



Blood Song: The Captive

By

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Dedicated to: “The Blood Song series is dedicated to all the werewolf lovers at Carol Res. Specifically, Kayla, Wes, Jimmy, Hodge, Michelle, Kyle, and various others through the years – Sabrina, Justin, Barbie, Jon, Greer, Reg, English Guy, Krista K., Krystal, Keri, Clinton G., and Bezus. You’re all a bunch of perverts, but I love you anyway. This one’s for you.”

Chapter One

She loathed him.

Absolutely loathed him.

There were so many things about Bastian to dislike, Simone was often hard pressed to choose her least favourite facet of his vile personality. Never mind that he was a control freak, set in his ways, intent on governing every aspect of her life. The authority that he had over her, as her assigned protector, had gone to his head in recent years. He was difficult to live with, his company a burden she would rather not bear yet what could she do? Her father had sent her to this gilded prison for her own good, for her protection, and for the good of their village, after all

....

Simone glared at Bastian from across the long wood slat table where the lone servant in the castle had set up their evening meal. She hoped that he could feel the degree to which she hated her second cousin, hoped that her cold stare was sending chills down his spine.

He was attractive enough, she supposed, in that coat of burgundy velvet, the white blouse billowing beneath his chin, a few dark hairs exposed where his strong chest could be seen at the part in the shirt. What with his long dark hair and fierce, dark eyes widely set above those high cheekbones in a long lean face weathered by his love of the sun. His smile was perfect, but it unsettled her anyway. He smiled most often when wicked thoughts of her crossed his perverted mind, and so, she had learned to detest that smile. He was smiling now – never a good sign – and the sight of those perfect white teeth flashing from behind masculine lips was enough to turn her stomach.

Though the servant had prepared a sumptuous meal, she had suddenly lost her appetite.

“What troubles you, my precious?” Bastian sneered, his dark eyes glinting with malice.

“The very sight of you has ruined my appetite for this meal.” She said, encompassing the table with a wave of her bejewelled right hand. The family crest ring, with its blood red ruby at the center of the curled gold dragon gleamed in the candle light. The ring was a gift from her father, to remind her of her rightful place at his side.

“You say that every single night.” Bastian sighed, carving a thick slice of meat from the beef roast in front of him. “Surely you don’t mean it, every single night.”

“Don’t I?” She asked, sarcasm in her voice.

“Oh, you and I both know, dear cousin, that there’s at least one day in every moon cycle where you find me absolutely irresistible.” There was that smile again, advertising the perversion that corrupted his supernatural soul. “That day is soon approaching, now, isn’t it? And it’s not like you have anywhere you can go to escape your feral urges. You and I are quite alone here, when the moon is full in the night sky. It is then that you will be mine, as always, you are mine, and will be mine for the rest of your many years.”

A low growl emitted from her throat without warning. Feral urges indeed. In this exact moment, she wanted to leap across the table and tear her cousin’s throat out.

Werewolf or no, she would never be his.

Yet if she turned, with a male werewolf so near her, so close to the full moon, the Heat would be upon her, and all her intentions of cleaving the flesh from his body would lose out to a

more pressing, more urgent instinct. The instinct to mate, to breed, to create life ... It was bad enough that she could not resist the mating urge when the moon did its worst. If not for the herbs that her father provided her with as a prophylactic, she'd have conceived long ago.

Twenty years now, she had been in this castle, under Bastian's watch. For twenty years she had been mating with him, though not of her own volition. There was simply no controlling the beast within her. The lunar cycle betrayed her best intentions time and time again. In human form, she resisted Bastian, to the best of her abilities. But as the beast, when the Heat was upon her, resistance became futile.

Always, the beast won

Even now, with the full moon four days away, she could feel the difference in her blood, the ebbing and flowing power of the beast, longing to be released. It was a longing that she could indulge now, if she so chose, if that was her will. She didn't need the light of a full moon to simply change from human to beast. But she didn't dare – not so close to the peak in the lunar cycle. Not with Bastian nearby

"Speechless, then?" Bastian decided, after Simone's long, thoughtful silence. "I prefer you silent, anyway. Your sharp tongue is the least of your charms, after all."

"If you'll excuse me, I've stitching to do." Simone snapped angrily. Rising from the table, she tossed her napkin on her gold edged plate, and snatched up a cluster of grapes from the fruit dish.

As she walked past Bastian, his hand clamped down around her wrist, stopping her dead in her tracks. "Now, now, Simone. You know the rules. If you won't eat here with me," he seethed, plucking the grapes from her hand, "Then you don't eat at all."

She was silent for a long moment, glaring into his dark brown eyes, seeing an enemy where an ally should have been.

"Fine." She spat, and tore her wrist out of his grip. She hurried up the stairs before he could say – or do – anything else to upset her.

"Controlling bastard," she said under her breath, as she reached the top of the staircase. Here was the portrait of her great grandfather, the Lord who had brought justice to their troubled land.

Now her father was Lord, and their troubles had returned, tenfold.

It was bad enough that robbers and rapists infested the woods on either side of the highway that lead from the Town of Grant to the Town of Sunberry. Twenty years ago, the wild things had returned. That was when Simone herself had been attacked by a werewolf, cursed ever after by the creature's wicked bite. A few months later, in her prison in the dungeon of this castle, she had cursed Bastian in kind. Her foolish cousin had been a bit too brave in approaching her in her feral state, and had ended up as her meal that night. He had survived his injuries, only to become a werewolf as well.

Now she was damned to live out the rest of her days with him as her so called protector. Every month, she would be a bitch before him, the Heat overtaking her sensibilities. She had considered suicide as a way out of her personal Hell, but she would not put her father through a loss that great. She was his greatest pride, and he worked tirelessly to find a way to lift her curse, to free her from her enslavement by moonlight.

She could not hurt her father. Not while he lived. Not while his greatest hope was to set her free of the curse – not while he longed for the day that she could rejoin him, in her rightful place as daughter. Her father was over sixty years old now. He didn't have many good years left, what with his arthritis and dizzy spells. She feared that if he didn't find a way for her to end

the curse, she might not ever be able to have a normal life with him, as part of a normal family. It was bad enough that he was limited to visiting her here, in this castle fortress – though never at that peak time of the month, mind you

And so, her father had consulted a number of people over the years: witches, warlocks, sorcerers, healers, even a cult who claimed to hold dominion and influence over angels and demons alike ... None had been able to lift her curse, though. Many of them had put her through painful procedures, given her concoctions that made her sick to her stomach, even worsened the curse during one lunar cycle where she had stayed in beast form for the better part of a month, forcing her to confront her inner demons, her inner monster

So while her father worked out a solution to her little problem, she could not disappoint him by ending her life with her own hand. Besides, she wasn't even sure if she had the courage to do it. She didn't even know if it would work. Death was a stranger to werewolves: they tended to live long lives.

Long lives as savage creatures, but long life spans nonetheless.

She walked down the hall, her stomach already beginning to groan with hunger. The closer she got to the Heat, the worse and more frequently her hunger spells came. Bastian knew that. He was punishing her for leaving him alone at the table. That's what the incident with the grapes was all about ... she was sure of it.

"Bastard!" She hissed, to the empty hall, to the portraits of ancestors she had never met.

At the door of her room, she collected her wits. She was about to enter her sanctuary after all. There was no need to taint the aura of the safe haven with anger. She took a deep breath in through her nose, and released it slowly through pursed lips. Then, she placed her hand on the cool latch that held the door closed, and unlocked it. Opening the heavy wood door, she stepped into the cool room, catching a look at her reflection in the mirror on the wall.

Was she beautiful, with her dark black hair flowing in long glossy waves over the creamy ivory skin of her bare shoulders? Did the blood red satin of her dress compliment the ruby red tint of her lips, the strange gold glint of her eyes? She remembered that a boy in the village had told her once, when she was seventeen, that she was the most beautiful girl in the world. But he had been a simple boy, a farmer – and no more than twelve years of age. So did his opinion count? She wondered what other men would think of her. Real men. Men in their late teens, their twenties, their thirties

She knew, more than well enough, what Bastian thought of her. Why, her dear cousin would seduce her every chance he got, if he could. But if she had been cursed into living out the rest of her days with just one man in a fortress prison, she supposed she might take to finding him attractive too. Bastian's attraction to her might just be one of convenience: she was there, and so, he wanted her.

There were times that Bastian was far too blunt about his desire for her. He could be so ... lewd at times, describing the way that he wanted to caress her breasts, stick his prick in her cunt, that sort of thing. He was a pervert. She wanted to tell her father how horrible Bastian was, yet she couldn't bring herself to tell her father about the things she had done with her cousin when the Heat overwhelmed her human senses.

And she had done so many things ... So many twisted, perverted, sexual things

Bastian found it laughable, that she could be in the thrall of Heat one day, and indifferent to him the next. He seemed to look at her with sport in mind, and enjoyed the monthly game of cat and mouse, the pursuit of her body, and her inevitable surrender to their shared desire.

Shame left a red stain on Simone's ivory cheeks. She could no longer stand the sight of herself, and so, she turned away from the mirror, returning to the sewing project that she was working on for her father, a large piece of green satin embroidered with their family tree. She was nearly finished, and wanted to have it done for her father's next visit, in two weeks' time. He knew better than to visit when the moon was approaching its fullest self. The Lord of Grant would do his village no good by becoming infected by a werewolf's bite. That's all the Town of Grant needed: one more werewolf on the loose.

Yes, her father had endured a great deal of scandal by keeping her at the family's fortress. The people of Grant knew that she lived. They knew what she was. Knew because she had killed many of their own – kin that had to be destroyed, lest they wake after the attack as werewolves themselves.

Simone was hated.

And more than merely hated - she was feared.

She saw it clearly in the face of the servant who cared for her and Bastian. The resentment there in the sneer of his lips. The horror in the servant's eyes. She could smell the man's fear, as surely as if she had taken his throat in her mouth and bit deep, drawing sweet sanguine blood.

She could nearly taste the blood that she was fantasizing about. She was getting hungrier. Never a good sign.

She gazed through the bars of her bedroom window, at the stars set high in the dark black sky. There was the moon, more than three quarters full, glowing and radiant – a remarkable presence in a cloudless sky.

"Curse you," she whispered to the moon, wary of the surge of warmth that she felt coursing through her veins at the very sight of the cosmic wonder.

She heard footsteps heading for her door. She sniffed the air. It sounded like Bastian. The air was sharp with the tang of her werewolf cousin. It likely was Bastian. The servant didn't have the guts to come up here, to her chambers. No, he stayed near the kitchen, kept himself close to the only exit in case she or her cousin became beasts before the expected time

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"What do you want?" She called out, annoyed that her cousin had followed her up to her quarters.

"I've brought you a peace offering," said Bastian, placing something heavy near the door. She could see his shadow there, beneath the door, see the gold-edged plate, the green glass of a wine bottle. "I want to talk."

"About what?" She wondered aloud.

"About us."

"There is no us, Bastian."

"There most certainly is." He hissed, opening the door without her permission. "I can feel the Heat coursing in your veins, Simone. As surely as it courses through mine. Why should we wait? Why not give in to our primal urges? Let the fur cover us, let the claws come, let the Heat overwhelm?"

"I have many reasons, cousin." She said, not even justifying his presence with a glance in his direction. "For one, there is an innocent man downstairs who likely hasn't bolted the door yet on his way out for the night. We'd make a meal out of him in a heartbeat. We would likely escape this place, and lay ruin to the Town of Grant." Simone smiled down at the family tree

she was working on. There was no pleasure in the smile. “Not to mention, you repulse me. That is perhaps the greatest reason of all.”

“Bitch!” He spat in her direction, and then left the room, storming down the hall, down the staircase, back to the dining hall, the sound of breaking glass following his hasty retreat.

“Bastard.” She whispered to the empty room. A strange satisfaction came over her, not only in knowing that she had resisted his call to sins of the flesh, but also because she had clearly – and somewhat viciously – pissed him off.

So Simone sat in her window seat, with no need for a lantern – the light of the near full moon was enough for her supernatural eyes. She could see every stitch in the design clearly. She could also see the few flaws, and the tiny stitches made to correct them. The fragrance of the tender, rare cooked beef roast at the door was beginning to become a serious distraction to her ability to stitch the small patterns necessary to make the names of the members of her family tree.

Her mouth salivated.

Her stomach twisted with knots and growled with complaint.

Distracted, frustrated, she accidentally poked her finger with the long gold needle. In haste, she pulled her fingers away from her sewing before a single drop of blood could damage the delicate green satin. A large dark drop of blood swelled up from where she had pricked herself. Simone put the fingertip into her mouth, suckling the small wound until it closed. The taste of the blood – her own blood – did not dampen her appetite. She thought of the meal left at her door with greater hunger, and so she went to it, deliberating over whether she hated Bastian more or less for showing her this one small act of kindness.

He had tried to use food as a means of gaining her favour. She mocked him as she repeated his taunting words: “Why should we wait? Why not give in to our primal urges? Let the fur cover us, let the claws come, let the Heat overwhelm ...?”

She lifted the plate from the stone floor, and was delighted to find warmth in the ceramic. Good. Her meal would still be warm, then. She looked at the bottle of wine. It was from her father’s favourite vineyard, a rich, full bodied, sweet red wine. Potent wine. The bottle was nearly full, too.

She grinned at a portrait of a grey haired ancestor dressed in the flamboyant high collared fashion of latter years. She toasted her ancestor, raising the green bottle high.

“To drink to drink, that I won’t think.” She sang under her breath, and took a thirsty swallow of the delicious, fragrant wine. The sting of alcohol on her lips reminded her that there were medicinal qualities in the berry wine. The whole bottle of alcohol might not be enough to get her drunk, but it would help her get some sleep. A dreamless sleep, preferably.

The closer the moon got to full, the more difficult it was to sleep at night. More often than not, she took to pacing the halls of the castle, the floor of her room, the garden of the closed-in terrace in the other wing of the castle. Her father had built the enclosed terrace for her, after her complaints that she never got to go outside anymore, with the castle as her prison. And so, he had sent over metalworkers and labourers, and the dome-like cage of iron bars had been erected, covering a garden that was several paces wide. It was the closest she had been to walking in the great outdoors in twenty years.

Her father didn’t dare let her go outside of the castle. Not with male werewolves loose in the forest, looking to mate with her, and females werewolves looking to end her life. Not only that, but there were locals in the village who might take advantage of any opportunity to kill Simone, as she was seen as a curse living among them, a dirty little secret in a town that prided

itself on cleanliness. There was no price on her head, at least not officially, since her father was Lord and therefore ruler - she of course was under his protection.

No matter what her father's role in the village, though, Simone knew that she was as good as dead if she left the safety of the castle. She had seen the hunters through the bars of her window – those men who went into the night with torches and bait, seeking out werewolves, wolves, bears, and mountain lions. She had seen the strange lust in their faces when their eyes met hers, recognized the bloodlust there. She suspected that many of them would have loved nothing more than to bury their swords into her chest, their axes into her neck.

There had been one, four years ago, who had boldly taken aim with a steady arrow while she watched him from the terrace, daring him with her golden eyed stare to act on his threat. The only thing that had kept him from letting the weapon take flight was his comrade's hand on his shoulder, disapproving of such an assault on the town's dirty, shameful little secret.

So yes, Simone would stay in the castle. And well away from the windows, too, when the archers were in the woods.

The dark haired werewolf looked down at her plate. The beef, in its gravy, was slightly congealed now, but pink with blood, and of a tender cut. It smelled heavenly, and slightly gamey – a younger steer, she wondered? She swallowed the saliva that ran along her tongue at the scent and sight of the meat. Boiled baby potatoes with fresh cream and dill weed accompanied the beef. Bastian had even thought to add the sprig of grapes that he had claimed from her – a peace offering that served only to remind her why she hated him so.

Even though part of her – that wild, wanton animal part – was craving him, her human side despised him, but what was the more dominant of emotions? While she wanted to believe that she loathed him in entirety, it was with a small amount of shame, and a great deal of helplessness that she admitted – if only to herself – that her blood yearned for him. In a few days time, she would yield to Bastian. Yield to his needs, and hers, as they once more became wild creatures driven by a shared hunger for sins of the flesh.

Thoughts of flesh and blood and hunger brought her again to the issue of the meal in her hand. To slight Bastian, she could leave it at the door, refusing to eat it to spite him Yet she was hungry. Very hungry. And she didn't want the flesh of that poor steer to be wasted. She did not like to think that she was a wasteful person.

"I honour you, steer," she said to the spirit of the animal, and drank another mouthful of the heady berry wine. Closing the door behind her, she went to her seat at the window and began to eat her cooling supper. The tender beef was nothing less than delicious. Simone devoured it with less than a thought, trying to remember to chew before swallowing, though the beast in her urged her to gobble it all down, as beasts tend to do.

The baby potatoes were so well cooked they fell apart on her fork, and she ate them with great appetite. The serving was a much smaller meal than she was accustomed to, but it was all that she could muster the pride to eat.

She would not go back down there, to the dining hall, and grovel to Bastian for seconds. No. Instead she would drink the wine and go to bed.

Or better yet, go to bed with the wine bottle, and sip herself into sedation.

Setting the bottle of wine on the night table by her bed, she decided to undress for the night. One by one, she released the small satin covered buttons of her red dress, revealing more and more of the flesh of her upper body. Soon, the cold night air was kissing the tips of her nipples with all the intimacy of the cool lips of a phantom lover. She let the red satin garment fall from her ivory shoulders, until all that she was wearing for a covering was the long wavy

locks of her onyx black hair. Her hair was so long it nearly swept the cleft of her buttocks. She brought a lock of her nose and inhaled the scent of rosewater, from the morning's bath. She wondered if anyone would ever find the fragrance of her body intriguing, exotic, enticing She longed for the gentle touch of a man, for the kisses of a normal man, a man of her choosing.

Was she destined to be alone – or worse than alone, doomed to spend the rest of her days with Bastian?

Crawling between the satin sheets of her feather-stuffed bed, she dismissed all thoughts of Bastian from her mind, and busied herself with the task of drinking her father's favourite wine. As she drifted into sleep, her thoughts were of her father. Her poor, lonely father.

It just so happened that her father was thinking of his poor lonely daughter, as he wrote the letter that would offer her in marriage to Bastian.

It was not so much the thinking, as the doing, that sealed her fate.

Chapter Two

The letters arrived with the servant the morning of the full moon. Simone sat, completely unsuspecting at the dining table while Bastian smirked – a self-satisfied smirk – as he read the letter from the Lord of Grant. As Simone looked at her plate, seeing the yellow envelope there with her name on it, inked in her father's own recognizable scrawl, she felt an impending sense of dread crawling up her spine.

"Well?" Said Bastian, setting down his letter, his fist so tightly clamped around it that Simone wondered at its content. "Aren't you going to read the letter from your father?"

She glanced at it again, at the *For My Dearest Simone* scrawled in dark black ink. She cleared her throat and said: "Some privacy, if you please."

Bastian swept his hand away from the table, indicating for her to go to the sitting room. He would not be the one to leave. He was not at her beck and call, and was making that clear to her.

She rose from the table, letter in hand, and went to her favourite chair in the sitting room – the strong wooden chair upholstered in purple velvet, where her father used to sit while entertaining. With the edge of a sharp nail – growing sharper and longer with every day – she broke the seal of red wax on the back of the envelope, and withdrew the letter from the Lord of Grant.

"My dearest Simone," she read aloud, dread sitting in her stomach like a fistful of lead. "I have decided, with great pleasure, that it is time that I accepted your suitor's proposal. I have agreed to give my blessing to your marriage to your second cousin, Bastian DeBeer, of whom you are quite familiar. On my last visit, Bastian told me how close the two of you have become during your time at Grant Keep. The two of you have much in common, namely, the condition that plagues you. It is my hope that you will enjoy a long and happy life together. I arrive in one week to discuss the arrangements. All my love, your father, George."

Even as she read the words, they did not sink in, they were so surrealistic. How could they be true? How could it be true? Marriage to Bastian? It was unthinkable.

She crumpled the letter in her fist, placed her fist in her mouth, and bit into that fist as the tears stung her eyes. Her heart pounded in her chest as her mind raced for an alternative, a solution to this problem. She would not marry Bastian – would not! She would disappoint her father, surely, but too damned bad for him! Werewolf or no, she would not be joined in marriage to Bastian just because they suffered from the same curse.

It was unthinkable. Unthinkable! What was her father thinking? Really? A happily ever after for two werewolves, and whatever werewolf offspring they should conceive?

"Darling, your breakfast is waiting." Bastian called, from the dining room.

Simone felt bile rise in the back of her throat. What to do, what to do, what to do? Likely, the origin of Bastian's wicked smile was directly related to the contents of his letter from the Lord of Grant. Her father was like that. He liked to finish multiple tasks with the same courier. The two letters more than likely contained the exact same information. That explained the haughty tone of Bastian's words.

Wiping the tears from her eyes, she rejoined her cousin at the dinner table. Breakfast was an assortment of starches, eggs, and meats, syrups and jellies for the hot cakes and toasts. There was fresh cranberry juice, and a jug of milk.

The servant was pouring her a cup of tea as she took her seat. She nodded her thanks, and made a small note of the distasteful frown he wore, as often he did frown when she was in the room with him. He didn't seem to care much for Bastian either – you could read it in his body language as he poured the master of Grant Keep his tea. There was a great deal of stiffness there, in his bones, and he smelled of fear. Even the servant – perhaps especially the servant – would know that the moon was nearing its most influential state.

A few more hours, and she and Bastian would both be beasts, yearning for the flesh of lesser mammals, which of course included man flesh. She could smell the salt of the servant's skin, the sweat that he had worked up in the heat of the kitchen. She could hear the song of his blood thrumming in his veins.

It was this blood song that had her in its thrall, this ebbing and flowing of his life force that had her staring at the thick vein in his neck as it pulse, thud-thud, thud-thud, thud-thud

Bastian seemed to know the thoughts that plagued her. "Come, now, cousin. Consider your manners." He hissed, folding his hand open to encompass their meal. "Martin here has made us a fantastic meal. And all you can think about is his taking throat in your muzzle and biting deep."

Martin froze, and his hands began to shake, the carafe of tea between them. Bastian slapped the table with his hand, making the servant jump. And then Bastian began to laugh. It was a loud, raucous, obnoxious sort of laugh. The kind of laugh that made Simone's nerves grate, made her want to leap over the table and punch her second cousin in the nose.

"You've absolutely no sense of humour, Simone." Bastian scolded her, his dark eyes made even darker with the malice he felt for her. "I'd rather my wife had a sense of humour."

"Then it's settled." It was her turn to laugh. With a cruel tilt to her smile, she snarled: "You will find another wife."

"Oh but where would I find one as beautiful, as shrewd, as wild in the sack?" His dark eyes were chilling her to the core. "I'm rather satisfied with the wife I've chosen. Your father seems rather thrilled with the match. And you, my dearest Simone, how do you feel about our coming union?"

Given the sleazy way in which he said union, Simone knew that he meant the rising of the full moon that very day – not the binding of their hands in marriage.

"You repulse me, Bastian." She said, simply, and began to heap herbed scrambled eggs on her plate. They were one of Martin's best creations, and after her small meals the last few nights, she was famished. She would not be angered out of another meal. Not with the growing hunger gnawing at her insides.

"I repulse you?" He laughed again. "Tell me that tonight, oh, say, around midnight." His lustful leer nearly ruined her appetite.

She decided to ignore him, as best she could, pretend that she couldn't even hear the words coming out of his mouth. Wasn't that the way one was supposed to deal with difficult people? Pretend that they didn't even exist? It worked for her. She'd rather that Bastian didn't exist. Rather that she had never met him – and certainly, wished that she had never attacked him.

As a human, he had been arrogant. As a werewolf, he was unbearable.

"I wonder how it will happen this time," Bastian began to amuse himself with the possibilities. "Will you come to me, grovelling like a bitch in Heat, or will I hunt you down, in full werewolf regalia, erection beckoning like a beacon in the night to draw you near? Will you succumb to me at once, and merge your flesh with mine, or will you resist me for as long as possible, the way that you usually do? There's some sport to be had in that, I must admit."

Bastian sat back in his chair and grinned at her, his smile a wicked one. "I rather like stalking you through the castle, cornering you, tearing off your clothes, and ravaging you." He bit into an apple, and began to chew it with his mouth open. "You are never able to resist me for very long. And when you come, you come so hard. I've never heard an animal make so much noise--"

"Enough!" Simone barked at him, slamming her hand on the table so that the butter knives rattled. "Bastian, mind yourself!"

"Oh my," He laughed, taking another bite of the apple. "The rose has thorns."

Simone pressed the points of her sharp, strong nails into the wood of the table. "Would you like to find out just how sharp those thorns are?" She asked, scratching thick lines into the table's surface. Her nails were itching for the opportunity to tear into flesh. Should he give her that opportunity, she would like it ... very much.

"Contain yourself, wolfling." There was a warning in Bastian's dark eyes. "I'm the larger of us, after all. All you'll gain yourself is a bruised ego and a sore bottom. Remember the last time you decided to tussle with me."

She did remember. Parts of it, anyway. Right up until the part where she changed into her werewolf form, his body around her, inside of her, her human mind resenting him while her werewolf mind craved him all the more

As a man, he was already much larger than her, with his wide shoulders and tall, well-muscled body. In werewolf form, he nearly dwarfed her

Silenced by the shameful memory of that last tussle, as he put it, she turned her attention to her meal. She would need her energy in the next few days.

The shift from human to werewolf wreaked havoc with her metabolism. She would shed most of her human skin, but not her scalp or pubic hair. Her bones would grow, and break, and bend to the will of her supernatural deformities. She would stand on her hind legs, with claws growing from the toes of her feet, and talons growing from the tips of her fingers. Her human teeth would be forced out of her mouth by the monstrous teeth that were the hallmark of her curse – a muzzle full of razor sharp canine teeth. Her nose would become supersensitive to scents, and her eyes, accustomed to sight within even the darkest of shadows.

Her chest would expand to accommodate the wolf-like musculature of her upper body ... Her breasts, covered with hair, would jut out from her rib cage like twin pillars. Her sex, already covered with hair, would swell with arousal, and her sensitivity there, in her most intimate flesh, would be heightened as with the rest of her senses.

Before the lunch hour was out, Martin would lead one of her father's cows to the dungeon, and sometime in the night, she and Bastian would make a meal of it. One cow split two ways was about average for a pair of ravenous werewolves.

The servant would leave their supper out at lunch time. That was usually an assortment of sandwiches, breads, cheeses and meats. He would not dare stay any later than noon. He was in danger the moment the full moon appeared in the sky. Martin would put the heavy iron bars on the outside of the kitchen doors upon leaving– all the other exits had been sealed twenty years before. There were heavy iron bars on all the windows, and most of the doors were iron bound

with heavy chains and bars across them. That kitchen door was the only way in or out of the castle, now.

Unless you counted the closed-in terrace, of course. Birds, rain, and arrows could get through the cage with ease

Simone didn't count out a selection of succulent pork sausages from the bowl, she just loaded up her plate until it was full. She had a rampant appetite today, and would eat until she felt she might burst. It was the animal within that made her eat with such abandonment, such haste.

When she looked up at Bastian next, she was happy to see a look of disgust on his handsome face. "I don't suppose that you ever stop to chew while you eat?" He asked aloud, making it clear that he was disgusted with her show of hunger.

"Maybe I wouldn't be so hungry if you didn't starve me at night as a way of punishing me."

"Maybe if you weren't so prideful, I wouldn't have to punish you." He supposed, turning his attention to his tea. "Really though, Simone, a lady ought to mind her manners."

"In a couple of hours, I won't be a lady anymore." She growled, feeling as annoyed with Bastian as she was, admittedly, aroused by him. He smelled so masculine, so male, it made her quiver, just thinking about just how male he could be at times.

"Yes, and indeed, I'm rather looking forward to that." Bastian purred, his eyes dark with desire as he sipped his rosehip tea.

Simone swallowed nervously. She could feel her blood warming to him, felt the need of her body beginning to overwhelm her better judgement. Her eyes were on his lips, his full, masculine lips. She knew what it would be like to kiss those lips, to allow herself to be swept up in the passion of his embrace. She knew the carnal pleasures that could be had between them, knew that it was just a matter of time before she was his willing mate, his bitch in Heat.

Simone also knew that she could do little to resist the call of her inner nature, but she would try. By God, she would try.

When her breakfast was finished, Simone went up to her chambers for a few hours of meditation. She put away the family tree that she was working on, put it high up on the shelf in her closet, and then she bolted the closet tight, lest harm come to anything within. If she were to somehow find her way out of the dungeon tonight, there was always the risk that she and Bastian would go on a rampage.

It had happened before – that was the reason for the family portraits being nailed so high up on the castle walls. They were out of reach, and thus, safe, unless she and Bastian somehow found a way to scale the castle walls.

Soon, she and Bastian would make their way downstairs, to the dungeon, where the servant, Martin, would lock them down for the long night ahead. Then, they would seek the savage gratification of each others' bodies, and feed upon the old cow left there to sate their supernatural hunger. Or perhaps they would feed on the cow, and mate as an afterthought – it was always hard to tell how these evenings would go.

They might mate while feeding – who knew?

Rarely did Simone have a clear recollection of her actions as the beast. That, perhaps, was something of a blessing in disguise. She knew, too well, the pain and confusion and wanton rage that came with her transformation from human to werewolf. It was better, then, that she didn't remember much of what followed the shift from one form into another. Bastian, on the

other hand, seemed to remember much of his transgressions, and he often found sick joy in telling Simone the stories of all that passed between them.

She didn't know if she should believe Bastian, as he was something of a bastard, but his descriptions of what happened almost always matched up perfectly with the bruises on her body, the blood from their shared slaughters, the broken furniture, the claw marks on the inside of the dungeon door, the smells in her hair, the tastes in her mouth. Why he had memory of the lunar lunacy while she suffered from amnesia of those sordid evenings was a mystery to her.

Deciding that she could use a bit of air before resigning herself to be cooped up with Bastian in a dank, damp dungeon, Simone paid a visit to the enclosed terrace garden in the other wing of the castle. Before she even stepped unto the stone patio, she could smell the pleasant fragrance of the domestic roses growing there, the perfume of other scented flowers, the lavender, the herbs. She plucked a sprig of rosemary and crushed it between her fingertips, staining the edges of her claws with the juices of the fragrant herb. She inhaled the scent, willing it to calm her frayed nerves, willing it to soothe the tense muscles of her body.

The moon was rising, she could feel it, as surely as the oceans could feel the tide pulling at them. So too did she feel the hair growing in her scalp, along the skin of her long, lithe limbs. She could even feel the tingle of her pubic hair, as it was pushed slowly, tortuously out of its follicles. Her nails were itching with the yearning for violence, her teeth, loosened to accommodate the wicked fangs that would come. Her chest ached when she breathed deep the fresh air of summer, and her ribs seemed almost to throb with every beat of her strong heart.

It was then that she smelled it. Smelled him.

The tang of a wild thing, so near that she wondered why she had not smelled it before. The musk was so sharp in her nose, so tantalizing, she had to give her head a shake to clear her thoughts. Another werewolf – not Bastian – was lurking somewhere in the woods outside the castle. So near, she could practically taste him.

Panic welled up in her chest when she realized what the real threat was. She was in Heat now – and this new werewolf could likely smell it on her. It was probably what had drawn him here to the castle in the first place. Most of the wild things were drawn to the Town of Grant, the livestock and people there. This one had come to Grant Keep for a reason.

He had come for her.

She chewed her lip anxiously. It was almost time for Martin to lock her up with Bastian. She had to warn Martin of the threat that loomed outside the castle, had to warn the servant of the danger that lurked outside, as much as within.

Just as she was about to head for the kitchen, movement at the castle wall caught her attention. Martin emerged from the kitchen door, carrying a bucket of steaming water. She saw the flurry of movement in the woods a few yards in front of him, saw the large shadow racing towards her servant with breakneck speed!

"Martin!" She screamed, from her vantage point high above the castle. "Look out!"

But it was too late.

No sooner had she called out in alarm than was the slender man nearly split in two by a swipe of the werewolf's talons. She saw the pink of rendered intestines spilling from Martin's tunic, saw the dark blood spurting from a second dark gash in his throat.

The massive golden haired werewolf was standing over Martin's body, but staring right at her with glowing golden eyes. He seemed torn between two choices: devour the blood rich man who lay dying before him, or ravage the damsel on the castle terrace.

As Simone began to back away from the terrace, knowing that she should head for the dungeon, the safest place in the castle, she noted with horror that the kitchen door was wide open. It was all the invitation that the male werewolf needed. He bounded into the kitchen through the door, disappearing into the castle.

Simone turned from the terrace and ran for the protection of her cousin. “Bastian!” She called, terror making her voice waiver as she sought out her protector. “Bastian, we’ve got trouble!”

Her worried voice echoed off of the walls of the castle. Bastian emerged from his quarters with a yawn, his long dark hair tousled. Clearly, he had been taking an early afternoon nap, lazy male that he was.

“What kind of trouble?” He yawned, taking a moment to scratch at his ball sack. He didn’t seem to think that the sheer panic of her words, the tremor of her voice, was any cause for alarm.

She pointed past him, at the golden haired werewolf climbing the staircase with reckless abandonment. “That kind of trouble!”

Bastian didn’t even have time to make the change as the werewolf leapt upon him. Simone shrieked as the werewolf’s momentum carried the two males to the floor. Bastian growled, an uncanny growl, but he hadn’t quite shifted when the golden werewolf clamped his jaws around his throat, biting deep, only to tear out her cousin’s throat.

Though many times Simone had herself fantasized about doing just that to her second cousin, seeing him there with the blood spurting from his ruined neck as his eyes looked wildly at his assailant, his arms flailing uselessly against the chest of the larger, wilder male – it was surreal and horrible thing to behold. A second bite from the massive werewolf broke him at the neck as the beast tore Bastian’s head clear off of his body.

There would be no recovering from these wounds. The werewolf had just made sure of that.

Finished now with her cousin, the golden werewolf turned now to Simone, his golden eyes glowing as they beheld her. It was with alarm that she acknowledged the intimidating erection where his thighs parted. It was ramrod straight, pointing straight at her, as though it was seeking the heat of her body.

Simone took a step back, and then another. All the while, the sharp musk of the werewolf pervaded her senses, arousing her to her core. This beast was larger than Bastian, of that much she was certain. He was larger in all the ways that mattered – it was no surprise, then, that the fight between them had been over before it even began.

The golden werewolf pulled himself to his full height, intimidating Simone all the more. He was huge, this creature, all seven feet of him. She had seen werewolves before, but never had she ever seen a golden one. When Bastian had turned, he was dark brown, as dark as the hair on his head.

Poor Bastian Her cousin was now quite dead

The werewolf growled at her, and took a step in her direction, talons out, as though he were readying himself for another pounce. The look in his eyes was one of pure sexual hunger. The kind of hunger that she had seen in Bastian’s eyes, many times over in the twenty years that they had been together.

“Now look here, mister,” Simone began, her voice trembling even as she tried to sound brave.

The werewolf lifted his head towards the ceiling and roared, until the roar became a howl. Simone was running for the dungeon even before the roar changed into the howl.

There really was no use running from a fully changed werewolf.

Especially not one so big. So muscular. So undeniably male. She thought she had made some progress, some distance between them when she reached the bottom of the stairs. But she had no sooner touched the last step than had the werewolf landed from the leap he had taken from the top of the stairs. He was now a very impassive – and impressive – hulk of fur and muscle, blocking her only way down to the safety of the iron cage in the dungeon.

He roared again, right at her, his breath hot on her cheeks, and she could smell the blood of her cousin on his breath, as well as that of poor Martin, and the mingled aroma of sheep and deer. As much as the scent of blood appealed to her, with the Heat upon her, she nevertheless took another step backwards. In another hasty step, the cool stone of the stairwell's banister was against her back.

Simone had nowhere left to go. The werewolf's arms encircled her, on either side of her heaving chest. His talons brushed the skin of her arms, as he enclosed his hands around her biceps, holding her steady. He seemed to want her to submit to him

Simone could feel the blood pulsing through the veins of this huge beast, hear the blood song of his vitality thrumming there, like a soft drum. Thud-thud, thud-thud, thud-thud

She felt light headed as the Heat made her swoon, as her heart beat out a staccato rhythm of its own. As the werewolf stared at her, golden eyes met golden eyes, and her arousal peaked – she had to break the glance, for fear that she would begin to shift, right then and there. She glanced down, saw the erection waiting for her, and felt the Heat course through her groin. She didn't have to touch herself to know that she was sticky with the wetness of her excitement.

This beast would break her, surely, if it tried to mate with her. It was huge – he was huge. She swallowed nervously, and took a steadying breath, yet it was as though she suddenly couldn't get enough air into her lungs. The prospect of mating with this nightmare creature was as thrilling as it was terrifying – and ultimately, unavoidable.

As it howled for the second time, a thrill ran up and down her spine. Purely electrical, it made the hair at the base of her neck bristle and grow. She felt the skin of her face tighten, felt the muscles beneath the skin go as rigid as the rest of her body. She knew what was coming next.

The Heat. The hair. The pain. The contortion. The confusion.

The change.

There was no stopping it, now that it had begun. Nothing short of a silver bullet, or perhaps a silver lance through her heart, could have kept her body from going where it wanted to go. And all the while, the male werewolf held her up, growling with satisfaction as the smaller female of his species went through the cycle of change.

It started with her ears, and ended with her tail. Before Simone even realized what she was doing, she was on the floor, tearing her red satin dress from her body, crying out as the spasms began to change her, to transform her, from young woman into vicious beast. She gnashed her sharp new teeth at the male before her, daring him to touch her.

Daring him to try. Wanting him to dare!

She was beast now, and he would have to prove himself worthy of mating with her. He would have to meet her challenge, and overpower her, take her as a male takes a female, on all fours, a wild display of fur and phallus and fucking.

She got to her feet, breathing heavily, facing the male as though her were an enemy to contend with. She snarled at him, snapped her muzzle twice in his direction, forcing him back, away from the staircase. He stepped back, once, and began to circle her, as though trying to determine how to attack, how to best this female in a fight.

Not that there would be much of a fight – he stood at least two heads taller than her, and was much wider in the shoulders, stronger in the legs. But this was the dance, the mating ritual between these feral creatures. It had to be done. It was the nature of the beast.

She lunged at him with a wide swipe of her talons, grazing his chest with a superficial wound. He growled at her, as much in surprise as in amusement. When she lunged a second time, he was upon her, wrestling her to the stone floor, pinning her there with his weight, his might. She tried to claw at his face- he held her, firmly, by the wrists, forcing her hands to the cold stone floor.

She whimpered, twice, but he did not relent.

She howled, a howl of surrender, of submission, and then he took what was rightfully his.

He released her, and she turned unto her abdomen for him, raising her buttocks high into the air, her nose pressed to the stone floor, panting, in Heat. He organized himself behind her, the heat of his body making her pussy quiver expectantly, made her clitoris twitch with anticipation.

Chapter Three

With great fervour, he plunged his penis into her wet crevice, pummelled her welcoming vagina with every inch that he had to give. She accepted him with a low growl that was the closest thing to a moan of pleasure that a beast like her could manage. When he pushed forward, sheathing himself entirely in her, she pushed back, answering the call of the wild that was as old as the dawn of time. Together, they rocked, and he growled when the muscles of her wet crevice began to spasm and tightened around him, again, and again, and again She was getting her fill of pleasure, he was sure, and most certainly, her fill of cock.

His talons clamped down on her hips so hard, she nearly yelped – there would be bruises, and possibly scratches, tomorrow, but it was a small price to pay for pleasure like this.

He grunted and growled as his balls slapped against her cunt – he had gone without a female for far too long, as they were hard to come by in this mountainous land. This female had a scent that had driven him half mad with want. He had stalked the Town of Grant for the better part of a week, seeking her out – then the better part of the day determining how best to get into the stone structure and mate with her.

The small human male at the door hadn't put up a fight of any kind – hadn't even seen what hit him. The other male werewolf – Bastian – hadn't had time to change. The taste of the younger werewolf's blood on his tongue was nearly as satisfying as the feeling of this female's tight pussy wrapped around his hard cock.

He fucked her with an animal intensity, as he worked towards achieving that ultimate satisfaction, that primal bliss, that primitive ball-busting orgasm. She was so slick, so wet, it was sheer madness fucking her. He knew that he would come, he was so close, any second now

When he came, he howled with fulfilment, howled as he pumped his seed deep into her silken slit, howled as the hot, creamy cum began to drip out of her, unto the stone floor. She was trembling, and for that, he felt a surge of pride. He did not know how many times he had made the young female come, but he knew that it had been many. Even so, there was a wildness to her eyes that he had not seen before, a hunger that echoed something in his ancient blood.

He felt finished with her – done, at least for now – but she did not seem finished with him. Before he even had a chance to realize her intent, she was upon him, pushing him unto his back, taking his semi-hard cock in her talons. With an intentional squeeze that seemed to say: “We're not done yet, mister”, she guided him back to her cum slick slit, and sheathed him with her hot and slippery pussy.

He was sensitive to the touch, and so he growled his displeasure. She growled back, and pinched the base of his cock with her talons. He decided that it was safest for his cock if he just laid back and let her have her way with him, so he did just that, watching her through half-lidded eyes with lazy male amusement to see what she would do.

Slowly, very slowly, she began to ride his cock, up and down, working the muscles of her cunt. Those love muscles, they clamped down in such a way that she very quickly got his attention – and held it, for his penis began to become rigid with blood song once again. His cock throbbed, thud-thud, thud-thud, thud-thud The smell of her sex was upon him, around him, intoxicating, invigorating

The heat of her pussy made his head spin, as she gyrated them both into a state of post orgasmic bliss. She began to ride him more quickly, and her breath came in short, eager gasps – he realized that she was going to come again, and this one was perhaps going to be the greatest come of her young life. Her cunt clenched him as she started to spasm, and he felt a hot wetness arc out of her, splashing his groin. He smelled the sweetness of that cum, and suddenly, he was overcome by an urge to taste it.

With supernaturally strong arms, he lifted her from him as she waned from the orgasm, and laid her on her back next to him. Without warning, he lowered his head to the valley of her thighs and began lapping up the sweet liquid that she had spent of herself, and he found that it was unlike anything he had ever tasted before. It was a potent blend, that stuff down there – his musky cum mixed with her sweet feminine juices, he couldn't seem to get enough of her, as his long tongue cleaned up every last glistening pearl, every precious drop.

She gave a low growl, and he wasn't sure what her meaning was, until she combed her sharp fingers through his long, blond hair and forced his head down to the nub of flesh where the thick lips of her pussy met. Oh, that. She wanted him to lick her engorged clitoris. He could see no harm in that ... perhaps she would even spend more of that wonderful liquid for him?

With his long tongue, he easily found the nub of flesh hiding amongst the dark, curly hairs. A few quick licks made her growl again, and he looked up from the job to see her turning her head from side to side. She was loving it. Seeing her go wild with passion made him want to do it all the more – he licked her, and teased her, and delved between her lips, even into her slick hole, and all the while, she arched, and growled for more.

He licked her clitoris with vigour, hoping that she would squirt again. His efforts were rewarded a short while later when a small amount of liquid spurted from between her cunt lips. He lapped it all up with his eager tongue, hoping that there was more. He looked up at her expectantly. She was ignoring him, looking down the long hall at the direction of the dead cook, the kitchen there. Her long, hairy ears were pulled back flat against her head.

Had she heard something that he hadn't? She was younger – her ears were probably better. He had been shot at many times, and the thundering boom of those guns had dulled his sense of hearing over the years.

She got up, and began to trot towards the kitchen on long, sexy legs covered with dark sweat slickened hair. Curious, he followed her through the castle, all the way to the kitchen. It was then that he heard them: several men on horseback, and a carriage of some sort. She looked at him over her shoulder as if to say: "Well, we can't stay here."

He followed her, through the kitchen, out into the sunshine, and deep into the woods - the wilderness.

He would stay with this female. She was a good female. He liked the way she came. He liked the way she made him come. She was in Heat. Perhaps she had conceived.

Yes, he would stay with this female.

For now.

THE END