true meaning of freedom.

* * *

There was nothing sexual in their run through the dense forest, but it was by far the most sensual thing Xandi had ever experienced. Racing with forelegs outstretched, ears flattened against her skull, nostrils flaring to catch the myriad scents surrounding her, she felt as if this amazing body were one huge nerve ending, sensitive to any and everything she passed.

The steady sounds of Stefan on her right and Anton on her left, the two huge males keeping pace with her smaller, fleeter body, gave her a sense of power she'd not felt before. Her perception of all around her was different, no longer quite so human, though she realized her humanity still ruled her thoughts. Her lungs drew in huge drafts of air, her eyes saw through the moonlit night as if it were high noon, and her long legs were powerful enough to leap small streams, bound over fallen logs, even outdistance the two larger wolves pacing her.

They ran for hours, covered miles. At one point they chased a rabbit into the ground, finally giving up on the terrified creature when it cowered beneath a huge fallen tree, out of their reach. Laughing, tongues lolling, the three spun away as if losing the race had been their plan all along, but Xandi knew she would have killed the tiny creature without a second thought. She'd salivated during the hunt, snapping ferociously at Stefan when he'd gotten between her and her prey.

For a brief moment she wondered how her human self would be affected by the changes wrought in her tonight, but the worry fled on the night wind, fled with the sheer exuberance, the complete exhilaration she felt in this amazing body.

Snapping joyfully at Anton's flank, she sped off ahead of the two males through the thick woods. They followed close behind, one on either side. It wasn't until the sky began to lighten on the eastern horizon that Anton turned their mad run through the forest back in the direction of his home.

Exhausted now, feet no longer so swift, breathing not as smooth and effortless, Xandi padded along behind the two males. Only Anton's tail was still held high. Stefan's drooped down behind him, as did Xandi's. Even with the long runs she'd taken over the past days, she had to admit her conditioning needed improvement.

They reached the broad lawn behind Anton's home just as the sun crested the mountains to the east. Exhausted, legs quivering and tongue lolling, Xandi collapsed in the cool grass with Stefan close beside her. They lay close together, panting, eyes half closed, as the morning unfolded. Xandi wondered if Stefan relived the hours past. Finally she sent a questioning thought his way.

He answered her almost immediately. *My God! Did you ever imagine...*

Never, not in my wildest dreams. Anton? She looked around, searching for the wizard, but he was nowhere to be seen. *I wonder where he's gone?*

He'll be back, you know. He wants you.

I know. How do you really feel about that? Xandi leaned closer and nuzzled Stefan's muzzle. *You know I want both of you, don't you? Is that so wrong?*

Before Stefan could answer, Anton the man, no longer a wolf, walked down the front stairs. He'd obviously showered and shaved. Dressed in a pair of black jeans and a snug tee shirt, his feet bare, his long hair hanging loosely behind him, he looked relaxed and at home.

Xandi suddenly felt sweaty and dirty, almost embarrassed by her wolven form. Stefan sat up on his haunches, obviously wondering what Anton intended.

"It's time for you both to shift back to your human form. I think you're capable of doing it without my help." He nodded first to Stefan, then to Xandi. "Can you reverse the process?"

Xandi went into her mind, realized she could sense her humanity as an image that drew her out of her wolven body. She was hardly aware of the vertigo this time, merely a change in perception as her vision shifted from that of the wolf to a woman's.

Stefan watched her, and she sensed his mind following her patterns. His bestial body seemed to waver, to shift. The silver-tipped fur disappeared, the face altered and adjusted, and for the first time Xandi saw Stefan, the man, standing before her.

Naked, without the fur covering his body, he was more beautiful than anything she could imagine. Strong and muscular, his lean chest powerfully sculpted with a mat of silver-tipped hair stretching between his flat, copper colored nipples, muscles rippling across his abdomen -- he had the body of an athlete in his prime.

His face, though... she reached up and touched the side of his face, running her fingers along his jaw line, tracing his full, sensual lips, threading through the long hair hanging to his shoulders. Black, shot through with silver, thick and straight, it framed his face perfectly. She'd never seen his face, only vaguely recalled what he looked like from his publicity shots while he was still performing as Aragat the Magician.

There was something familiar, though, something that made her turn and stare at Anton. The resemblance was extraordinary. "You could be brothers," she said. "You look so much alike."

Anton shook his head. "No. Possibly distant cousins, but I've checked our lineage. The resemblance is purely coincidental." He nodded at both of them, smiling. "Bathe, dress, join me for breakfast. We have much to discuss." He bent close and lifted Xandi's chin in his lean fingers, stared into her eyes for a long moment, then leaned closer and kissed her.

Though she'd expected something like this, she was startled by her body's reaction, the immediate shock of desire that settled in the pit of her stomach, swirled about until it settled in her pussy, deep in the heart of her sex.

He backed away, stared at her for a long moment, then turned and went back into the house. Almost afraid to look at Stefan, Xandi finally turned toward him.

He was smiling. His look was tender, his head tilted to one side, his amber eyes glowing in the morning light.

Feeling lighter than she could remember, Xandi kissed Stefan on the lips, then led him up the stairs to their room.

Chapter 5

Stefan followed her into the oversized shower. Exhausted, exhilarated, confused, Xandi stepped aside to let him enter. His body was hard, the muscles pumped up from their nighttime run, his cock erect, bobbing close against his body. The feral look in his eyes was very much the wolf, obviously possessive, broadcasting his need to dominate, to hold.

His hunger slammed into her like a fist to the solar plexus -- desire so hot and elemental it practically sizzled across her nerve endings. She raised her arms beneath the sharp spray from the shower, wrapped them around his neck and opened her mouth to his.

For the first time, she kissed human lips, felt the solid thrust of his tongue inside her mouth, tasted the flavors of the man, not the beast. His long fingers clutched at her hips and she clung to him, raising her legs up to clasp tightly around his waist, her body ready for the hard cock surging into her.

There was no need for foreplay, no reason to prepare her body for his assault. Their entire night had been foreplay, the end result here, now, in the shower with the steam rising and the hot water bathing their fevered bodies. Her flesh practically sizzled with the current racing between them, the shared need, the passion running so hot and hard she felt like a marionette on strings, as if her arms and legs moved by the hand of someone greater than both of them.

His cock stretched the slick walls of her vagina, reached deep inside, then slowly withdrew before filling her again. She pressed her breasts against the thick mat of hair covering his chest. The texture was much coarser than the wolf's pelt she'd grown familiar with, and her nipples peaked, tightened with each new contact. She experimented with the sensation, rubbing her breasts

slowly across his chest as the steaming water cascaded over their writhing bodies. She felt the sizzle race from nipple to clitoris, as if a direct line of power and sensation existed between the three points of pleasure, a connection beyond the physical, beyond sex.

His hands squeezed her buttocks and he raised her higher on his cock. Muscles in his arms and chest expanded with the effort and she felt herself responding even more to his arousal. He was human, but the instinct to mate, to mark her as his, was something primal, something more of the beast than the man, something dark and carnal and so damned intriguing.

She responded as the beast, clawing at his tense shoulders, nipping his jaw, clinging to his straining body as he thrust deep and hard, driving her higher, farther than he'd ever taken her as beast.

Sobbing, crying, Xandi felt his sharp teeth against her neck, his fingers holding her with bruising strength, his hard cock driving deep and fast, taking her over the edge, filling her with his hot seed, pumping into her over and over again until both of them shuddered beneath the stinging spray.

Stefan slid slowly down the shower wall until he sat on the floor with Xandi sprawled across his lap. She raised her head to kiss him once more. His body trembled in counterpoint to hers. His pulse beat visibly in the huge vein at his neck. Nostrils still flared with each deep breath, but his eyes were troubled. "Are you okay?" He slicked her wet hair back with one hand, then glanced down at the water swirling down the drain. His eyes widened.

Xandi followed his gaze and understood the heat that had taken her, the overwhelming carnal desire still pulsing through her veins. A watery pink stain flowed from beneath them, swirling in a perfect spiral before disappearing down the drain.

She'd started her period, a simple thing to a woman.

A powerful event for the Alpha female of the pack.

It was time. She'd known this was coming, known she must make her decision. Anton said the female took all the males in her pack sexually, that the drive to mate would be strongest during her heat. She knew, instinctively, he was right, knew that, as Alpha female, it was her choice to breed, to produce an egg for fertilization.

She'd felt the first stirrings during their nighttime run, had recognized the deeply rooted drive that led her to race the two males through the night, her tail held high, her actions teasing, playful. She'd reveled in her own sexuality, celebrated her power as female, as future leader.

Playtime was over. Was she ready? What about Stefan? "How do you feel about it?" she asked. There was no need to explain. Stefan's arms tightened around her and he rested his head atop hers. His cock still filled her pussy and she felt him complete the link, his thoughts moving easily within her mind.

I do not want to share you. Never. Yet I know Anton is right. The bond of the pack will strengthen with your mating. We are sensual, sexual creatures. Creatures of the flesh. I understand it now even more, after the run tonight, the bond we share with Anton. We love with great passion. We hate just as passionately. Share your body with him if you must, but please, save your soul for me.

Xandi rose up and kissed him. She heard his unspoken request, though they'd never mentioned children. *You have my soul. You have my heart. I control whether or not a mating results in young. Already my body responds to my wishes, and I do not wish children now. This new self is so fresh, I'm still a child myself. When the time is right, my offspring will be yours. This promise I give you, Stefan Aragat. I love you.*

She felt the tension leave his body with her pledge, but Xandi remained taut and anxious. She sensed Anton in her mind, knew he waited for the two of them. It wasn't merely Alexandria the wizard wanted. No, he wanted more. He intended to once more exert his dominance over Stefan. Though Anton's

intentions were for the good of the pack, Xandi understood his personal desire for power as well.

She kissed Stefan's lips, wrapped her arms around his body, sensed the knowledge in his heart. Felt his strength, his resolve.

Then she shared Anton's intentions with the man she loved.

He already knew. Xandi understood the quiet nod of his head, accepted his intentions. Stefan knew what Anton wanted, what the wizard expected. She understood the confident look on his face -- he had no fear of Anton, now. Knowledge gave him power.

* * *

Xandi dressed carefully for their evening meal with Anton. She'd never dressed for seduction, before. Not really. Of course, if what Anton said were true about the Alpha female during menses, she wouldn't need seduction. She would merely need to attend.

She chose a simple, sleeveless, dark green dress with a scoop neck and fitted bodice that emphasized her breasts. The slim, form-fitting skirt hugged the curved line of her hips and ended just above her knees. She decided against wearing a bra, but she did pull on a skimpy pair of bikini panties, not far removed from a thong.

She had no need of a pad or anything to protect her clothing. The metamorphosis over the past week had been complete. Her period this time was totally unlike anything she'd experienced before, when fully human. Other than the first tiny show of blood when she and Stefan made love, there'd been no other spotting of any kind, just as Anton had predicted.

There was however, a subtle, musky scent on her body, one she'd never noticed before. She knew Stefan was well aware of it. When he was close, it was obviously all he could do to control his hands. His nostrils flared each time she walked by. She felt his desire burning hot and ready beneath his skin, knew he

was drawn to her as much by her scent as the emotional feelings he already had for her.

Her body thrummed with sensual urges. Her skin felt ultra-sensitive. She was aware of the simple movement of air across her bare arms, the heat from the lamp near the bed. Her hearing was super acute so that Stefan's heartbeat echoed in her ears and she was almost certain she heard the whoosh of blood through his veins. The air around her seemed to crackle with energy, but she was unaware whether it originated from Stefan or her.

He wore simple black slacks and a white, long-sleeved shirt with the sleeves rolled back to his forearms. His black and silver hair was long, like Anton's, and he'd pulled it behind his head and tied it with a band just above his collar. She wanted to tug the restraining band loose, let his hair flow free around his face. She wanted to feel it brushing across her breasts, tickling her sensitive flesh over her ribs, tangling with her own russet thatch of hair at the apex of her thighs.

Xandi glanced at the clock, though her senses had become so acute she knew they were running early. Oliver hadn't even started the grill. She would have smelled the gas flame, though the kitchen and patio were on the far side of the house from their room. Tilting her head, she winked at Stefan.

He cocked one eyebrow, then opened both eyes wide as she slipped to her knees in front of him and brushed her knuckles across the fly of his slacks.

The fabric immediately bulged outward.

"Uhm, Xandi... don't we need to get down to the dining room? Aren't you hungry yet?"

"Oh yeah," she whispered, "I'm real hungry." She leaned closer and blew a hot draft of breath against the fabric, then reached up and undid just the zipper on his slacks. *No underwear.* Grinning, she slipped her fingers in through the opening and wrapped them around the solid length of his cock.

His very human cock. She hadn't been able to take him in her mouth until now, not with the risk of his huge cock choking her when the canine knot formed. Now though... now he was totally human, his penis, though large, was not so large she needed to worry about the size.

She licked the tip. He jerked his hips and laughed, but it was a strangled, half sobbing sound. She tasted him again, wrapping her tongue around the silky tip, then following the thick vein all the way to his testicles. She felt them draw up close to his body, all the incentive she needed to take him fully into her mouth, to suckle him deep and hard, using her tongue and lips, strong cheek muscles, even her teeth.

He groaned again and this time his hands fisted in her thick hair as if he anchored himself against her. She found a rhythm, sliding his hot length in and out of her sucking mouth, tonguing him, nipping at the tip, then holding him hard inside, exerting all the pressure she could. He tried... she knew he tried to maintain, to keep from coming in her mouth but she took that control, took it away with her mouth, her hands, stroking his balls, the sensitive flesh between testicles and anus, all through the zippered opening in his slacks.

Stefan choked off a strangled moan. His body stiffened, his hips thrust forward. His cock was hard and hot inside her mouth and she clamped down on him with teeth and lips, sucking hard, harder, swallowing the thick jets of semen as he gave himself up to her.

Long after he'd finished, long after the last drops of come had spilled from the tip of his penis, long after that huge erection had softened, only then did she stop her licking and kissing, her gentle suckling as she brought him down. Using her tongue to remove every trace of his seed, she gently tucked him back inside his slacks and carefully pulled the zipper up.

Stefan stared down at her, his expression shell-shocked. She smiled up at him, and took his answering smile as the gift she'd expected. Then she rose to

her feet and looped her hand casually over his forearm. Together they walked to the large dining room, their secret safe between them.

Anton rose immediately when they entered the room. He set down the glass of red wine he was holding and walked forward to greet them, his hands outstretched.

She heard the low growl beside her and smiled to herself. She and Stefan had already had this conversation. He would start no fights this evening. She would not switch, and neither would he. So long as she remained human, the allure of her scent would not be so strong to the men. If they became wolves, nothing would stop them.

The quiet growl made her feel protected... desired.

Anton acknowledged it as well. He dropped his hands and leaned forward to give Xandi a quick kiss on the cheek. He paused there a moment and she heard him inhale a long, slow breath. When he stepped back, his eyes glinted with amber fire beneath the subtle overhead light. He glanced quickly at Stefan then back to Xandi with a fixed smile on his face. His nostrils flared.

"Dinner's ready," he said, breaking into the charged silence. "You're right on time." Anton turned and walked back toward the table, but Xandi thought his usually fluid movements looked almost stiff, as if he forced himself to walk away from her. He pulled a chair out and nodded at Xandi, then turned toward the kitchen. "Oliver, our guests have arrived. You may serve."

Xandi found herself seated next to Anton and across from Stefan. The comfortable camaraderie from the night before was gone. An ominous silence hung over the large dining room. Oliver quietly served their steaks and a quiche. The meat was, as usual, blood rare. Xandi knew the quiche contained the grasses and other nutrients their bodies needed.

She cut into the meat just as Oliver turned on the CD player. The soft strains of a Johann Strauss waltz took some of the edge off the tension building among the three of them. Anton ate almost mechanically, a far different host than

the urbane wizard she'd grown accustomed to. Xandi glanced at Stefan, but the question was in her eyes, not her mind. She didn't know how to converse mentally with one man without the other hearing.

Stefan's eyes held a warning. He ate steadily as well, but his demeanor, while watchful, was much more relaxed. Xandi sipped her wine, studying Anton over the rim of the crystal goblet. He focused all his attention on his food, but she noticed his breathing appeared somewhat labored. There was a noticeable tremor in his large hands.

Without warning, Anton shoved his chair back from the table. He ripped at the collar of his shirt, tearing it down the front of his chest, sending buttons in all directions. Xandi slapped her hand over her mouth to stifle a scream as Anton tore away the rest of his clothing and shifted, his body writhing through the change from man to wolf in less than a heartbeat.

Xandi shoved her chair back from the table as Anton leapt in her direction, snarling and snapping his jaws. Before she could throw up her hands in protection, Stefan was there, shifting before her eyes, blocking the attacking wolf, shoving him back with hands that were paws, with sharp teeth and strong jaws latched on just beneath the larger wolf's throat.

Afraid to shift, Xandi backed out of the way. She should have stayed in their room, not allowed the two males to scent her while they were together, not during her time when instinctive lust could override their civilized minds.

Anton struggled to gain the upper hand, but Stefan was quicker, his emotions under control. Like viewing a nightmare in replay, Xandi watched as Stefan, his shredded clothes falling away from his body in tatters, forced Anton beneath him. He held Anton down with slavering jaws clamped tightly about his neck and both forelegs wrapped around his upper body.

Both wolves were aroused by the battle, their huge cocks glistening red and swollen, but it was Stefan this time who had the strength, Stefan who drove into Anton, forcing entrance despite the other wolf's struggles. At the moment of

penetration, Anton yelped and snarled, but he quickly dipped his head in acceptance and acknowledgment of Stefan's superior strength.

Stefan's hips thrust forward, at first making sharp, jabbing strokes, then easing back and slowing his pace once he seemed to realize Anton had truly yielded. The shift of the two men was almost simultaneous. As Xandi watched, one wolf dominating another became two men, almost identical in appearance, their bodies lean and beautiful, their long hair swinging with the rhythm of their joining. Stefan knelt behind the wizard, his eyes closed, a look of pure pleasure on his face as he stroked in and out of the other man. Anton held himself up, knees spread wide, arms outstretched, his body sliding forward with each powerful thrust of Stefan's hips.

Stefan reached around Anton's waist and grabbed the wizard's swollen cock, stroking it in time with his slow, steady strokes. Xandi slowly peeled her dress down over her hips and stripped off the tiny bikini panties. She rubbed her palm across her rigid nipples with one hand, pressed hard between her legs with the middle finger of her other hand. It wasn't enough. Not nearly enough.

She knelt beside Anton, her fingers still buried inside her streaming pussy. Anton's eyes were closed, his lips parted in what might have been pain, but was more likely pleasure. She leaned over and kissed the corner of his mouth. Anton's eyes flew open. Xandi took the opportunity of surprise to kiss him again, this time slipping her tongue deep inside his mouth.

Anton reached up with his left arm and wrapped it around her neck, holding her closer for their shared kiss. "I'm sorry," he whispered. "I'm so sorry... I..."

"I know." She trailed kisses along his shoulder, kissed the line of taut muscles along the side of his ribs, then sat back on her heels to watch. She was barely conscious of her fingers slowly circling her clitoris, dipping into her wet pussy, then stroking her clit once again. She caught the rhythm the men shared, stroking herself in time with Stefan's deep penetration of Anton.

They were beautiful to watch, two men, their lean bodies glistening with sweat, their muscles straining with each thrust and draw. Anton's eyes were closed, his mouth twisted in a tight grimace of pain and pleasure as Stefan's thighs slapped against his buttocks. Stefan's eyes were mere slits, his mouth slightly open, his fingers now grasping Anton's hips, his long hair swinging across his shoulders with each powerful thrust.

Xandi felt her desire growing, knew her climax was mere seconds away. Stefan picked up the pace, slamming his cock into Anton, his hands holding Anton in place as he filled him. Anton threw his head back and cried out, his shout turning to a long, low howl of pleasure, the sound of the wolf. His erect cock seemed to swell, to beckon Xandi. She reached out and grabbed him, held on tightly, squeezing the hard flesh, pumping Anton's cock in time to Stefan's deep, penetrating thrusts while her left hand stayed buried in her own hot pussy.

Anton stiffened, just as Stefan cried out and drove forward, almost knocking Anton over. Xandi watched the thick spurts of semen spatter the carpet in front of Anton as he climaxed, knew Stefan filled the other man with his own ejaculate. She sobbed with her own orgasm, felt the muscles clenching her fingers and wished it had been Anton's cock, Stefan's, either of the men she loved.

Panting, arms trembling, Anton carefully lowered himself to the floor, rolling away from Xandi... and in a heartbeat, it all made perfect sense. Why hadn't she figured this out before? She shook her head and smiled, first at Stefan, then at Anton. She let her gaze linger on the wizard. "Okay," she said, with enough force that both men looked up. "It's bullshit. That's enough. I have *finally* figured it out, you know? This is the last time. No more."

Anton squinted and stared at her. Stefan still looked a bit dazed. "You don't get it, do you?" she said, rocking back on her heels. "All this domination crap. You, Anton, jumping on Stefan when he already wanted you, now Stefan, saving me from the Anton's *wild impulse*... it's all bullshit." She wiped her damp fingers on the thick carpet. "You're both so damned afraid to admit what you

really want. Don't you get it?" She glared at Stefan and then Anton. "You love each other. You desire each other. That doesn't make you less manly or any less than what you are. It makes you more. Quit hiding behind all this macho shit and make love to each other the way you want to."

Xandi stood up and planted both hands on her hips. "You both need to bathe. Together might be a good way to start. Then you need to spend some time together getting past your hang-ups. Learn to touch one another with love, not under the guise of doing battle. In the meantime, I'm going to run. Alone. I'll be back in a couple hours."

She shifted before they had time to react, taking her lupine form with all its musky scent and powerful pheromones, well aware neither man had the energy to pursue her now. With a sharp yip, she raced down the long hallway and through an open door, out into the freedom of the dark forest beyond.

* * *

She returned around midnight, when the quarter moon hung high in the sky and light spilled from the huge bay windows in the den. Anton and Stefan must be awake. Shifting into her human form, Xandi went directly to the room she shared with Stefan. The huge bed was empty. She had expected as much.

She was smiling, humming to herself when she stepped into the shower. There was still one more thing she needed to do before this night would end. One more thing, before the beginning of a new day.

Chapter 6

Xandi dried her hair and wrapped herself in a light silk robe. There was a momentary sigh of regret for the lovely dress she'd worn earlier, the care she'd taken for her role of seductress. Anton's unexpected response to her scent while she was still in human form had shocked but not completely surprised her.

He'd admitted earlier this week he had been years without a woman. Not until he'd taken Stefan in what was more a show of dominance than lust, had Anton broken his celibacy. She wondered if Stefan realized she'd orchestrated their lovemaking this evening as much to ease his sexual tensions before dinner with Anton as to share their love?

Things could so easily have gotten out of hand at dinner. As it was, everything had been perfect, though not entirely planned. Smiling, Xandi tightened the belt to her robe and padded barefoot down the long hallway. Her life had certainly taken some odd turns in the past few weeks.

The image of Stefan's powerful body pressed up against Anton's equally strong male form filled her mind. Her nipples peaked and she was aware of the charge of heat and moisture in her pussy. A perfect example. She'd never thought watching two men having sex would arouse her. Tonight, she'd practically come without even touching herself, at the moment Stefan had penetrated Anton.

Xandi stopped, just a few feet from the closed dining room door and opened her thoughts. She sensed both men just beyond, sensed the subtle shift in power. Stefan maintained his newly won dominance over Anton. Their night of sexual discovery obviously had not ended when she left the room, but it had left

Stefan in control. Smiling, Xandi pushed the door open. Did Anton realize *his* night of exploration was far from ending?

Well, she was doing it for the health of the pack, wasn't she? Grinning even wider, Xandi stepped into the dining room.

Anton and Stefan sat near the fire, each with a glass of cognac. Both men were casually dressed, their shirts unbuttoned and hanging out at the waist. Stefan had chosen a leather wingback chair. Anton sat alone on one end of the long, black leather couch. Xandi noticed bites on Stefan's throat, red marks such as he had often left on her neck during lovemaking. The comfort level between the two men was high, the pervasive sexuality between them both sensual and seductive.

Thank goodness she'd had the few hours' long run to sort things out. It was so much easier to make decisions as a wolf. She'd learned quickly that her civilized upbringing and middle-class mores faded into the pure, elemental world of a creature of the night.

Stefan noticed her first, stopping in mid-sip, his crystal goblet of cognac tilted against his full bottom lip. He smiled. "You're back. Anton and I were just wondering if we should go search for you." There was no condemnation in his voice.

"Actually, we were going to flip a coin. The winner would be the one who searched." There was such a look of longing in Anton's eyes that Xandi's stomach did a quick flip.

Later. There was time for that later.

Stefan poured a glass of the amber liquor and handed it to her. Xandi sat next to Anton, facing Stefan. "I needed to think," she said, taking a sip. The cognac went down her throat like golden fire. Her thoughts were even clearer than they'd been earlier.

"This has been a most amazing week." She stared into the liquid depths of her drink. "I came here with Stefan, looking for answers for him. Instead, I've

found answers to questions that have plagued me all my life. Questions about my desires, my wants... my basic nature. I've also realized many things I held as truth went against my innermost feelings."

She looked up then, smiling at both Anton and Stefan. "I've learned, most graphically, that love, the abiding emotional and sexual love we all need and want, isn't always just between a man and a woman. It can be just as strong between two men..." She paused, hoping she was putting her thoughts into the right words. "Or, a woman and two men."

Stefan nodded, urging her on. She turned toward Anton and saw the hope in his eyes. "I've only known you a week, Anton, but the bond between us is strong. Instinctive, almost. I imagine it's the wolf in me that understands this. The human woman certainly couldn't figure it out, though I felt a bond with Stefan the very first night we met, even before I'd seen his face." She smiled and tilted her head toward her lover. "By the way, have I told you what a handsome face it is?"

His soft chuckle warmed the atmosphere even more. "If anyone had told me I would be aroused by the sight of two men making love, and that's exactly what you two have done, for all the dominance and power plays, I would have denied it. If anyone had even suggested I would want to be part of that love, I would have thought they were crazy. I was so wrong."

She sighed and shook her head, her heart almost bursting with the overwhelming emotions, hers and theirs. "I love both of you. I realize I *need* both of you. The time may come, as our pack increases, that I will want another mate as well. As might you. Whether it's the wolf in me or just who I am, I realize this is my new reality. I hope you can accept it... accept me."

Stefan set his empty glass down, stood up and leaned over Xandi. "I love you," he said, kissing her very gently on the lips. He turned then to Anton and ran his palm in a caressing stroke from the wizard's brow, along the smooth fall of his hair, to grasp his shoulder. "I love you as well. Both of you, in equal

measure, but it's been a long day for me, and I imagine the two of you have much to..." He paused and winked at Xandi, "... discuss. Good night. I'll see you in the morning, if not before." Without any sign of self-consciousness, Stefan leaned over and kissed Anton on the mouth, gave him a last squeeze on his shoulder, and left the room.

Anton's expression was one of pure disbelief when he looked up and stared at Xandi. She almost laughed out loud, but instead, she took one last sip of her cognac and reached for Anton. "For the good of the pack?" she asked, taking his hand. "That was the reason you gave me for polyandrous relationships within a wolverine pack. It's more than that, Anton. I do love you. You have made it possible for me -- and Stefan -- to finally know our true natures. You have given us our lives. That is a gift without price."

Anton stood up, his lithe body moving with the grace of a dancer. He stared intently at Xandi, his amber eyes glowing with desire, the corner of his mouth tilted up in a slight smile. "I feel as if I've been caught at my own game."

He shook his head as he placed both hands on Xandi's shoulders. "It's not a game though, Alexandria. Do you mean what you say? Your scent is driving me wild. Thank God Stefan stopped me tonight or I would have raped you without any thought to your humanity, to your own needs and desires. Right now, if Stefan and I hadn't exhausted ourselves fucking... making love, I'd be ripping this robe from your shoulders and driving into you whether you wanted me or not."

"Ah, but I do want you." Xandi wrapped her arms around Anton's neck and stood on her toes to kiss him. "Only I want you on my terms, in my way... at least this first time. I take my role as the Alpha female quite seriously." She tested the seam of his full lips with the tip of her tongue, plunging inside when he parted for her. His arms tightened around her back and she felt the huge bulge of his cock pressing against her belly.

This was not Stefan, yet the need she felt, the desire for Anton, was almost identical. She dipped her shoulder so that he could tug her robe off of her, and when she was completely nude, she practically posed before him, her body offering the kind of lush invitation she knew he needed.

Anton felt as if he'd entered some sort of dream state. For five long years he had thought only of Stefan, of the torment the young magician suffered because of his unwillingness to learn, of the almost visceral sexual reaction he had every time he was close to the younger man. Their confrontation a mere week ago had left him dissatisfied, angry with his own loss of control. He'd not been able to read Stefan's true feelings, had hoped like hell he hadn't broken the other man's will, or even worse, made an enemy of one of the very few left of their kind.

Now this woman, this perfect, sensual, intelligent woman, not only embraced the beast within him, but her own as well. His mouth moved over hers. His hands stroked the smooth, satiny flesh of her back. She was perfect. She was everything he'd dreamed of.

She was *Chanku*. He fought the urge to shift, to take her as a wolf.

He controlled his need, subjugated it to her will. She had offered herself in her human form. He must honor that, no matter how difficult. He ran his hands along her smooth back and sighed against her mouth. It was a truly pleasing form, this human body of hers.

Her hands slipped across the front of his shirt and shoved it back over his shoulders. He quickly shrugged out of it, then shoved his pants off. Of course he'd forgotten his shoes. Laughing, feeling ridiculous and silly, he ended up on his butt looking up at Alexandria.

This view wasn't bad at all. She stood before him, legs spread wide, hands on hips, fighting a smile and pretending to glare down at him while he sat on the floor all tangled in his pants. The fleshy lips of her pussy pouted between the

neatly trimmed thatch of auburn curls and her scent caught his nostrils, her essence arousing in the extreme.

Almost in a trance, he felt the smile leave his lips as he shoved his pants and shoes off his feet in one swift motion, then leaned over to taste her with his mouth. Her fingers tangled in his hair as he ran his tongue lightly across the soft flesh of her belly, but she moaned aloud when he swept over the tiny protruding clit, barely peeking out of the mat of soft hair.

She was hot. So damned hot and her flavor was sweet and succulent, seasoned with the essence of her time, her heat. He lapped at the thick labia, licking and sucking at her swollen flesh, well aware when her arousal loosed the lubricating fluids, readying her for their joining.

Her legs trembled and her hands clenched tightly in his hair. Shaking himself free of her grip, Anton stood up and grabbed her in his arms, lifting her off her feet as if she weighed nothing at all. She looped her slim arms around his neck and smiled at him.

He carried her to the long couch in front of the fire and stretched her out on a soft afghan. She was perfect, a woman unlike any he'd ever known... a female of his own species.

Alexandria smiled at him, held her arms up to welcome him. He settled himself between her legs and his cock was so hard and sensitive it felt alien to him, as if some other entity had empowered him with this sense of lust, of deep, carnal desire for a woman of his kind.

For Alexandria. Gone were thoughts of Stefan, of any other partners he might have known over his past fifty years. There was only Alexandria and her pouting lips, her pussy welcoming him, begging him to enter.

When he angled his cock to meet her, when he touched her moist center, he almost wept. This was the feeling he'd wanted, the knowledge he'd begged for. For all his power as wizard, as wolf, as mentor and Master, this was the one

thing that had eluded him, the perfect match of male and female, of Alpha wolf and mate.

In the back of his mind, he knew she belonged to Stefan, but she was granting him this time, this moment, without thought of any other male. Anton found entrance and thrust hard and deep, then held himself there, deeply entrenched inside her hot, wet passage, his cock squeezed by her strong vaginal muscles, his senses overwhelmed by the scent of her heat, her season, this time she shared with him.

This was what it truly meant, to be part of the pack, to be one with the Alpha female. He wanted to weep, to bow his head in prayer for such a gift, but he withdrew slowly and filled her once again. She lifted her hips, welcoming him, and he found his rhythm, their rhythm, until the only sounds were the slick slap of belly to pubis, of his breath and hers, soft moans, slight gasps, the rush of her heart, the pounding in his and they crested, both of them finding completion together, joined in a single heartbeat, a final thrust, a single sigh and a groan.

Almost in a trance, Anton held himself over Alexandria, his hips pressed tightly between her legs, his cock deeply embedded in her welcoming pussy. Her muscles spasmed around him in a sweet rhythm and he felt his seed filling her. There would be no young. He accepted that. She was pledged to Stefan. Knowing that, he accepted her gift and honored it. She would be a true leader, one who welcomed all to the pack.

He let his arms go loose and fell to one side. Alexandria cupped his face in her palm, leaned close and kissed him. "Thank you," she whispered. "I love you." She nuzzled his cheek with hers, ran her lips across his throat. They lay together as their heartbeats slowed, as breathing returned to normal. Finally, Alexandria raised herself up on one elbow and kissed him. "I need to get some sleep," she said. "It's been a long day. Come with me, please? The bed is large, and I know Stefan is waiting."

Anton leaned back. He had to see her, had to know she wasn't teasing him.

Her gray eyes stared back, intently. He shifted to one side and sat up. Alexandria slipped from beneath him and grabbed his hand. There was no subterfuge, no sense of jealousy, nothing to make him feel anything beyond loved. Wanted.

Anton squeezed Alexandria's fingers and rose to stand beside her. She tugged his hand, led him up the stairs and down the long hallway to their bedroom. The room where Stefan waited for both of them.

Better than any dream he might have had, more potent than any fantasy... this was real. This was the way he had hoped it would happen -- hoped but never dreamed. Squeezing his fingers around Alexandria's small hand, Anton followed her to Stefan.

Kate Douglas

For over thirty years Kate Douglas has been lucky enough to call writing her profession. She's produced ad copy for a radio station, flown over forest fires in a spotting helicopter while working as a photo-journalist, produced public information material -- including drawing a weekly comic strip for a world-wide health agency, co-authored a cookbook and written numerous freelance articles for publication. She has won three EPPIES, an award given by the international authors' organization, EPIC -- two for Best Contemporary Romance in 2001 and 2002, and a third for Best Romantic Suspense in 2001. Kate also creates cover art and is the winner of EPIC's Quasar Award for a Contemporary Romance book cover.

Kate is multi-published in Contemporary Romance, both print and electronic formats, as well as her popular futuristic erotic romance StarQuest Series and her new series, Wolf Tales, at www.ChangelingPress.com. She and her husband of over thirty years live in the northern California wine country where they find more than enough subject material for their shared passion for photography, though their new grandson is most often in front of the lens. Visit Kate at her websites: www.katedouglas.com for excerpts of her romances, and www.katedouglas.com/eroticromance for her adult stories. For regular updates and a chance to win copies of Kate's books and other cool stuff, sign up for her newsletter by sending a blank email to KateDouglas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.