

ELLORA'S CAVE TWILIGHT



KATE DOUGLAS

A *Wolf* by any
Other Name

LUCK OF THE IRISH

A Wolf by Any Other Name

Kate Douglas

Part of the Luck of the Irish series.

Three men and a leprechaun? When Dermot, Greg and Zev meet at the wedding of a past lover, a little green guy offers each man a golden opportunity to possess his greatest desire. Unfortunately, figuring out what that greatest desire amounts to isn't as easy as it sounds.

When computer nerd Zevulan Cable awakens in a dungeon, bare-ass naked, chained to a bed as gorgeous, identical-twin witches have their sensual way with his body, he figures he's found his greatest desire, just as the leprechaun promised. Then why is the tiny, sexless woodsprite the one who captures his heart? And how can he explain his growing need to howl at the moon?

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A Wolf by Any Other Name

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A WOLF BY ANY OTHER NAME

Kate Douglas

Prologue

Ireland, present day.

“This isn’t how I envisioned present-day Ireland,” said the nerd at the table.

Dermot Stone wished he would quit talking. Every moment Dermot had to spend responding was one less moment available for the task of getting shit-faced drunk.

“So what were you envisioning?” asked the other guy, Greg something. A lawyer.

The nerd shrugged and took another drink of Guinness. “I don’t know. More people wearing green, I guess. A few more redheaded wee Irish lasses. Where are the pet leprechauns?”

Dermot really needed to switch tables. He was far from sober himself, but at least alcohol didn’t turn him into a babbling idiot. He sighed and looked around the wedding reception. A huge number of people, probably hundreds, having themselves a grand old time and here he was sitting at a table with a lawyer and an intoxicated nerd. Wonderful.

Greg the Lawyer took a sip from his beer, grimacing a bit. The guy clearly wasn’t a drinker. “So, Zev, are you here for the bride or groom?” he asked the nerd.

“The bride. Tami’s an ex-girlfriend.”

That caught Dermot’s attention. “Really?”

“Yeah. We were together for about a month when she was living in the states.”

“She was my nanny,” said Dermot. “I lost my virginity to her.”

“Your *nanny*?” asked Greg. “How old are you?”

“Never mind,” said Dermot, immediately wishing he’d kept his mouth shut. “It’s a long story.”

"Yeah, but you're, what, early thirties? She's gotta be about your age, maybe even younger." Greg started to count on his fingers.

"It's not important." It was definitely time to steer the conversation away from himself. "What about you? Are you here for the bride or groom?"

"Groom. But I did sleep with the bride."

"All three of us slept with Tami?" asked Zev. "That's a pretty big coincidence."

"Well, I don't mean to show disrespect for the bride on her wedding day," said Greg, "but it's not all *that* big of a coincidence, if you know what I mean."

The men all nodded.

"I want to hear more about the nanny thing," said Zev. "I bet she sure as hell didn't have to fight to get you in bed by nine."

Greg laughed. "Yeah, I have to say, I really got ripped off in the babysitter allocation. If I was good, all I got was a Popsicle."

"Maybe he *wasn't* so good."

"We were talking about leprechauns earlier," said Dermot, desperately trying to change the subject. "Have you ever tried to catch one?"

"No, not recently," said Zev.

"I know how. Want to try?"

"Now?" asked Greg.

"Sure. It's not like this reception doesn't suck."

"I know I could use an extra pot o' gold," said Zev.

"We all could. Let's go."

* * * * *

"Heeeeeeeeere leprechaun!" shouted Zev, as they trudged through the woods. "Here, leper, leper, leper!"

"Please shut up," Dermot requested.

"I think I see one," said Greg. "Hand me the lantern! Oh, no, wait, it was just a couple of ogres and a troll."

"Catching a leprechaun is serious business," said Dermot. "If we do see one, don't grab it. He'll just vanish. And he'll do everything he can to trick you, so don't let yourself be fooled. Let me do the talking."

"Are we lost?" asked Zev. "I think we're lost."

"We've been walking for two minutes. You can still see the lights from the party."

"Oh. I've never been a big forest kind of guy. Give me a good meadow any day."

Dermot ignored the nerd and continued walking. Even though the leprechaun hunt had been an elaborate method of changing the subject, he had to admit that he was now genuinely excited to be out here. He would never admit it to these idiots, but he truly did believe in leprechauns and other such magic, and if only he could find...

"Does anybody know any good Irish songs?" asked Zev.

"When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," Greg suggested.

"I don't know that one."

"Me either."

Zev began to sing "Twist and Shout". Badly.

Dermot rolled his eyes. They were in Ireland, for God's sake. You were supposed to be able to hold your goddamn liquor.

They marched through the woods for a few more minutes, Zev singing the entire time. Dermot was just about to bash him over the head with the lantern, bury him in a shallow grave, and turn him into another Irish myth when he heard a rustling from the trees.

"Shhhh!" he said.

Zev and Greg fell silent.

The three men stood there, listening.

Nothing.

“False alarm,” Dermot said. Zev resumed his singing...and the rustling started again. Dermot waved his hand for silence. As soon as Zev shut up, the rustling stopped.

Greg walked over to the source of the rustling and peeked through the leaves and branches. “I can’t see if there’s anything in there or not.”

“Sing some more,” Dermot told Zev.

Zev resumed his abysmal rendition of “Twist and Shout”. Moments later, something burst out of the shrubs and danced in the path in front of them.

A little green man, only three feet tall. Dressed entirely in green, with a red beard, a pipe, and a hat. He danced around in time with Zev’s singing.

“Keep singing!” Dermot ordered.

The leprechaun, if this truly was a leprechaun, continued dancing around.

Dermot crept forward, waving for Greg to stay where he was. The lawyer nodded and watched the leprechaun in amazement.

If the legends were true, and at this point there was no damn reason to believe that they weren’t, he could capture the leprechaun by holding his gaze. He kept moving closer and closer, watching the little green man happily dance around, trying to catch his eye.

The leprechaun made eye contact.

Dermot didn’t look away.

The leprechaun stopped dancing and stared at him.

“I’ve got him!” said Dermot, forcing himself to hold the leprechaun’s stare. “Everybody stay cool!” He took a few more steps forward and crouched down, putting himself nearly nose-to-nose with the creature. “Are you a leprechaun?” he asked.

The little green man laughed at him. “Well, of course I’m a leprechaun! What did ye think I was, a unicorn?”

“Then I demand that you take us to your gold.”

The leprechaun looked pained. "Me gold? Now, what would a fancy lad such as ye be needin' with me gold?"

Dermot realized that the other two men were moving closer, but didn't dare break eye contact to tell them to scram. "You must take us to your gold."

The leprechaun nodded, sadly. "Aye, lad, I must. Unless ye wish to strike a bargain."

"No bargains."

"Well, aren't ye an impatient one? Perhaps ye should listen to the offer before ye get all huffy about me gold. There are few things finer than gold, save but for a nice pair o' shoes...and, perhaps, wishes?"

"Wishes?" asked Zev.

"Aye, wishes. I can grant ye three wishes. One for each. I can see into your hearts and grant your greatest desire, I can. Now, isn't that much better than a silly pot o' gold, lad?"

Dermot thought about that. He had all the money he wanted, but his greatest desire...

The leprechaun smiled. "I see a reasonable lad before me. Let me free, and I will grant ye each one wish. Ye will get what your heart most desires."

"Go for the wish!" said Zev.

Dermot nodded. "Fine. I release you." He broke eye contact with the leprechaun, hoping he hadn't made a huge mistake.

But the leprechaun didn't run away. Instead he looked at each of the men in turn. "Aye, I have seen what it is ye most desire, and so it shall be granted."

"When?" asked Dermot.

The leprechaun chuckled. "Have patience, lad. Leprechaun magic is a tricky business. It will work differently for all of ye. But it will work, that I promise."

Greg held a hand to his forehead, as if suddenly dizzy, and then fell to the ground. Within seconds, Zev had fallen as well.

“What did you do to them?” Dermot demanded.

“Don’t worry, ‘tis nothing to be concerned with. Their greatest desire lies elsewhere.” The leprechaun pointed into the woods, in the same direction they’d been walking. “Yours lies this way.”

The leprechaun winked, laughed merrily, and then dove back into the leaves. Dermot stood there, listening as the laughter faded.

He suddenly realized that Zev was gone. Vanished completely. Where had his greatest desire taken him?

It didn’t matter. Dermot’s desire lay straight ahead.

Leaving the lawyer snoring on the path, he headed deeper into the woods.

Chapter One

Zev wondered if a man's head could actually explode from a hangover. The visual was enough to make him gag, and he might have, if the dream bringing him slowly awake didn't feel so damned good.

Warm lips suckled the tip of his cock and an obviously talented tongue tested every fissure and ridge. Fingers with long nails stroked his balls, fondling each one in its turn, tugging gently and rolling the family jewels just the way he liked.

Well of course you're gonna do me the way I like. You're mine, aren't you?

He groaned as soft hair swept over his belly and Zev went with the flow, luxuriating in the skilled but imaginary lover he'd conjured for this morning's wet dream.

Maybe a hangover wasn't such a bad thing, so long as the day started out like this. Of course, if he'd been a little sharper with women, he'd have a real one sucking his cock. There'd been some pretty hot women at the reception last night.

Unfortunately, none of them had shown him the least bit of interest.

Experience had taught him he'd find very few women impressed with his knowledge of computers, the latest in game technology, or his ongoing dislike of standard operating systems. Conversation with the opposite sex definitely wasn't his forte.

As down on his luck as he'd been lately, he hadn't attempted even a minor flirtation last night, which was, of course, a moot point right now. He sighed and let his fantasy flow.

Another pair of lips joined the first set, kissing his chest and suckling his nipples. Zev moaned, and wondered briefly where he'd come up with the details.

He'd gotten pretty creative over the past year, since breaking up with Tami, but nothing this good!

Sweat broke out in a hot flush over his entire body as the imaginary sensations grew more intense. Strong fingers kneaded his buttocks, the mouth on his penis sucked like a Hoover. Another set of hands rolled both his balls in a steady massage that bordered on pain. He moaned aloud and let his thoughts roam free.

For some reason, they ended up back at the wedding.

Damn. What a party that was!

First there'd been champagne, then that unbelievable Irish whiskey, then...the image of a little man dressed all in green floated just beyond his consciousness.

Nah. No way. He must have been drunker than he realized.

Obviously, since he couldn't even recall coming back to his hotel room. Zev raised his hips just a tiny bit, giving the imaginary mouth enveloping his cock a bit more room to work.

Forget the wedding. Stay with the dream. *Oh Lord, that's amazing!* The imaginary mouth grew more insistent, suckling his cock deeper and deeper. The fingers squeezed his balls with a bit more enthusiasm and one sharp fingernail lightly rimmed the sensitive ring around his ass.

Zev completely forgot about the wedding. He put the little green man where he belonged, in the mental circular file designated for useless information.

Useful information was the delicious dream taking him closer, ever closer to the edge. It was so real he almost opened his eyes to watch the two women making love to his entire body, so real he could have sworn he heard their soft grunts and the rustling of their clothing.

Lips dragged at the nipple over his heart, another set of lips compressed the base of his cock, encasing him in a hot, wet mouth.

Hands squeezed his buttocks and massaged his balls. A blinding coil of need started building somewhere down in his gut. A finger, this one without the sharp nail, circled his ass, pressing against the sensitive nerves, pressing harder then retreating, press...retreat...press...retreat. He relaxed his sphincter muscles, subconsciously begging the finger to press just a little harder, for the mouth to suck just a little more of him into that hot, wet cavern.

As if he'd communicated every wish to his fantasy lovers, they complied. Zev knew he was going to make one hell of a mess in the bed in a very short...

A whole lot of things happened all at once.

The finger pressing against his anus suddenly gained entrance to an entirely virgin opening on his body. Gained entrance, kept going and pressed something Zev didn't even know he had.

In that split second where Zev wondered how he could possibly fantasize an act he'd never heard of, sharp teeth came together on his nipple and the teeth buried behind the lips that were sucking his cock suddenly clamped down on the base of his penis. Cheek muscles compressed his straining flesh to the point of pain, fingers squeezed his balls, the sharp fingernails raked across his perineum and the biggest blast of cum he'd ever produced managed the convoluted journey from his testicles to the end of his cock in record time.

Zev arched his hips and howled his release. For the first time since the dream began, he realized his hands and feet were somehow bound to the bed.

The mouth sucking his cock suddenly disappeared, leaving him wet and bereft, spurting the rest of his load into the chilly air.

Someone spat and gagged. A woman's voice snarled, "Shit. I hate the taste of that stuff."

Another female voice made a snorting sound of disgust and said, "Then spit it out. What did you swallow it for, anyway?"

“I didn’t know you were going to stick your finger up his ass, sister dear. I don’t know a man alive who can handle that. Warn me next time. Oh crap...it’s all over the front of me.”

“You said you wanted him to have, and I quote you, *an extreme orgasmic experience.*”

Zev’s eyes flew open. His first thought, *Wet dreams don’t talk*, was quickly buried. Standing over him were two of the most beautiful women he’d ever seen...identical in almost every way.

They were tall, slim, very young and blonde, their hair long and hanging freely, almost to their waists—literally the answer to his dreams.

Suddenly, it all came back to him. The little green man—no, make that *leprechaun*—had said he would grant Zev his greatest desire.

It hadn’t been a dream!

A quiet little voice in the back of his head asked Zev if his greatest desire had included being tied naked to a bed in what looked like a mad scientist’s dungeon. He suppressed the thought, choosing to focus instead on the women arguing over him.

“He didn’t shift, Petunia. He’s still just a man. Are you quite sure you know what you’re doing?”

Petunia looked at Zev, staring down her nose at him as if he were some kind of bug as she wiped a damp rag at a big wet spot on the front of her black gown. He elected to keep his mouth shut.

Instead, he studied her jewelry, the unusual necklace she wore and her copper bracelet, shaped like a snake winding from the back of her left hand all the way to her elbow.

The snake’s metal head rested just between her thumb and first finger, its beady, jeweled eyes seeming to watch every move Zev attempted to make.

Zev glanced away from the snake and looked directly into the blonde’s eyes, a bit disconcerted to realize one was blue and the other completely white.

The woman tapped the side of her nose in a thoughtful gesture, then picked up a dog-eared book from a nearby table. She flipped through the pages while, on the opposite side of the bed, her twin paced back and forth. "Ah. Here it is, Verbena. I thought so." She tapped something on a page midway through the book. "Page 369, paragraph 2. It says, 'A shift may be instigated by any physical extreme, be it sexual or sensory. A full moon is not always necessary. Shifting during orgasm is not uncommon. Neither is it unusual for a shift to occur during periods of pain or stress'."

"That's not the spell I was talking about. Did you use the proper *conjuring* spell? Are you sure you've conjured up a shifter?"

"Well of course I am! You know I was always better than you at conjuring. Case in point, our little woodsprite?" Petunia snapped her fingers under Verbena's nose. "You're just jealous."

Verbena grumbled. Zev tried to disappear into the mattress. None of this made sense. He glanced the length of his body and noticed his flaccid penis nestled quietly in its dark forest of pubic hair. It was probably trying to disappear as well.

"Well, if stress counts for anything, *I* would have changed by now." Verbena leaned over and stared closely at Zev. Her left eye was just as white as Petunia's right, but the right one was as green as an emerald. Zev blinked.

Verbena blinked back. "Let's try pain."

"Uhm..." Zev cleared his throat. "Do I have anything to say about this?"

"No." Both women answered as one. Petunia set the book carefully down on the nearby counter. Verbena dragged a box out from under the table on her side of the bed and set it carefully on the mattress next to Zev's left hip.

"Excuse me?" Zev tried for a more forceful approach. "Would either of you ladies mind telling me where I am and how I got here?" He tugged at the chains holding his wrists. They clanked and rattled. He noticed the sound echoed, almost as if the room were set up for really good acoustics.

“It’s quite simple, “ Verbena muttered. Her attention appeared to be more on the contents of the wooden box than Zev’s question. “Petunia used a conjuring spell and brought you here, to the land of Faerie. My sister and I are taking an advanced level mail-order college course in inter-species experimentation. It’s only offered once a year through the International Witches and Warlocks Guild. This semester we’re working on shapeshifters.” She looked up and smiled sweetly at Zev. “You’re our lab project. If we’re successful, we’ll get an A in the class and move on to the next level.”

Zev tried to ignore the implications of going from computer scientist to lab animal in the space of a few hours. He decided not to go anywhere near the Witches and Warlocks Guild, much less an in-depth discussion of the land of Faerie. Who the hell did they think they were kidding? Instead, he tugged experimentally at the chains holding his arms, at the same time putting pressure on the restraints holding his feet.

His ankles were essentially bolted directly to the bed with thick leather bands holding him firmly in place. He had a bit of movement with his arms, but a few light tugs followed by a full-strength pull convinced him he wasn’t going anywhere soon.

“Have you got everything?” Petunia leaned across Zev’s body to stare into Verbena’s wooden box. The soft sweep of her long hair across Zev’s hip and genitals suddenly brought his cock out of hiding.

He willed the traitor to relax. Petunia absentmindedly stroked his smooth flesh as she studied Verbena’s treasures. Within seconds, Zev was once again fully erect, bobbing inelegantly against Petunia’s black gown.

“I think so.” Verbena handed a number of items to her sister. “If we combine sex and pain, I imagine it should induce stress. If we hit all three, he’s sure to shift.”

“Works for me.” Petunia experimentally clicked a small nipple clamp just under Zev’s nose.

“Uh, not for me.” Zev raised his head as much as he could. “I don’t like pain. Not one bit. Nope. I think we should try sex again. Now *that* works for me. What, exactly, is it you want me to do?”

“Shift.” Verbena quickly massaged his left nipple to a point. Petunia slipped the clamp on it.

Zev yelped.

They repeated the process on the other nipple, although this time Zev kept his yelp down to a teeth-clenching grunt.

The sharp pain in his nipples slowly eased into a deep, throbbing ache that somehow transmitted itself to his traitorous cock. His erection had grown so large it actually hurt.

Petunia completely ignored his cock and slipped a hard pillow under Zev’s hips. Verbena adjusted his ankle restraints, bent his knees and shoved his feet closer to his butt. Before he could figure out what was going on, Petunia slapped some kind of salve on his butt then shoved a vibrating dildo up his ass.

After the first jolt, Zev decided it wasn’t all that bad...until he realized that whatever the witch had used to lubricate the damned thing was mentholated. After a moment of inglorious squirming against the icy hot vibrator, Zev grew aware of a soft chanting.

He opened his eyes to mere slits, looking past the nipple clamps and between his raised knees. Petunia and Verbena held their hands outstretched over his erection, chanting softly in some strange tongue. The jewels in Petunia’s necklace glowed brilliantly. Verbena’s matching necklace had taken on more color as well, until a soft light emanated from the gleaming stones.

Suddenly Petunia wrapped her long fingers around Zev’s cock. He watched in mounting horror as the copper snake bracelet she wore suddenly came to life. It slithered down her fingers and wrapped itself slowly around his cock. Petunia pulled her hand away as the snake constricted.

Zev jerked at the chains holding his wrists. He was afraid to move his hips, afraid to jostle the snake in any way. The chanting continued, finding its way into his soul, his bones, the straining sinews of his body. The rhythmic undulations of the snake twisting

around his erect cock took on a hypnotic pattern, timed to the mystical spell of the two witches' chanting.

The dildo vibrated at a higher pitch, the clamps seemed to tighten on his nipples and the snake's black tongue darted in and out with each muscular compression against Zev's growing erection.

In spite of himself, he felt his orgasm building, felt the pressure deep in his gut—the pleasure in spite of the pain—or because of it? He didn't know, couldn't tell if he'd ever known. He was alive and aware as he'd never been before. Aware of the tiny shifts of current in the air around him, the scent of herbs and spices permeating the stone walls of the room, the tiny motes of dust hovering in the candle light.

The chanting grew louder. The sisters began to stroke his flanks, his chest, the sensitive flesh of his inner thighs. He moaned, trapped in a visceral reaction to extreme sensation, an awareness completely foreign to him.

He felt each ridge of the women's fingerprints, compared the warmth of their touch to the heat of the vibrating dildo and found his own rhythm to match.

The pleasure built, the pain increased. Zev struggled to open his eyes, to fight the sensation, the sensual assault that traveled beyond violation.

The snake grew stronger, larger, until it totally encompassed his straining cock. Zev forced his eyelids apart, horrified to see the reptile undulate further down his penis, wrapping itself around and around like a hangman's noose until it reached the base, where his cock was rooted to his body.

The head of his penis looked like a swollen, purple plum, peeking out of the tail-end coils of the snake. Zev stared at it, the sensation filling him with terror while at the same time he realized he'd never been so acutely turned on in his life.

The snake looked back at him once, its red eyes glowing with an intelligence beyond reptilian. Its jaws opened wide, wider until the dripping fangs filled Zev's field of vision.

Senses on overload, Zev shut out everything around him. He narrowed his focus to the snake. Each metallic scale glowed with life, the eyes narrowed to fiery pinpoints and a silvery drop of venom hung like a tiny ornament from the tip of each ivory fang.

Zev felt a scream building, a terror unlike anything he'd known. With it, the pressure of his climax charged, a powerful orgasm trapped behind the constricting muscles of the snake.

The sensation of the vibrator disappeared, the clamps lost their power. Even the witches stood back from his straining body. With a last flick of his tongue, the snake dipped his head, released its body's pressure on Zev's penis, and sank its fangs directly into Zev's balls.

Pain and pleasure connected in a single lightning bolt, a maelstrom of horror and blinding light.

Then all was dark.

* * * * *

Zev pulled the soft blanket up over his shoulders and rolled over on his back. At least his headache was gone. He ran his tongue around the inside of his mouth, decided he'd better not try it again until he brushed his teeth, and stretched.

Hell. What a dream! Idly he ran his hand across his chest, recalling the weirdest nightmare-slash-wet dream he'd ever had.

His fingers rubbed over one of his nipples and he jerked. *Damn!* Why was it so sore? He gently tested the other one. It felt as raw and abraded as the first. Suddenly, crystallized images from his dream began to coalesce and regain their shape. Eyes still closed, Zev trailed his fingers along his belly, stopped for a minute to stroke his flaccid penis in greeting, then moved around its base to touch his balls.

His fingers hit a hard and painful lump. Jerking upright, eyes wide open, Zev exploded awake.

“Nightmare, shit! It really happened!” Frantically, Zev twisted and turned to see where he was. Definitely not his own room. Unless the local LazyDaze Motel had suddenly gone in for the dungeon look, he wasn’t there, either.

This room, which appeared to be made of solid blocks of stone, was about twelve feet square, without windows. Light glowed from a number of candles in metal sconces placed about the walls. The door was a solid plank of wood with a tiny iron cage covering an opening about six inches across. The only furnishings appeared to be the bed he slept on, a sink on a pedestal and what he hoped was a toilet, hidden behind a drape in one corner. An innocuous little table sat next to the sink. It seemed to be made of wood and plants, almost as if it were growing from the dirt floor.

Zev shook his head and quickly checked his body for more injuries. Other than the two little puncture wounds under his cock where the damned snake must have bitten him, he was unmarked.

Where the hell was he?

He shoved the one blanket back and sat on the edge of the bed, cursing steadily. None of this made sense! Matching witches, sexual games, a magical snake with real fangs...frustrated, he shook his head. “Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit.”

“Can’t you find anything more creative to say?”

“What the...? Who said that?” Zev leapt to his feet, feeling even more naked now that he realized he wasn’t alone. He glanced toward the door, but he was certain the sound had come from his left. He stared at the odd little table.

It began to unfold.

Zev stepped back, bumped into the bed with the backs of his knees and sat down.

“I did.” A tiny, green-haired figure unfolded from her position on the ground. Zev guessed it was female because she had absolutely gorgeous breasts...and gorgeous legs...and the most delectable, pert little nose...

“First I had to listen to you snore, then you talked in your sleep, now you’re just cussing without any originality at all.”

“What the hell are you?”

“Excuse me? Try ‘*who* the hell are you?’ For that matter, I might ask you the same question, especially since you’re in my cell and you slept in my bed.”

He blinked. Talk about getting put in your place by a runt! A really cute runt, to be certain, but...“I’m Zev. Zevulun Cable, actually. Zev for short.” He stood up, the better to tower over her.

The little creature circled him, looking up out of eyes the color of new-mown grass. He guessed her to be about five feet tall, a mere shrimp next to his six foot, four inch height.

“You’re definitely not short,” she said. “Not short at all.” She smiled and shook her hair back out of her eyes.

At this point, Zev was certain he’d lost all touch with reality. Her hair wasn’t hair at all...it was silky strands of leaves flowing in a waterfall of ivy green to her shoulders. Her skin was a deep shade of olive, the little fluff of pubic hair reminded him of the seedpods on thistles.

She was beautiful and exotic and he had a strong compulsion to water her to see if she’d bloom.

Zev did the next best thing. He grinned at her like a complete idiot. At least that’s the way he felt. An idiot under intense scrutiny.

Finally, after an interminable amount of time in which the creature studied him as intimately as someone could without touching, she held out her hand. Zev took it in his much larger one, surprised by the strong grasp of her fingers and the warmth of her palm.

“My name, fellow captive, is Fern. I’m a woodsprite, currently serving as an accidental science project for the terrible twosome.” She smiled at Zev.

His heart stopped beating. He was convinced the damned organ forgot how to work. Fern's smile was a thing of poetry, a warm, all-enticing look that drew him in and made him feel, well...not quite as nervous as he'd been before.

His cock decided to make her feel welcome, too. It came to attention and said hello in its own, inimitable way. He tried to brush it down with his free hand. It popped right back up. "Sorry," he mumbled.

Fern laughed. Her laughter was even more unsettling than her smile. Zev thought of bells, of sweet fields filled with birdsong, of throwing her down on the bed and screwing the socks off her.

If she'd been wearing socks.

"What do you mean, accidental?" he asked, instead.

Chapter Two

It wasn't easy to concentrate on his face, though that part of his body was certainly easy to look at, especially with the glowing aura surrounding him. The spectrum of colors fascinated her: the vibrant yellow spoke of intelligence and wisdom, the spike of red showed his fear of the unknown and the blue told her he was a searcher, still learning his place in the world.

As fascinating as she found his aura, though, it was that other rather enticing body part doing its best to get her attention.

Better to stick with auras. At least they were something she understood.

Fern slipped around behind Zev and sat on the edge of the bed, scooted back against the wooden headboard, drew her heels up against her thighs and wrapped her arms around her knees. If she was really careful, she could cover her breasts with her hair and knees, her crotch with her heels and possibly carry on an almost normal conversation with the first human male she'd ever seen up close.

Zev quickly followed Fern's lead. He sat back on the bed and leaned against the wall, surreptitiously tugging a corner of the blanket over his middle.

There was an obvious protrusion just below his waist, but covered as he was, it was easier to ignore. Not so the aura. It continued to glow, the colors constantly shifting and stirring as if this beautiful man had multiple realities within him. Fern sighed. She'd worry about his aura later. Where to start?

"For a third level witch, Verbena isn't very good at conjuring, from what I've learned," she said. "She and Petunia are constantly at odds over who has the better powers. Their assignment was to conjure up a shapeshifter for this semester's lesson, and Verbena rushed the spell, trying to show off to her sister. She got me instead."

Zev frowned. "You'll have to start from the beginning. What's a shapeshifter? What are you, for that matter?" He smiled at her with the confused look of a nymph just emerging from its husk. His aura faded to the light brown of confusion.

Well, of course the boy was confused! Fern reminded herself. After all, he was only human.

"I forget. Humans aren't nearly as familiar with the land of Faerie as we are with your world. I'm a woodsprite, born of the deep forest and the magic of the earth." She spread her hands for emphasis and raised her head, then remembered the naked body parts she meant to hide.

She quickly folded herself back into position.

"I just *am*. I've always been, for all I know. I have no mother, no father, no siblings other than the other sprites and nymphs of the forest. I don't shift, though I do become one with the ancients in the deep woods. I think when Verbena spoke her conjuring spell, she caught me in the midst of my transformation after a long conversation with an ancient oak, and mistakenly took me for a shifter. I awoke, screaming, chained to a bed."

She shuddered, the memory as painful now as it had been those long days ago. "They used iron on me. I couldn't escape."

Fern rubbed her wrists, vividly recalling the burning pain of her restraints. Now, at least, when the witches brought her to the lab, there was soft wool covering the iron. The pain was there, though not so intense.

"For all her faults, Petunia is better at spells and conjuring. She went after a shapeshifter and got you, didn't she?"

Zev shook his head, his frustration obvious. "I'm not a...what do you call them? Shapeshifter? I'm a guy. Period. Specifically a thirty year old computer technician for a life insurance company in Springfield. I grew up in Ohio, for crying out loud! Shapeshifters, whatever they are, do not come from Ohio. They don't work in offices in Springfield."

“No.” Fern studied his eyes and their unusual shade of brown glistening with amber highlights, the shifting colors of his aura, the slant of his high cheekbones and the dark mahogany depths of his hair. “I don’t know this *Ohio*...I’ve never heard of it before. You are from a much older place. I believe your world calls it Romania. I sense it in you. Just as I sense your other self, the shape you are destined to become.”

Zev’s choked gasp was matched by the look of wonder in his eyes. “No one knows I’m Romanian. No one! Even I didn’t know, not until about a year ago. After my father had a heart attack and died...that’s when my mother finally told me I was adopted. She passed away just a few months later.”

He paused a moment, long enough for Fern to see the dark wisp of sadness filtering through his many colored aura. It was obvious he mourned his parents very deeply.

Zev blinked, as if shaking off the pain. “Ya know, if she hadn’t told me when she did, I might never have known. It was a black market agency, totally illegal, but my parents were older and it was the only way they could get a baby. I was in an orphanage, half starved when they found me. I’ve seen pictures of myself when I first came to the US. I was barely two years old.”

He stared deeply into Fern’s eyes, frowning a bit as he studied her. “How can you know this?”

“It’s in you.” Could she possibly explain how much of his life was open to her, written in the flowing shades of the aura surrounding him? “Just as your animal shape is a part of you. I’m surprised it hasn’t manifested itself.” She dipped her head, consciously acknowledging his hidden power. “The call of the wolf is powerful within you.”

His bark of doubtful laughter made her giggle. “Mark my words, Mr. Cable. If Petunia and Verbena are successful, you’ll soon meet your alter ego.”

Zev’s laughter immediately quieted. He stared thoughtfully at Fern, then reached out and touched her hand.

“What do they do to you?”

“They...examine me. I think they are quite curious about me. I’m the first woodsprite they’ve ever seen up close. They’ve not injured me, if that’s what you mean.” She shut her eyes and looked away. No, they hadn’t actually injured her, though they hadn’t been gentle, either. She felt violated, just the same.

“They’re not really mean,” she added, attempting to explain the witches’ behavior without actually defending them “They’re witches. Young witches trying to learn their craft. They can be cruel, but without intent...it’s their nature.”

Zev cleared his throat. “I don’t care who they are. I promise you, I’ll do whatever I can to protect you. In the meantime, shouldn’t we be trying to figure out how to escape?”

“Do you know where you are?”

Zev wanted to reply that he must still be smack dab in the middle of the weirdest hallucination he’d ever experienced, but he was afraid his companion wouldn’t see the humor. Instead he glanced about their small cell and said, “In a dungeon, I assume.”

Fern nodded. “You’re close. It’s not just any dungeon, though. We’re about 100 feet underground, the walls are hewn from solid rock and the only way in or out is by witchcraft.”

“What about the door?” He pointed at the door for emphasis.

“It leads to a corridor that leads to a couple of other cells like this one, empty last time I looked. Go ahead. It’s unlocked.”

Unlocked? Zev jumped off the bed and yanked at the heavy door. It flew open so quickly he almost slammed his hand between the heavy metal handle and the stone wall.

A narrow hallway stretched into the darkness to both his right and left. A door directly across from him led to another stone cell just like the one he and Fern shared.

Zev pushed open the heavy door. Candlelight from the corridor illuminated the room in a soft, golden glow. Four square walls. Dust and what appeared to be broken pottery littered the stone floor. No windows, no furniture.

Nothing but the stale smell he associated with old warehouses or storage rooms.

At least he could be thankful he hadn't awakened in that one, all alone. He glanced back through the open doorway for a reassuring look at Fern, then grabbed a candle from the wall and explored farther along the corridor. There were two more cells. The first was empty.

The next one had a surprisingly modern looking shower set into the stone wall. Zev tried the single fixture. After a bit of sputtering and spitting, a steady stream of lukewarm water sprayed out. An old wooden shelf next to a small porcelain sink held plain white towels, something that might have been soap, and an old-fashioned safety razor.

Zev picked up the razor and shook his head. *Curiouser and curiouser*. He rubbed the stubble on his chin, then carefully set the razor back on the shelf. Two toothbrushes lay side by side. The pink one looked used.

Shrugging, he grabbed the blue toothbrush, ran it under a stream of water, dipped it in a little bowl of what had to be tooth powder, and brushed his teeth.

"The Ritz Carlton it's not," he muttered, shaking the wet toothbrush over the sink and setting it back on the shelf. He had to admit, though, his outlook was much improved with a clean mouth.

He'd worry about a shower and a shave later.

He glanced around, holding the candle over his head. Nothing. The shower, the sink and the shelf...nothing else. The floor, at least, was clean. Sighing, Zev left the cell and continued his exploration of the dungeon.

It didn't take him long. The corridor ended in a solid wall of rough-hewn stone. A few steps in the opposite direction showed him exactly the same type of barrier.

“Do you believe me, now?” Fern stood in the doorway, silhouetted by the flickering light of the candles behind her.

“I don’t want to, but it looks as if I haven’t got much choice.” Zev carefully replaced the candle in the holder outside their cell. He stared at it a minute. Not a bit of wax had dripped during his exploration. The candle hadn’t appeared to burn down at all.

None of this made any sense. No sense at all. Shaking his head, he followed the tiny woodsprite back inside.

“The air’s fresh. I wonder where the source is?” He turned the handle on the porcelain sink, identical to the one he’d seen in the other cell. Water spurted out and gurgled down the drain. “Plumbing looks pretty basic. Has to go somewhere.” He swept the curtain back and discovered an old fashioned toilet, the kind with a water closet overhead and a long chain to pull for flushing. “Very basic. Uhm, excuse me a minute.”

Zev pulled the curtain shut behind himself and made sure the plumbing worked. It was not easy to pee, knowing a strange – make that very strange – woman stood just on the other side of the flimsy cotton drape.

He fought an overwhelming urge to whistle or sing or do anything to drown out the racket as he emptied his bladder...“Come on baby...twist and...” The words died off into a soft whisper. Damn, that’s how he got himself into this mess in the first place. He shut up and decided it was better to just get on with it.

Finishing his business, he carefully put the seat back down in deference to his roommate, pulled the chain to flush, stepped out from behind the curtain and washed his hands.

“No towels.” He shook his hands dry, then rubbed them against his bare flanks. “We need to speak to management about the service here.”

Fern giggled. She’d moved back to her position at the head of the bed, her feet all tucked up and hiding what he’d almost been able to see just a moment ago. Zev usually

hated giggly girls. When she giggled, though, he thought of birdsong and butterflies. It gave him a knot in his gut somewhere just below his navel.

His stomach growled. Maybe the knot was just hunger.

“Do you get fed around here very often?”

“You just have to ask.” Fern glanced around the room, then shouted, “Hey, Verbena. We’re hungry. Send us something to eat.”

“No please or thank you?”

“Uh, you’d better move out of the middle of the room.” Fern patted the bed next to her. Unsure where this was leading, Zev sat down on the bed, a bit closer to Fern than he’d been earlier. She glared at him. “Please or thank you? Are you kidding? I didn’t ask to be conjured and/or kidnapped.”

Before Zev had a chance to answer, a small, food-laden, round wooden table and two chairs popped into the room, right where he’d been standing.

“Thank goodness they passed cooking last semester,” Fern said, matter-of-factly. Obviously, tables appearing out of nowhere meant little to her. “Though Verbena is much better with spices than Petunia. Of course, Petunia’s a real pro when it comes to desserts. C’mon.”

Bemused, Zev followed her lead, pulled out her chair, then sat down in his. A carafe of coffee and a plate piled high with thick strips of bacon, fried potatoes and three perfectly fried eggs had him salivating within seconds.

Fern’s plate was filled with lighter fare – what looked like a bagel, slices of fruit and some kind of cereal in a small bowl.

“Is it real?” Zev didn’t wait for Fern to answer. He gulped a swallow of coffee, burned his tongue and took a huge bite of eggs and potatoes. “Tastes real. Damn. I didn’t realize how hungry I was.”

“I think it’s real. I’ve been here for at least a moon’s pass and I’ve not lost any weight.” Fern sipped neatly at a cup of juice. “I wondered too, at first. I mean, to create

something out of thin air! It takes powerful witchcraft to perform tasks like that and I don't think these two are that good. Then I got to thinking...maybe they just steal it off a table somewhere, you know, sort of the same way they got us?"

Zev laughed. "I find that appealing...you know, the idea of our scarfing a meal conjured away from some stuffed-shirt in a fancy restaurant. Guess it appeals to my convoluted sense of humor."

Fern stared at her bagel a moment before taking a dainty bite. "So long as it wasn't someone really hungry who needed it more than we do."

The thought lingered between them for a moment, reminding Zev of the world beyond these stone walls.

Faerie, the witch had said. He was in the land of Faerie.

It couldn't be. *Impossible*.

How else could he explain all the weird stuff happening to him?

He watched Fern as she ate, enjoying her precise movements, the tilt of her head, the flow of that beautiful ivy cap of hair that drifted about her shoulders and parted to allow her full, olive-green breasts to peek through.

Somehow, over the past hour since he'd awakened, he'd accepted the fact she wasn't human. His cock certainly didn't have a problem. Thank goodness the table hid that part of him from her view. Trying to keep the damned thing under control had been wearing him out.

There really is a land of Faerie?

Conversation. He needed to think of something other than the impossibility of Zevulun Cable in the land of Faerie, and he really needed to get his mind off the exotic beauty of the small woman sitting across from him.

How long did she say she'd been imprisoned here?

“A moon’s pass?” he said, answering himself. “That must be about the same as a month, right?” Zev carefully placed his knife and fork across his empty plate and sighed. Food certainly helped put a new light on things.

Fern did the same, folding her cloth napkin and setting it to one side. In a soft, haunting voice, she began to chant.

Sixty seconds are but a minute, sixty minutes an hour. Twenty four doth make a day where sun and moon share power. Seven days to build a week, four weeks the pass of the moon. Four seasons, twelve passes and a year goes by. It all comes around too soon.

“That’s beautiful.”

Fern tilted her chin close to her chest and blushed. “’Tis but a nursery rhyme. I’ve always known it. Time really isn’t all that important in Faerie, other than the course of the moon.”

Zev let that sink in for a moment. There it was again. *Faerie*. Something else caught his attention. Hadn’t the witches mentioned the moon? Fern said he was a shapeshifter...a wolf? He shook his head. Too much, too soon, and none of it felt real, much less, made any sense. He’d deal with the impossible later.

As if any of this were possible...

“What do you think they have planned for us next?” he asked. He toyed with the scraps of food left on his plate.

“I think they will do their best to force you to change. You may not have much control over it. I doubt they intend to hurt you. Remember, this is just a class project for them. As much as I dislike them, neither Petunia nor Verbena is totally evil, as witches go. They’re very young and insensitive to the rights and needs of others, but that’s their nature.”

“What about you?” Zev reached across the table and took Fern’s hand. He’d known her for such a short time. How could she matter so much to him?

“I don’t know. I’m not sure why they’ve kept me as long as they have. Curiosity, I imagine. They’re very curious about me.” She turned her head, as if in shame.

“So am I,” Zev said, squeezing her fingers. “Curious about you, I mean. You’re not exactly human...are you?” He let go of her hand and touched the soft green leaves flowing over her shoulder, traced them to the point where they parted at the top of her breast. His finger brushed the flesh just below her collarbone and she sighed.

Her skin felt like the finest satin, pulsing with life, silky smooth and warm beneath his touch. His fingertips looked pale against the deep olive shade that reminded him of the color of old moss. Zev’s lips tingled with the need to kiss her, to taste the flavors of the forest, the essence of earth and air, woodland and sky.

It seemed like the most natural thing in the world. He leaned across the table, aware of her subtle shift closer to him.

His eyes closed. He licked his lips and cupped her head beneath his palm. The leaves brushed his hand, warm and so very alive. He felt as much as heard the soft moan from her parted lips, just at the moment his mouth touched hers.

He kissed air.

Eyes flying wide open, Zev jumped back from the table, knocking his chair to the floor. “Fern? Fern! Where the hell are you?”

Frantic, more frightened than he’d been since this whole bizarre episode had begun, Zev backed across the room until his back connected with the cold stone of the dungeon walls. The candles flickered, the currents in the air seemed to mock him.

Suddenly the table and chairs, the plates and the remnants of their meal, all disappeared as well.

Zev’s fingers scraped against the rough stone. His legs shook, his knees buckled and he slid to the cold floor. A scream buried itself deep in his throat.

I am not going insane. I am not crazy. I'm not in a dungeon somewhere in the land of Faerie, trapped below ground with no way out. I'm not. Fern, where are you? Fern? I need you.

Chapter Three

“Oh, I didn’t realize Verbena had already summoned you.” Petunia smiled at Fern, then leaned over and tightened the leather straps holding her hands to the headboard. “You’ll notice I got rid of the iron. I told my sister it was unnecessarily cruel to trap a woodsprite with iron, even with the wool covers.” She checked the leather straps holding Fern’s ankles and stood back to admire her handiwork.

“Verbi? She’s ready. Watch her, will you? I’ll be back in a minute.” Petunia moved beyond Fern’s field of vision, still talking. “What do you have planned for today?”

“I’m going to make her shift. I know she can do it. I used a shapeshifter’s spell to bring her here...she would never have been caught in it if she couldn’t shift.”

Fern glowered at Verbena. She’d tried explaining what had happened, but the damned witchbitches wouldn’t listen. They’d tried numerous spells and herbs. On the last visit, Verbena had resorted to pain, clamping Fern’s nipples in hard, pointy little clamps and stretching and bending her limbs until she thought the bones would break.

She wondered what they’d done to Zev. He obviously hadn’t wanted to discuss the details any more than she had. She hoped they hadn’t hurt him as much as they had her.

Fern’s thoughts were still wandering when Petunia walked back into the room.

She was stark naked.

Even Verbena appeared shocked. “Did you forget something?” she asked.

“No.” Petunia stood close by Fern’s side, wearing only her gemstone necklace and the copper snake bracelet that wrapped from her elbow to her hand. “We’ve tried stress and we’ve tried pain. I thought I’d work on sex and arousal. I get into it better without my clothes. She *will* shift, sister.”

Verbena shook her head and laughed. "I'm not interested. She's all yours."

Fern glanced at Petunia, surprised by the satisfied smile on the witch's face. "Feel free to join us at any time," Petunia whispered.

The lights dimmed. Fern tensed against her restraints, unsure what was coming. Not that she hadn't heard about sex. She wasn't *that* stupid. Unfortunately, the closest she'd ever come to experiencing it in any way was the kiss she'd almost gotten from Zev.

Key word: *almost*.

Petunia set a small glass jar on the bed, dipped her fingers in the stuff inside, and began to rub it on Fern's abdomen.

It felt absolutely wonderful. Fern closed her eyes against the low overhead lights and decided to just go with the sensation. Petunia rubbed the lotion over Fern's stomach, her fingers massaging and kneading with surprising gentleness. Fern moaned with pleasure. She heard Verbena's muffled, "Well, if you insist."

Before long, a second set of hands joined in. Fern moaned again, feasting on the complete sensuality of four knowledgeable sets of fingers massaging her abdomen, the taut flesh along her ribs, the sensitive flesh of her inner thighs.

Occasionally a finger would flick across her nipple, maybe sweep through the soft down at the apex of her thighs. Accidental? It must be. It only happened a couple of times...at first.

Then Verbena held something close to her nose...a vial of some foul smelling liquid. Fern jerked against her bonds, held her breath, then finally took a deep lung full of air.

Whatever she inhaled had an immediate effect. First a buzzing in her skull, a sense that something else had taken control. Then an awareness, a deep knowledge of her own body, of her needs...needs only the witches could fulfill.

When Petunia caressed her inner thighs, Fern arched her back for more. When Verbena's hands' massaged the rounded flesh beneath her breasts, she begged for her to touch the nipples as well.

The witches complied. Gleefully. Fern sensed her reality had been compromised, while at the same time she begged for the sensual touch the two offered.

A tongue brushed her nipple. She cried out. Lips suckled her and she groaned. Another set of hands gently rubbed her thighs, the soft flesh of her buttocks. Soon the hands were joined by the gentle brush of lips, the taut exploration of a searching tongue.

Where she might have fought such a violation at one time, now Fern welcomed the sensual assault.

She arched her hips, offering herself to Verbena's lips and tongue. She sighed at the moist suction over her abdomen. Lush and loving, the constant caress of lips and tongue, fingers and palms brought her closer and closer to *something*.

In the back of her mind, Fern tried to remember what she'd always been told...woodsprites were not sexual beings. Their bodies were part of the earth, the forest, the ancient spirit of the ages.

This was wrong. This growing excitement, this drug-induced sensual response was against her nature, against all she'd ever known.

Wrong? If it was so wrong, why did she want it so much? Why did it feel so good? Why did she reach for the secret hidden in Verbena's lips, in Petunia's fingers and spells? How could this possibly be wrong?

"My goodness, Petunia! Something's horribly wrong!"

Caressing fingers suddenly grasped Fern's thighs and spread them wide. She blinked, and the sexual haze enveloping her flashed out of existence.

"I don't believe it, Verbena! Look at her!"

Fern raised her head just as Petunia flicked her fingers roughly between Fern's legs. "Ouch! What are you doing?"

Both sisters stared accusingly at her. Petunia held one leg, Verbena the other so that Fern felt as if she'd been split in two.

"What are you?" Verbena pointed between Fern's legs. "Where's your cunny hole? You don't have a clit. There's nothing but a peehole there."

Fern frowned. *Cunny hole? Clit?* "I don't know what you're talking about. Let me see?"

Suddenly the wrist restraints disappeared. Fern sat up, bent over and did her best to inspect her crotch. "Looks fine to me," she said, glancing up at the twins. "What's the problem?"

"Look at me." Petunia thrust her hips forward, reached between her legs and spread apart what looked like plump pink lips to Fern. Buried behind the lips was another mouth!

She leaned over and looked closer. No, there weren't any teeth. Just lips, no tongue, unless that funny little protuberance at the top was...Fern reached out and touched the bump.

Petunia gasped and jerked her hips away.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I wanted to see what..." Fern ducked her head in shame. How embarrassing!

"No...no...it's okay." Petunia huffed out a big breath of air. "I had no idea. Verbena, we need to help this girl! Fern, it's okay if you can't shift. We won't worry about that for now. What we do need to worry about is why you haven't got a cunny hole!"

"I'm a woodsprite. We must not have those things." Why then, Fern wondered, did it suddenly seem so important that she should have what the two witches obviously felt so necessary to her well being? "What are they for?"

“Well...” Verbena blushed. Fern had never seen anything quite so colorful before. Deep red, all the way to the roots of her white blonde hair. It blended beautifully with the orange aura glowing about her.

“You have to have a cunny hole to make babies,” Petunia said. “That’s where the man puts the baby seed and the baby comes out when it’s ready.”

Fern suddenly relaxed. “Well, that explains it. Woodsprites don’t have babies. We just exist. We’ve always been, we always will be, so long as the land of Faerie breathes.”

“You have no idea what you’re missing.” Verbena was leafing through a huge, leather-bound volume. Her dry comment caught Fern’s attention. It made her think of the fascinating equipment hanging off the front of Zev. Her gaze had been drawn to that particular body part ever since she’d first seen him. She’d noticed them on other males of other species as well. It must be what they used to plant baby seeds!

Petunia dropped Fern’s thigh and peeked over Verbena’s shoulder. “Whatcha looking for?”

“A spell for Fern. One that will give her all the missing parts.”

Petunia recoiled in absolute horror and slapped her hand to her chest. Fern noticed it made her naked breasts jiggle. “Verbi, we can’t! That part of the book isn’t covered until next semester! We haven’t studied that chapter yet. If Mother finds out, she’ll kill us!”

“Mother’s supposed to be away for six weeks. She won’t be home for at least another two weeks, which gives us plenty of time. Here it is!” Verbena jabbed her finger at a page midway through the book. “It’s a stage spell.”

“Oh...Verbi! A *stage* spell?”

There was a hint of awe in her voice. Fern wasn’t so sure she liked the sound. “Uh, what’s a *stage spell*?”

“It means we have to do it in stages, over a period of seven days culminating with the full moon.” Petunia paused, stared blankly at the wall as if working out mental calculations, then smiled.

Fern wasn’t sure she liked the look of the smile any more than she had the sound of the spell.

“We’ve got just enough time, if we begin tonight.”

Fern swallowed. “Tonight?”

Neither twin paid her any attention.

Verbena grinned at her sister. “I thought you were the one who said we weren’t ready to attempt it. Are you sure you want to try?”

“Just think how far it would put us ahead of the rest of the class.” Petunia rolled her eyes. “So long as Mother doesn’t find out!”

“What if something goes wrong?” Fern asked.

Both witches turned to look at her as if this was the first time she’d spoken. “Your point is?” Petunia asked, a puzzled look flickering across her beautiful face.

Verbena dismissed the subject with a wave of her hand. “If it goes wrong, we’ll just do it over.” She handed the huge book to Petunia. “Read it, Pet, and let me know what you think.”

Petunia’s lips moved as she read through the pages. “Uh oh. The subject must want the transformation for the spell to be a success.” She stared at Fern. “You do want this, don’t you?”

“You mean I have a choice?” Fern pursed her lips and thought seriously about allowing two witches in training to rearrange her body parts. “I don’t think so. I’m happy with what I’ve got.”

Verbena grabbed Petunia’s arm and dragged her out of hearing. Fern concentrated on the movement of their lips, but could only be sure of two words – *desire* and *spell*.

The next thing she knew, Petunia was sprinkling something shiny and glittery over her head and Verbena was chanting madly, waving her hands and staring at the sparkles floating around Fern.

There was an audible pop, both witches blinked and Verbena smiled. "Ah...that should work perfectly." She leaned over and unfastened Fern's ankles. "You'll definitely want us to start the stage spell tonight. We'll see you in a couple of hours. Just holler when you want us." With a wave of her fingers, a now familiar incantation and a cheery smile, Verbena sent Fern back to her cell.

* * * * *

Zev awoke to the changing air currents in the room and the distinct knowledge Fern was back. The fact she reappeared right next to him on the bed, under the covers and pressed against his back, made her difficult to ignore, especially since he'd just been dreaming about her.

He was so glad to see her, he flipped around and dragged her into his arms for a hug.

"You're shaking! What did those two bitches do to you? Are you okay? Fern?" He hugged her tighter then backed away to get a better look at her face. She stared beyond him, as if seeing something for the first time.

"Do I look different?" she asked.

Zev sat up in the bed and pulled her out from under the covers to get a better look. He noticed she kept her legs together just as tightly as she had this morning. "No," he said, studying her closely. "Why? Should you?"

"They put some kind of spell on me."

"What kind of spell?" He checked her over again. She looked just as exotic and gorgeous as she had the first time he saw her.

“I dunno. I think they called it a *desire spell*. Do you have any idea what that means?” Fern’s brilliant green eyes sparkled with unshed tears. Whatever the two witches had done to her had definitely been frightening.

“As in sexual desire?”

She shook her head. “I’m not sure. I feel...weird. Different. Sort of...” Her voice dropped off and she took a deep breath. “May I touch you?”

Talk about your non sequiturs! “Excuse me?” Zev grabbed Fern’s shoulders and turned her to face him. She was suddenly focused on his cock. That obliging organ, never shy under the worst of circumstances, chose that moment to stand up and say hello.

Without waiting for permission, Fern slowly reached out and touched the tip. It jerked. She yanked her hand back, but Zev noticed she was smiling.

She touched him again, this time with a bit more confidence. He wondered if he should question where this was leading, but since he’d spent the past hour or so fantasizing about hot and heavy sex with the woodsprite, he hated to interrupt.

Of course, if she was only interested because of some stupid spell...

Fern giggled, stroking his cock and helping it grow to much better proportions than Zev was used to seeing. Her small hands grasped him with just the right amount of pressure, slipping up and down the smooth shaft as if she’d done this more than once...or twice.

He decided the spell couldn’t be a bad thing.

A tiny drop of pearly liquid appeared at the top of his penis. Without hesitation, Fern lifted it off with her finger and popped it in her mouth.

She grinned around the tip of her finger, which stayed there, pressed against her lower lip. Her teeth were white and perfectly straight, her lips full and inviting. Zev did what came naturally – he leaned over and kissed her.

She obviously didn't have a clue what to do, though she didn't back away. The innocence of her response sent his libido into overdrive. He had a brief and unfavorable impression of Tami and her worldly confidence, but that was buried in the slight parting of Fern's lips beneath his own, the tiny thrust of her tongue against his.

Her hands fluttered across his chest, then one slipped along his arm to grasp his shoulder. The other held on to his ever-growing cock as if it were a lifeline.

He groaned and sprawled back against the pillows, dragging Fern with him. Her lips never left his, her hand continued its steady slow but sure massage of his cock, her tiny fingers pumping him with growing skill. He suckled her small, darting tongue, then slipped his own between her lips. Her eyes flashed wide and green, then drifted shut on a sigh.

He fucked her with his tongue, slipping in and out of her mouth, matching the strokes she gave his penis. She drew him deeper into her mouth and her tongue tangled with his, her fingers tightened on his shaft and he knew if he didn't pull away immediately, it would be too late.

Panting, breaking the contact, he ended the kiss, gently lifting her fingers away from his hungry cock and resting his forehead against hers.

She was breathing just as hard as he was, so that they sounded like twin bellows. "I've only known you for a few hours," Zev whispered. "It's too soon. Too much, too fast. It's gotta be the spell those bitches put on you."

"It's not just the spell," Fern said, huffing the words between breaths. "I've been fascinated by you, wanting to touch you, since you first appeared. I've wanted to taste you."

Sliding along his torso, she slipped down to lie on the rumpled blankets between his spread legs. Her hair, that glimmering cascade of green leaves, rustled against his thighs and Zev shuddered with renewed desire. His cock danced once more at full attention.

Her touch was just as tentative, just as fresh as her kiss had been. She ran her tongue along the full length of him, dipped into the tiny opening at the tip, then licked him like a popsicle from bottom to top. She discovered his balls, first with her fingers, then with her lips, suckling with great care after he told her just how sensitive they could be.

She was especially careful where the snake had left its mark, but when she popped first one testicle and then the other into her mouth, he practically whimpered.

After what seemed like a lifetime of exploration, Zev grabbed up fistfuls of blanket in a vain effort to control his hands as Fern sucked his cock into her mouth.

If I die right now, I will still have known heaven. Zev's body went limp. All his blood rushed directly into his penis. Even his brain quit functioning.

Petunia had done an amazing job of giving him head the night before, but there was no comparison to what Fern was doing.

The witch might have managed more suction, but she certainly hadn't put as much heart into it. Fern smiled around his erection as she drew him deeper and deeper into her mouth.

After a moment, she scooted up on her knees for a better angle. Zev watched with growing amazement as the tiny woodsprite swallowed and sucked and eventually managed to take all of him down her throat.

He was afraid to move, afraid he'd hurt her if he thrust in the manner he was dying to do. Even Petunia, with all her skills, hadn't swallowed all of him with such skill.

Fern gathered up his balls in her hands and gently squeezed as she slipped up and down his cock. She appeared to finally get the rhythm figured out, enough so that Zev realized he'd found true bliss.

She moved faster, her cheeks compressing his sensitive cock, her tiny fingers stroking his balls and tickling the sensitive flesh between his cock and his ass. Those busy fingers were everywhere, scurrying from his sac to his thighs, to the taut, muscular ring around his anus.

For all her innocence, she certainly seemed to know what buttons to push. Zev groaned when one finger almost breached his ass, then retreated to rub rings around him, literally.

She seemed fascinated by the length of his cock, slipping it almost completely out of her mouth before diving down on him again. Occasionally she raked him with her teeth, then soothed him with her tongue.

Zev moaned and wondered if the multiplication tables would have any effect on him right now.

He was coming. There was no stopping what the sexy little woodsprite had put in motion. She sucked even harder, her fingers tickled his ass, they raked over his balls.

Groaning, clutching the sheets and thrusting against her unbelievable mouth, Zev lost all control.

He cried out, the sound vaguely reminiscent of a wolf's howl.

Fern grabbed the base of his penis and squeezed, as if milking even more from his pumping gonads.

Zev complied for all he was worth.

It felt so good he wanted to cry. First he had to remember how to breathe. Fern continued to lick his cock, bringing him gently back to earth. He cracked open one eyelid and winked at her. She might not have even noticed, so intent was she on the job she was doing.

Zev owed her. Big time. No woman had ever given so unselfishly, had ever made him feel so cherished. Obviously there was no way he could have sex with her now, at least not until his batteries recharged, but there were other ways to make love, to give back some of what she'd shared with him.

His body felt like warm Jell-o on a hot afternoon. Fern still sparkled with uncharged energy. He slowly dragged himself to a sitting position and pulled the gorgeous woodsprite into his arms. She came willingly, her lips parted.

When he kissed her, he tasted himself on her lips. "That's a first," he whispered, stroking the edges of her lips, then dipping between them to taste her tongue.

The thought that, just moments ago, his cock had filled this same hot, wet cavern, brought an amazing and unexpected stir to his groin. Zev slowly rolled over. He slid Fern's willing body beneath his and settled his hips into the hot V between her legs.

She had a glazed look in her eyes. He hoped like hell it was lust and not the effects of some damned spell. What if this magic between them was nothing more than hocus-pocus?

Fern wiggled her hips, better to position the two of them closer. Zev concentrated on her lips a moment longer, then slipped down to suckle her breasts. For all the fact she had leaves instead of hair and skin the shade of forest moss, her breasts were amazingly normal...if perfect could ever be called normal.

He licked and sucked at the round globes, working his way slowly around each breast before dragging one nipple, then the other, into his mouth. Fern arched her back and air hissed out between her teeth. Inspired, Zev tongued the pebbly surface of the nipple he'd chosen to concentrate on with his mouth, and carefully rolled the other between his fingers.

He could have played with her breasts all day, but the heat between her legs was drawing him. So far, she'd been everything a man could want in a lover—responsive, creative, willing—though he was convinced she was as innocent as they came.

The thought made him pause. "Fern?" He raised his head from her warm breast and gazed into her grass green eyes. "I don't want to do anything you don't feel comfortable with. Promise to tell me if you want me to stop, okay?"

He was certain a shadow passed over her eyes. The sparkle dimmed a moment, then she smiled at him. "Zev, do whatever you can. Please? Whatever you can."

Odd way to put it, he thought. *I can do one hell of a lot, sweetheart.* Grinning, he slowly worked his way along her flat stomach, kissing and nipping until she squirmed and giggled beneath him.

He blew a puff of air into the frothy curls at the juncture of her thighs, secretly relieved when they didn't just blow away like dandelion fluff. Her scent filled his nostrils. He inhaled woodland flowers and the earthy musk of the deep woods.

She arched her back in blatant invitation and Zev knew he'd teased her long enough.

He loved the taste of a woman. The textures and flavors from musky to sweet, the quick or slow response, the way every woman's shape was unique and hers alone. It was always a surprise, that first moment when his tongue made contact with the soft lips, the hard little nub, the hot center.

Zev allowed his own anticipation to build, felt his once flaccid cock grow in response, then he dipped between Fern's legs for the first taste.

"Holy shit."

He'd never taken a virgin in his life. This lady took virginity to a whole new level.

"Fern?" Zev raised up on his knees, his breath coming in quick gasps, his cock back in hiding like the coward it was. "Uhm...sweetheart? There's something missing here."

Chapter Four

Fern huddled at the far end of the bed, obviously distraught. Zev leaned against the headboard, his knees upraised to give Fern more space.

If anyone needed their space right now, Zev figured it was the little woodsprite. He couldn't imagine the feelings she was dealing with, especially after the effects of the witches' desire spell had begun to wear off.

Personally, Zev felt like shit. He wanted to take her in his arms and offer some sort of comfort, but she'd shoved him away and scrambled to the far corner of the room after their aborted attempt at making love.

Sex. He had to keep reminding himself it was just sex. A man did not make love to a woman he'd only known for a couple of hours...make that a woodsprite he'd only...hell, who was he kidding?

"Fern? Sweetheart...I am so sorry. I had no idea."

This time she raised her head and glanced in his direction, if only for a moment. Her eyes were red-rimmed and filled with tears. Zev couldn't stand it.

He scooted close to her and dragged her into his lap. She offered only a token resistance, then sighed and snuggled against him. "Oh Zev..." She hiccupped.

"S'okay."

"No, it's not. There's more..." She ducked her head against his chest and shuddered against him.

More? What more could happen than falling for a woman lacking, what he considered, anyway, to be some very essential equipment? Zev stroked the shiny green leaves cascading over her shoulders.

Fern sighed. Her voice was barely more than a whisper. “The twins said they could fix me.”

Zev’s hand stilled in mid-stroke. He thought about that a moment, about witchcraft and woodsprites and all those convoluted things suddenly filling his brain...a brain used to dealing with the pure logic of computer code.

Was this any more fantastic?

“You’re not broken, Fern. You told me yourself...you’re a woodsprite. Your body isn’t designed like a human’s. It’s designed to do exactly what yours does—be a woodsprite. If sexuality isn’t part of your natural make up, it would be wrong to change anything about you.”

Fern sniffed. One tiny hand crept along his chest to rest next to her cheek. “Why do I have breasts, then? Woodsprites don’t have babies...but I’ve got breasts and nipples to feed a babe. Breasts that ache to have you touch them. Don’t you understand? Even though the desire spell wore off hours ago, I still want to do all those things with you. I have a need...” She paused and Zev heard her swallow and sigh. “...a need here...” She touched her lower abdomen, then slowly ran her fingers through the downy curls to stroke briefly between her legs. “...an emptiness that wants to be filled. I felt it before, when you first appeared in the cell. I feel it now. I don’t understand it. I want to.”

“Oh shit.” What else could he say? Zev hugged her tightly. Her innocent longing swept over him with a yearning so lush and hot, it left him gasping. His cock suddenly reached gargantuan proportions, leaving no doubt in his mind that life with a woodsprite could become terribly complicated.

Fern lifted her chin to gaze at him. Her lips were slightly parted, a look of abject misery suffusing her lovely face. Zev leaned close to taste her sweet mouth.

A shaft of light suddenly blinded him. There was a subtle shift to his reality, a quiet little *pop*, and once more Zev found himself shackled to the narrow bed with the witches staring down at him. Fern’s woodsy scent lingered in his nostrils and his erect cock waived gaily at his captors.

“Goodness.” Verbena batted at his erection with the tips of her fingers. “Is this for us?”

Petunia snorted. “I imagine he’s been taking advantage of our little woodsprite.”

“That’s got to be frustrating,” Verbena said. She leaned over and stared closely at Zev. Her glassy white left eye seemed to peer right through him. “Did she tell you we can fix that little, um, problem of hers?”

“She’s fine just the way she is.” Zev tugged at the restraints to emphasize his point. Verbena backed away, laughing.

“Noble, aren’t we?” She flicked his swollen cock. “But without any place to put our little friend, I imagine captivity will grow very uncomfortable.” She glanced at her sister.

Petunia frowned. “She’s got a mouth, hasn’t she? I imagine she’s already given him some relief. He doesn’t appear to be suffering. However...” She encircled his erection with her fingers, frowned even deeper, then used both hands to hold him within her tented fingers.

Verbena glanced at Zev, looked at her sister’s hands entrapping his cock, and grinned. “Pet...are you thinking what I’m thinking? Frustration might accomplish what pain, sex and stress haven’t.”

Petunia moved her hands away. Verbena gently stroked Zev’s cock. The thoughtful look on her face made him very nervous. Suddenly she laughed.

“We’ll muzzle the beast. It seems apropos, doesn’t it? Considering our assignment and all.”

“Perfect, Verbi. Here, let me.” Petunia grabbed the book of spells and flipped through the pages. “Here’s one.” Holding the book in her left hand, Petunia made an odd series of motions over Zev’s rapidly shrinking cock, all the while muttering a string of incantations. “I’ll need your help, sister.”

Verbena stepped closer and looked over Petunia's shoulder at the open pages, then moved to the head of the bed. She stood just out of Zev's line of vision and hummed.

Zev pressed his hips as close to the mattress as he could. Whatever the hell the damned bitches had in mind didn't sound like something healthy for his privates.

Suddenly, Petunia let out a shriek and pointed right at Zev's balls. Blue smoke puffed out, hiding his parts from view, sparks flew and Verbena clapped her hands loudly.

When the smoke finally cleared and Zev stopped coughing, he focused his eyes on his crotch and forgot to breathe.

His cock and balls were completely enclosed in some sort of iron mesh contraption shaped suspiciously, over his cock at least, like a dog's muzzle. He couldn't tell what held the cage to his body, but just from looking at it, he figured it wasn't going anywhere.

Verbena stepped around the side of the bed to view their handiwork. "Just lovely, Pet, but what's the purpose?"

Petunia stoked the mesh covering. "He can't touch himself, nor can our little Fern help him ease the pressure."

Verbena tapped one long fingernail against her perfectly straight, white teeth. The *click, click, click* seemed to get louder with each tap. "True, Pet, but he has no incentive to touch anything. His cock has practically disappeared."

She flicked the metallic frame. "Of course, if there was something stimulating him just to the point of...hmm. Hand me the book."

Mumbling, Verbena flopped the heavy book on to Zev's belly and began flipping through the pages. Zev growled. He felt the tension building, the anger at their blatant disregard of his humanity, of his freedom...of him, Zevulun Cable.

He tugged at the restraints and bucked his hips, throwing the book to one side.

“Tsk, tsk. Bad boy.” Verbena glanced at him through narrowed eyes, grabbed the book and righted it, then returned to her search.

“Hurry,” Pet said. “It’s almost time to start Fern’s spell.”

Verbena smiled. “I’ve got it. This should take care of things.” She tapped the entry in the book, reread the lines a couple of times then tapped the mesh surrounding Zev’s wilted cock.

He tried to make out her words, but she mumbled them too quickly and they all ran together. Zev stared at his crotch, aware of a faint, bluish glow surrounding the mesh. Within minutes, the glow began to produce heat, a pulsing warmth that felt like tiny fingers encasing his genitals.

The sensation was subtle, barely registering at first. Zev stared at himself a bit longer, decided nothing important was going to fall off or disappear, and relaxed back against the mattress.

The witches ignored him, busying themselves preparing their potions and checking through the large book. Finally Verbena barked out a series of words and Zev found himself suspended from the wall on the far side of the room.

He might have been made of Velcro. There were no visible restraints, but something held him against the cold stones as if he’d been permanently fastened to the rock, his feet dangling about six inches off the ground.

Cold permeated his buttocks and shoulders, the two places where contact was the strongest. It made him even more aware of the tantalizing heat surrounding his genitals.

His cock began to swell, filling the wire mesh without ever actually touching the glowing strands. The cage enlarged as he did, floating just a fraction of an inch beyond his turgid flesh. He was aware of an increase in sensation, though it was obviously too subtle to do any more than keep him hard.

Suddenly Fern appeared on the table, bound much as he had been, though the restraints that held her appeared to be made of soft leather. She glanced toward Zev and gasped, then jerked her head back in the direction of the witches.

Verbena smiled at the little woodsprite from one side of the bed, Petunia from the other.

“Don’t you have better things to do than harass me?” Fern’s voice was filled with bravado. Zev felt quite proud of her.

“We’ve told you, dear. We only want to help you.” Petunia leaned over, her face a mask of caring and commiseration. She ran one long finger from Fern’s navel to the tuft of down at the apex of her thighs, then tapped lightly where a clitoris should be.

“We can start here, with the little pleasure button. You only need to ask.” Petunia smiled. Fern jerked her head around and stared at Zev.

Good lord but she was gorgeous. Her skin had gone a bit pale but the ivy green leaves fluttered about her face, her lower lip trembled with apprehension and desire. His cock swelled and throbbed, stretching out but never quite reaching the limits of the iron cage. He couldn’t help but imagine actually making love to her, burying himself deep within her...what?

“Not for me, Fern.” He shook his head. “You’re perfect just the way you are.”

He barely noticed the flip of Verbena’s fingers, but suddenly the heat and sensation surrounding his cock multiplied. Zev hardly recognized the low growl emanating from his throat, the sudden increase in awareness.

Suddenly his nostrils, his ears, his eyes, his entire body attuned to the room and the people within. As the sensations in his groin increased, so did his preternatural abilities. He heard the nervous patter of Fern’s heart. He smelled her, the woody scent of deep forest and damp earth, the sweet flowery essence he’d begun to associate with his little woodsprite.

She filled his vision, filled his very being with need. As if he were shutting down the rest of the world, awareness narrowed to Fern, then back to the powerful ache

growing between his legs, returning to the glistening trail along her bottom lip where her tongue brushed the soft flesh.

Snarling with frustration, Zev dragged his concentration away from the woodsprite and narrowed his gaze on the witch closest to Fern. As if the sprite spoke in slow motion, Zev heard her agree to Petunia's offer, saw the devilish glee spread from Petunia to her sister, sensed the gathering power as the witches offered the first step of the spell that would forever alter the woodsprite.

"No!" he shouted, struggling fruitlessly against his bonds. "No, Fern! Don't let them change you, don't..." His voice broke, the words choked off in a long, mournful howl.

"I have to, Zev." Fern gazed at him with tear-filled eyes. Her leafy hair was dull and lifeless, the tendrils limp and wilted. "I have to."

He slumped against his unseen restraints, ignoring his swollen cock. "It's my fault, isn't it?"

"Don't blame yourself. I've known for years there was something missing in my life. I just didn't know what it was. All you've done is show me. Now that I know what might be, I don't want to live without it." Fern glanced at the two witches, hovering expectantly at one side of the bed where she'd left them, halted in mid-spell. "Go ahead," she whispered. "I'm ready."

Zev wasn't going to watch. He really didn't want to, but his gaze was drawn to the flying hands of the two witches as they danced above Fern in cadence with their whispered spell. First Petunia, then Verbena hissed a string of gibberish, each sound punctuated by slashing fingers and loud claps.

A puff of smoke surrounded Fern and she cried out. Zev jerked at his unseen bonds and fell flat on his face when the wall suddenly turned him loose.

He scrambled to his feet and rushed to Fern, vaguely aware the cage encircling his cock was no longer attached.

Fern lay on the bed, limp and barely conscious.

“What have you done?” Zev glared at the witches as he quickly released the restraints holding Fern’s hands and feet. He gathered the limp woodsprite into his arms. The witches slumped against the counter next to the bed, obviously spent.

“Fern? Fern...are you...?”

“Am I different?” She struggled in Zev’s embrace and bent forward, spreading her legs apart. Her shoulders bowed in defeat. “Nothing. I look just the same.”

Zev turned to the witches and snarled.

Verbena flicked her wrist, Petunia muttered a curse, and Zev found himself back in their underground cell, Fern still cradled in his arms.

* * * * *

“Zev! Zev, wake up! Something’s happening...look!”

Zev blinked awake, groggy and disoriented. Something was pressing down on his chest, making it very difficult to breathe.

Fern shook him by the shoulder. “Ze-ev,” she wailed. “What’s happening? Look.”

He lifted his head and realized he was looking directly at Fern’s crotch. She straddled his chest, legs spread wide, her little tuft of pubic down about six inches from his face.

She was pointing at something between her legs. Zev blinked, adjusted his focus, and stared.

Protruding from a point where her clitoris should be was a perfectly formed little penis. About four inches long and fully erect, it stuck straight up.

“What do you think?”

Zev jerked his head back so he could look at Fern’s face. “Uhhhhhhh...”

“It feels oh, so good when I play with it.” She sighed. “I had no idea a pleasure button could be so much fun.”

“Uh, Fern, honey...it’s not really a pleasure button. The witches made a mistake.”

“A mistake? How could they?” She stroked the little cock lovingly. “I think it’s wonderful.”

Zev scooted upright. Fern slipped down his midsection until she came to a stop, her crotch pressed to his.

Her little pale green penis bumped his much larger one. Zev couldn’t repress a shudder. The image of two cocks, his and *hers*, was not one he was comfortable with, no matter how open-minded he considered himself.

“Oh...mine looks just like yours.” Fern grabbed his wilted cock and held it up next to her smaller one, studied the two for a moment, then sighed. “Well, sort of.” Her shoulders slumped. “I see the problem now. Wrong sex, ‘eh?” She took a deep breath, straightened her shoulders and hollered, “Verbena! Petunia! I need to talk to you. Now!”

“Well, at least you don’t have balls,” Zev muttered, but he figured Fern didn’t hear him. She disappeared with a quiet little pop, leaving Zev’s cock hanging at parade rest.

* * * * *

“You weren’t gone for long,” Zev said. Fern had reappeared within minutes. Unfortunately, so had his personal muzzle. The mesh cage surrounded just his penis this time, but the eerie sensation of heat and touch was even more pronounced.

His balls contracted. He wasn’t sure if they were trying to hide or just wanted to crawl back inside his body.

“Would have been even sooner if Petunia and Verbena hadn’t gotten into a blaming match. They are such idiots! Neither one of them is willing to admit they blew it.” Fern spread her legs apart and bent at the waist to inspect herself. “I sure hope they got it right this time. What do you think?”

Zev tried to ignore the increasing heat between his legs. He leaned over to take a look at Fern’s re-formatted body parts. The little penis was gone, replaced by a rounded

bump. As she gently rubbed it with the tip of her index finger, the flesh around the protrusion parted and out popped a perfectly serviceable looking clitoris.

Of course, the area behind it remained un-serviceably closed. Zev groaned. "Looks good to me, what there is of it. How's it feel?"

"Mmmmmmmmmmm." Fern continued rubbing at the tiny little nub, the look on her face one of unabashed pleasure.

Zev worried his eyes might pop out of his face. He licked his lips, following the lift and stroke of Fern's fingertip. The mesh around his swollen cock throbbed and pulsed with heat and sensation. He reached down to touch himself, to ease the torment.

A painful shock zapped his hand.

"Shit! What the hell was that?"

Fern blinked and stared at him. "What was what?"

"I touched the damned thing the witch bitches put on my cock and it shocked me."

Fern looked apologetic. "Oh. I forgot to tell you. They wanted me to warn you not to touch the mesh. It'll give you a shock."

"Thanks," Zev muttered. "I appreciate the warning." He spread his hands wide to either side of his trapped cock and glared at Fern. "What's the whole point of this thing, then? What's it supposed to do, other than give me a hard on?"

"That's what it's supposed to do. Keep you in a state of extended sexual excitement without possibility of release. They're working on the frustration angle. I think they figure if you get frustrated enough, you'll change shape." Fern giggled.

Zev glared at her. "What are you laughing about?"

"Something Petunia said...about wanting to find your 'inner beast'. They don't have a clue what shape you're going to change into."

"Neither do I. Personally, I don't see the humor in it."

"You will when you shift." Fern returned to stroking her new clitoris.

Zev figured she was making up for a very long lifetime of abstinence. It still didn't help his frustration levels any, watching that smooth little olive green finger bringing life to the most perfect clit he'd ever seen stroked. Zev took a deep, painful breath, aware of a shuddering sound as he exhaled.

"I still don't understand," he said, staring mournfully at her incomplete crotch.

Fern leaned back against the wall, spread her legs wider to stroke her new clitoris with her right hand while twisting the nipple on her breast with her left hand.

She closed her eyes, sighed, then opened them and smiled at Zev. Her fingers kept up their slow rhythm. "You will shift, Zev. I see it in your aura, in the ebb and flow of color around you each time you become frustrated or angry. You grow closer to the wolf with every episode. You, as the wolf, are much more powerful than even the combination of two witches. Once you shift, they'll have no control over you."

Zev let out a strangled croak. *Control*. What the hell was control? Fern's breasts drew him like a magnet. He leaned over her, careful to keep his aching cock away from any contact with the tiny sprite. For all he knew, the powerful shock could harm her.

Zev drew Fern's untouched nipple into his mouth. Her sigh vibrated against his lips as he suckled the turgid bit of flesh. He nipped at the tip with his teeth, then trailed his fingertips along her torso, working ever closer to her brand new clit.

He found the little protrusion of flesh and gently nudged her fingers aside. She spread her legs even wider. Zev stroked the smooth flesh, automatically sliding his fingertip beyond, searching for the hot opening his conscious mind reminded him he wouldn't find.

There was a tiny cleft, obviously there for more mundane needs, and beyond that, the perfectly puckered little ring of flesh that told him she at least had an anus like other women.

He suckled harder at her breasts, his mind feverishly entering new areas of pleasure. Not that he'd ever tried sex through the back door, but he knew it was possible.

He circled the taut ring with his fingertip, applying just a bit more pressure. Fern groaned and arched her back. No, she definitely was not trying to get away from his probing touch.

Zev released her nipple with a wet pop and scooted lower on the bed. His cock ached within its mesh enclosure, but he ignored it as best he could. He owed this to Fern. Hell, he owed it to himself to see if this new button the witches had blessed her with actually worked!

He found the stiff little nubbin with his lips, licked at it with the tip of his tongue, finally settling his mouth around it and nursing slowly, softly, humming his own pleasure to gently vibrate the sensitive flesh.

Fern's thighs clamped against his head, holding him a willing prisoner between her legs. Zev continued to torment her, working on the only erogenous zones he could find. He palmed her breast with his free hand, suckled at her clit and continued his slow but steady invasion of her only accessible passage.

The heat between his legs grew, the frustrated need to touch himself for relief driving his loving assault on the woodsprite.

He looked up and saw that Fern's head was thrown back, her mouth open, eyes shut tight.

So close! He held her on the edge of orgasm, wondering if she, like he, was trapped in a body without possibility for release.

Suddenly his finger breached the tight muscles surrounding her anus and slipped into the hot passage. He suckled hard on her clit, worked his finger deeper inside and pinched her nipple between his other thumb and index finger.

Fern screamed. Her body stiffened, her tiny clit throbbed between Zev's lips and the muscles surrounding his finger clenched and held him tight.

Obviously, the woodsprite had working parts.

She screamed again, a loud wail that ended on a sob...followed by a giggle. Zev licked the tiny nubbin between her legs and she jumped and giggled again. He slowly withdrew his finger and stroked the softened ring around her anus.

Fern laughed out loud.

Zev playfully flicked her nipple with his fingers and she weakly batted his hand away. He looked up at her once again, peering through the downy fluff between her legs. Fern stared back at him, a look of blissful fulfillment on her face.

"I take it that was your first?" he asked, grinning broadly.

"Oh shit yes." Fern flopped back against the bed. "I never knew what I was missing. Didn't have a clue." Her breath shuddered in her chest. Zev felt it beneath the palm of his hand still encircling her breast. "Guess the witches aren't so bad after all."

"I beg to disagree." Zev shoved himself up on the bed to sit next to Fern's prostrate form. He gestured at his painfully engorged cock, bobbing in mute frustration behind its ensorcelled mesh cage. "I could cheerfully kill either one of them."

"Have you thought of taking their theory one step further?" Fern scooted up and sat next to Zev, so close their bodies touched from elbow to thigh. "What if we controlled the shift? I've noticed your aura shifting as you touched me. Before you started really concentrating on making me come..." She blushed and looked away. "Thank you, by the way. I really, *really* had no idea..."

"S'okay." Zev wrapped his arm around her shoulders and pulled her closer. Both of them were careful to keep her from touching the glowing mesh muzzling his straining cock.

"Anyway, as I as saying..." Fern snuggled even closer to Zev. "If we controlled your frustration levels and you shifted here, you'd learn how to work it. I've heard it said knowledge is power."

Zev stared at his little woodsprite. Why hadn't he thought of that? If he could, unbelievably, shift into another form, it made sense to learn as much about it as they

could without the witches' knowledge. "You keep talking about auras. What do you mean?"

"Many woodsprites have the ability to read auras, the colorful energy that emanates from all living things. When I see you, I see the man surrounded by an ever-changing kaleidoscope of colors. The colors have meaning. The intensity of the shades tell us much of what people are thinking."

Zev had heard of auras. He'd never believed any of that garbage, of course, but then, he'd never believed in leprechauns or woodsprites and witches in the land of Faerie, either.

"So what's my aura like?"

Fern giggled. "Which one? You change constantly!" She stared at him a moment, pulling away from his gentle embrace. Zev held very still.

"Right now you're mostly blue and white and pink. The colors tell me you're searching spiritually for something more—that's the blue. I think the searching has to do with your search for your other self, your animal shape. The white means you're feeling protective and the pink means affection." She smiled. "I hope that's for me."

"No one else. No one at all." He leaned over and kissed the top of her leafy head. "Is there anything else, any other colors?"

Fern leaned back against him, her hair of leaves rustling provocatively against his shoulder. Hell, as horny as he felt right now, she could twiddle her thumbs and it would be provocative!

"There's a red spike. Very vibrant, very intense. I'm not certain if that's anger over your situation, sexual frustration or what. It's been growing ever since I returned from my most recent visit with the twins."

She turned her head so that Zev looked directly into her grass green eyes. "That's the color we watch," she said. "That red spike of emotion. If it begins to grow and overwhelm almost all the others, we'll know we're on the right track. We need to control it as well. Ideally, if we can bring up the vibrant red and a deep, deep blue,

which means you're on a spiritual quest, or, in this case, searching for your counter spirit, I think you'll shift. Once you take on your wolf form, you should be able to overpower the witches."

"Okay." Zev brushed the silky leaves back from her face. "Your idea has merit, but we need to wait."

Fern frowned at him. "Wait? Why?"

"We wait for the witches to complete *your* transformation. If we stop them now, you're only half woman, half woodsprite. We have to make it for six more days, until your stage spell is complete."

"Oh, Zev. I don't think you can last that long." Fern glanced down at the glowing mesh between his legs.

Zev gulped. As the two of them watched, his erection increased in length and girth. His muzzle-encased cock pointed straight up toward his belly, pulsing with energy.

Groaning, Zev slammed his head back against the stone wall. *Six more days. Six more days. Gotta make it six more days...*

Chapter Five

"It's decidedly unmanly to take a pee sitting on the pot." Zev washed his hands at the sink, grumbling under his breath. The mesh glowed about his painful erection. Fern grunted sympathetically – he thought – from her spot on the bed.

"I do it all the time," she said.

"Point made." Zev glared at the damned cage encircling his cock. He'd had just about enough of this. Their meals came and went. His balls ached, his cock ached, his muscles screamed from prolonged tension.

He'd definitely had enough.

The witches repeatedly called Fern, cast another spell on her, and sent the woodsprite back to their cell. Neither Fern nor Zev could see anything different looking between her legs, though she said *something* felt different.

Inside.

Zev had paced. He'd tried sit ups, push ups, walking up and down the short hallway outside their cell. He knew Fern used the time he was away to stroke her new clitoris, to experiment with the sexual sensations so new to her.

His hands quivered with the need to stroke his cock, to do something to relieve the tension that had been building over the past few days. He wanted to pace, to scream, to...hell, he wanted to FUCK something. Anything.

Fern. He really, *really* wanted to make long, slow, passionate love to Fern.

Unfortunately, though Fern had a beautiful, functional clitoris, she still lacked the necessary equipment to take his rampaging cock...even if he could release it from the damned magical muzzle.

"Zev?"

“Huh?” He spun around at Fern’s soft question. She’d been so quiet the past few days. He figured he’d probably scared her half to death with his moods and pacing.

“Zev, I think it’s time. We really need to see if you can shift now. Before the witches are through with me. They don’t watch us. I asked. Spying for some reason, goes against their code of honor.”

“You’re telling me they’ve got a fucking code of honor?” Zev waved a hand across his crotch. “This, my dear, is not honorable. This is torture. This is something the Geneva Accord does not allow.”

“I don’t think the denizens of Faerie signed the Geneva Accord. I’m just saying, Verbena and Petunia do not spy. They don’t think it’s fair. I asked them, and I believe them when they say they give us complete privacy.”

“So, what do you suggest?” Zev stood over Fern, his hands clenched at his sides, breath coming in harsh bursts that burned his lungs. Something had to break, and he was growing more and more concerned it would most likely be him.

Fern ducked her head. He could have sworn she blushed. Her mossy green cheeks turned the most alarming shade of violet...

“Remember when you made me come? You touched me...there?”

Zev took a step back. “There?” There, as in...he silently clenched his buttocks in response. “Yeah...your point is?”

“I can’t touch your...your penis. But, I can touch your balls and...”

“Oh yeah.” He took a deep, desperate breath. Right now, Zev didn’t really care what Fern touched, so long as she brought him relief.

“I’m thinking, if I touch you just enough to stimulate you, to frustrate you even further...”

“Fern. There is no way in hell anyone could frustrate me further. Watching you day after day as you diddle away with your new body parts is just about as frustrating as anything can be. Please, tell me exactly what it is you’re suggesting.”

“No. Zev, you’re missing my point. I think the witches are right. You’re obviously blocking your ability to shift. We need to teach you to do it here, away from Petunia and Verbena. You need to learn to control it, but until you actually shift, you’ll never understand the process. And, you’re not going to shift until your frustration levels are high enough to overwhelm your inhibitions.”

“You think so?” Zev felt ready to explode as it was. How much higher could any man’s frustration levels climb?

“Remember, I’m keeping track of your aura. Your red can spike higher than it has been. You’ve got a long way to go.”

“I find that hard to believe,” Zev muttered. Deep in his heart, he still hadn’t quite swallowed either the aura or the wolf stories.

Fern took a deep breath and a look of resolve steeled her features. “Lie down, Zev.”

Zev held back his smart-ass reply and stretched out on the bed.

Fern stood over him, her perfectly formed feet planted firmly on either side of his hips. She held a length of soft rope in her hands.

“Roll over. I want your butt in the air and that electrically charged cage under your belly and out of my way.”

“Yes ma’am.” Grinning to himself, Zev followed her orders. Talk about acting out of character! His little woodsprite was showing an entirely new facet of her personality.

Fern quickly tied his wrists to the headboard. Before he realized what she was up to, she’d flipped around and secured his ankles as well, spreading his legs wide apart.

“What the hell is going on here?” Zev tugged experimentally at the ropes. They held him practically immobile, a lot more effectively than he’d imagined. He turned his head and glared at her.

“Frustration, Zev. We’re working on frustration.”

“Fern. You can’t touch me. I’m afraid the shock could hurt you.”

“I don’t intend to hurt myself. I may, however, hurt you.”

With that enigmatic comment, she scooted back to the foot of the bed. A moment later, she crawled up along Zev's back and secured a soft blindfold across his eyes.

His mesh covered cock throbbed against his belly, but he was vastly relieved it didn't shock him. His buttocks tightened against the chill air in the cell. Then he felt the soft touch of Fern's fingertips, gently massaging his hips and the globes of his ass.

Zev bucked his hips. "What the hell are you doing?"

"Doing my best to turn you on."

He groaned. "Fern. I've been turned on for the better part of a week. It doesn't get much worse."

"Hmmmmmm. I think it does."

Zev hardly had time to consider her cryptic comment before he felt the soft caress of Fern's tongue over his balls.

He cried out. Damn! It felt so good it hurt!

She tongued each testicle in its turn, licking and nibbling until he thought he would die. Then she encircled his left nut with her lips. He felt her nose pressed against his ass, her lips massaging his balls, her tongue coming so close to the ensorcelled mesh around his penis that he almost forgot the pleasure for his fear she might hurt herself.

"Don't worry," Fern whispered, almost as if she could read his mind. "I'm being very careful."

Her small hands massaged his butt, rubbing and kneading the tense muscles, growing ever closer to the more sensitive area between his cheeks.

She touched him, a brief pass of her fingertip over the tight ring at his anus. Zev saw tiny sparkling flashes of light behind the blindfold.

She suckled first one, then the other testicle into her mouth, tonguing the egg-shaped organs within, nibbling at the sensitive flesh so perfectly that he almost forgot what her fingers were doing.

Oh shit! One finger had settled on a pattern, a rhythmic, circular massage of the one no-longer-virginal opening the witches had explored. He bucked his hips in mute protest, all the while praying Fern wouldn't quit doing exactly what she was doing.

Her mouth worked his balls, her finger pressed against his ass, the enchanted mesh surrounding his penis heated and pulsed, teased and teased some more.

Zev felt his world changing, knew he was going someplace new, somewhere he'd never been. Lost behind the darkness of the blindfold, he blinked against flashes of light, sparks of unexplainable energy.

The hot recess of Fern's mouth encased his balls, her finger suddenly gained entrance to his ass. She added another, pushing the two fingers deeper, stretching and filling, finding nerves Zev never knew he possessed.

His climax coiled and screamed within his loins, contained by the magical mesh imprisoning his cock. So close, so close...her fingers moved back and forth within his slick passage, her tongue and lips worked his balls.

He couldn't climax! The witches' magic held him on the edge, their spelled muzzle containing his orgasm. A frenzy of lust took Zev to another plane. He clutched at the ropes holding his wrists, arched his spine, threw back his head and howled.

Howled his pain, his frustration. His anger. His need.

The blindfold slipped away from his eyes. The bright light in the cell suddenly narrowed to a pinprick of brilliant red fire. The sounds about him grew more deafening. The racing thud of his heart. The rapid staccato of Fern's. The harsh rasp of his breath.

The woodsprite's timid cry.

Sensation. Awash in sensation, he suddenly knew the absence of her hot mouth and mobile tongue. No longer clenched against her invading fingers, touching, exploring.

His howl ended on a yelp of loss and pain.

Zev felt the pressure first along his spine, a twisting, burning, muscle-tearing rip, almost as if his bones splintered within his skin. The room spun, a spatial disorientation that seemed to last for hours, but took only seconds.

The ropes binding his wrists and ankles shredded and snapped.

Suddenly, Zev was looking up at the side of the bed out of eyes that viewed the world in unfamiliar patterns and colors. He snarled, sat awkwardly down on his haunches, lifted one paw to study the black nails protruding from furred toes, and blinked in astonishment.

His first impulse was to touch the paw with his tongue.

He swept his new tongue along his paw and foreleg, experimenting with the dexterity and sensitivity inherent in the damned thing. Tami would have loved that tongue! She'd complained on more than one occasion that he didn't have what it took to make her come when he went down on her.

He drew his long tongue back within his mouth, careful not to snag it on the sharp canines protruding from his upper jaw.

Yeah...Tami would have loved this tongue. Too bad she wasn't ever going to experience it.

Sounds echoed against and within his sensitive ears—Fern's terrified shriek, his own harsh breathing. He growled, testing the power of his voice.

His wolfen shoulders shook in silent laughter. This body was going to take some getting used to. Zev grinned, not the least bit upset to realize the woodsprite and the witches had been right all along.

He *was* a shifter. *Damn*. He stood up on all fours and stretched, arching his back and slowly waving his long tail. Testing further, he reared up on his hind legs and braced his front paws against the bed where Fern cowered. His tongue lolled out of his mouth, so he took an experimental swipe along the woodsprite's bare leg.

She screamed.

Zev flattened his ears. The last thing he wanted to do was hurt or frighten her. He closed his mouth and rested his head against her warm tummy. Her heart thudded against his ear and he sensed fear in every ragged breath she took.

Zev sighed and closed his eyes. She had to see he wasn't a threat to her, didn't she? Her rapid heartbeat slowed just a bit. Zev peeked at Fern through slitted eyelids.

She had raised her head and was staring at him. One finely boned hand tentatively reached out and touched the space between his ears, patting him like a large dog.

Zev leaned into her touch, encouraging her.

"Oh my. Zev? Is that really you? It really worked?"

He answered her with a soft growl and the warm sweep of his tongue across her breasts.

Fern giggled. There was an hysterical, nervous edge to the sound. "Looks like we got that red aura to spike like I wanted! I told you I sensed your other shape was a wolf. You wanna know the truth?" She drew a long shuddering breath. "I had no idea you'd actually manifest. This is amazing. I mean, I was almost positive, but I had no idea. You're amazing...absolutely the most gorgeous wolf I ever..." She paused. Her hand snapped away from his head to cover her lips.

"Uhm, Zev? Do you know how to turn back into a human?"

Zev shook his head, snorted and stretched his long, lean form. How could he tell her he'd worry about that later?

Now, he looked out at the world with eyes unfamiliar. He smelled layers of scents, sensed sounds and emotions, fear and disbelief. His? Fern's? He glanced once more at his paw, at the dark fur and shredded rope dangling loosely from his front leg.

He lifted his paw. The nails were truly beautiful—black as ebony and sharp—razor sharp. He sniffed the air, sensed the woodsprite's mixture of fear, awe and amazement, and turned his shaggy head once more in her direction.

Fern had scooted back against the wall during his self-examination. She looked confused and still a little bit frightened. She'd drawn her knees up in a defensive posture. Her hands were plastered against the cold stone. Zev opened his mouth to speak.

A low growl escaped. Fern shuddered. Zev backed away and shook his head again, then sat back on his haunches. Somehow he needed to reassure her. Why hadn't they ever discussed this part of the shift?

For shift it was. He'd done it. Zevulun Cable, computer scientist and resident nerd was now a huge, shaggy wolf. He flexed his shoulders, aware of strength and power he'd only dreamed of. His heart beat steadily in his chest, his nostrils quivered at the potpourri of scents, each one an individual message in the very essence of the air.

He was wolf, he was powerful, he was the quintessential Alpha Male from the tip of his brushy tail to the ultra-sensitive nose on the end of his snout.

A rush of pleasure heated his blood. He yipped, looked down between his front legs and realized his wolf cock was poking out of its sheath, the pink tip glistening with moisture. He stared at the unnerving appendage and fought a powerful urge to sit down and lick his balls.

Shit. The urges were much more difficult to control in wolf form than human...not that he'd ever wanted to lick himself before. In fact, Zev suddenly realized his sexual urges and needs were the uppermost thoughts in his wolfen mind.

Not the witches. Not escape.

Mating. He wanted to mate.

He whipped his head around and stared at Fern. She was watching him now with more curiosity than fear. He narrowed his eyes, inhaled her feminine scent. He wanted her. Wanted her with an intensity that even the enchanted mesh muzzling his human cock hadn't achieved.

The enchanted mesh that had amazingly disappeared during the transformation from human to wolf.

He still hadn't come. All that energy continued pulsing, raw and hot within his blood.

Zev raised his head and sniffed the air, drawing in more of the alluring scent of the woodsprite. His nostrils flared, his lungs expanded, he was subtly aware of the blood racing through his veins, the powerful beat of his heart.

Aware of the beast he had become.

What did Fern see? Merely the huge, black shaggy wolf sitting on the floor beside her bed, or could she perceive any of Zevulun Cable behind the beast?

Did Zevulun Cable even exist? The wolf had Zev's memories but appeared to be working under an entirely different set of social rules.

Had Zev been lost forever in the shift? When and if he shifted back to his human form, would any of the wolf remain?

Damn. He'd think about the implications later. The entire concept of matter changing shape, form, substance, thoughts. Awareness in this wolf mind was different from that of his human form. More primal, more elemental.

For now, he was very definitely a wolf. Zev stood up and shook himself. He looked back over his shoulder. From what he could tell, his lupine form was absolutely magnificent.

His bushy tail wagged slowly back and forth. He realized his color was more an iron gray than true black, the longer, coarser hairs on his coat tipped with silver.

Zev spent a brief moment admiring himself. He decided he really was quite impressive.

He sensed a shift in the air currents the moment Fern scooted forward on the bed. Without even looking her way, Zev knew she was moving cautiously closer. Zev turned his head slowly and blinked at her. He held very still and fought the urge to grin.

Showing her a mouthful of ivory canines might not be the incentive the little woodsprite needed to come close.

Fern sat carefully on the side of the bed, her legs dangling loosely over the edge. Zev took a step closer, slowly, hesitantly, his gaze fastened tightly to Fern's. She blinked rapidly and he felt her apprehension, but she didn't back away.

He noticed she didn't draw her knees together, either. Another step, and Zev stood directly in front of the woodsprite. Her shapely legs rested on either side of his broad, wolfen head.

He leaned over and sniffed, drawing her feminine scent deeply into his sensitive nostrils. His heart rate increased, reacting immediately to whatever pheromones Fern's body produced.

Zev glanced up, raising his head as he did and brushing his cold nose against Fern's clit. She jumped and giggled. He expected her to scoot away. Instead, she leaned back on her elbows and spread her legs wider.

An open invitation, if ever he'd seen one. Zev wondered for a moment how she could look at a wolf and exhibit such unguarded lust, then realized the rules in Faerie were probably a lot different than those in his more mundane world.

Zev blinked, considering the options.

Fern's scent invaded his mind along with his nostrils. He licked his lips, his long tongue circling the tip of his nose, and drew his gaze slowly away from the woodsprite's questioning eyes.

The moment he looked away, Zev realized how unique his options actually were. He turned his head and licked a damp swath along Fern's inner thigh.

She sighed in response.

He repeated the process on the other leg, enjoying the feel of her as much as the taste. His perception as wolf was totally unlike that of Zevulun Cable, human.

More intense. Earthier. Deeper.

Fern spread her legs wider and lay back on the bed. Her feet dangled weakly on either side of Zev's broad head.

He settled himself on his haunches, planted his front feet on the floor and stared hungrily at Fern's brand new clitoris. The soft curl of fluff at the apex of her thighs framed her clit like a shining halo.

He wondered if and when the witches' spell might complete the process they'd started. So far, the only real change to the woodsprite had been her little clit, though he thought the flesh surrounding it looked puffy and perhaps a bit fuller. Was there a hint of vaginal lips where the skin had once been smooth and sleek?

His cock twitched within its furry sheath.

Fern sighed.

That soft, needy sound, the scent, the hunger to taste her, drew Zev like filings to a magnet.

He leaned forward and gave Fern a long, wet lick between her legs. She jumped, sighed again and giggled.

Zev closed his eyes with the pleasure of her taste. He licked her again, taking his time with the protuberant little bud, the soft needy flesh surrounding it. He could only imagine the sensation of his rough wolf's tongue sweeping over her sensitive skin.

His own more sensitive parts began to ache. He licked Fern again and hoped it wouldn't take much longer for those idiot witches to figure out their spell.

At this point, licking and tasting was just about all he could manage.

Fern certainly didn't seem to mind. Zev nibbled at the little bud with his front teeth, licked the flesh between her legs, then swept his long tongue over her belly before returning to her clit.

Fern's breath huffed out between parted lips. Zev whimpered, wanting what he couldn't have.

Fern clamped her knees against the sides of his head. He licked her harder, faster, finally standing up on all fours to swipe his long tongue from her buttocks to her belly, lapping between her legs with quick, sure strokes.

He knew her climax was coming, felt the pressure in his own groin, inhaled the sweet, innocent scent of...

The room went dark.

Fern's orgasmic scream echoed in the back of Zev's mind.

Agonizing pain ripped through his muscles, his bones...a sharp, startling, tearing sensation, half pleasure, half pain, all...

Over. It was all over. Zev jerked against the restraints holding his legs to the bed. Yanked wildly at the chains on his wrists.

Opened his eyes and realized he was back in human form, his nude body stretched out on the examining table in the witches' dungeon.

His cock stood at full mast, mocking him. Zev couldn't recall the damned thing ever standing so tall or feeling so sensitive and downright miserable. He jerked at his arm restraints once more for good measure, then growled deep in his throat.

Candlelight flickered all about him. Petunia and Verbena stood near his feet, flipping through pages in that damned book of theirs, mumbling under their breath.

Zev shook his head and rattled his chains once more. Petunia turned her head to stare at him. "Don't worry," she said. "I think we've figured out how to make you shift. The moon will be full in about three hours." She glanced at her sister. "Is that enough time, do you think?"

Verbena nodded her head. "So long as all goes well with Fern's spell, I imagine it will work just right."

"I certainly hope so," Petunia said. "By the way, sister, something went wrong with our muzzling spell. Have you noticed anything missing?"

Verbena smirked. "It was your spell, sister."

"You helped." Petunia cast a sidelong glance at her sister.

"That's not important," Verbena sniffed. "What is important is how well we do tonight. Our grade depends on it. Once we force the shift, measure the chemical

changes within his blood to prove our success, then catalogue his return to human form, we can finish our thesis and submit it for our grade.”

“If only we knew.” Petunia set the book down.

The twins stared long and hard at Zev. Before he could ask what Petunia meant, Verbena chimed in. “I, too, sister. I wish we knew *what* form our subject will shift into. At least then we could be a bit more prepared.”

Zev blinked. Fern was right. They *really* didn’t know.

“What if he’s a hawk? Or maybe an eagle?” Petunia turned her head as if studying the four walls. “Are the windows all shut? We wouldn’t want him to escape.”

“I latched them this morning. The door is locked as well. For all we know, he could be a lion or a bear. I’d hate to loose something like that on the land of Faerie. Mother would have our hides!” Verbena visibly shuddered.

Petunia rolled her eyes. “I doubt he’ll be anything that ferocious. Just look at him.” She reached over and batted his erect cock. It wobbled painfully back and forth. Zev grunted.

Petunia grabbed the tip to stop the wobble, then idly stroked the taut flesh. Zev’s eyes rolled back in his head. “You’re right, though,” she said, grasping him tighter, as if for emphasis. “Mother’d have a fit if she knew we were even taking this course. It is upper level.”

Verbena straightened her spine and looked down her nose at her sister. “We are more than ready. Mother just doesn’t understand. Our professor at the International Witches and Warlocks Guild must believe we’re ready, or he never would have allowed us to sign up.”

“If you’ll recall, we didn’t give our correct age.” Petunia continued her steady massage of Zev’s cock. He wondered if she had any idea at all what she was doing to him.

Verbena snorted. “Don’t worry. We’re perfectly capable of handling whatever form he takes. He certainly doesn’t look very threatening.” She batted Petunia’s hand away and Zev yelped, torn between lust and relief.

“Quit playing with him or he’s gonna blow. We need to keep him in a suspended stage of extreme excitement for this to work properly. You’re right, though. He certainly doesn’t appear at all threatening. He’ll probably shift to a cat or something equally innocuous.”

Petunia laughed, then nodded and muttered quietly. Verbena mumbled something back at her. Elation coursed through Zev’s veins. He’d show them *threatening!* Who’d they think they were?

His thoughts swirled, the memories of wolf and man blending as one. He could shift. Now that he’d done it once, his body retained the memory. Zev knew he could shift at will. He stared at the twin witches and let his anger build.

Fern’s final spell was tonight.

Tonight would be the night. His captors were going to get their wish. They’d see him shift.

Damn. Would they ever. He grinned, imagining their shock when the wolf appeared.

Zev would get his wish as well. He’d finally have his woodsprite.

His new, improved woodsprite.

A woodsprite with all the accommodating parts any self-respecting werewolf—or man—required.

Fern. Damn, he hoped she was okay. In the brief days since he’d first met the odd little sprite, she’d grown terribly important to him.

Important in more ways than the sum of her parts.

Yes, it would be mind-blowing to finally make love to Fern the way he wanted, but Zev suddenly realized there was something more, something beyond the spells and the physical changes manifesting in Fern.

If Petunia and Verbena's spell did anything to harm her...*no*. He couldn't let himself think along those lines.

Zev blinked, staring into the darkness overhead, and wondered at the odd premonition that suddenly shivered along his spine.

Be careful what you wish for...

Chapter Six

Fern couldn't stop shaking. Her teeth rattled, her hands shook, her feet felt like ice. Unfamiliar nerves and muscles between her legs quivered and clenched in the final throes of orgasm.

This had been different. So completely different. Frighteningly, wonderfully, overwhelmingly different.

If only Zev weren't gone. She assumed the witches had him, but she wished he'd stayed. She wanted to ask him about the feelings roiling about inside her. The physical clenchings and cravings, the emotional turmoil so unfamiliar and strange.

She wanted. She needed. She lusted.

This wasn't the usual curiosity, the timid question, the mild arousal she'd experienced in her existence as an innocent sprite. This wasn't even close to the first climax he'd given her, the one that had practically knocked her socks off.

This was lush and all consuming, dark and pervasive, at the same time brilliant and glowing. This was passion and desire, an overwhelming urge to mate, a visceral craving to complete the act they'd only grazed upon.

She touched herself, caressing her breasts first, those marvelous globes she'd barely noticed in the past. Next she rubbed the sensitive organ that had remained unchanged since the first day the witches had cast their spell.

Once they'd gotten the sex right, of course.

Fern blushed, recalling her pride in that little penis she'd first developed. Zev had been so sweet with her, even though he was obviously nonplused.

Zev. Had he been able to revert to human form before the witches saw him? What if they'd zapped the wolf to their dungeon? What would they do to him?

What would he do to them?

She opened her mouth to call the witches, then thought better of it. Let them call her. Let the sisters continue on with their plans, unaware and uninformed.

She would hold the good thought for Zev. Pray to the powers of Faerie he'd gone to the witches in human form.

She had such terribly mixed feelings about the witchy sisters. Yes, they had captured her against her will. Yes, they imprisoned her away from fresh air and flowers and raindrops and the beauty of the deep woods.

On the other hand...

They'd given her Zev.

They'd given her a taste of something unknown, and until now, unwanted. How could you yearn for something you never knew existed?

They'd understood what she lacked and done their best to fix it.

Zev said she wasn't broken, but Fern knew better. She still wasn't entirely fixed, either, but she wasn't worried. Oddly enough, she trusted Verbena and Petunia. For all their immaturity and selfish behavior, the witches didn't really mean anyone harm, even Zev.

They were young and they were learning their craft.

So far, the stage spell appeared to be working.

Fern rubbed the smooth skin between her legs. Did she feel an indentation there, where none had been before? Was the flesh surrounding her marvelous clit really a bit puffy, fuller, perhaps? So far, the only change she'd really noticed, even with the nightly spells, was that wonderful little clitoris Zev played so well.

There had to be more. She knew there was more.

Today *was* the seventh day.

Tonight the full moon.

The spell should be complete by tonight.

She wanted Zev, but Fern was willing to wait. She smiled dreamily, imagining the unknown, exploring her desires.

Aware of the biggest change of all.

It was not a simple woodsprite who lusted after the wolf in man's clothing.

It was a woman.

* * * * *

"It's almost time, sister. Let's take care of the woodsprite first." Verbena waved her wand. Zev felt a woosh of air and suddenly found himself stuck to the wall, arms and legs spread wide. His cock bobbed at full mast. A fever roared in his blood.

The air in the room shifted, candles flickered and Fern appeared on the examining table. Petunia immediately tightened her restraints.

"Zev?" She turned her head and looked at him, her lips parted, green eyes wide, the leafy halo around her face tangled and mussed.

She was absolutely gorgeous.

"I'm okay. You?"

She nodded, then jerked as Petunia adjusted the straps around her ankles. "Sorry," the witch said. "I didn't mean to make them so tight."

Fern blinked. She looked terrified. Zev fought the growing compulsion to change into wolf form. He had to give the witches the chance to get Fern's spell right. Once she was ready...

Damn. He wished he had more of a plan. Ripping their throats out seemed a bit excessive. Besides, how was he going to get home if he killed off his transportation?

Which led to another problem. What about Fern? He couldn't see taking his little green woodsprite back to Ohio.

Of course, from what Fern had told him, the land of Faerie sounded fascinating. There wasn't all that much waiting for him at home. Nothing at all waiting for a werewolf.

He growled and tugged against the wall. He might as well have been glued to it.

Snarling quietly, he watched as Petunia finished checking all of Fern's restraints while Verbena walked about the huge stone room, extinguishing candles.

Zev was aware of a sense of power in the room, as if something waited just out of sight. Fern obviously sensed it as well. She was visibly shaking, her teeth chattering, fingers clenching against the soft restraints holding her immobile.

Petunia reached under the table and brought out a metal chest with an ornate lock on the front. She drew a key from the ring hanging at her waist and carefully unlocked the chest. A soft blue glow escaped the opening lid, bathing the witch's face in an eerie, fog-shrouded light.

Verbena extinguished the last candle, throwing the room into darkness broken only by the spreading blue glow. She stood on one side of Fern, Petunia on the other. They began to chant, their voices rising and falling in a soft but persistent cadence. Caught up in the mystery of their spell, Zev hung quietly from the wall. Every one of his senses focused on the tableau in front of him.

The radiance shimmered with more substance than any light should have, a glowing fog that grew and spread until it surrounded Fern and the two witches in a shining sphere of pale blue light. The instant the sphere enclosed them, all sound from within ceased.

Zev's muscles tensed. The call of the wolf grew stronger. Was it the full moon or fear for his woodsprite? He strained to see what was happening within the glowing orb, but the light coalesced, thickened and hid them from his sight.

Whimpering with frustration, hanging on to humanity by a thread, Zev forced himself to wait, to give the sisters time to complete their spell.

His muscles strained and pulsed, his heart hammered in his chest and the breath burst from his lungs as if powered by a bellows.

Still he waited, his fear for his woodsprite mounting with each passing second. The orb shimmered and pulsed. Was that movement within its glowing walls?

The room seemed to shrink around him, the walls growing closer, the hammering of his heart echoing off the cold stone. Zev snarled, fighting the shift, fighting the power of the wolf with all he had.

A tiny sliver of light glimmered across the high ceiling. He suddenly realized it was the glow of moonlight through narrow slits in the walls.

He watched the light move across the ceiling, spreading quickly over the walls, growing ever closer to the spot where he struggled. Suddenly it touched the orb, moonlight and blue radiance melding, shimmering, vibrating with power unearthly and ancient.

Pulsing, throbbing with a life of its own, the sphere seemed to suck every bit of energy from the room. Without warning, it burst, shattering a million sharp fragments of blue crystal. Fern screamed, a long, terrified wail that cut through Zev just as the beam of moonlight touched his face.

Petunia and Verbena shrieked in unison and scrambled away from Fern, scuttling on hands and feet like terrified bugs, their blonde hair flying about them as if touched by electricity.

Zev howled, gnashing his teeth in frustration, snapping at the air as his bones and sinews, muscles and skin shifted, twisted and changed.

Fern's screams grew louder, whether from pain or fear he couldn't tell. The witches cowered in the darkness. Blue light emanated from the broken shards of the orb, moonlight surrounded Fern and bathed her writhing body in a golden glow.

Zev leapt to the table in wolf form and stood over her, growling and snarling at the witches. Obviously terrified, they crawled beneath a heavy shelf, crying out in hysterics.

Zev snapped Fern's restraints with his razor-sharp fangs. Sobbing, she threw her arms round his shaggy shoulders and clung to him. Zev turned to give her a comforting swipe with his tongue, then jumped to the floor with Fern clinging to his back. Verbena rolled out from beneath the shelf and raced for the door.

Petunia wasn't fast enough. Zev grabbed her by the throat, his sharp canines holding her immobile without breaking the skin.

She screamed, and in a very unwitchy act, fainted.

"What have you done to my sister?" Verbena suddenly stood over Zev, her magic wand held tightly in her hand. "Don't you dare hurt her, you beast. Let her go. Now!"

Zev snarled through clenched jaws and glared at the witch. He bared his teeth, letting Verbena see just how close he was to crushing her sister's throat.

Verbena backed off, obviously confounded by the sudden shift in power.

"Zev. Let her go." Fern's soft voice was suddenly there, just next to him. He glanced at her and snarled. It was damned difficult to communicate in this form, but he didn't dare shift back and lose his advantage.

Suddenly, the room shook. Sparks flew, a burst of light exploded in the air. Zev kept his jaws closed around Petunia's throat, though it wasn't easy with Fern suddenly hanging on to his neck with a death grip, her body trembling in abject terror.

There was an audible *gulp* from Petunia. Her throat convulsed within his slavering jaws. Obviously, the source of the commotion was even more frightening than the very real possibility of having her throat ripped out by an angry werewolf.

"Mother!" Verbena dropped her wand and gasped. "What are you doing here?"

"I was just about to ask you the same thing."

An unbelievably gorgeous woman stepped out of a swirling mist of fire and smoke. Where the twins were light, she was dark, her long black hair flowing over her shoulders, curling about her waist, alive with electricity and power. Her eyes glowed with an unholy light, black coals burning in the face of a cover model.

As she moved closer, her midnight gown swirled about her ankles, sparkling with the light of a million stars. Zev blinked. The fabric *was* the nighttime sky, the stars and planets not a design, but real.

Where she walked, night accompanied her.

Power shimmered and ebbed about her.

Every candle in the room suddenly burst into flame.

His wolfen senses, already on high, zinged at a level Zev hadn't even imagined. He narrowed his eyes and an involuntary growl rumbled in his chest.

The woman appeared focused on Verbena, but she glanced briefly over her shoulder in Zev's direction. "Drop her, now, and shift. I refuse to deal with a wolf."

The imperious order was given in a manner that said she was never ignored.

Zev did as he was told. Almost.

Unfortunately, he was still new at the shifting routine.

He shifted before dropping his mouthful of Petunia.

Spitting and gagging, he jumped away from the witch's throat and moved back, still on all fours, naked as the day he was born. Fern gripped his neck, trembling harder than ever.

At least his erection had finally gone down. That craven beast was doing its best to hide from the world.

Petunia shook her head, rubbed her throat, and glared at Zev.

He snarled back at her.

It wasn't nearly as effective in human form.

She scrambled to her feet, rubbing her neck. Zev was pleased to notice teeth marks.

"You *will* explain." The woman glared at first one twin and then the other. The girls both looked at the floor. "Now," she commanded.

"It was..."

"We didn't..."

Both girls spoke at once.

The woman waved her hand angrily and the young witches shut their mouths. "You are both adults! In years, though quite obviously, not in your behavior. I have been gone for barely five weeks," she roared, glaring at them, "and look at the trouble you young ladies have gotten into! I want to know exactly what is going on here!"

Suddenly Fern unwound her arms from around Zev's neck and straightened up. Zev scrambled to his feet, but before he could stop the woodsprite, she approached the witch.

"Ma'am," she said, standing bravely in front of the tall witch. "Please don't be too angry with your daughters. They meant well."

"Huh?" Zev just about choked on his surprise. "What the hell are you saying, Fern? They *'meant well'*? How can you say that? They kidnapped us, did magic spells on us, they..."

Fern ducked her head. "They gave me a week with you," she mumbled. "They tried to fix me, to make me into a real woman. They..." Her voice broke on a sob.

"Oh, Fern..." Zev wrapped his arms around her. "The spell didn't work?"

Fern shook her head and buried her face against his shoulder. He held her tightly, protectively.

"It's okay, sweetheart," he soothed, oblivious to the three witches. "I told you in the very beginning you weren't broken. I love you just the way you are."

Fern's soft cries escalated into an anguished wail. Zev hugged her tighter as she sobbed loudly against his shoulder.

Angrily, Zev raised his head and glared at the twins. "She was fine until you two started in with your damned spell. You had no business experimenting on Fern. What did she ever do to hurt you? Now look at her. She was content before you gave her a

glimpse of what she might have. You promised her and you didn't come through for her. How dare you?"

Petunia and Verbena both stared at their toes. Their mother glanced from one contrite looking sister to the other, then carefully studied Zev and Fern. After a moment, she snapped her fingers. "You two," she said, snarling at her daughters. "To your rooms. If you're smart, you won't show your faces until I request an audience."

She waved her hand and the twins disappeared. The air shimmered with their passing, then all was still.

Fern's quiet weeping was the only sound in the room.

The witch sighed. "I will get to the bottom of this. They will pay for their cruel prank. My girls are willful and spoiled, but I've not known them to ever deliberately do anyone ill." She shook her head, obviously dismayed. The witch's anger had left with her daughters. Now she merely looked perplexed. "What to do with the two of you, I wonder?"

Zev shook his head. He had no answers. His arms tightened around the weeping woodsprite and he sighed. "Our lives will never be the same, but we can't go back to what we were." He thought about that a moment, the words he'd just spoken.

Did he really want to return to his mundane life in Springfield? Work five days a week, weekends off to spend staring at the television? A succession of Tami-types on one disappointing date after another?

Life without his lovely woodsprite?

"I don't want to go back to what I was. I don't ever want to be that dull, ever again." He smiled at the witch, actually enjoying her confusion. "I guess I'm not nearly so mad at your daughters as I thought I was."

He rubbed Fern's back, soothing her. Her cries broke into sobs, she hiccupped, sighed, quieted down and snuggled tighter against Zev.

“Innocence lost, both yours and the little sprite’s? I guess I see your problem.” The witch sat on the examining table, her chin cupped in her hand in a thoughtful position. “I’m Trillium, by the way.” She held out her hand.

Zev shook it. “Zevulun Cable,” he said. “This is Fern.”

Fern raised her head, sniffed, and shook hands with the witch.

Trillium sighed, suddenly looking tired and vulnerable. “I would like to speak with my daughters. They’re not bad girls, though I admit I have indulged them over the years. I need to know their intentions, and I imagine we all could use some sleep.”

Suddenly she tilted her head and stared at Zev and Fern. “Correct me if I’m wrong, but you, sir, are a werewolf, and the young lady is a woodsprite?”

Zev nodded, wondering where she was headed.

“Verbena and Petunia’s goal was to force you to shift, to find your true nature, correct?”

Again, Zev nodded. “I’m their science project, I think.”

Trillium smiled at him, as if that made perfect sense, then continued. “They also decided your woodsprite was...excuse me, I think the term they used was ‘broken’?”

Fern nodded this time, her eyes huge and luminous with tears.

Trillium sighed. “So the two dears decided to fix you, is that it?” She sighed again. “I think I have a better idea now of what’s going on. Let me think about this a bit. Do you mind if I just send you back to your cells? Are they comfortable enough?”

Zev nodded. He’d barely finished the motion before the room shifted, steadied, and suddenly realigned itself as their familiar cell.

Fern snuggled into his arms, her naked body warm and trusting against his. Zev rested his chin atop her leafy hair and stared at the candle flickering near the doorway. Like a deflated balloon, his heart sagged in his chest.

What now? he wondered, now that the anger that had sustained him was gone.
What now?

Chapter Seven

They were summoned the following day just as Zev stepped out of the shower. Fern had already bathed and was waiting in the bedroom cell for breakfast, Zev had just reached for a towel when suddenly they were standing, side by side, in the main room.

Zev continued to dry himself, ignoring the change in surroundings as if he were still in the bathroom. Anger might be rolling off him in waves, but it felt a lot better than the pathetic sense of dejection he'd worn like a hair shirt the night before.

He was tired of getting jerked around.

Petunia and Verbena waited, their heads bowed, looking very contrite. Trillium was dressed in sunlight and blue skies today, the flowing gown accented by the occasional fluffy white cloud.

She swept across the room and stopped in front of her daughters, glaring at them and tapping one foot. Petunia raised her head and looked directly at Fern. "I'm sorry," she said. "We had no right to try and change your nature."

"We want to apologize," Verbena added. "We meddled in things we don't understand."

"We were wrong," Petunia said.

"Very wrong," Trillium emphasized. "Very, very wrong."

She gazed at her daughters with a look of love tempered by impatience. "Zevulun, I wanted you to hear my daughters' apology, because it applies to you as well as Fern, but the rest of the discussion is between the woodsprite and the three of us. Please return to your room."

Before he had time to complain, Zev was back in the cell.

Alone and more pissed off than ever.

Breakfast awaited him on the small table in the center of the room.

A small table with one chair and only one place setting.

* * * * *

He couldn't eat. The food didn't even tempt him. Zev paced the cell, walked up and down the short corridor, counted stones in the wall and finally spent a couple of hours practicing switching back and forth between wolf and human form until it was literally second nature to him.

He thought of that a lot, the concept of nature. Trillium had mentioned nature, the fact the wolf was his but Fern's was to be a woodsprite.

The twins had gone against her true nature when they tried to give her the parts she needed to function as a woman.

A woodsprite had no need for sex, for any kind of physical love. Of course, that didn't explain the gorgeous breasts or the full and luscious lips he loved to kiss.

Damn. What were the bitches doing to his Fern?

Without a timepiece of any kind, he had no idea how long he'd been pacing. Meals came and went but he ignored them.

Worry gnawed an ever growing hole in his gut.

He loved Fern. Loved her just the way she was. If they couldn't have regular sex, they'd improvise. If it hadn't been for the enchanted contraption those bitches had muzzled him with, he and Fern could have managed quite well, thank you very much.

Where was Fern? What were the bitches doing to her? Poor thing...she didn't deserve any of this. She deserved love and attention, security and peace. She needed the freedom of the deep woods, the warmth of the sun, the love Zev wanted to give her.

Finally exhausted, both physically and emotionally, Zev threw himself on the bed and stared at the ceiling.

There were a hell of a lot of big stones up there, rough-hewn and fitted together in a variety of patterns. He started counting them, staring at the patterns, then realized one in particular reminded him of Fern.

He groaned. When he thought of her sleek body, the soft breasts and tiny tuft of down between her legs, Zev's cock once more made its presence known. He reached down to touch himself, something he'd been unable to do for days, and realized he'd never be able to substitute his own hand for Fern's soft lips.

Frustrated, frightened and lonelier than he'd ever felt in his life, Zev went back to counting the stones over his head until he drifted into a restless sleep.

* * * * *

Warm lips suckled the tip of his cock and an obviously talented tongue tested every fissure and ridge. Fingers stroked his balls, fondling each one in its turn, tugging gently and rolling the family jewels just the way he liked.

Well of course it's going to be the way I like. It's my dream, isn't it?

Zev sighed and stretched, practically wallowing in the sensations of warm, wet mouth and busy little fingers. After yesterday's nightmare, he figured he was due for a good wet dream.

Except, he wasn't dreaming.

Reality slammed into him about the same time one of those busy little fingers found his ass and crawled inside.

"Huh?" He opened his eyes to something better than any wet dream he'd ever conceived – Fern kneeling between his legs, her lips wrapped around his swollen cock, smiling around her mouthful.

Only it wasn't Fern. Not the Fern he remembered. Scooting to a sitting position, Zev grabbed her up in his arms, hugged her tight then held her at arm's length to look at her.

Suddenly shy, she dipped her head, the glossy dark brown hair flowing across her sleek shoulders in molten waves of silk.

Shoulders that were now a deep, smooth chocolate brown, as if Mediterranean blood ran hot in her veins.

“My God, Fern...you’re...”

“Not completely.” She held her finger against his lips and he kissed the very tip. When he looked up, she was smiling at him, her lips full and red, her eyes still that luminous grassy green. She shook her head. “They can’t make me completely human. It’s not my nature. Trillium explained it, how we have to stay true to our nature. We can’t be unmade or created because we are who we are. That’s why the girls’ spell wasn’t completely successful. They were trying to turn a woodsprite into a sexual being.”

“But, you’re...you’re...” He stumbled over the words, sweeping his hand over her smooth cap of hair, running a finger along her cheek.

Suddenly he looked down between her legs and grinned. Still as soft and fine as dandelion fluff, her tiny patch of pubic hair was now the same glossy dark brown as her head.

“I’m still, by nature, one with the forest.” She giggled. “But then, so are you, you know.”

Zev pulled her into his arms and kissed her. “I don’t care what you are or who I am, so long as I can have you with me. I love you, Fern. Last night was miserable without you. Don’t leave me.”

“Make love to me, Zev. Love me the way we’ve wanted. Fill me.”

His heart must have stopped beating. He knew his lungs had quit because he couldn’t draw a breath of air. “What did you say?”

“I said I want you to make love to me.” She leaned forward and kissed him, her lips warm and inviting, her tongue slipping between his and teasing him with potential he couldn’t possibly comprehend.

Her kiss was an aphrodisiac, a drug more powerful than he could have imagined. Zev wrapped his arms around Fern and met her tongue, thrust for thrust, as he rolled her to her back.

He reveled in her body, the sleek, warm length of her, the full, rounded breasts that were now a creamy brown instead of moss green.

Gorgeous. She was absolutely gorgeous. He found her rosy nipples, suckled each to a burgeoning point before moving down her belly, licking and kissing each inch of sweet flesh along the way.

Her scent was the same, the sweetness of woodland flowers, the freshness of a mountain breeze, but there was more, as well. An earthiness not borne of soil and moss and dark forest. Instead, the rich scent of woman filled his senses, luring him to mate with her, to be one with the woodland sprite who was magically so much more.

He was hard and long and thick, his cock so ready he knew he would burst if he didn’t find her heat. Still, he kissed and suckled his way along her torso, lost in the beauty of her body, the sweet flavors of her love.

He reached the silky tuft between her legs and paused, almost afraid to explore further. She moaned, a needy sound of ecstasy and want. Zev kissed her at the juncture of her thighs, then spread her legs until she was open and waiting.

There, just as he’d fantasized. Pink, pouting lips, the dew-touched center, her little clit standing at attention, awaiting his kiss. He sighed and touched her with his tongue. She cried out and clutched his head with her thighs.

“Fern,” he said, rising up to look her in the eye. “Control yourself.” She giggled and loosened her thighs. Zev went back to her crotch.

Ambrosia. She was sweet and salty, life and love in a flavor. He laved her with his tongue, suckled her with his lips. She cried out and arched her back when he stabbed

into her new vagina, licking deeply, tasting the moisture that gathered there at his demand.

Finally, when he could stand it no longer, Zev raised up over her and rested his swollen cock at her entrance. Fern smiled at him, a lost, dreamy, lust-filled smile that pulled him into its depths. He fought the urge to drive into her, to release the frustration and need that had beleaguered him for the better part of a week.

Instead he touched her softly, lightly, rubbing his swollen cock against her equally swollen flesh.

She moaned and thrust her hips into the air. Zev teased her, resting the rounded head just at her warm center, then dragging it up and over her swollen clit. Again she cried out, but this time she grabbed his hips and pressed herself against him.

He found her new opening, and drove slowly but inexorably in. There was a barrier that held him. He stopped at the virginal membrane, but at her silent plea, pressed on. She cried out, an exclamation of pain that ended on a sigh, but he was in.

Deep. So deep and hot. He tried to keep it slow, to take her easily this first time, but she bucked her hips against him, demanding more, challenging him.

With a tortured cry he gave into lust. Thrusting, his hips driving away the week's pain and frustration, the need and the passion compelling him higher, harder, he filled her.

So good. The heat, the tight, surrounding heat of her stole his breath.

With a cry, she claimed him.

He lost it completely, there within her molten depths. Lost the last shreds of control he'd maintained for the past few days, lost the sense of isolation, of need, of wanting that had been so much a part of his life for so long.

He found himself within her soul. Found peace and love and the fulfillment of all he'd ever wanted.

Found it deep in the heart of a woodland sprite.

Plunging deeper, harder, Zev found love. He cried out, a long, sobbing moan that escalated into the keening howl of a wolf. Cried out his love, his need, his promise to the woodland sprite who claimed his heart.

* * * * *

She wanted, she needed, she feared his taking. Trillium had warned her. She'd told Fern it would be painful and frightening, a link unlike anything she'd ever experienced.

It was.

It was also the most exciting, enthralling, ennobling event she'd ever known.

Zev was part of her! She felt him there, testing the barriers of her flesh, crying out for entrance. All it took was the lifting of her hips, the slight thrust to draw him in and he was there. A part of her. Loving her, mating with her.

It was all she'd hoped for. More than she'd expected. Yes there was blood, a primal libation to love and lust. There was also pain and a connection beyond words. Not just love, not possession, but more.

She cried out, clasping his strong shoulders, holding him close, drawing his very essence into her body and soul. He was huge, so much bigger than she'd realized, filling her over and over again, driving against that new part Trillium had told her about, a womb, a place where babies might grow.

So much had changed, so much of what she'd known and accepted was no longer true.

Something was happening, something like the orgasm she'd had when he'd touched her days ago. Trillium hadn't said it would...

No one had told her she could...

The cry started low in her throat. Borne of lust and pain and love, it built and grew until it encompassed her entire being, until it became a part of the new body, the new reality she shared with Zev.

She knew he was coming, felt his lust and passion and most of all, his love, as he poured his hot seed into her.

Felt it and knew she was ready, knew she was capable of meeting and holding whatever he offered.

Crying out, her scream of climax reaching out into a long, low howl of pleasure, Fern felt herself begin to change.

* * * * *

It had never, ever felt so good. Zev's climax exploded from his loins. His balls ached, his cock, that poor organ that had spent an entire week in a state of suspended arousal, finally had the freedom to release.

Right there, just at the moment of climax, he felt the shift coming over him. No! He didn't want to shift! Where was his control? He wanted to make love to Fern, to let her know with the claiming of her body she was his forever. Not the wolf! Not now!

Zev whined, a long, low doggy whimper of pain and embarrassment. How could this have happened?

His cock, long and hot and still aroused, was still embedded—and trapped!—someplace warm and welcoming.

He opened his eyes, taking a moment to adjust to his new perception, and realized he grasped Fern's back with his front legs.

He thought it was Fern.

Yeah. It was definitely Fern...but she'd never looked quite like this.

She turned and barked at him, her doggy grin teasing, her bushy tail swaying just to one side.

She'd shifted. His woodsprite had obviously found a new side to her basic nature.

Zev raised his nose into the air and howled. Fern's voice joined with his, an ear-splitting crescendo of joy and fulfillment.

Her body, in lupine form, held his cock trapped deep within her heat, where he throbbed and pulsed in steady cadence with her rhythmic palpitations.

The howl died to a soft, satisfied whimper.

Damn. Life was good.

* * * * *

Zev chewed and swallowed the perfectly sweet grape Fern popped into his mouth. He tightened his embrace on his lovely woodsprite. Candlelight flickered in the small parlor just next to the room where Verbena and Petunia worked diligently at a long blackboard. He knew Fern thought it was a bit excessive, Trillium's punishment for her precocious daughters, but Zev thought they'd gotten off easy.

Still, he couldn't imagine writing, *I will not meddle in the lives of others*, a million times across a blackboard.

At least they got to divide the punishment. He sighed as Fern popped another grape into his mouth. It should keep the two out of trouble for a while.

He was right, though. Life *was* good.

Trillium passed each of them a glass of clear, sparkling wine. "To new lives, new beginnings, and a love that will last forever."

Their crystal glasses clinked in the age old ritual of confirmation. "I still don't understand," Zev said. Fern tilted her head and kissed his chin.

"You don't have to understand to enjoy," she said. "Besides, according to your aura, you're perfectly content."

That was probably true. How could he possibly have known what his greatest desire would be? Somehow, thank goodness, the leprechaun understood.

"It's really quite simple," Trillium said. She sipped her wine and smiled benevolently at the two of them. This morning, her gown was sunshine and fields of sweet-smelling flowers. Zev had discovered, if he listened carefully enough, he could hear bees buzzing and the soft song of birds.

“It all comes down to basic nature.” Trillium waved one fine-boned hand, as if the answer were perfectly obvious. “Though Fern was a woodsprite, which by nature are asexual, and you are a werewolf, by nature a very sensual, sexual being, you are both one with the forest, an integral part of the land of Faerie. That oneness is your most basic nature. I merely nudged Fern, with one of my better spells, I might add, a bit closer to the bestial side of her own nature.”

Trillium patted Fern’s very human looking knee. “I wasn’t sure, though, if you’d be able to shift, my dear. I am so pleased with your success. It says a lot about your strength of spirit.” Trillium smiled at Zev. “She makes a beautiful wolf, don’t you agree?”

“Perfect.” Zev tilted Fern’s chin up and kissed her. He breathed in the soft brush of her sigh and felt his own, immediate response. “Absolutely perfect.”

“It’s agreed, then? You’ll stay?” Trillium smiled as if she had known all along what Zev’s answer would be. “You can maintain contact with your more mundane world, should you wish. The portals between Faerie and the temporal world are easy enough to spot, once you know what to look for. We really need you, Zev. There’s much work for you to do here.”

For the first time in his entire life, Zev felt complete. The powers ruling the land of Faerie wanted to upgrade their computer system. It was the perfect match for him. Life with his beautiful Fern, an entire society in need of his services, and a totally unique computer operating system.

No more dealing with...suddenly Fern’s lips captured his and all thoughts but those of his sexy little woodsprite flew out the proverbial window.

He sighed and kissed her back.

Life was getting even better.

About the Author

For over thirty years, Kate Douglas has been lucky enough to call writing her profession. She has won three EPPIES, two for Best Contemporary Romance and a third for Best Romantic Suspense. She is multi-published in contemporary and paranormal romance, both print and electronic formats, as well as her popular futuristic Romantica™ series StarQuest.

Kate and her husband of thirty-five years have recently moved to the beautiful mountains of northern California, where they find more than enough subject material for their shared passion for photography – though their grandchildren are most often in front of the lens.

Kate welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her [author bio page](#) at www.ellorascave.com.

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