



She likes her men rough, tough...and two at a time.

Wild Things, Book 1

Shannon Tally's heart has been broken one too many times, but it hasn't put a damper on her sex drive. If guys can play the field, so can she. And the two hot, sweaty ranch hands she spots "in the field" at her cousin's ranch will do nicely to play out her wildest fantasy: to tame not just one hunky cowboy, but two. At the same time.

Humans are a mystery to cougar shifter Chase Reya. They invade his home, threatening the animals and his solitude. That's why his leader sent him to the Tally ranch, to learn how to get along with humans. Or at least not to slice and dice them.

He never expected Shannon to stir a whirlwind of heat. And when the alluring female shares her affections with a werewolf, the combined sexual desire erupts even hotter. Only one person can generate this kind of passion—but can his lifelong mate be a *human*? For Shannon, a self-proclaimed lady "cougar", fidelity could be a tall order. Not to mention accepting his true nature...

Warning: Contains animals who are armed and dangerous and find a whole new use for spurs. If you like undomesticated pets, light bondage and m/f/m sex as graphic as it can get, then take a trip into these wilds...but be careful. With more than one animal after your hide, you may end up in bed with more than you can handle.

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Cougar
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Cougar

Beverly Rae

Dedication

To all the strong, beautiful women in the world, whatever their age.

Chapter One

“Damn it all, Chase, you know you can’t rip into a couple of campers up from Colorado Springs and expect no one to notice,” Haken snarled, his eyes sparkling with anger.

“I suppose you wouldn’t have done anything?”

Haken averted his gaze for a moment and Chase knew the truth. “I’d have found a less violent way to solve the situation.”

Yeah, right. Chase remembered how easily his claws had slid through their soft white skin and smothered the self-satisfied feeling that their scars would serve as reminders not to mess with poor defenseless animals again.

“I get it. I really do. And I’m not saying I don’t understand why you did it.” Chase opened his mouth to speak, but Haken lifted a hand to cut him off. “But just because the council may sympathize with your intentions doesn’t mean we agree with how you handled it.”

Chase stood his ground, a cool mountain breeze feathering over his nude body, ready for whatever punishment the council gave him. The other werecats milled around the two men, unwilling to join in the discussion yet too curious not to show up at the rare group gathering. *Curiosity may have killed the cat, but these wimps are just plain pussies.*

Haken stalked to the other side of the small bare patch of land, startling the two cubs wrestling nearby. The boys shifted quickly, returning to their human forms before scampering out of the way. “You need to learn how to deal with humans on their level.”

“I don’t like humans and I mix with them only when I have to.” Chase, like most werecats, preferred a solitary life in the woods, living in their cat forms, staying as far from human civilization as possible. Those who liked living in their human forms provided the clan with what few outside provisions they needed.

“Times are changing. It’s growing more difficult to stay away from them. When we come in contact with humans, we have to know how to act. Behaving oddly, much less attacking them, only draws unwanted attention.” Haken narrowed his eyes, his lips drawing back in a snarl. The only difference between Haken’s human and cat displays of anger was the laid-back ears of the predator currently hidden inside the man. “The elders and I have decided you need to learn a lesson.”

He growled at the female gliding too close to Chase, an obvious gesture of attraction. She purred, her yellow gaze fixing on Chase a second more before heeding the leader’s warning.

“Therefore, we’re *asking* you—” Haken locked eyes with Chase, “—to spend time with the humans. Get to know them. Learn to resolve issues without shifting and tearing them apart.”

Asking, my ass. He could refuse, but to do so would insult the leader who had helped him avoid punishment in the past. *Aw, shit. I know I’m going to hate what he’s got planned.* “What does the council want me to do?”

“The human owner of Shiloh Hills Ranch, Bob Tally, knows about us and has agreed to set you up with a job as a ranch hand.” Haken recognized the revulsion in Chase’s expression. “That’s right. Human ranch hands. You can learn how to deal with humans while you’re working alongside them.”

“And if I don’t?”

“Let’s not go down that road yet. Just go and talk to Tally. Then decide.”

He studied the pride leader’s determined yet hopeful face. “Fine. I’ll go. But only to talk.”

“Good.” With the council’s message delivered, Haken turned on his heel and strode out of the clearing. The other cats followed his unspoken direction and hurried into the darkness of the surrounding forest.

Rage flowed through Chase, followed swiftly by disgust. *Spend time among humans? Learn how to interact with them? The idea is ludicrous, not to mention insulting. Hell, I’d rather spend time with a wolf pack.*

Okay, maybe not. But almost. Tired of standing on two legs, he tucked his chin and shifted, dropping to all fours. With a swish of his tail, he darted down the hillside, rushing as though he could outrun the ridiculous sentence.

“So you’re Chase Reya.”

Chase didn’t bother answering since the question sounded more like a statement. Instead, he coolly regarded the seasoned cowboy standing behind the contemporary glass-topped desk that was out of place with the rest of the rustic furnishings in the Shiloh Hills Ranch office. Mounted animal heads—deer, elk, bear but thankfully no pumas—decorated the cabin’s walls. A gun cabinet boasted shotguns and rifles along with one ancient pistol, a collector’s item. If he had to talk to this human, then he’d let the man speak and get the ordeal over with as quickly as possible.

Dressed in jeans and a button-down plaid shirt, Bob Tally was the perfect image of an old-time cowboy. Unlike his movie-star counterparts with their perfect smiles and manicured nails, he was wiry and weather-beaten, with scars marking his hands from years of wrangling cattle and horses. Gray streaked his once-coal-black hair, while wrinkles aged by the sun and laughter framed the intelligent blue eyes scanning him from top to bottom. “Not much on talking, huh?”

When Chase merely lifted an eyebrow, he chuckled and reached out his hand. Chase eyed the outstretched hand and fought the urge to ignore it. He knew a handshake was the acceptable human method

of greeting. Reluctantly, he grasped Bob's hand, gripping it with a firm hold. Bob held on, keeping his grip longer than was necessary until Chase brought his eyes up to meet the older man's.

"Look, son, I know you don't want to be here, but I owe Haken—and your kind—a favor. So let's make this easy on both of us. Agreed?" Bob finally released his hand. "Yeah, I know what you are, but the others don't. So no going down on all fours around here, is that clear?"

"Clear." *Not that it matters since I'm not staying.*

Bob leaned over the desk, palms flat on the smudged surface. "Good. We'll get you settled in the bunkhouse with the rest of the hands." His body language sent the unmistakable message that he'd brook no arguments. "You shouldn't have any problems...if you give it a real chance."

Chase caught the underlying warning in the man's tone and let it roll off his back. "Hold up. I haven't decided if I'm taking this job."

Surprise flickered across Bob's features. "I thought this had already been decided."

"No one decides for me."

The cowboy took his full measure. "I see. Well, it's no skin off my nose but, if you do stay, I don't want any trouble. Understood?"

"I won't start any trouble. *If* I stay."

Bob was a smart one, finishing the thought for Chase. "But you won't run from trouble, either, I bet."

"What's that about trouble, Cousin Bob?"

The older man's mouth fell open, dropping the toothpick he'd balanced between his teeth. Chase pivoted, uneasy that someone had sneaked up behind him, and drew in a sharp breath at the beautiful woman standing in the doorway.

The female grinned first at Bob, then shifted her mocha-colored eyes toward Chase. His body tingled in instinctive sexual recognition, disturbing his calm demeanor. Curly honey-blonde hair framed the sweet face. Full pink lips betrayed the angelic roundness of her features, and Chase wanted nothing more than to take them between his teeth and nibble on the kissable, plump flesh. Soft curves accented her smallish breasts and hips, hips that were perfect for a man to hang on to, and that begged him to force her legs wide to thrust inside her and take a leisurely ride. Saliva flooded his mouth while the material of his jeans pushed back at his cock straining beneath.

"Well, I'll be damned. Shannon, girl, what the hell are you doing here?" Skirting the desk and meeting her halfway, Bob bear-hugged the woman, pressing her arms to her sides and lifting her off her feet. "Figures you'd walk in right when I was talking about trouble. You, my dear cousin, are trouble with a capital *T*. But you're the kind of trouble worth having around."

Let her go. The strange thought hit Chase, unnerving him in its intensity. Although Bob's embrace was not at all sexual in nature, Chase clenched his fists to keep from yanking her out of his hold. *What the hell is wrong with me? She's nothing, no one to me. A human.*

At last Bob released her and they kissed each other on the cheeks. Chase found he could breathe again. Or at least until she turned her attention to him. He struggled to stone-face his expression.

“I’m sorry, Bob. I didn’t mean to interrupt.” She spoke to her cousin, but her eyes were all for Chase.

He heard the alluring call of her sexuality in her dulcet tone and frowned as the heat flushed from his face down to tantalize his testicles. *Who is this female?*

“Don’t you worry about that. We were just finishing up.” Bob barely acknowledged Chase with a tilt of his head. “Chase Reya, this is my cousin and reigning cougar, Shannon Tally.”

“And damn proud of it, too.”

Cougar? Chase sniffed, trying to catch the shifter scent on her. *She’s no shifter. So what can he mean?*

Bob hugged her again. “Tell me what you’re doing here all the way from Georgia.”

Shannon—even her name made his desire for her grow—smiled, keeping her gaze squarely on Chase. “I decided it was high time to visit my favorite cousin.” She dropped her eyes, not in the least way demurely, and scanned him from head to toe. “I’d heard Colorado had some amazing sights and I wanted to see them.” A pink tongue peeked out between the ruby lips, enthralling in its brief appearance. “And what I’ve seen so far makes me want to see more.”

Is she coming on to me? Although werecat females tended to be aggressive in attracting sexual partners, Chase wasn’t sure if human females were the same. *Should I ask? Am I supposed to respond in a certain way?* He’d never considered sex with a human female, but this one had him ready to rut her up, down and every way in between.

“I’m glad you’re here. How about I show you the guest room and let Chase find his own way to the bunkhouse?” Bob lifted an eyebrow at him. “*If* you’re signing on.”

“Yeah. I’m staying.” The words were out of his mouth in an instant. No way could he walk away from this female. At least not until he’d gotten inside her. His cock twitched, already feeling her warmth wrapped around him.

“Good. Then head on out and let the boys fix you up.” Bob pulled Shannon around, breaking her visual lock on Chase. He jerked, physically thrown by the loss of her attention. He followed the pair, silently watching her delectable behind sway as the older man led her out of the office and up the stairs to the second floor.

He tilted his head, still watching them until they turned the corner on the second story and disappeared down the long hallway. His mouth dried up and he gripped the stair railing for support. *I have to have her. One way or another, I have to have her.*

Please be outside. Shannon rushed to the guest bedroom window, hoping Bob hadn’t delayed her too long. *If he’d yakked at me any longer, my ear would’ve fallen off.* At last she’d complained of needing a

rest. But maybe she hadn't gotten away fast enough. Granted, she would still find Chase around the ranch during the next few days, but she needed to see that animal of a man right now. Otherwise she might think she'd dreamed their meeting. Throwing the curtains aside, she pressed her nose against the window pane and scanned the yard below. Ranch hands milled around, hurrying to do whatever ranch hands did.

Where is he? She bit her lip, nerves threatening to take over, and searched the area between the main house and the bunkhouse. *There he is.* His yellow hair shone in the bright light, setting him apart from the other men. But if his hair hadn't marked him, she would've noticed him simply from his confident, powerful swagger. He stopped for a moment, listening as another hand spoke to him.

The flutter in her abdomen signaled another wave of excitement. *Shannon, girl, you've got to get yourself some of that.* She'd come to visit Bob with the single-minded purpose of screwing as many hunky cowboys as she could get between the sheets and anywhere else she could fuck them. But she'd never expected to run into a man like Chase. He was different from the others, wilder than any man she'd ever met. He was everything she'd fantasized in a cowboy—young, tall, tanned and sporting a major bulge in his jeans.

Be careful. The familiar warning sounded in her mind yet, unlike all the times before, she pushed it aside and allowed the dangerous thought entry. *This man could be more than just an amazing hunk of sexuality.* She hadn't felt that particular type of yearning since Jarrod had left her alone and sobbing in front of all her family and friends. A lump formed in her throat and she resolutely swallowed. *I will never let any man hurt me again. Men are for sex and only for sex.*

And she could feel the sexual attraction in her gut. Her body was ready for a hot time in the not-so-old west. One way or another, she'd have him riding her long and hard.

She closed her eyes and imagined how it would be. She lay on the soft grass, enjoying the sun warming her naked body. Chase, nude and glistening with a healthy sheen, lowered his body over hers, the muscles in his arms bulging as he supported himself with his hands next to her head. Rising up, she ran her tongue over the granite-hard pecs, drinking the perspiration off them before it could drip onto her body.

With a quick glance at the real prize, she twisted and cupped his balls in her palm. "Fuck me, cowboy. Try and break me. If you dare."

He groaned and slipped his scorching gaze from her face, over her ready-to-be-sucked nipples and down her flat stomach to the curly blonde patch below. "I don't want to break your spirit, sweet filly. I just want to ride you until you won't ever want anyone else on top of you."

Shannon rocked her hips forward, tempting him to move against her. Adopting a horrible imitation of John Wayne, she quipped, "Cowboy, get ready to get bucked off." *Not that I really want to win this little contest.*

He chuckled, then suddenly grew very intense. Taking her mouth with his, he scraped his teeth against her lips. Slowly, teasingly, he first tugged her upper lip into his mouth, then nibbled on her bottom lip. She

slid her hands along his arms, over the mountainous shoulders and clutched him behind his neck. *I'm never letting you go, cowboy.*

He feathered kisses along her jaw, down her neck and onto her shoulder in a wild race. He nipped at her, licked at her, making her breaths come quicker, faster. Kissing her, he traveled his way between her breasts, along the soft swell of her belly, to pause for a dip into her belly button. The move, surprisingly sensual, made her twitch.

“Shit, Chase. Don’t go swimming in the pond when you can dive into the ocean.”

He cast her a quizzical expression before realization hit. “Don’t worry. I know how to swim really good.”

Scooting back to sit on his legs, he slicked his palms down her side, following the bend of her waist. Pushing her legs apart, he raked his tongue along the curve between her leg and mons, blowing warm air against her skin. She shivered under the hot sun and grabbed his hair. “Lower, Chase. Go lower.”

“Is this low enough?” Shoving his arms under her legs, he lifted her, bringing her bottom off the ground.

“Hey!”

With her buttocks held in the crook of his arms, he thumbed her folds aside and dove in. His mouth latched onto her clit and pulled—hard. Jolting upward, she grabbed his shoulders, but couldn’t hang on. Not with all the shaking her body was doing.

Like a man forbidden to drink for centuries, Chase sucked, tugged, bit and sucked again on her throbbing clit. Crying out, she fell back down and let him eat her up. Her body shook, orgasm after orgasm racing through her, her heart threatening to burst out of her chest. She clutched at the grass beside her, tearing out handfuls as she tried to find some way of surviving the ecstasy. Yet if she had to die, this would be her choice of demise.

Just when she didn’t think she could handle the agonizing pleasure a second more, he tracked his hand up her side, over the curve of her breast to rub his thumb over her nipple. His hand traced a hot trail down to her buttocks again and fondled them. Fingering the crease between her cheeks, he latched onto her wet clit and lashed his tongue around the sensitive nub. The simple touch shot zings of desire into her already-tensed muscles.

“Chase. I’m so wet. Please. Fuck me.”

He answered, his words smothered against her.

She squirmed, hoping to make him go deeper. Instead, he broke free from her. “No. I didn’t want you to stop.”

With a chuckle, he moved to her side and thrust his hand between her legs, his two fingers sliding easily into the wet cave. His thumb took up where his mouth had left off.

Hell, it's not what I'd asked for, but it's still good. Damn good. She arched her pelvis, pushing at him, drawing his fingers deep inside her pussy, clenching the walls of her core. A small wave rolled through her and she clutched at the grass beneath her.

"Oh, shit. I want you inside me. Fuck me, cowboy."

Shannon cried out and spread her legs wider, giving him more room. Room enough to place himself between her legs. His mouth took hers again, plunging his tongue inside her, giving her a taste of him, a taste of her. He moved, gliding over her body and she felt the heat of his erection forcing its way between her legs. No longer able to think, she let her instincts lead her and rubbed against him, urging him to sink his cock into her. The fire burned hotter and wilder inside her. Wrapping her legs around his waist, she thrust her pussy against his crotch and moaned an urgent plea.

Denying her still, he slipped his tongue from her mouth and scorched a path down to find her tits again. Shannon closed her eyes, enjoying the sensation of his teeth nipping at her as he tugged and teased her aching buds. She writhed against him, her nails digging marks into his back and, at last, he answered her call.

He entered her, hard and fast, the size of his shaft creating delicious friction within her vaginal walls. He kept thrusting into her, pounding into her, and she pushed back, urging him to go deeper, faster, harder.

"Shannon?"

"Yes." She squeezed her closed eyes tighter and concentrated on the delicious feel of him inside her. "Oh, yes."

"Shannon, girl, open up. It's me."

Shannon jerked her hand out of her jeans, whirled around and almost fell over in her hurry to the door. *Thank God I locked it. Otherwise, Bob probably would've barged right in.* "Y-yes?"

"If you're feeling up to it, I thought I'd show you around the ranch."

She grinned and sucked her come-slicked fingers clean. "No need, cuz. I know you have work to do. Don't worry about me. I can explore on my own."

"Name's Chase." Chase met the frank looks of the ranch hands with a hard one of his own and waited for someone to question his arrival. *Damn, I hate this.* Within a few moments, however, they'd grown uneasy with his defiant stare and dropped their gazes to continue doing whatever they'd been doing.

All of them except for one. The non-human one.

The werewolf in cowboy's clothing, his legs crossed at the ankles in a careless fashion, leaned against the wall next to a bunk bed and grinned at him. A grin that said, "I know what you are, too."

Chase smothered a low growl. *If he keeps grinning like that I'm gonna have to shove that smirk all the way down his throat.* When the wolf moved, slowly, deliberately, Chase paralleled him, keeping a safe distance between them. *Come on, wolfman, make the first move.*

“Where are you planning on sleeping, c—” Wolfman’s grin grew wider. “Chase, was it?”

He started to call me cat. Chase fought the urge to tell him to go chase a car and never come back. Instead, he walked over to a different bunk bed and tossed his pack on the lower bed. “Here will do. If it’s free.”

Wolfman placed a hand on a young redheaded cowboy sitting at the table where five men were playing poker and acting as if they hadn’t noticed Chase’s arrival. “It’s free. John won’t mind using the top bunk from now on. Will you, John-boy?”

John, his Adam’s apple bobbing with a swallow, nervously glanced between them, then agreed with a curt nod. He averted his gaze and returned to the game.

“You got a last name?”

This hound is getting under my nerves real fast. Even faster than a dog normally would. “Reya.” He leaned over and tested the firmness of the mattress but kept his eyes on the werewolf. *Neither Haken or Bob mentioned a werewolf.* “And who are you?” *The humans’ mascot?*

“Dirk Claxton from around Denver. Ever heard of the Cannons of Denver?”

The Cannons as in Cannon wolf pack. Of course he had. Although he’d never met any of them, he knew their reputation. They were considered the ruling werewolf pack in the state. Maybe even the entire western half of the country.

The squeal of a chair’s hind legs on tortured wood floor announced the departure of another cowhand. They’d started clearing out, alone or in small groups, a minute after Chase walked in. *Good noses can always smell a fight brewing and good brains know when to get out of the way.* “Yeah, I know of them. Never met any of them, though.” He didn’t like the way the wolf had edged toward him, almost as though sizing him up for an attack. *Figures. I haven’t been here an hour before I get thrown out for fighting. But at least this time it’s not with a human.* He took a deep breath, rose and got ready for whatever the shifter threw at him.

Even then he wasn’t ready for Shannon Tally.

“Hi, guys.” She scanned first Chase then Dirk, her eyes glistening with intense interest. “Or should I say *howdy* instead? Do ranch hands really speak cowboy like they do on television?”

The scent of lust filled the room. Chase closed his eyes and sniffed, taking in the heady aroma. Yet the scent wasn’t purely hers. His instant reaction to Shannon’s appearance was met in force by Dirk’s. The werewolf’s attraction to the female was so strong Chase could do more than merely smell it. He could feel it pressing against his skin. Yet, surprisingly, her scent filtered into the mix with as much passion as the combined weres’ desires.

She smells hot and ready for fucking. Chase took in the easy seductive way she moved, obviously aware of their interest, yet accustomed to the admiration. *She’s regal. Like a queen in her castle.* Maybe her carriage came with her age, since she was older. While she had the confidence of a woman well into her

late thirties, she retained the vitality, the allure, the beauty of a young female. Her hips flared nicely in the skin-tight jeans while the vee of her blouse highlighted her small but perky chest. A knowing smile lifted the corners of her lips, highlighting the turned-up nose that crinkled when the smile turned into a grin.

Again the urge hit him, making him momentarily forget about the werewolf. *I have to have her. And once I do, I can get the hell out of this place.*

“What’s wrong, boys?” Shannon paused, dragging their attention to her and only her. “Did I interrupt a little male bonding?” She smothered the urge to giggle. Why weren’t these two talking? Sure, she was used to having a strong effect on the opposite sex, but this was ridiculous. *Hell, their tongues are almost hanging out of their mouths. Yep, this is gonna be fun.*

Of course, she’d known that the second she’d laid eyes on delectable Chase. Although finding him alone with another hunk had thrown her for a moment, she’d recovered quickly. *Please, God, tell me they’re not gay.* Not that she had anything against players from the other team, but she so wanted a good long taste of Chase. And the second cowboy, too.

Nope. No maybe about it. She wanted them both. Preferably together. All she had to do was make it happen.

Her gaze drifted back to Chase. *Maybe I’ll play with him more than the other... Nope, girl, keep it fun and free. No attachments—other than the physical ones tenting up their jeans.* She dropped her attention to their crotches, focusing on the goal in mind.

She moved a little closer to the shorter, stockier man. He was the exact opposite of Chase but just as yummy. Where Chase was lean, he was broad. Where Chase radiated a cheetah-like smoothness, a sleek animal ready to spring at her in the next second, this one exuded a slow but steady brute-like quality. Just as she’d hoped, the ripples of tension wafting off Chase hyped up.

“Hi, I’m Shannon Tally. Bob’s cousin from the South.” Giving him an ooh-you-are-so-yummy look, she imagined the tall lanky cowboy naked and positioned between her legs while the other sucked on her tits. Or maybe they’d stand, with one nailing her from the front and the other from the back. “And you are...?”

“No one. He’s no one.”

Ooh, jealous already? Very juicy. “Wow, Chase, talk about rude.” She flattened her palm on the other man’s chest and delighted in the way his heart picked up speed. “And you’re wrong. I’m sure he’s someone. Someone very special.” She met the shorter man’s sky-blue eyes and held on. “Tell me your name, cowboy.”

“Dirk. Dirk Claxton, sugar.”

Sugar. How cute. She lowered her gaze to slide over his slightly opened mouth then back to his eyes. “I’m happy to meet you, Dirk, Dirk Claxton.” *Did his eyes change color? Naw, couldn’t have. But I would’ve sworn...*

A low rumble from Chase interrupted her thoughts. *How odd. Did Chase just growl? And he’d moved closer. Sweet.* She placed her other palm on his chest, holding back both men. His heart, just like Dirk’s, raced against her skin.

Slowly, seductively, she ran her palms in circles around their chests, delighting in the rugged firmness of each man. *I wonder if they’re both as hard down there?* She let her hands skim down their shirts, enjoying the way their abs tightened beneath the thick material, and stopped an inch above the waistlines of their jeans. *Easy, Shannon. Take your time.* She paused, giving them a chance to back away, take her hand—something.

But neither man moved, neither one giving an inch to the other. She dropped her hands to her side, closed her eyes and took a breath to enjoy the palpable sexual awareness between the cowboys. *Holy shit. I do believe I’ve won the horny sweepstakes with these two.*

Without warning, she pushed against Dirk, pressing her breasts against his chest. He stiffened, but in a good way. She ran her hands along his arms until she took his face in her hands. *I bet Chase is watching this big-time. Are you jealous, Chase?*

Dirk exhaled the moment their lips touched, breathing warm air into her mouth. She took his breath inside her. Sticking her tongue in his mouth, she lapped up the taste of him. His hands gripped her ass, thrusting her pelvis against his bulging crotch. The flame of her desire surprised her and, for a moment, she was tempted—hell, more than tempted—to push her jeans down and beg him to eat her. She teetered on the brink, closer than she’d ever expected to come and pushed against him. Dirk, however, kept her there and nibbled on her lips.

Damn. What have I started? I don’t want Chase to think I’ve chosen Dirk over him. She nipped him back and struggled between what she knew she should do and what she wanted to do. *Oh, screw it. Screw me. Even with Chase standing by, watching. Hell, especially with Chase watching.*

Suddenly, Dirk wrenched away from her, leaving her bereft and unsatisfied. *What the hell?* A furious Dirk pulled Chase’s hand off his arm, then stood chest to chest with the angry man.

“Back the hell up, cat-man. In fact, why don’t you scat and leave us alone?”

Cat-man? But Shannon didn’t have time to wonder about the odd name. *Forget that. Check out the expression on Chase’s face. Jealous doesn’t remotely cover it.*

Chase chest-bumped Dirk, his hands clenched at his side. “Leave her alone, dog face.”

What is it with these two and their weird name-calling? Shannon could almost see the steam radiating from the men. Any other woman would try and cool them down. Or run away. But she wasn’t any other woman. Instead, she stepped between them, getting squashed against them.

“Settle down, boys. No harm done. In fact...” she turned to confront the tawny-headed hunk, “...if you’d waited another minute or two, I’d have had time to do this.”

Grabbing him by the shirt, she tugged Chase forward and slammed her mouth on his. He beat her to the punch, however, by getting his tongue into her mouth first. She fought to keep her triumph from showing on her face. She fondled the firm roundness of his ass and groaned into his kiss. He tasted musky, like Dirk had, yet different. His kiss had something else. A tangy indefinable something, reminding her of the untamed outdoors she longed to explore. He took her breast and rubbed his thumb over her already-taut nipple. A soft mew escaped her. Covering his hand with hers, she encouraged him to do more, take more. Where Dirk had excited her, Chase drove her crazy. *Fuck me. Fuck me hard over and over again. Damn, how I want to make my fantasy come true.*

Without warning, the kiss ended, making her gasp in surprise and disappointment. She stepped away, unsteady on her feet, turning her head to try and hide her emotions.

Shit. When did I lose control of the situation? I was supposed to be the tease, not them. Pulling herself together, she got ready for their gloating. After all, they’d taken control and used her horniness against her. What she saw on their faces, however, nearly buckled her knees.

Chapter Two

Chase and Dirk stood shoulder to shoulder, staring at her. Each man's gaze bore into her, yet she no longer saw the men inside those eyes. Instead, they looked at her like she was game to be eaten, a deer caught in the hunt, ready to be played with, then slaughtered.

She gritted her teeth, gathered her last bit of strength and smiled. "Whew. I have to admit, guys, I didn't expect that." She struggled to even out her breathing before she took the next step. "But I enjoyed every bit of it. With both of you." Tossing her head to make her curls bounce, she swayed provocatively to the door, paused with her hand on the doorknob, then glanced back over her shoulder. "I'm definitely going to enjoy playing with both you boys." With a wink, she opened the door and walked out.

Once the door closed behind her, Shannon released the pent-up air she'd held and tried to steady her nerves. Both men exuded an extra animal-like sexuality, but she knew she'd come face-to-face with something more, something she'd tried to protect herself from for the past ten years. Mentally she strengthened the emotional wall she'd built the day Jarrod had dumped her at the altar, lifted her chin in defiance and strode back to the house.

Seeing Shannon kiss the wolf churned Chase's insides into a volcanic boil. Dirk's hands on her ass drove him to the brink of insanity, obsessing with the need to take the shifter by his hair and toss him through the wall. Although tormented by the sight of his female—because she would be his one way or another—he kept his hands fisted at his side and didn't wrap them around the canine's throat. Instead, he held his fury in check and did the only thing he could do. He pulled them apart. Then she kissed him back, unleashing every ounce of passion he'd tried to contain.

He thrust his tongue into her mouth, wished he was thrusting his shaft inside her instead, and soaked up all her flavors. Swishing his tongue around, he swept away the werewolf's saliva, literally cleansing her with his own. Yet the kiss, instead of cooling the boil of the lava roiling within him, stirred the heat, sending the burn to a higher, hotter level. He gripped her breast, contenting himself with rubbing her tit instead of ripping her clothes off and sucking her nipple. When she covered his hand with hers, he silently shouted victory and then quietly died inside.

He had no choice but to break free. No choice unless he wanted to push her over the edge of the table and ram her from behind. But he wouldn't do that with the werewolf watching. Instead, he released her,

then watched her stride in that sexy walk of hers right out of the room. He bit back the words to beg her to stay.

I don't know what just happened, but I'm damn sure going to find out. In the same moment, Chase and Dirk glared at each other, then turned in opposite directions. Chase was determined not to show the wolfman how much she unsettled him, no matter how much he ached for her. After all, she'd kissed the damn dog first. He couldn't help but wonder which kiss she'd enjoyed more.

The two men studiously ignored each other, saying nothing. Chase attempted to think of other things—how long he'd have to stay at the ranch, how he would deal with humans—but every thought came back to the curly-locked blonde who'd awakened a primal need he hadn't known existed.

Shit, I never counted on this. Being with humans and now a werewolf is going to be hard enough. But seeing her every day, wanting her every second... Chase drew in a ragged breath. *Damn.* He lifted his gaze toward the door but, instead, found the wolf staring at him. “What the fuck are you looking at?”

Dirk remained stoic, his features blank. Yet Chase could sense his underlying bemusement. “She's something, isn't she?”

“Yeah, you could say so.” *And she's mine. Or will be if I have anything to say about it.*

Dirk chuckled, finally letting the humor hidden beneath show on his face. “You do have a way of understating things, kitty.”

Chase was beside him before Dirk made it to the door. “I'm no kitty and you'd do well to keep that in mind.” *Come on, dog breath, let's get this on, fang to fang. Right now a fight would do me good.*

Irritatingly, however, Dirk ignored the warning and looked out the window. Chase followed his lead to see Shannon talking with her cousin on the wraparound porch of the white country-style main house. The wind buffeted her curls, blowing them into her face. Brushing them back, she shook her head and laughed. Bob pointed at the corral and she turned, giving Chase an even more delectable view.

She's beautiful. Chase took her in, devouring every inch of her rounded curves, the tightness of her jeans accentuating the cleft between her legs, the rise of her breasts. Although he'd heard of other weres taking human females—sometimes even for their mates—he'd never considered the idea of fucking one. Until now. *Shit.*

“You want her.”

Chase ignored Dirk's comment, keeping his attention on Shannon. *Go away, little doggie.*

“Well, that's just too damn bad.”

Figures he'd say so. Chase shifted far enough to change the shape of his eyes, letting them narrow into slits. “Is that so?”

“Yeah, it is.”

Although he knew where the conversation was headed, he had to go with it. To blow it off would be too much like backing down. No way would he back down to some mangy-haired mutt. “How so?”

“Because she’s mine.”

Chase resisted the urge to snarl. Instead, he crossed his arms—as much to act nonchalantly as to keep from breaking the dog’s back—and focused on Shannon’s movements while keeping Dirk in his peripheral vision. “Hmm. So, you’ve marked her? Fast work, pup. Especially since you two just met.”

Dirk tensed, a slight change in his demeanor, but nonetheless, Chase caught it. “Who said anything about marking her?”

Why did my thoughts go in that direction? As though the werewolf would take her as his mate. Chase snorted at Dirk’s questioning look. “Don’t you hounds always stick with one bitch for life?”

“After we’re finished nailing every other bitch we want first. Trust me, cat-man, I’ll have that pretty little thing sucking my dick before the week’s out.”

Not if I can help it. Chase shot the man a challenging smirk. “If it’s going to take you that long, then you’d better forget it. She’ll be flat on her back with her legs wrapped around me before the sun comes up tomorrow.”

“Seriously, man. I know cats think they rule the world and everything in it, but are all you guys so delusional?”

“Not delusional. Justifiably confident.”

“Then it sounds like we have a problem.”

“Really?” Chase pulled the door open and paused. “No problem here that I can see. Aside from having to worry about catching fleas.” Enjoying the annoyed expression on Dirk’s face, Chase stepped into the bright sunlight.

“Dang, did you see the honkers on that woman?”

Honkers? Chase rolled from his back to sit on the edge of the bunk bed. The ranch hands sitting around the table took turns tossing coins and cards to the center in yet another game of poker. The way Chase figured it, humans enjoyed wasting time doing trivial things. So far he’d managed to get along with most of the hands mainly because he kept to himself and stayed out of the way. But this new topic of conversation caught his attention.

“Yep, she may be a little long in the tooth, but she’s still got a smokin’ bod. Man, those legs go all the way to her chin.” The cowboy called Mick bumped his fists against the first man’s. “Plus, I heard from one of the men at the tack store that she’s ready to ride any young stud that’ll give her a good bucking. Emphasis on the young part.”

The men chuckled, adding lecherous murmurs of agreement that rankled Chase’s nerves. Although they hadn’t mentioned Shannon by name, he knew they were talking about her and their talk both irritated and confused him. What was it about humans and sex? In his world, sex was shared freely and openly between one or more partners. Humans, from what he’d observed, had too many rules and taboos about the

natural act. In fact, he was thankful that Shannon's attitude about sex was more shifter-like than human. But it didn't make it any easier to hear them talk disrespectfully about her.

Mick flipped his cards toward the middle of the table and took a swig of his beer. "Yes, sir, boys. Shannon Tally is a real live cougar."

Cougar again? Don't humans know what a cougar is? Or does this word mean something different in human-speak? He muttered a curse and decided he had to know. "What do you mean she's a cougar?"

All the cowhands stared at him as though he'd asked if they could shift into two-headed birds. Mick snorted and let out a raucous laugh. "You're shitting me. You don't know what a cougar is?"

Keep cool, Chase. Don't let this worthless human get to you. "The only cougars I know are mountain lions."

Mick pushed back his chair, tilting it on the back legs so he could lean perilously backward. His wide smirk grew bigger. "Where the fuck were you raised? With wolves?"

Dirk, who had remained silent until now, sputtered his beer. "Like hell he did. Wolves would've had him for a snack. A tough, tasteless snack. Watch how you talk about wolves, Mick."

The cowboy paused to consider Dirk's strange remark, then let it drop to turn back to Chase. "A cougar is an older woman who still has a hot bod and likes fucking younger men. She's in her prime."

"Her prime what?" Chase hated asking this jerk, but he had no choice. He had to know.

Another round of laughter circled the table. "Her sexual peak, of course. That's why a cougar woman wants to have sex with younger men. Older dudes can't keep up with her." Mick eyed Chase suspiciously. "Are you planning on taking our little Shannon for a ride? Because if you do, then be sure to get in line fast. Otherwise, you'll get stuck with sloppy seconds."

Chase was on his feet, killing the raucous laughter of the men and bunching Mick's shirt in a tight grip. He wasn't sure what sloppy seconds meant, but he sensed it was a derogatory term. And he'd be damned if he'd let this human talk about Shannon that way. "Why you lousy hu—" Without wanting to, he shifted, allowing his eyes to change and his teeth to grow. Mick's eyes grew wide and he sensed the man's heartbeat beating faster.

"Hey, Chase old boy, take it down a notch, will ya? After all, we wouldn't want anyone to get hurt, right?" Dirk wrenched him away from a very scared and cowed Mick. Leaning in, Dirk warned, "Careful, puddy-cat. You're about to show your claws."

Chase closed his eyes, forcing his inner animal back into submission.

Coughing, Mick stumbled to the opposite side of the room, nearly bumping into the door Bob stepped through. Bob surveyed the room, taking in the now-very-quiet Mick and then landing his gaze on Chase and Dirk. "What's going on?"

Chase knocked Dirk's hand away and slid back onto his bunk bed. "Nothing."

Dirk shot him a warning glance. "That's right. Nothing at all."

But Bob didn't buy it. "That true, Chase? Mick?" Neither man answered. "Dirk, how's our new hand getting along?"

Chase bristled. *Why the hell is he asking that mutt? Like he's my master or something.* He bit back a snarl.

"Not bad." Dirk didn't bother covering his smirk. "He needs to learn how we do things around here is all. But don't worry. I'll be happy to give him the benefit of my experience."

Chase nearly choked on the thought. *Why that skuzzy hound!*

"Good. Just make sure no one—" he sent Chase a pointed look, "—causes any trouble. Every hand's part of a working crew and I expect all of you to get along."

Getting along in the human world obviously means taking a certain amount of shit from another hand without tearing his heart out. Chase leaned on the wall behind his bunk and glared at the worn comforter. *I'd better go back to avoiding the rest of them until I get out of this place.* He bit back a growl. *Unless Shannon's involved.*

Shannon ran her gaze over the shirtless man shoving a pitchfork into the hay. He worked with his back to her, muscles rippling in his broad shoulders, highlighting the bulge of each tendon as he lifted load after load of hay from the stack over to the floor of the horse pen. Perspiration glistened on his body, showing off more of his fine definition. Worn jeans, frayed at the bottom where the cuffs met scuffed boots, settled an inch or so below his lean waist, tempting her to push them even lower. His thick blond hair lay at the back of his neck, wrapping around to fall in front of him whenever he bent over.

And oh, when he bent over! She tilted her head, zoning in on the firm round ass pushed her way with each forward thrust of the pitchfork.

He'd taken his sweet time, but she was glad she'd waited for Chase to find his way to the stables. After giving him thirty minutes inside, she'd slipped across the yard toward the barn. "Fancy meeting you here, cowboy."

Chase rested the pitchfork against the stall. A smile flashed across his face before being replaced by a somber, uninterested expression.

Yeah, right. Like I really believe you're not happy to see me.

Making sure she moved her hips in a practiced way meant to allure even the most resistant of men, Shannon crossed over to him, getting close. Very close. She could smell the sweat mixed with another aroma, his personal scent of desire. *I wonder what he smells like in bed? During sex? After sex?* An image of Chase strapped to her bed flashed through her mind. *Fantasies, like wishes, can come true. If you're willing to make them come true. And I'm more than willing.*

"Pretty corny line."

Again, she studied his expression. Or rather the lack of one. *Don't even try to hide your feelings, big guy. No one can kiss me the way you did and then pretend he's not ready to kiss me again. Kiss me and more.* She tossed her curls and sidled over to him. "Yeah, I know. But I like the old-fashioned pickup lines."

He narrowed his eyes and a slight edge of smugness played at the corners of his lips, betraying his aloofness. "Does that mean you're trying to, uh, pick me up?"

He sounded unsure of the phrase which only made him that much sweeter. Taking his hands, she pulled on the fingers of his work gloves, slowly removing them and letting them fall to the ground.

"Trying? Oh, honey hunk, I never simply try." She looked at him—*oh, how I love a tall man*—and tiptoed her way up to plant a peck on his lips. "I just do it."

He licked his lips, tasting the chaste kiss. With a flicker of emotion across his face, he finally let go of his pretence. "Then just do it."

He reached for her, but she slipped out of his grasp and walked toward the back of the stable. She suddenly felt like the cat teasingly playing with a mouse. A very delectable masculine mouse. "You know, I've always wondered if I'd enjoy a roll in the hay. Seems to me hay would make for an itchy bed." *Good. He's following. As if there was ever any doubt.*

"You're right. Hay is itchy. But if you're getting fucked the right way, you won't notice."

She arched an eyebrow in silent question. "And you would know, right? Having had lots of willing fillies in the hay?"

He didn't answer, instead letting her figure it out on her own. At the back wall, in the dim light sneaking through the boards, she unbuttoned the first button on her blouse. When he didn't say anything, she undid the next one, continuing until her shirt lay open to her waist to reveal the swell of her breasts. He blinked, his eyes altering somehow.

Wider? No, narrower. I wish I could see his pupils right now. I bet they're as big as all of Colorado.

"Chase." Saying his name was all she needed to do. He was by her side, faster than she'd have thought possible. But the end result was all that mattered.

And yet he didn't touch her. She frowned, unable to believe he hadn't pulled her into his arms. But he wanted her, she had no doubt. His breathing came in shallow puffs, his mouth slightly parted in invitation while his gaze slid from her throat to the valley between her breasts.

At last, he reached out, using only his index finger to lightly graze over her breast. She inhaled, stunned at the response that small touch sent through her body. If one finger could heat her up that much, his cock would likely burn her alive. She'd gladly die in that fire.

Intrigued, she kept her hands at her side and waited for his next move. Dragging his fingertip along the curve of her breast, he paused at the edge of her blouse. She heard the ragged intake of his breath and matched it with one of her own, then held her breath. *Shit, don't stop now.*

He let out a burst of air and slipped his fingers under the blouse until finally his hand hid under the loose material. And still he hadn't touched her nipple. She straightened, wanting to force him to feel her until she either exploded or pushed his hand where she wanted it.

At last, he continued the torturously slow path toward her aching tit. His fingers finally slid over her taut nub, burning the nipple as though he'd lit a match to her skin. She arched, unable to do anything else.

"Look at me."

She did as he commanded and lost herself in the conflicted expression on his face. "Yes?" She hadn't meant to whisper, but her voice had suddenly lost its strength. *Tell me anything. Tell me everything.* Without warning, she realized she wanted more from him. But more than sex? She hadn't wanted more from any man in a very long time.

"If I go on, I won't stop."

His hand closed over her breast and her knees almost buckled. "If you stop, I'll kill you."

Surprise burst into his eyes, soon replaced with amusement. "What if someone comes in? What about your cousin?"

"He's off running an errand. As for the others...I don't mind putting on a show if you don't." *Not as long as you're my costar.*

He considered her explanation, then slid his other hand under her shirt and cupped both breasts. Pushing the blouse aside, he tugged it from her jeans then shoved it off her shoulders, down her arms to slide to the ground.

She shivered under his frank appraisal, confused at her shy response. *After all the lovers I've had, why am I acting like a timid virgin?*

Chase growled, a low, slow rumble in his throat that sent a different kind of shiver through her. He angled his head and enclosed her mouth with his. Hot musk filled her mouth, spicier than she remembered from the earlier kiss. Sucking on her tongue, he followed with not-so-tender bites to her lips, sweeping along her lips to flick his tongue in the corners. She moaned, wanting more with each nibble.

Yet he still hadn't touched her anywhere else. As though he'd read her mind, he suddenly grabbed her butt, pressing her breasts to his chest. Her firm tits flattened against the unyielding expanse and she arched backward to push her tits harder against him. Her hands slid behind him, becoming slick with his sweat. Running over the contours that were so like the rugged hills surrounding the ranch, she dug her fingernails into him, wanting to leave her mark.

This man is dangerous. Physically, and even more frighteningly, emotionally. Part of her, the part that kept her invisible wall fortified, warned her to stay away from him while another side, the side she hadn't heard from in years, called to her, urging her to take another chance.

He hissed in pain and broke their kiss. Yet he didn't appear angry. Instead, he looked pleased. "Using your claws already?"

Claws? As in nails? She tilted her head to study him. “I don’t mind a little pain. Do you?”

“Not that kind of pain.”

That kind? She dove into his eyes, searching. *Does he know the same type of pain I know? The kind that leaves scars on the inside?* She tried to calm down, returning to the guarded persona she knew so well.

His eyes glowed, the hazel giving way to the growing golden flecks and becoming more slanted than she remembered. “So are you up for a little fun?”

“Little?” She dropped her gaze to his crotch. “I sure hope not.”

“Don’t worry about that. Let’s get you naked.” He made that growling sound again, reached for her and yanked her jeans and thong down her legs, almost knocking her to the ground. He lifted her legs one by one, like he was shoeing a horse, and jerked her boots off.

“Hey, I’m not going to be the only one playing nudist. Drop ’em, handsome.”

He hurriedly shucked his boots and jeans. The lean waist that had hinted at the sizable package under the jeans hadn’t lied. Tawny hair, not unlike her own golden curls, framed his dick, already oozing with his pre-come. She took in every inch of him—every *horny* inch—and licked her lips.

“Oh, man.” Her pussy flooded with cream, her nipples hardened and she ached for his touch. “I can’t wait for you to fuck me.”

“First things first.” Chase took her by the arms, stared at her for a moment, then turned her around. “I want to see your ass.”

“My ass?” *Ah, he’s a tush man.*

“You’ve teased me long enough with that sexy walk of yours. I want to see what drives it.”

Placing a hand between her shoulder blades, he bent her forward. She placed her hands flat against the wall and spread her legs, sticking out her buttocks for him.

“So? What do you think? Is it everything you imagined?”

“And more.”

“Sheesh. I hope not too much more.”

He knelt, taking her cheeks and squeezing them. “I’ve wanted to squeeze these ever since I watched you walk up the stairs with Bob.”

The slap on her rump startled her. “Ow.”

“I thought you could take a little pain.”

“I can. When I’m expecting it.”

“With me, sugar, you’d better expect anything.”

A second slap smarted her right cheek, stinging into her backside. She dropped her head and watched her boobs jiggle from the strike. “Spank me again. I’ve been a bad, bad girl.”

“And I bet you’re very good at being bad.”

“Cowboy, you have no idea.” She wiggled her ass at him, challenging him to strike her one more time.

“Then you deserve this.” He smacked her a third time, slightly harder than the others, but she was ready for it.

“Damn, how I love a nice rosy ass. So round and pink. In fact, I want to take a bite out of it.” He grazed his teeth from the middle of her butt, over the still-stinging flesh and into the cleft between them. Taking her by the legs, he swept his tongue from the top of the crevice down and then back up.

The wetness between her legs grew to a flood. She moaned, closed her eyes and bent even lower, opening herself to him. “Ram your cock into me, cowboy. I need you to shove it deep inside me.”

“In time. Let’s not rush a good thing.” He skated his hand between her legs and she shifted, placing her feet farther apart. Gliding his fingers between her folds, he caught her throbbing nub between his thumb and finger—and twisted.

Shannon yelped in pain and bolted upward.

He stopped her, pushing her back into position. “All you have to do is say the word and I’ll stop.”

Although he’d surprised her again, she couldn’t stand the thought of his not touching her. “Don’t you dare.” She reached between her legs, found his hand resting on the curve of her leg and covered her pussy with it. “Rub me, Chase. Rub me while you bite me.”

“You want me to *bite* you?”

The way he said the word alarmed her, but not as much as it excited her. “Yeah, bite me. Bite me like you mean it.”

He moved his fingers, rubbing, stroking, pinching her clit. Her come burst from her, her breath coming in ragged pants, her mind growing fuzzier while her body grew more alive. Supporting herself with one hand, she fondled her tit, rubbing her palm against her nipple.

Floating little bites along the line of her buttocks—*harder!*—Chase worked his way from one cheek to the other. Moving back toward the center, he paused, sucked her flesh into his mouth, then let go. He nipped her tender clit between his fingers, massaging it, tweaking it until, at last, he bit her, sinking his teeth into the fleshy roundness of her butt.

“Argh!” The climax erupted deep within her pussy, shooting outward in shockwaves. Her legs trembled with the effort to stand. “Oh, shit. You really bit me. And hard.” Her warm blood trickled over her bottom and slid down her leg.

“You told me to.” His voice grew gruffer, harsher. “I couldn’t stop myself. But I didn’t bite deep enough to—”

“It’s okay.” *Hell, it’s more than okay. I want him to bite me again. Either that or...* “Oh, shit, Chase.” Another smaller climax sent aftershocks along her legs. “You’ve got me so hot. Fuck me now before I can’t stand up any longer.”

Chase rose, turning her toward him. He latched onto one tit with his hand and the other with his mouth. His tongue battered her nub and she clutched his hair to keep him close. Taking turns with each nipple, he ran his other hand between her legs and thrust a finger inside her aching pussy.

"Damn it. Fuck me," she panted, even though his fingers were doing a great job of fucking her. Still, she wanted more.

He popped her tit out of his mouth and chuckled, tickling the moist tip with his warm breath. "Are you always this impatient?"

"Only when I want something as much as I want this." *As much as I want you.*

"You're so damn wet. So hot." He nuzzled his face into her breast. "Get on your knees." Placing his hands on her shoulders, he guided her to the ground. Hay tickled her legs, but she soon forgot that when she came level with the wavy patch surrounding the long, thick shaft. "Suck me, Shannon. Suck me first. Then I'll fuck you until your legs give out."

She took him in her hand, thrilling at how soft the tip felt. Gently squeezing him, she wrapped her hand around him and tentatively slid her palm from the tip to the base. His impressive shaft curved ever so slightly, purplish-blue veins running the entire length of it to meet together at the large mushroom cap. *If ever there was a perfect cock, this is it.*

A thunderous roll of lust whipped through her and her pussy clenched in anticipation. *No man has ever made me this hot without fucking me. Not this fast.* "I love your dick. It's thick, warm and juicy. Hell, all I need is mustard to top off this hot dog."

He tensed up and went still.

"Did I say something wrong?"

Chase relaxed, then caressed her hair and tweaked her nipple. "No, it's okay. Come on, baby. Stop talking and put your mouth to good use."

"Hey. Watch it, bub." Taking his joke in stride, she laid her palm against his flat abdomen and circled her tongue around the weeping tip. Even that small touch burst a myriad of flavors into her mouth. *Yummy.* Chase tasted salty, musky, with a hint of something untamed. His dick jerked in response and she felt more than heard the rumble of his moan. The river between her legs boiled with heat.

Unable to wait another second, she dragged him into her mouth. He tensed, gripping her hair until it hurt, but she didn't care. Tasting his cock was the only thing that mattered. She slurped him inside, released him and did it again. He groaned and spread his legs wider. Sliding one hand to cover his taut butt cheek, she brushed the head of his dick across her lips, making a sexual lip gloss from his wet come.

"You taste sinfully good." Judging from the rise and fall of his stomach, she figured he couldn't respond. Satisfied with the control she had over him, she slipped him back into her mouth and tracked her tongue around his length, sucking whenever she needed to rest her tongue.

Taking her curls in both hands, he tugged her forward, driving his shaft deeper into her mouth. She choked but didn't resist. She'd take every inch of him, no matter what. Her pulsating pussy wouldn't let her do anything else. She slid her middle finger over her tender clit and rubbed. The instant she touched herself, another climax roared through her and she tightened her grip on him.

"That's it. Pull. Drag it back in. Don't be afraid of hurting me."

She glanced up, taking that second to flick her tongue over the tip before plunging him back inside. Chase locked his gaze on her, his eyes glazed over, his features hardening. She wiggled the tips of her fingers through the soft patch at the base and pushed against him, then released him inch by agonizing inch.

"Damn. Why didn't anyone tell me we had a show going on?"

Chapter Three

Chase yanked away from her, throwing her off balance and dropping her to her hands. He made a fierce feral sound and stumbled farther into the shadows, snatching up his clothes as he went. *He acts like a wild animal.* Shannon looked up, stunned and more than a little annoyed, to find Dirk leaning against the frame of a nearby stall. Wiping the hay from her hands and her legs, she rose on shaky legs and fisted her hands on her hips. “Hi, Dirk.”

His eager gaze surveyed her, his eyes glowing with appreciation. “Evening, Shannon.”

“What the fuck are you doing here?” A fully clothed and irritated Chase stepped in front of her and handed her shirt to her. She drew the shirt on and took her time buttoning it up. *Should I get Dirk to leave so I can finish with Chase? Or ask him to join us? Hell, I’m so horny I could split into hot little pieces.*

Dirk sported a sexy smirk. “Uh, looks like you’re the one doing the fucking. Or at least *trying* to.”

Until you interrupted us.

“Get out, dog.”

The anger in Chase’s voice was unmistakable. And a little disappointing. *No way is he ready for a threesome, which only leaves the choice of taking them one at a time. Unless I use this opportunity to ratchet up the tension between these two and make them want me any way they can get me—including sharing.*

Chase started forward, his coiled yet fluid movements reminding her of a predator ready to strike its victim. Shannon grabbed his arm, holding him back. “Hey, let’s not make a big deal out of this.” She tossed her hair, shaking it into place. “How long have you been standing there, Dirk? And more importantly, did you enjoy the show?”

“Long enough to know you like getting finger-fucked. Not to mention how my good buddy Chase likes to get blown.” His lecherous grin answered the second question.

Again Chase broke free of Shannon’s grip and lunged forward. She hurriedly took his arm with both hands this time.

Laughing, Dirk backpedaled, palms up. “Take it easy, man. No need to get so riled.”

“Get the hell out before I throw you out.”

“Sure, sure. Don’t go sharpening your claws, you old tomcat.”

Chase snarled at Dirk, pulling his lips back and showing his teeth.

Wow, he does sound like a tomcat. A really big, mean human tomcat with large eyeteeth. “Dirk, could you give us a moment? Or did you want something else?” Shannon kept her grip on the fuming man beside her. “Take it easy, Chase.” Yet she had to admit, his jealousy made her feel sexy and wanted...and, surprisingly, safe.

Dirk’s eyes looked different. More yellow? She squinted. *Naw. Chase’s eyes look yellow, too. It’s probably just the dimming light.*

“I sure do, sugar. I’d like to have some of your sweet lovin’, too. ’Course, with the way Chase is acting you’ll probably have to choose between us.”

Probably? She studied him closer. *So Dirk is up for an orgy. Hmm.* “And you wouldn’t mind getting in on a little three-way action?” She glanced at Chase and saw him grit his teeth. *Now if only I can talk him into doing a little two-on-one. The man’s acting like we’re a couple. A monogamous, one-man-one-woman couple.*

“As long as I get what I want, I could handle it. Even if it means having this alley cat around.”

“I’m not sharing anything with this hound dog.”

Again with the animal names? Confident that Chase wouldn’t tear Dirk’s head off, Shannon pulled on her boots and jeans, letting the two men stew while she decided what to do. Which did she want? A threesome or a fight? *Ooh, maybe a fight and then a threesome? Hmm, what a nice choice to have. Yep, things are definitely looking up.*

“Come on, old buddy.” Dirk moved closer yet still kept his distance. “You can’t tell me you wouldn’t love seeing Ms. Thang here sucking me off while she spreads her firm round ass for you.” He chuckled. “You may act like you wouldn’t, but I saw your eyes spark up at the thought of it. So quit playing the she’s-my-woman-and-I-ain’t-sharing routine and let’s get this party going.”

Shannon studied Chase, the way he dodged her gaze by averting his own, and knew the big man wasn’t telling the truth. *Dirk’s right. But getting Chase to admit it is another matter.* “I tell you what, boys. Let’s all sleep on the idea—especially you, Chase—and we’ll talk again tomorrow. Until then, I’ve got a date with a vibrator.”

Blowing them each a kiss, she sauntered out of the stable.

Shannon towed her hair dry, then ran her fingers through the natural curls, staring at her reflection in the old mirror over the beat-up dresser. If she stayed here, she’d have to talk to her cousin about updating the furnishings in her room.

If I stay here? She passed the comb through her hair and questioned the Shannon in the mirror. “What the hell are you thinking? Why would you stay on a ranch away from your job, your friends, hell, your entire life?”

Chase's face flashed before her and she blinked, unsettled at his image's sudden appearance. *Pulease. Like I'd stick around for some sweaty cowboy. Wham, bam and thank ya, man. That's my motto.* A motto she was determined to keep. She *pfed* out her disbelief and continued getting ready.

But what if what she'd sensed from him was real? That he wanted her for more than a quick romp in the hay? After all, hadn't his jealousy toward Dirk gone above and beyond the normal male chest-beating she was used to when a couple of bucks had to share her? She bit her lip and, for a rare moment, allowed her defenses to fall. If she had another chance at happiness, at finding love, would she take it? Would the reward be worth risking another heartbreak? She caught herself smiling at the reflection and whirled away. *Knock it off, Shannon. Remember what happened.*

Jarrold's face, closed and unfeeling, rocked her, making her relive the embarrassment, the torture of his rejection. A small cry escaped her as the emotions of that day swept over her. Why hadn't she seen the signs before her wedding day? Why hadn't he told her that he didn't love her anymore before she'd walked down the rose-strewn aisle? How had she missed his affair with her best friend? She had believed in love and believed in him. No way would she ever make the same mistake again.

She snatched up her sundress, slipped it over her head and let it fall around her curves. No, she was mistaken about Chase. He'd turn out like every other man. All he wanted from her was sex, and once he got it, he'd toss her away.

She faced her other self again, fisted her hands on her hips and grinned. "Too bad for you, Mr. Reya, because once I get you fucked good and hard, I'll do the tossing."

r u ready for some action?

Shannon heeled the rocking chair into motion, checked her phone again and frowned. *Who's clax253?* Obviously it was someone who'd gotten hold of her cell phone number *and* knew she was horny as hell. *But then again, when aren't I horny as hell?* She giggled. Still she'd never received a text message from that address before. *Clax? Could it be Dirk Claxton?* She thumbed her response.

maybe. howd u get my #?

A few seconds later, her phone beeped, announcing a new message.

sources - let's do it in field.

Definitely a man who knew what he wanted and wasn't afraid to ask for it. Unlike Chase Reya who had yet to so much as say boo to her today. Was he bowing out and letting Dirk have her all to himself? If so, he wasn't the man she thought he was. Another beep brought the same message, repeated in caps.

"Patience, Dirk."

maybe, she texted.

She could use some fun in the sun. After a restless night filled with remembering Chase nude, his big cock ready to ram into her, she'd found that, for once, her ever-ready Standing O dual-action vibrator

couldn't provide the necessary relief. Nothing and no one would satisfy her until she'd bedded that big hunk of a cowboy.

A horse's whinny brought her head up and her breath hitched in her throat. Chase stood at the entrance of the stable, his eyes locked on her while another man talked to him. She noticed, as she had before, how he'd interact with another hand, yet never get too involved with them. Almost as if he held them at a distance by being cordial, but not exactly friendly. He was aloof, reminding her of an independent, yet curious, alley cat.

God, he's sexy. Even from that distance she could see the yearning in his face. He might act aloof to the others, but he obviously wanted her in his space. *Good. It's about time you showed up.* She resisted smiling at him. He needed to be punished for making her wait most of the day before he acknowledged her presence.

how about sexting?

She uncrossed her legs, keeping part of her attention on Chase and his on her, then propped her bare feet on the railing. Her sundress floated around her, the blousy skirt billowing in the breeze. *That's right. Keep your eyes on the prize, Chase.*

Chase nodded at the man who then walked away. His gaze, however, stayed fixed on her.

sex texting? hell yes

Just as she'd thought, Dirk was up for anything.

im wearing a sundress no panties

hard alrdy

ull get harder

Shannon wiggled her fingers at Chase, then made a big show out of slipping her hand under her skirt. Startled, he quickly glanced around, checking to see if the other hands had seen. Licking his lips, he strode toward her. When he got close enough to see better, to see the expression on her face, she shook her head. *Uh-uh, Chase. Not too close.* Mimicking him, she licked her lips and saw him swallow.

more

more COMING, she typed quickly—*rubbing tits w phone*—then pressed the hard metal to her breast and massaged her growing nipple. Chase followed her movements, reminding her again of a cat. This time, however, she was the mouse the cat wanted to pounce on and gobble up.

hot—more

She trailed her hand over her abdomen and under the strip of lace. Tunneling her fingers through the short curls covering her mound, she ran her middle finger between her folds. Chase, noticing the movement under her skirt, dropped his gaze to the slight hump formed by her hand. Spreading her feet wider, she slid lower in the chair and let her legs fall open.

A beep brought her back to Dirk.

finger-fucking

want to be ur finger

Talk about hot! Sexting for one man while she finger-fucked herself and another man watched was more than fun. This is fantastic fuckin' fun. She separated the folds and stroked her already throbbing clit. Good thing she was proficient at one-handed texting, not to mention one-handed masturbating.

im so wet

She closed her eyes, listened to her pounding heart and opened them to find Chase at the top of the steps, mere feet away from her. The raw sensuality filling his face sent a rush of wetness onto her finger. *Oh, Chase, how I wish you were the one finger-banging me.*

dick is out

Dirk's next message came right on the heels of the first.

beating off

Shannon closed her eyes again, this time imagining both Chase and Dirk standing over her, watching her pleasure herself while they pumped their engorged cocks. Knowing those two, they'd probably have a competition to see who could jerk off the longest. She sighed, again deciding that, one way or another, she'd have them both, two dicks at one time. Chase would come around. She'd make him want her enough to share her with Dirk. She moaned, not too loud, but just loud enough, then opened her eyes. Chase's attention darted between her face and her hidden hand.

Making sure he saw her, she thumbed another message, mouthing the words so Chase could follow along.

want NEED to fuck

The frown on Chase's face warred with the desire in his eyes.

come to me

where?

stable?

cabin

She hadn't expected the teasing game she played to be so rough on her. The churning in her abdomen needed release and she wanted someone to help her with it. "Chase, come here."

want u to eat me

ur driving me crazy

He moved to her side faster than she thought possible. *How does he do that?* Standing over her, his gaze fell to where her skirt had fallen between her legs. His lips parted and she smelled the lust oozing from him. Her eyes widened at the bulge in his jeans that was level with her head. *I remember it being big, but not that big.* She suddenly wished she had three hands.

going to explode

“Chase, stand so that you’re blocking me from the others.”

He repositioned his body, putting his back to the yard and shadowing her body.

Lowering her eyes, she ordered him, “Put your hand on my tit.”

He hesitated, looked around once more, then slipped his hand beneath the top of her dress. The spaghetti strap fell off her shoulder, letting the bodice fall low enough to expose half of her breast. He cupped her, taking her nipple between his fingers and squeezing. Smothering a cry, she thrust two fingers into her pussy, using the upper part of her finger above her knuckle to press against her hot clit.

“Chase.” She panted, her climax coming closer and taking her breath away.

He rubbed her tit, moving faster, pressing down so hard that it hurt. But she loved the pain and wanted more.

“Let’s go somewhere private.” His voice was dark, even threatening, yet seductive.

The twitch in his jaw echoed the excitement inside her. “Not right now.”

“Why the hell not?”

She coughed out a short laugh. “I’m a little busy.”

He squeezed her again, then ran his other hand through her hair. “I need you. I couldn’t stop thinking about you all night. Let’s finish what we started.”

“I’d love to. But let me finish this first.” Knowing it was a risk, but wanting to jolt him, she lifted the phone, making sure he could read the screen.

coming

I need to fuck you

“What the hell?”

His hand squeezed her breast and she climaxed in the same second, her body shaking, the surge rolling through her. Still, he didn’t remove his hand. “Who are you texting?”

Once her climax ended and she could breathe evenly again, she withdrew her hand from under her skirt. Dropping the phone onto the table next to her, she placed her hand over her tit, over his hand, and kept him there. Anger, confusion and lust filled his face. “I was sexting Dirk.” She batted her eyes and gently removed his hand from her breast. “But I’m so glad you came along when you did. Sexting is never as good as the real thing.” Relishing her control over him, she stuck her wet-slickened fingers in her mouth and sucked.

He inhaled, following her every lick, every swirl of her tongue. “You were doing what?”

He’s irritated but curious, too. “Sexting Dirk. You know. Doing dirty talk while texting. Like phone sex. And I like to pleasure myself at the same time.”

His mouth dropped opened, ready to speak, then slammed shut.

Come on, Chase. Let your libido overrule your jealousy. “But I’d much rather have you between my legs instead of my hand.”

“Me?” Furious or not, his gaze still wandered to the dress falling between her legs. “Or Dirk?” His jaw worked, either from anger or lust. Maybe both? “You mean I felt you up while you were talking to that w—guy?”

Ooh, something else is going on behind those dark eyes. As though he’s imagining Dirk and me... Yes, there’s definitely something more in his tone. He’s confused. Wanting me for himself yet unable to resist the idea of watching me with another man. Maybe he’s imagining all three of us, together, slick with each other’s come. This is promising.

She ran her moist fingers along the waist of his jeans, noted his harsh breathing, then walked her fingers over his crotch. The spasm beneath his tight material gave her a glow of satisfaction. “Uh-huh. But you can’t say you didn’t enjoy it, too. The mountain in your jeans is evidence enough.”

He stepped back, moving out of her reach. “You’re driving me out of my mind.”

You and Dirk both. Shannon readjusted her dress and gracefully stood. “Just like the dream of you hammering into me drove me out of my mind.” She leaned against him and rested her palm against his granite chest, watching her hand move with the rise and fall of his breaths. “Look, Chase, you want me and I want you. But I want Dirk, too. I want to feel his cock against my ass while you suck on my clit.” Fascinated, she watched the struggle behind his eyes. Did they change color? *His eyes are very interesting.* “And I always get what I want.”

He stood absolutely motionless. Motionless, except for the fire flashing in his eyes. *I’ve got you now, cowboy. Nothing brings a man around better than a challenge. Especially a challenge involving a man he doesn’t like.* “So what do you say, Chase? Want to enjoy a ménage a trois?”

“No.”

Did he hesitate? “Are you sure?”

“I said no.”

She hadn’t expected him to take her up on her offer, but she hadn’t expected him to whirl around and stride down the steps so quickly either. Hell, instead of his one-word refusal, she thought she’d have time for more persuasion. She briefly considered following him and coaxing him into continuing yesterday’s roll-in-the-hay-interruptus, then decided against the idea. *Shit. Let him stew awhile. The more torn up he is on the inside, the easier it’ll be once I get those two hunks together.*

She sighed and picked up the phone again.

r u there?

yes - chase is here

A frowning emoticon blinked back at her. *him? why?*

i want him 2

r u sure? both?

both

now?

he said no

make him say yes

She laughed, delighted at Dirk's willingness to share her with another man. And since he was so willing, perhaps he could help her spring the trap that would finally catch the big cat. She frowned at the idea. *Weird. Now I'm using the dog and cat references.*

ideas?

maybe

let's talk—bhnd house

brt

Shannon stretched her arms, glanced at the stable where Chase had gone. *That man's harder than hell to get a grip on. I wonder, once we've gotten together, if he'll mellow. Hmm, he's going to get better looking with age, I bet.* She smiled, absently rubbing her ring finger. The implication of her thoughts and action struck her cold. *Why the hell am I thinking long-term? I'm not getting involved and I'm only going to be here a little while longer.* Still, she couldn't keep the twinge of regret from twisting her heart.

She returned to texting Dirk, squinting at the phone as she rounded the corner of the house. Suddenly, someone grabbed her from behind and clamped a hand over her mouth, stifling her scream.

Chapter Four

Chase should've known better than to give a human female a second look. But Shannon Tally had him wanting a second, a third look. Hell, even the idea of sharing her with Dirk was sounding better. What did it matter as long as he got what he wanted? But could he do a threesome with a werewolf?

He closed his eyes and let the vision take shape. Shannon, sandwiched between him and another man whose lowered face was hidden by fallen hair, clasped him around the neck. Swallowing, he could feel the heat of her breasts pressed against his chest, her legs wrapped around his waist as the unknown man slammed into her from behind. With every thrust, every grind, she made a soft grunting sound, a sound that only heightened his lust, thickened his shaft. He grew harder, longer, quickly coming to the brink. Her curly hair, damp with sweat, plastered to her face and her tongue, pink and oh-so delectable, flicked over her upper lip. Together the three of them moved, each man thrusting into her as she rode them to their ultimate releases. Her cry mixed with his howl.

Spent and using each other for support, the other man lifted his face and grinned. *Dirk!*

Frustrated, Chase tossed the bridle on the floor of the tack room, drawing the attention of two of the other hands.

"Hey, man, take it easy. If the boss man catches you mistreating his equipment that way, he'll tie you up by your tail." The cowboy scooped up the bridle Chase had tossed to the floor, shook it out and looped it over one of the hooks on the back wall. When the man turned around, ready to admonish him more, he stopped, his jaw hanging open.

Chase hadn't meant to shift as much as he had, but it felt good to throw some fear into the human. Besides, he'd only let his eyes narrow and his fangs grow a little. Keeping the sound low enough that the other cowboy wouldn't hear him, he bared his teeth and let a low mean growl roll off his tongue. The cowboy stiffened, took one last incredulous look at him and bolted from the room.

"Yo, Ben!" The second cowboy shot a questioning look at Chase, then hurried after the first. "What's the matter with you, man? Hold up."

Chase smothered his smile. Hopefully, Ben wouldn't run to Bob Tally and tell him his new hand had glowing eyes and deadly looking fangs. But if he did, it wasn't a big deal. The cowboys would make a joke out of Ben and his "monster". Only Bob would know the truth and Chase was fairly certain he'd overlook this one mistake. And if he didn't, well, then Chase could tell Haken he'd at least given this getting-to-know-humans thing a good try.

Besides, it wasn't as though he'd morphed all the way. What had Bob said? "No going down on all fours"? Well, he hadn't, had he? So, as far as he was concerned, he'd kept his end of the deal.

Although he hadn't been on the ranch very long, his patience with humans was already wearing thin. Or was it because a certain curly-headed blonde made him itch for a release of some kind, of any kind? He didn't know which and didn't care. If he had his way, he'd have two things happen. First, he'd have Shannon begging him for a real romp in the hay and then he'd get the hell back to the mountains. But how long would he stay to achieve his goal? The realization that he'd stay on the ranch until he'd had Shannon churned his gut. He no longer cared that she was human. All he cared about was getting inside her.

Would he fight Dirk for her? Not that he'd mind tearing the dog's throat out. Werewolves and werecats weren't sworn enemies, but they weren't bosom buddies, either. Normally, they stayed out of each other's way. But he wasn't about to let anything keep him from getting between Shannon's legs.

Still, if he couldn't have her alone, was he ready to do as she wanted? Was he ready to share her? Having had orgies with willing werecat females, Chase wasn't squeamish about group sex. But those orgies had always included two or more women. He'd never shared a female with another male—much less a werewolf. The closest he'd come was simply watching another threesome get it on. Hell, he would eagerly watch Shannon getting fucked by two werecats. Watching her go down on one man while the other screwed her in the ass would only increase his desire to have her. Once she'd finished with them, he could picture her striding toward him, wiping her mouth as she sent him a lustful smile. She'd lie down and spread her legs, opening her arms to him in invitation. Yeah, he could definitely watch her in a threesome. After all, his vision had made him hard—at least until he'd realized the other man was Dirk. But he'd never even given the idea of participating in a two-man, one-woman tryst a thought before now. Until Shannon.

Chase slapped his hands against his jeans, dust clouding the air around him. *So what's it going to be? Take Shannon with Dirk? Or don't take her at all?*

"Are you trying to give me a heart attack?" Shannon glared at Dirk who couldn't stop chuckling at his joke. "Sneaking up on someone isn't my idea of a joke, asshole."

"Aw, loosen up a bit, sugar. After all, it's not as if you didn't know I was coming." He winked at her and edged closer. "Besides, I was out to spook you, not scare you to death. Good thing I covered your mouth, though, or we'd have had the whole ranch down on us."

"On you, you mean." She scowled at him, but let him tug her closer. "Just don't do it again."

"Okay, okay." He snuggled against her, pressing his nose to her hair and inhaling long and slow. "Sugar, you sure do smell good."

"Which is more than I can say about you." She squirmed against him, yet not wiggling enough to actually make him let go. In reality, she liked his aroma. An aroma born of hard work and masculinity.

"Tell me more about this sex thing you want with me."

“With you and Chase.”

“Yeah. Although why you want to fuck that old tomcat, I’ll never know.”

She leaned away to study him. “What is it with the cat references? And his calling you a dog? Are you guys into that scene? Because if you are, that’s where I draw the line.”

“Not in the way you’re thinking.”

Huh? She would’ve sworn his eyes flashed from blue to amber. Blinking, she again saw nothing but ocean-colored eyes. *The sexual frustration must be getting to me.* “What does that mean?”

“I’m joking. It’s only our little way of playing with each other.” He released her and held his palms up. “No, no. Not that way, either. Sugar, I am all heterosexual male.” Taking her by the arms, he pulled her into an embrace and kissed her neck.

She relaxed, enjoying the feel of his lips on the slope of her neck and tilted her head. Pressing her breasts hard against his firm chest, she ran her hands along his back, tugging his shirt out of his jeans. His skin was solid under her fingers and she couldn’t help squeezing the muscles in his back. Chase hadn’t finished her off on the porch, so maybe Dirk could. After all, a woman like her couldn’t survive on a few climaxes a day—especially self-induced ones. And what better way to get Chase out of her mind than to have Dirk inside her body?

Dirk slipped his hands under her dress, moaning when he found the lacy strip, the sole barrier keeping him from her treasure. With a yank, he freed her of her thong. “Spread ’em, sugar.”

Her chest muffled his words, softening the tone, but she obeyed. Needing him to touch her breasts, she wiggled her shoulders, dropping the spaghetti straps down her arms.

“Mmm.” He latched onto her tit, forcefully, dragging her hardened nub into his mouth. His hand found her snatch and she leaned against the wall of the house, whimpering in delight.

“Ohh.”

“That feel good?”

She closed her eyes, letting the sun warm her from the outside as he warmed her insides. “Very good.” *But not as good as Chase felt.* She tensed at the errant thought. Unwilling to let the thought take hold, she concentrated on the man loving her.

He plunged his fingers into her at the same instant he left one breast and caught the other nipple with his teeth. Fondling her other breast, he worked his fingers back and forth over her juicy clit.

“Damn, you’re wet. Wet and ready.” Grabbing her by the butt, he hoisted her up. She wrapped her legs around his waist, pushing her skirt out of the way.

He pinned her to the wall by pressing his body against hers, letting her support herself with her arms and legs. His hands brushed at her mons and he hurried to unbuckle and shuck his jeans. Using one hand to position her better, he pointed his cock against her throbbing clit and started to push in.

“Wait.” The word exploded from her. She tried to clam up, but couldn’t. “I can’t.”

“What the hell?”

Shannon forced his upper torso away, dropped her legs and slid to the ground.

“What’d’ya mean ya can’t?” Dirk snarled his question through panted breaths. “What are you? A big tease?”

She struggled to find the right words. Although she’d been at the ranch a full two days and hadn’t gotten laid once, no way was she a tease. She wanted Dirk. Of that she was sure. “No. But...”

“But what?” Seeing her smooth her dress, he started to zip his jeans. “You’ve put out enough messages for me to know I didn’t misinterpret anything. So what’s with all the flirting and sexting?”

I want Chase first. She swallowed the answer before it could slip out. “It’s just that I want more time to really enjoy you. Anticipation is part of the fun. Besides, we’re supposed to work on a scheme to get that threesome going.”

He studied her and, for a moment, she was afraid he’d see through her excuse. “Sugar, I don’t mind having you even while that c—Chase is around to share. But I don’t see why we can’t fuck first. Then I’ll share.”

She palmed his cheek and turned on all her charm. “Yeah. And it would be amazing.” She dropped her gaze down to his crotch, then back up. “But I want the first time to be special. Besides, I get the impression that you’d like to needle him some. You know, like by getting your dick inside me first. And if that happens, he may give up and decide not to join us.”

“At this point, with my dick aching like crazy, I don’t much care about waiting for him.”

“But think about how much better it would be if Chase watched. How hot that would be.”

Dirk’s eyes glittered with unhidden glee. “Ah, I see what you mean. Okay, then, let’s put our heads together and figure out how to get the stubborn stick-up-the-butt where you, I mean we, want him.”

I want him with his shaft buried so far inside me I can feel the tip poking out the top of my head. “Don’t worry, I already have a plan. Just follow my lead and play along.”

“The boss man wants you to muck out the stalls.”

Chase closed his eyes, let the irritation from Dirk’s voice flow out of his body, then glared at the werewolf. “And he sent you as his messenger?”

Dirk grinned that shit-eating grin he hated. “Yep. So you’d better get a move on. Daylight’s burning.”

Chase tossed his cards onto the table, folding his hand. Although he’d had a great hand and probably could’ve won the pot, he’d just as soon shovel manure rather than endure another minute playing poker with the ranch hands. An hour trying to relate to humans was long enough. Leaving his hat hanging on the bed frame—why humans liked wearing those things he’d never understand—he sauntered out of the bunkhouse.

He’d gone a few yards before he realized Dirk was at his heels. “Did you forget something, pup?”

Dirk kept going past him. "Nope."

Then why the hell is he heading for the stable, too? A low growl rumbled deep in his chest. Did Bob want them to work together? Would Bob do something that foolish to test his determination to get along? Even with the werewolf?

Once inside the dimly lit stable, Chase knew something wasn't right. Dirk stood next to Shannon, his arm possessively wrapped around her waist. After the sexting incident, Chase had given her a wide berth, taking time to try and work her out of his system. Not that he'd been successful. He was as hot for her as ever. *Damn, she looks so good. Sexy, luscious and feisty. I bet she's already dripping with all the sweetness I'd love to lap up.* "What's going on?"

Dirk started to answer, but Shannon stopped him cold. "We're here to give you one more chance."

"One more chance at what?" He narrowed his eyes at Dirk, shifting slightly to increase his sense of smell. Did Dirk smell like deceit? He sniffed, catching the werewolf's scent, but not detecting any emotion other than his normal cockiness.

He'd forgotten, however, that he'd also catch Shannon's strong aroma of lust. He inhaled, drawing in her spicy fragrance. Her desire overwhelmed him and he struggled against throwing her to the ground and humping her. Even with Dirk standing nearby.

Hell, especially with Dirk standing nearby.

"Another chance at this." Shannon slipped the straps of the sundress off her shoulders to skim quickly down her arms, letting the garment fall to the ground and exposing her naked body.

"Holy shit."

For once Chase had to agree with Dirk. Suddenly, his throat closed up and his dick stood at attention. *Forget the damn dog. Trying to refuse her is like expecting a dying man to turn down immortality. I was stupid for even thinking I could forget about her. How can I turn down a female this hot even if it means sharing her with the werewolf?* "What are you doing, Shannon?" His voice came out forced and yet weak at the same time.

She moved closer, halving the distance between them. Lifting her breasts, she kept her eyes on him and slowly, seductively licked each of her nipples. "Right now I'm doing what I want you to do." She spread her legs and slipped a hand between them. "Like I want you to do this."

Chase struggled to stay where he was. "And why's he here?"

The bouquet of lust grew stronger. Rubbing herself, she slid her middle finger through the patch of curls and between her folds. "Ooh. Dirk, give me a hand, won't you?" Dirk scooted up behind Shannon and bent to kiss her on the neck. His hands cupped her breasts and he rubbed his thumbs over her hard buds. She moaned, covering his hand with hers.

Is this a human way of torturing men? If so, she's doing a damn good job of it. Chase growled. "That doesn't answer my question." He didn't want to pull his gaze away from her breasts, away from Dirk's hands on her nipples. *Come on, Dirk, tweak them. Make her squeal.*

"I know you're no Einstein, but don't you get it? The lady wants both of us. Together." Dirk's eyes lost their blue and colored with an amber glow. "Beats the hell outta me what she sees in you, but I don't care. I'll screw a sexy bitch anytime, anyway—with anyone she wants."

Shannon pushed away the arm Dirk had crossed over her rounded tummy. "Watch who you're calling bitch."

"Sugar, bitch is an affectionate term where I come from." Dirk kneeled behind her.

Chase instantly hated himself. On the one hand, he wanted to stay exactly where he was. That way he couldn't see what the shifter was doing to her. On the other hand—*damn it*—he wanted nothing more than to watch him, join him. He remembered the feel of her buttocks and yearned to grasp the soft flesh, pulling her closer so he could drink in her sweet wetness as he spread her ample cheeks, opening her to Dirk's shaft. He groaned, thinking of how he'd lap her dry as Dirk pushed her against his face with every thrust.

God, how he could imagine it. She'd cry out, digging her nails into his shoulders, leaning forward for the werewolf. Then she'd fall to her knees and take him in her mouth, widening her opening for Dirk. He'd see everything the shifter did to her while enjoying how she stroked and pulled on his shaft.

Shannon giggled. "That tickles, Dirk." She smiled a knowing smile, almost as though she could see his vision, too. "Don't either one of you stop."

Grrrrr. Chase's growl reverberated around the stable.

"Sounds to me like someone's getting hot and bothered." Dirk ran his tongue along the side of her leg, his eyes glowing now.

"Wow, Chase. I think I just creamed. Make that sound again."

"I'll make that sound again, all right. When I'm between your legs."

"Then you'll join us?" Shannon reached behind her for Dirk's hands, then guided them around her hips and placed them over her curls. Dirk parted her folds and moaned.

"When I'm alone with you." Chase gritted his teeth and tried not to let what Dirk was doing turn him on even more. But he couldn't deny that it was. Watching someone else—even the werewolf—excite her was tearing him apart. Just not in the way he would've thought it would.

Shannon closed her eyes and leaned into Dirk for support. "That's it, Dirk. Rub right there. Oh, you're making me so horny."

Chase swallowed and took a step toward them. "Shannon." Her name came out hoarse, tense, needy. Was having multiple partners a human sex tradition? Was that why she wanted the threesome so much?

"Yes?" Shannon placed her hands over Dirk's and helped him keep her pussy lips apart.

“Fuck me.” He didn’t care how or when. All he knew was that he had to have her. Any way, anywhere, with anyone.

“I’d love to, Chase. Along with Dirk.” She cocked an eyebrow at him, questioning him.

“Whatever.” If the only way he could have her was to share her, then so be it. Whatever it took, he had to have her next to him, opening herself to him, fucking him.

She paused, searching him as though unsure that she’d heard him correctly. “Then we have our threesome?”

Dirk rubbed his fingers over her, spreading her wetness to her curls. Unable to find his voice, Chase nodded.

With a sigh, she removed Dirk’s hands and motioned for him to stand. He skimmed his hands along the curve of her body and over her shoulders. Taking one of his hands, she licked his fingers. “Yummy. If I do say so myself.”

Dirk chuckled behind her. “You sure are.”

She tilted her head, letting him bite her along the shoulder. “Hmm, that’s so good, Dirk. I wish you’d bite me. Hard.”

“No!” Chase ran forward, stopping himself a few feet from her. “Don’t say that to him.” He glared at Dirk. “Don’t even think about marking her.”

Shannon and Dirk froze at the tone of his command. “Mark me? What does that mean? How would he mark me?”

Dirk pulled his lips into a silent, challenging snarl at Chase.

When neither Dirk nor Chase answered her, Shannon darted her gaze between them. “What are you two? Vampires?” She giggled and playfully slapped Dirk’s arm. “I think both of you have seen way too many horror movies.”

Chase was beside her in an instant. “Let’s do this.” He reached out to take a breast, but Shannon swerved away, out of both of their grasps. He clenched his fists, fighting his ache for her.

“Not here. Not now.” She retrieved her sundress and slipped it over her head. “This was just a preview of the fun to come.”

Both men growled, then frowned at each other.

“Aw, that’s cute how you both growled at the same time. But save it for the cabin, boys.”

“The cabin?” Chase stared at the pert nipples pushing against the thin material. “So you got me ready to do this and now you’re putting me off? No way.”

“For once I have to agree with him. Forget the damn cabin. Let’s do it now.”

She placed a hand on each of their chests. “I know I’ve been testing your patience. But trust me, it’ll be worth it.” A mischievous expression softened her face. “Do you know where my cousin’s hunting cabin is?” Chase nodded along with Dirk. “Good. Then meet me there later. Oh, and you’ll have to walk. We

wouldn't want anyone else noticing the horses hitched outside and wondering who's at the cabin, now, would we?"

"I still don't see why we can't do it here and now."

"Because Bob will be back in a little while and I won't risk him finding us. I don't mind putting on a show for others, but I draw the line at relatives." She took their hands and placed them on her breasts. Both men squeezed her, fondling her nipples. "You know the old saying, boys. 'Good things come to those who wait.' Seven o'clock at the cabin."

She brushed their hands off, tossed her hair and strolled out of the stable.

"I don't know about you, but I'll be at that cabin."

Chase scowled at Dirk. "Why don't you butt out for good?"

Surprise filtered across the werewolf's face. "Get over it, fuzz ball. Didn't your momma ever teach you to share your toys? Or has something else got you all twisted up inside?" He ran his gaze slowly from Chase's face to the floor and back again in an overt dare. "What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?"

Chase swallowed back another retort and instead focused on the odd twist in his gut. Something was definitely bothering him, but he couldn't get a hold on exactly what it was. Dirk laughed and strolled outside, finally leaving him alone with his thoughts.

Shannon. She's what's tearing me up. But why? She's just a human. Granted, she's the sexiest female I've ever met, but still only a human. The idea of the blonde vixen, her legs pushed over her head as he pounded into her, rocked him on his feet. *Damn, but I want her bad and I'll have her, too. But once I do, will I be able to forget her?*

Naked—except for the red cowboy boots and spurs jangling on her heels—Shannon paced the one-room cabin, looking out the front window every few minutes. *Sheesh, what the heck is wrong with me? I've had sex with more than one man before. This isn't any different than the other times.* Yet, try as she might to convince herself, she knew this time was very different. She couldn't shake the impression that something momentous was about to happen. *It's probably just my nerves.*

An image of Chase's face invaded her thoughts, pushing all others aside. *He makes it different, special. But why? Because he's such a hunk with an animal-like vibe?* She bit her lip and frowned. No. Dirk was just as delicious with his own wild side, but he didn't give her that incredible connected sensation every time he got near her. Chase was unlike anyone she'd ever met. *Or will meet.* "Argh!" She moved away from the window, although it was the unfamiliar thoughts she really wanted to get away from.

If only Chase shows up, that'll be... A warm feeling flowed through her and she smiled. *No.* She'd instigated this threesome. She was the one who wanted both men. Not just one. And certainly not one for more than just a fun time in the Old West. Resolutely, she forced away the vision of Chase and her, alone, making love in front of a roaring fire. Never mind that in that vision, she sensed a future, the same future

she'd closed her heart to long ago. Hadn't she learned her lesson with Jarrod? No way would she let one man overwhelm her thoughts—much less her life. She was in control and determined to stay that way. *Then why do I feel so lost?*

"I must be getting old," she muttered. "Old and soft in the head." Shaking off the unwanted ideas, she concentrated on the reason she'd hiked the short distance to the cabin—good old two-on-one sex.

What if only Dirk shows up? Her chest tightened at the thought. *Then that lucky cowboy will have the best night of his life. Sex with Dirk will be great.* She frowned at the empty hole in her gut. *I really want Chase. I want him to be the first to fuck me. And the last.* "Damn, you'd think a monogamous-thinking alien has taken over my brain."

I am so not ready to settle down. Especially with a man I just met. The unruly part of her mind, however, wouldn't let her get away with the lie. *Unless Chase settled down with me.*

Stop it, girl. Get ready. They'll be here any second.

Blowing out an exasperated breath, she picked up the large bell, the one used to summon the ranch hands to the mess hall, and leaned against the wall next to the open window. Peeking around the frame, she waited for someone to arrive.

Oh, my God, there's Dirk.

Dirk stood at the top of a small rise, his thumbs hooked in the front pockets of his jeans. Shannon scanned the area around him, searching for any sign of Chase—and came up empty. *Damn. Where is he?*

With a wicked grin on his face, Dirk started down the slope toward the cabin.

She sighed, then straightened up. *Well, no bother. If Dirk's the one who wants me, then Dirk's the one who gets me. At least for tonight.* She tossed her curls, ran a finger over her teeth and got ready to open the door.

"Hold up."

The all-too-familiar sexy voice sent a wave of excitement through her. *Chase.*

Chase's long, lanky legs chewed up the distance between him and Dirk.

"Shit, Mr. Kitty, I was hoping you'd lost my trail."

Chase cocked an eyebrow at Dirk. "With your smell? Hell, a bear with a bad cold could follow your stench." He glanced at the window.

Shannon darted back against the wall, waited a minute, then peered around the edge again. *He came. Chase came.* She pressed a hand to her chest and tried to calm her breathing. *Sheesh, I'm practically giddy with excitement.*

"Are you ready to join in? Or are you here to cause trouble?"

"Relax, dog face. I don't like you touching her, but if this is what she wants, this is what she gets. For now."

For now? Yet no matter what, Chase obviously meant something else would happen later. And if that meant he'd stick around, stick with her, then she couldn't help but thrill to the idea.

Finally! Time to get started. She took a breath, threw open the door and stepped inside the doorway, legs set wide apart, bell in one hand. With a fist on one hip, she clanged the bell loudly. "Hoo-wee! Hoo-wee! Supper is served." They stopped in their tracks, mouths parted slightly at her surprise entrance. She fought to keep from laughing and winked. "Come and get me, boys."

She pivoted slowly and seductively, then walked to the large wooden table, knowing they would follow her. She tossed the bell aside, letting it clatter to the floor. Hopping onto the end of the table, she set her boots on the two chairs she'd positioned there earlier, let her knees fall to the side and leaned back on her elbows, exposing everything and letting the two men get an eyeful.

Chapter Five

Chase stood in the doorway, the setting sun making a beautiful purple backdrop behind him. Her heart skipped a beat and she had to steady her nerves before she could speak. “Hiya, Chase.”

“I’m first.”

And you’ll be the last. Damn it, Shannon, shut that stupid voice up! “We’ll see.”

“Hey, don’t get your hopes up, man.” Dirk nudged Chase to the side, taking his place in the doorway, and grinned. “Oh, honey, I’m home.”

Shannon smiled, letting them think her reaction was to Dirk’s joke. Chase would rather have her to himself. But as a one-night stand? Or more? She ignored the yearning ache inside her.

Dirk clapped a hand on Chase’s shoulder. “Have you ever seen anything so pretty?” Chase grunted and shook the hand off, but the expression on his face told her he agreed.

Shannon glanced at the men and licked her lips. *Let’s get this party going.* “I taste even better than I look. Want to find out?”

Chase’s eyes flashed, the color changing to a brilliant yellow, and the intensity exuding from him doubled. “Shannon.”

Shit, even the way he says my name makes me wet. I wonder if my saying his name has the same effect on him. “Chase?”

“And I’m Dirk. Now that we’ve got everyone’s names straight, how about we get down to business?” He took a step in front of Chase, but only a step.

Chase gripped the man’s shoulder and pushed ahead of him, striding toward her like a man possessed. Shannon’s breath hitched in her throat and for the first time she wondered what she’d gotten herself into. Could she handle this cowboy who sometimes acted more like a wild animal than a man?

He stopped a mere foot away from her, but didn’t touch her. Her body responded, aching for that physical connection, but she held back from reaching out. *Come on, Chase, touch me.* He studied her for a moment, then motioned for Dirk to go around the table, placing him at Shannon’s head. Dirk softly caressed her hair.

“Listen up.” Chase’s tone dipped lower and Shannon shivered at the sexual tension in his voice. “We’re going to do this threesome, but it’s going to go my way.”

“Now wait a sec.” Dirk’s hand in her hair tightened. “I’m not taking any orders from the likes of you.”

Chase growled—*growled?*—and lifted his lips in a snarl. “The only reason I’m sharing is because this is what she wants. It’s a one-time thing.”

He’s getting protective really fast. But for the life of her, she couldn’t find anything wrong with that. Not any longer. Something had opened up inside her at his possessive words and she’d almost heard the sound the crack made in her invisible wall. “Dirk?”

“Yeah?”

“We’re doing it his way.” She tipped back her head to see his face. *Holy shit. His eyes are amber, too. What the hell is with these two?* “Okay?” *Come on, Dirk, you know what I want. Help me out.*

Dirk blinked and she saw that he understood. “Fine. But only because you asked and only if I get satisfaction, too.” He gritted his jaw and looked at Chase. “So? Do I need to fetch some catnip to get this thing going or what?”

Chase grasped one of her feet, pulled the spur off the heel and brought her legs over his shoulders as he sat in the chair. He scooted forward until he was inches from the cleft between her legs. “Shannon, suck him off. Dirk, play with her tits.”

Dirk chuckled. “For once, I’m not going to argue with you.” Quickly, he unbuckled his silver buckle and pulled his zipper down. Tugging the top of his jeans wide, he offered her his already-extending dick. Shannon started massaging it, running her fingers over the oozing tip. His cock jerked, growing with the attention.

“Good. Now draw him in.”

She did as Chase commanded, slowly sliding Dirk’s shaft into her mouth. The vein-covered skin glided into her mouth easily, until the tip struck the back of her throat. But she didn’t choke. Instead, she concentrated on watching Dirk’s face as a wave of desire wafted over him. He inhaled, then slowly exhaled. “Oh, man, that feels great.”

“Play with her tits.”

For a man who wanted her all to himself, he sure seems to be getting off on watching Dirk and me. But as long as he’s happy...

“Don’t mind if I do.” Dirk palmed her, kneading, stroking her nipples between two fingers, whispering sweet words about her tits. He pushed her breasts together and rubbed the hardened nipples against each other. She moaned and continued to stroke his dick, matching the pace set by his hips moving back and forth.

Why isn’t Chase doing anything? Please tell me he’s not content just to watch.

“Are you getting wet, Shannon? Can you imagine me lapping your juices while you suck him?”

She made a sound in her throat and hoped he’d understand. *Stop talking and do something.*

He spread her folds and she gasped, thankful that he’d finally touched her. She wiggled her ass to encourage him to do more. Dirk, his eyes closed and mouth parted, grunted each time she took his full

length. His hands worked her, pinching her pebbled nubs, sending little stabs of pain into her chest. But she loved every bit of it.

I wish I could see Chase's face between my legs.

Cold metal struck her clit, the strange sensation making her jump. Quick jabs of pain flicked into her sensitive nub and ran in a straight line over her pussy, into her curls, around the outside of her snatch, then back up the slit.

Omigod. He's using my spur on me. She mewed, excited by Chase's inventiveness and again wishing she could watch him in action. She poised the tips of her teeth over Dirk's shaft and slowly moved his dick out of her mouth, razoring her teeth along the loose skin.

"Damn, oh, damn, but she's good. I don't know what she's like at your end, cat man, but she's got one talented mouth on her. Fondle my balls, sugar."

She looked up at Dirk, pleased at the rapt attention her breasts held for him and cupped his balls with one hand. He groaned in appreciation.

Chase dug the spur into her, shooting a little more pain through her, but she didn't care. Truth be known, she loved it. But she wanted more than metal against her skin. She took Dirk's cock out of her mouth and rubbed it against her cheek. "Chase, sweet man, please eat me. I need to feel your tongue on me."

Before she could take Dirk back inside, Chase's fingers struck her clit, wiping away the ache and replacing it with the warmth of his hand. She jerked up, but he held onto her, sticking to her like one of the broncs he'd broken. Pushing hard, he penetrated her pussy, shoving two fingers deep inside her. "Ah, Shannon, you're already dripping. So you like sucking on his dick? Or could it be you like getting finger-banged?" Slowly he dragged his fingers into her channel, then reversed direction. He moved his thumb over her clit, alternating the pressure he put on her growing nub. "Mmm, you smell sweet. Sexy, musky and sweet all at the same time."

Even what he says makes me hot. Shannon squirmed, urging him to push his fingers—or something bigger—back into her.

"Tweak her nipples harder, Dirk. I think she likes it."

Dirk nodded, keeping his eyes closed, and twisted her nipples harder. But not hard enough that she wanted him to stop. He groaned when she removed his cock from her mouth. "Damn it, Chase. Don't stop. Don't ever stop. Put your mouth where your fingers are."

"Take it easy, woman." He slammed three fingers into her. "You're going to love what I'm going to do to you. Just be careful not to chomp down on Dirk's little prick."

Little my ass.

"Little my ass." Dirk's eyes opened and narrowed at Chase as though he didn't trust him not to tell her to bite. "Don't anyone even think about doing any chomping."

How she could giggle with all the hot sensations rushing through her, she'd never know. Chase renewed his finger-fuck of her, slipping his fingers deeper, faster inside her. His thumb raked over her throbbing clit and she struggled to keep from screaming. *Not yet. If I yell too soon, he might stop. Or would he finally use his mouth on me instead?* She struggled with the decision, finally deciding to go with the flow. Besides, she couldn't keep her body from thrashing. The men, however, held her down, keeping her where she actually wanted to stay.

"Suck on him, Shannon. Pull it hard. Eat him up."

She obeyed, fervently hoping he'd take his own advice and eat her up. *He's definitely enjoying the show we're giving him.*

"Baby, tell me to eat you again. This time I might do it."

Chase's order was everything she'd wanted to hear. She let go of Dirk, against his growling protest. "Eat me, Chase. Eat me while I blow Dirk." Smoothly, she slid his cock back into her mouth.

"Oh, shit that feels so great, sugar." Dirk continued his pumping action, his breaths matching his movements. "Yeah, Chase. Eat her. Suck her. I want to see her squirm even more."

Chase clamped his mouth onto her pussy, making her gasp in surprise and relief, sending an electric bolt through her. She twitched, delighting in his attack, spasms flaring under his touch. His tongue joined his fingers, diving into her cave. He nipped at the pulsing nub, sucking on her, drawing her juices out of her. The sounds he made lapping at her wetness excited her, burning her skin with every lash of his tongue. "Oh, shit, Chase. Damn, that's good. Bite my clit. Please."

"I gotta be honest, man. Watching you eat her is turning me on big-time." Dirk leaned over and swiped his tongue over her nipple. Bumping the table, he continued nibbling at her tits. She brought his dick inside, then released.

Tremors rippled outward from her head and core, crashing together near her heart. She'd had several men at once before, but none of those times compared to these two.

Chase removed his fingers to dart his tongue inside and out. He licked her from her slit up to her clit, taking her pulsing nub between his teeth. Letting out a satisfied sigh, he slid back down to dive into her cave again. She clenched, wanting to keep him inside her as long as she could. Holding her folds wide with his thumbs, he caressed her with his fingers and lashed at her with his tongue. Panting, she rocked between the men, arching for one to take her tits and bucking for the other to drink her dry.

Chase slipped his tongue out of her and ran his hands down the outsides of her legs. She squeezed her legs together, trying to force him back down. He laughed and held her apart. "Look at me, Shannon."

She tried to raise her head and couldn't until Dirk gave her a boost. Her body shook, already exhausted by the encounter, but excitement still resonated within her. Chase smiled at her, raised his fingers coated in her sex and stuck them in his mouth. "You are the hottest, sweetest thing I've ever known."

"Shit, man. I want a taste." Dirk's voice was gravelly, filled with lust.

"I'm sure she has plenty left." Slowly, with the tips of his mouth eking upward, he slid his tongue along the inside of her leg from the valley behind her knee up to the cleft at the top of her leg. She inhaled, anticipating him to pounce on her pulsing nub yet, instead, he nipped her skin, marking a trail of increasingly stronger bites around her mons to the other side. Reversing direction, he ran his tongue down her other leg.

"You are driving me frickin' crazy. Fuck me, Chase. Do it now before I explode."

"I think it's time for a switch." Easing her legs off his shoulders, he placed the spur on the table, rose and motioned for Dirk to take his place. She watched, mesmerized by his smooth, cat-like walk. Had any man ever walked so fluidly? He moved with the grace of a dancer, yet with an underlying fierceness in every step. Unbuttoning his shirt, he tossed it to the side and quickly undid his jeans.

Instead of sitting as Chase had done, Dirk stood next to her leg and bent over, placing his face above her curly snatch. He crept his hand along the mound of her tummy, following her midsection up to take a breast. "First things first. I want to smell you." Burying his face in her curls, he inhaled, tickling the skin underneath. He gripped her boob, squeezing hard, and slipped his other hand between her legs to open her to his exploring tongue. Where Chase's tongue had been smooth and hot, Dirk's was rough and warm. She stared into Chase's face as he studied her reaction to Dirk's touch, then placed his mouth close to her ear.

"Shh, remember this. Dirk can't kiss you. Only I can kiss you."

His gaze sought hers again and she understood what he was asking of her. Kissing was somehow the most intimate thing they could do and he didn't want to share her kisses with Dirk. She nodded, silently pledging her kisses to him.

Chase growled, smothering her mouth with his. The sweet taste of her juices mixed with the musky manly taste that was all his. Covering her upper lip with his, he ran his tongue across her teeth. She swept her tongue into his mouth and he pursued it, holding it hostage for a moment. At last he turned her loose and raced her tongue back inside, flicking the tip of the soft flesh along the sides of her mouth.

Shannon whimpered, not knowing how she could stand more blissful torture, not knowing how she could ever stop. No one had ever kissed her like that, ever made her cream not from another man's mouth on her pussy, but simply from his tongue on her lips. He'd created a tornado in her. Her nipples ached not for Dirk's hand, but Chase's touch.

She took Chase's hand and placed it on her other breast. Biting her lower lip, she reached out again and peeled the flaps of his jeans. Breaking free of the kiss, she turned her head and took him inside her mouth. His abs contracted and he bent to replace his hand on her nipple with his mouth.

Chase growled against her tit, spilling warm air over her sensitive skin. She moaned and took his hard length, sucking hard on his shaft. He shuddered and gripped her breast harder. Dirk, licking like a thirsty dog at fresh water, suddenly covered her clit with his mouth. With Dirk's mouth on her pussy and Chase's

dick in her mouth, an orgasm broke over her, spilling out of her pussy and sending shudders through her body.

Taking her by the hair, Chase urged her to return to his oozing cock. With his splendid appendage at her face, she took up where she'd left off just as Dirk resumed feasting on her. She worked her mouth up and down, from his curly-framed base back up to the oozing tip. The sucking sounds she made echoed those of Dirk and excited her even more, sending more juices to her soaked pussy. Reaching between Chase's legs, she cupped his balls, gently juggling them so they rolled over her fingers.

"Shit, Shannon, I love that. Here." He pulled his dick away and scooted closer to the table, moving his balls closer to her. "Put your sweet mouth on these, baby. Run your tongue over them." He chuckled and tracked his fingers through her hair. "But be careful."

She moaned, deep in her throat, and nuzzled her face into his sacs. His musky scent filled her nostrils, delighting her in the masculine aroma. Palming his balls, she tenderly stroked them with her tongue, taking turns to gently drag each into her mouth. Moaning again, she blew against the sensitive area and inwardly smiled when he shivered. She fondled him more, rubbing her forehead against the skin between his balls and his ass, coupling the balls first in her palm, then putting as much of them as she could into her mouth.

"Ooh, damn. Stop, Shannon." Chase stepped away and she grumbled, unhappy to lose her new toys so soon. "If you keep doing what you're doing, I'm going to shoot my wad all over your face."

She lifted an eyebrow at him that said "so what?" and grinned.

He growled a torturous sound. "Don't tempt me."

She arched, loving the sensation of each man's hand on her tits. "Don't be afraid to put a little muscle into it, boys. A little pain turns me on."

"Then let's use both of these." Dirk took her leg, lifting it until he could grasp the spur and yank it off the heel of her boot.

"Be careful with that Dirk Claxton," Shannon quipped lightheartedly. "Did your momma teach you how to safely hold sharp objects?"

"I'm pretty sure both of us were born with sharp objects, um, in our hands."

What an odd statement. But who cares? Not me. Not when they know how to handle a hot woman like me.

Chase reached out for the spur he'd left on the table. "Now let me think. Where, oh where, do I want to use this?" His eyes sparkled, growing more yellow. "I've got an idea."

Whirling the spur around, he laid it against her shoulder. She inhaled, holding her breath, excitedly waiting for what he had planned. Slowly, he pressed the rowels against her skin just hard enough to cause a slight sting, but not enough to draw blood. He held the heel band and carefully drove the spur along her shoulder and into the hollow at her neck. Following the spur's trail with his tongue, he moved on,

skimming the spur over the rise of her chest and into the space between her breasts. He tenderly soothed the soreness the steel of the spur left behind.

Dirk sat between her legs and placed her boots on the edge of the chairs. Spreading her wider, he slid his spur in a circle, going into the curly patch of hair, down the crevice between her leg and her pussy, and back up the other side. But when he moved the spur on top of her throbbing clit, she knew she'd never again think of a spur in the same way.

Much as Dirk had done to her pussy, Chase circled her breast, kissing the trail he made with the spur. He topped the mound and skimmed a loop around her nipple, digging the steel a little harder into her flesh. Both men latched onto her—Dirk onto her clit and Chase onto her tit—jolting her. Cold steel met hot tongues and she closed her eyes to savor the intensity of the two sensations. She inhaled sharply, letting the multiple vibrations flow over her, and grabbed the back of Chase's head.

"Are we hurting you?"

"Chase. God, yes. I mean, no." She panted, trying to answer him without losing her hold on the delirious feelings running over her skin. "Ooh, wow. Spur me, cowboys."

"I'm thinking this filly needs a rider."

Chase left her tit bereft. "She does."

Dropping the spurs, Dirk and Chase left their respective sides, meeting at one end of the table, each ready to climb on top. Instead, she slid off the table, squeezing her body between them, and put one hand on each of their gloriously hard chests. The instant she touched them, she blew out a breath, letting her hands slide farther down until she had both of them exactly where she wanted them. Almost in sync, their shafts twitched, coming to attention. With a wicked laugh, she dropped to her knees and came face-to-face with her ultimate cream-filled dreams. Working her hands in and out, up and down, she bumped their wet cocks against her cheeks.

"I wonder which one I should take first."

"Oh, shit. Take me." Dirk's words came out in a whisper.

"No. Me." Chase's tone was all pleading.

Shannon rubbed their tips against the corners of her mouth and cast her gaze upward so she could watch both men's faces. Peeking just the tip of her tongue out, she flicked the end of one cock, then the other.

Dirk clutched her hair, holding on with both hands as he stared at her. Chase, with his own tongue snaking out to lick his lips, held his shaft for her, urging her to take more of his inside her mouth. Delighted, she fondled his balls, silently thanking him for his help.

"Ready?" If she hadn't had her mouth already busy again, she might've laughed at their urgent expressions and rapt attention. Both men nodded and she took a breath. "Good."

Opening her mouth wider, she slipped as much of each of their rods into her mouth as she could and sucked. The mixture of their individual tastes swept over her tongue, giving her a new and different taste. Where one was sweet, the other was salty. Where one was musky, the other tangy. She moaned as they did, wrapping her tongue to take both tips. With her hands cupped firmly around them, she pumped them, two shafts of desire in her mouth.

Dirk's hold tightened on her hair. "Holy shit. I'm going nuts."

Chase's answering moan echoed Dirk's awestruck tone.

The heat of their cocks scorched through her hands and into her body, sending a fresh wash of desire between her legs. Purple-lined veins throbbed against the skin of her palms while their juices tickled her tongue. Twisting around the tip of each man's shaft, she sucked, pulling every ounce of drink she could from them.

When she took a breath, she turned and brought Chase alone inside her mouth. Yet instead of complaining, Dirk simply groaned and covered her hand on his shaft with his, helping her massage him. Chase caressed her back and pushed his hips toward her, letting her draw another inch of him inside. She dragged him in, then released, repeating the motion over and over again. When she thought he'd reached the peak of his limit, she let him go and took Dirk's shaft in. Chase let out a satisfied "ah" but didn't complain.

"This, boys, is how to share."

With Dirk's hand cupping his balls and the other firmly entrenched in her locks, she worked him, twisting her hold around his engorged shaft, tugging him to her. Gripping Chase's cock, she echoed her head's movement with her hand.

She glanced up at Dirk's closed eyes and felt the rise coming to the forefront of his dick. *If I don't stop soon...* Checking with Chase, she realized that he, too, was nearing his release. She had to stop for fear of breaking the tenuous hold each man held on his restraint. Letting Dirk's shaft go with a satisfying pop, she stood, running her hands up the length of rock-hard abdomens and over their mountainous chests. Lifting her head, she looked at Chase and Dirk, and froze. *Amber eyes. Weird.*

Dirk cupped her ass, squeezed and made a rumbling noise in his throat as though he'd lost the ability to speak. Chase, his gaze locked on hers, took her tit in his hand and rubbed his thumb over the hardened nub. A wild, almost frightening glint in his eyes made her dart her gaze away.

She swallowed, determined to speak. "Now that we've learned to share—" Her gaze fell on the object hanging on the adjacent wall and she forgot the rest of what she'd meant to say.

Chapter Six

When Shannon pushed them apart and sauntered away, all Chase could think of was getting his hot rod deep inside her. Whether he was first or second no longer mattered. Her sudden departure threw the werewolf, too, who growled his displeasure and pivoted to watch her. Shannon strode across the room, her naked ass wiggling enticingly.

“What’s she up to?”

“How the hell should I know?” Yet even if Chase had known, he wouldn’t have told him.

Shannon stopped in front of a crumbling fireplace, with bricks broken off the edges of the mantel and ashes piled over the grate. She glanced back at them, a wicked smirk on her face, and reached above the mantel to take a bullwhip off its hooks.

“Uh-oh. What’d’ya think she’s going to do with that, Mr. Kitty?”

A spark of excitement, mixed with a tinge of anxiety, flickered in Chase’s gut. “I think a woman with a bullwhip can do just about whatever she wants.”

Dirk dropped his voice to a whisper only a werecreature could hear. “Maybe she’s planning on taming a wild animal? Did you tell her what we are?”

“No.” Chase shook his head and concentrated on Shannon’s slow, seductive stroll toward them. Her breasts bounced, taut nipples pointing at him like heat-seeking missiles. The sway of her hips drew his attention away from her tits to the patch of slightly darker blonde hair below. His cock reacted, once more demanding he throw her to the floor and make her his.

Suddenly, he saw her again, taking Dirk inside even as she spread her legs, letting him slide into her bottom. He groaned, met the werewolf’s eyes over her shoulder and sensed the unspoken message. “*Give her what she wants, cat-man. Rock her off her feet.*”

Shannon stopped a few feet from them, fisted one hand on her hip, set her feet apart and shook the handle, making the popper dance above the floor. “Lookie what I found, boys.” She moved her wrist in a circle, letting the whip snake next to her feet. “You two have your spurs and now I have my whip. It’s time to stop messing around. Strip, you big studs.”

Both men hurriedly shed their clothes and boots. Chase had enjoyed a session or two of bondage in his life, but this female with a whip was the first to ever make him sweat. Sweat in a good way, that is. If she wanted to whip him into submission, he’d let her. Then he’d give her the same treatment. Still, being

vulnerable in front of an armed woman had its downsides, too. “Do you know how to use one of those things?”

“Nope.” She swung her arm forward slightly, letting the whip flick out in front of her. “But how hard can it be?” She arched an eyebrow over the tantalizingly smiling mouth. “Your turn to follow my orders. Work ’em, big boys. Go on. You know what I want to see.”

Chase glanced at Dirk who had already started stroking his cock. *You have to love a woman who knows what she wants.* He grinned and wrapped his hand around himself.

She nodded, slowly, smugly. “Good. You’re doing real good.” Her grin grew. “But not good enough.” Moving quickly, she swung her arm outward, raising it above her head.

“Shannon, stop before you hurt someone.” Chase lowered his voice, but tinged it with a hard edge. “You obviously don’t know how to use a whip.”

Fortunately, she lowered her arm and let him take the whip from her. “Oh, so you’re an expert on bullwhipping?” She frowned. “Or whatever it’s called.”

Winding the leather into a loop, Chase scanned her body. He lifted her chin with the end of the whip. “I’ll show you how to use a bullwhip.”

She caught his underlying meaning and swallowed. “Show me.”

“A bullwhip has all kinds of good uses. To ward off attackers...” Chase gently placed the whip over her shoulder. “To punish a very bad girl.” He jiggled the handle so the leather strip flicked gently against the delicate curves of her back. “I think someone ought to be taught a lesson. Don’t you, Dirk?”

“Oh? But what, pray tell, did I do that was so bad?” She pretended confusion, but the twinkle in her eyes betrayed her excitement.

“Little girls shouldn’t handle deadly weapons.” Fire sparked in her eyes. “At least, not unless they know how to handle deadly weapons.”

“And which deadly weapon are you talking about?” She bumped one eyebrow up and down in challenge and lowered her gaze. “The whip? Or something else?”

“The one you don’t know how to handle,” snickered Dirk.

Her mouth dropped in feigned “oh, my” surprise. “Good one, cowboy. So what’s the punishment for my crime?”

His gaze met hers, silently asking if she trusted him. “Bend over and put your hands on your knees and you’ll find out.”

She hesitated, biting her lower lip in a way that made him want to bite it, too. Slowly, she turned around and placed her sweet apple-shaped butt toward him.

Her ass drives me crazy. She’ll feel my whip on her ass and me inside her in a minute. Smoothly throwing his arm up, back and then outward, he sent the whip flying toward the milky white of her flesh. With a small *snap*, the tip of the whip struck her butt cheek.

“Oh!” Shannon bolted upward, slapping a hand over the small red spot where the whip had touched her. She twisted around, her face an unreadable mask.

For a moment, Chase was afraid he’d hit her too hard—until a slow smile spread across her face.

“That was fucking amazing.”

She couldn’t have said anything sexier. Unable to control his lust any longer, Chase strode over to her and pulled her ass against him. Using the whip as a rope, he loosely wrapped half the length around her waist, then around his, tying them together. The end of whip dangled temptingly down the side of her leg. Bending her over again, farther this time, he opened her buttocks to his inspection. “Wrong. *You’re* fucking amazing.” With a growl, he reached between her legs and found her dripping pussy. He speared two fingers into her wetness, pushing them in and out. Using his thumb, he skimmed the area around her bottom hole, making the sensitive muscles knot.

“Dirk, grab the lube and condom from my jeans pocket.”

“Oh, Chase, please hurry. I want you to doggy-style me.”

He cringed at the term “doggy-style” and Dirk’s low chuckle, but shoved his irritation away when Dirk handed him the tube.

“Hey, what about me?”

Chase stared into the eyes of the werewolf. “You’ll get yours. In a bit.”

Dirk’s eyes flashed gold, but he didn’t complain. After a tense moment, he nodded his agreement. Taking his hand away from her wet pussy, Chase sheathed himself, then parted her ass cheeks wider.

“Damn. She looks good front and back.”

When the dog’s right, the dog’s right. Chase squirted the lube onto his fingers and rubbed them around her bottom hole, into her dark passage and back out. Her muscles flexed at his touch, making him ache with the need to put his cock where his hand was. “Easy, baby. Try and relax. It’s going to be a tight fit.” He shoved two fingers into her, felt her tense and then relax. Turning his hand in sideways motions, he worked her ass, loosening her up for his invasion.

She moaned and shimmied her butt at him. “Do it, Chase. Hard. I can take it.”

His cock bobbed up and down, telling him to do as she ordered. But he didn’t want to hurt her. At least not more than she wanted to be hurt. “Steady her, Dirk.” *I want to watch her blow him, suck him as I fuck her.*

Dirk moved in front of her and took her by the hair. She grabbed his thighs, holding on for balance.

Chase lubed himself, running his hand over the length of his shaft, spreading the slick liquid from base to tip. *Damn, she’s going to feel so hot around me.* Scissoring his fingers into her ass again, he pushed at the tightness, working her muscles, ordering them to give him greater access. *Come on, baby, take it easy.* Her tightness loosened up a bit but she needed more. Pointing the end of the lube slightly into her ass, he squeezed, sending the cool gel into her. She gasped, then shuddered. She bucked back at him to try and

rush him, her panted breaths a sign of how much she wanted his cock inside her. He had to smile at her eagerness.

“Bend lower. Dirk will keep you steady.”

She followed his directions, moving her hands farther down Dirk’s legs. Dirk slid his palms down her back to grip her by the hips. The werewolf’s eyes glowed brightly, arousal apparent not only in his hard dick, but in the rigid set of his body.

Chase positioned the crown of his cock against the puckered skin and pushed. She went still, held her breath, then slowly let out her breath. Her ass loosened up. He took his time even though he wanted to pump hard and fast, then pushed his shaft farther inside. *Clench, relax, push.* The mantra of their actions filled his head. *Clench, relax, push.* Her ring of muscles slowly released, letting him enter. He was halfway into her, but that remaining half throbbed to feel her hold around him.

“Use the whip, Dirk. Spank me while Chase bangs me.”

Dirk took the end of the whip and slid it along her back. With a quick flick of his wrist, he feathered light *snaps* along her skin. Small pink marks traveled around the curve of her buttocks, then up the slope of her spine.

Her mews at the whiplashes swirled in Chase’s gut and, for a moment, he wanted to change places with Dirk. Suddenly, the need to feel his cock fully inside her overwhelmed him, stripping him of any chance to stop, and he plunged his length into her. She cried out, nearly tumbling over at the force of his shove, but his impromptu rope binding them together and Dirk’s sure catch held her upright.

“Shit, Shannon, are you all right?” He could barely speak, panting the words out. When she didn’t answer, alarm at what he’d done skyrocketed. “Talk to me, baby.” He leaned back, rubbing his hands over her gel-slicked ass. Blood whirled in his head, shaking all other thoughts out. *I need to stop. God, but I don’t want to stop.* His concern for her, however, won out and he began to pull out.

“Don’t you dare.”

He paused, unsure that he’d really heard her speak. “Did you say—”

“Fuck me now!” She twisted her head around and glared at him. “Did you hear me that time?” She wiggled her buttocks at him and he took her at her word, plunging his cock inside her again. She screamed, louder this time, but he took it as a sign of her desire and kept going.

Chase growled, shifting to bring out his teeth and claws. He pulled out, only halfway, then rammed back into her, rocking her on her feet. The sweat from his brow and chest dropped onto the small of her back, and he wished he could lean over to lick the drops off her. Dirk reached under her and took her tit, his breathing labored, his eyes closed again.

His cock sliding in and out of her pink-flamed ass only made Chase hotter for her. He watched Dirk’s arm muscles, imagining how the werewolf fondled and played with her tit. The harder, rougher he pushed, the more engorged he became, slapping his balls against her. Still her tight rings clamped around his shaft

and wouldn't let go. *She's so tight, so hot. I'm not sure how much longer I can go on yet I don't want to stop now. Not yet.*

Her cry of release sent shockwaves shuddering through her, rippling along his cock and skimming to shiver against his balls. The sensation shook him, nearly sending him over the edge. With a groan, he forced himself to withdraw from her, pulling out quickly before he lost it. Fighting harder than any battle he'd ever fought, he kept his climax in check. Barely.

Retracting his claws and fangs, Chase threw away the condom, pushed Dirk's hands off her, then bent over so he could wrap his arms around her, over the whip. She was still shivering from the orgasm. "Are you okay?"

She giggled brokenly between ragged breaths. "I will be."

"Well, I won't be unless I get some ass." Dirk let her go and motioned for a change. "My turn."

Chase unwound the whip, lifted her into his arms and wrapped her legs around the upper part of his. As though specifically made for him, her snatch opened wide and he glided inside. Her moaned breath against his shoulder warmed his skin. "Can you handle both of us, baby?"

Shannon smiled that soft smile he loved and nodded. "I can't wait."

Taking her gently to the floor while keeping his shaft inside her, Chase leaned back on his calves and hands and waited as Dirk knelt behind her and cupped her ass cheeks. She lifted, placing a hand on the base of Chase's dick to keep it from slipping out of her. With a relieved groan, Dirk slid the tip of his shaft inside her ass.

"Oh, damn." She stiffened, somehow pushing at both of them, clinging to Chase.

His gaze locked onto Dirk's hands kneading her breasts as he gently worked his way into her from behind. The werewolf leaned over, trailing kisses along her smooth neck.

As long as he doesn't bite, I'm okay with it. Chase gritted his teeth, wishing he could balance her better and still put his hands on her. "Pinch her tits, Dirk." Dirk did as he asked and Chase licked his lips in appreciation. *She's so hot. Fucking both of us at once.*

She rocked slowly, going along with Dirk's careful movements. Dirk moaned, his eyes closed, as he pushed harder, slipping as far as he could inside her. A strange yet exhilarating feeling rippled along Chase's shaft. *Oh, shit. What the—*

He paused, his heart picking up speed, then shoved his shaft back inside her in the same moment Dirk drove into her from behind. *It's him. Almost like we're meeting in the middle.* Chase's breaths came faster. *Holy crap. No wonder men don't mind doubling up on one woman.* He wanted more, wanted to enjoy the new experience for all that it was worth. *Damn, this feels so good. Fuck her hard, Dirk. Make her shudder.*

"Shannon, play with your clit. Masturbate while he rams into your ass. Ram her hard, man." He stared into her face, watching the flashes of lust as she took both men at once.

Shannon fingered her pussy, keeping one hand steady on his cock. Dirk, his eyes closed, and with sweat running down his forehead, thrust into her harder, harder until she rocked with his pushes. Chase, the ache inside his gut roaring to be released, watched, mesmerized, enthralled and horny as hell.

“Good one, man. That’s it. Make her pant.” He puffed out air as he worked his hips, thrusting upward. He matched Dirk, push to shove, and was rewarded with the wonderful sensation again. Playing around with the new experience, he changed rhythm, the impression against his cock changing as the werewolf pulled out and he dove in. *Damn, this is great. Fucking her and feeling him fuck her, too. Hell, forget great. This is absolutely amazing.* Even the feel of Dirk’s legs between his own, his tense muscles working to thrust his hips forward, excited him.

Shannon, throwing her head back, screamed in ecstasy and rode them both. Her arms pushed her tits together and she kept rubbing herself, stroking him as he drove into her. Flesh slapped against flesh, sweat dripped from one person to the next until he couldn’t tell where one person’s perspiration started and another’s took over. Groans, moans and various sounds of desire filled the air until, suddenly, Dirk fell backward.

Feeling his own release nearing the brink yet again, Chase growled and lifted Shannon off his dick. Together they cried out as he did so, almost as though they’d somehow torn the other’s soul out. Collapsing on top of him, Shannon’s hard breaths pushed against his chest. “Damn, woman, that was amazing.”

She giggled, then smoothed the hair away from her face to look at him. “Tell me we’re not finished yet.”

He laughed, twisted his head to check Dirk, his breathing only now leveling out, and shook his head. “I don’t know about him, but I’m still in the game.” Summoning his strength, he stood, taking her with him and carried her to the table. Gently, he laid her on top of it. He wiped the beads from her sweat-dampened brow, gazed into her eyes. *She’s something special. Very special.* “I need to fuck you.”

“You mean you need to fuck me again.”

“Yeah. Again and to the finish this time.”

“Hold up. Don’t forget me.” Dirk staggered over to the table, bent over and licked her tit.

“How about this?” She pushed her breasts together and smiled at Chase. “Dirk can fuck my tits while you get my pussy again.”

“Sounds good to me.”

Chase grinned at the man rubbing her tits. “Everything sounds good to you, man.”

“Hop up here, Dirk, and I’ll give you a ride.”

Chase stepped to the side to let her scoot down the table until her legs hung over the edge and Dirk crawled on top of her upper torso. He licked the hollow between her breasts, lapping away like the dog he was. Finally, he straddled her, using his legs to push her breasts together. With a groan that burned a hole in Chase’s gut, Dirk worked his cock between her breasts.

“Chase?”

He yanked his gaze away from her breasts. “Yeah?”

“How about eating me first?”

He swallowed. What man wouldn't? Placing a chair underneath him, he positioned her legs over his shoulders. Dirk pumped, his ass cheeks clenching and releasing as he thrust his dick back and forth between her tits. Chase closed his eyes, envisioning Shannon flicking her tongue at the tip of the werewolf's dick and expected to be disgusted. Instead, the fire burning within him increased and he pressed his face against her sopping pussy. She moaned, whether at Dirk's attentions or his, he didn't care. All that mattered was the sweet taste of her and the feel of his hand on his slick cock.

Her clit throbbed beneath his mouth, encouraging him to lick, stroke, nip at her. She bucked against him, her sensitive nub handling all his lashes, and he gripped her legs, keeping her down.

“Eat me, Chase. Please, I need you.”

He opened his eyes to see the pretty patch of hair above her pouting pussy and growled, sending his hot breath onto her skin and getting a shiver of excitement in reward. Concentrating on the button pulsing for his full attention, he suckled strongly on it and listened to Shannon's moans grow louder. She came, arching, bending, nearly tossing Dirk off her.

“Oh, God, oh, God. Oh, oh, oh. Ohhhh!”

Her cries marked another orgasm and, with the sweet juices spread over his face, ratcheted up the burning heat inside his groin. Even watching Dirk's ass muscles constrict and release as he worked his shaft back and forth between her tits made Chase ache for her. When the werewolf rose up on his legs far enough for Chase to glimpse Shannon's enraptured face as she flicked her tongue over the tip of the other shifter's dick, he knew he wanted more. “Get off her. Now.”

Dirk kept pumping, momentarily twisting around to glare at Chase. “You're fucking kidding me, right?”

“No, I'm not.” Standing, Chase took Shannon by the legs and urged her to flip onto her stomach. “You want to come, don't you? And I want her to suck me off while you fuck her ass again.”

Dirk's blank stare and obvious confusion lasted only a second. “Don't mind if I do.” Dirk helped her to roll over and slide closer to the edge as Chase came toward her head. Guiding his shaft into her, Dirk groaned and gripped her ass. “Damn, but she's tight.”

Chase, taking her hair to keep it out of her face, spread his feet and let her take his balls in her hands. With a quick whip of her tongue over his weeping tip, she deep-throated him. “Ahhh.” For a moment, he closed his eyes, undone by the amazing sensation of her teeth, her tongue caressing him.

“Hey, cat man, didn't you want to watch?”

He opened his eyes, thankful of the reminder when his gaze fell on the slickened round hills of Shannon's buttocks. Her flesh quivered with each of Dirk's strokes and when the shifter slapped her on the

cheek, Chase had to resist the urge to change places with him. He couldn't decide which way he wanted her the most. *This is better than anything I imagined.*

On her elbows with him, she still managed to lift her bottom higher for Dirk. Almost without noticing, Chase matched his rhythm to Dirk's. "That's it, baby. Pull, but not too hard. Ah, use your tongue. Good, that's good."

"I don't know how much longer I can last, man."

"Then don't."

With a loud groan, Dirk pulled out of Shannon, releasing onto her back. She squealed and tugged on Chase's dick a little harder. Dirk, spent but mobile, crawled off the table and grabbed a cloth off a nearby table. "Let me clean you up." Quickly, he wiped her down.

Unable to resist any longer, Chase pulled his cock out of Shannon's mouth and lifted her into his arms. Laying her gently on the floor, he entered her, shoving his dick into her wet and welcoming pussy. She grunted at the force of his move, then wrapped her arms around his neck and her legs around his waist. "Make me come again, Chase."

He gazed into her eyes, wanting to go deeper into those sweet depths, as deep as he now was inside her body. "More than that. I want to make—" She blinked and he knew she'd caught his near slip. *What the hell had I started to say? Surely not that word.* Yet, suddenly, he knew he'd almost said it all, telling her before he'd actually realized the truth. *I love her.* He sucked in air, stunned. *I want her to be my female, now and forever. She's my mate.* He studied her face, the myriad of expressions, and waited. *Does she already know? Can she sense my unspoken feelings? The unspoken word?*

"Make whoopie?" She tilted her head and gave him a look full of understanding. Her face softened and the corners of her mouth crooked up in an almost shy smile. They held that indefinable connection for a few moments more until, at last, she craned her head around to see a very satisfied Dirk standing at the end of the table, watching, listening. "Dirk."

Thrusting into her, Chase took her face between his hands and regained control of those wonderful eyes. "Later. We'll talk about this later."

Damp hair stuck to her forehead as she nodded. "Later." Then, squeezing her legs around him, driving back into him, she whispered, "I do, too."

His heart skipped a beat while hers pounded against his chest. With a roar, he lunged into her, spilling his seed into the woman he loved.

Chapter Seven

A hand fondled her breast, perking her tit into attention. Shannon stretched, arching her back to push her boob harder against the hand, and reached for Chase, who had been curled up next to her on the makeshift bed he'd thrown together. But abruptly the hand left her breast and the warm body next to her rolled away. The smile forming on her face morphed into a frown and she struggled to rid her mind of the sleep stubbornly clinging to it.

At last, she threw away the mental cobwebs and remembered. *Chase loves me. He didn't actually say the words, but I know he does. I felt it. Still, it'd be nice to hear him say it.* "Chase?"

Growls erupted near her, ridding her of the lingering sleep and making her stomach flip over in fear. Jumping to her feet, she snatched up her clothes, clutched them to her chest and whirled to find the two men punching, grabbing, yanking each other around the room. "Oh, my God, what the hell are you doing?"

Dirk landed against the wall, then slid down to land on his rump. Bottles from the shelf above him shattered on the floor around him. He scrambled to his feet, vibrations of rage flowing off his body, golden eyes glaring, flashing with anger. "No one throws me around like that." With a sound that was half shout and half roar, he lunged toward Chase.

Chase readied for the oncoming attack, his shoulders bulging, his face a frightening mask of fury.

Shannon bolted upright and shouted at Chase. "Why the hell did you do that?" *More like how the hell.* She didn't get far, however, before he grabbed her arm and pushed her behind him and away from Dirk. The enraged glint in his glowing amber eyes stunned her and she held her breath. *What is going on with this guy?*

"Yeah, catnip, what's up with you? Share and share alike. Just like before."

Chase, the muscles in his back rippling, ready to attack again, growled. "Not happening, dog breath. Things have changed."

Changed? He doesn't want to share now that he loves me. That's what's changed.

She smiled again, unable to keep the happy feeling from her face. "But, Chase, he doesn't know. He couldn't know what's happened. We have to talk. First you and me, and then—"

Before she could finish, however, Chase covered her mouth with his. He wrapped his arms around her, crushing her within their iron embrace. Dirk growled somewhere far away, but even that faded under the onslaught of emotions. At the mere touch of Chase's tongue to hers, lust—renewed and given added strength—raked through her. She drank him in, wanting to taste more of him, all of him. But what she

really wanted, she'd already waited too long for. She opened her legs and wrapped them around his lean waist.

Chase, however, broke their kiss. Taking her face in his, he searched her for obedience. "I've had enough of this. I can't—" He struggled, his face showing the turmoil within, then determination set his features. "Tell him you want only me." His grip strengthened, yet she knew he was restraining himself. "Tell him."

The gleam in his eyes told her everything she wanted to know. *He really does love me.* A thrill lightened her heart. *He did a threesome with Dirk, but now he doesn't want to share me. He wants me all for himself. Now I, we, mean too much.* She continued to study him, searching his heart while searching her own. *I love him, too.* She took his wrists, not to break away, but to keep him close. *How the hell did this happen? When did I fall in love?* Grinning, she wiped the questions away. *Who the hell cares? All that matters is that we love each other.*

Without turning her eyes away from Chase, she tried to make Dirk understand—even though she barely understood herself. "Dirk, I'm sorry. Really. But the threesome part is over." She had to look at him. "Please understand."

Although still irritated, Dirk ran a hand through his hair, then gave her a curt nod. Finally, his familiar easy grin replaced the snarl on his lips. "That doesn't mean I can't watch, does it?"

"Good grief. You are such a dog."

"More than you know."

At Chase's remark she turned to him, hoping his answer would be the same as hers. She heard the grumble in his chest, but it was soon followed by a heavy sigh.

"I guess letting him watch is okay." Chase lowered his tone at Dirk. "But no more touching."

She laughed and swiped her tongue along his chin. "I think we've had plenty of foreplay, Chase. I need you to fuck me and fuck me hard. Right now. Right this—"

"Don't you ever shut the hell up?" Chase clutched her ass cheeks, holding her in place. He rammed his cock into her waiting pussy.

If he'd wanted her to forget how to speak, he couldn't have found a better way. Her head swam, dizzy with the feel of him forcing his way into her core. His kisses grew more intense, more possessive than before. And his cock, oh, God, his cock so deeply entrenched in her, called out to her with every shove, every push. She laid her head back, letting him bite her neck from her earlobe to her shoulder. Even when he bit her extra hard, digging teeth—*fangs?*—into her, she wanted more. *Am I bleeding? I don't care.*

Clutching his hair, she kept his mouth on her and arched, hoping he'd get the message to take her nipple into his mouth. She almost cried in relief when his teeth nipped at the swollen nub.

Another orgasm, bigger, longer than the earlier ones, swept over her, surprising her in its duration. She held onto him and rode it out. Yet before she could take a breath, another shuddered through her. She cried out and dug her nails into his back.

“Say you’re mine.” His rough panting tickled her nipples, but in an enticing way.

“I’m yours. And you’re mine.” She leaned away from him, pushing against his chest, and ground against his pelvis. Although she could feel his shaft at her inner wall, she wanted more of him.

She kissed him, his mouth, his neck, his ears and still couldn’t give him enough. Suddenly, everything was clear to her. Jarrod’s heartless abandonment, the months of clawing through the ensuing heartache, all the years of meaningless sex, all the men she’d used then forgotten, were in preparation for Chase. Everything she’d experienced, everything she’d lived, had given her the insight to recognize the truth of this moment. *I love this man*. He was hers and she was his.

He thrust into her again, going impossibly deeper, bouncing his balls off her wet slit below. Moaning, he dug his nails into her back and continued to ram into her. Yet this was no mere act of raw sex any longer. They were, as he’d wanted to say, making love.

The huge orgasm blindsided her, sweeping through her like a tsunami, rolling over her body, diving into her heart. She tensed, then started trembling and kept shaking with wave after wave racking her from head to toes.

Drenched in sweat, they clung to each other, one’s tremors feeding into the other’s. With a wild cry, Chase stormed his release, shooting into her. She smiled, happy to have his seed inside her. Contracting her muscles, she did her best to capture his come.

“Shannon.”

“Yeah, I know. I’m yours.”

His chuckle blew warm breath against her shoulder but, compared to the heat of their bodies, it felt cool. Slowly, he laid her down on their thrown-together bed. She held her breath, hoping he wouldn’t walk away. With a sigh, he collapsed on top of her. She slid her hands along his sweaty back and hugged him.

“Whew. I sure hope that was as good for you as it was for me.”

Shannon caught Chase’s bemused look and, together, they turned to see a spent and very satisfied Dirk sitting on the floor, his still-erect cock in hand. “Believe me, Dirk. It was way better.”

With a grin, Dirk curled up into a ball and quickly fell asleep.

“Just like a man.” Shannon nodded at the snoring Dirk. “Fall asleep anywhere in no time flat.”

“Just like a dog, you mean.”

“Huh?”

He touched the end of her nose. “Never mind.” Snuggling against her, he stroked her love-worn body.

She traced the line of his jaw, working her finger from his kissable earlobe over to his even more kissable lips. He surprised her by snatching her finger into his mouth and holding it there while he lashed

his tongue around it. She giggled, watching the motions of his tongue behind his cheeks. “You sure do like sucking on things, Mr. Reya.”

He turned her loose, making an exaggerated popping sound. “What’s with the ‘Mr. Reya’?”

“Oh, I don’t know. The name fits you. You know, all spicy and hot, yet cool and commanding.”

“You get all that from the name Reya?” He snuggled his face into her neck, showering her with tickling kisses and making her giggle more.

“Yep.” She wiggled her ass against his crotch. *I wonder how much longer I’ll have to wait before he’s ready for another go.* The growth beneath her bottom answered the question. “Uh, if you’re thinking of growing any more, then I need to take a restroom break first.”

He cupped her tit, licked across the swell of her breast. “Then you’d better head on out to the outhouse. Oh, and get dressed first.”

She straightened up, pushing against his granite-hard pecs. “Are you serious?” She glanced around the small one-room cabin and realization hit her—in both the head and her bladder. “There’s no bathroom in this place?” *Please tell me you’re joking.*

Chase obviously enjoyed her dilemma. “You’re just now noticing this?”

“Hey, I had my mind on other things.”

He skimmed a hand along her thigh, over her leg and onto her curly snatch.

She squirmed against him, but this time it wasn’t due to any desire to have sex. “So tell me where the real bathroom is.”

“Out back. Just follow the dirt path and you’ll run right into it.” Chase stood, taking her with him.

Lying cradled in his arms, she splayed her hand across his steel-like chest, and wished she could answer the heat in her abdomen instead of the call of nature. She sighed and enjoyed how he carried her to the back door of the cabin and leaned over, flexing his muscles, to let her open it.

She peered into the dimming light and, although it was well down the path and obscured by bushes, finally spied the shed, which was not much bigger than a phone booth. “Holy shit.”

“Haven’t you ever heard of an outhouse?”

“Yeah, sure. Like in the movies. Doesn’t everyone have indoor plumbing nowadays?”

“Not in these old cabins. Besides, it’s not that bad. Just watch out for the spiders and snakes.”

She dropped out of his arms and pushed him back a couple of steps. “Now that part better be a joke.”

“Actually, no, it’s not.” He hugged her close. “Let me get a lantern and I’ll go with you. I’ll stand guard over you while you, uh, do your business. After all, I’ve seen everything you’ve got.”

She glanced up quickly to see if he’d snickered at her and caught him rolling his lips under to smother a chuckle. *No way am I going Number One in front of this man. A girl has her limits, after all. Never mind him. I’m a big girl. I can do this.* “Get the lantern and don’t let me hear you snickering.”

Chase found the battery-operated lantern—*thank you for small mercies*—while she tugged on her clothes. “Here.” Keeping a straight face, he handed it to her along with an old newspaper.

“Trust me. I’m not going to waste any time reading.”

He coughed, quickly covering a laugh. “Uh, the paper’s not to read. It’s to wipe with.”

She took the crumpled paper and stared at the dirty spots on it. “Don’t we have any toilet paper?”

“I didn’t see any. And I doubt anyone left some in the outhouse, either. Spiders tend to nest inside the roll.”

She cringed, thinking of the tiny spider she’d killed back at the ranch. It had taken her thirty minutes to dredge up the courage to step on it. Her anxiety took over, imagining her baring her tush to tarantulas and cobras in the semi-dark of the crude structure. *Oh, shit. Was great sex worth this?* She studied Chase’s handsome features and remembered his hands on her body. *Yeah, he’s worth it.*

Gathering her courage, she stepped outside into the twilight and trudged through the brush and bushes, trying to follow the dirt path leading to the outhouse.

“You can do this, Shannon. You can do this.” Repeating the encouraging words out loud didn’t help much. But she half hoped they might scare a snake or two away. At last, after what seemed a very long time, she stood in front of the tiny building and reconsidered her decision not to let Chase accompany her. Steeling herself against whatever horrors lay behind the wooden door, she lifted the latch, flung the door wide and stumbled back a couple of feet, ready to be attacked by scores of spiders and snakes.

“Shannon? You okay?”

She jumped at the sound of Chase’s shout, then gritted her teeth. “Yeah. I’m fine.” *Does he really mean to check up on me? Or to frighten me a little more? The man definitely has a playful side. Too bad I’m not laughing.*

“Good. But I forgot to warn you to look out for skunks, too.”

Skunks? Oh, come on! She spun around, checking the bushes around her, but saw nothing. She blew out a breath, settling her rattled nerves. *Playful, my ass. He’s downright evil and when I get back to the cabin, he’s going to pay for his little jokes.* She forced the knot forming in her throat back down into her stomach. *But what if he’s not kidding?*

“I’ll be in the cabin if you need me.”

“Okay.” She lifted the lantern and stuck her arm into the outhouse, illuminating the closet-like quarters. Spider webs hung from every corner but it was the hole serving as a toilet that nearly had her losing her lunch. *A frickin’ hole? No actual toilet? So I’m supposed to pee into a hole in the ground?* She inched forward to peek closer. Thankfully, she couldn’t see the bottom, but she had no doubt about it. This was the toilet. *Now I know where the term shithole comes from.*

Taking a deep breath—which she immediately regretted—she stepped into the outhouse and closed the door. She hooked the lantern on the nail on the back of the door and quickly lowered her jeans. *Please, oh, please, don't let anything bite me in the ass.*

Faster than she'd ever managed to do so, Shannon did her business, zipped up her jeans and pushed open the door. She stepped outside and inhaled, taking in the sweet mountain air.

A low rumbling sound froze her to the spot. *What the hell is that?* “Chase?” She swallowed and tried to produce more than a whisper. “Chase?”

The answering growl suddenly made her reevaluate the outhouse's appeal. Yet she doubted the rickety old shed would give her much protection. *If this is a wild animal, I have to make it back to the safety of the cabin and Chase.* She turned slowly, biting her lip to keep from whimpering. Every rustle of a leaf, every fleeting shadow left her shaking and trying to drag air into her suddenly constricted chest. *Is that something?* She squinted, trying to make out the shape in the bushes. *It's too big for a skunk. Way too big. So what the hell is it?*

The idea hit her and she nearly cried from relief. *I bet it's Chase. Funny how the man who'd seemed so stoic before today had morphed into a prankster.* “Chase, if you're trying to scare me, it's not working. And, by the way, that's one lame-ass growl. Shoot, I've heard poodles that sounded meaner.” *And I've definitely heard him growl meaner than that.*

The growl was louder this time and definitely more menacing. *Okay, that really sounded mean. And dangerous. Oh, shit.*

“Chase?” Suddenly, her brilliant deduction of his playing a joke didn't fly. *That's a real animal.* The dark shape in the bushes moved closer, growing bigger and wider. She could hear the crunch of leaves with its every step. *Holy shit. That's a really big animal.*

Unable to break free from the dread striking her numb, she stood and waited for the animal to break through the bushes. Her breathing quickened and her heart raced in her chest. *Only a few more feet and I'll see it.*

A massive head covered in brown fur broke through the last bush between them and jaws opened wide, showing long sharp fangs dripping with saliva. The fear holding her in one spot exploded into absolute terror. She dropped the lantern and ran.

Chapter Eight

How long does a human female take to do her business? Chase paced the room and wished the cabin had a back window to go along with the back door.

I guess this is just one of many things I'll have to get used to now that I've found my mate. The smile slipping over his face surprised and delighted him. *My mate. I've found my mate.* She was human, but other werewolves had taken human females for mates. Granted, he'd never expected this to happen, but now that it had, he wasn't about to let her go. He would explain everything to her, then bite her, changing her into a shifter.

His smile faded. *Will she want me once she knows what I am?* A knot formed in the middle of his chest. *What if she's afraid of me? Even if she can love me knowing what I am, will she want to become a werewolf? What if she refuses to be my mate?* Growling at the fear clenching at his heart, he shoved the questions away. He'd find out soon enough.

What's taking her so long? He stared at the back door, willing her to come back. At last he forced himself to sit down. *If she isn't here in a few more minutes, I'll go get her.*

"Where's Shannon?"

Chase glanced up from his seat at the table—the table where he could still imagine Shannon's luscious nude body spread across its length—to scowl at the werewolf. Dirk stretched, pushed his body against the wall to stand, then scanned the room. "Out back."

The werewolf sauntered toward him, took a chair and flipped it around to straddle the seat. "She's one incredible female."

"She's *my* incredible female." Although Dirk had backed off earlier, Chase figured it couldn't hurt to verbally stake his claim one more time.

Dirk held up his hands, palms out. "Relax. You wouldn't want to cough up a hair ball. I get that you two have found something special. No problem. I mean, I would've liked to have had another go, but I'm willing to step aside for *true love*." He grinned, hinting at the truth behind his taunting words.

True love. As sappy as that sounded, those were the correct words to describe what Chase felt for Shannon. He just hoped the feeling was reciprocated. If what she'd said during sex—agreeing that she was his—was any indication, it was. Keeping his expression neutral, he let his thoughts wander to the day when he would take her into the mountains, showing her his world and her new home. His dick twitched at the thought of Shannon lying on her back amidst the forest, legs open, welcoming him.

Her scream ripped his fantasy apart, knotting his gut. Chase rushed through the back door, flinging it open so hard it nearly tore it off its hinges. Dirk hurried behind him, but alarm for Shannon kept him in the lead. He ran, his eyes quickly adjusting to the darkness. Another scream drove a wedge of panic through his heart and he picked up his pace by partially shifting. “Shannon, where are you?”

“There!”

He saw her in the same instant Dirk yelled. Stumbling through the brush, she fell, her eyes wild, cuts from the bushes streaking her cheeks. “Run! It’s right behind—”

The bear was on her before she could finish her sentence. To Chase’s horror, the huge animal picked her up with one paw and tossed her several feet into the air. She landed behind the bushes with a sickening thud.

“No!” Roaring, Chase tore off his clothes, shifting all the way. Fur raced along his body, claws extended from the hands forming paws, eyes narrowed, morphing from the sight of a man into that of a cougar. His bones ground together, growing larger in some areas and smaller in others. Within seconds, he fell to the ground on all fours. He snarled, challenging the bear. Dirk stood beside him, a dark brown wolf, growling his own battle call.

The bear rose on its back legs, swiping the air around him with its gigantic paws and splitting the air with its terrifying roar. Dropping back to the dirt, it lumbered toward them, a furry freight train determined to pummel them under its feet.

Chase’s muscles tensed and he crouched, ready to pounce. He flung his body at the bear, soaring over its snapping jaws to land on its massive back. The bear bellowed in anger and bucked, trying to hurl the werecat off him, but Chase dug his claws deep into the fur, into the creature’s underlying skin. Snarling, he clamped his fangs into the thick neck. Blood gushed into his mouth, spurted from the sides of his jaws, splattering onto his chest and legs. Dirk darted in and out, keeping away from the animal’s strikes, and landed his own blows to its underside.

Enraged by its inability to get rid of them, the bear spun in a circle, rubbing against the thick brush to try and knock them off. When that didn’t work, the animal roared in frustration, buckling at the knees to begin a roll. Chase jumped, tearing away part of the beast’s neck. He hurtled his body several feet from the rolling predator.

The severely injured bear struck out at them, but his now-feeble attempts to attack fell short. They continued to strike at him, Chase daring the gigantic jaws while Dirk slashed at its hind legs. Round and round they circled the animal, using their speed to stay clear of the bear’s claws and fangs.

Lifting its head in a final roar, the bear hurriedly shuffled back from them, then twisted around and ran back down the path, leaving a bloody path behind him. Chase, his breath harsh and ragged, watched the bear disappear from sight, making sure it was no longer a threat, then turned to where Shannon had landed.

“Chase?” Shannon stood between two bushes, grasping limbs to keep herself upright. Dirt and blood covered her clothing and a gash made an ugly streak across her forehead. “Is that really you?”

Joy filled him and he shifted back to human form. She stared at him, mouthing something incomprehensible. A small cry escaped her as her knees buckled and she lurched toward him.

Chase caught her a second before she hit the ground. He knelt over her, lowering her gently to the ground, letting her face rest against the ever-growing pool of blood flowing out of her. “Shannon.” He stroked her pale cheek, silently urging her to look at him. “Baby, please open your eyes.”

A human Dirk stood over them. “She’s losing a lot of blood, man. Too much blood.”

Chase pulled off his shirt, pressed it against the gaping hole in her side and fought back the urge to take his fear out on Dirk. “Help me staunch the bleeding. We’ve got to get her back to the ranch.”

Dirk removed his shirt, squatted on her other side and started ripping it apart for makeshift bandages. “I don’t think we’d make it in time. She wouldn’t survive the trip. Not the way she’s bleeding right now.”

Chase inhaled slowly and fully, then exhaled, trying to calm down enough to think. “We have to do something. I can’t, I *won’t* let her die.”

“You have to do the only thing you can do.” Dirk met his gaze and nodded, his face a grave mask. “You know what I mean. If she has any chance of surviving until we can get help, then you have to mark her and hope it’s enough to keep her alive.”

Bite her without her consent to become his mate? She’d said she was his, but she hadn’t known that he was a shifter—or that she’d become one, too. What would she say later? What if she’d rather die than become a shifter, or his mate? Yet Dirk was right. What choice did he have? He had to change her to give her enough strength to make the journey back to the ranch.

Chase shifted again, just far enough to lengthen his teeth into fangs. He let her head fall backward to expose her lovely neck and her carotid artery, then paused, wondering if he’d seen her eyelids flutter as though she were trying to open her eyes. When she didn’t, he opened his jaws and sunk his fangs into her. She gurgled a strange sound, jerked a few times, then grew still. Clutching her body against his, he held her, giving her the life force that he prayed would keep her alive.

The nightmare was always the same, with the same gigantic monster rising up in front of her, its glistening white claws flexed, ready to tear out her throat. Hard eyes locked onto her, freezing her very breath while shiny alabaster fangs dripped saliva in anticipation of sinking into her delectable skin. She struggled to get to her feet but, as it always happened in the dream, her legs refused to move.

Shannon opened her mouth to scream, yet no sound came. *Why can’t I scream? Why can’t I run? Where am I? Please, God, don’t let me die.* Then in one last desperate attempt to scream, she mouthed the

hardest question of all. *Chase, where are you?* With the ferocious bear towering over her, she prepared, as she always did in the torturous nightmare, to die.

When the beautiful mountain lion jumped in front of her, placing his body between her and the monster, she finally cried out, not in fear but in exultation. The cougar fought like a demon possessed, striking out at the monster, standing between her and certain death.

The cougar, aided by a swiftly moving wolf, attacked the enormous bear-monster, slashing at its throat, its underbelly; anywhere they could find a vulnerable spot. The bear was covered in big dark splotches of its own blood and soon Shannon could sense its desire to fight lessening. With an outraged roar, the bear whirled around, stumbling over its own feet, and rushed out of the clearing.

“Chase?” she whispered. “Is that really you?” *Why did I call the cougar by Chase’s name?* Yet she knew without a doubt that the puma who had fought for her, perhaps sacrificing his life for her, was Chase. The blackness she’d grown accustomed to enveloped her again and she closed her eyes, unable to stop her legs from buckling beneath her. With an exhausted sigh, she welcomed the wet warmth against her cheek even when she realized that the warmth came from her own pool of blood.

“Shannon?”

She sighed again, not sure if she’d actually made a sound but not caring. The soft touch against her cheek washed through her, giving her comfort where no other could be found.

“Baby, please open your eyes.”

She tried with every ounce of willpower in her to heed his plea but could only manage to peek between fluttering eyelids. In that second, she saw what couldn’t be real. Yet deep inside, she knew with absolute certainty that it was. Chase, holding her gently in her arms, sprouted fangs, then sank them into her neck.

The pain racing through her neck burned through her skin, into her veins and down into her very soul. Jerking against the invasion of her body, she tried to cry out, tried to lift her hands up and push him away, but she was powerless. Giving up even the pretense of struggle, she welcomed the blackness surrounding her.

“You’ve been here the whole time. How about you let me take over and you get—”

“No. I’m not leaving her side.” His words came out harsher than he meant, but the frustration and guilt he felt had to come out somehow. *But not at her cousin’s expense. Shannon wouldn’t want that.* Chase glanced at Bob, hoping the distraught man would recognize his apology in his face. “I can’t. I don’t want her waking up without me here to help her.”

It was the same discussion they’d had many times since he and Dirk had carried her back to the ranch two days earlier. The ranch’s doctor—one who knew about the existence of shifters—had done all he

could. With shifter blood running through her veins, taking her to a human hospital was out of the question. Now it was up Shannon to pull through and the only thing they could do was wait.

Why can't they understand that I'll stay by her side until it's over? No! Not over. Until she comes out of this...sleep...she escaped into. He cradled her hand in his, covering it with his other hand. And she will come out of it. I know she will. She has to.

"Chase, look, I know we're not best buds or anything, but you need to listen to Bob. What good will you do her if you collapse from exhaustion?"

He could sense Dirk standing behind him and shook his head. The werewolf had remained nearby during the past days, surprising Chase with his unwavering support. "You know I can last a lot longer than that. Than any human ever could."

"Yeah." Dirk let out a heavy sigh. "I know. And I also know you did everything you could to save her."

Chase sprang out of the chair, whirling toward Dirk. Fangs shot out and claws sharpened into razors. Grabbing the werewolf by the collar, Chase shoved him against the wall. "Do not talk like she's dying." Barely controlling his rage, Chase spit out his words. "She is not going to die."

Dirk calmly unhooked Chase's clenched fists from his collar and moved him back a step. "I know, I know. I didn't mean it like that. I only meant that you need to stop blaming yourself."

Chase thrust the werewolf against the wall again, then hurried back to his place beside Shannon. "If I'd gone with her to the outhouse, none of this would've happened."

"You don't know that. In fact, if the bear had caught you off guard while you were playing kissy-face, then both of you might've ended up bits of meat right now, a tasty meal served up to the vultures. Instead, you heard her cry for help and you answered it. Hell, I hate like hell to admit it, but you saved her, man. So stop torturing yourself."

"She has to wake up."

"Yeah. And she will. Give her time. After all, she made it this far, she'll make it all the way."

Chase paced to stare out the window. "I don't know what I'll do if I lose her. Even when I finally realized I wanted her as my mate, I still didn't get how much I need her. How much I love her." He swallowed, trying to keep his voice from quivering. "She's everything to me."

"I envy you, man."

"What did you say?"

The slow easy grin that was Dirk's trademark smiled back at him. "Crazy, huh? A werewolf envying a werecat. But I do. Not because of what you are, but because of the way you feel." The grin faded as Dirk raised a finger in warning. "I'll deny up and down that I ever said this—" he dropped his finger and his features softened, "—but I'd give anything to love someone the way you love her."

Chase studied him, realizing how alike they really were. "I'm not so sure it's a good thing. What if she doesn't love me back? At least not enough to accept what I am. What I made her become." He moved to her side, wanting, needing to stay close to her.

"Then you'll learn to live with it. As long as she's okay, you can live with the other, right?"

Yeah, I can. Chase smoothed a hair away from her forehead and willed her to respond. *Please, come back to me, Shannon.*

"Hey, Sleeping Beauty, it's about time you woke up."

Dirk.

Shannon groaned at the throbbing in her head and neck, the ache in her entire body. She swallowed, but her throat felt as though it had been sewn shut. "Water." She hoped he'd understand the word hidden in the croaking sound she'd made.

"Just a sec. I'll get her some."

Bob.

She peeked open one eye and, instantly regretting it, squeezed it shut again. *Oh, please let me die. Shit, shit, shit.* "Aw, shit. Someone close the fucking curtains before my head explodes."

Bob's relieved-sounding chuckle came from the other side of the room. "I bet the real Sleeping Beauty never talked like a cowhand."

"You do know Sleeping Beauty isn't a real person, right?"

Leave it to Dirk to point that out.

Someone sat down, dipping the bed, and a hand lifted her head to press a glass to her parched lips. Cool liquid slipped between her lips and she moaned in gratitude.

"Take it easy," he whispered, then cleared his throat. Stronger sounding now, he added, "You don't want to overdo it."

Chase. Thank God Chase is all right. She squinted, fearing the sunlight would split her head in two, but she had to see him. Had to know he was unhurt. Had to see that he was...a man. *Did I really see him change from a puma into a man?* She finally made her eyes obey and looked into his face. "Chase?"

"Yeah, I'm here."

The expression of tenderness, of caring—of love—in his eyes made her heart pound. Like before, the incredulous thought hit her. *He loves me.* She paused to enjoy the touch of his hand against her cheek.

"He never left your side."

She glanced at Bob, unsure of what to make of his statement, then back at Chase. "Are you okay?" His slight smile was all she needed to reassure her.

"I'm okay."

“Good.” A wave of pain ripped through her and she hissed to keep from crying out. “What happened?” *Did you really turn into a cougar?*

“You played a little game of tag with a bear.” Chase tried to sound playful, but his tone was deadly serious.

Dirk stepped to the side of the bed next to Chase and grinned. “And you lost.”

Releasing a huge sigh, Chase echoed the other’s grin and gave her another sip. “Don’t you know better than to mess with a bear? Never mind. As far as I’m concerned, you won because you’re alive.”

“Are you sure?”

“Trust me, you’re alive and getting stronger every day. But I’m glad you’re finally awake. You’ve been in and out of it for four days.”

“Thanks to Chase.” Dirk winked at her, sharing a secret she wasn’t sure she knew.

“Hey, take it easy. Let me help you sit up.” With Chase doing most of the work, she rested against the headboard, wincing at the ache searing along her shoulder and neck.

“I remember running from the bear—oh, hell, I tripped and fell like some stupid bimbo in a slasher movie—and then suddenly I was flying through the air.” *And landing really hard.* “I remember getting the air knocked out of me and my head feeling like someone had taken an ax to it.”

“Brother Bear definitely laid into you. He gave you quite a gash in that hard head of yours.”

Brother Bear? She sent Dirk a questioning look. It hurt like hell to move her forehead.

Bob took a position on the other side of her, capturing her hand between his two callused ones. “I don’t know what you three were doing out there, but I’m damn glad Dirk and Chase were around to fight off the bear. I hate to think about what would’ve happened otherwise.”

“Me, too.” Had her head wound make her hallucinate? “Chase, did you—?” She glanced at the cowboys, unsure of whether to speak candidly or not. “I mean, could I talk to you in private?”

Bob nodded, told her he’d be nearby and kissed her hand before leaving. Dirk and Chase exchanged a telling look. Patting Chase on the shoulder, Dirk winked at her again and followed her cousin out of the room. *Now what’s that about? When did those two become so chummy?*

“I love you, Shannon.”

She promptly forgot the question she was about to ask and gaped at him instead. “Wow. Good thing I’m already in bed. Otherwise, that would’ve knocked me off my feet.” *He loves me. Sure, I already figured as much, but hearing him say it makes it real. Very real.* “Did you just say you love me?”

He laughed. “Yep, I did.” A frown fell into place. “And you love me, too. Or did I not understand what went on between us?” His features hardened. “Maybe I don’t know how humans do this kind of thing, but I was sure—”

“Wait. What did you say? You don’t know how *humans* do this?” Shannon used his arms for support and leaned forward to study him. “Humans? As in you’re not human?” *Am I still dreaming? At least it’s a new dream, but I’d rather wake up. Wake up now!*

He glanced over his shoulder, checking to make sure Dirk had closed the door, then faced her again. “Do you remember anything else about the attack? Like seeing something else?”

“Yeah, I do. I remember one helluva big cat. Bigger than any cougar I ever saw on television. In fact, I saw the cat change into...you. But...I had to be seeing things after getting hit in the head. That’s the only explanation that works. Right?” Her heart pounded against her chest, at once terrifying and exciting her. She bit her lower lip and felt the pain that was more real than anything she’d experienced in her nightmare. Taking a deep breath, she got ready to hear the impossible answer. “What are you trying to tell me?”

He took her hands in his. “You didn’t hallucinate. What you saw was real.”

“Real.” *Maybe if I repeat what he’s telling me, I’ll believe it. But do I really want to? The man who just declared his love for me is wacko. Or a supernatural creature.* “You’re telling me you can change into an animal.” *Please tell me you’re joking.*

“Shannon, I realize this is difficult, especially after getting mauled and nearly dying, but you have to believe me.”

No I don’t. Yet she couldn’t say the words. Whatever Chase told her, she wanted to believe.

“You’ve heard of werewolves, right?”

“Like in stories? Fairy tales? Uh-huh.” An image flashed through her mind. She’d not only seen a huge cat but a very large wolf. Together, side by side, staring at her until she’d passed out. “Omigod, I remember now. There was a wolf, too.”

“That’s right. But it was a werewolf, not an ordinary wolf.”

“And he was standing right next to the enormous cougar.” *Omigod, he’s serious. He thinks he’s a man who can change into a cat. What do they call them in the movies? Shifters?* She had to look away from him to give her brain time to catch up with what her heart already knew. *I believe him.*

“I’m the cougar you saw.”

Yet she needed one more stab at bringing her world back, the world where supernatural creatures did not exist. “You seriously thought I’d believe you?”

His earnestness deflated a little. “I did. But I guess you don’t.”

She smiled, hopeful that sanity was making a come-back. “Damn, Chase, next time give a girl some time to recover before you joke around like this.”

“Shannon, I’m not joking.”

A stab of alarm mixed with irritation brought out the dare before she could think twice about it. “Then prove it. Change into a cat, right here and right now.” *Come on, Chase, give up the gag. Why is he playing this game when we need to discuss our future? Do we have a future?*

“Okay, I will. Brace yourself.” Then, within seconds, Chase narrowed his eyes. They glowed with an amber, cat-like color, the color she’d seen before. He growled, that wonderful animal-like growl he’d done while having sex, then parted his lips. Long sharp teeth—non-human teeth—grew over his jaws. “And the wolf was Dirk.”

She placed her palm on the bandage on her head and waited for her mind to stop reeling. “Holy shit. Omigod. You’re telling me the truth. This is amazing.” Stunned, she pulled her hands out of his and fell against the pillow and the headboard. “I, uh, I don’t know what to think. How is this possible? How the hell—” *I’ve fallen in love with a supernatural being!*

“We’re called shifters. Dirk’s a werewolf and I’m a werecat.”

“A werecat.” She whispered the word, trying to make the word feel more natural, like any other word she’d say every day. “So you can change into a, a werecat whenever you want? Or does it have to be a full moon like for werewolves?”

“There’s no moon out right now. The full-moon thing is pure fiction. Werewolves, like werecats, can shift anytime they want to.” He started to reach out for her, but stopped as though he wasn’t sure she’d let him touch her.

“And you and Dirk, in your animal forms, saved me from the bear.” She giggled, unable to keep it contained. “Oh, shit, I finally get it. That’s why you and Dirk are always arguing and calling each other animal names. Now it makes sense.” *I had sex with two shifters! Are there others around me and I just don’t know it? Are all the ranch hands shifters?* The life she’d grown to love on the ranch changed, making it more unusual, more thrilling.

“Shannon, baby, there’s something else you need to know.”

More? Is he going to tell me my cousin is a shifter, too? “What now?” Yet a part of her wanted to hear, was excited to learn about this other world and these strange wonderful people.

“You were badly hurt.”

“Tell me about it. My head still feels like someone’s standing on my shoulders and driving a sledgehammer into it.”

“You would’ve died, bled to death, if I hadn’t done what I did.”

She inhaled sharply, afraid of what he’d say next. “What did you do, Chase?”

“Only a shifter could have survived your wounds. I didn’t have a choice if I wanted to save you.”

“You’re scaring me, Chase.” She swallowed, thinking about all the movies she’d seen where a werewolf bit someone and then they, too, became a shifter. Was it the same for cat shifters? “Just spit it out and tell me.”

“Normally, I’d never have done it without your consent, without you saying you wanted me to.”

“Chase, I swear if you don’t tell me what you’re trying to say, I’m going to... Well, I don’t know what, but it’ll be something painful to your crotch.” She clenched the sheets, yet she was unsure if she did so to keep from running or from hitting him.

“I bit you and changed you.”

She sat back, taking deep breaths. *Holy shit. Does he mean what I think he means? Did he change me into...* She paused, trying to decide how she felt. “You changed me? You mean, into a shifter? Like you?”

“Yes. Into a werecat.” He hurried now, speaking quickly, urgently. “I love you, Shannon, and I want you to be my mate, my wife. I would’ve ended up changing you anyway if you’d said yes to mating with me. But when the attack happened and you were dying, I had to go ahead without your permission. So will you? Will you be my mate?”

His mate? A werecat mate? Will I change? Have I already changed? Grabbing the hand mirror lying on the nightstand, she held it up and studied her face. *Do I have fangs now? Do my eyes change color?*

He took the mirror from her. “You haven’t actually shifted yet, but you will. But my bite, the bite that turned you, gave you the strength you needed to survive.” He reached out, touching her chin with the back of his fingers. “I couldn’t stand to lose you.”

“But you did it without asking me first.”

“I didn’t have a choice. You weren’t conscious.”

Although part of her understood why he’d bitten her, another part of her rebelled against the act. “But you did it without asking me.” She struggled against the turmoil, the confusion inside her.

“I know what I did. You don’t have to keep saying it.” Chase leaned away from her, annoyance closing up his features. “So you would have chosen to die instead? Or is it the fact that I made you my mate that bothers you the most?”

Her gaze met his and, instantly the confusion, the whirlwind of emotions within her evaporated. His anger flashed in those amber eyes, but so did his love for her. The love she’d wanted all her life. At last here was the man she could trust with her heart. *I would have said yes.*

“Shannon?” He frowned at her, unsure how to interpret her silence.

He changed me to save my life. Yes, without my permission. But hadn’t he already changed me? I no longer wanted a life of endless sexual partners. Instead, all I wanted was Chase. And now I have him. “I’m glad you did what you did.”

The relief he felt swept over his face, erasing the stiffness in his body. “Does that mean you’ll be my mate? You’ll come with me to my mountains?”

She searched his eyes, saw the love she’d hunted for all her life and gave him the only answer she could. “Well, after all, I already was a cougar. You just made me more of one. So when do we leave, Mr. Cat?”

“Oh, hell, not you, too.” Chase’s laugh echoed around the room.

Epilogue

“Shilah’s a full-blown bitch.”

Chase covered his laugh, hefted the backpack onto his shoulder and followed the path leading them higher into the mountains. “You know why, Shannon. Haken changed her without her consent, against her will, and brought her to his home. She’s not adjusting to our life very well.”

She fell into step beside him, doubling her steps to keep up. “Oh, boohoo. You didn’t ask me first, but you don’t hear me whining.” *Well, maybe I did when he first told me. But not for long.*

“Yeah, but I bet that old cat Haken is hell to live with. Besides, you got the better man, er, shifter.”

“Not a bit conceited, are you?” Her chuckle softened the jab. “Still, I don’t see why we have to visit them. Aren’t werecats supposed to be solitary creatures?”

“We get together when we choose. And I owe Haken. If he hadn’t sent me to your cousin’s ranch, I never would have met you.” He grabbed her arm, spinning her around to face him. “Where would I be without you?”

She leaned into him and swiped her tongue over the hollow of his neck. “Absolutely nowhere.” Purring, she slipped the backpack off her shoulders, letting it fall to the forest ground. “How about we take a break?”

He skimmed a hand over her breast and pushed his pack off. “Hmm, I do like the way you think, my mate.”

“And I like it when you call me your mate.” Shannon stepped away, already working on the buttons of her shirt. Her jeans and boots followed with Chase working to rid himself of his clothes.

Within minutes, Shannon, naked and shuddering with delight, reached out to run her hands over his bare chest. His rough hands gripped her breasts, lifting them to his mouth. He nipped, then flicked his tongue over her taut nipples, sending sparks of lust spiraling into her abdomen. Moisture flooded the crevice between her legs and she tugged him to the ground beside her. She arched her back, giving her breasts to him.

“Shannon.”

The simple yet sexy way he said her name made her quiver with excitement. She wanted to answer but couldn’t. He lavished her nipples, tossing all her coherent thoughts away. Already ready for him, she felt his shaft pressing against her thigh, his dick growing stronger, thicker. Soon she tugged him on top of her and slipped his cock between the crevices of her folds, teasing herself, teasing him.

Chase trapped his face between her breasts. "I love you," he mumbled between licks around her globes. Pausing, he looked up, the adoration apparent in his eyes.

Shannon shuddered in pleasure at the heat in his look. "I love you, too. More than I can say."

"No. I love you more."

She laughed at their familiar argument. "Then prove it." Pushing his shoulders, she guided him between her legs. "Gobble me up, big cat."

He obeyed her, sliding lower, then bringing her legs over his shoulders. His tongue moved slowly over her inner thigh, tingling her and making her jerk with every swipe. Growling his warm breath onto her skin, he latched onto her clit. His tongue whipped around her throbbing nub, sending her shooting toward the sunlit trees above.

"Oh, yes. Yes!"

He pulled her closer and drank deeper.

"Oh, shit, Chase. Don't stop." Bucking under his hold, she tensed, then released time after orgasmic time. She shuddered, panting, trying to level out her breathing.

Wiping his mouth, he crawled over her, placing wet kisses along the way, to position his face over hers. He nibbled at the corner of her mouth, softly, reverently until she could stand it no longer.

"Chase, I'm ready. Hell, I'm more than ready. Take me now."

"Impatient, huh? No problem." Spreading her legs, he plunged into her. The force of his thrust reverberated through his chest, rippling the muscles in his pecs. With his hands planted on either side of her, he pumped faster, harder, burying himself deep within her.

Gasping from the force pounding into her, she watched him, wanting to see his release. Amber eyes slanted and fastened onto hers. "I'm coming. Make me scream."

He doubled his movement, moving faster, his hips thrusting. She ran her fingers along his back, delighting in the feel of his muscles working for her, and clamped her hands onto his ass, holding on to him as he tightened and relaxed his buttocks.

"I don't know how much longer I can hold on. You're so hot, so tight." Chase stiffened, readied for his release and turned his head to the side. His cry echoed through the forest, sending birds flying from their perches.

Hugging him, she held him close, loving the way each wave rushed through his strong body. She closed her eyes, wanting to feel his seed gushing into her. She luxuriated in the heat of his skin against hers, the warmth of his breath against her neck.

"Shannon?"

"Hmm?"

"Are you really happy I turned you? I mean, if I hadn't needed to do it to save your life, would you have wanted me to bite you?"

How can he doubt my love for him? “Very happy. Of course, if I’d had a choice—” He tensed at her abrupt stop and she bit her lip to keep from giggling. “If I’d had a choice, I would’ve skipped the getting-torn-apart-by-a-bear part.”

Chase chuckled, relaxing to fall beside her. “Yeah, I could’ve done without that, too.”

They lay together for several minutes, listening to the sounds of the forest, enjoying the slant of the light as the sun moved higher in the sky. Shannon, her head on Chase’s chest, sighed and turned to look at him. “Do you know the only thing that could make this moment better?”

His eyebrows dipped between his eyes. “How could we possibly improve upon perfection?”

She bopped him gently on the nose. “Near perfection.”

“Okay, I’ll take the bait. What would make this time, this place, and us even better?”

Shannon paused, resting her chin on her hand to stare into his face. “If I were pregnant. That would make it better.”

Chase grew serious and hugged her closer. “Yeah, that would definitely make it perfection.” Suddenly, he rose onto his elbows and studied her. “Are you saying what I think you’re saying?”

“No, not yet.”

Disappointment flitted across his features. “Not yet?”

“Nope. But that means, of course, that we’ll just have to keep trying.” She licked her lips and arched an eyebrow. “So, my big strong pussycat, are you ready?”

“You’re really into the animal pet names, aren’t you?”

“Yep. I like ‘em a lot.”

He grinned and nuzzled against her neck. “Whatever makes you happy.”

“You make me happy, Chase. So, are you ready to make a little kitty?”

“Baby, I am ready, willing and able.”

Before she could anticipate his move, he leaned back and shouted his joy. Shannon wrapped her arms around his neck and laughed.

About the Author

Beverly Rae's witty, sexy, action-packed romances leave readers experiencing a wide range of emotions. As a multi-published author, Beverly is always working on her next book, taking the "usual" and twisting it into the unusual.

To learn more about Beverly, please visit www.beverlyrae.com. Send her an email at info@beverlyrae.com or join her Yahoo! Group to join in the fun with other readers as well as Beverly: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Beverly_Rae_Fantasies.

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I Married a Dragon

Wanted: One wild man. Domesticated males need not apply.

Dance on the Wilde Side

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Cannon Pack, Book 2

Veterinarian Tala Wilde has always had a fascination for wolves—and a secret longing for a wild man. Her fantasies are so powerful she finds herself howling at the moon and dancing in its light.

Still, when she catches just such a man breaking into her clinic to free the canines, she wonders if finding the man of her dreams is a little too much reality for comfort. Is he half animal...or just half crazy? Should she howl along with him? Or howl for help?

Devlin Cannon never wanted a mate—until he answers Tala’s innocent call. Even when he wakes up trapped in one of her dog runs with a rump full of buckshot, he knows the shapely vet is destined to be his. Trouble is, not only is she not a shifter, she doesn’t even know they exist. Luckily, the sexual sparks they strike together soon lure her into his arms—and entice her inner animal out to play.

But before he can claim her for his own, they’ll have to survive the hunters already hot on his trail, who are ready to skin them both alive...

Warning: Definitely not for the tame at heart. Do you like your sex missionary style and predictable? Then don’t read this book. However, if you like hot sex with bites and licks all over, release the animal within yourself and read on.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Dance on the Wilde Side:

He struggled to keep the animal inside from showing in his eyes, on his face. But oh, how the animal wanted his mate. “Don’t worry. I’m going to make you scream, Tala.” He gently brushed a strand of hair away from her face. “I want you to scream my name.”

A raw rumble rolled in his throat and he moved to lie on top of her again, to rub against her and luxuriate in the feel of her. The heat in her expression drove him wild and he thrust his hands into her long hair, securing her head in place. His tongue attacked her mouth, wanting to possess all her tastes, all her essence. As he rubbed, she whimpered, a whimper of need and urgency, pushing him to the edge of reason. “Are you ready to scream, Tala?”

Her eyes narrowed, but she nodded, her panted breaths making her breasts bounce to their rhythm. “We’ll see who screams first.”

Ah, a challenge. And just the type of challenge I love. Grabbing her hands, he pulled her arms above her head and held them with one hand. She paused, motionless, as a flicker of alarm crossed her face. He ignored the hurt her look gave him. “Tala. You know you can trust me. Still, if you want me to stop...”
Don’t make me stop.

“Yeah, I know. But can you trust me?” An answering determination sparkled in her eyes and she bucked, trying to break free of his hold. The harder she fought, the tighter he held her, the brighter the shine in her eyes became.

An amused delight pumped his blood faster. “So you want to play rough, huh?”

She gritted her teeth and bucked, trying to throw him from her, a grin spreading over her beautiful face. At the sight of her sweating and fighting against him, the power of the animal within him rose, threatening his tenuous hold. Fangs grew and he battled to keep from shifting. “Damn, woman, you’re strong.”

“Not sure you can handle me? Come on, Devlin. Show me what you’ve got.”

He renewed his hold on her and, using his other hand, guided his shaft between her folds, just far enough to torment her. “Do you want me, Tala?”

She giggled. “Do you want me, Devlin?”

They laughed together this time and he knew he’d met his match in more than one way. His lips came down on hers and he tasted the muskiness of his pre-come. His abdomen tightened with the taste and the smell, and the wolf inside roared his need. Holding himself, he moved his cock against her clit, working it around her, over her.

She tensed, the passion showing on her face.

“Scream for me, Tala.”

“No.” She panted the word, adding evidence to what he already knew. The corners of her mouth tipped upward, beckoning him to kiss them. “Make—” *pant*, “—me.”

He dragged his tongue over those taunting lips, nibbling and sucking. He rubbed his dick against her, harder, enjoying the wetness spreading between her legs and onto him. “Don’t mind if I do.”

Pushing her legs farther apart with his own, he moved onto his knees and braced against her. Her face lit up with anticipation. God, how he loved her expressions. He lifted her legs, positioned his dick and slammed into her. She grunted from the impact and wrapped her legs around him.

“Oh, damn, Devlin. Fuck me.” Wild eyes met his, demanding more from him.

He found her nipple and sucked, matching his sucks to the pounding he gave her, his hips lunging faster with each thrust. She arched to meet him, urging him to take her, possess her. Her pussy enclosed him, wrapping her hot wetness around him, tightening every time he drove into her, releasing when he slid back out.

She’s so tight. So wet. She feels so good, so hot, so...mine. He closed his eyes, fighting against the inevitable, trying to make the sweet ecstasy last.

At least until he won the challenge. “Scream my name, Tala. Scream it so everyone will hear you.”

She squirmed, trying to break free of his hand holding hers. Soft mews of lust murmured from her, thrilling him more than he could have imagined.

“Scream my name.”

Just as he was sure he couldn't hold on much longer, he heard her whisper. “Devlin.”

He opened his eyes and almost lost his grip on what little control he had left. The look of desire, want, need...of love...in her eyes stirred him to the core. He couldn't imagine his life without her. “Louder. Don't just say my name. Shout it like you mean it.”

She panted, gasping with each lunge as they rocked together on the bed. “Devlin.” She said it louder, with meaning.

“More.” He let go of her arms and parted her folds to pinch her clit. She jerked, another orgasm racking her body. “Scream.”

Throwing her head back, she flattened her hands on his chest. “Devlin!”

He rammed into her stronger than ever before and she cried out at the force of his thrust. They scooted to the headboard, bumping her head against the wood. But she didn't complain.

He bent over her and took a breast in his hand, still inside her, never wanting to leave her. “God, that's a beautiful sound. Do it again, Tala.”

“Devlin!” She screamed his name louder, longer, digging her nails into his back, fixing his body to hers. “Devlin!”

The exhilaration flowing through him found its way to his heart and he couldn't resist any longer. His physical control was no match for the emotions bursting inside him. At last he climaxed with a howl ripping from his throat. Fighting the animal within him no longer, he lowered his head, opened his jaws and sank his fangs into her shoulder.

“Ow! Shit!”

The strength she'd shown earlier was nothing in comparison to the strength she now used to toss him off her. Scrambling from the bed, she stumbled backwards until she struck the dresser. She sank to the floor and leaned her throbbing shoulder against the solid oak. “Ow! Damn it all to hell and back. You bit me!”

Devlin rose up on one elbow, blinked at her as if trying to focus, and swung off the bed. “Tala, let me explain.” His amber eyes slowly gained more brown.

Tala gripped her shoulder, blood oozing onto her hand. “Are you nuts? What do you think you are? Some kind of animal? You bit me!” She grabbed an old T-shirt from the dresser and stuck it on top of the wound.

“You said that twice already.”

She scowled at him, his remark stoking the volcano threatening to erupt from within her. *If he thinks I'm angry now...*

He winced. “I know. I'm sorry. I should've prepared—”

“Get away from me.” She attempted to calm the mix of pain, shock and—God help her—lust trying to overwhelm her brain, but couldn’t. “Why the hell did you bite me?” *Does it really matter?* She gave it a moment’s thought. *Yeah, the why does matter.*

“I didn’t mean to. I just got carried away in the moment.” Pushing his hair away from his remorseful face, he beseeched her. “Tala, please, listen to me.”

He inched nearer until she stuck out a hand to stop him. “Please listen? What next? ‘Please let me go for the jugular this time?’ Would you like me to lie still while you finish the job?” Keeping her eyes glued on him, she grasped the furniture and hauled herself to her feet. *I can’t believe it. This guy bit me!* Gritting at the pain, she snatched up her robe in the process, and headed for the bathroom.

Devlin started to follow her. “Oh, no you don’t. You stay where you are. Or get the hell out. But don’t you dare follow me.” She thrust her finger at him in a threatening jab and stalked into the bathroom, slamming the door behind her.

Tala fell against the door and tried to catch both her breath and her sanity. *What the hell just happened? One minute I’m getting laid and laid good. Okay, laid great. And in the next, I’ve got teeth in me. Had their rough play gotten out of hand?* She crossed over to the sink to stare into the small oval mirror above the basin and frowned at her white complexion. *Sure, I’ve had rough sex before and even a little biting, but this is wild. Too wild.* With two fingers, she gently removed the robe and blood-reddened shirt to examine the injured area. Two major holes flanked a row of smaller indentations with similar marks in another semi-circle below. *Looks like an animal bit me.*

Reaching for a washcloth, she wet the soft cotton under the faucet and gingerly dabbed at the gashes. The sting shot down her shoulder and into her arm. *I will not cry. I will not cry.*

“Tala? Are you all right? Do you need my help?”

Is he kidding? “Never mind. I’ll take care of myself.”

Tala continued cleaning the area until the bleeding finally slowed down. She fumbled through her medicine cabinet, located the rubbing alcohol and poured some onto the cloth. Inhaling a long one, she held her breath and placed the alcohol-soaked material on her shoulder. A quick yelp escaped her before she could stop it.

“Tala, please. Let me help you.”

She ignored Devlin’s knock on the door as well as his words. Tears came to her eyes, and she stuffed the bathrobe’s collar into her mouth to stifle her cry. Gripping her robe with all her strength, she waited for the pain to lessen.

“Tala, are you all right? Answer me or I’m going to break down the door.”

Oh no, he didn’t! She’d thought she was angry before. But the fury boiling over in her now put her previous ire to shame. *How dare he threaten me! First, he tears up my car, then he bites me like some caveman—or more like a sabertooth tiger—and now he has the nerve to threaten to break down my door?*

“Devlin, back off or I’m going to bite your balls off.” *Crap, would he think that sounds as sexy as I do?* Her mind was on kinky sex when she’d just been bitten. Was she as crazy as he was? She threw the blood-soaked cloth to the floor, grabbed the bandages from the medicine cabinet and plastered on a quick bandage.

“I’m worried about you, babe.”

A red stain spread across the bandage. Enough was enough. She’d put herself in danger with this stranger long enough. Determined, she swung open the door.

She registered Devlin’s surprised expression as she charged at him, relishing the fact that he moved as fast as he could to get away from her. He’d gotten dressed in the meantime, and his shirt flew open in his attempt to get out of her way. But she kept at him, punching her finger into the middle of his solid chest.

“I told you to back off and I meant what I said. And don’t call me babe. I’m no one’s babe. Especially not yours.”

A legend...a myth...a high stakes game that could shatter them both.

Heart of a Huntress

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The Kavanaugh Foundation, Book 1

As one of the oldest surviving vampire hunters in the Foundation, Lana's learned the toughest lesson: success comes at a price. So while the yummy stranger she bumps into at Caesar's trips all her temptation switches, duty comes first. Better to be alone than to gamble with someone else's heart—or her own. Although maybe a one-night stand won't hurt...

Byron has set a one-way course for revenge against the Vegas vampire who murdered his uncle. When he collides with Lana, though, her scent calls to him like a potent aphrodisiac. The only explanation: she's his true-mate. And the timing couldn't be worse. He can't afford any distractions—not to mention it'll be hell convincing her to love someone who sprouts fur and fangs every full moon.

One drink together turns into a daring night of passion. Their erotic interlude ends abruptly with the news that Lana's partner has been abducted by the very vampire Byron seeks. Now Byron has no choice. He must reveal what he is and risk a rejection that could spell his own destruction...

Warning: Contains wild sex you want to sink your teeth into and a shower at the Venetian that may need to be closed for repairs until further notice.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Heart of a Huntress:

His fingers itched to touch her, but he shoved them into his pockets. "No ambushes tonight?"

Lana shook her head and her shoulders relaxed. "No sign of trouble anywhere, and that has me nervous."

"For what it's worth, I haven't seen any of them at Caesars or Bellagio. Care to check out the Venetian with me?"

"How does someone completely untrained know what to look for?"

"Some things are instinctual." Byron closed the space between them and bathed in her scent. Right now, his instincts told him to get her up to his suite at the Venetian and remove every article of clothing that clung in all the right places to her lean body.

Her pupils enlarged, and her grip tightened over the straps of her purse until her knuckles turned white. Her breath quickened. "Instinctual?"

A grin raised the corners of his mouth. She seemed just as aroused as he was, and they hadn't even touched each other yet. So far, so good. "Yeah, sort of like that gut feeling you have when you cross someone who isn't quite right. Or maybe when you bump into someone who seems a little too right."

There. He'd laid his cards on the table for her, letting her know he wanted her without sounding like some horny pervert. He realized he was holding his breath while he waited for her response.

"I think I know what you're talking about." She lowered her eyes and took a step toward the main entrance. "I suppose checking out the Venetian before heading home wouldn't hurt, so long as you stay out of my way if we find anything there."

"Trying to steal my thunder?"

"Trying to keep you from getting killed."

He chuckled at her overprotectiveness. If she only knew that he was really a wolf in human clothing, not some helpless little lamb. "If I remember correctly, I saved your life last night."

She bristled at his comment. "No need to get cocky."

"I meant what I said about joining forces. I think we'd make a great team." He trailed after her as she meandered through the crowd, his strides easily matching hers.

"I'm not authorized to work with outsiders."

"Who says Big Brother needs to find out? I want to catch my uncle's killer. You want to kill any bloodsucker that moves. It's a win-win situation from where I'm standing."

She stopped and rubbed her forehead once they reached the sidewalk. "Is that the only reason you're following me around, Byron? To get your revenge?"

"No," he blurted out.

"Then why?"

A lump expanded in his throat, cutting off the air and causing spit to pool under his tongue. He swallowed hard to push it down into his stomach, where it sat like a lead brick. How much should he tell her now? "The truth?"

"It would be a good place to start."

He glanced around at the scant traffic on the sidewalk, but still felt uncomfortable telling her with an audience. He wouldn't be surprised if Alan had spies positioned within earshot, and with a werewolf, that could mean a block away at this time of night. "Can we please go someplace where we can't be overheard?"

"Where do you suggest?"

"I have a room at the Venetian."

Her head snapped up, and her lips parted. A new facet enhanced her scent. He'd smelled it last night in the hallway, but now he knew what it was. Her arousal. His cock strained against his zipper as he inhaled it. "No funny business?" she asked softly.

"You call the shots, remember?"

"Good." She pulled herself together, appearing to be all professional for the moment. "Maybe I can talk some sense into you."

“I doubt it, but you can try.”

Despite the raging hard-on, he brushed past her and led the way to the Venetian with a smile on his face. If he could get her into his bed, then maybe tonight wouldn't be a total failure. The wolf inside wagged its tail in delight.

Lana fiddled with her purse as she followed Byron, unsure how much trouble she was about to invite into her life. She didn't miss the distinct bulge in his jeans when he passed her, nor the heavy innuendo in his words. He had made it clear that he wanted her, but also that he was leaving it up to her to determine how far they took things. The way her body reacted whenever she came near him told her she should jump his bones now before one of them ended up dead. Her mind, on the other hand, cautioned her not to give in to him blindly. He was hiding something from her, but what?

Espe's whispered advice played again in her mind. *Have a howling good time.* What the hell did that mean? But as she caught a glimpse of the way his jeans clung to his tight ass, images of doing all kinds of naughty things came to mind. Her fingers itched to grab it, to pinch it, to feel the muscles slide under her palms as he pumped his cock deep inside her over and over again.

The cool desert night air suddenly felt like the noon sun. Damn, why had her mind gone there? Why had another man's touch made her skin crawl earlier tonight, whereas Byron's made her want to remove every stitch of clothing? She admitted she needed a good ol' fashioned fuck fest—a “Lana-palooza” where she came so many times, she'd have trouble walking the next day. But it wouldn't be open to the general public. Just the one man she'd hungered for since the first second she'd laid eyes on him.

There, that settles it. Just sleep with him and get it out of your system.

Her gut tightened. She hated it when her common sense agreed with her emotional side.

But what if once isn't enough?

She shook her head. No, once would have to be enough. Anything more and she'd risk forming a relationship with him, however sick and twisted it might be.

With her walls up and a game plan in place, she entered the Venetian with a fixed smile on her face.

Too bad the moment he took her hand, everything fell apart. The innocent gesture cracked her façade and set free a torrent of emotions inside her. They cascaded through her body from the point of contact with him, filling her with warm, panty-drenching lust. The lone song of a gondolier reverberated off the walls from the canal that wound its way through the casino. The pleading notes tugged at her heart, intensified her desire, and made her want to push him against the wall and finish what they'd started last night.

Her breath came out in ragged pants. Screw looking for vampires—they had less than half an hour to get back to their black holes before the sun came up anyway. Where were the elevators up to his room?

“Are you feeling okay, Lana?”

His question pulled her from her downward spiral of self-destruction. Her whole body burned. She blinked a few times to bring her surroundings back into focus. How should she answer him? *Take your clothes off and fuck me now?* “Um, why don’t we just head upstairs?”

“And finish our discussion in private?” The raw edge in his voice nearly sent her over the edge. Jesus Christ, he seemed just as turned on as she was. If they made it to his room fully clothed, she couldn’t decide if she’d be surprised or disappointed.

She got her answer as soon as the elevator doors closed. He took a step toward her and hesitated, as if he was worrying about being too aggressive. She’d barely inclined her head forward before he wrapped her up in his arms.

Their lips crushed together so fiercely, she could almost taste his desperation. Her mouth parted and his tongue swept in to ravage it. Each sensual flick heightened the throbbing tension between her legs. She pressed against the solid bulge in his jeans and frantically ground her hips, hoping to stimulate her already-sensitive clit.

The elevator dinged and they jumped apart like two teenagers caught making out in a car on the side of the road by the local sheriff.

His chest heaved up and down as if he’d just sprinted the hundred-meter dash at a world-record pace. “My room is just down the hall.”

“Good,” she managed to say between her own pants. The sooner they got to bed, the better.

He fumbled with the key card, his hand trembling as he inserted it into the slot. She inhaled through her teeth and tried not to tell him to hurry up. Dear God, what was wrong with her? She was acting crazier than that cougar from the other night.

The green light flashed, and they practically fell into the room. He kicked the door closed while his hands slid under the slinky material of her top. The warm calluses on his palms felt rough against her skin, complementing the almost savage way he kissed her.

Byron was a man’s man, not some sissy metrosexual. He knew what he wanted, worked hard to get it, and had no qualms about being forceful when he needed to be. And she loved every second of it.

But what if once isn’t enough?

The voice of an angel, a husband who loved her—she had it all...until a tragedy took away

Songbird

© 2009 Maya Banks

A Linger Story

They called her their Songbird, but she was never theirs. Not in the way she wanted.

The Donovan brothers meant everything to Emily, but rejected by Greer and Taggart, she turned to Sean, the youngest. He married her for love, and she loved him, but she also loved his older brothers.

Her singing launched her to stardom. She had it all. The voice of an angel, a husband who loved her, and the adoration of millions. Until a tragedy took it all away.

Taggart and Greer grieve for their younger brother, but they're also grieving the loss of Emmy, their songbird. They take her back to Montana, determined to help her heal and show her once and for all they want her. They're also on a mission to help her find her voice again. Under the protective shield of their love, she begins to blossom... until an old threat resurfaces.

Now the Donovans face a fight for what they once threw away. Only by winning it—and her love—will their songbird fly again.

Warning: Explicit sex, ménage à trois, multiple partners, a committed polyamorous relationship, adult language, and sweet loving.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Songbird:

Emily Donovan woke with stinging eyes, her body shuddering in the throes of a nightmare. The same nightmare she had every night.

She closed her eyes against the unbearable ache in her chest and tried to fall back into oblivion, but the memories were too vivid, too alive in her mind.

Sean.

How she missed him. He hadn't deserved to die. He'd been too young, so full of life. He'd loved her unreservedly, picked up the pieces of her shattered heart and helped put her back together.

As always when she thought of Sean, images of his two older brothers, Taggart and Greer, haunted her. It angered her that she couldn't separate her memories of Sean from the other two Donovan brothers, but they were as much a part of her soul as Sean had been. But Sean had accepted her. Loved her. Taggart and Greer had shoved her away.

The ache in her chest stole her breath, and she opened her eyes to stare at the blurred ceiling. The lamp at the side of her bed cast elongated shadows, sometimes frightening, but the dark was scarier, so she always left it on.

The days had gotten a little easier. She managed to perform normal activities. Eating. Sleeping—finally. But her sleep was still tortured by images of that night. By Sean’s blood covering her hands. By his whispered *I love you* and his warm smile before he took his last breath.

“It’s not fair,” she whispered fiercely. “It should have been me, not you.”

Her breath stuttered out in a sob that clawed at her throat. It hurt to inhale. It hurt to exhale. It hurt to *live*.

Giving up on sleep, she crawled out of bed, feeling much older than her twenty-five years. She’d *always* been so much older than her years. Quieter, more mature. Only the Donovan brothers had been able to bring her out of her shell, and she’d give anything to go back to those days in the Montana mountains where only the skies were bigger than their dreams.

She’d lived hers. Just for a little while. Just as Tagg had always predicted. Their little songbird was destined for bigger and better things than the Mountain Pass Ranch. But she hadn’t wanted fame and fortune. She’d only wanted their love.

With a weary sigh, she walked into the kitchen clad in only her silky pajama top. Sean had bought it for her, and when she’d laughingly informed him he got ripped off because only the top was there, he smugly told her he preferred easy access and had thrown away the bottoms.

Mechanically she performed the rituals of morning. Preparing coffee that she didn’t even like, toasting a bagel she wouldn’t taste. All the things that made her life feel normal.

The chair was cool on her bare legs, and she scooted up to the small, two-person table where she’d placed her saucer and cup. She drank, barely wincing when the hot liquid hit her tongue. Chewing the bagel took effort. Swallowing took more.

What was she supposed to do today? The question filtered calmly through her mind, and she stared at the half-empty cup in her hand in bemusement. She had no job to go to. No appointments. No schedule. She only had one goal. To survive another day.

Maybe she’d take a walk. Challenge herself to face the city she’d fled to. Its size and people would swallow her up. Offer her the anonymity she desperately craved.

The mere idea of leaving her apartment without a specific destination in mind sent a wave of nausea through her belly. The coffee bubbled like a volcano about to erupt, and she swallowed rapidly.

She couldn’t go on like this, living in the shadows, afraid to step into the light. Sean would hate the life she led. He’d look at her with those intense blue eyes, and his lips would thin in disapproval.

She looked down, studying her fingers, and wondered how long it would take before she didn’t feel so flayed alive when she thought of Sean. When she couldn’t *feel* the knife that had ended his life.

A firm knock sounded at the door. Her head whipped up, and panic hit her like a sledgehammer. Each breath squeezed from her lungs, crushing her chest.

Stop being stupid.

No one knew she was here. She knew none of her neighbors. She was safe.

Who the hell could be at her door at five in the morning?

Renewed fear gripped her by the throat.

Maybe it was just her apartment manager. Or a neighbor.

At five in the morning?

Her gaze flickered over the four deadbolts she'd had installed. No one was getting in unless she let them.

The knock sounded again. Harder this time.

She flinched and hastily stood, her heart beating in a vicious cadence.

She didn't have to answer. She could pretend to be asleep. Or not at home.

Hesitating, she turned away from the door only to yank back around when the knocking persisted.

Whoever it was wasn't going away.

Damp palms wiped nervously on her pajama top. She glanced down, realizing she wasn't dressed for company, and then she laughed—a harsh, dry sound that assaulted her ears.

She wasn't entertaining guests. The sooner she answered the door and sent them on their way, the better.

It took everything she had to make that walk across the living room to the door. She put her palm on the surface and leaned forward to peer out the peephole.

She gasped, blinked, stepped back then surged forward again, straining to see. Her stomach plummeted.

Oh God.

Greer and Taggart Donovan stood in the hallway, their expressions grim—and determined.

How had they found her?

Stupid question.

She closed her eyes and leaned her forehead on the door. Not now. She couldn't face them right now. Maybe never. How was she to look at them knowing how much they reminded her of Sean? Of how much she loved Sean?

Of how much she loved Greer and Taggart.

Her fingers splayed out over the wood as if she could touch them through the barrier. She turned her head so that her cheek pressed against the surface and then reached for the top lock, letting her hand rest on it without moving it.

Another knock jarred her face and then she heard Taggart's voice, low and entreating.

"Emmy, open the door."

She swallowed once and slowly pulled away until she was an arm's length from the locks, her hand still on the top one. As she turned it, the click echoed harshly.

With shaking fingers, she worked down until she reached the last. She grasped the knob and turned, cracking the door and bracing her free hand on the frame.

Her gaze met and locked first with Taggert and then Greer. They filled the doorway, the entire hallway, and God, they looked just as she remembered. Stetsons, faded jeans and boots.

For the longest time she stared and they stared back. Then Greer stepped forward but halted when she retreated a step.

“Open the door, Emmy,” he said softly.

Her knees trembling, she eased the door wider until there was a gaping space, more space than she’d allowed in a year. Greer’s expression softened, his leaf green eyes filled with regret. Then he simply opened his arms.

The first step was the hardest, but suddenly she found herself in his warm embrace. She buried her face in his chest, inhaling the faint smells of tobacco and horses, two scents that seemed permanently branded on him.

She shook against him, but the tears wouldn’t come. Her eyes were so dry they hurt.

He lifted her and walked with her into the apartment. Taggert closed the door behind them, and she turned to see him fingering the locks, a scowl on his face.

“Have you cried even once, Emmy?” Greer asked quietly as he held her.

It made her sound so heartless. She hadn’t cried. Not at the hospital when they told her Sean was gone. Not at his funeral or afterward when they buried him in the family plot on Mountain Pass land. Not in the many months since. Crying made it all so...final.

She wrapped her arms around his waist and squeezed. It felt so good to be back in his arms.

“I missed you,” she whispered.

“Aww Em, we missed you too,” Greer said in a low voice.

Taggert made an impatient sound, and she pulled away from Greer to stare at the oldest Donovan brother.

“Why the hell did you disappear on us, Emmy?” Taggert demanded. “You were Sean’s wife. We would have taken care of you. The MPR is your home. It’s always been your home. Long before you married Sean. Frank’s going crazy. No one’s seen you. And now we find you holed up like a prisoner in an apartment in the city. You hate the city.”

Her hand flew to her throat, her pulse pounding against her fingers.

“I told Frank I couldn’t do it anymore,” she cracked out. “He knows. I told him not to look for me. I can’t—won’t—sing.”

“You think that’s all he cares about?” Taggert asked. “He’s your manager, but that doesn’t mean he’s a complete mercenary asshole. He’s worried sick over you. We all are.”

“Tagg, enough,” Greer warned.

Taggart threw up one hand and turned away, his entire body simmering with frustration. Then he turned back around and pinned her with the force of his stare. Warm, liquid chocolate. She'd always loved his eyes. They made his already dark looks even darker, but she'd never been afraid of him. He'd always been her Tagg, and she'd always loved him.

"Come here, damn it," he said gruffly.

She only hesitated a moment before she walked into his arms. He hugged her fiercely, stealing her breath with the force of his grip. But God, for the first time in a year, she felt safe.

His breath whispered roughly over her hair, her only signal of the turmoil that rolled beneath his tough exterior.

"Goddamn it, Emmy, what were you thinking?"

She couldn't answer. The words were lodged in her throat, so thick and swollen she feared choking. She concentrated on breathing, taking in his solid strength and the crisp, clean smell of his shirt. He still used the same detergent, the same plain deodorant. No frills, no aftershave, no cologne.

He pried her away from him, holding her shoulders as he stared down at her.

"You're coming home with us."



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