

ELLORA'S CAVE TWILIGHT

JACI
BURTON

Legend's
Passion

DEVLIN DYNASTY

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



www.ellorascave.com

Legend's Passion

ISBN 9781419922770

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Legend's Passion Copyright © 2008, 2009 Jaci Burton

Cover art by Syneca

Electronic book Publication May 2009

The terms Romantica® and Quickies® are registered trademarks of Ellora's Cave Publishing.

With the exception of quotes used in reviews, this book may not be reproduced or used in whole or in part by any means existing without written permission from the publisher, Ellora's Cave Publishing, Inc.® 1056 Home Avenue, Akron OH 44310-3502.

Warning: The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this copyrighted work is illegal. No part of this book may be scanned, uploaded or distributed via the Internet or any other means, electronic or print, without the publisher's permission. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is investigated by the FBI and is punishable by up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000. (<http://www.fbi.gov/ipr/>). Please purchase only authorized electronic or print editions and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted material. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

This book is a work of fiction and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, or places, events or locales is purely coincidental. The characters are productions of the author's imagination and used fictitiously.

LEGEND'S PASSION

Jaci Burton

Chapter One

Dylan Maxwell prowled Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, waiting for his contact.

Some woman with dark hair. Yeah, great description. That told him a lot.

Then again, at two in the morning, he didn't expect to find a lot of females wandering the depths of the park. In fact, with the recent killings it was damned dangerous for a woman to wander alone in one of these parks in the middle of the night. He wondered if she was planning to bring someone along to protect her.

Zippering his jacket closed, he leaned against the thick tree and tried to discern which direction the infernal wind was coming from. He finally gave up, deciding it was swirling in off the Bay and hitting from all sides. There was no hope of getting warm. He was just going to be cold.

It was freakin' July, for the love of God. How could it possibly be so cold in California in July? It was supposed to be summer here. Home in Oklahoma he'd be sweltering, the air conditioner cranked. Not that he got home that often anymore. Working for the National Crime Agency kept him on the road nearly all the time. He couldn't remember the last time he'd either had a vacation or been home.

Damn good thing he liked to travel.

And now he was loitering in a park, skulking behind a tree like a pervert. He was really going to have to get better info out of the NCA analysts. This was a big case. The murders were grisly, all having occurred in parks in the middle of the night, and the remains—well, what had been left of the bodies anyway—hadn't given them much information. And they were similar to killings that occurred previously in other West Coast states a couple years ago, which was why the NCA had been called in.

They'd been following this case for months, with very few leads and really messy evidence. The crime scenes had been grisly as hell; bodies completely torn apart.

Animal attacks, they had thought at first. Bite marks and hair had suggested a wild pack of wolves, but that made no sense at all. Wolves would have been easily spotted and captured, and so far animal control and wildlife authorities hadn't tracked a single wolf, much less a pack of them.

Then again, nothing much about this case made sense. Because saliva tests indicated human.

Fucking weirdo cult no doubt. And now they'd received an anonymous lead from a woman who said she had vital information on the case. Which was probably a false lead, but just in case it wasn't, they had to follow up. This woman had way too much detailed information about the case to be a fluke. Maybe, just maybe, it would be the break they needed.

So here he was. Waiting. And freezing his fucking ass off. Maybe he'd get lucky and instead of the informant the actual killer would decide to show up. He could solve this case and go home for a little R and R.

Where it was warm.

Chantal Devlin closed her laptop and stretched, then stood, looking out the window of her office at the gorgeous view of San Francisco spread out before her.

She wrinkled her nose, then yawned.

God, she was bored. And tense. And frustrated. And horny. And so ready for a little action. Buried at her desk for the past three months, she was relieved to finally put the last filing together on this case. Long, tedious and dull, dull, dull.

What she needed right now was action. A little run.

And a lot of fucking.

Pent-up anxiety and need sizzled through her nerve endings. She hadn't shifted and had some fun in far too long. Work had kept her tied up and in human form for months now.

She was ready to play. Her pack contact had set her up with a guy for tonight. An out-of-towner from the South, because she refused to fuck anyone within the pack. And of course she would never, ever, fuck a human. The risk of accidentally turning one was too great. She wasn't anywhere near ready to mate with another pack wolf and the pack liaison knew that, so this guy coming in from out of town was perfect. No strings, no requirements for relationship or mate choice. She was more than ready for a romp in the park and a little anonymous sex to ease the tension. By tomorrow morning she'd be back to normal and in prime form to get back to work.

No rest for the wicked, she thought with a chuckle. Or for the non-wicked, because she sure as hell hadn't been wicked enough lately.

She hustled down to the parking garage and drove the short distance to Golden Gate Park. Her juices were already flowing and she hadn't even met the guy yet. She didn't know anything about him other than he was tall, built, with blue eyes and a Southern drawl. Maia, the pack liaison, said this guy was hot. And when Maia said a guy was hot, he was *hot*.

Good enough. Her nipples tightened, her breasts warming. How long had it been since she'd had a good fuck? Too damn long. She should know better than to go so long without sex. Tonight was going to be rough. She hoped this guy had stamina because she intended to screw his brains out.

She pulled into the parking lot and climbed out, heading toward the designated meeting area. The cool wind bit at her skin, offering blessed relief to the heat boiling inside her. She'd worn a stretchy casual skirt, a tank top and sandals to work tonight since it was a Saturday, so stripping would be easy. But first she had to find her partner.

The breeze blew tendrils of hair free from the clip, but she didn't care. Her blood was boiling in anticipation. She snaked her way through the path, then headed into a dense copse of trees and bushes where she couldn't be seen by security, the thick area of the park where no one traveled.

She spotted him huddled against a tree. Tall, broad-shouldered, watching her approach. Her skin tingled with the need to shift. But she wanted this in human form.

At least at first.

He was gorgeous. Thick, dark hair, stunning blue eyes, sharp brows arched in a frown.

"Took you long enough to get here," he said in a sexy Southern drawl that made her toes curl.

"I was working. Trust me, I'll make the wait worth it."

"I hope so. So what have you got for me?"

"A little impatient?"

"I've been waiting awhile for this. I want it now."

Oh, man, he was hot. Her nipples nearly broke through her top, her pussy swelling. A trickle of moisture wet her panties.

"You want it, take it." She trailed her fingernails between her breasts, enticing him, then circled around him so she was pressed against the trunk of the tree.

He moved with her like a predator, as if he was stalking her. "You'd better show me what you're offering. I'm not into playing games."

Yes, he was. A game she was thoroughly enjoying.

"Show you, huh? Sure, I'll show you." She grasped the hem of her skirt and slipped her fingers upward, sliding her fingers underneath the straps of her panties. She gasped as she tucked one finger into her pussy, felt the cream pouring onto it. So wet, her cunt quivered as she touched it. She withdrew, scenting her own arousal as she held her finger out for him. "It's right here. Taste me."

Dylan's knees damn near buckled as the raven-haired seductress held out her wet fingers in front of him. Her scent traveled on the breeze, intoxicating his senses. Like a

drug had been shot into him, he found himself rooted to the spot, unable to move, but dying to grab her hand and suck her soaked finger into his mouth.

What the fuck was going on here? He felt dizzy, disoriented. Something wasn't right. Whatever she was offering, he wanted it. And it wasn't the information he sought, but he didn't give a shit about the informant anymore. This stranger had bewitched him, put him under some kind of spell. He couldn't even remember why he was here. His cock twitched, lengthening, hardening, his balls drawing up with a throbbing ache of desperate need.

He didn't know her.

He wanted to fuck her. No, that wasn't right. He *needed* to fuck her.

Up against the tree.

Right now.

He grabbed her wrist. Hard. She gasped, but her green-eyed gaze lit up and sparkled. She smiled when he took her finger and licked it.

Goddamn, she tasted good. He covered his lips over her finger and sucked. Every last drop of her honeyed cream. And he wanted more.

"Shit," she whispered. "More."

He pulled her finger out of his mouth. "Yeah, baby. More." He pushed her against the tree and dropped to his knees, grasping her ankles. Her skin was utter silk, trembling under his fingers as he wove a trail with his hands up her calves, her thighs, sliding under her sexy, tight little skirt, pushing it up with his hands until he revealed little white lace panties.

"Sexy little things," he said, leaning in to breathe the scent of her cunt. The more he inhaled, the more fogged his brain became. And the harder his cock got. He looked up at her. She was watching him, her lips parted, her breathing ragged as he dragged her panties over her hips and down her legs.

Her pussy was so pretty, a little thatch of raven hair just at the top of her sex. The rest of her was bare. He reached out to smooth his fingers over the swollen lips, bringing away more of her sweet honey. He licked it from his fingers like candy.

"Eat me," she begged, spreading her legs wider. "Please lick my pussy."

With a growl he reached up and grabbed her ass, digging his fingers into her soft flesh as he pulled her cunt toward his face and buried his tongue in her sex.

"Ohhh God," she cried, tangling her fingers in his hair and thrusting her hips forward to undulate against his questing tongue.

He sucked her clit, ravenous for the taste of her. Damn, he couldn't get enough, swallowing her cream, licking her up and dipping his tongue into her pussy. Her little moans only made him want more, made him want to take her over the edge. He wanted her to come in his mouth, wanted to possess her completely. He wanted her screaming and writhing against him, to give her a climax like no man had ever given her.

He didn't know why he wanted it like that, he just did.

Relentless, he assaulted her clit, swirling his tongue over the distended pearl until she was shrieking, pulling at his hair. She came apart then, flooding his tongue with her cream. He drank every bit of her juice and continued to lick her until her legs were trembling uncontrollably.

Then he rose and covered her mouth, needing the taste of her lips.

She devoured him like a hungry animal, wrapping her leg around his waist to hold him in place.

As if he had any intention of leaving. Not until he'd filled her with his cock, his cum.

Not until he made her his.

Chantal was quivering. Every damn part of her body. She didn't know who this man was, but she wanted him. All of him. Inside her.

God, he had a talented mouth. No man had ever made her come like that. Shrieking like a goddamn banshee. Her clit still tremored with the aftereffects of her climax.

And the way he kissed her, it was as if he'd possessed her, his tongue mastering hers with velvety strokes that made her belly tighten. She was past the point of clear reason. Chantal Devlin, who never lost control with a man, who was always so clearheaded, even with sex, had totally and completely gone over the edge with this guy.

And she still didn't even know his name.

She tore her mouth from his, the mating call reaching desperate proportions now.

She searched his face, lost in the depth of his steely blue eyes. "I'm Chantal. Tell me your name."

"Dylan."

She palmed his chest. Steely hard, just like his abs as she trailed her fingers down to his crotch. She popped the jeans button, then drew the zipper down, shuddering as her knuckles brushed his hard-on. It was thick, long—she couldn't resist dipping her hand inside his jeans to encircle his flesh.

"Christ," he said on a harsh breath, surging against her hand. His breath was hot against her cheek.

With each stroke she felt his pulse pounding in his cock, felt her own blood rampantly racing throughout her veins. The need to shift, to run wild, was strong. The need to tear into this man was even stronger. The animal within her was dying to break free.

She leaned her head back to gaze into the dark intensity of his eyes.

"Fuck me, Dylan."

His nostrils flared, his gaze narrowing as he palmed the tree trunk next to her head with one hand, jerking his cock out with the other. She stared down at it, thick and pulsing in his hand, and licked her lips, swallowing past the dry lump in her throat.

She'd never wanted a fuck so desperately before.

"You want it here? Against the tree? My cock ramming into your hot cunt?"

"Yes!" His voice made her insane. "Fuck me now, dammit!"

He lifted her with one hand and she wrapped her legs around his waist while he placed his cock at the entrance to her pussy. She surged against him, engulfing his shaft between her pussy lips, gripping him like a vise as she slid all the way down until he was buried deep.

She could come right now, the contractions were so strong inside her. But she wanted to wait, to enjoy every blissful moment of this mating frenzy. He lifted her higher, then slammed her against the trunk of the tree.

Oh, it hurt. So damn good she cried out, then growled, letting the animal within her partially loose. He wanted it hard, she'd give everything he gave. She unleashed her claws, raking them down his back, lifting his shirt to draw her nails along his skin. He grunted, thrusting his cock deeper.

"Fuck, baby" was all he said in reply.

She snarled in protest when he didn't drive hard enough, no longer conscious of the human side of her. She couldn't speak, could only give him nonverbal signals to slam into her, to give her every stroke. Deeper, harder, to make it hurt. She needed this, wanted the fury, the passion, everything he had and then some.

When she felt it spiraling inside her, she let her canines burst forth and buried her face in his neck, clamping down on the flesh between his neck and shoulder as the first wave of her climax sent her careening into oblivion.

He shuddered and groaned, spurting his hot cum inside her as he, too, rode an orgasm that sent her crashing again. His fingers dug into her buttocks as he slammed her forward into the tree, then sank to the ground.

Shaking all over, Chantal was exhilarated. What an orgasm! Or orgasms, to be precise. She released her hold on his skin and let the human side of her regain control, resuming her normal breathing patterns.

She stroked his hair, kissed his sweat-soaked neck then pushed against him.

Dead weight.

"Hey."

No response. She frowned.

"Dylan?"

Again. Nothing. He lay slumped against her. She pushed again, and he fell to the ground.

Oh shit. Something wasn't right. She smoothed her skirt down over her hips and bent over him.

He was pale, blood pouring from the wound in his skin where she'd bitten him.

A cold chill passed over her.

Uh-oh. This couldn't be. Stepping over him, she lifted his shirt, wincing at the bloody claw marks on his back.

If he was a werewolf, the bite and claw marks would have healed over immediately.

This guy wasn't a werewolf.

"Oh, crap."

She'd just made a huge error. No, a catastrophic mistake.

She'd just fucked a human.

She sank to the ground as the realization hit.

It was even worse than that.

She'd just *bitten* a human.

Okay. Don't panic.

She really wanted to panic. She rose and ran to her car, grabbing her purse, then headed back to Dylan, not wanting to leave him alone. She dialed her pack leader and gave him her location.

He was going to be so pissed. But she couldn't leave Dylan out here alone.

The second call she made was even more important. Family was needed during a crisis and she really needed family right now.

"What?"

Even though the one word was curt and irritated, she melted in relief at the sound of her brother's voice. "Noah. I need you out here right now. I have just screwed up so fucking bad and I need your help."

"I'm on a plane in an hour."

She clicked off the phone, closed her eyes and batted back tears. He didn't even ask what she'd done. God, she loved her family.

How was she going to repair this damage?

She looked down at Dylan, at the man whose life she had just irrevocably altered. She didn't know. She thought he was her tryst, that he was sent here. She hadn't thought anyone human would be out this time of night, in this location.

Goddamn, she didn't know.

Brushing her fingers over the dark locks that fell over his forehead, she whispered, "I'm so sorry."

Chapter Two

Chantal paced while Noah was in the bedroom with Dylan.

That's all she knew about him. His first name. Dylan. The pack had retrieved him from the park, brought him to the main house and closeted him in one of the upstairs bedrooms, refusing to allow her access. She'd been cooling her heels for the past six hours, going without sleep. She looked a wreck and felt even worse.

Guilt tightened her stomach. She felt sick. What if he died? Did humans die from wolf bites? Hell, she didn't know the physiology. She'd never done this before.

Stupid thing to do, Chantal. Where had her head been?

Easy. She hadn't been using it at the time. She'd been thinking with her pussy.

Noah had arrived, true to his word, about four hours after she'd called him. Thank God he'd been in the States instead of out of the country and had been able to hop on one of the Devlin jets immediately. She'd given him a quick, utterly embarrassing recap of events. After hugging her and telling her everything would be all right, he'd marched upstairs and muscled his way into the bedroom where Dylan was being held, despite the two vicious guard-hounds at the door.

Like anyone would get in Noah Devlin's way when he wanted in somewhere.

But he'd been in there an hour.

And hadn't come out.

She chewed on a fingernail and loitered in the hallway.

Finally, the door opened and Noah walked out, his brows knit together in a very tight frown.

Oh shit. That so wasn't good.

"What?"

"Let's go talk somewhere."

She led him to the room she stayed in when she visited pack headquarters, shutting the door behind her and resting her head against it. "How bad is it?"

Noah dragged his hand through his hair and sat on the bed, looking up at her through half lidded eyes. "I know him."

"You do?"

"He's NCA, Chantal."

"Oh, God." She wanted to sink to the floor and cry. "Government employee?"

"He's an agent. On assignment, working on the wolf attacks."

"What wolf attacks?"

"Don't you watch the news or read the paper? Jesus, Chantal, it's happening right in your own fucking backyard."

Lifting her chin, she stalked to the wet bar and poured a glass of water. "I've been kind of busy, Noah." She took a long swallow and turned back to him. "What wolf attacks?"

Noah sighed. "They've been going on in four West Coast states for the past year. Grisly dismemberments. Mostly park attacks that the Feds and local police at first attributed to wild animals. Until forensics found human saliva in the wounds."

"Shit. Werewolves?"

"Probably. But rogues. Or someone who's gone off the deep end. We don't attack humans, not for food or sport."

"Of course not. Jesus, that's disgusting." She wrapped her arms around herself. "And Dylan's an agent?"

"Yeah."

"Damn." She crossed the room and sat next to him. "I didn't know. I didn't know he was human. I was supposed to meet an out-of-town werewolf in the park. I just assumed..."

"I know, honey. It's okay." He slipped his arm around her shoulder.

She laid her head against him, needing that few minutes of comfort before she looked up at him. "Is he going to be all right?"

He nodded. "His wounds are already healing. He's in prime shape. The change will happen soon, though."

She sank into the chair next to the wet bar. "Oh, God, Noah. I've never turned a human before."

"You'll have to be there for him now. He'll need you to see him through this."

Damn. This was going to be so complicated. They were bound now, through blood. She was responsible for him. She didn't want to be. But she had no choice.

"I can't believe I did this."

Noah shrugged. "You're not the first wolf to inadvertently change a human. You'll do the right thing."

Whatever that was. "So now what do we do?"

"He has to be told. And knowing Dylan, he isn't gonna like it."

She swallowed. "I guess I should tell him."

He nodded. "I'll be with you. I can handle him."

Somehow that didn't sound encouraging. She had her own brand of strength, but one riled newly turned werewolf could be formidable. And Dylan was big.

What exactly would his strengths be? His powers? "Do you know anything about a newly turned wolf's powers?"

"Yeah."

She stood and walked over to face him. "Tell me everything. Forewarned is forearmed."

His brows lifted. "Nervous? You? The great Chantal Devlin, fierce litigator, who eats prominent judges for breakfast, who fears nothing and no one?"

She shoved him. "Shut up already. This is new territory for me."

He grinned. "That's what you get for not keeping your panties on."

"Jerk." How utterly mortifying. "Now tell me what happens."

"He'll wake up confused and not remember what happened. Except the sex, of course. But he'll be hungry. And really full of energy. And his sex drive will be through the roof. You'll have to...uhhh...take care of that for him, because under no circumstances is he to be allowed to go off and fuck his brains out with the human female population. So feed him, fuck him, then tell him what you did to him and how it's going to affect the rest of his life."

She chewed an errant hangnail. "How soon will he make the change?"

"Full moon is in three days. You'll have to prepare him for the physiology. The first change isn't going to be easy on him. It's not like us. It's going to hurt. Bad. The more you keep him fucked down and relaxed, the easier it'll be. In fact, if you're having sex with him when the change occurs, even better."

She groaned. "I don't think he's going to want to have anything at all to do with me, let alone sex." God, the sex had been phenomenal though. She wouldn't mind a repeat performance. Or ten or twenty. And he'd been human at the time? God almighty. His sexual prowess would only increase as a wolf. She might not live through it.

What a way to go.

"Then I guess you'll have to use your powers of...persuasion to convince him, won't you?"

"You want me to chain him up in the dungeon and hold his dick hostage until he turns?"

Noah laughed. "Not a bad idea."

"Asshole. You're not helping."

He held out his hand. "Come on. Time to face your destiny. He should be waking up soon."

Why were her knees knocking? Noah was right. She wasn't afraid of anything or anyone, had faced formidable opponents without batting an eyelash.

What she'd done to Dylan was unforgivable. How was she going to explain it to him, to get him through this? She wasn't sure she could handle his change, let alone help him get past the next few days.

But she didn't really have a choice, did she? She took Noah's hand and allowed him to lead her back down the corridor, past the gargoyles protecting Dylan.

He was alone in the semi-darkened room. The shades were closed, a white sheet drawn up to his chest. Naked, his skin was tan against the bright sheets. Noah stayed near the door. Chantal moved forward and slid into a chair next to the head of the bed.

At least he wasn't pale. There was color in his face, and now that the frenzy to screw his brains out had passed, she had a chance to study him.

He was gorgeous. Thick, dark hair that he wore a little long in back, with a tiny bit of curl at the ends. She slid her fingers through his hair and brushed a lock off his forehead.

His lips were full, his nose a bit crooked which she found charming. It made him a little less than perfect. He had sharp cheekbones and a square jaw which was covered with dark stubble. She brushed her palm across it and shuddered at the sensual scraping of her skin, then gasped when his hand shot up and grabbed her wrist.

She found herself staring down into steely blue eyes.

"Where the hell am I?"

Chantal looked to Noah, who stepped forward to the side of the bed. "Hey, Legend."

Dylan frowned. "Devlin?"

"Yeah."

"What are you doing here? Where's here?"

"You're safe, so don't worry. And this is my sister, Chantal."

He looked to Chantal, then back at Noah. "She's your sister?"

Noah nodded.

"I need to sit up." He pushed off the bed and struggled. Chantal started to help him, but Noah shook his head. She kept her hands at her sides. When Dylan managed to rise to a sitting position and push the pillow behind his back, he looked to Noah. "I feel like shit. What happened?"

"Long story. Long, really fucking complicated story. And you aren't going to like the outcome."

"I already figured that."

The sheet had dropped down to his waist, leaving his chest and abdomen bare. Chantal couldn't help admiring his broad shoulders, sculpted pecs and well toned abs.

Now is not the time, Chantal. You can fuck him later.

"So which one of you is going to break the bad news?"

"I will," she said. "Since I caused this problem."

He crossed his arms.

She inhaled. "Last night, you and I had sex."

He looked to Noah and back at her. "You sure you want to discuss this in front of your brother?"

"He already knows anyway."

Shrugging, he said, "Whatever. It's your story."

"Anyway, it wasn't exactly normal sex."

"Really."

"Really. There was a small added component at the end." She looked down at her nails. God she needed a manicure.

"You care to elaborate on the added component at the end?"

Not really. She wanted to go back to last night and change her mind about meeting a stranger in the park. She wanted to go home instead. She wanted to erase everything. She looked at him, holding his gaze. "I bit you."

"You did?" He felt his neck. "I don't feel anything."

"The wound is already healing. Anyway, it wasn't an ordinary bite."

Dylan looked at Noah. "Does this have anything to do with I'm investigating?"

"Yes and no. Let her finish first and we can talk about your case after that."

Dylan turned a now-sharp gaze to Chantal. "Go on."

"We're not human," she blurted, then winced. Okay, so she probably could have finessed that a little better.

"Excuse me?"

"We're werewolves."

Noah leaned against the wall and crossed his arms. "Way to throw it out there, Chantal."

She half turned to shoot Noah a scathing look. "Well, there is no easy way to say it, is there?"

"Werewolves." Dylan shook his head. "You can do better than that."

"She's not lying, man," Noah said. "We're wolves. Shapeshifters."

"Uh-huh. Come on, Noah. We've known each other a long time. What's really going on here?"

"Chantal bit you during sex. She changed you."

"Changed me...how?"

"When I met you in the park," Chantal started, "I thought you were another wolf, like me. I had made an arrangement to meet with someone...an out-of-town sexual arrangement. I thought you were him. I didn't know you were human when we had sex. I didn't know you were human when I bit you, otherwise I'd have never touched

you. But because I did, you've been infected with werewolf blood. You're going to become what we are."

"You people really believe this?" He tossed off the sheet and swung his legs over the bed, heedless of his nudity. "You're both fucking insane and I've got a job to do."

Noah rushed him, growling and partially shifting. His voice became dark and menacing as he pushed Dylan back onto the mattress with his forearm across Dylan's throat. "Stay put!"

Dylan's eyes widened as he took in Noah's changed features. The eyes turning yellow, fangs where his teeth were, his voice now more of a growling snarl than a human's voice.

Holy shit. Was he hallucinating? Had they fed him drugs or something? Noah backed off and Dylan watched him change back to human, his features softening.

"Sonofabitch," he whispered.

"Sorry, man," Noah said. "Had to show you we weren't making this up."

"I still don't believe it."

"It's true, Dylan," Chantal said.

He looked at her, his memories flooding back from last night. The woman with dark hair he'd thought was his contact. The sex. God, the sex—how could he forget that? She was still as beautiful in the daylight as she'd been in the park last night. He couldn't believe what had happened between them. It wasn't like him at all to forget his job and have sex with a stranger. "I don't fuck women I don't know."

She nodded and dropped her gaze to her lap. "It's in my pheromones. When I'm in heat like that it's irresistible to human males. It's like a drug, an aphrodisiac. It makes you drunk with desire." She looked up at him. "I didn't know you were a human. I never would have come near you had I known."

He rubbed his forehead where a headache was starting. "This is all a lot to process. And still damned hard to believe. Werewolves only exist in the movies and in books."

Noah smirked. "Apparently not."

"And you say I'm going to change now, become like you?"

"Yes. But it's not so bad. We lead normal lives. We belong to packs and we guard and take care of each other. You just have to be careful around humans."

"Obviously," Dylan deadpanned. "This is real, huh?"

"Yup."

Dylan dragged his hand through his hair. "Holy fucking shit. Okay, I need to get up. I'd like to get dressed. Where are my clothes?"

Noah opened the closet door. "These have all been brought from your hotel. The dresser has the rest of your things. Your toiletries are in the bathroom."

All his stuff. "Where exactly am I?"

"This is the San Francisco pack leader's mansion," Chantal said. "You're safe here among your own kind."

"Werewolves aren't my own kind."

"They are now," she said in a low voice that spoke of embarrassment. She could barely meet his gaze.

God, she was beautiful. And every time he looked at her he was reminded of the wild, animalistic sex they'd shared last night. And his dick was getting hard. So not a wise thing to happen in front of her brother. He grabbed the sheet and bunched it up over his crotch. "I need a shower and to get dressed. And I'm starving. And I have a million questions."

Noah nodded. "Take your time. One of the guards will escort you downstairs when you're finished. We'll meet you there."

"Fine." *Just get the fuck out of my room.* Christ, this was confusing.

Chantal stood, opened her mouth as if she wanted to say something, then clamped it shut and followed her brother out the door. He locked it, walked into the bathroom and turned on the shower, trying to relax under the hot steamy spray. When he was

finished he stared at his reflection in the mirror, checking his neck and shoulder for marks.

Other than a faint hickey-looking mark where Chantal said she had bit him, he didn't see anything that resembled the vicious bite marks similar to the ones on the bodies from the case he was investigating.

And obviously the victims had been torn apart and killed, not transformed into werewolves.

So what was the connection between Chantal and Noah and this case?

Was he really going to turn into a werewolf? And what the fuck did that mean? For him, for his career, his future? Was all this real? He'd seen Noah partly change from human to beast. That had been no illusion.

Goddamn.

He'd sure as hell had one life-changing fuck last night, hadn't he?

Chapter Three

"This has really screwed up our pack dynamics, Chantal."

Chantal sighed as Lamont Burkhart, the pack leader, read her the riot act.

"What were you thinking?"

"I thought he was the man Maia set me up with."

"Didn't you smell the human on him, for Christ's sake?"

"No, I was too busy fucking him to think about his scent, Lamont." And that was the truth. She hadn't bothered to track his scent. And even if she had, all she would have scented was human. Even werewolves smelled human unless they changed or were releasing pheromones, and only the females did that. Smelling wolf on him wasn't her primary objective last night. Getting his cock inside her was.

Lamont paced, his hands clasped behind his back. He was over six and a half feet tall and had to nearly double himself over to get in her face. "If you would mate with someone in our pack we wouldn't have had this problem."

"I'm not ready to mate—"

He held up his hand as he straightened. "Spare me the same bullshit you've been spouting for the past two years. I don't want to hear it. Turning humans is frowned upon and you know it. It's hard enough to keep our identities secret without bringing in outsiders. What is it with you Devlins and your predilection toward mating with humans?"

He was referring to her brothers, Jason and Max, both of whom had fallen in love with human females. But her situation was different. "I'm not the least bit interested in mating with a human or any man right now."

"A little late for that given the situation, don't you think?"

"It's my fault, Lamont. I should have been more specific in my description of the were I set her up with. I should have gone with her."

Chantal looked with fondness toward her friend, Maia. "It's certainly not your fault, Maia. I take full responsibility."

"As well you should," Lamont said. "Though Maia bears some blame in this too. We hardly run an escort service here, Maia. And you know how I feel about pack members mating with outsiders."

Maia nodded. "My humble apologies, Lamont."

"Leave us," Lamont said.

Maia turned away, smiling and winking a violet eye at Chantal on her way out. One of the few friends Chantal had made since being assigned to this pack two years ago, Chantal refused to allow Maia to take the blame for her own error. Chantal had been the one to approach Maia about needing a man and not wanting to mate with a pack member. Maia didn't mate with anyone inside the pack either. As a flight attendant, she had plenty of contacts in other packs and had offered to make arrangements.

No one else was going to suffer for Chantal's mistake. It was bad enough Dylan already had.

The object of her thoughts walked into the room at that moment.

Her breath caught. Freshly showered, his hair still damp, he wore a white polo shirt and jeans, looking fit, casual and entirely too sexy. Her heart picked up a rapid pace, a hunger coursing through her that had nothing to do with food.

His gaze shot to hers, nostrils flaring as if he were breathing in her scent.

She'd seen that look between pack mates before. In heat.

Oh, damn.

"Dylan," Noah said, stepping over to him. "This is Lamont Burkhardt, the San Francisco pack leader. Lamont, Dylan Maxwell."

Chantal hadn't even known his last name.

Dylan shook Lamont's hand.

"We are terribly sorry about the unfortunate event that has brought you here," Lamont said, casting a chastising look at Chantal. "We hope you accept our humble apologies for what has happened to you."

Dylan shrugged. "I'm not sure I know exactly what's happened. But I'm slowly grabbing a clue."

"It is Chantal's responsibility to guide you through this process," Lamont explained. "Come, you must be starving. The impending change will cause you to be ravenous. You need to eat."

They sat at the table and ate. Chantal sat next to Dylan, breathing him in. Soap and the underlying scent of pure male that she attributed uniquely to him. It was burned into her olfactory senses now. She could probably pick him out of a crowd of thousands.

Dylan downed his food like a man starving, tearing through two thick, rare steaks until nothing was left but bone. They consumed a couple bottles of wine, which Lamont explained would help relax the agitation within him.

Chantal was pretty damned agitated herself. And at a loss for what to do for Dylan. Or for herself.

Dylan wiped his mouth and took a swallow of wine. He stared at the remains of the two steaks he'd damn near inhaled. Two huge steaks. Almost rare. Damn, he'd been hungry. He always liked his meat well done. Scorched, in fact.

What the hell.

"You'll find your tastes changing," Maia said, smiling at him. A petite woman with the body of a stripper, she had unusual violet eyes and short, spiky blonde hair. "A lot of your tastes will change. More meat, less of the side foods."

"Uh-huh." All the people at the table looked so...normal. They ate, they drank, had normal conversations, even laughed and cracked jokes. Just looking at them one wouldn't notice anything unusual at all. Did they finish dinner, clear the dishes then turn into wolves and run wild through the parks?

"All your appetites will be more enhanced. Especially at the beginning," Lamont said. "Food and sex."

His gaze shot to Chantal, who turned a bright crimson.

"Chantal will see to your sexual needs."

His brows lifted. "Is that right?"

"Yes. You will have a voracious sexual appetite before the change occurs. She will satisfy all your requirements. Anything you need, just ask her."

Interesting side benefit. "Tell me about this change."

"Even now your physiology is changing. All your senses are heightening. You are growing stronger. During the full moon you will complete the transition and shift for the first time. It will be painful. Extremely painful. Chantal will assist you through that too. Trust her, let her help you. Do not leave her side at all for the next few days. It is important you stay here at the compound."

Dylan's gaze shot to Lamont. "Wait. Can't do that. I have a job."

"It'll have to wait." Lamont crossed his arms.

Dylan shook his head. "It can't wait. I need to leave." How could he have forgotten his goddamn job? All this shit had messed with his mind. Werewolves and sex and fucked up transformations didn't matter. A killer was on the loose and he had to find him before he struck again.

"You cannot leave the safety of the compound. You will have to contact your employer and ask for time off."

"It's not that simple." He looked to Noah.

"Lamont, we need a minute in private to discuss this," Noah said.

Lamont nodded and looked at the others. "Leave us."

The others rose and exited the room immediately, leaving Dylan, Chantal and Noah alone with Lamont.

"Dylan works for the NCA as an agent. He's investigating the wolflike murders," Noah said.

"Oh, I see. Well, that's rather ironic." He looked to Dylan. "We have nothing to do with those."

Dylan steepled his fingers. "Any idea who is?"

"We have thoroughly investigated these killings within our own justice system. It's no one in our pack. We think it's a rogue. Definitely a werewolf, though."

Dylan's gaze shot to Noah. "Would have been nice if you'd let me know about this before."

Noah shrugged. "It's not like we go about revealing our identities to the Feds, man. I couldn't tell you. Would you have believed me anyway?"

"Not before last night." Shit. "I still have to do my job. I was in the park last night because I was supposed to meet an informant. Some woman with dark hair who had a lead for me. I thought Chantal was the informant."

Lamont looked at Chantal.

"Don't give me that look," she said. "I didn't even know about these murders until Noah told me about them this morning."

Dylan stood. "I have calls to make, leads to follow up on. I'm on assignment here. I need to report in to the NCA or they'll be sending a shitload of field agents to look for me. You don't want that. Let me go do my job."

Lamont sighed. "Very well. But I want Noah and Chantal with you at all times. And they do have the inside track on the werewolf population here in the area as well as around the country. They can be of use to you."

Dylan shrugged. "If it's okay with them, it's fine by me."

Lamont looked to Chantal.

"I can take a few days off work. I just finished a case."

"I'm free for a few too," Noah said.

"Good," Lamont said. "We do, of course, require your discretion in this and would appreciate you not notifying the government of the existence of werewolves."

"Considering my current predicament, it would be a death warrant to my career. You have my word."

Lamont nodded. "And night of the full moon, Dylan, you come back here for the change. It's dangerous for you to be out there."

"Fine."

"Then it's settled." He stood. "Chantal will see to any of your other needs and questions. If you require anything else, please don't hesitate to ask."

After he left the room, Dylan turned to Noah. "Doesn't he remind you of Lurch?"

Noah snorted. "He's a little dry and humorless, yeah."

"More like those movie vampire types than a werewolf if you ask me."

"And just what are our 'types'?" Chantal asked.

"Not sure yet. Y'all seem pretty normal to me. Except for the snarling and biting."

"You haven't seen the half of it yet," she said with a half smile.

"Show me." He tilted back in his chair and laced his fingers over his stomach.

"Uh, yeah. That's my clue to leave before I get icked out." Noah stood. "You need me, Chantal, buzz my phone. I'm going out but I'll be nearby."

"I need to make some calls," Dylan said.

"Make your calls," Noah said. "You won't be going out for a few hours."

"Why's that?"

"Urges, my man," Noah replied with a snicker as he walked out. "Urges."

Dylan turned back to Chantal. "I feel like there's a private joke I'm not privy to."

“Sexual urges. Now that you’ve eaten, they’ll be hitting you shortly. Better make your calls.” She stood. “I’ll be in my room.”

“Naked? Legs spread? How nice of you to act like a whore for me during this transition.”

She pushed calmly back from the table and leaned over him, her mouth inches from his, her gaze boring into his. “Guess I deserved that since I put you in this predicament. But get this straight. I’m no man’s whore, Dylan. I’m doing this out of guilt and pack responsibility. Nothing more. When you’re ready and the urge hits, I’ll be ready to take care of it for you, because that’s what I’m supposed to do. Don’t assume I’ll derive any pleasure from it.”

She turned on her heel and walked out of the room.

Well, that was strangely unsatisfying. But goddammit, he didn’t choose to be a werewolf. Sex kitten Chantal Devlin had decided she wanted a romp in the park, took a bite out of him and as a result his whole life had changed overnight.

Didn’t he deserve to be a little pissed off about that?

As far as her not getting any pleasure out of fucking him? Huh. He’d see about that.

Chapter Four

Chantal paced. Stopped in the middle of the room and stared at the door. Nothing. She resumed her pacing until she reached the center of the room, then halted again, crossing her arms over her chest.

She looked at her watch. It had been an hour.

Where was he? Her panties were damp just thinking about how it would be with Dylan again. Hot, carnal and wild, just as it had been last night.

She might be irritated as hell with him, but she couldn't deny wanting his cock inside her again.

So why hadn't he shown up yet?

She finally grew tired of wearing a hole in the rug with her heels. Disgusted at her nervous anticipation, she kicked off her shoes and fell onto the bed. Exhausted, she figured she'd just close her eyes for a few minutes. She'd hear Dylan when he showed up.

When she opened her eyes the room was dark. Damn, she'd slept the rest of the day. Of course she hadn't gotten any sleep at all last night so it was no wonder. She yawned and grabbed her pillow, snuggling deeper into the soft down. Warmth. Oblivion.

Her eyes shot open when she caught a familiar scent and heard movement. She wasn't alone in the room.

She started to move.

"Don't."

Dylan's voice, tight and strained.

"Stay just like that. God, you look hot, sprawled out on your belly with your legs spread and your skirt hiked up to your thighs."

He was panting. She scented his arousal in the air around her, her panties flooding with moisture as she breathed him in. She heard a zipper drawing down, the rustle of clothing as it dropped to the floor.

"Where've you been?" She hated asking the question, but couldn't help it.

"Fighting this. My cock's been hard for the better part of four hours. I paced, I worked out, I read, I made some calls. I did everything I could to keep from coming in here. I even thought about jacking off, but I knew it wouldn't even begin to take the edge off. It's you I crave. I need you, Chantal. I don't want to, but I do."

The bed creaked as he climbed on the end and came toward her. She gripped the sheets in her hands, anticipating, wanting, squirming as she rubbed her pussy against her wet panties. Her clit swelled and she moved it against the mattress, feeling the burst of sensation sparking inside her.

"I can't promise to be gentle," he muttered, his body surrounding her on all sides.

"I don't want you to be."

He touched her calves first and she jumped at the contact.

"Shhh," he whispered, smoothing his hands upward, over the backs of her knees.

Slow. Too slow. He crept to her thighs, raising her dress as he moved his hand underneath the fabric to her upper thighs. When he reached her panties, he growled, "These are in my way," and tore them with a harsh rip.

She gasped. "Those cost twenty dollars."

"Send me a bill."

The animalist nature of the act only served to heighten her excitement. She lifted her hips, begging silently for his cock. He patted her ass and ran his finger between her cheeks.

"I want to fuck you everywhere. Including here. I'll bet your ass is just as tight and sweet as your cunt."

She shuddered at the sensation of his fingers teasing back and forth along the puckered hole. When he bent and kissed the small of her back, she whimpered. When his mouth went lower, his tongue finding her drenched pussy lips, she cried out and dug her nails into the mattress.

She could shift, could take over. He wasn't lupine yet. She was stronger. But oh, she felt so feminine under his assault. And she needed to let him have his way, let him do this to her. She owed him that much. God, she needed him inside her.

She gasped when he flipped her over onto her back, then held her firm with his hand on her belly. He tortured her with his tongue, lapping at her pussy with warm, wet strokes, sucking at her clit until she was afraid she was going to die from the sweet pleasure.

She couldn't take it anymore. "I thought you said you weren't going to be gentle."

He laughed. "Impatient for my dick?"

"I want it."

"Tough. I've been waiting. Now you wait. I want you to come. I want to taste that sweet honey again. It's like a goddamn drug, baby. Give it to me."

She didn't like the tone of his voice, ordering her to have an orgasm. Then again, it was damned hard to not have one the way he was licking her clit, sucking it, tugging, then swirling his tongue around it. She was going to come and she couldn't hold back if she wanted to.

Hell, she didn't want to. She lifted off the mattress, ground her sex against his face and let go.

"God, Dylan, I'm coming," she moaned, the hot rush of fluids pouring from her. He clamped his mouth over her pussy and drank from her as she crested the wave over and over again.

She panted, breathing deeply to gather some semblance of wit. Though he hardly gave her much time before he snaked his arm around her waist to lift her up. He flipped her over and shoved a pillow under hips.

Now he wasn't gentle as he kneed her legs farther apart and positioned himself between them, his cock head finding her slit. Before she could even draw a quick breath, he shoved inside her, burying himself balls-deep.

"Oh yeah, that's perfect," he groaned, grinding against her ass as he fit against her, drawing out and thrusting hard.

He was thick, pulsing with heat and she'd never felt anything so good. She rose up and back against him, needing him deeper. He placed a hand on her back, pushing her down.

"No. Let me."

His growl of irritation only turned her on more, his hand large, hot and powerful splayed across her back, holding her steady. Visions of him holding her in place with his teeth while he mounted her in wolf form sent pools of desire pouring from her.

"You always get this wet when you fuck?" he asked, withdrawing almost completely, only to slam hard against her again.

She grunted, fisting the sheets and pushing back. The answer was no. No man had ever turned her on like this. But she wasn't about to tell him that since her emotions were conflicted enough where he was concerned.

In the darkness, every sound, every scent was magnified. Her senses caught and held the musky, totally male smell of his soap, heard every intake of breath he made, the slapping sounds of their moist bodies connecting together. It was hot in the room despite the air-conditioning, their bodies sliding against each other as he lay fully on top of her, swept her hair to the side and sank his teeth into the back of her neck.

She screamed in pleasure, came in a flood of crashing sensation. He growled against her neck as he jettisoned inside her, keeping his teeth buried in her nape, possessing her, riding her.

It was phenomenal. She'd never climaxed so hard or so long. By the time he let go of her neck and raised off her, she felt like a limp dishrag, unable to move, let alone speak.

Instead of leaving the bed, he rolled to the side and took her with him, drawing her against him. Admittedly, she kind of liked that.

She shouldn't like it. She didn't even like him. Okay, she didn't even know him. She was never supposed to know him. That was the whole idea with men and sex. Last night Dylan was supposed to be a quick, anonymous fuck, and he had been. Only the quick fuck had turned into something more...binding. Now she had to keep him satisfied while he made the transition. Which meant she couldn't just up and leave or kick him out of her room. Her bed.

Dammit.

She had to let him stay.

"You smell good." He kissed the back of her neck.

She shivered and tried to elbow him. He laughed.

"Not much for after-sex snuggling, are you?"

Glad for the darkness, she shrugged. "You hardly seem the snuggling type yourself."

"You don't know me very well, then. I enjoy women. Every thing about them. I'm not a fuck 'em and leave 'em kind of guy."

He was right. She didn't know him. Nothing about him other than he was an agent for the NCA and human. Well, formerly human. She scooted away and sat up, pulling her hand through her hair. "Why did my brother call you Legend when he first saw you?"

"It's my code name with the NCA."

"Oh. Why that code name?"

"Let's say I tend to get myself out of pretty sticky situations in rather legendary ways."

She wanted to hear about those ways, but that would require intimacy and conversation, and that she wouldn't do. "Didn't you have to go out?"

"Yeah, actually, I do. You in a hurry to get out of bed?" He inched toward her again, teasing her inner thigh.

She melted, her clit tingling at the thought of how easy it would be to lay back, spread her legs, and let him rub those big, hard hands all over her pussy. Spend the entire night in bed with him. Exploring, learning his body, getting to know him.

Too dangerous. When he demanded it, she'd fuck him and leave it at that. "Want to prow around in werewolf land?"

He paused in his mapping of her body. His fingers disappeared from her thigh and the warmth of his body left her side. She felt cold. The harsh light on her bedside table flipped on. She squinted, then glared at him.

"That's actually a great idea," he said. "Can you take me there?"

She was the one who suggested it. No point in being irritated with his boyish excitement. "Sure. Give me an hour to get showered. Nighttime is when everyone prowls. We might be able to find out something about the killer."

He bounded out of bed and grabbed his clothes, climbing back into them so fast she barely caught a glimpse of his body. Too bad.

"I'll shower and change too," he said, exiting her room in a hurry. With a resigned sigh, Chantal slid off the bed and headed into her bathroom and turned on the shower.

She turned and regarded her reflection in the mirror. Her face was flushed with the aftereffects of great sex, something she could still be having if she wasn't so damn skittish about getting close to a man.

"Dumbass," she said to her reflection, then stuck out her tongue.

Well, great. Instead of a night of hot sex, she was going to help Dylan hunt for a killer.

* * * * *

Excitement churned inside Dylan. Adrenaline pumped through his veins. He didn't know whether he was more sexually charged or if it was the chase for the killer. Either way, he was keyed up.

Chantal had recruited Noah to come along, so the three of them headed out into the city. Not the typical tourist traps, since they were closed by now. Noah drove them to a nondescript brick building with no windows. The building stood two stories tall in the middle of what looked to be a business district.

"What's this place?" Dylan asked as they parked in front and stepped out of the car.

"Party central for the werewolves around here," Chantal said, smoothing her skirt.

Correction. What skirt there was. The tiny scrap of fabric barely covering her ass could hardly be called a skirt. Typically he'd enjoy ogling a woman wearing a short skirt. But for some reason, knowing they were going into some club where other men could look at Chantal made the green monster rise up in a huge way inside him.

And he didn't like that. Why should he be jealous? He had no claim on this woman. He'd fucked her, and according to this whole werewolf thing going on inside him he'd get to continue to fuck her for a while longer, which was just fine with him. But that was all they had going. They had no relationship. Hell, he didn't even really know her.

So why did the thought of those long, shapely legs and firm thighs about to be displayed for every pair of male eyes to see really piss him off?

Music pumped through the heavy oak door. Noah rapped on it. A window slid open in the door and a mean set of dark eyes glared at them. Noah showed an ID.

"Okay. I know Chantal. Who's the new guy?" the man behind the window asked.

"Human. Newly turned. He's Chantal's."

The guy looked at Dylan for a second, then nodded, slammed the slider shut and opened the door.

The interior was pitch black inside with the exception of lights strobing down from the ceiling and hitting a dance floor. Dylan followed Noah and Chantal's lead to the bar. The place was packed, both on the dance floor and off, every available table occupied.

"Are all these people werewolves?" Dylan asked, bending low to speak in Chantal's ear over the loud music.

She tilted her head back and nodded. "Yeah. No humans allowed."

Damn. He had no idea.

A group got up and left, so they took their table and sat, giving Dylan a chance to sip his beer and survey the crowd. A mix and match of all ages, all robust and healthy looking, smiling, laughing and partying their asses off. It could be any nightclub in any city, with the exception that these people were lupine.

"So why do they hide out? Why the exclusivity?"

"Kindred," Noah explained. "Plus, if anyone shifts or things get out of hand, no one will be shocked and our covers aren't blown. It happens. Fights break out, tempers flare, passions rise. Things are just warming up in here. It looks normal right now. Just wait."

"Werewolves are a very primal, passionate lot, Dylan," Chantal added. "Anything can happen."

He cast a heated gaze at Chantal. "So I've noticed."

Lifting her chin, she said, "You haven't seen anything yet."

Noah cleared his throat. Loudly. "You two gonna practice verbal foreplay all night, or are we here to do something else?"

Dylan dragged his gaze away from Chantal's challenging stare. "Ever see any bad element among your kind? Anything suspicious?"

Noah shrugged. "There's always a dumbass or two in the population who want to step outside the secrecy we try so hard to maintain. Think the rules don't apply to them. But they're easily brought in line. Or eliminated."

"Our rules are very clear," Chantal added. "Break them and you die. The sanctity of the pack is everything and all of us work very hard at maintaining the cloak of normalcy. If one of us is found out, it threatens us all."

"So it would be unlikely that the pack would protect a killer of humans."

"Protect? No. We wouldn't turn him over to the authorities, either," Noah explained. "We'd just deal with him ourselves. But he wouldn't be allowed to run amok. If werewolves were discovered to be living among humans, they'd hunt us all down. The potential for war would be great. We would never risk the possibility of elimination of our species."

"None of us want that," Chantal said. "We'll do anything we have to in order to stop this killer. What do you know about him?"

"He struck a couple years ago in southern California and Nevada, then nothing until a few months ago. Then he hit in Oregon and Washington about six months ago. Last three attacks were here in the San Francisco area."

"So he's a traveler," Chantal said.

"Or someone who likes fucking with us," Dylan said. "We get a lot of serial cases that move around for the sheer fun of watching us chase them. That's their thrill."

Noah drained his drink, then shook his head. "This guy's pissed off about something. Or at someone."

"I wish I knew who the woman was who had called saying she had information," Dylan said, casting his dark gaze on Chantal.

If he'd met that woman instead of Chantal, none of this would have happened.

And he wouldn't be a werewolf feeling this hunger churning inside him right now, wishing he could strip Chantal down at the club and fuck her.

His head was swirling. It was getting hard to concentrate on work. His stomach hurt. His cock throbbed. How long had it been since he'd eaten? Since he'd fucked Chantal? A few hours? Several?

Too long.

He was getting hungry again. For food.

And for Chantal.

Chapter Five

Chantal caught and held Dylan's gaze, reading the hunger in his eyes.

"Let's feed you," she said, shooting Noah a warning glance.

Noah took a look at the feral expression on Dylan's face and nodded. "Get him some food. And whatever else he needs. I'm gonna do a little recon around here, see if I can get to know some of the locals."

"Okay." She signaled for the waitress and ordered meat. Rare. And in a hurry. The waitress took a quick look at Dylan and seemed to catch Chantal's drift, scuttling off to the kitchen.

Chantal reached across the table for Dylan's hand. "Hey, hang on. We'll get you some food."

He seemed in a trance, his gaze fixated on her. He nodded. "It hurts. Everywhere."

"I know." Dammit, she didn't know, but she understood now that she'd have to be more careful over the next day or so until he made the transition. Keep him fed and keep him fucked, Lamont had told her. She hadn't been doing her job.

The music pulsed around them. Hard, heavy and driving with a sensual beat that entered her bloodstream, pumping the primal sensations within her. It had to be making Dylan crazy because he wasn't used to the experience yet. She could handle it, could control the wildness within her.

From the looks he was giving her, she wasn't sure he was going to be able to tame the impulses.

Fortunately the waitress came back with a huge piece of meat. Dylan dove into it with a vengeance, polishing it off quickly. He never once took his eyes off her as he ate. Her pulse began to thrum with a wild beat as he watched her, and with every bite he

took, every time he swept his tongue over his full bottom lip, she began to feel as if she were his meal.

It was getting warm in the club. The music churned, the urge to move, to dance, becoming a need she couldn't ignore. She stood and reached for Dylan's hand.

"Let's go."

"Where?"

"Dance floor."

He frowned. "Don't feel like dancing."

"We'll be doing more than dancing, trust me."

After studying her with a surly frown for a few seconds, he slid his hand in hers and let her guide him into the middle of the throng of undulating dancers. She turned around and wound her body against his.

"Feel the music, Dylan. Let it enter you."

He wrapped his arms around her and jerked her against him, none too gently. The thick heat of his cock brushed insistently against her hip. "I'd rather enter you."

Sensation took flame and caught, igniting her into heated arousal. The frenzied beat of the music pounded as hard as her clit. "I know what you want. You'll get it."

"Good. Let's go."

He pulled away and tugged on her wrist but she stood firm, advancing on him once again, holding him there by lifting her leg and wrapping it around his hip. "Just dance. And keep watching."

She began to move against him with the rhythm of the music, undulating her hips against his, driving her clit against his pelvis. The ache intensified, pleasure bursting and making her clit swell. She let her head fall back and just went with the mood, letting go.

Dylan frowned and grasped her hips while she wound her arms around his neck. "You're playing a dangerous game, Chantal. I don't have much control."

She raised her head, opened her eyes, drinking in his chiseled features, the frown that signaled pained arousal. "Look around you, Dylan."

He tore his gaze from hers and surveyed the dance floor. She already knew what he'd see. The smells and sounds of sex surrounded them, permeating the entire room.

The party had begun.

Dylan didn't want to look at anything or anyone but Chantal, but the sounds of moaning crescendoed even over the ear-splitting music. Various stages of foreplay or downright sex were happening all around them. People were either dancing and ignoring what was happening, or they were getting down. Right next to him a woman had straddled her dance partner. His pants were unzipped and they were going at it as they danced. Across the room one guy had his woman spread-eagled on the table and was snacking on her pussy. Another woman was going down on a guy while he leaned against the bar.

Christ. Was this some kind of sex club?

Chantal leaned into him. "I told you we're a passionate lot. This happens at the parties. Since we don't kill for sport anymore, we fuck to let off tension."

He pulled her back and searched her face. "You do this often?"

She shook her head. "Never, actually. Been to the clubs before, but never...engaged."

"Why not?"

Her lips curled in a teasing smirk. "I'm picky."

He liked that. "Guess I should be flattered, then."

"Yes, you should be."

Dylan searched the room looking for Noah, but couldn't find him.

"Where's your brother?"

Chantal shrugged. "Probably took off after he looked around a bit. He knew what we were going to do here. I doubt he wanted to witness it."

“And what do you think we’re going to do here, Chantal?”

Her eyes darkened, lips parted as she moved her hips against him. “We’re going to fuck.”

That wasn’t why he’d come here. But it’s what he needed. The mission be damned, he needed to be inside Chantal. His balls were twisted in a painful knot, throbbing tight and hard against his body. His lust for her was overpowering, driving every thought away except the need to mate with her. It burned within him to the point if he didn’t take her right now...

Oh, fuck it. Enough thinking. He shuffled her backward, off the dance floor and through the crowd, holding her close to his body and using his hands to push people out of the way. Not that anyone paid attention to them. They were too busy doing their own thing.

He slammed her up against the wall and latched onto her lips, driving his tongue inside her mouth. She tasted of raw passion, of the same hunger that burned within him. It fired his blood, making the lust churn inside him. Soon he forgot where he was, didn’t care about the people around them, the fact they were in a public place.

With a low growl against her mouth he tugged her skimpy little skirt over her hips and slid his fingers underneath her panties, desperate to make contact with the heat of her flesh.

She was wet and pulsing. He rocked his palm against her sex, then inserted two fingers inside her. She moaned against his lips and thrust her tongue against his.

Rock-hard and ready, he couldn’t stand this. Playing was one thing when he had patience. Now he didn’t have any. He withdrew his fingers and unzipped his jeans, tugging them down enough to withdraw his cock. He didn’t even ask if this was what she wanted. One look at the glazed expression in her eyes, the way her tongue swept over her bottom lip, and he knew.

He pushed against her and entered her with a quick thrust. She cried out, the sound absorbed by the loud music. Only he heard and her cries were the sweetest music in the

place. He pushed her hard against the wall, pistoning his cock deep, feeling her pussy grip him as she welcomed him inside.

Chantal clawed his back with her nails, scraping along the tops of his shoulders, trailing them into his hair, tugging it fiercely.

"Fuck me," she demanded in a low, sexy voice. "Harder."

He slammed against her, pulling back so he could watch where their bodies met, could see her cunt grab on to his shaft every time he withdrew and reentered her. She fit him perfectly, accepting the thick heat of him fully. He was on fire from the inside out, his balls aching with painful pleasure, filling with the cum he would soon jettison inside her.

Music blasted louder, harder, the beat driving through his nerve endings. He pumped to the rhythm, grabbing Chantal's wrists and raising them above her head, pinning her to the wall. Possessing her was his driving force now. Her eyes were open windows, letting him see inside to the passion, the need, the wild creature that lived within her. Instinctively he knew she'd never let anyone this close. Chantal was guarded, but not with him. He wanted to crawl inside her, to mark her, to make her his in a way that had never been as compelling as it was right now.

"Dylan!" she cried, her pussy squeezing him with relentless pulses.

With measured, frantic strokes, he took her over the edge, burying his head in her neck and biting down on the soft tissue between her throat and shoulder. She shuddered against him and spilled hot cream over his balls as she came. He shuddered, climaxing against her, erupting with fierce contractions that sprang from his spine and upward. He emptied into her with blinding pulses until he had nothing left to give.

Panting, he released her arms, wrapped his around her waist and pulled her skirt down, protecting her from those who might see.

Fuck. He'd lost it. Utterly lost it.

And the odd part was, he didn't give a shit that he'd just fucked Chantal in a very public place. Nor did he care who had watched. She didn't seem to either. Just lifted her lips in a very satisfied smile.

"Feel better?" she asked.

"Much."

"Good."

He took her hand. "Now let's find Noah."

"He's probably long gone by now. With the car. But it's not too far back to the house. We can walk."

They headed out the front door of the club. Night chill bit into the air around them. "You sure you're not too cold?"

"I have...internal insulation to keep me warm," she said as they started walking. "I don't tend to feel the cold."

"Oh. Good to know." That was convenient. He supposed there'd be benefits to this werewolf thing.

"Are you cold?"

The wind swirled around them, biting into his skin. He thought about it. "Actually, no."

"Good."

They cut through the park, Chantal leading the way. In about two hours it would be dawn. Typically this wouldn't be a wise decision since wandering around a dark, deserted area like this in the middle of the night wasn't the safest thing to do, but he had a weapon.

And a very sexy werewolf by his side.

He slanted a glance at her, finding it hard to believe the slight little wisp of a woman holding his hand could shift into a feral beast. He'd like to see that.

A sound to his left dragged his attention away from the beautiful woman at his side. He stopped, sniffed the air, looked around, his senses catching something on the wind.

Something foul.

"What's wrong?" Chantal asked.

"I smelled something."

She inhaled. "Wolf."

He couldn't describe the sensation, but it prickled down his spine like a sixth sense of foreboding. He grabbed his gun and released the safety. Chantal's eyes widened.

"Do you think it's the wolf you're looking for?"

"Maybe. Could be nothing, too. I don't have a handle on these new senses slamming around inside me. But I'm not going to take any chances."

He stalked the area, tuning into his senses. Chantal followed, staying behind him and a little to his side, remaining within his field of vision at all times. Good girl.

Was the wolf following them, or was it stalking other prey?

A rustle in the bushes ahead and a scream made him start.

He had the answer to his question. The wolf hadn't been after them. Ballsy sonofabitch, though. He knew they'd been there and just hadn't cared.

"There." He shot straight ahead, Chantal hot on his heels.

A wolf had a dark-haired woman backed against a tree. Dylan pulled his gun and fired at the ground in front of the wolf, the shot spraying grass and dirt in front of the wolf. The wolf started, jumping back and turning to snarl at Dylan. Dammit, he couldn't shoot the thing, it was too close to the girl. If he missed, he'd hit her.

The wolf's eyes glowed like golden flame in the darkness, its sleek muscles undulating under its gray fur. For a second Dylan was sure it was going to lunge at him, but then it turned to the left and sprang through the dense bushes, disappearing from sight. The young woman sank to the ground in a heap, out cold.

"I'm going after him," Chantal said, pulling her clothes off in a hurry. Dylan watched, transfixed, as within seconds and at a dead run a naked Chantal shifted from woman to wolf and disappeared into the brush.

He checked the woman for injuries. Other than a few scratches on her arms and legs, she seemed okay. Probably in shock. He took out his phone and called Noah, reporting what happened while he waited for Chantal. Goddammit, he wanted to be able to shift and go with her. Wasn't that just the oddest thing? He didn't want to be a werewolf, didn't want this upheaval and complete change in his life that had been thrust upon him.

But it sure as hell would come in handy right now. Because he'd like to chase down that sonofabitch who'd tried to attack the girl. He looked up at the moon. Almost full. He felt the draw to it, immersed himself in its power.

It was almost his time.

Chapter Six

Chantal hadn't been able to catch up to the wolf. Once she hit the end of the park, the trail ended at the fence leading onto the Golden Gate Bridge, the bastard. No telling where he'd gone from there and his scent had gone cold. In human form she wouldn't be able to follow his scent. Only when he was in wolf form. He must have shifted and taken off over the fence where he had a car waiting or he'd walked across the pedestrian part of the bridge.

She'd hurried back to Dylan and found him and Noah with the girl. She was conscious, but her memory was a blank. She didn't even remember the wolf, only that someone attacked her and she fainted. Said the last thing she remembered was meeting some friends for drinks at a bar called The Joint on Market Street, a popular nightspot. The police arrived and they gave their statements, saying they'd come upon an unconscious woman while walking in the park. Dylan identified himself as NCA and indicated he'd fill his superiors in on what happened. Then they left the scene and headed back to the house.

Dylan ate a pound of bacon and some eggs while they sat around with Lamont and Maia and a few of the others from Lamont's higher echelon.

"The others who were killed also were young and hung out in very trendy bars like The Joint where the woman was last night. Our wolf is obviously targeting his victims there," Dylan said.

"Maia and I hit that bar a lot. We know all the regulars. It's a popular place for the downtown crowd," Chantal said.

Lamont frowned. Chantal shrugged. "We go before dark, okay? And only one or two drinks."

"Lighten up, Lamont," Maia added. "We *are* allowed to mingle among the human population. It's not like we ate anyone. Well, not in the werewolf way, anyway," she finished with a cocky grin.

Noah snorted. Maia shot him a lascivious gleam. Chantal shook her head, having seen that look from her friend before. Her brother was in serious trouble. Then again, Noah might enjoy being "eaten" by Maia. And that was somewhere she didn't want to go, mentally.

"So how about a double date tonight at The Joint?" Dylan asked. "Since Chantal and Maia are regulars, they'll fit in and we won't look out of place."

Maia shrugged. "Sounds fine to me."

"And you, Dylan? How are you holding up under the impending change?" Lamont asked.

"I'm fine and handling it."

Lamont's brows lifted and he looked to Chantal, who nodded. "He's right. He's doing okay. And I'm taking care of him," she added before he asked.

"Tomorrow is the full moon. I don't think I need to remind you that Dylan will need to be kept here when the change occurs."

"Noah and I will take care of it." Geez, like she didn't know when the full moon was?

They'd slept during the day. She woke to dusk settling over the room, Dylan's even breathing behind her.

Interestingly enough, Dylan hadn't gone to his room to sleep. He slept in her room. Even more interesting was that she didn't mind when he followed her, undressed and slipped into bed, drawing her against his body and pulling the covers over them both. She'd passed right out, cocooned within his embrace.

She was getting used to having him around, which was a very bad thing. As soon as she got him past the transition, she'd go back to her job and he'd go back to doing

his. Wherever that was. They had no relationship—okay, other than the bond they would always share because of what she'd done. But that didn't make them partners forever. It didn't mate them. Not unless it was by choice on both their parts.

Dylan didn't know the first thing about lupine society and its rules. And Chantal wasn't ready for that kind of commitment. She had...things to do with her life before she settled down in a pack with one mate.

Though at the moment none of those "things" came to mind. The only thing pressing on her mind was Dylan's long body stretched out behind her, his warmth surrounding her, his hand resting in the hollow between her breasts, one leg over hers.

Possessive. She never even let guys spend the entire night with her before. She might fuck them, but she never slept with them. But Dylan had slept with her. And she was comfortable with him. What did it mean? Was it because she had no choice, or was there some special quality about him that other men she'd known didn't have?

The sex was phenomenal, that was for sure. She smiled in the darkness and inhaled a satisfied breath. Admittedly, she'd never been quite so...pleasured, before. And they'd only scratched the surface. She knew there was more. So much more.

In fact, that "more" was lengthening against her ass right now, the heat of his awakening cock sliding between her legs. Dylan cupped her breast.

"I feel you're awake," she teased.

"Uh-huh." He moved his hips against her. Her pussy responded with a flood of moisture. God, she was so easy where he was concerned. Her nipples puckered, begging for his attention. He rolled her over on her back and took one hard peak between his lips and sucked.

She arched, thrusting the bud into his mouth, letting him graze on her nipple in lazy abandon. Waking up this way, letting him love her body in slow, leisurely fashion, was another new experience for her. Her nerve endings tingled in anticipation as a desperate rush of passion surged to life. The yawning awakening had been replaced with hungry need. She lifted her hips to his, trying to edge closer to his cock.

He used his own hips to push her back down on the mattress. "Not yet, baby."

Damn him. "Quit teasing and just fuck me."

"You're too impatient." He licked her neck, causing chills to pop out along her skin.

"You're too damned irritating. We need to get going."

"Plenty of time," he murmured against her breast as he shifted lower, licking at her nipples, sucking them, gathering one between his teeth and lightly biting. She nearly came off the mattress at the exquisite sensation. Twice, because he did the same thing to the other tortured bud before moving his way south, sliding his tongue into her belly button and tormenting her.

"Dylan," she warned, trying to throw him off. It was useless, like trying to crawl out from underneath steel. He had her pinned. At least her bottom half, his hands grasping her hips as he kissed her inner thighs, then teased her sex with his rough bearded chin.

"Yeah, babe. I know what you need." He kissed her clit.

A feather touch, not at all what she needed. All it did was prime the pump, make her want more. She twined her fingers in his hair, trying to direct him to her pleasure spots. But the damned man wouldn't budge. He looked up at her and smiled.

"You in some kind of hurry today?"

"Yes. I want to come. All over your tongue."

His lips curled and he stuck out his tongue. "This tongue?"

She couldn't help it. She laughed. "No. Your other one, jackass."

"Oh, you must mean this tongue, then." He pressed it down on her clit. Warm, wet, he swirled it around her sex, licking her up as if she were the best ice-cream cone he'd ever tasted.

She melted, pouring over his tongue. He lapped her up and came back for more until she was writhing underneath him, mindless, her only driving thought to climax.

She fisted the sheets and clenched her butt cheeks as she approached the edge of reason. When he slid two fingers into her pussy and began to pump them inside her, she lost it.

"Oh God, Dylan, I'm going to come," she cried, thrusting her hips against his mouth and his fingers as her orgasm tore through her. He latched onto her clit and sucked as she came, sliding one more finger into her pussy and fucking her cunt with a maddening rhythm that made the waves crest higher and higher until she sobbed out his name.

And still, he didn't stop, licking her from her clit all the way to her ass, lifting her up so he could tease the tiny hole. He invaded her there with his tongue and mouth, wetting her beyond her own juices pouring down there.

What was he doing to her? She was going out of her mind and loving every minute of it. But she guessed his intent and a fire grew deep in her belly at the thought of having him embedded there, where she'd never let a man in before. Oh, she'd fucked herself in the ass with her toys, but she'd never been filled with a thick, hot cock. Her pussy quivered at the thought, anticipation wrenching her arousal a notch higher.

Dylan stood and dragged her to the edge of the bed.

"Fuck your pussy with your fingers," he ordered, stroking his cock. "I want your ass."

He pulled her legs up and braced them against his chest, his gaze focused between her legs as she skimmed her flesh with her fingers, teasing her already swollen clit.

"Yes, like that," he whispered, draping her legs over his arms and spreading them apart. "You have lube?"

His voice was tight, barely restrained. She nodded and pointed to the bedside table. He leaned over and grabbed the bottle, pouring the liquid onto his hand. He coated his cock, then her, positioning his shaft at her entrance. He inched forward, pushing past the tight barrier. The burning hurt.

"Rub that pussy for me, baby," he said, leaning over her. "Make it feel good."

She focused on the sensations around her clit, and on his eyes, the darkness within them, the pleasure she saw in his face as he forced past the muscles in her ass. With careful, measured movements he inched his way inside, stopping with every push so she could grow accustomed to his invasion. He'd pull back, watch her caress her clit, let her feel the pleasure instead of the pain.

Even though it hurt, it felt good too, the mix of agony and delight easing the pain of his entry until there was nothing but the sensation of being filled, of having him thick and hot and buried inside her. She dipped her fingers into her pussy, where the thin membrane that separated one part from the other allowed her to feel him moving inside her.

"So tight," he murmured as he gripped her legs and began to pump against her. "Fuck yourself, Chantal. Fuck your pussy for me."

The double penetration brought out the wildness within her. She felt the beast begin to surface, and she let Dylan see it, growling at him, scratching his arm with her free hand. His fingers bit into her legs as he began to power deeper, harder, and she cried out, demanding it, needing each punishing thrust he gave her. The animal within him, though not visible, was present. She could see it in the swirling darkness in his eyes and she reveled in its power, its match for her strength. The mating was savage as he pistoned his cock deep in her anus. She thrust another finger in her pussy, using her other hand to tease her clit.

"You ready to come?" he asked, lifting her even higher off the bed as he fucked her now, his voice low, deep, like a growl.

"Yes," she hissed. "Fuck me hard."

She dug her fingers deep into her pussy as he slammed his cock into her ass. When her climax hit, she howled as the pleasure splintered her, making her shake so hard she rocked the mattress. She screamed, unable to control the sensations as every nerve ending came alive with her orgasm.

Dylan yelled and shot hot cum into her ass, pressing deep, his body plastered against hers as he raised her legs over his shoulder and shuddered against her. She saw the light in his eyes, the yellowing glow as he soared through his orgasm. Though brief, it was still there and she knew then his change was coming soon.

Panting, shaking and drenched in perspiration, they showered afterward. Dylan was achingly tender with her as he washed her all over, his lips pressed to her skin as he rinsed her body. He caressed her, then positioned her up against the wall of the shower and took her again, this time slowly, his cock moving inside her with sweet, oh-so-gentle strokes. She came again with an explosion that nearly sent her to her knees. He kissed her, soft kisses like a spring rain instead of their typical hard passion, until he came inside her with a torrent of shudders, gripping her so tight and so close to his body that it brought tears to her eyes.

He was an enigma. Hard and passionate one minute, soft and tender the next. Challenging her in every way, meeting her head-on and giving her everything she could ever ask for in a mate. A true partner.

Damn him. She was falling in love and she didn't like it one bit.

Chantal Devlin had never loved a man in her entire life. And she had no idea how to handle this.

Because she wasn't keeping Dylan Maxwell. He wasn't her mate.

He wasn't!

The Joint was jammed up with all the usual people. Chantal led them to the table she and Maia typically occupied near the front window. Their favorite waiter, Joe, came over.

"Hey, you two," he said, grabbing his pad from his pocket. "Been awhile."

"Where've you been?" Chantal asked. "We missed you."

Joe grinned a boyish smile. "Visiting family while on break from college." He rolled his eyes. "Obligations you know. They drive you crazy if they don't get to do a visual inspection at least a couple times a year. But I'm back now. And I see you two lovely ladies brought dates this time, huh?"

"Yeah," Chantal said. They ordered drinks and she surveyed the room.

"No one looks out of place," Maia remarked. "Typical crew."

Chantal nodded. "But we'll give it a couple hours and see who wanders in and out."

While they sat and drank, Chantal watched Dylan. He seemed unsettled. Fidgety. Like something was bothering him. And he wasn't making eye contact with her. She was sitting next to him, but he kept looking out over the crowd and didn't once look at her. She tugged on his shirt sleeve and he turned to her.

"You okay?"

"Yeah. Why?"

"You seem...anxious."

He shrugged. "Just want to find the guy." He looked away.

It was more than that. She felt weird vibes emanating from him. His anxiety was rising. She took a glance outside at the moon. Almost full. By tomorrow she'd have him safely locked up at the mansion where she could keep watch during the transition.

Then her duty to Dylan would be finished.

And she could let him go, get him out of her life and off her mind. Return to some normalcy.

That's what she needed—her real life back. She'd chalk up these feelings to a little mini-vacation from her regular routine. She wasn't in love with Dylan. She never fell in love. Men were for fucking, not making a life with. Geez, what had she been thinking?

Too much about Dylan, that's what. She decided to look around The Joint and see if she could figure out who was there that looked out of place. The staff were all the same people.

No, wait. Bartender was new. She hadn't seen him before. She motioned Joe over.

"Need refills already?" Joe asked.

Chantal smiled. "No. Just wondering about the bartender. New guy?"

Joe glanced over his shoulder and frowned. "Oh. That's Lance. He started about a month ago. Comes in and works late shift but has to leave before closing. Weird schedule but he's a med student. He has to be on staff at the hospital so can't stay for cleanup. We have to do his dirty work." Joe shrugged. "Cushy schedule, huh?"

"Hmm. Sucks for the rest of you."

He laughed. "He's a nice enough guy and the ladies go crazy for him. Must be his pheromones or something but he draws them like flies to honey. I'll have to figure out his secret," he said with a wink.

After Joe left, Chantal slanted a look at the rest of them. "Okay, that's strange."

"Very," Maia said. "Especially the pheromones part. If he's lupine he might be deliberately drawing out the human females. They wouldn't be able to resist him."

"Which means he's got a captive population, especially in a bar, and if they've been drinking, they're easy marks. Asshole," Noah said, grimacing.

"So what do we do now?" Chantal asked, focusing her attention on Dylan.

"We stay here and keep our eye on him. When he leaves tonight, we leave. See where he goes."

"Our wolf from the park didn't make his kill last night," Noah added. "That means he's hungry. If that dude behind the bar is our guy, he'll want to finish what he started."

Chapter Seven

Didn't it just figure that tonight Lance would stay until almost closing? But he finally finished up and left. And one of the women he'd been chatting up at the bar the entire night shot out the door right after him.

Damn good thing too, because if Dylan had to sit there one minute longer he was going to explode. His skin felt like it was prickling with some kind of rash. Every part of his body itched and burned and he was dying to shed his clothes and sit in an ice-cold bathtub.

He was boiling from the inside out.

And irritated. And antsy as hell. He wanted this case over with, wanted to find the killer and tear him to pieces. Food hadn't calmed him down and this wasn't exactly the type of place where he could fuck Chantal up against the wall to help ease his tension, so he did his best to ignore her.

Not that he could, with her sitting next to him. Her scent permeated his senses. Primal, earthy, musky, like the sweetest honey, tantalizing him to take a taste of her.

Taste, hell. He wanted to devour her. The urges were growing stronger and he was finding it hard to control them.

"Let's go." He stood and pushed the chair back with his legs. It banged against the one behind him.

"Hey, dude, be careful," the guy behind him said.

Dylan turned and growled at him. One more word and the scrawny little shit was going to go flying through the window. The guy took one look at Dylan, his eyes widened and he held up his hands.

"Sorry," the kid said. "No harm done." He sat back down and turned away from Dylan.

"Jesus, Dylan, get a grip," Noah said, grabbing his arm and leading him toward the exit.

The woman who'd left right after Lance caught up to him. They stopped for a few seconds, talked, then Lance threw his arm around her and they started walking together.

Chantal sidled up next to him. "Is she his next victim?"

Dylan shrugged. "Could be."

"We need to stop him."

"We need to make sure he's our guy first," Dylan snapped. "Be patient."

Chantal shot him a glare and moved behind him to walk with Maia. Fine. He couldn't handle her standing so close anyway. He needed his mind on work and she distracted him in the worst way. His dick was throbbing and he couldn't chase down a killer werewolf while trying to harbor an erection the size of a giant redwood tree.

They followed Lance as he made his way down the street toward the parking garage. Noah went off to grab their car while the rest of them kept an eye on the parking garage exit. Noah pulled up first and they piled in, then Lance exited the garage and they followed.

Lance headed to the park. Dylan's gut tightened. "This might be our guy."

Noah purposely kept far enough back so Lance wouldn't become aware he was being followed. He cut the lights once they entered the park and pulled over when Lance did.

They waited.

Lance and the woman didn't get out of his car. Dylan frowned and looked over at Noah. "You think he'd do her in his car?"

Noah shook his head. "Doubtful. Bloody mess and hard to clean up. He's priming her with foreplay, then he'll convince her to get out and take a walk in the park. At least that's my guess."

"Makes sense."

After about fifteen minutes, Lance and the woman exited the vehicle. Her clothes were disheveled and her hair mussed up.

"Definitely foreplay," Dylan said. The thought of it made his balls ache. Primal hunger surged through his bloodstream. Good thing Chantal was in the backseat.

Damn good thing he wasn't back there with her. He needed her, badly. This whole transition thing was a pain in the ass. His concentration was shot and he was forcing what little clarity he had left. Right now he was operating on instinct and years of experience. He hoped to God they could get this case wrapped up tonight, grab Lance before he did any damage to this woman and end things so he could go back to the mansion and get through this fucking nightmare of becoming a werewolf.

He wanted his old life back. He didn't want this change, goddammit.

"Okay, they're out of sight," Noah said. "Let's go."

Dylan popped his door open, and turned around to look at Chantal and Maia. "You two stay here."

Chantal shot him a look of pure venom. "Like hell. You need—"

"Don't argue with me," he shot back, cutting her off. "The more people tramping around leaves and twigs and making noise, the more likely he'll hear us and run. Noah and I can handle this. Now stay put."

If looks could kill...

He left her in the car, no doubt fuming and calling him every dirty name in the book. But at least she stayed there. She could cuss him out later.

While she was fucking him.

They circled behind a copse of thick trees, trying to remain out of sight while they followed Lance and the woman into the depth of the park. Lance and the woman were holding hands, stopping every now and then to kiss.

Frustration ate away at the last of Dylan's patience. He wanted action, dammit. He wanted Lance to make a move, to see him shift into a wolf so he could shoot the sonofabitch and have it be over with.

Lance led the woman to almost the same spot as he had the girl last night. Asshole. Not very careful, was he? Either that or he was supremely confident he wouldn't get caught.

He pushed her up against the base of a tree and lifted her skirt, then squatted. From their vantage point, he and Noah had a clear view of him eating the woman's pussy. The girl dug her nails into the tree trunk and moaned, thrusting her cunt against Lance's face.

Watching Lance pleasuring this girl wasn't helping the ache in Dylan's balls. Too reminiscent of what he and Chantal had done that first night in the park. The pain throughout his body was intensifying. He was shaking all over like he had a fever with chills.

"You okay?" Noah whispered.

Dylan raised his hand and gave Noah the okay signal. No way in hell was he going to get pulled off this case or in any way alert Noah about something wrong with him. He could hold it together a little longer. He had to. They were almost at the point they could capture this guy.

All Lance had to do was even look like he was gonna shift, and they had him.

Chantal sat in the backseat of the car thinking of the thousand different ways Dylan was going to suffer for dumping her while he got to run off and play crime solver.

"Pissed, are ya?"

She shot a glare at Maia. "Like you wouldn't believe."

Maia grinned, the spiky ends of her short, silvery blonde hair glimmering in the moonlight shining in through the back window. "He's right, you know. All of us out there stomping around would make too much noise."

"I realize he's right. Doesn't mean I have to like it." Maybe she'd squeeze his balls in her fist while she was sucking his cock. A little pain with his pleasure. She and Noah and Maia could have shifted and followed Lance. As wolves, they could be deathly silent.

She stared out the side window at the darkness, wishing she could be out there now. She really wasn't good about following directions. If they shifted and snuck behind them...

Movement caught her eye. Through the trees to her left, she caught sight of something gray flashing by.

"Maia, did you see that?"

"See what?"

"Look there," she pointed.

Maia stared, then her eyes widened. "Holy shit."

"Yeah." She looked to Maia. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

"Yes."

They began to undress, wrapping their clothes into cords to wear around their necks.

"Hurry," Chantal urged.

Dylan groaned. Lance was into foreplay. He'd licked the poor girl's pussy raw. Now he was finger-fucking her while he sucked on her clit. Hell, he could have gotten off with Chantal in the backseat of the car, smoked a couple cigarettes and been back watching them again during the time period this dude had been pleasuring the woman.

He began to have his doubts about Lance being the wolf they were looking for. Unless he was into well satisfying his victims before he tore them apart.

He shot a glance at Noah, who shrugged and rolled his eyes.

After another screaming orgasm from the dark-haired woman, Lance stood and unbuckled his pants, shucking them to the ground. He stood in front of her and stroked his cock. Smiling at him, she sank to her knees.

Turnabout.

Sighing in disgust, Dylan realized they were wasting their time here.

He'd wanted this finished tonight.

"Let's go," he whispered to Noah.

They headed back to the car. His pulse was racing, his body warming to the point of great discomfort. He needed Chantal. And she was pissed. Maybe a walk home, just the two of them. They could talk.

But when they reached the car, dread dropped his heart to his feet.

"Shit," he muttered. "Where are they?"

"Knowing my sister, they walked home," Noah said. "She's not one for cooling her heels, especially when she's pissed off."

Great. "I guess we should search the area for them before we drive away and leave them."

"I think we should leave. If she decided to take a walk instead of staying put like you told her, it's her own damn fault if she gets left. She can walk home."

Dylan crossed his arms. "There's a killer wolf out here somewhere, Noah."

"Who targets humans, not other werewolves," Noah reminded him. "Chantal can take care of herself, and I'm sure Maia can too."

So maybe he was over worrying. And maybe his plans to take a long walk home with Chantal and fuck her on the way had just been screwed.

Still, a Southern gentleman didn't leave a lady out wandering. Some things were just ingrained. "I'm gonna look for her. You take the car and head on back to the house. I'll just walk back. I need the air anyway."

Noah rolled his eyes. "Fine. Call me if you need a ride."

Dylan nodded and headed north into the dense brush, figuring he was probably wasting his time. Noah was right—Chantal had been so irritated she'd decided they'd just walk back to the house. But he'd at least search a bit.

He pushed through the bushes, cursing when a thorn jabbed into the skin of his upper arm. By the time he threaded his way through the brambles he was pretty scratched up.

Damn woman. No way would she have gone through here.

He was about to turn back when a dark flash sprang across his field of vision. Shit! He tore off after it, but as soon as he'd no more launched into a full run than he started to sweat, hard. Then he began to shake, violently. So badly that he had to stop and drop to his knees.

What the hell?

Racking pain shot up his spine, white-hot and unbearable. He screamed as it burned like someone had a lit a torch inside him.

His vision blurred. He couldn't see anything but shadows now. Every sound around him was magnified, including his own blood rushing in his ears. His heart pounded and panic set in.

And he was hot. So goddamned hot he couldn't stand it. He tore at his clothes, stripping them from his body in a hurry, desperate for any cool air to wash away the heat incinerating him from the inside out.

Even his bones were on fire.

He dropped forward, slapping his hands to the ground as he felt the first crack of his bones. His skull was splitting apart and he screamed in agony, tilting his head to the sky.

He was dying.

Chantal circled back toward their origination point, having long ago lost sight of the wolf.

And of Maia, who'd gone off in another direction. They were hoping they could cut off the wolf and meet him head-on, but no such luck. But they decided if they got separated and didn't find the wolf, they'd just meet back at the car, or at the house.

As she headed that way, she heard a half howl, half cry of pain, so mournful and piercing it made her pause and shudder.

God, it was awful. She hurried in that direction, praying the wolf hadn't attacked someone.

Her heart thudded when she came upon a naked Dylan, crouched over and clearly in agony. She shifted to human, tossed aside the rope of clothing and hurried over to him.

"Dylan, can you hear me?"

He was bent forward, his head touching the ground, his body curled up so tight she couldn't shake him loose.

"Dylan! It's Chantal. Answer me!"

"It hurts. Goddammit, it hurts."

His voice was low, strained, a guttural whisper filled with agony.

Shit. It wasn't full moon yet. Why was he going through transition? She smoothed her fingers over his back, feeling the bones there. They were starting to move.

"Baby, listen to me. Try to roll over onto your back."

"Can't. Hurts."

"Yeah, you can. Just try. I can make this easier on you if you let me."

She moved him, slow and easy, onto his side. He grimaced with every movement.

"I'm sorry. I promise to make it better. Now onto your back."

"Christ, Chantal. I know you're pissed off, but are you trying to kill me?"

She smiled. At least he had a little sense of humor left. "The reward will be worth it, trust me. On your back, stud."

He finally rolled with a loud grunt of pain. Success! His cock was thick, erect, and she didn't waste any time. She knew what he needed to make the transition easier.

"Dylan, open your eyes and look at me."

He pulled his eyes open, squinting. They were golden, shimmering.

"Okay, you're going through transition a little early."

"No shit."

She smiled and threaded her fingers through his hair as she straddled him. "Fuck me, baby. It'll make this easier."

"Bout damn time you showed up. I need you."

She knew he needed her for this, not for any other reason, but just the words tumbling from his lips made her wet and ready for him. Oh, who was she kidding? She was always wet and ready for him.

He gripped her hips and thrust inside her, sheathing himself to the hilt. Sweet pleasure burst inside her at his invasion. Her pussy gripped him in welcome. She settled on him, moving against him in tandem rhythm, placing her palms on his chest while she leaned over and captured his lips with her mouth.

His mouth was blazing heat, his tongue liquid fire as he slid inside her mouth with desperation. She sucked his tongue while she lifted up and down on his cock, feeling it lengthen and thicken inside her, filling her walls, stretching her until her juices poured over his balls.

She pulled away and sat up, grinding against him, rubbing her clit against his skin. She was lost in sensation, in the need for him that superseded any sense of duty. She fucked him because she wanted to, not because of any requirement. Because being close to him had become a necessity, a joy in her life that made each day complete.

His skin glistened under the moonlight, the tight strain he was under visible in the lines furrowing his brow.

"Don't fight it," she said, reaching forward to smooth her hand across his face. "Accept it and it'll be easier to bear."

She rocked against him, absorbing the sensations, wishing she could take away his pain. But she felt him relax as she moved, his fingers lessening their tight grip on her hips.

"That's it, baby," she said. "Relax. It's your time. Breathe in and out deeply. Concentrate on fucking me, on how good my pussy feels gripping your cock, squeezing it, milking the cum right out of it."

His eyes widened and he lifted his head, reaching for her hands as he began to buck his hips against her, driving his cock upward. Strong contractions pulsed inside her as she reached the edge and flew over, crying out with her climax. She squeezed his hands and rode him hard. He groaned, then howled, coming in shuddering bursts.

The sounds he made were more wolfen than human.

Finally, he relaxed. She lifted off and kneeled beside him and he made the full physical transition to wolf. God, he was beautiful, his silvery coat sleek and shiny under the moon's light. She shifted alongside him so she could teach him how to communicate in their lupine language, with psychic thought, the human part of them remaining even though they were fully wolf.

Dylan explored the sensations of being a wolf. Every sight, sound and sensation magnified in incredible ways. And he could hear Chantal talking to him, though they weren't speaking. And the speed he could run – incredible. Not even winded, either. He felt...invincible.

He stopped, sniffed the air, scenting another wolf. He turned to Chantal, who nodded.

Maia and I saw a wolf flash by the car earlier. That's where we were, out trying to find him.

That's our guy. They followed the scent upwind, catching sight of the wolf where Lance and the girl were still entwined and going at it.

The wolf growled. Lance and the girl were fucking and panting so hot and heavy they didn't even hear it.

No way was he going to hurt anyone else. Dylan howled and Lance leapt off the girl. The girl screamed and stood, grabbing frantically for her clothes as she spotted the wolf approaching. Dylan and Chantal circled in front of the wolf, getting between it and the humans so he couldn't attack. Lance at least had the presence of mind to start backing away from all of them.

They ran like hell. Dylan heard the slamming of their car doors and the roar of the engine. They peeled away in a hurry.

Good. No witnesses.

They're mine, the wolf said, raising his lip and showing his sharp canines.

I don't think so, Dylan replied. *Your game is over.*

He wished he had his gun. Fighting a wolf was new to him. But he felt powerful. He could handle this.

The wolf lunged for him, teeth bared. Dylan braced for the attack and sidestepped him, then jumped, biting down on the back of his neck. Instinct roared to life and the battle was fierce. He drew blood, tasted it flowing into his mouth, feeling it increase the surging need for battle inside him. He wanted more. He wanted death, to tear this creature apart.

Chantal entered the fray, snapping at the wolf's hindquarters, pulling him off balance. The wolf turned on Chantal and bit her. She yelped.

Goddammit! Dylan lunged at him, and at the same time Noah showed up, jumping into the battle, leaping onto the back of the wolf.

Outnumbered, the wolf went down and Dylan grabbed him by the throat. Without hesitation, he bit down and ended the wolf's life.

Instinct. Part of him couldn't believe he'd made a kill, but the wolf side of him knew there was no other choice.

He returned to human form, as did Chantal and Noah.

So did the wolf.

Obviously, it wasn't Lance as they'd suspected.

It was Joe, the waiter from The Joint.

"Holy shit," Chantal said.

"We need to get out of here and fast," Noah said. "Lance has probably already called the police. I'll get the car. Get your clothes and get dressed."

Dylan nodded. As they hurried to get their clothes, Dylan grabbed Chantal's arm. There was a bite mark there and it was bleeding. He reached for her wrist.

She smiled. "I'm fine. It's already healing. Werewolves have amazing recuperative powers, remember?"

"You shouldn't have jumped in the middle of that. You could have been seriously hurt."

She frowned. "I can take care of myself, Dylan. And you're welcome."

She stalked ahead of him, obviously irritated.

Well, damn. He had a lot to learn about this werewolf thing. And about Chantal. She had no fear. She'd taken up position and had his back like a seasoned agent.

Or like his mate would do.

His mate. His woman.

God, he wanted her. Needed her. In a few days she'd become ingrained, a part of him.

She was saucy, annoying, opinionated and hardheaded. And beautiful, sexy, intelligent, warm-hearted...the kind of woman he'd been looking for his entire life.

He was in love with her.

He couldn't let her go.

Chapter Eight

"Joe took frequent breaks from his job at The Joint. Not long enough that anyone grew suspicious. He claimed to have family obligations and trips to take. But the NCA has placed him at the scene of every murder," Dylan said. "And his death has been pinned on another series of wolf attacks, which will now cease completely without explanation. It's the best we can do under the circumstances."

"At least he's been killed and the wolf murders will stop," Lamont said, nodding his head. "This is good for all the packs involved."

"Did you ever figure out who the woman informant was?" Noah asked.

"No. It could have been a false lead, but I doubt it. My guess is someone knew about Joe. Maybe a girlfriend or something. Either way, we never heard from her again so he either found out she was going to inform on him and took care of her or she was too scared and decided not to come forward."

"Well, it's over now," Maia said. "That's the important thing."

"And everyone can go back to their lives," Chantal added, though she was looking at Dylan when she said it.

"I'm out of here. I've got business to take care of somewhere else." Noah stood and wrapped his arms around his sister. "Walk me out?"

She nodded.

He said his goodbyes to Lamont, Maia and Dylan then walked with Chantal to the front door.

"Don't be stupid," he said to her.

She cocked a brow. "What the hell does that mean?"

"It means don't be typical Chantal and blow him off."

"Still not understanding."

"You're in love with Dylan. Don't push him away just because you're scared of having a mate."

"Don't be ridiculous. First, I'm not afraid of having a mate, and second, I'm not in love with Dylan."

He kissed the top of her head, leaned back and grinned at her. "Yeah, little sis, you sure as hell are. Now I'm the last person in the world to claim settling down is a great thing and you know that. But when it's time, it's time. Give it up and accept it. You and Dylan belong together. Even someone as jaded as me can see that. Call me if you need me."

He turned and walked out. Chantal scrunched her nose, then stuck her tongue out at the closed door.

Like he knew what she needed. Hmph.

She turned on her heel and found Dylan leaning against the doorway.

Shit.

"You are too in love with me," he said, smirking.

She brushed by him and headed up the stairs to her room. "I am not."

He followed her and shut the door behind him. "Yeah, you are."

Ignoring him, she started packing her things in her suitcase. "You don't even know me. It was just great sex."

"It was, wasn't it?"

Oh, she hated when his voice went all low and dark like that. It made her pussy wet and trembly. Dammit.

"I don't want you to leave."

She paused. "Why not?"

"Because I think we have something together."

"Yeah. Fucking. You can't build a foundation on great sex, Dylan."

He approached and wrapped his arms around her. "You can't? We have chemistry, Chantal. That's what made me a werewolf in the first place. That blind fuck, you and I in the park that first night, remember?"

God, did she ever remember. It was burned into her memory banks forever.

"I need you to guide me through this being a werewolf thing. I can't do it without you."

"Sure you can. You're a big boy."

He exhaled, ruffling her hair. "Okay, so I can. But I don't *want* to do it without you. I've kind of gotten used to having you around."

"I don't even know where you live."

"I don't really live anywhere. I'm on the road all the time with the NCA, but I'm originally from Oklahoma."

"I've never been to Oklahoma." Her eyes filled with tears. Dammit, what was wrong with her?

"You tell me where you want to live and we'll work it out from there."

"Why are you being so accommodating?"

"Because I'm in love with you and I don't want to lose you."

Shit. Shit, shit, shit. He could have said anything but that and she might have been able to walk away. She turned in his arms and looked up at him. "You love me."

"Yes."

"I'm difficult."

"No kidding."

"I'll make your life a living hell."

"I'll love you in spite of it."

She sighed, already knowing she'd lost the battle. Noah was right. It was time. She'd known it since that night in the park. "I love you too. You'll be sorry."

He laughed. "I like a challenge."

"You'll get one."

He swooped her up in his arms and pressed his lips to hers, kissing her with a maddening passion she would never tire of. Her body flamed to life, her nipples puckering and pressing against the thin silk of her dress.

Dylan put her down and took her hand, leading her toward the door.

"Where are we going?" she asked.

"To the park, to that spot where we first met. I've got this thing now for fucking in the park."

She grinned, her pussy moistening. "You're a very bad boy, Dylan Maxwell."

"That's why you love me, Chantal Devlin."

About the Author

In April 2003, Ellora's Cave foolishly offered me a contract for my first erotic romance and I haven't shut up since. My writing is an addition for which there is no cure, a disease in which strange characters live in my mind, all clamoring for their own story. I try to let them out one by one, as mixing snarling werewolves with a bondage and discipline master can be very dangerous territory. Then again, unusual plotlines offer relief from the demons plaguing me.

In my world, well-endowed, naked cabana boys do the vacuuming and dishes, little faeries flit about dusting the furniture and doing laundry, Wolfgang Puck fixes my dinner and I spend every night engaged in wild sexual abandon with a hunky alpha. Okay, the hunky alpha part is my real-life husband and he keeps my fantasy life enriched with extensive "research". But Wolfgang won't answer my calls, the faeries are on strike and my readers keep running off with the cabana boys.

The author welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and e-mail address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

Tell Us What You Think

We appreciate hearing reader opinions about our books. You can e-mail us at Comments@EllorasCave.com.

Also by Jaci Burton

A Storm for All Seasons 1: Summer Heat

A Storm for All Seasons 2: Fall Fury

A Storm for All Seasons 3: Winter Ice

A Storm for All Seasons 4: Spring Rain

Aftermath

Bite Me

Bound to Trust

Demand to Submit

Devlin Dynasty 1: Running Mate

Devlin Dynasty 2: Fall Fury

Devlin Dynasty 3: Mountain Moonlight

Dolphin's Playground

Dream On

Ellora's Cavemen: Legendary Tails II *anthology*

Fiery Fate

Hands On

Magnolia Summer

Midnight Velvet

Out of the Darkness *with C.J. Burton*

Passion in Paradise 1: Paradise Awakening

Passion in Paradise 2: Paradise Revival

Passion in Paradise 3: Paradise Discovery

Tangled Web *with C.J. Burton*

True Lies

Winterland Destiny



Discover for yourself why readers can't get enough of the multiple award-winning publisher Ellora's Cave. Whether you prefer e-books or paperbacks, be sure to visit EC on the web at www.ellorascave.com for an erotic reading experience that will leave you breathless.

www.ellorascave.com