

A woman with long, flowing red hair and a black high-necked dress stands in the center. She holds a rolled-up scroll in her right hand. To her left, a white and grey husky with blue eyes sits. Behind her and to the right are several tall stacks of old, thick books. The background is a blue gradient with light rays emanating from behind the woman. The entire scene is framed by a dark blue border with white decorative patterns.

Viola
Grace

Archive

The Fool

ARCHIVE

TAROT - THE FOOL

BOOK FOUR OF THE HALF-
BLOOD CLUB

BY

VIOLA GRACE

The scanning, uploading and distribution of this book via the Internet or via any other means without the permission of the publisher is illegal, and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions, and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted materials. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Archive - Book 4 of the Half-blood Club series.

Copyright © 2007 Viola Grace

SERIES ISBN: 1-55410-776-8

Cover art by Martine Jardin

All rights reserved. Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, is forbidden without the written permission of the publisher.

Published by eXtasy Books

Look for us online at:

www.extasybooks.com

THE FOOL

MEANING:

This is a generally positive card for new direction. The fool is stepping into an unknown universe, carrying with him all possibilities.

When it appears in the upright portion of a reading it means a new and fresh start. New beginnings, new directions. The world is your oyster. Shuck it.

It also warns against acting without thought, impulsive ideas may lead to disaster.

On a reversed reading it cautions against impulsive actions. You may alienate people through thoughtless impulses. Weigh your new directions carefully or all is lost.

To anyone with a close group of friends. You know, the ones that you can see every week or once a year, and it is like you were never apart.

CHAPTER 1

Melissande Simpson was a little scared. Her grandmother had given her the use of the property in the woods without being given any details as to why her granddaughter required it. This blind faith was humbling and it made Jinx even more antsy about using the property to hide.

Not that anyone was going to come looking for her. Her only value was as an Archive. Her mother had not passed on the shape shifting ability that ran in her family and her father was just a normal guy, living a normal life, with his wife of twenty-nine years. She might have to make some appearances at the High Council to explain her talents, but she was fairly sure that no clan would press for her inclusion. Her mother's clan certainly hadn't.

The wolves never made room for half-breed children.

With Hex's advice ringing in her head, she laid in supplies for two months. If she didn't need to move around, the wards that Hex had had put in

place around the cabin and property would keep anyone from finding her until she left the safe zone.

* * * *

Her phone rang just as she was getting ready to leave the service station for the last leg of her drive.

"Hello?"

"Hey Jinx, it's Arabel. I just wanted to let you know that the wards came down this morning."

"Damn."

"Did you make it to your safe house?"

"Not yet. I had some car trouble."

"Didn't Hex fix that damned gremlin for you?"

"Yeah, but I decided to keep him. He's kinda cute." She flicked her eyes to the rearview mirror and smiled at the ugly little critter in the baby seat in back.

"Jinx, you are incorrigible."

"Yeah, I know. Was there anything else?"

"Yes, actually. Which one of these spells was the fire-proof one?"

"The blue ribbon. Did you need to use it?"

"Not yet, but I may need to use the spell for my daughter. She is being stalked by a pissed-off dragon."

"Her target? She got him?"

A rich and husky laugh broke over the cell

phone. "Oh, did she ever. Bad part is, now he is out to get her. It should be fun for my little Graylin."

Jinx shook her head and was glad that she was safely parked. Her luck wasn't up to having this type of conversation while driving. "I wish her luck with him then."

"And good luck to you as well, Jinx. You know that you need it."

"Bugger off." Her grin was in her voice; it was nice to know that someone was looking out for her. Especially since her friends were now occupied.

"Bye Arabel, take care of yourself."

"And Jinx, find someone to take care of you."

"Talk to you soon."

"Bye, Jinx."

Mel sighed as the phone disconnected. Hex and Hookey were already out of communication, and now George was off as well. She was truly on her own for the first time in years.

A squawking grunt came out of the back seat and she blinked rapidly, then grabbed the box of cookies she had bought at the station and smiled at the gremlin as it tore through the packaging to the sugary treats inside.

Having one's car infested by a gremlin wasn't as bad as it seemed. As long as she remembered to knock on the car before she started it, nothing went wrong. Today, she forgot and had to spend

one hour at the service station getting her vacuum lines reconnected. Annoying, but not deadly.

Before she had left the garage, she knocked him out of the car and buckled him into his baby seat. She bought some cookies for him and a snack for herself at the store and then was ready to finish the last leg of her trip.

With both hands on the wheel and a happy gremlin in the back of her Taurus, she finished the last hour to her grandmother's cottage.

She sighed with relief as she turned the corner to the driveway of the little house. She could feel the wards closing around her and relaxed on several levels at the feeling of security that permeated her. She hadn't even realized how tense George's announcement that they were now 'out' in the magical community had made her until now.

She released the gremlin from his little seat then grabbed her bags from the car. It was the first of three relays. She breathed another sigh of relief as she noted that her grandmother had had the house prepared for her. Everything was clean, the fridge was humming and the lights turned on as she flipped the switch. Power was occasionally unpredictable at the cottage. There was, of course, a generator connected to the house but Jinx could never get it to work.

She tracked her gremlin by the means of watching the flight of birds. He seemed to be

having a good time, and the little beggar would come back to her before she left. He always did.

Unpacking was quick, a matter of moments. Melissande had never been one to spend her money on fancy clothes so the majority of her bags were food. The one bag that was saved for last was her bag of writing equipment.

She carried it over to the desk, turned on the light and laid out her tools. Rolls of parchment, ribbons, sealing wax, ink and quills. Satisfaction lit her features as the tools of her talent were in their proper places.

Being the only living Archive in both the regular world and that of Realm was fun on occasion. It did mean that she was unable to use magic, but she was able to create spells for purposes that had never been conceived of before, on demand.

She looked down at her notes and sat to begin her assigned writs. The first spell that had been requested was a birth-control spell. It was a favourite of the goblin born. They tended to give birth in multiples, so skipping one or two breeding cycles was not a terrible thing. George had been the tester for that particular spell and Jinx hoped that it could withstand a dragon mating.

She wrote a spell in English and when it was completed she blew across the ink. A pleased smile broke over her features as the ink blurred

and shifted into spell-script, just as it did every time. It never failed to amaze her that her own writing was becoming a part of the magical community. She sealed it and wrapped it with a red and blue ribbon, then tucked it aside.

George had come up with the idea of selling her spells as a way of getting them into use so that she could observe them in the hands of different users and change them to be more effective. It also had the side effect of making them all quite wealthy, although they could not tell any of their friends or family where the money came from, for fear of exposing her as an Archive. It was the biggest secret that they had shared until now.

The last three Archives had been taken to Realm and died in the service of the Magus and Warlock's councils, respectively.

They were always on the lookout for new Archives, but as none had been seen in over two hundred years, they had relaxed their sweeps. Jinx could only hope that she had missed a sweep after the glamour came down.

Time would tell and in the mean time, there were spells to write and the whole night ahead of her. It was time to get to work.

CHAPTER 2

A skittering at the window dragged her out of a sound sleep. The damned gremlin again. Melissande grunted as she rolled out of the warm sheets and stumbled to the back door. When he was in he wanted out, and now he was out and he wanted in. Sick little bugger.

There he was, prancing happily on the other side of the door, holding a live squirrel in his hands. Apparently he had made a friend while he was out.

With her eyes lifted upwards for guidance, she opened the door and he and his new pet scampered in and started looking for cookies. She stopped the grocery massacre by handing him a box and smiled as he handed the first one to the squirrel.

"So, you have a new pet, and now are feeding him out of your own rations. That deserves to be rewarded." She prepped her own breakfast and then made a smaller portion for her companion

and his new friend. The toast and eggs were happily received.

"There you go. Now don't go saying that I never do anything nice for you." She made quick work of the dishes, and then pondered getting dressed. It was still cool and she could wear jeans and take a walk in the woods out back.

With that in mind, she dressed quickly and headed out into the woods that she roamed as a child and teenager, the gremlin and squirrel roaming behind her as she walked.

The patch of poison oak was exactly where she remembered it, as was the tiny footpath and the berry patch. Her mouth watered at the remembrance of the tart raspberries and the bursts of juice that came with the blueberries. The nearby danger of itchy skin was a small price to pay.

A quick glance told her that the berries were not near being ripe, so she continued on, heading for the pond. When she was young, she referred to the pond as her 'swimming pool' and had imagined that there was an imaginary friend living in its depths. When she was a teen and told her grandmother of her swimming adventures, she had always seemed relieved. Melissande had never been sure why.

It was just as she remembered it. The rocky wall spilled down into a recessed pool that swirled gently and remained open and crystal clear the entire year round. It even defied the ice and frost

that was endemic to the winters in the area.

It warmed her, this lack of change in her environment. With her world swirling with uncertainty, having a portion of her childhood remain constant was a comfort. Stepping firmly into the glade surrounding the pool she unbuttoned her jeans and stripped off in preparation for her swim.

The air this morning was brisk, but still warm and the pool was a welcome sensation on her bare skin. She had finished thirteen laps when she felt something or someone watching her. Surfacing and pulling herself up on a rock, she looked carefully around her to find her admirer. There was a brief flash of fur and silver eyes and then nothing but waving tree branches.

A wolf? That would be a little unusual. They normally didn't stray into this territory. Her naked body was exposed to the breezes and it was when her nipples peaked at the wind's caress that she realized that she was still being watched.

There was nothing on the banks, nothing in the woods; she shook her head and glanced down, then shrieked in surprise as she saw a face watching her from within the water. "What the hell?" She jerked her feet free of the water and swung them onto the rock with the rest of her.

As the water stilled again, the face reappeared. It was masculine, handsome and almost as transparent as the water. As she watched he

slowly rose to the surface a few feet from her and waited for her to speak.

"Uh, hello." Manners mattered, her grandmother used to tell her. No time like the present.

"Hello Melissande. You are as lovely as I remembered." He was wearing a wrap at his hips, slightly darker than his skin, which faithfully moulded to his body to do more than hint at his interest in her loveliness.

"Have we met?"

"No. Not formally. I am Orion, guardian of the Maiden's pool."

"I am Melissande Simpson. My grandmother owns the property that this pool is in."

"Your grandmother was a devotee of the maiden. She worshipped the goddess in all her forms. The Maiden pool was once a site of devotion. Then, with the encroachment of man, it became a refuge, and now it requires its own protection."

"From development?"

"From women who are no longer maidens." He grinned at her through silvery eyes that slanted like a cat's. Unless she was mistaken, he was a half-breed between elves and elementals. A rare combination.

"What?" His last statement sunk in. So he knew that she was still a virgin after all these years.

"Each woman who is no longer a Maiden that swims in these waters, takes some of the magic

with her. A Maiden gives more than she takes. Her purity cleanses the water and relieves the souls of those who meditate on the banks."

"So, that is why Grandma was so relieved when I would come here to swim as a teenager." She shook her head ruefully, heedless of her naked body. He would not endanger her maidenly status and seemed to wish to speak to her.

"Indeed. She did become concerned as you entered adulthood however, and pressed me for any details. Even trying to bribe me into seducing you after your twenty third birthday."

Her mouth opened in surprise. She had indeed come to visit back then, and had felt the eyes most keenly while she was swimming. Her body had also acknowledged a few fluttering touches, but at the time she had put it down to her imagination.

"Why didn't you show yourself to me then?"

"It was not your time. I could feel that your destiny would take you down a different path than that. After all, no Archive would be able to hide here indefinitely."

She sighed heavily, "Does everyone know?"

"Now? Yes. There are search parties out for you around the globe, but the wolves have something more subtle planned. If you go with them, you will be safe, and your choices of a mate will be unlimited."

"Mate? With a werewolf? They are just beginning to interact with other races of Realm. Why would

they want an Archive? They can't use the spells themselves yet."

"You have said it; they have just begun to interact with magical races. You would be an immediate advantage in their bargaining."

She could see his logic, from where the wolves currently sat, they were charity cases. With an Archive at their disposal, they would be able to dictate the terms of new spells and control all access to her. They had the manpower to do it.

"Yes. But do I want to be? I don't know."

"The way things are moving, you will have no choice, Melissande." The water shimmered around him. "They are going to come for you, and your family will hand you over, rather than lose you forever."

"Do you think that they will?" She knew that her mother would fight for her, as would her father, but against the Councils of Realm she didn't know how effective they would be.

"Yes. It is already in motion. The werewolves will make themselves known to you in the next two or three days. Be ready."

"Alright. Uh, thanks for the warning." She shifted on the rock as the sun came around and sparked against the pool's surface. "Can I go and retrieve my clothes now?"

He looked surprised, "Of course." He gestured for her to re-enter the water.

Eyeing him carefully, she slipped back into the

water, and smiled as it warmed in her vicinity. The column of warmth followed her to the edge of the pool, and it sluiced off her in a smooth sheet as she left the pond.

His eyes followed her carefully as she waited for her body to dry. Appreciation was in his gaze. "You know. It is amazing that you have not yet taken a lover."

She tugged her shirt on as quickly as she could. "No one has been right. I have come close, but I haven't felt like getting that close to someone."

"It is a great shame. Your body is fantastic and you have an amazing mind."

She wrestled her jeans on over wet skin, "Uh, thanks. They are a matched set." Finally clothed she turned to face him again.

His arousal was tenting the fabric over his groin. A heat in his eyes almost had the water steaming. "It was lovely to see you again, all grown up. Please come back and visit anytime."

"Same here. I will try." She nodded awkwardly to him and then beat a hasty retreat down the path that led back to her house.

Safely inside once again, she leaned on the door and pondered the surreal encounter that she had just had. Her life was definitely taking an odd turn.

* * * *

That night, her dreams were wild.

She was swimming in the Maiden pool. Her body was warm and heavy, the water cool and calming.

She sensed a presence and looked up.

A wolf was silhouetted against the moon, a silver fang shining in the dim light and silver eyes watching her every move.

Slowly, with a boldness she did not know she possessed, she stood and faced the wolf in all her naked and lunar-kissed glory.

A growl broke from her audience. He paced forward, the look of a hunter in his eyes. She moved calmly to the edge of the pool and stood without fear or trepidation.

This was right. He was hers.

As he approached, he shifted from wolf to human form, still in silhouette. She admired his shoulders and the tilt of his head as stood before her. Bands of muscle gleamed in the light of the moon, his thighs bulging as he moved closer and closer. She only wished that she could see his face.

His scent enveloped her, and she knew that she would recognize him in an instant, just by that wild aroma.

Her hands shook as she reached out to him then stilled as they encountered warm flesh. Hard muscle under smooth skin teased her and as soon as she made contact, he began to move.

His lips skated along her neck and she shivered in reaction. Her nipples rose against his chest as she cuddled close. Her head tilted to give him full access to her neck and she shivered as he growled and set his teeth against her skin.

Belatedly she realized that she had just surrendered in wer fashion. Startled and struggling, she pushed herself away from her dream lover and ran through the woods.

She could hear the pounding of his feet behind her, pounding, pounding...

CHAPTER 3

The sound of a door being hammered on with a fist woke her.

“Wha...?” She struggled to consciousness and as the noise continued, she blinked herself awake and stumbled to the door with her sleep-shirt falling over her backside to settle at her knees. Her dream had been very vivid and her heart still pounded in her chest.

The knock led her to the back door. She peeked through the window and blinked in surprise. Standing there were two of the most stunning people she had ever seen. Well, humans anyway. She had seen plenty of attractive elves and dragons.

A male with stunning auburn hair and piercing green eyes stood next to a woman of the same coloration. Hormones that Jinx didn’t know she had came surging to the fore.

As she stood transfixed, they met her eyes through the glass and he imperiously knocked

again. They definitely were not there selling cookies.

Blushing furiously, she opened the door and said, "Yes, how can I help you?"

"We are your neighbours." Wow, his voice was just as heavenly as the rest of him.

Then his sentence hit her. She merely blinked at them. There was no house anywhere near her grandmother's cottage.

"She is still waking up, Sirn." The woman was exceptionally amused. "Melissande? May we come in?" She was very polite but something told Jinx that a 'no' was not acceptable

"Uh, sure. Just give me a moment to get dressed." The door swung wide and she darted for her bedroom.

She heard something that sounded like 'Don't bother on my account', as she closed the door and dove for her jeans, bra, panties and t-shirt. In under a minute she was dressed and as she passed the mirror she groaned at the wild morning hair that crowned her head.

Since they had already seen it, she sighed and opened the door, almost running into her male guest who had been approaching her bedroom.

"I was just coming to ask you if we could start some coffee for you. It looks like you need it." His eyes flitted regretfully over her hips and thighs, and she wondered exactly how much had been revealed by her worn pyjamas.

"Uh, no. I usually drink herbal tea in the mornings. I can make coffee for you two if you like." The blush was back. She could feel it. She dropped her gaze and shuffled past him quickly, not sure how to treat these invaders in her territory.

"Tea will be fine."

"Ok then." She quickly moved to her kitchen and started a kettle for tea. The woman was sitting at the table smiling at her. "I don't mean to be rude, but who are you? There aren't any homes nearby."

The woman coloured slightly, realizing her lapse in manners. "Oh I'm sorry, my name is Rebecca, and this is my brother, Sirlnel. We are members of the local were pack."

"Oh." She leaned hard against the counter, unconsciously pressing her breasts against the thin fabric of her shirt. "So, why are you here?"

"We are here to protect you."

This had to be a weird dream, "From what?"

"From the Magus Guild hunting parties that began to flood our territory yesterday while looking for you." Sirlnel had moved closer to her as she spoke to his sister and was watching for her reaction to his news.

The counter slipped out of her grip and her butt headed to the floor. Sirlnel caught her just before impact.

* * * *

He stood with her limp in his arms. "Becs, I don't think that she was expecting that."

Rebecca stood and checked Mel's breathing carefully. "She's out cold. Funny. I didn't think that she would be so frail."

"She's light as a feather. Where should I put her?"

"The bed would be odd with us there; lay her on the couch in the living room." She moved ahead of her brother and flipped the afghan off the couch, prepping the pillows to receive his burden.

"Do you really think that she didn't know about the Magus Council searching for her?"

"I think that it is a safe assumption."

"If old lady Simpson hadn't tipped the clan off and offered her in exchange for protection, they probably would have had her already."

"Yeah, but then our clan wouldn't have had the chance to lay claim to its first Archive. Does it matter to you that she's a half-breed?"

Sirnel thought about it for a moment, and then noticed that his hand was gently stroking the hair from Melissande's face in an absent manner. "It doesn't matter to me, but there are the rest of the clan males to contend with. The gathering is only two days away. I'll take my chances just like the rest of them."

"Based on the way she looked at you, I am

pretty sure that your chances are considerably better than theirs."

"The way she looked at me? She wouldn't even raise her eyes to me."

"Exactly, my dear brother. Exactly." Becs went off to the kitchen and got a towel that she dampened with cool water.

Sirnel was still watching the woman intently when she returned. His expression was that of someone memorizing everything in front of him for further reference. Her brother definitely wanted this one-trick witch, but how far would he be willing to go for her?

As if the thought had woken her she began to stir.

Her eyes opened to see the two werewolves hovering over her. "This has to be the weirdest dream I have ever had. But usually I am alone with the guy and there is no girl."

Sirnel applied the compress that his sister had obtained, "We aren't part of a dream, and there are Magi on your trail. There has been an alert that an Archive is loose in the world and they are ready and willing to fight to possess you."

"But how did they find me? For that matter, how did you find me?"

"Your grandmother knew that knowledge of your existence was only a matter of time, and so she met with our Alpha to arrange for a bodyguard for you. Years ago. But, as long as you

remain on your grandmother's property or our lands, you are free from their intervention. But not free from ours."

* * * *

"From yours." Her mind was whirling "Your clan wants something from me?"

"They want possession of the only living Archive."

"Well, I am currently in your custody." Her tone ended with a hopeful note. She knew that there was more to it, but she could dream. "Will that do for now?"

"They want it on a permanent basis, Melissande."

"What does that mean?" She raised a hand to hold the compress to her head and she turned to his sister for clarification. "What did he mean, Rebecca?"

"In two days, all interested unmated males of the clan will make a play for your affections by holding a games day. Each game designed to highlight the strength and abilities of the wolves involved. Only the five highest scoring participants will be presented to you for choosing."

"Oh, great. Speed dating for complete idiots." She closed her eyes and shook her head; she couldn't believe that she had forgotten her

grandmother's property was within a pack territory. Her grandma had been pressing her to start dating seriously, but she had just brushed it off as grandmotherly pestering. Apparently, Grandma had taken matters into her own hands.

"Sirnel, maybe you should get some of the other alpha females here to help out. I don't think that the guys will be much use." Rebecca shook her head at her brother and frowned.

"Why do you say that?"

"Well if you had been able to get *your* brain out of *her* pants for more than a few moments, I would say let you stay. But we can't contaminate the games by getting her too familiar with you. It would be cheating." She smiled slightly as Melissande coloured brightly, red flooding into her cheeks.

A heavy sigh broke through him. "Yes, I guess you are right. I don't want her sent off with someone who won't respect her just because I became too familiar."

"He's leaving?" Disappointed was a mild word. Crushed was the only one that fit.

"Yes, Melissande, I have to leave. That way I have a chance to be presented to you at the games, if I am a winner." He sat next to her and leaned forward for a delicate kiss. She tasted his breath for an instant, spicy and wild, then his lips gently pressed into hers. Her lids fluttered closed and her entire focus was the soft strength of his mouth on

her. It was as if her entire body was using that light touch as a spur to its arousal. Her pulse pounded in her veins, and then he was gone.

* * * *

As he drew away, the skin across his cheekbones was flushed and tight.

He really wanted this woman in his bed, and he was willing to kill to have her there. She tasted right, perfect, and he wanted more.

CHAPTER 4

The females that the pack leader sent over were all the sisters or relatives of her 'suits', and therefore all interested in keeping her relaxed and in a good mood. They put aside their normal snobbery toward the child of a beta, and treated her as one of them. Mostly. There was little fighting and posturing, as would normally occur in that situation.

The first night was a giant sleepover with a pillow fight and lots of pedicures. The women were obsessed with nails and hygiene. A kit appeared out of nowhere, and before she knew it, her fingers and toes were soaking in warm water, with a movie in the DVD player. The night flew by in giggles and whispers.

Mel woke in the morning to her toenails being an unlikely shade of cherry. Her fingernails were tinted a metallic blue. She sighed softly as she remembered all the times that the half-blood club had gathered in just such a way to the same

results. More unlikely color combinations, but a similar result in the long run.

Mind you, the wer women didn't drink, so there was a glaring difference right there.

They spent the day gossiping about the guys, each woman making her brother out to be a combination of Superman and Laurence Olivier, and all the others shooting the ideals down.

It was surprisingly fun, even if she was behind on her scripting schedule. There was no way that she would be able to write with all of these women here. It was frustrating. She needed to write out the spells. And that meant distracting the wolves.

Having one of the girls send her brother out for barbeque supplies struck her as an inspired idea. They were all in favour of meat for lunch. The big giggling match came when the brother came to make the delivery. All the girls formed a wall to keep Melissande and him from meeting. The rest of the day was uneventful; the ladies did housework while trying to get information from her on her preferences in a man.

Her virginity was not a matter for public discussion, so she could hardly tell them that she had no idea of what she wanted in a man. Let alone a werewolf.

The magic was building in her, and she had to let it out. The urge only grew in her as the day waned on. Finally she had had enough just as the

sun was going down.

"Ladies! I need some privacy."

Becs was their spokesperson and she piped up, "But Melissande, we are having so much fun!"

"I just need to do some paperwork. And I need privacy to do it."

One of the younger women piped up, "Paperwork? Like homework?" Bright blue eyes were looking at her curiously.

She tried not to roll her eyes in exasperation. "Yeah, I just have to do a bit of homework right now. I will be back in half an hour. Put another movie in, ladies. I will be with you shortly."

Pulling rank in a room full of wolves was not something for the faint of heart. She drew herself straight and stared them down.

The betas tried to meet her gaze and looked away when the set of her jaw indicated the determination with which she was insisting on her privacy. The alphas were tougher. Their wills clashed with hers and she steeled herself to fight for her rights in her own house.

"You will remain here while I do what I have to. Go ahead and make yourself some popcorn." By assigning them tasks, she was asserting her status within her household. It was hard for her to do, but her mother had drilled her on the basics of pack behaviour when she was a teen.

At that time, it had been in case her grandfather made contact, but since that never happened it

was coming into practice now. Her mom's beta status would have kept her in the pack, if it hadn't been her lack of power and her pack's birth rate. Three females for every male. They could spare a few powerless females.

It was those lessons that kept her back straight and her will strong. After a few minutes, the two alphas nodded and moved the other women into the kitchen.

As soon as they had gone and she could hear them puttering in the other room, she grabbed her equipment and headed off to her bedroom.

Silently she rolled out the scroll that would house the spell and began to concentrate on the effect that is should have. Ten minutes later she had a scribble that she couldn't read, but she was under the gun in the energy department, so kept going on the other.

Now that they were written, there was just one more step. Holding the writing up to her face, she blew across every letter and smirked as magic swirled from within her to wrap around the inks and take them into the parchment. The first went quickly, but the second one took quite a bit out of her as she tried to focus and blow her magic across the page.

The words fought her, but finally fell into the spell-script that she couldn't read. Jinx had always been able to put the magic into the spells, just not able to make them work. She would need a magic

user to read the spell to determine its actual purpose. She thought that one would induce impotence and the other was a fire-proofing spell, but she couldn't be sure unless someone used them.

Now all she had to do was face a room of ticked-off werewolves with pedicures. Why didn't life get any easier?

* * * *

It wasn't nearly as awkward as she had anticipated. The ladies accepted her right to privacy on her own territory with surprising grace, and she just knew that she would be in for a heck of a time when she was on pack land.

They watched a movie and then their sleeping bags flared out. Tomorrow was going to be a busy day, they needed their rest.

And so, Melissande slept in a house full of wolves. A very surreal experience.

CHAPTER 5

The ladies had her up and showered early. They seemed to be in a hurry to get to the event, and not just because they were drooling over each others' brothers. Rebecca had gotten a call early in the morning, around one. It seemed that another pack had requested representation in the event, and it was turning into a multi-pack jamboree.

There were now a minimum of four packs involved and the girls could hardly wait to meet all of the eligible wolves that wouldn't be going home with Mel. It was an unheard of event, to have so many packs meeting under a flag of truce to have a games day. They looked forward to a lot of fun, and a field full of partially clothed men.

A minivan arrived in front of the house and they all clambered in. A soft shriek of dismay rippled through them as the vehicle refused to start.

Mel smiled and said, "Pop the hood." As the engine was exposed, she smiled and fished her

gremlin out of the works. "C'mere you little bugger. We are just going down the road. I'll be back soon." She looked at him closely. "Where is your squirrel?"

The gremlin chortled and grabbed onto her hair. He wasn't going anywhere. She climbed back into the van and the others looked at the beast with disgust. "What is it?"

"A gremlin. He thrives on stalling cars. Especially if I am in them." It was one of the thousands of things that caused her friends to name her Jinx. She stroked him lightly and he nipped at her fingers in response.

"He follows me wherever I go, and so he will be coming with us today." Her tone brooked no interference. Inside she was giggling madly. Getting away with bringing a violent pet with her broke any number of pack rules, and she couldn't be more pleased.

The van started with no trouble this time and they were off in a few moments.

The ride took less than twenty minutes and the crowd that had already gathered was flattering to say the least. The excitement was palpable as they disembarked from their transport.

Mel reminded herself that they were there to take home an Archive, not her specifically. They wanted the power for their clans. She just came along with it.

* * * *

It had all the air of a festival or fair. Tents dotted the field and flags with clan markers flew from each.

It looked like they were staying for the long haul. This was going to be more than a one day event. She asked Rebecca, "How long is this going to take?"

"Well, if it had just been one clan, it would have been over and done with in a day. But, with the other four, it should be around three days in total." She explained while she led Mel to a tent with five guards around it. Each represented one of the clans and was there to keep any from pressing an attraction, to their advantage.

"This is your tent; we will bring you here each day, and take you home every sundown. It will be a place for you to rest and relax. It will also provide a meeting space where you can speak with the various clan leaders."

Oh, fantastic. She was going to be interviewed by them, probably to make sure that she was what they said she was. Mel was not looking forward to it. The alphas were notoriously arrogant and adhered to traditions that were beyond the bounds of normal behaviour.

"That is great. Can I get someone to bring me a Coke?" She sounded plaintive to her own ears, but she was facing something that she had tried to

avoid her entire adult life. Dealing with werewolves.

"There is a cooler inside with a selection of beverages and meals will be brought to you." Becs was polite and firm. She was giving the beta an order. Too bad that this beta was not going to follow orders.

"That's great. Just so we are clear, I am not going to confine myself to a stuffy tent." She faced the alpha directly. A clear challenge. "This event is being held because of me, and I am going to watch every bit of it." There was a murmur of disapproval in the group, but no one spoke out against her statement. They were going to let her have her way.

As a concession she said, "You can send an honour guard with me, but I will have free reign here. I am not a prisoner, and I do not react well to being treated like one."

Rebecca mulled this over for a moment and then moved off to speak with an older male who was watching their little group. He had the stamp of an alpha and she met his gaze as it connected with hers.

She fought her impulses and stared him down. She kept her arms at her sides, her shoulders relaxed and her mindset confident. Apparently satisfied, he nodded and Becs looked relieved.

"Walther says that it is fine with him. He is our alpha and as host, he has the final say." Becs was

trying hard to impress the man's importance, but Mel was having none of it.

"Actually, within reason, I have the final say. I am here to let the clans fight for my hand as it were. If I make a run for it, the Magus clans will be ready to snap me up. It is in my own best interest to stay with the wolves. At least I know that they won't lock me up in a tower. They don't have one." She grinned impishly at the other women and they giggled.

It was true. The wolves in general liked open spaces and that preference spilled over into their homes. Spacious bungalows were the norm. The worst thing that the wolves would do would be to confine her to pack territory. Usually several square miles.

Becs led her over to her guards and explained the situation. They were to stay with her at all times, unless she was attending a call of nature.

"Alright guys, what are your names?"

"Mark, of the Silverfang clan."

"William, Bill of the Yellowpaw."

"Edgar, of the Daggerfang."

"Timothy of the Goldeneye."

"Alonso of the Fightinghart clan."

Each executed a neat bow as the introduced themselves. She nodded in response to each and then let her feeble senses do their work. "All of you are married." She smiled as they looked at her in surprise. "Just because I only have one talent,

doesn't mean that my nose doesn't work." They looked confused.

"My mother is a beta of the Yellowpaw clan. She had to leave when she wanted to have a family." The disgusted looks washed over them in a wave, and were quickly controlled.

"Melissande, may we conduct you to the first event? They are gathering in that field over there." Mark took the job of communicator and she agreed with a short nod.

The cadre of women that was following her were relieved to have their duty interrupted, until they realized that they would have to remain on the sidelines of the events, while Melissande was going to be front row. Then they were after her in a matter of moments.

CHAPTER 6

The first competition was a shape shifting obstacle course. The competitors went off in sets of four, ran a quarter mile, shifted to wolf shape, ran through a dog course, picked up a banner, dropped it in a bucket, shifted back to human and lifted a log series, then climbed a fence and dropped back onto the ground in half-transformed shape to do heavy lifting, then back to human for the finish line.

The best part was that they ran nude.

The first group of contenders stood nearby, completely at ease with their nudity. A messenger was sent to inform them that she had arrived. As one, their heads turned.

With all of those naked were men looking at her, she should have felt self-conscious. She didn't.

Her gaze challenged each and every man there to try and win her. Surprise showed in more than one face. The daughter of a beta was not supposed

to be that forward, or that confident. The erections that began at her direct attention were impressive, and flattering.

She strode to the edge of the field and simply sat on the grass waiting for the games to begin. She did not have to wait long.

At a signal from one of the alphas the men took their marks. A few restless moments and a sharp clapping of hands broke the silence and the invisible ties that held the men in check. The race was on.

* * * *

The initial leg of the race was a simple footrace to a bridge; the leaders quickly separated themselves from the rest of the pack. A warm thrill ran through her as she noticed Sirel in one of the lead positions. His arms and legs moved smoothly, muscles bunching and relaxing in the gleaming light of the day. It was a beautiful sight.

Every ideal of Greek mythology was depicted in those men, grace, beauty and strength, and they were competing for her. It was enough to cause a gush of moisture between her thighs. The women sitting near her smiled slightly at the change in her scent, even her nose could detect the same change in them. It was obvious that the specimens of masculinity that were running were of interest to more than just herself, and several of the losers

were going to be well consoled.

Her pulse was rapid and she watched amazed as the second leg of the race began with a shape shift and a run through a slalom course in their wolf shapes. It was the same style of agility course that dogs trained on and competed in, and apparently the wolves enjoyed them for the same reason. They were both fun and challenging.

One by one, the men shifted, shook themselves into their fur and began the course. All that was missing was a fly ball, and the course would have been complete. Mel grinned at the image that formed in her mind of the ranks of werewolves running to the springboard to catch a tennis ball. It almost made her laugh out loud, but did help her to get her arousal out of control.

They completed a seesaw, then had to shift back into human form for the last leg of the race. It was at this point that the weaker of the competitors became obvious. They couldn't shift back from wolf to human, or managed it and collapsed in a heap.

Sirnel staggered slightly as he shifted back to human form but ran the final leg of the race to the finish line in first place. A blonde was hot on his heels and one of the girls murmured, "That's Geoffrey. He is a member of the Yellowpaw clan."

As the men finished or dropped out, their placement was dutifully recorded by a panel of judges. They had also been judged on speed and

the ease of their transition between forms.

Rebecca clapped in delight as Sirnel was declared one of the finalists that would compete the next day. "I knew he would do it!"

"Well, I suspected that he would do it. You had depicted him as a god-like form. No one would dare to displace him." She laughed at Becs and kept snickering as a flush stained her face.

Ten finalists in total were declared and the women with her leapt up to console a few of the losers that cast longing glances toward the feminine huddle. They may have lost the Archive battle, but they would not be spending the night alone.

As a few of the finalists turned toward her, her honour guard stepped between them. Apparently, fraternizing was not to be allowed. Especially considering that the men were still nude, and interested.

"Miss Simpson? If you would come with me, the pack alphas would like to meet you." A messenger appeared next to her and she squinted into the sun, noting his silhouette and having a flickering thought about the dream she had enjoyed after the day at the pond.

It wasn't the same man. She didn't know who had been in her dream, but it wasn't this man. "Fine, lead the way." With a little effort she rose from the grass and brushed the remnants off her jeans. Her bottom was a little damp, but nothing

that wouldn't dry in the afternoon sun.

A sharp tug on her leg let her know that her gremlin had reappeared. He scampered up and climbed onto her shoulders, his face buried in her hair.

She looked about to see what had scared him and laughed at the sight of a group of wolves snarling at him from twelve feet away. Her guards were all that stood between her gremlin and the hungry jaws.

"This is my gremlin, please don't eat him." She addressed the shifted wens and was gratified to see them turn away from her with a swish of tails and a few glances at her hair.

The messenger was waiting for her, bemused.

"Lead on." She squared her shoulders and followed the back of the messenger, with her guards flanking her on all sides.

Her tent beckoned, and within were the bosses of the clans that were after her. A deep breath and she was ready for the inquisition.

The dim confines of the tent almost blinded her for a moment so she came to a complete halt inside the flap. Five shadows sat around a table that had been erected for this purpose. The table was round and she suspected that it was only that which kept the alphas from fighting to be the head of the table.

She immediately took charge. "Welcome to my tent, gentlemen. What can I do for you?"

They looked confused, finally one spoke. "We wish to know a little more about your talent."

"What about it?"

"Well, we know that you owe your allegiance to Alfred and the Yellowpaw clan, but what benefit would be given by having you linked to one of our clans?"

She sat and glanced over at the man who shared her hair color, then dismissed him with a flick of her lids. "I owe my allegiance to no clan. Least of all my mother's. She was disowned by her family when she left, and they never acknowledged me. I owe them nothing."

The scowl that ran over what had to be her grandfather's face made the tiny neglected girl deep within her cheer in glee. Served the old bastard right. Her mother had tried several times during her childhood to engage her father in her family. It had never worked, and her mother had been devastated.

He could rot. So could his clan.

CHAPTER 7

“An Archive is a being who can create spells. Those spells are used by magical races for tasks or tools.” She grinned viciously, “And they pay through the nose for the privilege.” As she sat her Coke was delivered to her by one of her entourage. The girl took one look at the assembled leaders and bolted.

“Just how do you know that? We were told that you had not been in contact with the general magical public.”

“I have friends who brokered the spells to interested parties. It has kept me well financed over the last few years.” The beverage was rapidly disappearing as she sipped at it. It seemed to hit the spot. “Who are you all, by the way?” She looked around at the alphas. “I know Alfred, I see those eyes in the mirror, but who are the rest of you?”

And so she was introduced to the clan leaders. It was only the alpha of the Silverfang that stuck

with her. Walther was kind, debonair and had a harsh sensuality about him that was oddly familiar.

The questions that they asked her were almost amusing; they wanted to know how her talent would impact their status in Realm. So she told them.

“By controlling their access to me, you control their access to new spells. You will get respect, bribery and an instant vote in the council. The clan that I end up with will have more status in the halls of Realm by their association with me.” Her pride was not misplaced. It was a simple fact and the reason that she had stayed away from the packs for so long.

It would be a manner of ownership. She would become property to be traded, her talents a commodity.

Then came the question that she had been waiting for. “Will your talents be passed to your children?”

Walther had asked it, so she answered it. “No. I do not believe that two generations of Archive have ever been. Not in the same family. My talents will die with me.” It was odd to talk about her death in such bald terms, but it needed to be stated.

They would not be able to breed another from her. It wasn’t even plausible. The occurrence of an Archive was so rare as to be astronomically

unlikely. Two in one family were unheard of.

The heads of the alphas darted together, a frantic murmuring occurred and they muttered in low tones. It was almost a sibilant hissing and guttural growls, and she blinked as she realized that it was wer. The language of the packs.

She had never been taught the language as her lack of shifting ability made it impossible to understand. It was part of the magic of the shape shifters, and magic was not an ability that she possessed.

Mel waited for the alphas to finish and then stated, "It is extremely rude to speak in a language that others can't understand. So what was the verdict?"

"We decided that you are still a welcome addition to the packs, even with your limited genetic potential." Alfred announced it with a sneer. He looked almost hostile and she knew it was because of her denouncing her clan obligations.

"With my mother's faulty genetics it was a wonder that I have any talents at all." His mouth opened in shock as he absorbed the insult. No daughter of a beta should dare to speak to him like this. It struck him in his pride. That his child was a daughter of two healthy alphas and had still only the basic talents of a beta was obviously a sore spot.

"Enough you two. Stop it." Walther was verbally

separating them. The glares darting back and forth across the table were almost visible. "Melissande, thank you for answering our concerns. You will be a wonderful addition to any of the packs, and we hope that the selection of suitors provides you with a suitable spectrum from which to choose."

"Thank you, Walther. You have treated me with respect and it is appreciated." She stood and nodded to the rest. "I am heading out to see what else your clans have to offer aside from their men."

The ladies were all grouped around the entrance of the tent, several casting longing glances to some of the other games that were going on.

Jinx burst out laughing; they were indeed playing fly ball. All the players were already transformed and they had made up teams. It was bizarre to watch them playing in coordinated manoeuvres, tongues lolling as they raced along, caught the ball and then waited for their turn again.

It was a relay. Wolf after wolf pounced, caught the ball and then ran to deposit it in a barrel on the side nearest the next team member.

It was hilarious. The ladies herded her to the sidelines and they all had a good laugh as the teams took turns and the final heat resulted in a winner. The Daggerfang team had done well, finishing first in three out of five rounds. The girls

with her cheered and it was at that moment that she realized that they were all adults.

There was not one child at the entire gathering.

"Where are the kids? My mom told me that at clan gatherings there were always kids." She asked her group at large, but it was Becs who answered.

"No one wanted to chance bringing children when there were so many clans represented. It hasn't happened in years and they decided that kids would be safer away."

Mel pondered the testosterone-laden air and agreed that it was a sensible decision.

After all, the guys were showing up to defend their pack's honour and to make a good impression on a possible mate. With all those naked muscled men running around it was probably more of an education than children would need.

If she was honest, it was a little much for her as well.

CHAPTER 8

The day finally drew to a close and she was once again shepherded home in the same van she had arrived in. Barbeque had been both lunch and dinner, unsurprising with so many carnivores in the area.

The heat and the stress were taking their toll on her and she was only too relieved to fall into bed after her entourage had been dropped off at her house.

A wild and uncontrolled heat gripped her. She knew this feeling and yet had never experienced it first hand. Hands cupped her breasts as a mouth trailed kisses down her neck; she tilted her head back and let her body take her over. She wasn't going to let these sensations get away. This time she would embrace them, and her dream lover, wholeheartedly.

A firm heated pressure was on her lower back and she rocked herself against it. It was either his cock, or he was smuggling a rod of radioactive material, because

her flesh caught fire at the contact. Parts of her were melting at the contact and she had a feeling that he knew it.

She still couldn't see him but she could feel and smell him now. It was heavenly. Her pulse was hammering heavily through her torso and a fine tremor began in her limbs.

One of his hands stroked slowly down her abdomen and she shook as it delved between her thighs. A finger slowly circled her clit and she mewled in reaction. A steady flow of moisture was creeping out of her slit and she felt a blossoming of sensation deep inside as her orgasm overtook her.

A keening cry broke from her and she woke, sweating and gasping, with a sickening feeling that her dream had not been silent.

The next day was the same; only this time there were games in the morning and the final races for her favours in the afternoon. No one mentioned her moaning in the night. Perhaps no one had noticed.

The first race was a hunt. They had to run into the woods and return with a gift for her. A few of them smiled confidently, but only Sirnel smiled at her with warmth in his eyes. He had something planned, she could feel it.

Once again the men stood and waited for the signal, this time everyone looked to her and bemused, she clapped sharply to start them off.

They literally turned tail and ran.

It was only five minutes before the first wolf reappeared and dropped a rabbit at her feet. She shivered and looked at it distastefully.

For wolves, the scent of blood was an aphrodisiac, but for her it was simply blood. Her gremlin bounded over chortling and took a poke at the rabbit. The wolf that had brought it snarled at him, but made no move to attack her pet. Apparently, he had gotten the memo.

The second also brought a rabbit. As did the third and fourth.

The fifth brought a small deer, the sixth a hawk. Then a dove, and then Sirnel appeared with the perfect gift.

A branch of berries was clutched in his jaws, and when he opened his mouth to drop the offering, she saw a bunch of nuts fall to the ground. The gremlin was on them in an instant and she smiled as he consumed the food with glee. Out of nowhere a squirrel joined it and together they had a snack with Melissande laughing her head off.

The other wolves looked on in confusion as she smiled and enjoyed the enjoyment of her companions. The two remaining offerings did not even register on her consciousness as her mind fell into the eyes of the wolf that was rapidly capturing her heart.

The rest of the world fell away and she

recognized him for what he was. Her dream lover.

Sirnel was hers. She was his. There was nothing else to say.

She crossed to him and knelt in front of the wolf. On an impulse she wrapped her arms around him and buried her face in his fur. A snarl of rage was the only warning she had as Sirnel was ripped from her unceremoniously and thrown into her guardsmen. A ball of fur and fang bolted past her and a battle was joined.

As a cry rang out, "Geoffrey! Stop it!" she realized that it was Alfred trying to call off his pack member. The order went unheeded. Geoffrey was trying to take Sirnel's throat out, and her chosen was not about to let him.

At no time did the snarling and snapping jaws tempt her to break up the fight. She was out-classed and knew it. She knelt, still and waiting, for a winner.

Fur flew, blood coursed and Sirnel gained the upper hand. Paw. *Whatever*. Geoffrey was pinned to the ground, teeth firmly wrapped around his neck. He struggled for long moments and finally went limp, whining his acceptance.

Sirnel cautiously let his subordinate go. Watching for a final attack. It didn't come. Geoffrey slowly gained his footing and shook himself into human form. Blood streaked his golden skin and he climbed to his feet, covered with bites and claw marks.

Alfred approached him and calmly backhanded him. The crack of knuckles against flesh rang in the clearing in a way the snarls hadn't. That action caused her to flinch where the melee hadn't. It was brutal, this pack discipline, but necessary to keep the younger alphas in order. Geoffrey was unconscious; his body slumped in silence on the grass, only the telltale movement of his chest giving proof of life.

Sirnel was watching, still in wolf form. As she crumpled to the ground in shock he came to her and licked her chin. She wanted him to lick a lot more than that, but not in this form.

Her thoughts shocked her and the wetness seeping from her shocked her even more. It wasn't like her to chase tail. Especially anthropomorphic tail.

As she wrapped her arms around him she felt him shiver and fur gave way to flesh. Arms tightened around her and she was burying her face in the crook of his neck while she hid from Alfred's brutality.

"Thank you for choosing me, Melissande. You won't regret it." His voice sent gooseflesh down her spine. She was shaking, but no longer knew if it was shock or lust. She really hoped that lust would win.

"I know I won't. I just hope you don't." She answered him in a voice so quiet he barely heard her.

CHAPTER 9

Mel's head spun as a whirlwind of declarations and confirmations as well as a signed contract occurred in rapid succession. She was bundled into a waiting car and the next thing she knew, Sernel was driving her off into the afternoon.

Half an hour later a house loomed in front of them. It was a one-floor bungalow, but it was anything but modest.

A railing and a porch surrounded the house on all sides, three steps led to the main door but a patio and an outdoor dinette set were visible on the left side of what had to be Sernel's home.

A wave of trepidation broke over her as she realized that her life had come to a crisis point. It was now or never. Surrender her virginity and possession of her talents to Sernel, or run like hell and hope he didn't feel like chasing her. *Yeah right.*

As he came around to open her door and caught her into an embrace so steamy that her toes

curled, she knew that a chase would be on.

"Would you care to see the inside of my house? Or do you want me to fuck you up against the car?"

"Uhh. Inside please." The whole virginity thing was going to come up, and based on his erection, it was already up. "There is something you need to know."

His arm curved around her waist and she was escorted into his home with all state and propriety. Well, as proper as a guy could be when he was sporting a raging boner and sliding his hand down onto her ass.

The kitchen and living room were blurs as he hustled her to the bedroom. His bed was a king sized monstrosity and the bank of windows that ran the length of one wall contained a set of French doors that led out onto the patio that she had noted earlier.

She was given no chance to absorb any more of the details as he took possession of her mouth once again; she trembled in his arms, her lips parting under his assault. His tongue lapped at her and she felt his tongue scraping across her teeth. A sharp giggle and he slipped inside to taste her own tongue. When she reciprocated she heard a satisfied growl and his muscles bunched under her hands. In an instant she was falling through the air and felt the impact of a firm surface beneath her back. His body followed her to the

bed and she was soon writhing beneath him, trying to dislodge him from her hair. It was only when a sharp tug produced a yelp from her that he let her up for air.

"Ow, you're on my hair." She struggled up against the headboard and sat up. "And, I am a virgin. This is my first time."

The lust in his eyes faded slightly, "What?" He shook his head to clear it, then focused on her words.

"I haven't had sex before. You are my first."

"What?" It still didn't seem to sink in.

She slapped his face lightly, "This is the first time I am having sex. Ever." She paused again. "In my life."

He reared back on his heels and looked at her, "You have to be joking." The erection that was threatening the structure of his zipper wasn't dissipating; she was relieved to see.

"No. Not a joke. I wouldn't be sitting here and waiting for your reaction if it was a joke."

He leaned forward and kissed her softly. "Thank you for telling me."

She leaned into the kiss and used her hands to peel away his t-shirt. He reciprocated and soon she was trembling in anticipation as he perused her naked body in the afternoon sunlight as it filtered through the curtains.

"You are lovely. From your head to your toes, you are fantastic." His eyes worshipped her skin,

dappled gold in the daylight. His own clothes flew across the room in seconds and then she was admiring his body, and the cock that was calling to her hands.

Her fingers curled and she reached to wrap her fingers around the smooth heated length. Wow. It felt weird. Her thumb found a drop of pre-cum and swirled it around the head, slicking it up and teasing it gently. A hiss came out of his mouth as he pulled her hand away and he bore her back to the bed once again for his kiss. "That feels great, but it is more than I can bear right now. This time is for you."

She squirmed in his grip, blanking her mind to enjoy the only feeling she wanted. The feeling of his hands on her. Each feathery touch on her neck let a sigh of happiness drift through her lips and the slide of his tongue set a flame deep in her belly.

It flared and danced with each touch, her body's moisture trying to fan out the flames. A steady torrent of desire that urged her thighs to shift and rub together in an effort to contain the fire.

This was what the club had giggled and whispered about. This fire and the heartbeat that took over her body made her blood sing and stole her breath. If the foreplay made her feel like this, the actual sex was bound to kill her.

She dug her fingers into his shoulders as his

mouth teased and fondled her breasts. Darts of pleasure moved between her groin and nipples. Her hips lifted against him and the rod of his cock pressed deeply into her belly at the contact.

How could one body contain so much heat? She asked herself and then threw the thought out the window as his mouth continued its downward path. Her ribs were tickled and laved with his tongue as she began a low moan deep in her throat.

The moans and sighs became constant as her body gave itself up to him. Her hands wrapped around his shoulders and unbidden, her fingers began to draw a new spell on his back. She didn't know what it was for, or who would read it off of him. She certainly couldn't, but the power didn't care, it wanted out and his body was the parchment.

His hands ran over her hips smoothing and soothing her as she bucked when his head made for the heated shadows between her thighs. As his hands parted her thighs and his tongue began to lap at her she heard a noise coming out of her that had never been uttered by her throat before.

Instead of a high-pitched squeal, it was a snarl of urgency. Her fingers tangled in his hair and held him to her as she arched her hips into his mouth. The guttural growl that echoed her snarl reverberated within her. Two of his fingers worked their way inside her and his tongue found

her clit, he tasted her with a savagery that had her back bowing in urgency.

Her snarl took on a frenzied pitch as she came closer and closer to orgasm. His fingers slid and pumped into her with a steady beat and she howled as the spiral of sensation broke free. Her fingers pulled at him and hauled him up for her kiss. She tasted herself on his lips and she shook with a passion that kept building.

As her body rode her climax, he moved to enter her, the blunt head of his cock parting her folds and making way for him. He rocked slowly against her until she once again arched into him and as her hips thrust toward the inch-by-inch invader he plunged in to the hilt. The sharp pain set an impulse free that she had never experienced. She bit him. Hard. On the upper bicep.

Blood flowed in her mouth and a satisfied grin took over her features. Blood for blood. It was only fair.

His growl of pain echoed in her ears as he began to pound heavily into her. The first few strokes made her flinch with pain, but as her body became accustomed to it the pain faded in her consciousness. It all blurred together, pain, pleasure, blood and snarling. As his orgasm overtook him and he howled his own satisfaction, that became part of her memory as well.

His hips jerked into her once, twice, three times

in hard succession and with no particular rhythm,
and he slumped forward.

CHAPTER 10

“‘Was it good for you?’” She had to break the silence. It was driving her nuts and her lack of fulfillment on his entry into her body filled her with a wild energy that needed an outlet. Apparently the outlet was her mouth.

“Wha...?” His head lifted from her shoulder and his bleary eyes struggled to focus. She realized that he had still not regained his breath, and she watched the sweat gleam on his chest as the muscles flexed and heaved.

His cock twitched inside her and she flinched, the soreness of her first time flaring again now that the hormones were dwindling. She put her hands on his chest and tried to calm him with the pressure of her touch.

“It was amazing, did I hurt you?” He feathered his lips over her eyebrows, leaving a sweet kiss on her forehead.

“No. Well, no more than I expected.” A faint blush heated her cheeks. She knew that it stood

out like a sore thumb on her pale skin.

"It will be better next time. I promise."

She idly trailed her fingers over his lips. "It was much better than I expected my first time to be. Much *more*."

He nipped at the tips, then his tongue flicked out to taste them. She trembled and her pussy clenched around him in response. Wow, who knew that those two nerves could be related. He groaned and his head fell back to her shoulder as his shaft was gripped softly. With a desperate groan he pulled out of her and stood.

He disappeared into an open hall and the sound of running water declared the existence of the bathroom. He reappeared with a washcloth in his hands, his cock and balls now clean of the blood that she had glimpsed when he left.

"Open wide." Before she knew it he had parted her thighs and was removing all traces of blood and semen left by their coupling. "It looks good. Only a little bleeding, nothing major." On bare feet he padded back to the bathroom and returned without the soiled cloth.

"Now, I believe that you did not come while I fucked you." It wasn't a question, and without any further comment he lay between her thighs and was looking up at her with his chin on her pubic bone. An impish grin came over his features as he looked up at her. She could only imagine that her eyes were wild with panic.

A dark chuckle broke free, and he then turned his attention to the now cooled folds between her thighs. To warm them, he exhaled a warm stream of air across her flesh. His fingers searched for her opening carefully and then he gently slid one finger into her. No harsh movement, just stationary placement of his digit in her channel.

His tongue sought out and found her clit and a delicate fluttering on it had her squirming and arching in only a minute.

The peak of sensation that she had been forced to abandon welcomed her back with no ceremony. One minute she was at a cold start, the next she was panting for release. No transition, no chance to catch her breath.

A hiss and snarl were his only warning, then her back was arching, her pussy shoving toward him and her channel pulsing lightly around his finger. Her orgasm hit her like a freight train.

Her eyes fluttered open to see her lover on his arms above her with a hellishly smug grin on his face.

"I knew you would be dynamite in bed." He wrapped his hand around her hip and gave a small squeeze. "But only with me."

She laughed softly. He was so familiar. She didn't know why, but she had felt his hands on her in another life. Or maybe...

"Does your clan have dream walkers? Or sleep mating?" He had shifted to the other pillow and

was looking at her with his head propped up on his fist.

"Only in the case of true mates. It hardly ever happens."

"Has it happened in your family?"

"My mother claims that my father visited her in her dreams before they mated, but he claims that his end was a simple wet dream." The grin was back. His possession of her had obviously put him in a good mood.

"All men claim that. Love at first sight is far more common. I wonder how many of those people realize that they have been dreaming of their lover for years." Slightly disgruntled Melissande turned away from him. She was not in the mood to hear that her dreams were foolish.

He stroked her shoulder and turned her to face him once again. "Did you dream of me, Melissande?"

She kept silent and pouted.

He stroked her gently and asked again, "Did you dream, Melissande?"

"Yes. I did."

"When did it start?"

She thought about it. "After I swam in the Maiden pool in the forest. It started that night."

His fingers drew idle designs on her shoulder, "Was there anything in the forest that day that was unusual?"

"Aside from the keeper of the pool? Only a wolf

that...oh hells. It was you!" She winced at the sharp smacking noise that emanated from where her hand impacted his shoulder. "You were watching me swim!"

"Ow. Yes I was. Why not? You are amazing when wet." Sirlnel slipped a finger into her channel again, "Pretty good while dry too." His wicked grin was back, completely unrepentant.

He dipped his head and before she knew it his tongue was laving her nipple and sucking it strongly into his mouth.

A furious blush spread across her as her body's moisture coated his finger and began to seep out of her as she writhed and gasped under him.

She was wrapping her arms around his neck when a pounding on the front door interrupted them.

She looked calmly at him, her lust cooling rapidly. "Are you expecting someone?"

He snarled and tried to take her mouth in a kiss. "No, I am not. Ignore it." She stopped him with her fingers gripping his lips, then shrieked as a face appeared at the window.

"Uh, Sirlnel, I think it's for you. Definitely." Walther's face was rueful and apologetic, but he was not going anywhere. His arms were crossed over his chest and his feet were firmly planted.

Snarling in frustration he flipped a sheet over her body to hide her from the alpha and went to the door, still nude.

"What is it, Dad?"

Oh, that explained a lot. His ease, his confidence and the deference that the other women had shown to Rebecca.

"Alfred has claimed right of bloodline. He is challenging your win and her choice." Walther was not looking at her, but a satisfied curve to his mouth let her know that he was pleased she and Sernel had consummated their union.

It would give them a fighting chance to object to Alfred's claims. If she was pregnant, it would seal the union despite all objections, but it would take a few days to find out.

"Give us a moment." Sernel turned back to her and walked toward the bed. Walther waited outside on the patio.

Mel was sitting up with the sheet clutched to her breasts. "So, my grandfather is making a fuss, is he?"

"He is challenging my right to you by virtue of your being of his bloodline." He was laying her clothing over the edge of the bed and when he had collected them all he sat to take her hands. "As he is an alpha, it is his right to decide your mate."

"Even if he disowned my mother and myself?"

"Blood does not acknowledge the legal refusal. It remains constant." He raised her hands to his lips and kissed them. "I will fight for you, Melissande, no matter what happens."

He would. She could see it in his eyes. Now

that he had committed to her, he would stop at nothing to keep her safe. She had to return the favour by whatever means necessary.

“Call me Jinx.”

CHAPTER 11

Two phone calls and one text message later and she was ready to go with Walther and Sirlnel. If he was willing to fight for her, she would return that loyalty with everything at her command. And that included members of her little family.

They took Walther's car back to the field where all of the activities of the past days had been staged. A mob was waiting for them.

The Yellowpaw clan was out in force this evening. The sun had begun it's setting into the west and it cast a bloody glow upon the proceedings.

"As her grandfather and clan leader, I declare her to be of the Yellowpaw clan and therefore under the rights of blood." Alfred looked pissed. He no doubt smelled Sirlnel on her.

"I do not acknowledge our blood ties, and therefore do not fall under your clan laws." She kept herself calm knowing that it would infuriate him.

A hissed cry of "Whore!" was her only warning as his hand descended toward her. Sirnel stopped him with his own arm, a blur of movement that she caught out of the corner of her eye. Alfred was on the ground and his clan was still with shock as their alpha lay in the dirt.

They were trying to gear up to attack when as one all the were turned to look at the sky.

Jinx smiled. Her second phone call was here.

The were scattered as the dragon circled the clearing and then came in for a landing right next to Jinx. Well, Jinx and Sirnel. He refused to leave her, even as the dragon roared and flame erupted from her mouth.

Jinx raised her hand to pet the scaled neck. "Hello Arabel. Thanks for coming. Did Matthias take it well?"

Arabel shifted into her warrior form, nude but with wings and a tail. "Fine. He will come around in a few hours." Her extended canines were exposed with her grin and her tail lashed with humour.

"Sirnel, this is Arabel. The mother of one of my best friends, George. Arabel, this is Sirnel, my chosen mate." The introductions were done with a rapt audience. All the were had come running when the dragon landed and were maintaining a safe but attentive distance.

Showing remarkable adaptation, Sirnel shook Arabel's hand and said "Pleased to meet you,

Lady. Be welcome on our lands."

"Thank you, Sirnel, but I think your alpha will have something to say about that." She nodded to Walther.

"I greet you as well, Lady. And my son's welcome is that of his clan. The Silverfangs welcome you." He came forward and shook her hand as well, carefully keeping his gaze above her neck.

"Your welcome is most kind. Not at all what I remember the wolf packs to be." Jinx was happy that Arabel left it at that. She had once told her that she found werewolves to be *chewy*.

"Evolution is a hard thing mistress. We all must move forward or die out. Some of us know this better than others." He glanced over at Alfred who had managed to right himself and was trying not to look terrified at the dragon in their midst.

"You are wise." She looked closely at the assembly. "Melissande has declared her choice. Who among you will gainsay it?" The formality of her words was not lost on Jinx. She was speaking from a different time.

Alfred screwed up his courage. "I will. I will defy her choice and put her under the claim of blood ties."

"A tradition, I assume?"

"Indeed, one of our oldest. I have control over all of my bloodline."

"We have similar traditions and my daughter

has just defied them. Melissande has the same rights."

"Not as long as she is my granddaughter." Alfred was almost foaming at the mouth. His hostility was palpable and his sentence gave her an idea." Not as long as she carries my blood."

"If I no longer carried your blood, would you give up this bizarre claim?" Jinx had a feeling that this was the point of the power that had surged through her while she and Sernel were making love.

Alfred snorted in amusement. "Of course, but you cannot change your parentage any more than your mother could. Any more than I could have a daughter with the ability to change. An alpha, the type of child that I deserved." Disdain dripped from his mouth and sealed her resolve. This was the time for her to make her move.

"Arabel, can you read a new spell for me?"

"Sure, Jinx. Where is the scroll?" Arabel looked feral, her eyes flashing with the urge to destroy the man who showed such contempt for his own child. Children were precious to the dragons. She herself had defied the council and hidden her child for fifty years to allow her to choose her own path.

"On his body." Jinx's eyes flashed with amusement as she formed her next request. "Sernel, can you remove your clothing, please?"

"Here? Now?" His features declared that this

was not the time for such matters. But there was a curiosity in them that belied his reticence.

“Here and now, Sernel, please.”

The dragon was a bit confused, “Jinx, where is the spell?”

Mel waved to her and waited until all of Sernel’s clothing hit the ground. She slowly moved toward him and ran her hands over his shoulders. She felt the power building in her and brought his head down to hers for a kiss.

She exhaled slowly and the talent of an Archive filled him. He warmed to her touch, then grew hot and Arabel began to chant softly.

The runes and words that she had written in passion flared into life and burned out of his skin. The drone of the spell’s words rang in her ears and pulsed in her veins.

Fire took her over, burning and running along her nerves. Blooming in her belly and rippling out of her mouth. With a scream she separated herself from Sernel and fell to the ground as the spell she had written transformed her.

She could hear the cries of confusion and concern but could not answer them. She had brought this upon herself and for better or for worse, it would be her fate to live with the consequences. If she lived.

Her skin was too tight; the flames were ripping her apart. Suddenly she heard the wild calling her. A pulse, a howl burned in her throat. She

screamed and the howl broke free.

Fur erupted from her flesh, burning her as it ran over her body. She was a wolf. It was done.

With a happy yelp she leapt to her feet and took a few hesitant steps, then began to run.

CHAPTER 12

Her eyes burned with the wind as she ran to the woods, it was amazing this feeling of freedom. She only wished it could last forever. She noted the squirrels and chipmunks, heard the chatter of the birds and the hissing of her gremlin.

The gremlin called to her and she went to find him, her paws making no noise on the carpet of leaves and moss. He was in deep conversation with his squirrel and she crept up to him, keeping her eyes wary for more wolves. She could *feel* them. They were coming for her, hunting her.

Like hell.

A sharp yelp and her gremlin was on her. The squirrel clutched in his arms. She ran, this time heading deeper into the woods, to a scent that she faintly caught on the breeze.

Home.

Faster and faster she ran; the path clear to her although the scenery blurred with her speed. She heard another wolf behind her and welcomed

him. Sernel. She would know him anywhere. Or any wer.

Her endorphins must be high if she was making jokes as she fled for her safety. She saw her destination in her mind's eye and half an hour later was outside her grandmother's cottage. This would be the hard part.

She was just wondering how to go about opening the door when it swung silently open on its hinges. "Melissande, get inside!"

That her father recognized her in wolf form was odd enough, when she went inside to find her mother on the floor, as a silvery red wolf, she let out a yelp of surprise.

Sernel shifted to human form and came over to her. "You have to let it go now, Melissande. Just relax and let the change wash over you again."

He started to stroke her behind the ears, and it was the added petting of her gremlin and her father that relaxed her enough to begin her change.

Naked on the floor, she rolled over and said, "Well, that was fun. Can I have a blanket or something?" Her father was way ahead of her. Daniel Simpson was a practical man. A comforter flowed around her and she struggled to sit up.

Margaret Simpson was shifting back into human form and looked over at her daughter, "What the hell just happened?"

Unable to contain herself anymore Melissande

began to laugh. It was a howl that boiled up from within her to echo through the kitchen.

She got a hold of herself and pulled herself up against the cupboards. "You know how Alfred has always said that he is disgusted that we are the results of his bloodline?"

Wary, Maggie held Daniel's hand. "Yes."

"Well, we are a new clan now. The clan of the Archive. The blood of the Yellowpaw has been burned from your blood, and my blood." She looked at her mother with tears in her eyes, "We are new animals."

Silence reigned for several moments until her father summed it up. "Holy shit."

* * * *

Arabel was waiting with Walther in the living room. They had arrived before Jinx by virtue of the dragon's wings. It was an efficient way to travel, and Arabel had enjoyed the way the alpha had tried to hide his unease at her aerial acrobatics.

If she didn't miss her guess, she was witnessing an event that had happened less than a dozen times in history.

The birth of a new werewolf clan.

* * * *

They had all gathered in the living room after Melissande and her mother had gotten dressed again. Sirnel was wearing a pair of sweat pants donated by Daniel.

"So what does this mean?" Her father was always practical, cutting to the heart of the problem.

"I think that we no longer carry Alfred's bloodline. The spell that Arabel read off of Sirnel took away the traces of Alfred and left only the genetics of my grandmother, Agatha. She was alpha through and through, and had come by it honestly. Alfred murdered his way to power." The guesses that she was making felt right. There was a freshness to her body, an energy that had never been their before.

It had to be the alpha instinct.

Even her mother was sitting upright instead of cuddling against her father as she had always done when the slightest threat to her family was spotted. They had been remade, redesigned by magic.

"You can't be the Clan of the Archive." Sirnel's voice rumbled in her ear. She was curled against him, and it felt completely natural to have him touching and cuddling her.

"Why not?"

"Because if you are correct, the Archive talent is only for you. There will be no generation that follows with the talent. You need a trait that can

be passed from generation to generation within your clan."

"Like what?"

"Well, from what I have seen of both you and your mother, I would say that you are the Clan of the Redwolf."

Jinx and her mother looked at each other and smiled. It was right. That would be their name.

"Now, Mom, I don't want to scare you, but what are you going to name my little sister?"

"What?"

"Oh, yeah. You are about two months pregnant, I can smell it." She cocked her head, "And I can hear more than one heartbeat within your body."

"I just found out." Daniel was amazed; he covered his wife's belly with one large and capable hand. "A girl?"

"I don't know how I know, but it is a girl." Jinx smiled "A little sister to teach all my tricks to."

Margaret and her husband shared a long kiss. Jinx was used to it. It created a certain warmth and security for her to know that her parents were in love after all these years.

She only hoped that Sirnel would still stay with her as she started her own pack. Not all alphas would take a back seat to a matriarchal female.

As if he heard her thoughts, he squeezed her tight. "No matter what comes, I will stand beside you. My clan has enough males to take over my position. You need me." His voice was a husky

murmur and she shivered.

Boy did she need him. Naked. On her white sheets, with a rose in his teeth and desire in his eyes. Or running through the forest. Or sitting here on the couch. Oh, she had it bad.

This had to be love. Nothing else could be that confusing, or all consuming.

In the most cheerful voice she could muster she asked the room at large, "So, when are we going to face Alfred and tell him to fuck off?"

CHAPTER 13

They waited only until George and her new mate had arrived, the wolves were uneasy around Rikard. He was putting out a lot of power, and they could feel it in their bones. It was unsettling, but he was making his protective nature known to all comers. He finally had her and she was not going to slip his attention.

The George and Jinx had squealed and hugged while their new mates sized each other up. The high-speed game of catch-up took less than two minutes and then George announced, "Well then, let's kick your grandfather's ass."

They each took up a seat on one of the dragons as they felt it was the best way to make an impression that would last on the were clan gathering. And that is exactly what they did.

In a fit of humour, the dragons strafed the gathering, their claws touching the top of the tents as they made pass after pass. Werewolves scattered everywhere. Jinx was laughing so hard

that when George finally let her and Sirnel dismount, she almost crumpled to the ground.

At the scowling faces of the alphas that approached she regained a certain sense of decorum. Alfred was in the fore, striding toward both herself and her mother as they stood facing him.

"Margaret, do you dare to reject your clan and your bloodline?" His tone was harsh, and no doubt had caused his daughter to cower in the past.

"I embrace my bloodline, Alfred. I am of the Redwolf clan." She looked over at her daughter and smiled. "I am a new animal."

"What? What the hell are you talking about, bitch?" His voice was a harsh shriek and his body language spoke of his temper.

"I have nothing of you left within me. Magic has remade me, and my daughter. There is none of your blood in my veins." She stood her ground and waited for the explosion.

It didn't take long.

Jinx was waiting for it, and so was Sirnel. As soon as Alfred rushed at Margaret, he was tackled and held to the ground. Jinx calmly walked to him and used a nail to draw blood on her own forearm.

"Sniff this." It was rude, but she wanted to see the look in his eyes as he realized that his line was gone. It didn't take long.

"How?"

"The how doesn't matter. We are no longer Yellowpaw, no longer your kin. You have no claim on us and we are the beginning of a new clan. A matriarchal clan. The clan of the Redwolf." It was formally spoken and she raised her voice to be heard by all the leaders. "As the clan of the Redwolf contains the only living Archive, they have asked for and received guards from the dragon council. No one will take me from my family, and my choice is made."

She nodded to Sirnel and he released Alfred, who was looking bereft and confused. As Sirnel rose she took his hands. He leaned down to kiss her as she rose on her toes to return it. It was a meeting of equals. Alpha to alpha. Male to female. Mate to mate.

"Let's go home, Jinx." His harsh whisper reminded her that they had not had enough time to learn each other in the whirlwind of the last days. By the look in his eyes, he wanted to correct that.

George had not shifted forms and they ran to her, leaping onto her back with Sirnel shouting directions to his home as they flew.

As soon as they landed they scrambled off her back and ran into the house laughing. As he closed the door on the curious dragon's eye and leaned back against it, Melissande stripped off her clothing with unseemly haste.

* * * *

He watched every piece of clothing fall away and as she backed slowly away from him beckoning him with her body he surged forward. She squealed and ran. Straight to the bedroom.

Snarling playfully he caught her, tackling her to the bed and pressing his body into hers. She groaned and pulled at his hair when he lifted his head, then snarled with need as he mocked her with his eyes.

“What do you want, Jinx?”

“You. Inside me. Fucking me hard and fast.” And just like that his own lust flared into overdrive and his clothes flew into a heap across the room.

He was on her so fast that she barely had a chance to gasp as he flipped her to her belly and raised her to her knees. His fingers primed her with short jerky impacts, spreading the liquid heat that her body was producing to ease his entry.

As soon as her hips moved in time to his hands he moved his cock into position. At the first blunt impact she arched her back, the second worked him an inch into her and the third slid him all the way home.

Lust ran through her, tremors shaking her arms as she held herself for his thrusts. When his cock slid back and forth across the front wall of her channel, her knees buckled and she mewled. That

was the spot.

He rubbed back and forth over that spot, harder and harder with every thrust, his cock buried to the balls within her on every stroke. Her back arched and she howled as her body clenched hard around him, her hips shoving back to keep him in her as she came apart with him deep inside.

His hands gripped her hips, his fingers bruising as he pounded into her and his own howl of satisfaction tore through the air as he spasmed in his own release. Short pulses of movement kept him within her for long minutes and then he collapsed on top of her, bearing her flat to the bed.

As if it was a Herculean task, he groaned and drew out of her, moving to the side and turning her to spoon her against him.

They were both gasping for air and finally she said what they were both thinking. "Wow."

CHAPTER 14

A trembling was running through her as the water pounded across her back. Well, it wasn't only water. The calming shower that she had suggested was turning into an upright orgy.

He arched her toward him, supporting her with an arm around her ribs; his hips worked his shaft inside her to devastating effect. Again.

This time as she came he dug his teeth into her neck and the pleasure/pain shook her to the core. Her knees gave way and he held her tight as he achieved his own bliss. He had to carry her from the shower and as he lay her dripping wet on the clean bed, he smirked in satisfaction.

"I think you liked that." He covered her with his own body again and nuzzled at her neck.

She tilted it in supplication and was going to wrap her legs around him again when there was a knock at the door.

"Who the hell could that be?" The snarl was left in the air as he got off her, his tight backside left

the room to answer the summons.

* * * *

She heard masculine voices talking too low for her to make out the exact phrases. But, she did hear the words 'Archive' and 'spell' quite clearly. Time for her to go to work.

Wait. All her clothes were in the living room where she had stripped. *Crud.*

Her problem was solved as her lover came back to her with the clothing over his arm. He dropped them on the bed and leaned into her. "What else do you need love?"

"A pen and paper. That's it." She began to get dressed and then turned back to him. "And a rain check for the sex in the shower and the wet bodies on the bed."

"Done and done." A toe-tingling kiss later and she was limp and panting once again. He slapped her sharply on her nude butt and said, "Get to work."

* * * *

Two members of the Magus guild were there to commission a safe transportation spell. The older ones did not take rapid transit into consideration and a few people had had 'accidents' while using them.

She made a few notes as to the specifics required and named her price. Thirty thousand dollars. To be transferred to her account upon completion of the spell.

They tried to haggle, but she pointed out that it was a multi-user spell. It would outlast the coming generations and was well worth the price.

When they asked her how they were to come by the money she replied "Have a bake sale." She really didn't care. This was her talent, her job, and her destiny.

She was the Archive.

EPİLOGUE

“Are you sure that this is the right place?” The Aspacious house was intimidating, but when the goblin answered the door, Jinx knew that they were at the right place.

“Come on, Sirlnel. The girls will meet you later. The guys are this way. And you have met George and Rikard already.” She followed the servant and he gestured for her to check her husband into the study where four supernatural beings were already debating the type of poker that they would play.

The goblin stepped forward, “This is Sirlnel, mate to Jinx, and werewolf of the Redwolf clan. These are James, Warlock and mate to Hex, Rikard, dragon and mate to George, and these two elves are the mates of Hookey, their names are Boral and Orlyn.” Introductions completed, he led the way to the living room where the girls were waiting for their fourth.

Shrieks, giggles and laughter distracted the

men from their poker game as the night wore on, but it was all worth it. These men had gotten lucky.

They were the mates of the Half-Blood Club.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Viola Grace was born in Manitoba, Canada where she still resides today. She really likes it there. Her hobbies have included cross-stitch, needlepoint, quilting, costuming, cake decorating, baking, cooking, metal work, beading, sculpting, painting, doll making, henna tattoos, chain maille, and a few others that have been forgotten. Her writing actively pursues the Happily Ever After that so rarely occurs in nature. A brilliant mind, with a twisted sense of humor.