



# *Sanctuary*

*Cassidy Hunter*



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## Dedication

*To Morgan the Super Editor, for believing in Sanctuary, and me, all along.*

*To Kiki, my friend and critique partner.*

## Chapter One

Kimberlyn's guilt warred with her pleasure. It was difficult to be good when the need grew inside her like a sharp-edged mountain, until her fight was as ineffectual as a fist against an oak tree.

The need won, as it eventually always did, and pleasure bathed her body. She sank down into its warm depths, drowning her misgivings in lust as thick and sweet as maple syrup.

Maybe this time would be different. Maybe this time she'd come through and really believe she was no danger to them. That she'd never be again. How terrible it was to crave something that could spell disaster to the very men who sought to share it with her.

The men crawled over her like ants on a sweet, lips, tongues, and hands fighting for a bit of bare flesh. Sensation overwhelmed lucid thought, and the doubts faded. It wasn't her fault. Not really.

The soft blanket one of them had spread for her didn't stop the sharp twigs and the occasional stone from bruising her flesh, but she would not have the men indoors. She would not take the chance on renting a hotel room, but she could not take them home. Besides, outside in the open air, with the breeze and the huge, black sky, the stars, and the beautiful, beautiful moon...this was her favorite place to be.

She grabbed David by the back of his neck and dragged him to her, inhaling his scent before she kissed him. The fresh, spicy smell of him intermingled with the hot night air and excited her, but she could control herself. Usually.

Unless she shifted and he ran. That was why she always chose alpha males. They were way less likely to run. And that meant they were less likely to smell like food.

Impatient with herself for allowing the thoughts to creep back, she ripped her lips from David's mouth.

"What's the matter, love?" he asked.

"I need to stop thinking."

"No worries there. We'll make you forget. Mark, get her hands. Did you bring the...?"

"Got them," Mark said, giving her nipple one last lick before rising to retrieve something from the bag they'd stashed under a tree. She knew what was inside.

"What should I do?" The doe-eyed man at her feet didn't mind a little direction.

"Do what you do best, Alan, and turn it up a notch. The lady needs help."

Alan grinned, flashing his white teeth in the moonlit dark. "Got it."

She lay back and closed her eyes. She didn't open them or resist when her wrists were tugged over her head and secured, or when her legs were pulled apart and each ankle was tied to a stake.

She wasn't afraid. As long as no silver touched her, she'd be okay no matter what they did. And what she wanted was for them to take her out of her own head.

Having sex with abandon was something she should be able to do. *Should* be allowed to do. But who she was made her too dangerous for normal sex. Part of her always held back, always watchful. But worse than that was her belief that she was not entitled to sex with normal people. Innocents, as she thought of them.

Alan knelt between her open legs, his gaze hot and eager in the moonlight. Eating pussy was his specialty. And she was paying him enough for it. She hadn't fucked an innocent since she was seventeen and lost her virginity to a twenty-two-year-old named Simon. She'd nearly had him for dinner when she'd accidentally begun to shift in the middle of a boisterous round of sex, and he'd run screaming into the night. Only because it'd taken her so long to complete the change had he escaped.

She could nearly control every impulse she had by now, except when they ran. When they ran, instinct took over, and she gave chase. And if she caught them...

"Alan. Do it." She was tired of waiting, tired of thinking. She needed the relief heavy sex brought her. "Now."

Being restrained was more for her own pleasure than for any real protection for them. Their restraints wouldn't stop her, but they gave her some sense of false security. She could relax more. Besides, she liked the feeling of being dominated. Of the restraints.

Alan lay on his stomach between her wide-spread thighs, and the first touch of his warm, moist tongue made her reflexively jerk her ankles against the straps.

David ran his fingers over her breasts, skimming smoothly through the light sheen of sweat. "You're hot, baby..." He scooped a handful of crushed ice from the water she'd brought. He rubbed the frozen chips over her breasts, and she shivered as her nipples hardened to stiff, cold points. "Mark," he said, handing the remaining ice to the other man, "give it to Alan."

His warm mouth enclosed a chilly nipple, tongue flicking the stiff crest, shooting shocks of pleasure throughout her body. God, it was good. It was so good.

Mark bit her shoulder gently and ran his mouth down to her other nipple. Alan had scooped out fresh ice and pushed a handful against her swollen, overheated pussy. She squealed and jerked at the sensations, hot, cold, throbbing pleasure that sent her straight to the edge of orgasm, flirting with that first amazing climax.

Not yet, not yet...

Alan blew a hot breath against the icy stiffness of her clitoris. "Oh, God," she moaned, shuddering. He flicked his tongue out to tease her before finally closing his lips around her clit, gliding his tongue over the sensitive, swollen flesh, faster and faster until her back arched and she cried out.

He withdrew his mouth before she could climax, and she drew in a deep, shuddering breath. Her clit throbbed with a slow rhythm, perilously close to exploding into that first intense orgasm that always bordered somewhere between pleasure and pain.

"Not yet, honey." Allowing her to gain a measure of control, Alan waited, running his lips across the insides of her thighs.

"That's not going to pull me back," she told him. The other two played over her belly and breasts like she was a priceless violin, Mark rough and David gentle, creating such dissimilar sensations she could, for a moment, take her attention from between her legs.

Then Alan slid a thumb moist from melted ice into her slick opening, and the tip of an icy fingertip into the tiny puckered hole below. His lips moved from her thighs to her clit, toying with the swollen, sensitive button until she lost herself completely in the sensations overtaking her body.

"You're so delicious," Alan murmured. "Creamy, warm, perfect..."

Mark nipped the underside of her breast. He flicked his damp tongue at her nipple, then rose up and took his erection in hand. "Move, David." His voice scraped her nerve endings like a piece of rough bark, hoarse and full of desire.

David lifted his mouth and cupped her breast, staring into her face but speaking to Mark. "You know the rules. She won't suck you."

"Maybe she wants me to make her." Mark looked down at her, his mouth smiling but his eyes a little darker than usual. "She likes it rough."

Kimberlyn struggled for breath as Alan pushed his finger and thumb in more deeply and began thrusting a slow rhythm. He licked her, his tongue wet, his licks fast and hard.

"Oh, God!" Her orgasm loomed, so close, so tempting.

Mark rubbed the head of his cock along her mouth, moisture beading from the tip to coat her lips like a slick lipstick. "All staked out and helpless, spread out before us like a succulent, beautiful feast. That juicy pussy open and wet. David is going to fuck you, Kim. And I'm going to slip my dick into your hot mouth. Suck it hard for me, baby..."

The fear that always lived inside her sparked to flame, and she tightened her lips. Shaking her head, she pulled against the restraints, knowing if she tried very hard, they would break.

"Alan, take your mouth from her cunt and let David take your place." Mark thrust his cock at her lips a little harder, getting past them but running into the roadblock of grinding teeth.

"Open, Kim. Open...your...fucking...mouth!" Mark straddled her chest, unrelenting as he pushed harder.

Alan's mouth left her pussy with a wet sound, and he took his place at her head. "Look at me, Kimberlyn. It's okay."

She rolled her eyes toward him, his calm brown eyes making her remember this was all a game, a challenge she'd set for herself until she was absolutely positive she could be trusted to fuck men who had no idea she might harm them.

"She's okay, Mark."

Mark gave a nod. He reached down and squeezed her jaw, giving her no other choices but to open her mouth and take him or lose control and kill him. She opened her mouth.



Mark pushed his hard cock past her lips at the same time David plunged between her open legs. David fucked her the most often because of the three, he was the largest. He possessed a huge cock that might have made some women hesitate, but Kimberlyn took him with a greedy hunger.

Both men fucked her, their practiced rhythms as synchronized as they could make them. Alan whispered in her ear, his moist breath an anchor she was not ready to do without.

She came with a scream, arching her back so strongly she nearly dislodged Mark from her mouth. Still, some small part of her held back, and she fought to keep her teeth from sinking into Mark's erection. His seed shot down her throat, followed by a hot stream she could feel through the condom as David reached his own climax.

Mark fell from her to lie panting at her side, his arm heavy just under her breasts. David pulled himself from between her legs and made room for Alan, who would give her as many more orgasms as she could take.

Heart beating so hard she could see her chest jerking, she stared up into the night sky. Each time it got easier. Each time she moved a little closer to realizing she was not going to shift and kill them.

"You did great," Alan said. He began massaging her clitoris with slow, slippery fingers.

In seconds the familiar sensation grew and spread. "Alan, oh..." She writhed beneath his expert touch, breath catching in her throat as her second orgasm, a little less intense but just as pleasing, washed over her.

"I want to fuck you, Kim."

She stretched in her restraints, smiling as her climax faded into tiny aftershocks of sensation. "I would love for you to take some pleasure, Alan. You give me so much."

"With more to come, I'd hope."

She didn't know from where he produced the knife, but it sliced through her ankle restraints in seconds. He tossed the knife to Mark, who released her hands.

Alan wasted no time in flipping her to her stomach. Sliding a hard forearm beneath her pelvis, he jerked her ass into the air. He thrust into her pussy with such a force she lost her breath. He slammed against her, his enthusiasm and passion making up for his smaller size.

He reached around and slid the fingers of his free hand into the cleft between her legs. Fingers massaging her clit, balls slapping against her, he brought her to another orgasm.

He lowered her to the ground and collapsed atop her when he came, his sweaty body shuddering against her. They lay in a sweaty heap, the four of them, satisfied and tired.

She sighed and ran her fingers up Alan's arm. "I'm moving away."

The men stared at her.

"What? Away?" Mark frowned, narrowing his eyes dangerously.

"Yes. I will miss all of you."

"Whatever you're afraid of," Mark said, as he always did, "is not going to happen. Why don't you tell us why you—"

"Shhh." David's voice was a loud whisper. "I thought I heard something."

She listened, the distant sound of sirens and traffic intruding. The sweat cooled on her body, and she shivered, thinking again how much freedom she would have in the hills of Kentucky. It was past time she went. "We have to get out of here."

They rose as one and began dressing quickly, gathering evidence of play to put away for another time.

The men gathered the condoms to dispose of. They couldn't have known that the condoms weren't really necessary, because she hadn't told them. She'd long ago discovered she could have no children. She'd never been sick and she'd never caught a human disease.

There were *some* positives to being a werewolf.

## Chapter Two

“Wolf’s Grove.” Kimberlyn rolled the words around on her tongue, tasting them, as she pulled into the driveway of the old house. Tears threatened, and she forced them back. She hadn’t cried since...she couldn’t actually remember when. A long time ago.

The house stood well back from the unpaved road, surrounded by trees and wildflowers. Sunflowers still grew up against the porch like old, tired soldiers waiting for someone to come give them something to guard. It appeared as though someone had taken care to cut the grass and do general upkeep at least every couple of weeks.

There was a wild, unlivd-in look to the place, but that only added to its charm. The air was different here than in Los Angeles. Fresh and fragrant, honeysuckle and other scents wafted by on a gentle, warm breeze.

She’d always known Wolf’s Grove would be her home someday. Her father, having finally succumbed to years of illness, was gone. There had no longer been anything to keep her in LA.

The sun shone high and warm, and she heard no sounds other than the busy buzzing of bees, an occasional droning fly, and birds high in the many trees. Wolf’s Grove had a population of only fifteen hundred people, a tiny town in Nowhere, Kentucky. Woods, a few neighbors, freedom. Her skin rippled and sharp claws shot from her fingers. How good it would feel, how right, to finally be able to shift and run free, anytime she wanted to.

She got out of the car, walked to the faded aluminum mailbox listing tiredly on its weathered wooden post, and opened it. The lid scraped open to reveal the lonely emptiness inside.

Running a hand affectionately over the metal, she drew in a deep breath and took it all in. Her home, with fading and cracked white paint, the graveled driveway, the dilapidated porch. The huge shade trees, the swing with a broken chain.

Deep inside, something stirred, a long-smothered feeling she didn't recognize. It wove upward and painted her entire body with hope.

A new beginning. The wolf itched to break free and run through the wild, entangled undergrowth into the woods at the back of her house.

Soon she would run. Tonight, the woods would belong to her.

She had things to take care of first. A quick glance at her watch told her the real-estate agent would be by in twenty minutes. The small town seemed to breed friendly people who insisted upon helping a stranger settle in.

There was time for a short walk into those beckoning woods. She had to have a taste. They'd been calling her ever since she'd seen that photo of her father's, when she'd been a confused, tormented child of eight. She'd not been able to fully shift until she was fifteen, but she'd always known there was something inside her crying to get out. Something different.

If only her father had told her what it was. If only he hadn't thought taking the girl out of the wolf pack could take the wolf pack out of the girl.

She draped the strap of her bag across her chest and jogged to the woods. The trees grew close together and created a dense canopy through which little sun penetrated. She sniffed the air, pulling in scents of earth and life. Secrets and silence, small animals and whispering leaves, complete and utter peace. Here, she belonged, as she'd known she would.

Birds high in the tree branches scolded her intrusion, and she smiled. Stepping carefully, she walked through the woods, hard pressed not to throw herself onto the dry, leaf-covered ground and wallow around naked.

Oh, tonight, tonight. She shivered. Mere hours. If she could just get through Julie's visit, she'd be set. The real-estate agent was nice, but Kimberlyn wanted nothing more than to be alone. It was already late. It wouldn't be dark until eight thirty or so, but the woods would darken much earlier than that. And she was ready to explore them.

The sound of a car horn pulled her from her exploration, and she reluctantly started back to the house.

Julie waved enthusiastically when she spotted Kimberlyn. She slammed her car door and walked toward the house.

“Kimberlyn?” She stood waiting at the rickety porch steps for Kimberlyn to join her. “Julie Stepp. So good to finally meet you! Come on in, honey. Let me show you around. Here are your keys. Now, I have a list of places you can find some really good deals on furniture and appliances, since you have...er...nothing. And grocery stores, phone numbers, everything you'll need.”

Kimberlyn climbed the old steps. “Thanks, Julie.”

“I am happy to do it, hon. Listen, are you sure you're going to want to stay here tonight with no furniture or anything? Thank God they've gotten the power on, and the water...but you have no bed or refrigerator or *anything*.”

Julie held the screen door open as Kimberlyn pushed the key into the lock and opened the front door. The house smelled old and musty, but that would be taken care of in short order. “I'll be fine. I have my sleeping bag and a cooler.” A bed was the least of her concerns.

The rooms were huge, twice as large as Kimberlyn was accustomed to. The town house she'd shared with her father in LA had been nice but small. And it'd had no character whatsoever.

“It's going to need a lot of work, honey. But I told you that. Now, Logan Walker builds some fantastic houses. He's agreed to come over with his friend Andrew and give you an estimate on how much it'll take for them to just fix the place up. He's so good to help that way.”

Kimberlyn nodded, pushing her long hair out of her face. “It's amazing. I love it.”

Julie insisted on taking her through every single room, into the basement, even into the attic.

The kitchen was large, with windows everywhere. Fading sunlight slanted through them to light the old wood floors. “It's beautiful.”

Julie's look was doubtful. “Well, you can fix it up, make it pretty with a few coats of paint and some new cabinetry, maybe. The boys'll do everything you need them to do, and they'll give you really reasonable rates.”

Kimberlyn eased toward the front door, hoping the woman would follow. “I'll just start unloading my car before dark, then.”

“Oh, let me help you with that!”

But Julie easily allowed Kimberlyn to dissuade her. So eager to be alone she could taste it, Kimberlyn rushed through good-byes with a promise to let Julie know if there was anything she needed.

And finally, she was alone.

Carrying a bigger load than a girl her size should have been able to carry, Kimberlyn rushed inside with most of the contents of her car. One more trip and she could go, if the town's welcome wagon didn't show up to delay her. Julie had told her they would, but maybe not until tomorrow.

She felt bad for being so ungrateful for the little town's hospitality, but the woods beckoned. The wolf paced restlessly, and she needed to set it free. And at last, she was ready.

No neighbors. No one to see her run out her back door as naked as a newborn, faster than a normal person, into the woods. Her woods.

She wrapped her arms around a tree, the rough bark biting into her chest and stomach. She danced, free for the first time in her life. Leaves and twigs whispered and crackled beneath her bare feet. The woods were dark, but it didn't matter. She could see. The wolf would see even better.

Still, she delayed, the anticipation making her giddy. Relief mingled with excitement. She wished, not for the first time, that she had a mate. Someone to share such a moment with.

She would shift, but first, she gave in to her earlier desire and fell to the ground. She rolled around as though the dirt and vegetation were a foaming bath of scented bubbles. Nothing had ever felt so good.

Sticks poked at her ribs and leaves decorated her hair. She gathered up handfuls of moss and grass and rubbed it into the skin of her belly and legs. Then she lay quiet and still, looking up at the darkening sky just barely visible through the dense treetops.

The forest held its breath. Nothing moved, nothing spoke. It was as quiet as a graveyard at midnight. Then a gentle breeze blew, wafting over her skin. The woods welcomed her with a drifting and cool caress.

The moon rose, swollen and white, and she could wait no longer. Sucking in a great gulp of sweet-smelling air, she let herself change.

## Chapter Three

The shift wasn't easy. She'd denied it for so long. Because she'd restrained herself to only changing when she had no choice, each lengthening of bone, each twisting of sinew and stretching of skin was an agony.

She tried to anticipate each step and be ready for it, but the pain clouded her mind and soon she writhed on the ground, moaning.

But at last, it ended. The wolf got to its feet and stood for a moment, head low, as the hurt faded. She looked up at the world, a world with muted colors and scents so heady and strong she could have taken a bite of it.

She ran through the woods, freed from the restraints of big-city society. Heady freedom brought with it a loosening of caution, and Kimberlyn the wolf cavorted like an innocent pup who'd long been caged.

Pausing to drink from a cold, crystal clear stream, she stared at her reflection. Water dripped from her muzzle, and golden eyes shone, mysterious and untamed. White face surrounded with bluish grays, her coloring and beauty fascinated her.

She was such a girl. She lowered her mouth to the water, drinking her fill. Her stomach growled, and her thoughts turned toward the wild bounty the woods offered a hungry wolf.

Then her attention was caught by something much more important than her stomach—a long, musical wolf howl that undulated through the quiet night air like the call of a siren to a hapless sailor.

She stood frozen, unable to so much as breathe. Wolves. There were wolves in these woods. The howl was cut off abruptly.

She couldn't resist. She had to follow that howl. If there were wolves here, and she'd heard one with her own ears, she had to find them. Or it. She trotted toward the sound.

In three minutes, she heard them: hushed noises and sharp yips of unease. Whines of pain. Slinking forward, she finally saw them.

A silver-washed clearing held at least twelve wolves gathered around what appeared to be a fallen pack member. The dead or dying wolf was an enormous dark shadow on the moon-drenched ground.

Even as she watched, a black stain spread from under the huge, shaggy wolf's body. He'd been injured, severely injured, and Kimberlyn frowned. Why did his pack not heal him?

But it was difficult for her to concentrate on one fallen wolf when, for the first time in her life, she had stumbled upon an entire group of her own kind. Werewolves.

She couldn't run to them, as much as she wanted to. She didn't belong to this pack. For all she knew, they would tear her to bits as soon as they saw her.

Anger and sorrow arose from the pack like poisonous vapors, rising into the night air on wings of fear. Why they didn't heal their friend puzzled her, but she couldn't go charging into their midst and demand they help him. They must have their reasons. It wasn't her business. Not yet.

Carefully she slid back into the trees. They were here. It was enough for now.

Then she froze as one of the wolves looked her way, lifted his nose, and sniffed the air. His growl, when it came, chilled her blood. The others looked in her direction as well, hackles rising, growls weaving together in a terrifying song. They knew she was there.

She could run, or she could stand and fight. Not that these were good choices. If she outran the wolves, by some unlikely chance, they would not only know where she lived but also would see her as an encroaching enemy, and she'd never be safe in the woods.

If she stood and fought...well, one wolf against an entire pack never bode well for the loner.

They were upon her before she could decide, thus deciding for her. She rose to her full height, but despite the fact that she was huge, most of these wolves were even larger, especially the males. They gathered around her in a large circle, snarling and growling deep, dark warnings. Their voices vibrated along her skin, raising her soft fur to stand stiff and bristly on her neck.

Three of the wolves had shifted halfway between the human and the wolf, and Kimberlyn was fascinated. In her limited experience, there was no halfway. She had so much to learn.



“Who are you?” asked one of the half-shifted wolves.

She couldn't talk. Of course he knew that. Hesitating, she began to change to human form. Less painful and time consuming than the shift to wolf, she managed to not embarrass herself too much as she completed the change on her knees, naked and shivering before them. The adrenaline rush kept the pain and exhaustion from overtaking her, but she'd feel it later. *If* she managed to make it out of this alive.

“Kimberlyn from California,” she said, her voice coming out awkward and rumbling. “I'm new here. I mean you no harm.”

“Who do you belong to?” A dark male's eyes narrowed suspiciously, his lips drawn back to show sharp, lethal incisors.

“I have no pack.”

The pack drew in closer still, their circle tightening slowly. One of the half-shifted wolves walked close to her, close enough to touch. His body was covered with a fine fur, and claws shot from his fingers and toes. His face was caught in the half change and could in no way be described as beautiful. He stood on two feet and bared his belly, his cock half-erect and enormous, bobbing as he walked.

She stood silent, understanding they could smell her fear, unable to do anything to halt it. The half-shifted wolf didn't touch her but pushed his face close to her, sniffing.

“You smell good,” he said. He closed the couple of inches between them and dug his hands into her back, thrusting his cock into her side.

She snarled and struck out at him before she thought of the consequences. He squealed when her fist smacked his nose, his voice more surprise than pain. His backhand burned against her cheek, numbing half her face. She landed in an ignoble heap but leaped up immediately, rage and a big dose of fear clouding her vision.

Before she could reach him, she was jerked around. One of the wolves had shifted back to human form and lifted her against the tree with a hand to her throat. She gagged and kicked at him, her fingernails digging into his arm.

“I'll let go of you if you calm your ass down,” he said, staring up at her. Muscles bulged as he held her up, but no strain showed on his face.

“Yes,” she whispered. Her voice rasped like rusty nails, burning a trail of white-hot pain through her throat.

“Elijah! He's shifting! Hurry...”

He loosened his grip on her throat. “Fuck! Don't let him shift, for God's sake.” He turned back to face her as he let her slide down the tree, his cold eyes leaving no doubt he meant every word he said. “Stay by my side. Do not try to run, or I will hunt you down and kill you. Are we clear?”

She nodded, barely. He took his hand away. “Follow me. Try to run and you *will* be stopped.”

Every deep, shuddering breath sent waves of pain through her throat. If she could shift, the pain would go away, and her throat would begin to heal. But she couldn't take the time.

She ran with Elijah, the other wolves following. If Elijah wasn't the alpha, God only knew what their leader was like. Maybe that's why they didn't heal him. And too bad for her she couldn't heal herself. But then, she couldn't very well lick her own throat.

The wolf was lying in the same position, only now his body was returning to its human form. If that happened, his wounds would kill him. Even as a wolf, he would have trouble healing.

“What happened to him?” she whispered, her throat cramping. “Is he your alpha?” But she knew he was. His body, as hurt as it was, screamed power. It floated around him like a cloud of steel, an aura of strength that was unmistakable.

“A sleuth of bears,” Elijah said, then ignored her as he bent to the pack leader. A gray wolf, huge and sleek, sat at the alpha's side, his yellow eyes on Kimberlyn. Then he licked the leader's cheek.

“He's going to die,” Elijah said, and there were moans and gasps at his declaration. The gray wolf lifted his nose toward the sky and howled, a sound of grief and mourning that sent shivers down Kimberlyn's spine.

“Why don't you heal him?” she asked, becoming angry despite herself.

Elijah's face snapped toward her and he growled. “He is beyond help, bitch. Do you think we would not help him if we could?”

"I don't understand. I've seen no attempts to help him."

Elijah jumped to his feet, rage in his eyes, death in his face.

"Let me heal him," she said.

"He cannot be healed," Elijah roared, reaching for her.

She danced away from him. *You dumb fuck, of course he can be healed.* "I can heal him, if you really want him alive." There was challenge in her voice. She'd once brought back a dog who had been hit by a car, his insides and bones mixing together in a mealy mess. What she couldn't understand was why this man's pack stood around him, doing nothing at all. It made no sense. A quiet thought grew into a scream, and she narrowed her gaze, thinking.

What if they couldn't heal? What if they didn't know how or didn't possess the ability? She didn't ask them. "I have to shift before I can heal him."

The wolves closed in like a tightening vice, and Elijah stared at her with grim, cold eyes. "If you think to try to harm him or any of us, you will be killed before you can move."

She raised an eyebrow but nodded. He was dying, but they worried about her finishing the job. Idiots.

The gray wolf at the leader's side watched her, torment and fear in every line of his body. He gave an urgent yip that seemed to say, *Hurry up, girl. If you can do something, do it!*

She hated for anyone to see her agonized shift but had little choice. Elijah the bodyguard wasn't going to let her go change in the bushes. The wolves watched her in complete silence with varying degrees of disbelief and empathetic grimaces.

"God, girl. What the hell?" Elijah stretched a hand toward her, then snatched it back before she could tell whether he was about to hit her or pat her.

She padded to the fallen wolf. He was a big man, this leader, but not as big as Elijah. His lean body was still in the throes of a fight not to shift. He was a fighter, a strong, strong man. His back was broken, and cuts that went all the way to bone slashed across his body in hideous stripes.

He wore blood like a gruesome mask on his face. She couldn't tell if he had once been a handsome man.

"Get on with it," Elijah said.

The wolves watched, and she could feel doubt flowing from them in waves. And something else. Hope. That they loved this torn and battered man was obvious.

She drew in a breath and went to work.

“What are you doing?” Elijah's voice was just below a yell. He looked down at her, his body as stiff as cardboard, hands fisted at his sides.

She ignored him. It wasn't like she could shift back every time he wanted to have a conversation. If he wanted his leader alive, she hadn't much time. Too bad she couldn't heal the human body. Her life might have been easier.

The gray wolf hovered but didn't get in her way. He seemed to trust her more than the others did. Or maybe he was just that desperate.

Kimberlyn the wolf began to lick the injured leader's wounds, and as she licked, her saliva closed wounds, repaired blood vessels, and sank deep within his body to heal bones and the fractured spine.

Her mind drifted. The sounds of the other wolves faded, as did awareness of her surroundings. Should someone wish to harm her, now would be a good time. With her thoughts fully engaged upon his wounds, she was as helpless as the man she healed. Her power eased out of her, cooing and crooning to his ills, coaxing them better, mending injuries like an old woman darning socks.

Time had no meaning; she had no idea how long it took her to heal his shattered body. As she neared the end of her work, her conscious mind began once more to awaken to the sounds around her.

Murmuring voices whispered on the cooling breeze like the rasping together of falling leaves. Fresh early-morning dew soothed her bruised throat as she dragged her mouth from the wolf, inhaling deeply.

Dazed, she looked up. The wolves, all in human form, stood in a circle, watching her. Mist danced and weaved around them, creating a picture of such rightness and beauty she might have cried had she not been in wolf form.

She staggered up and shook herself, wondering if she wasn't too fatigued to shift. She'd have to get home before she changed, or else she wouldn't make it. Nearly too exhausted to run, in human form she would simply have crashed where she stood.

The wolf whose life she'd saved slept a slumber of peace and not the near-coma sleep she'd found him in before she'd healed him. He'd be okay. He'd be better than okay. He needed to rest and repair his mind.

She backed away. His pack gathered around him, touching his body, shocked and awed by his obvious health. His body began to shift back to human form, and she fled.

## Chapter Four

When Kimberlyn awakened, the day had once more given over to the night. She'd slept the sleep of the dead, though somewhere deep in her memory she recalled the sound of banging, muffled in her brain by sheer exhaustion. Someone had been there, knocking upon her door.

She stretched, realizing she'd not even crawled inside her sleeping bag before falling asleep, but lay half atop it. The house was thick with darkness, and she flipped on light switches as she strode to the kitchen. Her body needed food to fuel her for the day ahead.

She had to see to her new patient, after all. That, and she really wanted to be welcomed by the other wolves. As much as they might distrust her right now, they'd surely come around.

"Let's see what we have here." Her mouth watered at the thought of food, and she realized just how famished she was. She knelt in front of her cooler and pulled back the lid. She had a package of lunch meat, some cheese, and a baggie of leftover KFC. She sat on the floor and tore at the chicken like a starving thing, moaning through huge bites, barely chewing before she swallowed.

Appetite controlled, she made herself a sandwich and ate it more slowly, washing it down with two bottles of water. Glancing out the window, she decided to take a quick shower before she went back out.

Slipping out the back door after her shower, she stopped just inside the trees to shift. Excitement curled low in her stomach. But before she had time to do more than kneel on the ground in readiness to change, shadows of running shapes surrounded her, and she stared up at three fully shifted wolves.

"Um. Hello?"

One of the wolves, a small gray female, snapped at her legs. *Get up.*

Kimberlyn rose to her feet. "Okay, I'm up. Now what?"

One of the wolves ran ahead, stopping after a few feet to glance back. *Come on.* She recognized him as the gray wolf from last night who'd been so worried about his leader.

The other two wolves stood behind her, and finally one gave her an impatient push.

"Get your nose out of my ass." She glared at the wolves behind her, then began her agonizing shift.

Before the wolves behind her could give her another nudge, she loped after the lead wolf.

They led her past the clearing in which she'd healed their injured alpha. It was quiet and bare, as though no one had ever gathered there, bled there, cried there. The only evidence of it being a popular meeting place was the ground, bald and trampled in a nearly perfect circle.

She was scared. Admitting her fear calmed her. Anything could happen in the world of wolves. Though she'd had little contact with them, in fiction they were hated and feared, cast out and hunted. And it wasn't simply because they might be a danger to humans. They were vicious creatures who were known to prey upon their own as well. But no one truly believed werewolves roamed the earth. People simply had no idea. No idea at all.

They ran for what seemed like an hour, through the woods, up the side of a hill, until finally, the wolves led her into a honeycomb of deep caves and shifted back to human form.

The caverns were huge, damp, and quiet. She couldn't have heard much over the sound of her own galloping heartbeat, however. Once her breathing slowed and quieted, she became aware of small sounds, of water drip, drip, dripping onto the cave floors, of little winged creatures and scurrying animals.

After a few minutes the darkness became overwhelming, too dark for her to find her way. She stood still, hand upon a damp wall. "I can't go any farther. I can't see."

Sudden wet, sucking sounds and a crunching, bone-snapping noise, and then a hand touched hers. She couldn't help the squeal she let loose, then silently cursed her girlishness.

"I'm sorry," a man said. His voice, deep and smooth as creamy vanilla ice cream, floated around her. "Please, take my hand and I'll lead you on."

His warm fingers curled around her chilled ones, and she let him pull her onward. She had no choice but to trust him, as she could see very little. She realized she was shivering, unhappy at being in a space of total darkness. At any time she was sure to plunge down into that unrelenting blackness, screaming her way through miles of black space until she hit the bottom.

But at last, orange light wavered ahead, casting dim and flickering shadows on the walls. She stared at that light as though she could pull herself to it with her eyes, and within seconds she was able to see vague shapes.

She let her guide's hand slide from her own and glanced up at him whenever she could take her eyes off the cavern floor. Shadowed and dark, his face was as smooth and beautiful as a painting. He glided beside her, completely comfortable and unafraid in the dark. She wished she were so surefooted. She had better night vision than the humans, but the light in these caves was as thick and dark as ink.

"Where are we going?"

"The pack wants to meet you."

"We already met."

"More officially. And our pack leader, the wolf you healed, wants to meet you very much."

She thought she detected a small thread of humor in his voice. "What's your name?"

"We're here. Come on."

He put a hand at the small of her back and nudged her into the light. The room was huge and quite bright. The air was surprisingly fresh, though a fire burned in the middle of the room.

Oil-filled lanterns hung at intervals on the damp walls, giving the cave a warm appeal. People stood in groups, talking and laughing. It was a frigging dinner party.

There were maybe forty people in the room, including those in wolf form. She looked around. The bright noise after the dark walk was disconcerting. The jumble of voices blended with the spit of the fire, the yelp of a young wolf, and the dancing shadows. The world outside ceased to exist.

A man walked toward her, muscles bunching in a stalk that all the wolves had to some degree, but this man...she knew immediately he was the leader of the pack. This was the man she'd healed.

His hair was thick and dark and touched his collarbones. His eyes were black as cigarette burns in his pale face. Deep in their inky depths lurked danger, and pain leaped from him and rose on wings of emotional torment such as she'd never before witnessed. For a second she



wondered if they'd forged a link during the healing, but then she realized he was just that disturbing.

The man who'd led her through the darkness stiffened beside her. The other wolves quieted and watched with a furtive nonchalance.

The leader stood before her, but his eyes were on the man beside her. "Andrew?"

Andrew sighed, and she watched the tension leave his body. "I brought her, Logan."

Andrew and Logan...the contractors?

Logan's eyes sparkled for a second as a smile lifted his lips and then dropped away just as quickly. "I see that." Finally, his eyes met hers. "Hello."

"Hello." She found it difficult to keep her gaze on his. This man saw too much. She'd rather keep her secrets to herself.

"I'd like to know the name of the woman who saved my life."

Her face heated. "Kimberlyn. Kimberlyn Thorn. I've just moved to town..." *Stop giving him information he hasn't asked for.*

His skin was hot when she let him take her hand, and liquid heat rushed straight to her groin, dampening the silk of her panties. She'd never felt anything like it. She wanted, with no doubt whatsoever, to fuck this man. She *needed* to.

She wanted to lie on her back with her legs open as he plunged into her, his hard body pressing hers into the ground. That's what she wanted.

Air caught in her lungs and refused to move. Heat and pressure from her pussy spread into her lower belly, up to her breasts, while chills caused tiny bumps to rise on her skin. She'd never felt anything like it.

The man at her side, Andrew, let his arm brush hers, and she looked into his face for the first time, sure he could feel her lust for his boss.

When her eyes met his, she lost her breath. His gaze held humor, but something else. Understanding.

"He makes me feel that way too." His voice was such a soft whisper she wasn't sure she heard him right. She was too caught up in the way he was making her feel to care.

His eyes were a vivid, vivid blue, light sky surrounded by a dark blue ring. His gaze hit her like a hot, naked wire full of electricity. Thick, dark hair was tied back in a ponytail. An erotic vision of him in her bed flashed into her mind. White, crisp sheets tangled around him, contrasting with all that darkness, his long hair framing his face.

She swallowed hard and forced herself to look away. Would all the wolves hit her this hard? If so, she could see herself lying on her back in this very cave and never leaving the place again. It was not a pretty picture, but these two affected her that much.

Lust screamed through her veins like a live thing, racing straight to her groin. Caught between the two of them with the heavy air pressing in on her, she gasped at the sudden reality of her situation. She was not only with those of her own kind, but panting over two of them with an unbelievable lust.

Finally she'd found her people. Her wolves.

## Chapter Five

"I'm Logan Walker, Ms. Thorn, and the man who brought you in is my...is Andrew Morgan."

She nodded. "I'm glad to meet you."

"Why do you have no pack?"

"The world isn't crawling with wolves, in case you're unaware. And none came calling to take me in." She meant the words to sound sarcastic, but they came out as bitter. Angry. She hadn't found any wolves in her short life. She'd always felt the outsider, the freak.

Logan stared at her for a second, so impossibly gorgeous, pacing before her like a caged...wolf. "No matter what your reasons, you're here now. You would like to join my pack?"

She'd like to throw herself at him and roll around naked on his bare body. "Yes. I would." Maybe.

"Thank you. For saving my life. Do you understand how rare you are, Ms. Thorn?"

"I'm sorry?"

He raised an eyebrow and threw Andrew a quick glance. "You don't know?"

"Because I healed you? Can *none* of you heal?" It had to be true, because they had nearly let their leader die.

He shook his head, slowly, never taking his gaze from hers. "No. We can't."

Andrew crossed his arms, which caused his arm to once again slide against hers. A chill raced up her spine, and she shivered, feeling her nipples harden.

"Are you cold, Ms. Thorn?" Logan asked. He dropped his gaze to her lips, then lower, before slowly raising his eyes once more to hers.

Not with him looking at her like that. "No."

“Are you afraid?” Andrew asked. His voice was a whisper, his words caressing her like the lightest breeze.

She turned her head and looked at him. “No.”

“Liar,” Logan said. “I can smell your fear.”

Could he smell how much she wanted him and his friend? God, please no. She lifted her chin and narrowed her eyes. “Do I have reason to be afraid?”

Logan walked a little closer. “Oh, yes, Ms. Thorn.”

“Of...” she cleared her throat. “Of what?”

The other wolves slowly gathered around, as though attracted by the rising emotions. They stood behind their leader, faces closed and sullen. The bodyguard Elijah came to stand at the front of the group, silently watching.

Kimberlyn swallowed, realizing the soreness in her throat from Elijah's hard grip had faded. “Of what, Mr. Walker? Will you kill me?”

He tilted his head to the side like a curious puppy, but the look did nothing to make him look friendlier. Or less dangerous. “When word spreads of your ability, you will be...coveted. We will constantly have to fight to keep you.”

“So forbid your wolves to speak of me or my ability.”

He snorted. “Word will leak, Ms. Thorn. Your secret will get out. And though we might survive the fights to come with you to heal us, it will be a poor existence. For us, as well as for you.”

She squinted, then frowned. “What are you suggesting I do? Find another group who will take me? I don't even know—”

He sighed, so close now that his breath stirred her hair. “We will take you, Ms. Thorn. I was just informing you of the life now in store for us all.”

She stared at the strong column of his throat, loath to meet his electrifying gaze. What did he want her to say? “Thank you, Mr. Walker.”

“Logan.”

She nodded, her movements jerky. “Logan.” Even his name tasted good. “And you can call me Kimberlyn.”

“Kimberlyn,” Andrew breathed, drawing a startled glance from her and a sharp one from Logan.

”Take care of her,” Logan said. “Introduce her. I’m going out.”

“Out? Where?”

“Just out,” Logan replied, warning in his narrow gaze and the beginnings of a growl in his voice.

Andrew was not cowed. “I’ll come with you.”

“You will do as I said and take care of Ms. Thorn.”

“Logan—”

Logan ran his hand over his face, tired lines around his eyes. “I’ll take Elijah.” He bowed his head slightly at Kimberlyn. “Welcome, Ms. Thorn, to my pack.”

“That’s it?”

But he turned and walked away, leaving her staring at his broad back. Andrew touched her arm.

“That’s it. It really is that easy. Come with me. I’ll introduce you to the others.”

She shrugged, staring around the room at the other wolves. “I never heard of it being so simple for a new member to be welcomed in.”

“I think you read a lot and were told little.”

Heat climbed up her neck. “I didn’t have anyone to tell me. I didn’t know where my own kind were. And I have been busy caring for—”

“I wasn’t accusing you, Kimberlyn. It doesn’t matter anyway. You’re here. You’ll learn. And you’ll be among your own kind. You’ll have our protection and...”

She dared to look at him when his voice trailed off. Desire flared through her body once again. “And?”

“And we’ll see. Now, come with me.” He softened the order with a coaxing smile, but his worried gaze followed his leader as Logan hurried from the room, Elijah in tow.

“Gather around,” Andrew called. “It’s time to officially meet the healer.”

“Should you call me that?”

“It's what you are.”

“I'm a woman and a wolf, too. Why bring up the healer part of me when that's the very thing, according to your alpha, that's going to get us into trouble?”

His eyebrows shot up, and he grinned. “Okay. Everybody, come meet Kimberlyn, the newest member of our pack.”

She bit her lip and smiled back. “Thank you.”

He was so, so fucking gorgeous.

“You're welcome.”

The wolves stared at her with quiet curiosity and, from the glowering looks a couple of them sent her way, immediate dislike.

“It's going to be impossible for you to remember all the names, so I'm going to leave you to mingle. It won't be long until you know them all.”

“How many are you?”

“How many are we.”

She cut her eyes to his, a thrill sweeping through her. “Yes. How many are *we*?”

“There are forty-one of us. We've all gathered here tonight specifically to meet you. These caves are special to us.”

“Really? Why?” She looked around with a wrinkled nose.

“Well, look at her. The healer seems to think she's above the rest of us and our meager lair.” The speaker sashayed forward, elbowing two other wolves out of her way. She had long blonde hair and lightly tanned skin, her vivid blue eyes a perfect contrast. Her incredible physical beauty was no less striking for the hard look in her eyes.

“Maybe,” the woman continued, stepping close to Kimberlyn, “we should just refer to you as Her Highness. Or maybe Ms. High and Mighty?” She turned her back to Kimberlyn and laughed. “What do you all think?”

Several of the wolves laughed openly, but Kimberlyn didn't get the sense they were quite as ill-intentioned as the blonde beauty. She glanced at Andrew, but he was studying his fingernails. Okay. So no help from him. Healing was her forte, not fighting, but she refused to shy away from a challenge.

She tapped the woman on the shoulder. "I'm sorry, but I didn't get *your* name. Is it, perhaps, Miss Mean Ugly Bitch?"

Andrew sighed. "This is Elena. She's one of our sweetest wolves."

The gathered wolves laughed again while Elena glared at Kimberlyn with a dark, angry stare. "You don't want to fuck with me. You don't even belong here."

"I do belong here, according to your alpha. If you want to argue that fact, please take it up with him."

Elena's face paled even more, and she took a step back. "So. You'd go running to Logan with your lies and complaints about us, and you haven't even been here an hour."

Kimberlyn widened her eyes. "Lady, I never said I was going to do anything. I'm certainly not going to start my first day in the pack arguing with *you*. Excuse me, please."

She walked past the furious Elena, smiling and holding her hand out to one of the friendlier looking wolves.

Some of them were indeed friendly, but she thought most of them were civil simply because Andrew, though he hadn't interfered with Elena's hissy, leaned against a wall and watched them all quietly. And none of them seemed to want to get on Logan's bad side.

Andrew was right. She would be protected. She'd thought it was only from other shifter groups and the outside world, but she was beginning to think he'd meant the protection would happen within her own pack.

As she walked around the room and talked to the others, she had to fight to keep her eyes from wandering to Andrew. She knew who was going to be in her dreams tonight.

He caught her watching him and gave her a lazy wink. She nearly melted into a puddle where she stood. The haughty Elena slunk toward him and draped herself around him like a thin, clingy curtain. She stared at Kimberlyn, her message clear. *Mine*.

"Thank you for healing our leader."

Kimberlyn looked around at the voice, smile ready. "You're very...welcome." The man who'd spoken wore a grin and held his hand out for her to shake. She took it, glad he couldn't see the expression of pity on her face.

“Don't feel sorry for me,” he said. “I'm happy as can be. I'm alive, and I shouldn't even be that!”

“Oh, I'm not...I'm sorry.”

“You prolly want to know what happened?”

As he seemed eager to tell her, she agreed.

“Well, see, back in nineteen eighty-three I was attacked by them same bastards what got Logan yesterday. They took my sight, and I ain't seen so much as a bright light since then.”

She had to take a moment for her brain to translate his thick Kentucky accent. *Bastids* and *yestiddy*...

“I'm so sorry, Mr...?”

“Awww, it's all right. I'm used to it. Folks call me Ford.”

“It's nice to meet you, Mr. Ford.”

“Not mister, just Ford, if you don't mind.”

“The people who attacked you. Those are the same people who attacked Mr. Walker?”

“Not the same 'xact people, but they come from the same clan. Bears. I hate them bastards.”

“I'd say so, Ford.”

The lids of his useless eyes were lost in folds when he smiled, deep lines crisscrossing his face. She wondered how he survived. Surely the others must take care of him.

But Ford was pushed from her mind when she looked up and saw that Logan had returned and was standing next to Andrew, their two dark heads bent together, deep in conversation. As she watched, Logan started to turn away. After a quick glance around, Andrew reached for his hand.

For one moment, fingers touched in a brief dance, then slid away in regretful secrecy.



## Chapter Six

“Kimberlyn.” She inhaled Logan's voice, and it melted on her tongue like silky dark chocolate. “We are having a meeting tomorrow to officially welcome you into the pack. There will be other issues to discuss as well, but there is no need for you to worry. You are pack.”

She gave a short nod. “Thanks. Can someone lead me back out of the caves? I'd like to run for a while.” How good it felt to be able to say that, to no longer hide.

He raised an eyebrow. “You'll get your run. We're going home tonight. It's fourteen miles from here, and you can run all the way.”

“And as for leaving the caves,” Andrew said, coming up behind her, “there's a much easier exit. I brought you through the front entrance just in case.”

“Just in case what?”

“It doesn't matter.”

“Just in case you were to be torn to pieces,” Elena said, coming to stand beside Andrew, “as Logan generally does to all trespassers.”

“Kimberlyn is pack now, Elena. You need to remember that.”

“Besides, if she were to be killed, bringing her in the complicated way wouldn't have made sense.” Andrew smiled at her. “I brought you in the front just in case Logan decided not to keep you. But Logan is a smart man.” He winked at her.

She refused to think of what might have happened had she not been welcomed. “I don't understand. You said we were going home tonight...?”

Elena snorted. “You really thought we lived here, in the caves?” Her laugh was not nice but was abruptly silenced when Logan shot her a dark look.

“We own a large estate and two hundred acres of woods.” Logan's voice was deep and mesmerizing. “The official name is Moonseed Valley. We just call it Sanctuary.”

Kimberlyn swallowed. “*Sanctuary*,” she breathed. How right it sounded.

Logan nodded to Andrew. “Get them out. Elijah.”

“Right here, boss.”

“Follow her.”

“I can guard her,” Andrew said, crossing his arms. He lifted his chin.

Kimberlyn watched, breath held. Andrew's softer features were a foil for Logan's strong face, his merry eyes contrasting with the serious, dark look in Logan's.

Logan narrowed those dark eyes. “Elijah will guard her.” Then in a quieter voice, “Don't test me, Drew.”

Andrew threw Elijah a contemptuous look. “He's nothing but muscle. He isn't loyal to her and couldn't think if you paid him. She'll be better off with me. As I said, *I* will guard her.”

Logan struck with dizzying quickness, snakelike and effective. His face never changed expression as Andrew flew through the air and crumpled against the cave wall.

Kimberlyn's hand flew to her mouth to stifle her gasp.

Elena looked at her, dark eyes disdainful, but past the sneer, Kimberlyn saw well-hidden worry.

“Elena, see to him.” Logan raised his voice. “The rest of you, let's go.”

“Home to Sanctuary!”

Kimberlyn glanced around to see the blind Ford, smiling and dancing from foot to foot.

“What about him?” she asked, but no one seemed to hear her.

They were, as one, shifting.

Oh, God. Hoping they'd be too busy to notice or care about her own painful and slow change, Kimberly followed suit.

When she finished, she found several of the wolves watching her. Logan, once again the wolf she'd healed, shook his huge body languidly and turned to leave.

She meant to follow but caught a glimpse of the still unconscious form of Andrew. He suddenly looked small and helpless in his human form, and she jogged toward him.

Elijah, his wolf's body bulky and big, herded her away. She gave him a low growl of warning, ducked around him, and hurried on toward the fallen Andrew. Elijah gave a sharp yip of irritation and slammed his body into hers, turning her away.

He was starting to piss her off. Kimberlyn hated bullies, and it appeared that Elijah was the bully king. She ran around him, seeing Andrew a mere eight feet away.

But then Logan the wolf appeared, standing in front of Andrew. He stared at her with dangerous golden eyes, his head lowered between his shoulder blades, silent and waiting.

She stopped. Logan in human form was scary enough, but in wolf form he was terrifying. He waited, yellow eyes gleaming. His lips pulled back over sharp teeth, a warning that nearly caused her to make water right then and there.

She lowered her head and whined, and Logan advanced on her, stiff legged. She gave in. He was her leader, her alpha. And he fucking petrified her.

She arched her back and tucked in her tail, staring up at him with as much submission as she could muster. Her tongue darted to lick her muzzle, whimpers escaping her throat.

Satisfied, he nipped the loose skin of her neck, then pushed her after the others. She went without argument. The human part of her was pushed down as instincts and knowledge of the wolf took over. Still, she realized that, other than instinct, she knew very little about the rules of the pack.

Logan wouldn't have left Andrew had he been worried about the man's safety. She understood that much from the covert touch of fingers she'd glimpsed earlier. Still, she couldn't help the thrill of disappointment that went through her. But perhaps she'd been wrong. She couldn't remember a time when she wanted anything quite as badly as she wanted Logan. And Andrew.

They called to her as though they were parts of her missing psyche. And her body wanted them. She couldn't even decide which man she wanted the most. Just that she wanted them.

She trotted after the others. They ran through an opening into a smaller cave, then out into blessedly fresh air. Sweet freedom. She ran flat-out, air whistling past her, her worries swept away on that invigorating wind.

Her paws struck the ground, pain momentarily splintering up her legs as her muscles bunched and stretched, faster and faster. She felt she was flying—nothing could catch her; she

was that fast. The pain fell away, her paws lightly touching down for a brief second before she sprang from the ground, full of life, energy, strength.

Each inhale brought a crisp, nearly cold stream of air hitting her steaming lungs with a joyful shock. She was alive, alive. Nothing else mattered.

She darted around trees, over logs long fallen and rotted, dead leaves a thick cushion of crunch under the pounce of her paws. The moon rose high and white, pregnant and round, drifting free in an inky sky. She could not resist such a glorious, beckoning mystery. Slamming to an abrupt halt, she lifted her muzzle heavenward and paid tribute to the blue-veined orb. After a moment, other howls joined hers, intertwining and floating upward to surround their moon.

When Elijah encouraged her to move on by nosing her side, she leaped away, grinning inside. She was too cheerful to be angry at him, and more in the mood to play. He growled and grumbled, but she paid him no mind. She sprang at him, and he caught her midair, sending her to her back. Catching his leg between her teeth, she jumped atop him when he stumbled.

His growls became more playful, surprising and delighting her. Elijah had not seemed like the type to take anything lightly. His guard was too high, his control too tight. And yet here he was, tumbling with her through the leaves, taking care not to really hurt her. And he could have.

They might have played until Logan sent someone after them, but she glanced up and saw Andrew, head down, jogging slowly toward them. He'd shifted, and the insult Logan had dealt him would eventually heal, but she could sense a dull sort of hurt about him.

She gave Elijah a sharp yip to show she was serious, and an ungentle nip to his ear. Annoyed, he rammed her body away, giving quite an effective wolf glare.

She ignored him and loped to Andrew. He waited for her, his gaze calm. Still, she knew he was hurt, and for the first time in her life, she wanted to heal emotional pain. Unsure if she even could, she nonetheless wanted to. She *needed* to. For him.

But before she could reach him, his head jerked up and his gaze fixed on the trees to his left.

Logan sprinted from the thick foliage.

She stood still to watch, unwilling to intrude. But the two did nothing more than stare at each other in silent communication. Logan tossed his head and wheeled around, pausing only to level a short stare at Kimberlyn before trotting back into the trees.

As he disappeared, two others slid into the open to flank Andrew. Elijah nosed her from behind, urging her toward the others. Had they been watching all along? Perhaps Logan hadn't really trusted Elijah alone to guard her.

It was starting already, the guarding, the watchfulness. She was now in danger, or would be as soon as her abilities as healer got out. She'd wanted to belong to a pack, not have her freedom, newly won, yanked away.

She thought of her snug little home and hesitated. She looked back in the direction of the house, a low whine escaping her throat, but Elijah and the others huffed impatiently.

Maybe she could explain it to Logan. He'd understand, surely. He wanted the pack safe, and she would only bring danger to them. And now she knew. If she found another home, another pack, she would simply keep her ability to herself.

Shit. She didn't want to leave the pack, but she didn't want to live in fear, either.

She wondered if she even had a choice anymore.

## Chapter Seven

“It’s...beautiful.” Beautiful, awe inspiring, huge, sprawling. The house at Sanctuary was all that and more. She stared up at it, the fact that she was nude forgotten in the majestic shadow of Sanctuary. The moon rose high above it, creating a picture so perfect it could have been a painting. An old, dark, gothic painting.

“You feel it, don’t you?” Andrew murmured. “As much as you feel the connection you have with me. And with Logan.”

She sent him a level stare, hoping he didn’t see how uncomfortable his words made her. “I felt a connection with my little house back in town.”

“It wasn’t really that house, Kim. It was this place. This place is filled with those of your own kind, unlike the big cities. You’ve found your place here, but there’s even more to it than that.”

“Why did he hit you?”

He looked away. “He is our leader. I can’t argue with my alpha...in public. I undermined his status.” Andrew shrugged. “He put me in my place.”

“It’s not right. You should be allowed to say anything you want.”

“You haven’t been involved in pack politics long enough to understand. You’ll learn.” He softened the light rebuke with a smile, white teeth flashing in his lovely face.

She studied him, trying unsuccessfully to keep her eyes on his profile. “I’m not sure I’m going to stay.”

He jerked his head around to stare at her, eyebrows raised. His laugh came out slightly choked, as though he wasn’t sure if he should laugh or not. “Not sure?”

"I don't think I want to live my life having to watch over my shoulder constantly, having...guards, putting other people in danger simply because I exist. Where's the freedom in that?"

*"Hon-ey."*

She frowned, unhappy with a tone that sounded a little too condescending. "What? And please, don't call me honey like that."

"Like what?"

She waved impatient hands. "Never mind. Just...what?"

"You have to stay, Kimber." His gaze skimmed briefly over her body before sliding back up to her face.

"Can we go find some clothes?" She gave in to the urge and crossed an arm over her breasts, then dropped a hand to cover her sex.

The other wolves had gone inside the impressive double doors at the front of the huge house, but still she felt eyes upon her. And not just Andrew's. Though he was obviously trying to be a gentleman, he still seemed to find it impossible to keep his gaze from her body.

As she did from his. While not as tall or broad as Logan, Andrew's whipcord lean body was defined and hard. Warm, smooth skin over taut muscle, his body was a perfectly sculpted masterpiece that made it nearly impossible for her to look away.

"Come inside. We'll get you dressed."

His words caused heat to spread through her body, a warmth that had nothing to do with the balmy night. She swallowed hard. How would it feel to have sex without being afraid she'd lose control? To not worry that she might end up having her partner for dinner? To not worry that she might start to change and see that look of utter horror and revulsion on his face?

Still, would the trade-off be worth it?

She glanced around as she followed Andrew through the yard to the front doors. The back of her neck prickled, the small hairs rising. "Someone's watching me," she murmured. "I can feel—"

The world spun as she was yanked off her feet and tossed over a hard shoulder. Her breath left her in a rush, and in her shock she could do little but hang over Andrew's back as he sprinted for the front door.

"Open," he bellowed.

She heard the doors creak open, and then they were inside, where the murmuring of voices let her know they had an audience.

"Andrew? Wha—"

"Elena! Come with me. You! Find Logan. Elijah, take her to a room and don't leave her until you see me or Logan. Jeremy, out the back. How the fuck could they have discovered her already?" Those last words were directed at no one in particular, and Kimberlyn felt fear race up her spine. Could her new pack protect her?

The room erupted in a volcanic rush of activity and noise, and she lost track of his voice. The wolves rushed to obey, no questions asked. They moved in a blur, each person perfectly sure of his job. Elijah grabbed her by her upper arm, putting his other around the small of her back as he whisked her up the curving staircase.

"Elijah, what—"

"Hush, girl."

"But—"

"Hush!"

Elijah hurried her down a long hall, kicking open a heavy wooden door at the end. He shoved her through, then closed the door on her protests.

Not that she wanted to argue. She'd been tossed, yanked, and all her female bits exposed to anyone who cared to look. She hurried to the wardrobe shoved against a wall. Time to find something to wear.

Suddenly she stopped rummaging through the clothes and tilted her head. Surely there were traitors in the wolf pack, or else the enemy wouldn't have discovered her ability so soon. And my money is on that bitch, Elena.

Of course, that could have been because out of all the wolves she'd met, Elena had been the only one she'd actively disliked. But Elena had been the first one Andrew had called on when



he'd wanted a wolf by his side. Kimberlyn pulled on a pair of white cotton pants and a light blue tee, and on the bottom of the wardrobe, found a pair of sneakers that fit pretty well.

Silence reigned so completely she couldn't resist opening the door to see if Elijah still stood guard. When she stuck her head out, he crossed his arms and raised an eyebrow.

"Back inside."

Okay. She could understand that she wasn't exactly a fighter, and that she'd now become a precious commodity to these people, but she refused to be bossed around by an overbearing, self-important bodyguard.

She glared and stepped outside the room, shutting the door firmly behind her. She crossed her own arms in a mocking dare. "No. And you might want to stop telling me what to do."

He pushed away from the wall. "I have my orders."

"Well, now you have more orders."

He laughed. "You want to try taking me on, little missy?"

*Little missy?*

He watched her, grinning like an idiot. Arms akimbo and feet planted wide, he waited, she was sure, to put her in her place.

She sighed and kicked him in the balls.

"Argoaaahgh..." Face purple, he cupped his balls and leaned forward, strangled noises coming from his throat.

"Now," she said, pacing before him like a drill sergeant, "we will discuss a few things. First of all, there will be no more disrespect. You will not talk to me like I'm a child, and you will listen when I have something to say. Are we clear?"

"Bitch," he croaked, "kicking me in the nuts like a fucking sissy."

"Hey, whatever works."

"You're lucky I don't—"

"Elijah, maybe you should go see if there's an ice pack handy," came an amused voice.

Elijah groaned and put his hands on his knees, head low.

Logan stood in the shadows watching them, a smile on his face. "Go on. I've got her."

Elijah straightened slowly, grimacing. "Find anything?"

"Talk to Andrew. He's below with the others."

Elijah nodded and walked away. He turned back before he reached the end of the hall. "You should be careful. She fights like a fucking girl."

"I think I can manage," Logan replied, as dry as a desert.

Elijah shrugged and continued on his way, hands still lightly protecting his manly parts. "Don't say I didn't warn you."

Logan turned his attention to Kimberlyn. He leaned against the wall and crossed his arms, mimicking the pose Elijah had adopted, but managing to look entirely different. Sexy, strong, dark...she wouldn't attempt to kick him in the balls. Logan made her want to do something to his balls, all right, but hurting them never entered her mind.

"Are you okay?"

She looked at him in surprise, her thoughts drawn quickly from his body. "Yes. Thank you. So the enemy already heard of me?"

"We aren't sure, but we're not taking any chances."

"They wouldn't kill me, just take me, right? Maybe if I agreed to heal everyone's people, there would be no danger."

"There's only one of you. You would have no life. And the clans would begin to take chances, without fear. The fighting would escalate; soon we would be discovered by humans, among other things."

She bit her lip. "I guess. But..."

"What?" He pushed himself away from the wall slowly and walked toward her.

"It doesn't seem fair. How can I not heal them, knowing they have no one?"

"You didn't heal us before. We managed. We do have doctors, you understand."

"Then why did your pack give up on you, before I healed you?"

Something flickered in his eyes, there and gone before she understood what it was. "Jericha was on her way, but she would have done me no good. I was torn apart."

"She is a wolf? The wolves' doctor?"

“Yes.” He stood close now, close enough for her to look up and see the tiny flecks of silver in his eyes.

She swallowed. “Why did you hit Andrew?”

“Do not question me.”

“Or what? You'll hit me too?” She frowned. “You're acting an awful lot like a dictator.”

“I rule this pack, Kimberlyn. I do what's best for them. You understand little.” He shook his dark head and moved a step closer. She had to force herself not to step back. Her hair stirred, blown in the gentle breeze of his breath when she looked up at him. His gaze was flat, shuttered. “Don't question me, healer.”

Fear swept up her spine, an icy finger that set her body shivering as though she stood barefoot in the snow in the dead of night. Realizing she held her breath, she exhaled sharply, then did step away from him. “Don't *threaten* me, leader.” Could he hear the quiver in her voice?

Closer still he moved, until his body slid against hers, a slight whisper of touch. She shuddered at the vision that touch evoked. She didn't know if she was terrified or hot for him. Maybe both.

“What are you doing?” she asked. She forced her hands between their bodies and brought her palms up, meaning to push him away. But her fingers lay on his chest, warm through the thin fabric of his shirt.

Now it was his turn to shiver, and emboldened by the heat in his eyes, she moved, with the slightest of movements, her palms over the hard points of his nipples.

“How beautiful you are,” he murmured, “with your hair a dark flame I want to wrap around my body, your eyes so deep and mysterious a man can think of little but how it would feel to have them staring up at him as he plunged between those soft white thighs. And your mouth...”

With excruciating slowness, he reached to touch the rough pad of his finger to her bottom lip. “So red and ripe. And do you know what your mouth makes me think of?”

His voice was a mesmerizing murmur of warmth and sex, and she shook her head with a dazed slowness, waiting for his words to wash over her.

He continued to stroke her lip, and she couldn't resist opening her mouth and tasting that finger with the tip of her tongue.

He closed his eyes at the touch. "It makes me want your lips closing over my cock as I thrust in and out of that wet, hot mouth."

She couldn't breathe. Her entire body trembled with need. He was so close. So warm. Desire spread through her body and came to rest between her legs with a heavy, pulsating beat. She wanted him. She wanted him more than she'd ever wanted anything in her life.

Drugged and dazed, her body slow with want, she started as Andrew suddenly appeared, sliding his hand up Logan's muscled bicep.

One of them was nearly too much. Both of them, she hadn't a chance. Andrew moved his hand from Logan to her throat, then slid his fingers down over her swollen, aching nipple.

"We need you," he said. "Will you be our third, Kimber?"

## Chapter Eight

"I don't understand." She tangled her fingers in the hem of her shirt and twisted, a nervous habit she knew betrayed her but was unable to stop.

Logan and Andrew watched her, standing side by side against Logan's bedroom door, as though afraid she might try to bolt. They'd led her here after Andrew's surprising request.

They were together. She'd *known* they were.

"We want you to join us, Kimber," Andrew said, his shortening of her name making her smile, albeit weakly. "Our power base is not as strong as it could be. With you to complete the triangle, we will no longer be fragile. You will be your own protection. With us, of course, to help you. We will succeed where we failed before."

"We will be strong enough to no longer be threatened by the other groups," Logan said. "All that has been missing is you. We've been waiting for you for a long, long time."

"The other groups, they have their thirds?"

Logan smiled. "Some of them. Which is why they are stronger than we are."

Andrew pooh-poohed. "It's always about power. But now, they'll no longer be stronger. We'll be equals and will not have to fight every second for our lives."

"We will still have to fight," Logan said, his voice dry, "but now we shall fight as equals." His dark gaze landed on Kimberlyn. "Or even as superiors."

"Superior?"

"I think with you, we will be even stronger than the strongest triumvirate."

"I—"

Andrew left his place beside Logan and knelt in front of her, wrapping his hand around her calf. "You can feel it, Kimber. It is meant to be. Join us as you are destined to."

"I need to think..."

"There's no time," Logan said, impatience creeping into his voice. "They have already discovered what you are. Attempts will be made on all of us, not only to eliminate us as the weaker group, but also to take you. If we are destroyed, there will be one less group to fight for you."

"The bears?"

"The bears are the strongest and our most...annoying enemies."

She licked dry lips, not missing the way Andrew's eyes followed the movement of her tongue. "This is too sudden, too new. I need to know more before I commit."

"You have no real choices. Don't you understand?"

"There are always choices."

Logan's voice was harsh. "Your only other choice is to die. You will join us or you will condemn us to die as well. We are slowly weakening to the point where it will not take much for them to finish us off."

"I just say okay, and it's done?"

Andrew and Logan exchanged a quick look. "No, not exactly," Andrew said and looked away.

"What do you mean?"

"There will be a ceremony," Logan said.

Shit. "What *kind* of ceremony?"

"A public one," Andrew said. He loosened his grip from her calf and ran his hand up her leg.

His touch was like live wires on her skin, and she dug her fingers into his arm. "Stop," she hissed. "I can't think."

His laugh was pleased and knowing. "See? If you were not meant to be our third, my touch would not affect you so much."

"Leave her alone, Drew." Logan folded his arms. "I'd prefer her to agree because she wants to, not because we convince her by touch."

Andrew shrugged. "It can't hurt to show her what we can give her. As you said, we're running out of time."

"Can we get back to this public ceremony? What does that involve?"

"Our power will rise and jell when we have sex," Logan said, not mincing words. "That much is obvious. We will have sex, the three of us, in the caves, before our people."

Because she couldn't allow herself to think about what else he'd said, she whispered, "Why the caves?"

"Those caves belong only to wolves," Andrew said. "We're safe there. We will not be attacked."

She took a deep breath. "You really expect me to have sex with both of you, in front of the rest of the wolves?"

"Only once."

"It will connect us in a way we've never been connected with the pack," Andrew said. "Once our triumvirate is complete, we'll be their true leaders. We'll be able to protect them. And we'll have a mental connection to them that we don't have without you." Once again he wrapped his hand around her leg. "And to each other."

She shook her head. "All I wanted was to be free. I wanted to run. This place called to me."

"Maybe because of us, Kimberlyn." Logan's voice bathed her like gentle candlelight.

"And you have only to join us to be truly free, Kimber. Don't be afraid."

"This can't really be happening."

"It can."

"It is."

She stepped away from Andrew. "If I join you, I will never be free again. I will always have to be here, part of you, part of *them*. And what if something happens to one of us? What will become of the two that remain?"

Again, that swift, dark look between Logan and Andrew. Andrew looked down at his fingers, and Logan stared stonily at the wall.

"What?" she asked. "What else haven't you told me?"

Logan sighed and ran his hands over his face, his eyes suddenly tired. "Once we form our triad, if one of us should die..."

"We might all die," she finished, her voice soft.

"Yes."

Her laugh was hard. "This offer gets more attractive by the moment."

"There is no real choice," Logan said again. "It's only a matter of how much time you'll allow to elapse before you agree."

"I don't have to agree," she said, angry. "I can walk out of here and go back to California. Actually, that idea sounds pretty good right now. Leave you two to your pathetic rules and just get the hell out of here. I refuse to be a slave to anything. To *anyone*."

"Kimber—"

"No! I want to go back to my house."

"We can't let you do that. It's no longer safe for you to be alone."

She ground her teeth. "Then may I *please* go back to the room you assigned me?"

Logan nodded and held up a hand to quiet Andrew's denial. "You have an hour."

"Goody." She marched out the door, angry, afraid, and angry that she was afraid. This was not the life she'd signed up for. In the hall, she stopped and walked back into the room. "What will you do if I refuse?"

"You can't refuse, Kimberlyn."

"But let's say I do."

"The power recognizes you."

"What is that supposed to mean?"

"Go to your room, Kimberlyn."

She clenched her fists. Knowing it would do no good to argue, she stomped from the room. Bastards. No matter that the thought of kissing her way up their bodies sent a flood of liquid heat between her legs, she did not want to be forced into a situation in which she could never be free. She wanted a fucking *choice*.

\* \* \*

Logan held his hand out to Andrew and pulled him to his feet. Andrew's hand shook slightly in his, and with a sigh, he pulled the younger man to his chest.



“Don't worry.” Andrew's thick hair was soft and springy against the roughness of his palm, and as he stroked his lover's hair, calmness settled over him.

“I have to worry.” Andrew buried his face against Logan's shoulder, his voice muffled. “What if she doesn't agree?”

“Then you know what we'll have to do.”

“She'll hate us.”

“Not forever. I don't think she's going to agree, Drew. It's too much, too soon. She's been so sheltered. And we don't have time to coddle her. We don't have time to wait.”

Andrew bit Logan's shoulder gently. “I know. I just wonder if she'll ever forgive us.”

It was a chance they had to take. “She will.” He shivered as Andrew's warm breath blew against his shoulder.

“When will we...?”

“We'll give her an hour.”

Andrew moved back slightly and pushed his palm against Logan's half erection. “You want her as much as I do.”

Logan groaned and ground his cock against Andrew's hand. “Yes.”

“She wants us this much too. That'll be what saves us.”

“It's been a long fucking wait.”

“Too long.”

Logan struggled to think under Andrew's touch. “Elena will have to be watched.”

“Then show her some teeth. She's terrified of you. She's one of the best fighters we have, and we can't afford to lose her. I just don't trust her around Kimber.” Andrew squeezed Logan's hardness through his jeans and kissed his neck. “But forget Elena. Can I have some lovin'?”

Logan's laughter rumbled through his chest. “I think so.” He buried his fingers in Andrew's dark hair and pulled, his eyes searching Andrew's face. “Did I hurt you earlier?”

“Yeah.”

“You have to stop challenging me, Drew. The others—”

“You're always going to be the dominant one.”

Logan's breath quickened as Andrew's hand continued to rub his dick through the cloth. "Does that displease you?"

He felt the air caress his ass as Andrew unzipped his pants and pushed them over his hips. His breath caught in his throat as he waited for Andrew to continue massaging his cock.

"You know it doesn't. You're my alpha. And that's the way I like it."

"The pack will soon discover you're to be my second in command, their leader. When we have the ceremony, they'll know we're also lovers."

"Will they accept it?"

"They'll have no choice. We may have trouble with some of them, but we'll deal with that when the time comes."

Logan hooked his hand to the back of Andrew's neck and kissed him, loving the way Andrew's lips softened and opened for him, pliant and willing. He slid his tongue into the younger man's warm mouth, releasing a low moan as Andrew wrapped his hand around his bare cock, fingers cool against the hot skin.

"Soon she'll be as addicted to you as I am," Andrew whispered against Logan's mouth.

"Sshhh." Logan walked Andrew to the bed, his dick throbbing with agonizing bliss. "I have better things for you to do with your mouth than talk."

Andrew's silky laugh sent waves of pleasure through Logan's body. He shoved Andrew down on the bed and pulled off his shoes, throwing them in a corner before jerking down his pants.

Frenzied, he worked Andrew's jeans over his hips and let them drop, fresh need taking him. Kimberlyn was partly to blame for that. He wanted her. The woman turned him on more than any other woman he'd ever met. And soon, he'd have her. One way or the other. He'd have Drew, and he'd have Kimberlyn. Such pleasure might be very nearly too much to be borne. A solid fist of excitement curled in his stomach at the thought. Not that Drew didn't do it for him; of course he did. But having both of them would involve a whole different level of pleasure. He could almost taste it. Taste *her*.

Andrew grabbed the front of Logan's shirt and pulled him to the bed, and for a moment Logan just reveled in the feel of Andrew's warm skin against his. Muscles bunched, fitting together like perfect pieces of a silk-covered puzzle.

Andrew's soft breath intermingled with Logan's as they lay face-to-face and groin-to-groin. Brushing his fingertips over the goose pimples arising on Andrew's smooth chest, Logan finally kissed him.

Lips forged, and tongues danced a slow, sweet waltz.

Andrew swept his rough fingers over Logan's ribs, his touch, though soft as a sigh, sending shock waves through Logan's body. Unable to accept that Andrew might not know how he felt, he let his shields drop. The walls hit the ground of his mind with a sound like furious thunder. His love rushed out to embrace Andrew, to coat his mind with adoration as thick and sticky as honey. Thoughts he could never voice flew to Andrew on swift wings, and Andrew threw his head back, eyes closed, gasping.

"Drew?"

Then those vivid blue eyes opened to capture Logan's, and Logan felt it; they were one. Merged together, forever connected by something he could neither explain nor completely understand.

And just as suddenly, lust washed over them, a brutal tidal wave of desire, all tied up in a messy package topped with a ribbon of love as pure and piercing as light.

Andrew cried out and dug his fingers into Logan's skin, the pain only adding to the intensity of the union. Normally the submissive one, Andrew became a wild thing, aggressive in his need, his grasp on Logan desperate, almost afraid.

He pushed Logan back and climbed atop him, his quick kiss hard, holding a promise of so much more that Logan couldn't help a shiver of anticipation.

"God, Drew!" Logan pushed his head back into the pillow, his cock caught between them, hardening even more as Andrew slithered down his body.

He nearly came off the bed when Andrew touched his tongue to the fevered, swollen tip of his dick.

Realizing he was in danger of breaking his teeth, he forced his jaw to relax and rode the wave of sensation Andrew was creating with his mouth. He grabbed a fistful of Drew's thick hair and stared up at the ceiling, each suck bringing him closer to orgasm. Closing his eyes, he pictured Kimberlyn there with them, her brilliant green eyes challenging him, calling him. Her breasts were heavy and rose-tipped, nipples long and pointed.

“Oh, God,” he groaned. Drew sucked him deeper and deeper into the warm, moist cave of his mouth, his tongue swirling, hand squeezing his balls.

“I’m going to come,” Logan muttered.

Drew licked up Logan’s long cock, then ringed his finger and thumb below the head. He squeezed. “Not yet.” He grinned. “You know how I like to prolong the agony.” He flicked his tongue out to catch the moisture that beaded on the engorged head. “You taste good, Logan.”

Logan dropped his head back on the bed and groaned. “Don’t torture me, Drew.”

“When the three of us are together, it’s going to be magical, isn’t it?”

“Yes.” Logan reached down to push Drew’s head toward his cock. “But right now, *this* is magical.” His cock throbbed with a painful beat.

“Do you want to fuck me?”

Logan rose up on his elbows. “What I want—”

And then his body stilled, as his gaze went toward the doorway. There, fist stuffed against her mouth, face pale, stood Kimberlyn. Watching.

Her gaze rushed toward him like a dart, piercing his heart, his head, and his cock with lust. He couldn’t look away from her, didn’t want to, and as she stood frozen, his seed left him in an explosive stream. For a mind-numbing moment, he could neither see nor hear as his climax held him captive.

When he came back to earth and looked for her, she was gone.

## Chapter Nine

Kimberlyn backed from the room, embarrassment finally unfreezing her feet. *Oh my God. Oh my God.*

She'd actually come back to beg Logan to reconsider. Let her go to the house she'd just bought, get it in order, and think things over. There really couldn't be that big of a rush. And if he was that worried for her safety, she'd agree to take one of his wolves as a bodyguard. Even Elijah, the big dope. If he was too stubborn to agree to that, well, she was just going to take off.

She'd slip out when no one was watching, and start a new life elsewhere. The last thing she wanted was to finally find her freedom only to lose it again. No, the new taste of it was too sweet. She craved it. She wanted to experience it, if only for a while. Logan couldn't object to that. He couldn't.

Too wrapped up in her thoughts to think of knocking, she'd pushed open the door and seen them. On the bed. Logan's erection was in Andrew's mouth, and the look on his face... *Oh my God.*

They must have thought she was a freak, spying on them like that. But she'd been unable to move as desire and fascination hit her like the world's biggest hammer and rendered her completely helpless.

She'd never seen anything in her life that affected her so much. It had taken everything she had not to throw herself at them, to sink down naked between them and writhe in ecstasy.

Logan came as she watched. His lips parted, his eyes narrowed, and a flush of heat colored his high cheekbones. Before his gaze had left hers, vibrations had shaken her clit until she nearly reached between her legs to end the tormenting, unrelieved pressure.

She ran.

"Kimberlyn!"

Logan's harsh voice followed her down the hall. Two of Logan's people, a man and a woman, stood against the wall, hands up, grinning.

"Whoa, woman, slow down!" the man said.

"You're being summoned," the female added. Both of them looked friendly, but Kimberlyn didn't stop to chat.

She ignored them and slammed her bedroom door behind her. Standing against it, her breath rushing in and out like a bellows, she listened.

The silence bore down on her with a heavy weight, solemn and foreboding. Something was in the air. Something more than Logan and Andrew realizing she wanted them and wanted them badly. Surely Logan had read her desire in her eyes.

No, it was something more. She shoved her hair out of her eyes and took a deep breath. She was being paranoid.

When the knock sounded on her door, she sighed. She was about to find out just what they had planned for her.

"Will you open the door?"

"What do you want, Andrew?"

"I want to talk about...what you saw."

A vision of them on the bed exploded in her mind in high definition, and she pushed her fingers between her legs, hard. "I'll be out in a little while."

"Now, Kimber."

"Damn it!" She jerked open the door.

Andrew's eyes held worry and doubt, but his smile was benign. "May I come in?"

"If I say no, you'll come in anyway." She stepped back and motioned him in. "Where's Logan?"

"Sit down, Kimber, please."

Stubbornly declining to sit would have been childish, so she sat beside him on the small settee and folded her hands. "I'm listening."

"Why did you come into Logan's room?"

She couldn't help the flush that heated her face. "I wanted to discuss things."

“You mean discuss your leaving?”

“Yes. But only long enough to think.” She hurried on before he could argue. “I'd be willing to take one of the wolves for protection, if you really think I need it.”

His long hair caressed his broad shoulders as he shook his head. “I'm sorry, Kimber. I really am. But whether you like it or not, you came to us. You're one of us now. You're going to be one of the leaders of this pack. You can't endanger—”

“Damn it, Andrew! I didn't come to Kentucky for that. I came to a place that called to me, a place I could have, for the first time in my life, some fucking freedom to be what I am!”

“And what you are is a wolf, Kimber.”

“Stop *calling* me that.” She stood, her movements angry and jerky, and went to stare out the window. “Why can't you just let me live my life? I'm willing to be part of this pack. I *want* to be part of this pack. But I want my own life too. I don't want to have to watch my back every second of every day. I don't want to be responsible for the other wolves. I don't want to know that, because of me, this pack is in more danger. I just want to live. Can't you understand?”

He touched her, and she jumped, unaware that he'd risen to stand behind her. “I'm sorry, sweetheart. I do know. If you'll just give it some time, you'll adjust and come to love your life. Once our power base has been secured, you won't be so afraid. You'll not be in so much danger. And neither will we.”

“I'm not afraid. Aren't you listening? I don't want what you want. I don't want to give what you want to take.”

“I'm sorry.”

She snorted. His words left a bitter aftertaste. “Okay. Let me go to my house. For just a couple of weeks. I'll think about things...”

“Kimber, once you've taken part in the ceremony and have gained some experience, you will live in your house, if that's what you want. You won't have to live here. A lot of the wolves don't. Most of them have normal day jobs in the city. Eric is a nurse. Dana is a lawyer. They both live in the city. Carmen is a dentist and lives in town.”

She bit her lip. “Then why won't you let me go right now? Why can't I decide for myself?”

“You can decide for yourself. It just has to be the right decision.” He picked up a trailing strand of her hair and brought it to his nose.

Maybe they weren't taking her seriously because she was asking. “I'm no longer asking your permission, Andrew. I will be taking some time to think about things. If I must join you, then I will. But I'm telling you right now that I'm going to go home and try to live a halfway normal life before I have to come back here.” She tried to ignore the way he smelled, like male and heat and sex, but finally had to turn and push him away before she threw herself in his arms and begged him to take her.

He touched her arm, and she stiffened and jerked her arm away. “Don't.”

His face dropped all expression, but his eyes were cold, making him look more like Logan than himself. “Will you judge us so harshly then? That you can't bear our touches because we love each other?”

She frowned. “What?”

“That you are part of this triangle is a fact. We cannot change that. The three of us are fated to be together. But if you can't bring yourself to tolerate us because of what you saw earlier...” He shook his head. “Life will be difficult. You'll have to get over your...squeamishness.”

He thought she was squeamish? He thought she couldn't bear the thought of him and Logan touching, or touching her? She couldn't help but give a surprised laugh.

“You mock me?”

“No, Andrew. No.” But she couldn't give him more. Not yet. She couldn't admit to desiring the two of them so much that she could barely think.

“You've been sheltered your entire life. You're not...a virgin, are you?”

Her mouth fell open, and she shut it with a snap. “Virgin? Me?”

“I thought—”

“No. I just had to be careful before. I was afraid I'd lose control and...eat my lovers.” She tried to sound amused and lighthearted, but the words were too true, too hurtful, to brush off.

“Oh, honey.” Again, he reached out to touch her but quickly withdrew.

“Things would be so much simpler for you, Kimber, if you'd just accept us.”



“It's not you I don't accept. It's you trying to force me into a life I'm not ready to live.”

“You're being stubborn.”

Her face heated. “Maybe I am. But I've a right to be any fucking way I want to be. And that's what I'm having trouble with. I want to control my own life. I never have. And now when I have that chance, you want to take it from me.”

“We don't, Kimber. We want to add to it. We want to give you more than anything you've imagined in your wildest dreams.”

“I'm finished talking. Go back and tell Logan what I've agreed to. Set me up with a bodyguard, and we'll be on our way. In a couple weeks, maybe a month, I'll...maybe I'll be ready to join you.”

He blew a heavy breath and dropped his head to stare at his feet. He opened his mouth to speak, then closed it and walked out the door without a single look back.

She was surprised to see that her hands were shaking, but felt as though a weight had been lifted. She'd stood strong. Now she would go home and figure out what she wanted to do without Logan and Andrew distracting her. Without her body betraying her.

With a last look around at a gorgeous bedroom she might never see again, she walked from the room.

She slipped down the long, empty hallway. It would do no good to try to reason with Logan and Andrew; they weren't going to agree to her going. Daylight was coming, and she shook her head to clear the fog. She needed some food and sleep, in that order. Once she got home...

Home. It had a lovely ring to it. If only they'd leave her to enjoy it. She'd never had a place of her own. She'd always been responsible for someone else, lived by someone else's rules. Now she was free and she meant to enjoy every second of it.

The wolves were asleep, and the house was silent, with only the occasional crack and pop of a settling foundation making her pause to listen.

From the other side of the house came a clank and a quick burst of laughter. Some of them were still up, then. Surprised at the forlorn reaction to leaving the place, she squared her shoulders and headed for the front door. She could always come back if she wanted to.

She stepped into the open air, stopping to lift her nose to the wind. How fresh and earthy everything smelled here. The night was breezy and balmy, pure.

Once inside the cover of the trees, she'd shift and run home. Maybe along the way she'd snare a rabbit and have supper. Her stomach growled at the thought. Though the human part of her shied away from hunting and eating raw meat, the wolf part of her had no such compunctions.

She listened. No noises, no yells, no signs of pursuit. Quickly grabbing the hem of her shirt, she started to pull it over her head.

Something barreled into her, knocking her to the ground. The side of her face slammed into the ground, and pressure on her head held her still. Her shirt half covered her face, and she instinctively struggled, trapped and smothered. A stick snapped beneath her, jabbing into her hip like a knife, but she barely noticed.

Warnings from Logan and Andrew filled her head. No matter how she struggled, whoever held her was stronger than she was. She couldn't escape, couldn't see, couldn't breathe.

Two minutes out of the house and she was already in trouble.

## Chapter Ten

People, strong people, practically sat on her to hold her down. They'd thrown something over her head so she couldn't see, but worse than that, she couldn't suck enough air into her lungs.

Her struggles were wild and desperate. She heard a satisfying crack, and a dull pain shot through her head when she rammed it into someone.

"Calm down," one of them demanded. "We won't hurt you."

At the purr of an oncoming vehicle, her heart leaped. Someone was coming. *Logan, help me. Andrew...*

She shouldn't have been so quick to ignore them. If the bears had her, what kind of terrible life would be in store for her? Terror shot through her, electric shocks that made her lose all control.

"Fuck, she's shifting. What do you want us to do?"

"Here."

That last whisper was familiar, so familiar she hesitated, but the shift came over her with a roar of fury.

"Hurry!"

She fought the bag over her head as her face elongated into the snout of a wolf, fangs snapping madly at the material. Animal instincts overwhelmed human thought. She would kill them, kill them all.

But the sharp sting of a needle hit her in the back of the neck, and a heavy, paralyzing pain dropped her like a stone. She screamed, fury and pain dueling inside her as the wolf began to change back to human form.

"Get her in the truck."

They lifted her gently and placed her in the back of a truck. She heard the clang of a cage door before blessed unconsciousness washed over like a cool bath.

She awoke with a hammer tapping at the bones of her temples with steady, determined pressure. Groaning, she dragged herself to her knees, trying to raise enough spit so she could talk.

"I'm thirsty," she croaked, and shivered. She shouldn't be cold, but chills raced up her spine and goose pimples dotted her flesh. Nausea rolled in her stomach, and she retched as the world spun around her. "What the hell?"

She opened her eyes when the dizziness passed. A torch flickered on the opposite wall, and a slow, steady *clink, clink, clink* made her think of a drippy faucet. Bright shadows danced on the walls, giving the impression of warmth, but again, she shivered. Where the hell was she?

"Hello?"

One of the shadows against the wall detached itself and came toward her, and she squinted to see better. Too sick to be afraid, she waited.

"Who are you?" she asked. "I need water."

The figure squatted down before her, and for a moment her wavering vision sickened her. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. A little better.

"Drink this, girlie," a harsh voice said.

She drew back, feeling the blood drain from her face. "*Elijah?*"

"Yep. Here."

She scooted back against the wall. "Get away from me!"

He followed her, his hand steady and determined. "Drink this, or I'm going to hold you down and pour it down your throat."

She reached inside her for her wolf, but it didn't so much as purr. She couldn't shift.

"What have you done to me? And why?"

"Just following orders, kid. Drink up."

She took the container with a shaky hand and sniffed it, but smelled nothing more suspicious than water. Her thirst overcame her hesitancy, and she tilted up the bottle.

Sweet Jesus, it was good. The water bathed her parched throat and calmed her roiling stomach. She stopped drinking, at last, and wiped her mouth on the back of her hand.

“Why?” she asked. “You’re a traitor?”

“What?”

She could barely make out his frown in the darkness. “You’re with the bears?”

He laughed. “No.”

“Then why have you taken me? When Logan finds out—”

“Logan is the one who had you brought here.”

“I don’t believe that.”

“He had no choice. You were going to run, and that would have been very dangerous for all of us. And especially for you. Believe me, you don’t want the bears to get you.”

“Where am I? He’s simply going to keep me prisoner here until...until...when?”

“He’ll be along soon. You need to rest and let the drug work its way out of your system.”

“You drugged me. You bastard.” Of course they’d drugged her. She recalled the sting of a needle and the clang of cage doors. “And how the fuck am I supposed to rest in this freaking cold, wet place?”

“You’re coming with me.”

“Not until you tell me what’s going on.”

He snorted and stood up, then bent down to pick her up and carried her like a baby. Her pathetic struggles did nothing more than make him grin.

“Laugh while you can, fucker. I’ll get you for this. You’d better watch your back. Once I’m feeling better—”

“Hush, girlie. Save your strength for what’s ahead.”

“What’s ahead?”

But he refused to say.

“We’re in the caves, of course,” she said.

“Yup.”

“Because this is the safest place to be.”

“Uh-huh.”

“Then why don't you just live here all the time?”

“As you said, this isn't the most comfortable of places. Besides, we're not going to hide behind cave walls our entire lives. Soon we'll be taking on the bears, and we'll win.”

A frightening thought wormed its way through her hurting brain. “Is this about the ceremony?” Her stomach lurched, and she put a hand to her mouth.

He shrugged broad shoulders. “Logan will be here soon. He'll talk to you. Now shut up, will you?”

He finally walked into a reasonably well-lit room, depositing her on what appeared to be a large padded altar in the middle. *An altar?* Still, weakness weighted her body, and helpless, she sank down into feathery warmth.

“Sleep,” he said. “I'll keep watch.”

“Oh that really makes me feel better.”

He shrugged and went to stand against a wall, nearly blending with the skipping shadows.

Her last drowsy thought was, *if it's so safe here, why does he have to stand watch?* But she knew. He wasn't guarding her so much as making sure she didn't escape. She'd been abducted by her own pack.

\* \* \*

“Wake up, Kimber. Come on, sweetheart. Open your eyes.”

Andrew's voice was a soothing rumble and did nothing to make her want to fight her way through the cotton layers of sleep.

“I don't want her as my leader. I won't accept her.”

That voice was familiar as well. *Elena.*

Kimberlyn opened her eyes, Andrew's face coming slowly into focus.

“Shut up, Elena,” Elijah said behind her.

“It's not right that she, someone we don't even—”

“Elena, do not say another word or I will bar you from this ceremony. Kimberlyn was chosen for us, and you will accept her or leave the pack. Am I clear?”

Kimberlyn sat up. Logan stood next to Andrew, a little behind him. Though he spoke to Elena, his dark eyes speared Kimberlyn.

With each second, her fuzziness departed, and anger took its place. “You have no right to do this.” She looked from Logan to Andrew. “I will not participate in this ceremony.”

“You have no choice.” Logan's face never changed expression, but his eyes narrowed the tiniest bit.

“You would rape me, then?”

He shook his head. “We won't have to.”

She knew all too well what he meant. And was all too afraid that he was right. That she desired him was apparent. And Andrew. She knew there was something there, or she wouldn't have been pulled to them so strongly. The pack stood in a circle around the altar, several feet back. “I don't want them watching.”

Then why did her heart pound at the thought?

Andrew moved closer, leaning a hip on the tall altar. He didn't touch her. “This is something none of us can control. It's what has to be done. You're part of us now. We just have to make it...official.”

“No.” She slid to the edge of the altar. “I'm leaving.”

Logan was there, his big hands encircling her upper arms. His eyes glittered in the torchlight, and she could not look away. Danger covered him like a physical thing. He would have her, and there was nothing she could do about it. He would have her, he and Andrew, here on this altar before the watchful gaze of the entire pack.

But she had to fight. It was who she was. She would not go along with them like a sheep, allowing them to rearrange her life.

Logan sighed with the slightest movement of his chest. “Do what you must, Kimberlyn. As we will.”

He tightened his hands on her arms and dragged her to him, against his hard body, and his lips descended toward hers.

She was lost.

## Chapter Eleven

She meant to fight; she really did. But the need caught her completely off guard. “Oh, God,” she moaned against his mouth.

Logan ran his tongue across her lips, and she granted him entry immediately. His shirt felt silky and cool beneath her fingers, but she craved the feel of his flesh. Before she could do more than tug imploringly at the cloth, Andrew came up behind Logan and ripped the shirt from Logan's back.

Kimberlyn yanked the torn pieces away from Logan's body, her hands eagerly searching for and finding bare skin as smooth as butter. She licked his chest, fighting the desire to bite into him. Oh, to feel his skin give way beneath her teeth, to bathe in his life force like a mermaid left too long on dry land, to take every part of him into her body...

She shuddered at her thoughts, reminiscent of the fears she'd had since her first shift. She moaned and pulled back the slightest bit, her heart pulsing hard and fast.

Logan ran his hands to her thighs and pushed them apart, rubbing his hardness through her clothes, against her sex. He watched her, his eyes overflowing with the wisdom and knowledge of a tutor. His gaze pulled her back in.

*Did I say that aloud? Does he understand?*

Logan flashed a smile, so characteristic of him, that there-and-gone-again show of teeth. “Baby, trust me.”

A millisecond was all it took for that truth to sink in, for understanding to blossom in her heart. When she opened her eyes again, she was smiling back at him.

*Trust me.*

She let go. “Thank you,” she whispered, or thought she did.



Andrew climbed on the huge altar with her, positioning himself at her back, pulling her between his open legs. He wrapped his arms around her waist, hugging her against him as if she were the most adored person in the world.

“Thank *you*.” His whispered words floated to her, and she absorbed them without thought. A bubble of magic seemed to encase the three of them, and she floated against its rubbery, springy walls.

A tangible line connected her to not only Logan and Andrew, but to the rest of her people. How could she ever have wanted to fight this?

One minute her clothing was there, restricting her, annoying her, and the next there was only bare skin. Logan's body merged with hers at the front, and Andrew's from the back. She was part of them, and they of her. One.

Logan pulled his lips from hers, but before she could protest, Andrew's hands snaked around her waist and lifted to her breasts. The smoothness of his chest when her head fell back against him made her aware that he had already shed his clothes.

She let her head fall back against him, turning her face to the side to kiss his arm. His chest warmed her back, the gentle nudge of his erection becoming more urgent as his thumbs stroked her sensitive nipples.

She opened her eyes, needing to see Logan. He knelt beside her, magnificent in his nakedness, no less dangerous looking for lack of clothes.

A movement from the corner of her eye caught her attention, and she stared at the gathered wolves. They watched the trio with riveted faces, some of them beginning to shift.

Elena stood alone, her stare caught between magical lust and envy. Maybe because Elena would now be hers, Kimberlyn felt a spark of sorrow.

But soon the other wolves were forgotten as the men's touches and kisses brought her spiraling down into a vortex of heady sensation. Logan, so dark and stern, melted her heart with the gentleness peeking from his eyes. His attention was too caught up in her body to hide it. “Okay?” he murmured.

“Oh, God. Yes.”

Andrew, softer in his attitude, swept her hair from her neck and kissed the sensitive skin there, the butterfly touch sending a flame of desire from her neck to her toes.

Held securely in the circle of their arms, tight between their bodies, she wanted more. More of everything. Andrew leaned back and slid his hands under her thighs, positioning them so her legs rested open on his. Logan moved in closer, kissing her, his lips heavy and hot. She sank into Andrew, and Logan followed her, his hands slipping up her legs to rest with his thumbs so near the lips of her pussy she thought she would come from the thought alone.

“Touch me,” she whispered against his lips. “Logan.” His name tasted like sin on her tongue, so she said it again. “Logan.”

“Baby,” he whispered back. “I’ve been waiting for so long, so long for you.”

“And it’s about fucking time you got here,” Andrew crooned, nipping the soft skin between her shoulder and neck. “About fucking time.”

Logan slid his hands up, his thumbs finally touching the moist, waiting cavern of her pussy before moving farther up, slowly, to take her waiting clit between the pads of his thumbs.

She jerked at the contact, and Andrew hugged her to him, burying his face in her hair. Logan’s eyes glittered in the torchlight as he watched her, as mysterious as a long-ago god, dangerous as a wild animal.

He pushed a finger inside her, wringing from her a deep gasp and a reflexive tightening of her legs.

His thumb continued to slide over the swollen bit of flesh even as he slipped another finger inside her.

She moaned, and Andrew circled his palms over her stiff nipples, watching as Logan fucked her with his fingers. She realized that, for the first time, the thought of being careful hadn’t entered her mind.

Other moans floated to her. The pack was feeling the effects of the sex, the emotion. She saw that they were not touching each other, but some stood with heads thrown back and eyes closed, or leaned weakly against the cave walls, as though magic flowed through thirsty veins and coated them with ecstasy.

Logan pulled his fingers free and lay on his stomach between her open legs. His breath touched her before his lips did, a warm breeze that held a thousand tiny tongues. A scream clawed its way through her throat. She pushed her body back into Andrew, trying to escape too much sensation.

*Oh sweet...it almost hurts. Too good...*

Her gaze landed upon Logan's bare ass—firm, perfect globes she longed to squeeze. Instead, she put her hands gently in his hair, and he withdrew for a moment to look up at her. That moment, that touch of gazes was something she would never forget.

Andrew slid backward and laid her carefully down upon the fluffy warmth of the altar covering. She sank down as though on a bed of clouds, legs open, arms over her head, breasts full, firm mounds pointed at the ceiling.

“Where are you going?” she murmured as Andrew moved away.

“To touch my other love,” he replied, his low tones sending shock waves of delight through her body. “It is a good time to let them know about us, while they are so drunk on the ceremony.”

She propped herself up on her elbows to watch. Logan smiled and lowered his face to her pussy, tongue washing over her in a never-ending stream of bliss. He took her clit between his lips and tugged gently, then licked a quick line to her hole, his tongue moving faster and faster.

She flinched when he seemed to sense that she teetered on the edge of orgasm and pulled back. “No! Don't stop...”

Andrew ran his hand over Logan's ass, squeezing the mounds of flesh like melons. Her breath stopped, then sped up with frightening speed as she watched, her pussy throbbing with unrelieved pressure, clit vibrating with little pulses of pleasure.

Logan traced around her sensitive pussy lips with a knowing finger, then closed his eyes as Andrew continued to explore his body. She forgot the watching wolves; there was only the three of them, caught in a sensuous bubble of heat.

Andrew's large, rigid cock bobbed before him as he walked on his knees closer to Logan's upper body. Kimberlyn reached for it, quite naturally, and he slid into her hand with no hesitancy.

“Satin over steel,” she murmured, stroking his penis with fascination. “I do want this inside me.”

His face showed surprise, perhaps at her extreme turnaround, at her acceptance of the events. “It's yours.”

Logan teased her clit with his tongue and slid his finger inside her, then two fingers, pulling out slowly before pushing in again. He caressed her with fingers coated with her juices, and she let her head fall back, cares slipping away like wisps of smoke.

“Oh God, Logan...” Andrew's cock slid from her hand, and he bent toward her. Silky lips closed around a distended nipple, and the two men brought her to the edge of torment and rapture with lips, tongues, and fingers.

Elbows no longer able to support her, she fell back, hands searching for whatever part of them she could touch, squeeze, caress. Her fingers slid over sweaty, satiny skin, and into thick, silky hair.

A scream tore its way through her throat as her climax exploded deep inside her, the suddenness of it a shocking, perfect pleasure. Her pussy tightened around Logan's fingers, her clit throbbing inside his mouth.

She bucked, her nails sinking into an uncomplaining body as she came. Darkness battled with lightning flashes behind her closed lids. Oh God, she was dying.

Then Andrew kissed her, his tongue exploring her mouth the same way Logan's tongue was exploring her pussy. She moaned against his lips as another orgasm shook her, no less earth-shattering for being the second. Instead, the sensations grew, the tremors shaking her like an earthquake, and she gasped for breath when her every nerve ending sparked overwhelming pleasure.

She fought the feeling, kicking and hitting, teeth snapping, unable to understand the magnitude of the power in control of her body, her brain. As though fused to her, the men continued the blissful assault, holding her easily as she bucked. Like human manacles, they held her and loved her, and power enveloped the three of them in a chaotic, passionate embrace.

As though unable to help himself, Andrew pushed his cock against her lips. “Please...” he moaned, and some tiny still-thinking part of her brain wondered if he had lost all control.

Her teeth unclenched and then she was aware he was inside her mouth, fucking her, filling up her throat. His cock hit something in her throat that sent more pleasure shocks pulsating through her body, and as though she had a clitoris in the back of her throat, she came again.

Logan ripped his mouth from her pussy and howled. The sound was echoed by the pack members, who gathered close and reached out, eager to physically touch some small piece of the magic that spilled from the three writhing on the altar.

She waited, knowing Logan was about to fuck her, and knowing that she might not survive it. She could barely handle the sensations from his tongue and from Andrew's cock in her mouth.

Logan arose above her like a god, eyes wild with some ancient knowledge, his face a feral, terrible mask. Again, he threw back his head and howled, the sound resonating around the cave like the scream of a thousand souls. He grasped her thighs in a brutal grip and plunged into her, his pelvis smashing into hers, hands bruising.

Andrew continued thrusting into her mouth; his hand shot out to grasp and hold one of Logan's. Thus they were linked, the three wolves, forever.

She couldn't be alive; she couldn't. No one could hold such power, such pleasure, such pain, and live. Logan's plunges into her enflamed her, pleased her, terrified her. She sensed the power gathering itself for something more, even more, as the pressure built, the friction from Logan's cock throwing sparks of pleasure throughout the entire room. It could not be contained, she was sure. The *world* would feel their power.

He grew inside her, and even as her throat accepted Andrew, her pussy pulsed around Logan, pulling him deeper, urging him on, taking everything he could give.

She shrieked, the sound shooting past Andrew's cock, her orgasm arching her back and finally calling forth her shift.

Andrew's scream joined hers as he was thrown from her mouth. He landed beside her, jerking and convulsing with his own orgasm, and he too began to shift.

She began to shake with the force of the orgasm, claws popping from fingers, teeth elongating, body changing.

Logan roared as he came with her, and the sound covered her, sank into her, became part of her. The echoes bounced from the walls of her mind and sank like knives into her heart. Blackness overtook her. Grateful, she rested.

## Chapter Twelve

When she awakened, maybe a mere minute later, the cave was in chaos. Some of the pack had shifted, some had not, but all were feeling the effects of the ceremony.

Kimberlyn sat up gingerly, dazed. Beside her, Andrew lay with an arm thrown over his eyes, and Logan still lay half atop her. He opened his eyes even as she glanced at him, and he stared at her solemnly.

She hadn't fully shifted, and had reverted back to human form when she'd fainted, but she wanted nothing more in that moment than to shift and run. At least her mind did. Her body rebelled at the simplest of movements.

Euphoria had her in its grip. Exhilarated, she flung her arms over her head and laughed. "I know who I am," she shouted.

"You know your purpose," Logan said. "You know where you belong. All doubts are gone. There is no confusion, no noise, no fear."

She looked at him, and only when he rose up and touched a fingertip to her face did she realize she was crying.

"It's so perfect. I've never, ever felt so..." She shook her head, searching for the right words. There were none.

"I know." He brought his finger, wet from her tears, to his mouth.

She sobbed at that, smiling through the tears. She was home. *That* was it. Stretching, she yawned, then reached to push Andrew's hair from his face. "Wake up, Andrew."

He stirred at her voice and sat up slowly, glancing down between his legs as if to reassure himself he was still intact. "What...wow." His voice was thick, his eyes dazed. "Did you know, Logan?"

Logan grinned, his eyes hooded. "Not exactly. Come here, you."

Andrew scooted toward him as Kimberlyn watched. Logan hooked a hand behind Andrew's face and pulled him down for a quick, hard kiss.

She looked away. Maybe three really *was* a crowd. Watching them, it occurred to her that she could never be as close to either of them as they were to each other.

"You're worried?"

Kimberlyn looked back in surprise. "What?"

"I'm getting something from you. You're suddenly not so happy."

She shrank back. "You're...reading my mind?"

Logan shook his head and dropped his hand from Andrew. "No, you're unconsciously shielding too hard for me to get more than a glimpse. What's wrong?"

"Nothing!"

His face was suddenly hard, eyes dark and unreadable. He and Andrew both stared at her. "When your urges have calmed, you remember that you don't approve of the physical relationship Andrew and I have."

Her mouth fell open, and she looked wildly around at the pack. "That's not true at all!" It turned her on to see them together. She just didn't want him to know she was jealous.

She was being childish. She had a place here. They wanted her.

Andrew reached for Logan's hand, but Logan flinched away. Both of them stared at each other. Andrew's eyes widened, and hurt shone from them like light from the moon.

Logan held out his hand. "Andrew..."

"No. It's...no."

Guilt stirred inside her. "Guys. I'm sorry. I never meant anything—"

"Logan, there's something wrong with Ford." Elijah stood at the edge of the altar, and Kimberlyn was surprised that she could hear him. She felt so insulated with her two men. Two men she'd just hurt.

Elijah's gaze shot to her nude body, then shot away just as quickly. She flushed. It was a little late for modesty now, but she crossed her arms over her breasts and bent her legs to hide her still-throbbing sex. Logan and Andrew slid from the altar, unconcerned with their nudity, and followed Elijah away.

The wolves still milled around with dazed eyes, some of them smiling at her shyly. One of them, a young, blond male walked to the altar and held out a hand. "Can I help you down?"

She shrank back. "No. Thank you. Uh, I need some clothes."

He raised an eyebrow and grinned. "Not in my opinion. What you three did, that was...awesome. I've never felt anything like that before." He walked closer and leaned casually on the altar, staring up at her with mischievous eyes. "I'm still hard. Wanna see?"

"I see my shirt, there on the floor. Would you hand it to me, please? And my pants, if you can find them..."

He made a production out of sighing deeply and handing her the clothes with a woebegone expression on his face. "Dress, if you must."

"Planning on it," she muttered and slipped quickly into the somewhat tattered clothing.

Sliding from the altar, she ran to the gathering of wolves around Ford on the opposite end of the room. Logan and Andrew knelt beside him, and Andrew was the only one to look up at her. Logan's face was unmoving, and it hurt her to look at him.

"What's wrong?"

Andrew shook his head. "He's dead."

"What? How?"

"The overflow of power must have been too much for him. He's not breathing."

"No. I'll fix him." Her shift seemed easier this time, but that could have been because after the ceremony, everything seemed easier, better. She closed her eyes and let her mind slide into Ford's body. Her mind wandered, looking for a bit of life inside him. She found nothing and was ready to give up when, finally, she felt that tiny spark, far off.

She looked up at Logan, giving a sharp yip. *He's not dead!*

"What?" Andrew asked, his eyes liquid in his pale face.

Logan buried his fingers in her fur. "Can you fix him?"

She stared at him. *"I will try with everything inside me. I'm just not sure what to reach for. I don't know what ails him."*

As though he knew exactly what she was trying to say, he replied, "Try, Kimberlyn."



She skimmed Ford's body, reaching once more for the spark she'd found. *There you are, gorgeous.* She then realized that though she was in wolf form, inside him she was in human form. How odd. How...*good.*

Wrapping her hand around the spark, she searched further. His mind was a black, arid wasteland, completely closed to her. She could see nothing. Immediately her lungs constricted, and she had to fight her desire to withdraw. How did blind people live without going stark raving mad? *Calm down, wolf. You're not smothering. Breathe. Breathe.*

She took the spark of life with her, trailing it along like a kite string as she explored his body. She could find nothing that would have him so near death. What was she missing? Grinding her teeth, she made another pass over his body. *Where are you?*

*Ford. Help me.*

She went deeper. The sounds around her muted as she explored Ford's body in total concentration. *Come on, you fucker. Where are—*

And just like that, she saw it. Her breath whooshed from her lungs in a rush, and she flew toward it. She wanted to laugh in glee. *Come here, trouble maker.*

She'd never seen it before. Like a bundle of nerves, a glowing mass of magic had somehow become lodged in Ford's brain stem. God only knew what kind of effect it was having on him, but she knew without doubt he would never be the same.

"What is it, Kimberlyn?" Logan's voice wafted to her mind, floating like a leaf on a summer day, and she smiled to herself for being so fanciful. How much closer she felt to her alpha and Andrew now that she'd experienced the ceremony. She *felt* them, right there with her inside Ford, giving her strength. Clarity.

She gently urged the mass to break apart, giving each little piece a nudge onward. Reluctant to leave, she nonetheless pulled herself away and shifted back to human form. Once more kneeling on the damp floor, she opened her eyes.

"Kimberlyn?" Logan's eyes were filled with concern, but something else too. Belief in her. He trusted her, whether he knew it or not, to make things right.

She smiled and touched his arm. "He's fine. Better than fine. He's—"

And at that moment, Ford's eyes shot open, and he dragged in sweet air, his chest rising as his lungs expanded. He blasted to his feet like a gunshot, ignoring the outstretched hands and the worried faces around him.

"Oh my God!" His scream was enough to send the others toward him, but Kimberlyn only smiled.

"Ford, are you okay?" Andrew asked, grasping the older man's arm. "We thought you were dead, man!"

"I was," Ford said, tears running down his face as he pointed at Kimberlyn. "But she came in and..."

Logan frowned. "Ford, you're pointing at her. Can you actually—"

"I can *see her*," Ford screamed. "I can fucking see her!" He fell to his knees, sobbing, looking everywhere at once. "I can see everything! I can see you, I can see the walls, I can see the torchlight. I have to go outside. I have to—"

And he fell over, out cold. Kimberlyn stood before him, arms outstretched to keep the others from running to rouse him. "Leave him be. His mind needs time to accept these things."

The wolves stopped in their tracks, staring at her with awestruck faces, mouths agape. "You made him see," someone whispered.

"Not just I," she said. She held out her hands to Logan and Andrew. "We did."

They came, her two men, Logan carefully and Andrew eagerly, and took her hands. "I'm sorry," she told them. "I love that the two of you are together. I was only...afraid. Afraid that I wouldn't be as important to either of you. I hope you'll forgive me."

"It doesn't matter," Andrew said. "We'll do anything to keep you. Anything." And he looked at Logan, his eyes soft.

"I'm sorry," Logan told him.

"There is nothing to be sorry about."

Andrew held his hand out to Logan, and this time Logan didn't flinch away. He grasped it and smiled, then shot a challenging look to his people.

"The ceremony is unfinished." He held Kimberlyn and Andrew's hands high. "We are your leaders. Do you accept this?"

“We do,” they said as one.

But one man, standing next to the unsmiling Elena, stepped forward. “I follow you, Logan. Not”—he hesitated long enough to throw a contemptuous look at Kimberlyn and Andrew—“a strange woman and *him*.”

Logan smiled, but his eyes were deathly cold. “If you wish to stay in this pack, John, you will show respect.”

John bowed his head but couldn't keep his lips from curling in a sneering smile. “You're pack leader. But now you've decided to take on a fag and a bitch in heat, and you expect us to just—”

Logan leaped in a blur of movement; one minute he was beside Kimberlyn and the next he was standing where John had been standing a second before. John now lay facedown a few feet away, quiet at last.

“Do any of you wish to leave the pack? If so, you are free to go.” Logan clenched his fist, his eyes shooting sparks of fury. No one moved. “Then we shall continue on with this woefully interrupted ceremony.”

He held his hands out to Kimberlyn and Andrew and speared Elena with a narrowed gaze. “Elijah. Get rid of him.”

Elena looked away from him, and her stare landed on Kimberlyn.

Despite her best intentions, Kimberlyn shivered.

## Chapter Thirteen

It had been three days since the ceremony, since she'd had mind-blowing sex with Logan and Andrew. She lifted her hand and stared at her left palm, rubbing it absentmindedly. Shaped like a small starflower, the mark looked like a burn but was completely numb. Slightly raised, the five petals of the flower had a whitish cast, attached to a swirling center. Three of the twisting petals were tipped with red.

Logan and Andrew had the exact same mark on their palms.

She'd noticed it right after the ceremony.

"Why are three of them tinged with red and two empty?" Andrew had mused.

Logan had just shaken his head. "I don't know."

"Do you feel different since the ceremony, Kimberlyn?" Andrew asked.

She felt the heat rise in her cheeks. "Well..."

Logan's lovely grin flashed, making him looking ten years younger and so much more approachable. "He doesn't mean sexually." He lowered his voice, his gaze holding hers. "Although that is something we might want to explore later."

Andrew laughed. "Definitely."

"How do you feel mentally? *Psychically*."

"I feel stronger. I feel more connected to you two. Somewhat to the other wolves." She shook her head, eyebrows raised. "It's amazing. If you or Andrew are reasonably near, I can somehow feel where you are. It's like I can hear where you are, does that make sense? And even..." she stopped, blushing again.

"What, Kimber?"

She cleared her throat and stared at her shoes. "I can feel your moods. Last night..."

Logan sucked in a breath, but Andrew's laughter floated free and surrounded them, bringing lightness to a suddenly tense atmosphere. "You should have joined us, Kimber. We wanted to invite you in, but Logan thought you might need some time to get accustomed to things..." His voice trailed off, a question in his eyes.

*I felt left out. Angry that you two were making love without me. Bastards.* She shrugged and continued to avoid their gazes. "Maybe I do."

Logan stood in front of her. He grasped her chin and tilted her face so her eyes met his. "As you can feel us, so can we you. We can also read your moods."

Mortified, she stepped back, stumbling in her haste to get away from them. *Holy shit!* They knew she was needy, jealous, desperate...

"Kimberlyn. Stop. We aren't reading your mind. Each of us can sense things about the other, that's all."

"Don't be upset, Kimber." Andrew held his hands toward her. "Come here."

But she hadn't gone to him. She'd run. She'd steered clear of everyone since then, keeping to her room and herself, trying to come to terms with the strangeness of the her new circumstances.

She started at the knock on her door, as if her thoughts had brought Logan or Andrew to check on her. She wasn't sure if she was relieved or disappointed that it was only Roxie, bringing her dinner.

"Logan says to ask you if you're sure you're not ready to join them downstairs for dinner." Roxie couldn't have looked less like a typical housekeeper. Upswept, bright red hair listed precariously atop her head, and her makeup looked like it'd been caked on decades before. Vivid scarlets, powder blues, and thick false eyelashes adorned her thin face. Long, bright red nails tipped fingers encircled with diamond rings, in perfect harmony with her tight red leather skirt and a pink halter top. Hideous and perfect. Balanced expertly on stiletto heels, she handed Kimberlyn her dinner tray.

"Maybe tomorrow night. Thanks, Roxie."

"Oh, don't mention it, sugar. Do you want to talk? If I was you, I'd be down there on top of those two gorgeous hunks of manhood. Omigod! I'm so jealous! Everyone is. Those two only ever fucked each other since I've known them." She put a white hand to her mouth, eyes wide.

“Oh Jesus, honey. Don't tell them I said that. I mean, not that I was getting in their business or anything, you know, but I always knew those two was, you know, close. Of course, you can't fool old Roxie, no sir. I've been married four times and have fucked my share of beautiful men. Not those two, mind you, although if given half a chance, shoot, I'd be all *over* that!” She put a hand on a bony hip and paused to take a deep breath.

“You feeling all right? You look a little peaked.” Roxie put out a hand to Kimberlyn's forehead. “You want me to call the doctor? See if she can drop in and give you a little something to help you relax a little?”

“I'm fine.” Kimberlyn smiled and looked longingly at the tray.

“What am I saying? I suppose you don't need a doctor, being a healer and all.”

Kimberlyn let out a short bark of laughter. “Lot of good it does me, since I can't heal myself.”

“You can't? Well isn't that just the darnedest thing. You know, I once knew this woman who —”

“Really, thanks so much for bringing the tray.” She put her tray down on the small table and urged Roxie to the door with a hand at the small of her back. “Tomorrow I'll come downstairs for meals. Promise. Thanks again. You're a wonderful cook, and I can't wait to eat.”

Roxie resisted Kimberlyn's gentle push at the open doorway and stared at her with solemn blue eyes. “If you need to talk to somebody, I'm here.” She held a hand to her small bosom and sighed sincerely. “I took to you right off the bat, Kimmy. And I'm here for you.”

*Awww.* “Thanks, Roxie. I might take you up on that offer.”

Roxie grinned, her lipstick-stained teeth making her look sort of psychotic, in an endearing way. “See that you do. Honey, I can tell you things about the people here that you would not believe. And I do need a girlfriend to gossip with. Some of the folks here are all uppity, if you know what I mean. Think that because Roxie isn't a wolf, she's not as good as they are.”

Kimberlyn's mouth fell open. “You're not a...well, of course you're not! It just didn't occur to me until you said it. How in the world did you happen to be here, living among wolves, when you're human?”

Roxie batted her weighted-down eyelids. “Well that's a story for another time, sugar. But it should tell you one thing about old Roxie.”

“What's that?”

Roxie leaned close. “I can keep a *hell* of a secret.”

Kimberlyn laughed. “Yeah.”

Roxie winked, proud as anything, and sashayed down the hall. Kimberlyn shook her head, smiling, and shut the door. She was *starving*.

She'd finished half her steak before she realized something was wrong. Her heart pounded with heavy, slow beats, and tremors shook her body with such force the fork jumped from her hand. She grabbed her throat, gagging on the food stuck there and reached for the carafe of water. The cold liquid sloshed over the rim and soaked her clothes, but at last the meat dislodged in a painful slide down. Still, her chest was tight with a cold fear she couldn't identify. But a face appeared in her mind's eye, a disembodied apparition of terror, and she knew.

Jumping up from her table, she'd almost reached the door when it was flung open and Logan charged in, eyes wild.

“Logan! What's wrong?”

He grabbed her upper arms and squeezed. “They took Andrew.” His voice was hoarse and so filled with pain she wanted to cover her ears. “They took him.”

Her teeth slammed together when he gave her a hard shake, but she could see in his face he wasn't even aware he was doing it. “Oh, God...”

“They had him once, Kimberlyn. I know what they will do. He won't be able to stand it. He can't take it. We have to find him. We're bound to him. We have to find him. Do you understand?”

She put her hands on his chest. “Logan. We'll find him. But we have to be calm so we can feel him.”

He shuddered. “Fuck them. Fuck every one of them. I'll kill them. Whether they kill him or not, I'll kill them.” He let go of her arms and stepped back, clenching his fists. “Fuck. Fuck.”

She glanced at the others crowding her doorway, then dragged her boots from under the bed and put them on. “Do we have weapons?”

Logan's nod was jerky. “We're not even going to try to pit wolf against bear. We're going to shoot the fucks. They broke the treaty first. Elijah!”

Elijah appeared in the doorway, already heavily armed. Holsters were strapped to his waist, his thighs, his wrists. He held two rifles and what looked like a sawed-off shotgun. "What can you shoot, girl?"

Thanks to the hard young men she'd run with when she was afraid of hurting the nice ones, she was no stranger to guns. Coldness settled over her like a misty blanket. "I can shoot anything."

Elijah's smile looked as cold as she felt. "Good girl." He gave her the shotgun and pulled a 9 millimeter from the waistband of his pants. "Here you go. Enough?"

"Yes."

Sudden pain hit her chest, and she fell to her knees, gasping. She glanced up and saw Logan leaning against the wall, his features contorted.

She closed her eyes. "Are we feeling what Andrew is feeling?"

"Some of it."

Fuck. Of course, he'd shield to protect them from pain, but he had to give them something so they'd know he'd been taken.

An image of Andrew flashed through her mind, his smiling lips and flashing eyes, and she realized that if she, who had only known Andrew for a short time, was hurting for him, Logan must be torn completely apart.

"The strength will fade," Logan said, "but it's so soon after the ceremony."

The wolves stood in the hallway, waiting. Quiet determination rose from them in waves, and something more. Rage. Pure, hot rage.

The fight that had almost cost Logan his life had been simply a fight. One-on-one, wolf against bear. But this was something else. This was the kidnapping of one of the leaders, and it wouldn't be one-on-one.

"I won't give in to them, Kimberlyn."

She swallowed and said nothing. They left the building, trotting single file into the woods. Some of the wolves, as if by prearranged orders, shifted and ran off in different directions. Scouts, she realized.

"This leader, will he...kill Andrew if you don't do as he asks?"



Logan jogged beside her, looking straight ahead. "He may kill him anyway. He almost had me; why stop now?"

She shook her head. "We'll find them. We'll get Andrew back."

Logan ran on, silent, and her doubts rose up to choke her.

She would have to trade herself for Andrew.

## Chapter Fourteen

When she stumbled, Logan grabbed her arm and propelled her along. “Keep moving.” Face grim, eyes shuttered, he glanced back and motioned for Elijah to catch up to him.

“Boss?” The bigger man looked like he should have been panting, carrying so much bulk and weaponry, but Kimberlyn noticed he hadn't even broken a sweat.

“Make sure they understand to stay well back. You and Kimberlyn will come with me, and grab Timothy as well. He's the best shot we've got, next to you. I'll call them when I need them to advance on the place.”

Elijah nodded.

Kimberlyn frowned, struggling just a bit to keep up. “How long will it take us to reach the bears?”

Elijah snorted. “Not long now. The bastards have been camping out in our territory for a long fucking time.”

Breathing a little more heavily, she fell a few steps back. Logan and Elijah ran on, and she knew they were keeping their pace slower than usual because of her.

“We're almost there,” Logan said, slowing to jog beside her. “We need to be quiet now.”

She nodded, but his gaze had already grown distant. His lips moved the tiniest bit, and she frowned. Elijah slowed his pace and ran on her other side.

“What's he doing?” she asked him.

Elijah's gaze was curious, and something else. Maybe a bit suspicious. “He's communicating with the pack, something way easier to do since your...ceremony. Can't you hear them?”

She concentrated, picturing them, listening. She could feel Andrew and Logan sometimes without concentrating at all; she knew she could hear them if she could just figure out how.

And finally, she felt them. It wasn't exactly hearing, more of just tuning in to a collective consciousness. She just *knew*. Logan had them all stopped and poised to slip in past the bears' guards.

Logan stopped and grabbed her arm. "Now we walk."

Elijah whispered, "They'll be expecting us."

"Where's Timothy?"

Elijah raised his arm, and from the trees to the left a figure suddenly appeared. This man was smaller than Logan and Elijah, lean and compact. His face was stone-cold, and she couldn't imagine a smile ever lightening those dark features. Dark, straight hair fell to below his shoulders, and tattoos covered his arms, his throat, and probably half his body.

He looked like the type of man who wouldn't mind murdering someone in their sleep. Or out of it, for that matter. Uncomfortable, Kimberlyn looked away.

"Protect the healer, Timothy."

She shivered at the cold heat of desire as Logan's arm brushed her shoulder. Wanting him wasn't logical, and her need wasn't scurrying for cover just because they were in danger.

Timothy didn't glance at her, just nodded sharply at Logan's words. They moved carefully, silently, through the dark forest, until at last, the glint of firelight flashed through the trees. Her hands shook, the guns seeming too small for hunting bear. The wolf pack crept at her back, imaginary touches pushing her onward.

When she saw them, black spots danced in the air around her, and she feared for a moment she might faint.

The werebears stood like stone sentinels in a semicircle, watchful and silent, foreshadowing terror and hidden dark things she couldn't bear to know.

"They're so enormous," she whispered. "So huge."

Long snouts turned toward her voice, and she cringed. Could they possibly have heard her? Despite the firelight and the bright moon, the bears' features seemed fuzzy to even her sharp eye. Still, she could see long, narrow faces, and claws that were half as long as her forearm. They stood on hind legs, waiting, watching. They knew.

"Hush, Kimberlyn."

Only the fact that Logan still held her arm kept her from screaming and running. Stunned, she stared at the nightmare beasts, feeling Logan searching for Andrew.

Nausea curled from her stomach into her throat, bile burning like acid disgust, and she pushed a cold fist against her teeth. The scene was as unreal as a storybook fantasy, terrible in its rage.

"Take a deep breath, Kimberlyn. I'd forgotten that you've never seen one of them before. Remember, together we're strong. They can't hurt us as easily as they have in the past."

"Do they know that?" she whispered.

He shrugged. "I don't know what they know."

Acrid smoke from an unseen fire drifted to her, and she drew its burn deep into her lungs, closing her eyes at the normalcy of that scent. And though the thought made her feel weak, she embraced it anyway. Logan would take care of her.

"I say we have a traitor in the pack," Elijah growled.

"Shhhh," Logan cautioned.

She breathed deeply, wishing she could shift. As a wolf, she wouldn't be so afraid. But she understood now why the bears would be difficult to fight without weapons.

"What happens now?" she asked.

The bears roared and ran toward the wolves. Elijah caught her as she screamed and ripped her arm from Logan's grasp and then stumbled backward. He held her arm and slapped her, nearly hard enough to bruise her cheek.

The pain brought her out of her fear, and she stared up at him, furious. "Bastard." And before he could close his open mouth, she punched him. His nose gave a satisfying crunch, and blood splattered her face. "How's that for fighting like a girl?"

Elijah drew back a meaty fist, but Logan's voice stopped him. "Enough."

Elijah swiped the back of his hand across his nose and glared at her.

"Now, both of you, get the fuck ready."

Kimberlyn shook her head, dislodging and releasing the remainder of dazed fear. Taking a deep breath, she lifted her gun and found a cold, clear place inside her head. She was one of their leaders now. She would not disgrace herself further.

She couldn't see her wolves but knew they were near. The ground shook from the charge of the bears, and she waited, finger on the trigger.

As though they knew exactly where the wolves waited, the bears stopped fifteen feet away. "Logan," one of them called. "We will talk."

The speaker stepped forward, a huge, shaggy beast who wore power like a thick suit. That he could talk was wrong, unnatural. Civilized speech coming from that deformed, hideous face left her mind, for a long moment, in chaos.

Logan's jaw clenched. "You can't win this, Connor. Give Andrew to me, and I won't kill you."

Connor laughed, his gravelly voice showing how unimpressed he was. "We always win, wolf. But I'm not here to fight. I'm here to negotiate an *end* to the fighting."

Kimberlyn was afraid to move. She didn't want to draw the slightest attention to herself. Logan stepped forward, and the two leaders advanced upon each other with slow, careful steps. Kimberly shivered. She stared at Logan's back, hoping he wouldn't move too far away. Elijah's arm bumped her shoulder, and without thinking, she put her gun in the crook of her left arm and slid her fingers into his hand.

For a moment they shared a quick, surprised look, and embarrassed, she started to tug her hand from his. His fingers tightened, and staring stonily ahead, he refused to let her go.

Bolder, she stepped forward. "I'm not letting him face them alone," she murmured, and was unsurprised when Elijah, still with her hand in his, walked with her to Logan's side.

Logan glanced at them, then did a double take at their clasped hands. Elijah smoothly slid his hand from hers at Logan's look, but he met Logan's level gaze with a cool one of his own.

"Well, well," Connor said. "It seems the rumors are true. You've found yourself a lady. Pretty little thing. What's your name, puppy?"

As if he didn't know. She remained silent and even managed to meet his gaze with what she hoped was enough calmness to fool him. She had to look up, way up, to meet those small, cold eyes. "Courage, Kimberlyn," she whispered.

Logan gave her a hard look.

"Trouble with your harem, Logan?"

“Just get on with it. What negotiations?”

Even the crickets quieted to listen, and Kimberlyn held her breath at the sudden pregnant pause.

“I’ll trade you Andrew for Sanctuary. You and your pack can go wherever you want, as long as it’s not here. And you never come back. If you agree, he lives. If you don’t, he dies. And so does the rest of your pack.”

## Chapter Fifteen

Logan clenched his fists, his face pale. Kimberlyn closed her eyes. At least Andrew was alive. And at least Logan hadn't offered to trade her for him.

Melancholy suddenly choked her. She was going to lose Sanctuary before she'd even had a chance to want it.

"No," Logan said.

Kimberlyn's gasp was like a rifle shot in the still night air, but she sensed no surprise from anyone else. Elijah cautioned her with a hand to her back, and Logan gave away his emotions only by the tightness around his eyes. Kimberlyn could feel his agony and the weight of his decision.

But Connor ignored him. He held up a furry, claw-tipped paw and said, "Oh. Also, I'll be willing to share the healer with you and your pack. She'll belong to both of us. Dual citizenship, so to speak. How's that for fair?"

"No."

Connor's smile was an ugly caricature. "I'll give you a few minutes to discuss things with your pack."

"I don't need to discuss things."

The huge black bear tilted his head. "Lori. Gwen. Bring him."

The women were as huge and hideous as the males. Something about them, maybe the way they dragged Andrew between them with such indifference, made them look even more brutal than Connor. Stomping to their leader's side, they held Andrew between them, waiting.

He wasn't unconscious, but his head drooped low, and his eyes were hidden. In the darkness it was hard to tell how he'd been injured. He wouldn't want them to feel his pain and

would shield them from it until he couldn't. He was so much better a person, so much braver, than she was.

"Trade him for me," she said, her voice coming out soft but sure.

"Kimberlyn," Logan replied, chiding, his eyes so sad she felt a tear escape and run freely down her cheek.

"Please, Logan. They won't kill me. They won't hurt me." A murmur from the pack caressed her with approval.

"No, don't say it again," he told her, turning his face away.

"Why not?" she whispered. "They—"

"Hush, girl," Elijah said. "You don't know what you're—"

"Enough, Elijah."

"Boss."

Connor took another step forward. "The only question here tonight is, do you want to take Andrew and run? Or do you want to watch him die? And you know if the bears and wolves fight, your wolves will die."

"You might be in for a nasty shock," Elijah said.

The bear didn't acknowledge him. He leaned over and grabbed Andrew by the hair, jerking his face up to the moonlight and those watching.

Logan's body stiffened.

Bruises were dark shadows upon Andrew's pale skin, and blood like thin, running paint spread across his face. His nude body looked small and helpless in the grip of the bears. Kimberlyn clenched her teeth, her heart bursting.

She felt it coming before anything happened. As though the atmosphere shifted and the world tilted, she lost her balance for a second. Fuzzy, she fought the fog in her mind, and realized suddenly what was happening. The minds of the pack were joining. She stopped fighting it and let them draw her in because she was pack.

*She was pack.*

She raised her gun in perfect sync with Logan and Elijah. The heat from Timothy's bullet seemed to ripple the air as it zipped over her head.



Connor roared and stumbled back, releasing Andrew and letting him slump to the ground. Terror blazed from his small eyes like a beacon. Frozen, she couldn't look away.

*"Move, Kimberlyn, move! Get Andrew and run..."*

As if in slow motion, events unfolded around her. Bears were flung backward; others fell amid the gunfire. Screams and blood erupted from them in a symphony of violence so alien to her, so wrong, so *wrong*...

Logan threw his gun down and ran to meet a bear as huge as the fallen Connor. He ran with a yell of rage, in his hand a curved knife half as long as he. As Kimberlyn watched, Logan flew through air thick with droplets of scarlet, spun, and buried his blade in the big bear's neck. She covered her mouth, retching, as the head separated from the body and rolled away like a gory sphere.

She stumbled, her legs giving out just as a bear reached her. She could only look at him stupidly, unable to form a thought coherent enough to allow her to lift her gun and shoot him. He reached for her, saliva spraying her face as he roared. She fell backward, the ground coming up to meet her with an unforgiving hardness. She was going to die and couldn't even begin to save herself. She might have screamed; if she did, the sound was ripped from her mouth to join the other screams, and she heard nothing.

Stunned, she watched as the bear jerked, jerked again, and with blood blossoming upon his shaggy fur, fell beside her, dead.

She scrambled backward, away from the dead beast, stones and sharp sticks digging into her palms. She didn't remember standing, but once more on her feet, she spun to find Andrew.

One of the female bears shrieked and ran to a fallen male. She shifted before Kimberlyn's eyes, as fast as a thought. Her face twisted with agony, and she raised her face to the moon, screaming. "No, no, no...Jesse!"

Kimberlyn knew she should go, knew she should save Andrew, but rational thought couldn't make her feet move. She watched the tortured woman hands deep in the open cavity of her mate's chest, and Kimberlyn didn't see enemies. She saw only a woman losing the love of her life.

She saw bears mowed down by automatic gunfire, because they had a master who was power hungry and bloodthirsty. Would the wolf pack have done the same had they been so commanded by Logan? Yes. Yes, they would have.

Slowly, she swiveled her head and started to walk through the carnage, guns forgotten, watching the bloodbath. Life dripped and splattered in dark scarlet upon a thirsty, spongy ground. Death surrounded her, and she walked.

Elijah ran at her and shoved her, hard enough to push her halfway to the fallen Andrew. "Get him and get the fuck out of here," he screamed. "Go, bitch!"

She crawled to him, ignored and lying still on the ground. "Andrew?"

"Hey, sweetheart." His voice was weak, slow, his breathing ragged, but he was warm; he was alive. He was the sane part of this whole killing night, and she clung to him. "Kimber." He tugged her chin to search her eyes. "Haunted eyes already. Oh, baby, I'm sorry."

"Andrew?" It was all she could think to say as she stared into his own swollen eyes.

"Can't shift with the drugs. Get me home, baby." His words were muddled, the sound nearly too soft for her ears to catch.

She came out of her daze finally, and adrenaline shot through her like a surge of electricity. "I have to get you out of here."

She dropped her weapons. Grabbing him under the arms, she dragged him into the trees, away from the battling animals. She stopped and laid him behind a huge rotting log. "I'm sorry. It's the best I can do. You're not dying. You'll be fine here if you keep down and keep quiet."

"Kim?"

She shook her head violently. "I can't. *I can't*. They're calling me, all those wounds, all that pain. I have to fix it. I have to help them." She wasn't aware she was crying until she felt the itch of tears running down her face. I'm a healer. I can't *not* heal."

She didn't dare look into his eyes, dark, tortured eyes that were surely accusing. Jumping to her feet, she shed her clothes and shifted. She welcomed the pain the shift brought, because it was honest pain. It was life.

People milled about, some of them toting guns, some of them naked humans who'd shifted from bear form. So much blood, so many injuries.

She didn't hesitate. She let her power guide her to those she could save, the bear Jesse with his love still by his side.

The female bear stared with a feral gleam in her glassy eyes, her nude body crouched protectively over him. Her sobs were heart wrenching and added eerie, haunting background music to the battlefield.

Kimberlyn sprinted toward her, hearing little but the tragic sound of her anger and grief. From the distance, her wolf's hearing picked up an unbelieving voice calling to her, but she shrugged it off and concentrated on doing what she was born to do.

She crouched over the dying bear and began to lick his wounds. The woman, misunderstanding her intentions, grabbed a heavy, fallen tree limb and landed desperate blows upon her back. Kimberlyn ignored her. Only once, when the pain became distracting, did she turn to snap at the half-crazed woman.

But soon she ceased to hear the woman or feel the blows. Something had happened during the ceremony; she didn't feel physically stronger, but her healing abilities were more powerful than ever. She delved deep within the fallen man, found the injuries that would have killed him in another half hour, and mended them.

When she came to herself, Jesse's eyes were open, his gaze penned to his love, who now cradled his head and stared at Kimberlyn with adoration. "Healer," she whispered, but couldn't continue.

But Kimberlyn had others to heal. They called to her, and she could not resist their pleas. The dead and dying lay in scattered heaps on the forest floor, the ground soaking up the blood like an eager sponge. The wolves emerged victorious, although Kimberlyn saw some of her own lying among the bears. The ceremony had given the wolves an extra edge of strength and speed, and the guns had put them over the top.

Thinking of little but releasing her power into injured bodies, she leaped to the next victim, the man who'd tormented the wolves for such a long, long time. Connor. But to the healer, the wolf, he was just a dying man.

Single-minded in her purpose, at first she didn't feel the cold iron pressed to her skull. She leaned in with her wolf's tongue to begin healing the bears' leader, and the gun pushed hard enough against her head to make her yelp.

“Kimberlyn. Move away.”

She looked up, cringing away from the gun, still crouching over the fallen leader, whose life force rapidly faded. *“I will not move, Logan. I have to heal him.”*

“You will not heal our enemy. He is defeated. Leave him.”

*“I cannot. I am a healer. Not just a healer of wolves.”*

Logan grabbed her by the loose skin around her neck, his grip pinching, hurtful. He flung her away from Connor. “Go home!” he bellowed, furious beyond anything she'd ever seen. “Go!”

She whined, her eyes on the barely breathing bear.

His stare showed his disgust. “Go away, Kimberlyn!”

*“No.”*

He stood, legs apart, guarding his enemy's death. “Elijah. Take her home. Put her in the secure room.”

Elena, covered in blood not her own, joined them. She said nothing, but through the blood mask she wore, a confusing sadness shone.

Kimberlyn got her feet under her and jumped away, determined to escape into the forest. She would give Logan time to cool down; then he'd see her side of things. His anger would burn out in a matter of hours.

But when she twirled around, Elijah was waiting. Without hesitation, and with maybe a little too much enthusiasm, he slammed the butt of his weapon against her skull.

Her legs numbed, her brain went fuzzy, and despite her best efforts, she began the shift back to human. And then she was out.

## Chapter Sixteen

Logan stared after Kimberlyn for long seconds, melancholic. What the hell was he supposed to do now? She'd healed the enemy. She'd left his own people lying while she'd run to Connor's side.

And God help him, he loved her.

He sighed and rubbed his eyes tiredly, shutting out the moans of the injured and the cries of those who mourned the dead.

Connor lay on his back in a puddle of his own blood, the light in his eyes nearly extinguished. He couldn't allow Kimberlyn to save this bear. He'd tormented Logan's people for too long.

He looked once again at Kimberlyn as Elijah scooped her into his arms, and frowned at the way his wolf looked at the naked body in his arms.

"Elijah," he said, his voice soft with warning.

Elijah gave his characteristic shrug. "You hold her and try not to look."

"Take her to Sanctuary."

Elijah hefted her closer to his chest and turned away, stepping over bodies for the walk back to the house.

"Elijah."

Elijah stood still, but didn't turn to look at Logan. "What?"

"Are you sure Andrew is safe?"

"He'll be fine once the drugs are out of his system and he can shift."

Logan nodded, then realized Elijah couldn't see him. "Carry on. Watch them both."

Elena leaned on him, her gaze distant. "You should have taken me, Logan."

“My spirit calls to Andrew, and to her.” He nodded after Elijah, carrying the still form of one of his loves. One of his loves whether he liked it or not.

“My spirit calls to *you*. That has to mean something.” She stared up him with an almost desperate gaze, so unlike her that for a moment, he hesitated. Hope flickered in her eyes.

He pulled away from her. “Help me get our injured cared for. If they get well enough to shift, most of them will heal shortly. It appears that for now we've lost our healer.”

Her face closed. “What do we do with the dead bears?”

“Leave them. Let their own care for the bodies.”

She shrugged, much like Elijah. “And Connor?”

“Leave him to me.”

“He might yet live.”

He shook his head. “He will not live.” He'd see to it.

He allowed himself a brief moment for relief and thankfulness to wash over him. Andrew was alive. They'd won.

Two hours later he trudged toward Sanctuary. He'd lost three wolves, but if this had happened before the ceremony, he would have lost many more. The packs numbers had dwindled over the years, and despite the lost three, the wolves would celebrate their victory tonight.

Sanctuary loomed before him. Dawn broke as he walked, and the gothic-looking house was bathed in soft light and mist. Ivy climbed the walls, and tall trees leaned over the roof in a loving shelter. Wildflowers grew in chaotic order, creating a walkway of sorts to the front door. Sanctuary wasn't just the house, of course, but the land on which it stood, and more. It was his. Theirs. It belonged to the pack, and he would die before he let it fall to thieves like the bears.

Roxie opened the door before he reached it, her face vivid with its various paints, a neatly folded pair of his pants and an old T-shirt in her arms. She smiled widely. “You did it, Logan!”

“We did it, Roxie.” He took the clothes from her and slipped into them, ignoring her searching eyes. She'd only laugh at him if he told her to turn around while he dressed.

“You're hungry, of course. Want I should send up a tray, or will you eat downstairs?”

“Tray. A heavy one.”

She laughed and hurried to do his bidding. He was pretty sure she already had his tray ready, laden with half the pantry. He climbed the stairs to his room, hoping to avoid the others. He needed quiet right now. No questions, no congratulations, no celebrating. He would check on Andrew, eat, sleep. Everything else could wait.

Even her.

She needed to know he was serious. If he went running to her right now, she'd think she had him wrapped around her finger. She might help lead the pack, but *he* would lead *her*.

He walked straight to his bedroom, strong in his intent. He was the leader of this pack. He would not be weak.

But when he opened his bedroom door, one of his weaknesses was lying on his bed. Andrew's perfect body showed not so much as a scratch. He gave a small snore in his sleep, bringing a smile to Logan's lips. He'd told Andrew once that he snored, but of course Andrew told him he was a liar. Soon he'd have to stop hiding his love from the pack. Of course, after the ceremony, they surely knew anyway.

He started at the quiet knock on his door. Might as well begin to let them know right now. He strode to the door and flung it open, ignoring the fluttering in his stomach. Roxie grinned and hefted what appeared to be a tray loaded with at least fifteen pounds of food.

"Heavy, Logan, just like you wanted. Let me in so I can set it down."

He moved aside and ushered her into the room, watching her carefully. Her eyes took in the nude Andrew on his bed, then with scarcely more than an eyebrow raised in appreciation at his masculine beauty, she plopped the tray down on the small table, and brushed her hands on her tight jeans.

"Do you need anything else?"

He narrowed his gaze. "No."

She tilted her head at the look in his eyes, her scarlet lips quirking. "Logan, seriously. We know about you and yon glorious cherub on your bed."

He sniffed and looked away. "I know."

"Really." She grinned and sashayed toward the door, where she turned and put one hand on a jutting hip. "Who could blame either one of you? You're both the most gorgeous men in the

universe.” She paused to bat her weighted-down eyelids. “And if you ever want to add another female to your stable, don't hesitate to ask. I'm sure Kimmy would appreciate the company. Soon as you release her, that is.” She gave a broad wink.

He tried to maintain his dignified distance but couldn't help smiling. “Get out of here so I can eat.”

“You enjoy your...meal.” With one last, lingering look at Andrew, who by now had slid his arms under his head and was watching them both with interest, she slipped through the doorway.

Logan turned his attention to Andrew. The other man hadn't bothered to cover his nakedness when he'd awakened, and under Logan's regard, his cock twitched and began to grow.

Logan leaned over the bed and placed his hand over Andrew's erection, closing his eyes as Andrew's dick continued to harden beneath his palm. He squeezed gently, opening his eyes at Andrew's moan.

Logan's gaze met and held Andrew's, and Andrew gyrated his hips slightly beneath Logan's hand. He slid his hand over the velvety skin and cupped Andrew's firm balls, then moved back up to encircle his long hardness.

“I thought I was going to die.” Andrew's smile was weak and didn't come close to reaching his eyes.

“It's over.”

Andrew shook his head. His face was so tormented Logan couldn't look at him.

“I thought...”

“Don't. It's over. Connor is dead and can't hurt you anymore.”

Andrew drew in a deep, shuddering breath, finally showing a real smile. “You're always saving me, Logan. When Connor kept me penned and starved all those years ago, you saved me then and haven't stopped. I love you. I think it's not possible for me to love you more, but then something else happens and I realize I was wrong.” A crystal tear overflowed his bright eyes and made its slow way down his cheek.



Logan ground his teeth. The bears hadn't done lasting damage to Andrew's body, but they had come damn close to breaking his mind. That was Connor's specialty, fucking with a man's mind. "I'm always going to be here for you, Andrew. When are you going to accept that?"

"I was afraid you wouldn't come this time. There's Kimberlyn..."

"And we both feel her pull. We both need her. But that doesn't mean I'm ever going to stop needing or loving you." He grabbed Andrew's face with both hands, forcing him to meet his gaze. "*Never*. I swear it."

Andrew swallowed and nodded, the confidence Logan had cultivated over the years coming back into his eyes. "I hate that I always have to be reassured."

"Shhh." Logan climbed onto the bed beside him and pulled him into his arms.

He held Andrew tightly, wishing he could take away the pain and memories. Wishing Andrew would understand his worth.

Andrew rubbed his lips lightly across Logan's chest, his tongue wetting the fabric over his nipple. Gently, he tugged the rigid point between his lips, teasing it to further stiffness through Logan's shirt. "Take off your clothes," he whispered. "I want to feel your skin next to mine."

Logan, loath to release him, nonetheless shrugged out of his shirt and kicked off his shoes and pants. Immediately Andrew pulled him back into his arms, his kiss fevered, desperate.

Hot skin to hot skin, chest to chest, fears slowly subsided, and a physical need took over. Andrew became the aggressor, pushing Logan back to explore his hard body. Logan lay back and let Andrew do as he wanted, unable and unwilling to stop him. Andrew needed the release. So did he.

Andrew took his cock in hand and rubbed it against Logan's, his laughter low and pleased when Logan bit off a curse. Logan's engorged erection throbbed with pleasure, and he wanted nothing more than to flip Andrew to his belly and thrust his cock inside his perfect ass.

As though sensing his attention wandered, no matter how briefly, Andrew sank his teeth into Logan's hard abdomen. Immediately soothing the sting away with his tongue, he slid down to taste Logan's straining hardness.

"God, Drew," Logan muttered as Andrew's mouth expertly played him, teasing him nearly to the brink of orgasm before withdrawing.

Andrew squeezed Logan's cock, looking up at him with something a little too serious for Logan's taste. "You always fuck me, Logan, but you never take me in your mouth. And I rarely get to fuck you. Tonight I want that to be different."

He nodded, and Andrew's smile lit up his face. Logan sat up and flipped the younger man to his back and, holding Andrew's cock at the base, took him into his mouth.

"Oh! Fuck..." Andrew pushed himself up on his elbows. Gathering Logan's hair in one hand, he pushed it back as Logan sucked him. "Fuck, Logan..."

Logan felt the thrill of giving Andrew so much pleasure. He picked up the pace, sliding Andrew's cock in and out of his mouth with a perfect rhythm.

Andrew fell back onto the pillow, back arching as Logan took him deep inside his mouth, tongue swirling. "Now, Logan. Let me fuck you now."

Logan released Andrew's dick slowly, reluctantly sliding it from his mouth "Do whatever you want," he said, smiling.

Andrew's eyes glowed as hot as the sun as he took over, urging Logan to his hands and knees. He put his hands on Logan's ass, slapping gently then squeezing with a hard grip before parting Logan's cheeks and positioning his cock at Logan's hole. "Pure ecstasy," he murmured. Just let me..."

His voice trailed off, and Logan felt the bed dip as Andrew rustled in the bedside drawer. He dropped his head between his shoulders, resting his face on his forearms, waiting for Andrew to coat himself with lubricant and slide inside. Eager for it.

"Raise up a little," Andrew whispered. "I want to see your face when I fuck you. Touch yourself."

Logan took himself in his rough palm, his gaze meeting Andrew's in the large mirror across the room. "Do it." He began to caress his cock.

Andrew grasped Logan's hips, then pushed into him, stretching him slowly, carefully. Logan breathed faster, watching as Andrew fucked him. Pain and pleasure battled fiercely as he teetered on the edge of climax, his hand keeping pace with Andrew's thrusts.

Andrew's lips parted, his eyes darkening with pleasure, his groans like music that pushed Logan ever closer to his orgasm.

Andrew shouted, his fingers digging into Logan's hips. "I'm coming. God, I'm coming..."

And Logan, with a groan of his own, came with him.

## Chapter Seventeen

Kimberlyn lay in the bed of her new prison with her fists clenched. She could *feel* Logan and Andrew; their scents teased her nostrils, and the taste of them, cloyingly sweet and musky, melted on her tongue.

Staring at the ceiling, she forced herself to keep her hands atop the sheets. To give in to the temptation of touching herself in response to their lovemaking was more than her pride would allow.

Drawing a deep breath, which didn't help, she threw herself from the bed and paced the room, her bare feet slapping against the cool hardwood floor.

Aloud, she recited favorite verses from Shakespeare, chanted poems from Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and tried to remember all the algebraic formulas from her college days.

It didn't help.

Visions of the two men entwined together on cool white sheets, long hair kissing broad shoulders, and brown hands wrapped around long, hard erections invaded her mind, and she couldn't coax them out.

"God," she screamed, shaking her fist at the door. "Get out of my head!" Her aching, pounding head. Still, that pain was nothing compared with the pain stabbing her heart over her two men loving each other, leaving her in the cold.

There was no peace to be found inside this room. It was as though they were pulling her heart and soul through plaster and wood and leaving her physical body behind. It hurt. Oh God, it hurt.

She ached to end her torment by joining them, at least in spirit, by using her own eager fingers to get off. Stubbornly she resisted, resisted until finally it was over. Breathing hard, she flopped back onto the bed, glad they'd finally climaxed and ended her agony.

For the moment, anyway.

She turned to her stomach and buried her face against her folded arms. “What have you got planned for me, Logan?”

She wasn't afraid, not really. Linked to his mind, she knew he wouldn't kill her. Even when he shielded from her, she knew he wouldn't kill her. She was too valuable, for one thing. A healer, the only one they'd ever met. And besides that...

He loved her. As difficult as that was to understand, she could believe they were meant to be together because she felt the same way he did. In some strange new way, she loved Andrew, and she loved Logan.

Elijah had given her a pot of strong black coffee and a plateful of protein and carbs after she'd shifted. The one thing he had refused to give her was clothes. The room held nothing but a small bed, and in one corner a toilet and chipped sink. When she'd awakened, Elijah had been standing at her bedside, his breathing a little fast, a flush covering his cheeks.

Too fuzzy to care, she'd merely watched him. She could barely open her eyes, and moving was out of the question. Positioned so that her legs were open beneath his heated gaze...thinking about it now made her own breathing speed up.

They'd stared at each other for a few long seconds; then he'd cleared his throat and turned away. Even when he'd given her the coffee and food, their gazes darted, sometimes met, clung for a brief second, then fell away.

“You bastard, you hit me,” she'd whispered once.

He glanced at her. “Just a little tap,” he scoffed. “Be thankful. Logan would've done a lot more.”

“No, he wouldn't have.” She'd swallowed her desire and turned to the wall.

She could lust after Logan's bodyguard all she wanted, but she had a feeling that if she were to give in to her body's desires, there would be hell to pay. Logan hadn't looked pleased when he'd eyed their clasped hands. Still, the chemistry was there. Elijah was a bully and an ass, but for some reason she wanted him.

Mentally, she shrugged. It didn't matter. She couldn't fuck him. She groaned. She couldn't fuck anyone if Logan refused to let her out of here. That thought made her clench her legs together.

Flipping to her back, she slid her fingers down over her stomach to touch her thighs. She parted her legs and with agonizing slowness, ran a fingertip over the smooth lips of her pussy. Refusing to get off when Logan and Andrew had been having sex had only delayed the inevitable. The waiting had made the sensations even more potent, and she closed her eyes as she touched herself.

She slid her fingers between her legs, breath catching at the pleasure of finally allowing herself to give in. And if Logan and Andrew felt her pleasure, well, that was just an added bonus.

It was almost as though they were there, watching her, touching her, loving her. Her men.

She pictured them, strong, hard, nude, twin expressions of desire on gorgeous faces. Logan, the sharp planes of his face and the slight tilt of those dark eyes making him seem slightly alien, exotic. His stare was predatory and dominating, dangerous. She shivered as she thought of him. And Andrew, so gloriously, deliciously seductive. In his vivid gaze lurked a mixture of innocence, pain, and a deep darkness that told her he must not be underestimated. He was as dangerous as Logan.

They'd just have to get used to the fact that if there were people to heal, she was damn sure going to heal them, no matter who they were.

Shaking those thoughts away before she grew angry again, she let herself feel those beautiful men, seeing them the night of the ceremony as they moved together as one, the three of them.

“Oh, boys, boys.”

She rubbed the palm of one hand over her stiff nipples as her other hand stayed between her legs, fingers massaging her sensitive clitoris. The pressure, close to the surface ever since she'd felt Logan and Andrew making love, grew heavier.

When she heard the click of the lock, and the door quietly opened, she kept her eyes screwed closed. The thrill of knowing she was being watched exploded in her like a bomb. “Oh,” she murmured, her fingers working faster and faster. “God, oh...”

She plucked at her nipples, every nerve ending in her body electrified. The only thing that would make the impending orgasm better would be to feel Logan and Andrew's hard cocks plunging into her, deeper and harder and faster...

The weight of her watcher's eyes was nearly a physical thing, and she opened her legs as wide as possible, taking her fingers from her swollen clit to plunge them deep into her pussy, then once again to her clit until her orgasm, nearly painful in its intensity, burst inside her in frenzy of rapturous pleasure. She threw her head back and gave voice to the feelings, gulping in air and finally, lying still, too replete and lazy to so much as close her legs.

But slowly, the realization that she'd masturbated as someone watched her brought goose bumps to her bare skin. Suddenly shy, she couldn't bring herself to open her eyes to see who had shared those moments with her.

She held her breath, then slowly, slowly turned on her side, away from the intruder.

And after a second's hesitation, she heard a sound like a soft sigh, then the tiniest click as the door closed.

\* \* \*

The next time she awakened, most of the day had passed by, and her stomach groaned with ravenous hunger. The small rectangular windows high on the wall showed a weak light, and her room had grown shadowed and dim.

Pulling the sheet around her, she went to the heavy silver-laced door, thumping on it with both fists. She'd awakened confused and frightened of something she couldn't put a finger on, but it was as unsettling as watching a horror film in the dead of night, alone. Despite the fact that she was a stronger than average wolf, things that went bump in the night made her feel like a little girl lost in the woods.

It was too quiet. Not only that, but the day had gone by without her. The other wolves were carrying on, resting from the day of battle, eating, fucking, whatever else they wanted to do, and she was here, forgotten.

The unbending metal of the doorknob was cold to her hands, and when no one came to answer her summons she started beating the wall. "Let me out of here!"

The walls were secure too, as she'd known they would be. Finally she gave up and sat on the bed, staring sightlessly at the floor. She had no choice but to wait.

Sanctuary might be a haven, but it was also quite an able jail. She stood and paced the small room, restless.

When the door finally opened and Elijah stood framed in the doorway, she practically leaped at him. "I've never been so glad to see anyone in my life. I've got to get out of here."

"Sorry. I'm just bringing food and water. Hungry?"

His gaze never once met hers. He looked everywhere but at her. She frowned. "I'm hungry. But I have to get out of here. I can't stand this. I want to go out and run for a while." She hurried on as he started to shake his head. "Come on, you can keep watch on me, make sure I don't try to heal someone who's dying." She knew she sounded bitter, but at that moment, she didn't particularly care.

"Sorry. Can't do it. I have orders to give you food and leave. Logan said he'd be up in an hour."

Now it was her turn to shake her head. "Fucking lackey."

"Bitch."

But neither one of them sounded as though they meant it.

"Can you at least bring me some magazines or a book? A laptop, maybe?"

He walked toward the door, hesitated, then left the room without another word.

She looked after him with regret. Elijah might not have been the best company in the world, but right then she'd have talked to a toad.

She passed the rest of the evening napping and pacing. Once she went to the door and yelled at Elijah, who completely ignored her.

Logan was teaching her a lesson. He was displeased with her and wanted to show her who was boss. As if she didn't know.

Sleep eluded her that night. When she heard the lock click, she figured it was Logan coming to let her out. Too relieved at being released to be angry, she wrapped her sheet around her and stood, ready to bolt out the door.

But it wasn't Logan who stood framed in the doorway, eyes empty and unsmiling.

"Elena? What do you want?"

Elena's face was still, resigned. She brought up a black semiautomatic. "I want you to come with me."



## Chapter Eighteen

Kimberlyn sighed. “For God's sake, do you wolves do anything but shoot people? Where are you taking me?” Despite her flippant words, her heart pounded against her ribs. If she could shift, she could disarm her, but Kimberlyn's shift was anything but swift. Elena would kill her before she so much as dropped her sheet.

Elena glared at her. “I'm sure you realize that if I shoot you with silver, you'll most likely die.”

Kimberlyn stared at the other woman, silent.

“Just letting you know so you won't do anything stupid. I don't want to kill you. But if I have to, I won't hesitate.” She motioned with the gun. “Come on. We don't have much time.”

Kimberlyn hiked her sheet up to her knees. “I need clothes. And shoes.”

“I didn't bring any. You'll have to make do with the sheet. Now come on, before I make your face a little less pretty.”

“*Logan? Andrew?*” She felt no answering response, no feeling in her mind like they were there, listening. The only time she'd really felt either one of them was during times of stress, violence or sex. She wasn't sure how to reach out to them.

“Logan—”

Elena pushed her through the doorway into the darkened hall. “Logan is the one who sent me. He couldn't get rid of you himself because Andrew would have thrown a fit. He doesn't *want* you here.”

In the hallway lurked one of the other wolves, a man whose name Kimberlyn had forgotten. He said not a word, but came eagerly when Elena beckoned him.

“Ready?” she asked.

He nodded.

“Do it right, Freddy.”

“I'll do it perfect, Elena. For you.”

She nodded once, then pushed Kimberlyn ahead with a sharp jab of the gun to her lower back. “Move.”

Kimberlyn's gaze darted. Where the fuck was Elijah? She didn't believe for a minute that Elena was telling the truth. She concentrated so hard her eyes watered, but Elena's mind was closed to her.

She shook it off as Elena hurried her down the long hallway. “How do you expect to get me out of here without anyone seeing us?”

Elena grabbed the back of the sheet. “Hold still.” She then pushed open a door halfway down the hall and motioned Kimberlyn inside. The room was dark as a cave, but Elena knew exactly where she was going. She gripped Kimberlyn's arm in a hard grasp and led her across the room. She pushed at a panel on the wall, and it slid noiselessly open, sending through the scent of mildew and animal droppings.

“There are stairs to go down. Hold to the railing at the side. Don't fall and break your skinny neck.” Elena sounded like she sincerely cared.

She lost her sheet halfway down the steep steps. The stone was cold and smooth beneath her bare feet, and she shivered as Elena urged her deeper into the bowels of a dark, unfamiliar hell.

*“Logan, where are you?”*

“Hurry! We don't have much time.”

“Before what?” Kimberlyn asked. She hadn't really expected an answer and wasn't surprised when none was forthcoming.

At the bottom of the stairs, Elena halted her. “There's a door in front of you. Feel for the knob, then push the door, hard. It's heavy.”

Putting her bare shoulder against the cold door, she shoved as hard as she could, and finally, with a sound like stone scraping stone, it opened.

The vast night sky was dark purple peppered with bits of glitter. Kimberlyn lost some of her fear as she breathed deeply of the bouquet Sanctuary offered, the scents of the night and the sight of the sky giving her courage.

Elena pushed the gun into her side with a cruel thrust. "Run." She pointed toward the closest line of trees. "I have a truck a half mile from here. If you stop, I'll kill you."

Kimberlyn ran, Elena just behind her. With the wind in her face, her blood pumping as her bare feet skimmed the ground, she could barely deny the change. But thoughts of what Elena might do while she writhed helpless and agonized on the forest floor gave her the strength to resist.

"Am I going to die?" she asked, her voice jerking as she ran.

"Not if you do what I say."

Kimberlyn's feet were bruised and cut before they reached Elena's truck, sitting dark and somehow forbidding on the nearly overgrown path.

"Up against the side," Elena said.

Kimberlyn put her back against the side of the truck's bed, flinching away from the cold, rusty metal that scraped her skin.

"Hold still." Elena opened the door and fished around inside for a second before bringing out a pair of handcuffs. "Turn around. Hands behind your back."

The cuffs sank into her wrists with an excruciating pinch when Elena snapped them into place, and Kimberlyn groaned. Fucking silver-plated cuffs.

"Don't want to take a chance with you, do we?" Elena said. She sounded cheerful all of a sudden, like she knew victory was close and her reward was just around the corner.

Elena practically lifted her and tossed her into the truck. The old vinyl seat, ripped in more places than it wasn't, caught at Kimberlyn's skin. She bit her lip to hold back a moan when one of her battered feet scraped against something that felt like a jagged aluminum can on the floorboard.

Elena, looking too fresh to have just run through the woods holding a gun and watching a prisoner, hopped behind the wheel. "Aaaand they're off."

The old truck's shifting gears sounded as painful as Kimberlyn's wrists where they met the silver. She grimaced when she fell back against them, adding to the pain from her scraped feet.

"My feet are killing me."

"Gah! Will you ever toughen up, girl?"

"I'm your leader, Elena."

Elena's only answer was a harsh bark of laughter, its bitterness tainting the air with acid regret.

"Are you going to tell me where we're going?"

"We're going to the bears."

"The bears. Why the hell would you take me to the bears?"

"They want you. Or should I say, *we* want you." Elena waggled her eyebrows and took her hand off the wheel to squeeze Kimberlyn's breast. Kimberlyn looked down at it, unable to slap it away.

"You want to...you want to have *sex* with me?"

"Oh, I do, sweet thing. I do. But that's hardly why I've taken you."

"You said Logan—"

"Oh, yes, yes. Logan. He just wanted me to kill you, you see. But I have other plans for you." She toyed with Kimberlyn's breast, her fingers pulling the nipple into a stiff peak. "The bears will give me some time with you. We'll put on a show for them. I always did get turned on by fucking in public."

Kimberlyn pushed herself against the door, but Elena's hand simply followed. She pinched Kimberlyn's nipple roughly. "Hold *still*." She traced Kimberlyn's belly, her touch soft, caressing.

"At the ceremony, I could have had such a good time with you. With all of you, but especially with you. I couldn't keep my eyes off your body. Your legs were open for all to see, and all I could think about was taking Logan's place and licking your luscious pussy." She shook her hair out of her face and darted a look at Kimberlyn before dipping a long finger between Kimberlyn's legs.

Kimberlyn shuddered when Elena's fingers slipped between her pussy lips and slid across her clitoris. Elena knew what she was doing, and despite herself, Kimberlyn let her legs fall open a little.

"That's a good girl," Elena whispered and slid her finger over the sensitive bit of skin, slowly, continuing her massage. "Doesn't that feel good?" She swirled a finger at Kimberlyn's opening. "You're so juicy. So wet already. You're such a whore, aren't you?" She pinched Kimberlyn's swollen clit between her finger and thumb. "I'm tempted to pull over and really play with you, but alas, time is short. Once we're safe, I'm going to have so much fun. So much fun." She pinched Kimberlyn's clit faster and faster, until Kimberlyn was gasping for breath and on the very edge of climax. Then she withdrew.

She put her hand back on the wheel and laughed. "Oh, sweetie. That was fun. Now you're all wet and ready for me, and when we get to the bears, I'm going to play with you until you're screaming for me to make you come."

Kimberlyn closed her eyes, disgusted with herself. Her pussy still throbbed, and she nearly rubbed it on the seat to get off. If Elena only knew how close she already was to begging Elena to make her come, she'd really be proud.

Her arms once again began to hurt from the silver cuffs, pulsing a painful beat that spread throughout her body, joined by her bruised feet.

Neither of them spoke for the rest of the ride. Elena clicked on the radio, singing along to upbeat music with a surprisingly good voice. Three songs later, the truck finally ground to a jerky halt, and Elena shut off the engine. The sudden silence was unnerving; there was no sound other than quiet breathing and the clicking of a cooling engine.

Kimberlyn pushed down silver-induced nausea, swallowing weakly.

"Welp, we're here." Elena tossed a look at Kimberlyn. "And just in time, it would seem. That silver hurts like a motherfucker, doesn't it?"

She hopped from her seat and came around to Kimberlyn's door, pulling her from the seat. When Kimberlyn stumbled and fell to the ground, Elena snorted impatiently.

"Get up! We're already late." She prodded Kimberlyn with the ever-present gun until Kimberlyn struggled to her feet.

Pain covered her vision like a hazy curtain, and she could barely concentrate on putting one foot before the other.

“Hang on. I'll have to carry you. We're going up into the caves.”

“The cuffs...”

Elena sighed. “All right. Can I trust you not to try anything?”

*I'm too weak to try anything, you piece of shit.* “Yeah.”

Elena unfastened the cuffs, and as though Kimberlyn weighed no more than a baby, tossed her over her shoulder. She laughed, running her hand up the back of Kimberlyn's thigh to squeeze her bottom. “Hang on, little leader.”

Nausea rose with every step, and Kimberlyn concentrated on pushing it down. Whatever the bears had in mind for her wasn't going to be pleasant. Maybe if she couldn't find her own way out, Logan and Andrew would come. No matter what Elena said, she couldn't believe Logan would do something this horrible. He loved her. He, Andrew, and she were meant to be together. Besides, she knew enough about Logan to trust him, no matter how furious he was.

*You always hurt the ones you love.*

No. Not Logan.

She wouldn't let Elena know she didn't believe her lies, though. Let the bitch think what she wanted. Kimberlyn had a feeling Elena wasn't long for this world anyway. Maybe it was just because she thought she was going to die as well. Being with the bears had never turned out good for the wolves.

Deep inside her, her wolf stirred, growling as the effects of the cuffs lessened the tiniest bit. One way or the other, the blonde-haired beauty was going to die.

## Chapter Nineteen

The trek up the hill to the caves, thrown over Elena's shoulder, gave Kimberlyn a few minutes to lose some of the effects of the silver. When they reached the caves, the huge werebears gathered around to watch as Elena dumped her prize on the cave floor.

The wolves had killed a lot of the bears, but there were at least twenty of them standing over her, staring down with hate-filled gazes.

She sat up slowly, wrapping her arms around her bent knees to cover her nakedness. "What do you want?" She didn't know who was in charge now that Connor was dead, so she passed her gaze from one to the other.

At last they parted, and two people slipped through the circle of bears. A man and a woman. Humans.

The man turned to the bear at his left. "Well, Zeke. Let's get her restrained and wait for the drugs to wear off. If she's really a wolf, I want to see her shift. I'm not paying fifty thou for a pretty girl."

Fifty thousand dollars? The bears were selling her to humans? And scariest of all, shifters had let the humans come into the world of the weres. They'd given up the secret.

"It's not drugs, Anderson. It's silver. I told you we wouldn't drug the bitch." Zeke's voice was as rough as tree bark, and scraped over her nerve endings like barbwire.

The human woman knelt down beside Kimberlyn. "Hey, puppy. Can you talk?" Her voice was soft and not unkind.

Kimberlyn snarled at her. "Of course I can talk, idiot. What the fuck is going on here? Why have I been brought to this place?" She stared past the woman at the hideous bears. "And what are *those* things? Is it Halloween?" It wouldn't work; of course it wouldn't. But she had to try.

The bears growled, and the woman shot to her feet, turning on Zeke. "You bastard! She's just a girl!"

“What is this, Zeke? You promised us a wolf. If you're trying to fuck with me, you'll regret it. Our deal is off.” The man called Anderson was either stupid or courageous. The bears could kill the humans with a small swipe of those huge claws.

Maybe he was just that stupid.

Zeke narrowed his eyes. “Don't threaten me, human. I can kill you where you stand and fuck your woman until she loses her mind. And then I will give her to my bears.”

The woman gasped and backed up against her male human, who held up a consoling hand. “Now, now, Zeke. I'm sure we can work this out. I want the wolves; you want to be richer than God, yes?”

“Fucking right.”

“And I've agreed that as long as you bring me the other weres, the bears will be left alone. After all, I need you as much as you need me. But this girl, Zeke, this girl...surely you can't mean to tell me she's a...werewolf?”

“She's fucking with you, Anderson. The girl is right; you're idiots.”

“Now just a minute, Zeke—”

Zeke waved a huge, hairy hand. “The bitch is fucking with you. She's a wolf. And a special wolf. This girl can heal wounds that would otherwise kill. I've seen her do it.”

“So you said, so you said.” Anderson bent over, his gaze on Kimberlyn. “Girl, can you do as he says? Can you heal?” he straightened back up when Kimberlyn remained silent. “Because if she can really heal—not that I'm calling you a liar—” he hastened to add, “but if she really can heal, hell, imagine what that'd mean to us.”

“She can't heal humans,” Elena said, speaking for the first time. “She can only heal animals.” Her eyes were filled with contempt, leaving no question as to what she thought of the humans and their ignorance.

The woman studied Elena for a long moment. “Why don't you just give us *this* one?” she asked Zeke. “She's a wolf, right?”

“Sandra,” Anderson said, patting her shoulder. “You know our deal. Elena belongs to Zeke.”

What the hell was going on here? Elena was Zeke's woman?



Kimberlyn took in a deep breath. "How could you do this to your own pack?"

Elena met her eyes with not the slightest guilt or shame. "Zeke treats me right. I'm going to lead by his side. I wasn't born a follower." She walked to the bear and in front of everyone, reached out to fondle his enormous, hanging penis. "And we are going to be so fucking rich." She grinned, teeth gleaming in the torchlight.

Zeke grinned back at her, thrusting his lengthening erection into her hands. "*You're* fucking perfect, little wolf," he growled.

The humans looked slightly embarrassed but stared at the interaction with fascination. "Pardon me," Sandra said, her gaze on Zeke's cock, "but how does she...uh...you know..."

Zeke's smile was pleased, and he pushed his pelvis toward Sandra. "Wanna find out? I've never fucked a human while shifted."

"That's because you'd kill a human, lover," Elena said, pulling his attention to her. She threw a dark look at Sandra.

Kimberlyn shifted her weight, the effects of the silver beginning to wear off but the hard dampness of the cave floor seeping into her unprotected skin. It appeared that they'd forgotten her for the moment, and she took the opportunity to study the bears.

One of the bears hadn't forgotten her, however, and she met his eyes with a frown. He was familiar, somehow. The she saw the bear at his side, Jesse, the bear whose life she'd saved. He and his woman both pinned her with their gazes, and neither of them looked happy.

Slowly, Jesse winked at her. She could taste the relief, it was so strong. These bears would help her. If the chance came, they'd take it. There was hope after all.

Zeke pulled her from her relief when he reached down and hauled her to her feet. "For now, she's ours. Fifty thousand won't be enough now that you know she can heal. I want a million for her."

The bears gasped, and Anderson put his hands on his hips. "I can't do a million, Zeke. And we already had a fucking deal."

"I'm just upping the price. The merchandise just became more valuable. You'll get a lot more than that for her."

"She can't heal humans," Sandra put in. "She's not worth that much to us or anybody else."

“If you sell the shifters to the military, they are going to need someone to heal their soldiers. One million. Take it or leave it.”

As he talked, Zeke turned Kimberlyn around so that her back was against his chest. Still aroused, he lifted her several feet into the air and thrust his cock between her thighs. His slick, slightly bumpy organ rubbed over her sensitive spots, and she bit off a groan of disgust.

Elena smiled. “Like I said, chickie, we're going to have fun.”

Kimberlyn rammed her head backward, hoping to hear the crunch of bone beneath her skull. Zeke's mocking laughter bounced off the walls of the cave, his pelvis thrusting enthusiastically against her. His punishing grip on her arms was as strong and unyielding as an iron band.

The humans watched closely, but the bears backed away. Elena clapped her hands, smiling gleefully. “She's going to change.”

The woman called Sandra ducked behind Anderson, her eyes shiny with excitement, lips parted to show small white teeth. Her gaze darted from Zeke's huge cock to Kimberlyn's face.

Kimberlyn closed her eyes to shut them all out. If she didn't force herself calm, she would give them exactly what they wanted. The constant friction as he rubbed against her, trying to push her over the edge, burned like poison. The humiliation burned more. Her hatred grew, embracing her anger. She opened her eyes, ice filling her veins, burying animal instincts beneath the mountain of cold human fury.

*I will not shift. Not yet.*

Elena's laughter rang out, a clear bell in all the ugliness. “You'd like a couple shifters for toys, wouldn't you, Sandra? Take them home, keep them penned up until you wanted to play? And people think I'm perverted!”

Sandra's face went from pale to red quickly, her gaze darting.

“Change, damn you,” Zeke roared.

Elena put a calming hand on the pelt covering his arm. “Don't worry, love. When you and I both work her over, she'll shift. I had myself a little preview in the truck and I am eager to get her all hot and bothered.”

Kimberlyn could hear Zeke's smile in his voice. "Oh, I look forward to being part of that, princess."

Anderson cleared his throat. "So you won't hurt her...or kill her, like you would a human?" His eyes darted to her breasts, then between her legs.

Sandra nudged him. "We could maybe keep her for a little while, honey. Time away from this barbaric life would be good for her."

He looked over his shoulder at her, their eyes meeting in a silent communication. Kimberlyn shuddered, not sure if she wasn't safer with the bears.

At last, Zeke withdrew his dick and let her slide down his body. He shoved her to Elena. "Later, Anderson, you and your woman can watch us play with this one. Right before you buy her."

"Only if she shifts," Anderson said, but his voice didn't sound quite as determined as it had earlier.

"Oh, she'll shift," Elena purred, sliding a hand around Kimberlyn's belly. "She'll shift."

Zeke watched for a moment, then yelled, "Gregory. Ison. Take her to the cell and get her locked in."

Gregory and Ison were somehow larger and more forbidding than Zeke. They walked toward her with identical expressions of cold dislike, and she could have sworn she felt the cave floor move with their heavy steps.

"I wouldn't antagonize them, Kimberlyn. No matter how strong you are, they are so very much stronger. And they hate you. Connor was their friend, and you let him die." Elena smiled, satisfied.

"But I didn't let him—"

"Sure you did," Elena interrupted, her voice smooth. "I saw it myself. The bears repulsed you, and you refused to heal them."

Kimberlyn darted a glance at Jesse and his woman, and they both eyed her with shame, fear, and sorrow. She understood. If they wanted to live, they'd keep what they knew to themselves.

## Chapter Twenty

She didn't struggle when they took her to the cell, but they dragged her along as if she resisted. The two men wanted to hurt her, whether she gave them a reason to or not.

They tossed her into a large, dark room lit with only one flickering torch. She refused to give them the satisfaction of hearing her cry out. When her elbow cracked on the hard cave floor, she forced herself to keep quiet. It would heal. She was more concerned with the fact that Elena and Zeke were determined to make her shift. There were no drugs in her system, no silver to control the shift. If she got afraid enough, or otherwise mentally weakened enough, she would change. If she did, what then? What would they do to her? Because as a wolf, she'd fight. She'd fight hard.

Gregory and Ison locked her wrists into cuffs set into the wall. Her legs were pulled apart, ankles set into matching cuffs at floor level. Helpless and spread-eagle in an upright position, she waited.

If the two guards left the room, she'd shift and easily slip out of the irons. She might not make it past the other bears, but she'd give it a try.

But the guards didn't leave the room. They stood against a wall, feet spread, arms crossed, eyes blank.

Not once had they touched her or looked at her in a sexual way, though they'd had their hands on her nude body and she was now restrained and helpless before them. They could have done anything they wanted to her but didn't.

She had only to wait ten minutes before the humans and Zeke, holding Elena around the waist, walked into the room.

"She's addicted to sex," Elena was saying. "It's the way she bound with Logan and Andrew. You can just look at her and see that sex is her drug."

All eyes turned to her, and she stared at the wall. Shit. Sex *was* her weakness. Her body betrayed her with little more than a single touch. Especially now, after the ceremony, the need seemed to only grow stronger. But Logan and Andrew weren't here to feed her need.

She closed her eyes. Others *were* here, though, and despite herself, her heartbeat sped up at the thought.

Dammit. Think of Logan and Andrew. They'd come to her if she could lead them.

Elena sniffed the air, her eyes gleaming.

"She smells of need and sex." She slid her hand over Zeke's penis, and it stiffened and began to rise under her touch.

Kimberlyn glanced at Sandra and Anderson, both of whom stared with glittering eyes and parted lips. She scented the air, thick with the smell of desire.

"Make her shift, then," Anderson said, his voice hoarse. His hand went to the front of his pants, but after a guilty glance around, he quickly scratched his silk-covered belly instead.

"Seriously," Elena said, her voice hard. "Shifting is really the last thing on your mind right now, isn't it, Anderson? You want to see us fuck like the animals we are. You want to fuck us, too, don't you?" She released Zeke's penis and pulled her shirt over her head, her breasts bouncing.

"God, no!" Anderson said, but his eyes were on her breasts.

Elena walked to him, kicking her shoes off as she went. Before she reached him, she was naked. She grabbed his hand and held it to her breast. "Oh, human, I think you do."

"Now wait a minute," he said, but his voice was weak. He glanced at Sandra.

Elena turned her attention to the woman. "Bet she wants to have her night of depravity even more than you do, handsome. I can smell her. Take off your clothes, both of you."

They exchanged long looks before doing exactly as Elena had ordered, their hands fumbling in their haste.

"Ison, light the torches," Zeke said. "All of them."

Kimberlyn frowned. What did the bears hope to gain from this little display? They wouldn't lower themselves to please the humans unless there was something in it for them. But what?

And just that quickly, she knew.

Magic began to swirl as thick as smoke from the torches as the bears prepared to have their own little ceremony. The humans would be forever bound to Zeke and his bears, and the bears would control them.

How the fuck did she know this? And then she looked at Elena. She knew because Elena knew. Elena was her wolf, as tied to her as the humans would be to the bears.

Elena sauntered closer to Kimberlyn, her eyes gleaming bits of glass. She parted her legs and ran her hands over her smooth belly. Grasping her own pussy lips, she pulled them open, exposing the hidden red fruit within.

From the look of things, Kimberlyn knew she would likely overdose on magic and sex this night. Drowning, she closed her eyes and reached desperately for Logan and Andrew. Because if she was a participant of the ceremony, she would be as linked to the bears as she was to the wolves.

She shuddered. Death would be better.

Elena thrust a hand between Kimberlyn's legs as Zeke stalked toward them, and began to massage Kimberlyn's flesh with one fevered hand, masturbating herself with the other.

The magic swirled around her, and familiar heat spread through Kimberlyn's body as Elena rubbed her clitoris, and whatever resolve she held began to fade, burning off like fog in the morning sun. She craved that touch, that orgasm. Need, pure need, exploded inside her.

The other bears drifted into the room, drawn by sex and magic. Kimberlyn searched but couldn't find Jesse and his woman. She let her head fall back against the wall. They'd been her only hope.

Breathing fast, she tried to think of something else, *anything* else, but Elena's long fingers worked between her legs, spreading a fire of desire through her body.

"Oh my God," Sandra murmured, walking close.

Zeke motioned to Anderson, whose erection looked almost painfully hard, the purpling head bobbing as he hurried toward Zeke.

"Fuck her," Zeke said, pointing at Elena, "while I take care of *your* woman."

"You'll kill her," Anderson said, but his eyes darted to Elena.

“I’ll be careful,” Zeke promised. “You two are special to us.” He grabbed Sandra and flipped her around. “Bend over and put your hands on the floor. Now!” he said, when she hesitated. She did as he demanded, crying out when he grabbed her ass, parted it, and rubbed his cock between her legs.

Kimberlyn watched, watched as Elena thrust a finger inside her, watched as the orgasm she so desperately held back threatened to explode within her.

*“Logan, help me!”*

But part of her was afraid there was nothing to help her now.

*Don't give up! You're stronger than your body. Think of Logan. Think of Andrew. Think...of love.*

But thinking of her two men did nothing to douse the flames, only fanned them further.

She opened her mouth and screamed. “Logan! Oh God, *Logan!*”

And she did the only thing left for her to do.

She shifted.

## Chapter Twenty-one

Logan jerked his head up and sniffed the warm night air. He stopped running, and Andrew stopped beside him, tilting his head. Then he, too, scented the air, and they both waited, heads low, hackles raised. Bears were coming.

They burst from the trees, two bears, a male and a female. Pausing at the sight of the wolves, the bears stared with small, dark eyes.

Logan growled deep in his chest, and bunching his legs under him, leaped. Andrew followed at his heels.

But in midair, even with murder in his heart, Logan noticed the bears were doing something so outlandish that he came down to earth with splayed legs and an embarrassing bark of pain.

The bears, rather than attacking, were shifting to human form. Wolves could tear a human apart in less than five seconds.

What were they doing?

The bears shifted in less time than it took a wolf to shift, and the male spoke, eyes calm but with a determined set to his jaw. "Please. My name is Jesse. We know where the healer is, and if you don't come soon, she may not survive."

Logan's shift seemed agonizingly slow, though in fact it was not. But he could barely contain himself from speaking until he was finished. "Where is she?"

"We'll take you there. She saved my life. I won't repay that by watching my new leader sell her to humans."

"What?" Logan was sure he'd heard the man wrong. "*Humans?*"



Jesse's nod was grim. "Zeke fought Grant to be leader after Connor's death. He's leader now. But he brought in two humans. He's agreed to sell shifters to the humans. In exchange, the humans will leave the bears alone. And he'll be rich."

Logan laugh was a bark of disbelief. "Can he be that stupid?"

"Yes. And that greedy. He's handing us all a death sentence, but half the bears want to believe, and half of us...don't know what to do."

He looked at Logan, warning in his eyes. "He thinks you all will be destroyed with the help he gains from the humans."

"If they find out about us, we'll be hunted and destroyed, that's true, but he'll be one of the first to go. Dumb bastard."

"The healer gave me back my life." He looked at the woman. "And my lady." Once more he glanced at Logan. "Do you want to gather your pack? If ever there was a time guns were needed, that time is now."

Logan smiled, and the girl watching him noticeably shivered. "Just show us the way," he said, and without another word the three of them began to change.

He ran after the bears, Andrew at his side. The ground was but a blur beneath his feet, and he cut through the air like a knife. A vision of Kimberlyn's sweet face and mysterious eyes stayed in his mind, urging him ever onward. It did nothing to calm him, however. He was thirsty for blood, and this night he would drink, drink as if he would die if he didn't feel hot blood spurting down his throat. He would make them wish they'd never taken what was his.

The rage usually carefully stamped down and hidden from view had surfaced, and he let it come, gladly, arms open to receive it. When the rage took over, there was no Logan, only death. There was no control, only the red, red haze of blood across his vision. But he'd had as much as he could take. He embraced the demon inside him, whispered to it, coaxed it, loved it.

*"Kimberlyn, Kimberlyn...let me in..."*

And suddenly she was there. She flew into his mind as though sucked into a vacuum, *"Logan!"*

*"Baby, hold on. I'm coming. I'm coming."*

"God! Oh, God!" Her screams hurt his head, shattered his heart, and added a black consuming fear to the scarlet rage.

What the fuck were they doing to her? He felt it, the sex and agony, felt it as surely as she did, and it was all he could do to keep from screaming along with her. She had shifted. She'd shifted and they...what were they doing?

The wolf raced on, barely feeling the ground beneath his paws, the long claws clipping the ground before he exploded into the air, shooting past the startled bears. He needed their guidance no more; she would guide him.

The string that tethered him to her jerked him into the caves, fast even for a wolf. The first room was empty, but he knew where she was. Knew where *they* were. And they were about to die.

When he burst into the room, he hit them like a bomb. This, then, was the power she'd given him. He would have laughed with maniacal glee had he been in human form. The bears had no chance. He simply destroyed them. The power had him in its greedy grip; he felt sure he could merely have looked at them and they would have burst into a thousand pieces of blood, bone, and gristle. But no, he wanted to feel his body hitting theirs, wanted to feel his teeth sinking into tough flesh, his claws piercing and tearing and ripping...

Held tight in the sure hand of his power and rage, he was barely aware when Andrew joined him and Jesse and his girl turned on their own to aid the wolves in this battle for life.

Once, he caught sight of Ford, ragged old fur shining with new life as he fought for the first time in years by his leader's side. Three other wolves flashed by, and he wasn't surprised. As soon as he'd known where he was going, they'd known as well.

He clawed his way to Kimberlyn's side, his beautiful wolf, shifted and suffering. She howled, and in her voice he heard echoes of his own rage. The bears holding her could contain her no longer. Once he'd hit the room, she'd gained his power, and she shook them off as if they were little more than droplets of rain.

Andrew barreled past him, and the three of them swirled in a vengeful dance, destroying anything in their way.

Jesse and his girl slipped out the door.

Logan watched them go, identified them as friends, and promptly forgot about them. The bears were fighting their best, but they were babes against the monsters. Those who realized it and tried to run were brought down with little thought or trouble.

Kimberlyn had backed the humans and a bear Logan recognized as Zeke against the cave wall and appeared to be toying with them. She stalked them, and even as huge as Zeke was, he cowered before her.

*Motherfucker, you should be afraid.*

The bears fell before the wolves and the magic, and all that remained were Zeke and the two humans.

"Healer, please," Zeke pleaded, hairy hands held before him, an ineffectual shield against her. "You don't kill; you *heal*."

Her eyes gleamed as she stalked him, her movements mesmerizing, danger surrounding her beautiful white coat like a visible aura. Logan wanted her more than he'd ever wanted anything in his life.

Andrew started past him with an eager pant, but Logan nosed him back. This was the healer's kill. They would not take it from her.

The humans melted to the floor, the woman in a dead faint, the man vomiting on his feet. "Let us go," he moaned. "We won't tell."

Logan's rage cooled, and he cajoled it back inside him. He'd never been so strong.

Kimberlyn grew bored with Zeke's wheedling and leaped at his throat. She sank her long white fangs into his neck and shook her head almost playfully. His neck snapping was like the sound of a slender tree breaking, and it was over.

She didn't come down slowly or carefully as Logan had done, as Andrew had done. One minute she had her mouth against Zeke's body as his lifeblood poured from him, and the next she fell to the ground, shifting.

Logan loped to Kimberlyn, limping slightly as a torn paw took its time healing. His bones popped as he shifted, a short-lived pain as familiar and natural as breathing. Stones dug into his knees nearly unnoticed as he watched Kimberlyn's still-agonized shift. "Come on, baby. I need to hold you."

She fell into his open arms with a cry, sobbing against his chest.

"It's over, Kimberlyn. You're safe."

She shook her head, her voice muffled against his skin. "They had me, Logan. Zeke and the bears held me, and he...and I was shifted..."

Helpless, he clenched his jaw. "It's over. He's dead. The bears are dead. You're safe."

"I'm a terrible person, Logan. I...Elena...I couldn't control the feelings. But with Zeke—" She retched, digging her fingers into his chest.

"You are to blame for nothing, Kimberlyn." Rising, he pulled her with him and lifted her into his arms. "I'll take you home, home to Sanctuary. You will heal."

Ford darted in to slide his nose against her leg, then sat beside the only wounded wolf from the fight.

"Go back to Sanctuary, Ford. He's not dying. Call Jericha. Kimberlyn could use her too."

The wounded wolf struggled to his feet and followed Ford from the caves. All the wolves would be a little ragged for a while. Jericha could check them over.

"You didn't believe the lies, did you? You didn't think I'd actually tried to run? And oh, what about Elijah? Logan, is Elijah alive?"

He smoothed her hair, carrying her toward the exit as Andrew trotted behind, still in wolf form. "Elijah will be okay."

She gasped. "I forgot about Elena! Where did she go? Is she dead?"

"I don't think so."

"She's the one who took me, Logan. She's the one who—"

"I know, Kimberlyn. The wolf who aided Elena told us everything before we killed him. We just didn't know where they held you."

"How did you find me?"

"We felt you when you were...distressed. You called for me."

"I *screamed* for you." She sniffed once, loudly, then struggled in his arms. "Let me down, Logan. I can walk."

"I'm carrying you."

She smiled into his eyes, then put her lips against his gently. "I...thank you."

"I love you, wolf." He leaned his forehead against hers and held her to him.

"What about me? Do I get some of that gratitude?" Andrew walked beside them, beautiful in his nakedness, looking too innocent for someone who'd just slaughtered a cave of werebears. He held his arms open and grinned.

Kimberlyn laughed, though Logan had been afraid she might never again, and he let her slide down his body. She jumped into Andrew's arms, and he watched them with a tired smile. There was no jealousy, only a momentary pang that he no longer held her, and the desire to hold them both.

He still had the smile on his face when a shot rent the air and Kimberlyn jerked, blood appearing like a blossoming red flower on her lower back.

Too stunned to move, he stood glued to the ground in shock. His heart turned to stone and dropped into his stomach to lie there, dead.

The gun fired again, and another hole joined the first. Andrew's screams sounded muffled, distant. Logan's feet weighed a thousand pounds, his legs frozen, useless sticks of flesh. But then he was moving, running through thick, sucking tar.

Kimberlyn lay on the ground, arms thrown over her head, with Andrew's body hunched over her.

"Oh God, she's dead, Logan! She's dead!"

## Chapter Twenty-two

Logan ran faster than he'd ever run in his life, with the dying Kimberlyn held against his chest. She wasn't dead. She couldn't be dead...

Andrew had flown after Elena as her mocking laughter echoed through the forest, but Logan barely gave her a thought. *Please don't die. You can't leave us now.*

Jericha would be well on her way from the city by the time he got Kimberlyn to Sanctuary. If he could have shifted, he could have made the trip so much faster, but he couldn't shift and carry her at the same time.

An eternity later he was met by a battered-looking Elijah. Elijah ran beside him, worried glances going to Kimberlyn's still form. "Is she...?"

"She's alive. Silver bullets. Jericha?"

"She'll be here in fifteen minutes." Again he glanced at Kimberlyn. "Let me carry her."

"No."

Elijah didn't ask again, but when they ran into one of the lower level bedrooms and Logan placed her gently upon the bed, Elijah knelt down on the floor and took one of her white hands in his. "Where's Andrew?"

"Getting Elena." Logan sat on the bed beside her and brushed her hair back from her face, marble-cold and pale against the red pillowcase.

Wolves drifted into the room and stood in silent watchfulness against the walls, waiting. Everyone seemed to feel the heavy weight of the healer's delicate link to life.

Roxie tiptoed to the bedside and stood wringing her hands, tears turning the paint on her face into a running, sticky mess.

"Logan," she whispered, "is she going to be all right?"

“Yes.” He refused to think any other way. Of course she'd be all right. “She just needs to awaken and heal herself.”

Roxie squinted her eyes and blinked. “She can't heal herself, Logan. She told me so.”

He shot to his feet and grabbed Roxie by her skinny upper arms. “What?”

“She can't heal herself.”

He groaned and thumped his forehead with the heel of his hand. How could he have been so stupid? “Somebody get that fucking doctor!”

Roxie backed away quickly, as though afraid of being so close to such anger and fear. “Jericha's coming. It'll be okay, Logan.”

He'd never felt so helpless in his life. Kimberlyn was so still, so waxy pale, the spark that made her the animated, beautiful woman she was fading fast. She was cold, so cold.

Stumbling to the chest at the foot of the bed, he grabbed a warm quilt, tucking it carefully around her dirty, nude body. “Wake up, Kimberlyn. Wake up.”

He turned as Andrew stumbled into the room, blood spattered and grimy. The younger man didn't hesitate, just flung himself into Logan's arms, his entire body shaking. “Elena's dead.”

Logan squeezed his body, wondering how his love had suddenly become so thin. “Thank you.”

Andrew shook his head. “Any change?”

“No.” He motioned to Roxie.

She pulled Andrew away gently. “Come on, baby. Let Roxie get you some food. Come on, now.”

Logan gave him a small push. “Go on. You need to eat.”

Andrew leaned down to kiss Kimberlyn's forehead, then straightened to kiss Logan's cheek. Neither one of them cared who was watching. “I'll bring you back a sandwich.”

Logan nodded, too tired to argue. Besides, he needed food or he was going to fall over soon. “Where is that fucking doctor?”

“I'm here,” Jericha called and swept into the room. “Let me see her. *Move*, Logan. I need some room to work. Okay, clear the room. It's too hot and close in here. Open a window, Elijah,

for God's sake, and stop mooning over my patient. That's not going to do any good. Pull that table over here, Logan.”

Relief hit Logan, and he felt it to his toes. Jericha was magic herself. She was spectacular. She'd heal his Kimberlyn wolf.

“You will, won't you?” he asked, forgetting that he hadn't even spoken aloud.

But she gave him a level stare and replied, “I'll do better than my best, Logan. Now go away. I don't need you hovering. Sherice! Over here, help me turn her. Careful!” She eyed the wounds, uncharacteristically silent for a moment. Then, “She should be dead already; she's been shot full of silver. How is this wolf still alive?” She frowned, then prodded the wounds, fascinated.

Elijah growled. “Just fix her, woman!”

Jericha pursed her mouth. “Get out of here, Elijah Berry, before I take a scalpel to your ass. Out! All of you! Send in Cord and Corliss to help. The rest of you, get the fuck out. Logan, that means you too. I'll send word when I have something to send.”

Cord and Corliss glided into the room, twin swans the good doctor had taken in when they were orphaned at the age of ten. All the wolves stared as they filed from the room. The twins were everything swans should be and more. Delicate, beautiful, graceful. White hair to their hips, even on the male, and downy skin with a hint of pink. Huge, sad, liquid brown eyes.

“She'll live, Jericha? Tell me she'll live.” Logan's voice was hoarse.

Jericha shook her head. “Logan. I'll try. I can't promise anything.”

“But she's special. We need her...”

“And that, more than anything, will give her a chance. Now be silent if you won't leave, and let me tend her.”

\* \* \*

Kimberlyn floated, smiling, on a bed of cotton. Euphoric, she stretched, then grabbed handfuls of the airy fiber and rubbed it into her skin. This feeling was alien to her, surely alien to everybody. There were no words for how she felt, for the happiness and well-being in which she was cuddled, the beauty and bounty surrounding her, for the complete and utter peace she felt inside.



This, then, was heaven.

But they called to her, her wolves, her men. The voices penetrated, and her heaven was not as peaceful. They needed her, and she needed them; it was not her time.

But she'd discovered something on her journey into the beautiful abyss. She could heal herself. If she wanted, she could heal the world. The knowledge floated with her like letters in an alphabet soup, and she greedily slurped up the words, absorbing everything she needed to know. Of course, she kept thinking. Of course! How could I not have known this?

She was healer. She would heal.

She torpedoed back to her earthly body full of knowledge and wisdom but lacking something she'd carried with her for most of her life. The guilt was gone. The confusion was gone.

She was healer. Her body was clean, her mind was sharp, and her heart was pure.

Flung back into Sanctuary, she sighed as she left one haven for the other. Back into Logan's arms. Back into Andrew's arms. And soon, though only she knew it, to Elijah's arms and the arms of one other who had yet to arrive. Maybe she would forget when she awoke, but for now, all that mattered was that she accepted. She wrapped her arms around herself and smiled. She was ready.

She drew in a deep, gasping breath as her soul reentered her body, her eyes flying open with something close to horror. If she'd had breath for it, she might have screamed at the shock, but then Logan was there, his eyes worried, face lined with exhaustion and torment.

"Baby," he said. "Baby?"

Andrew joined him, face a little more peaceful, eyes hopeful.

She smiled and held out her arms.

She was home.

## Chapter Twenty-three

"You're different," Andrew said to her two weeks later.

Kimberlyn smiled at the ceiling and squeezed his hand. "Yes."

The mattress dipped as Logan turned toward her, his movement slow, ginger. "Why?" he asked, his voice sliding over her sensitive skin like a sweet, cooling breeze. "What happened when you were..."

"Dead?" She ran her free hand down his arm, holding his hand as she held Andrew's. At his shudder, she turned her face toward him to kiss his shoulder.

His swallow was loud in the still, predawn morning. "Yeah."

"It was...indescribable," she told them. "I was shown things." They hadn't talked about it, not really. She'd held the experience to her like a beautiful secret, unwilling at first to speak of something so sacred. The men had babied her these last two weeks, tiptoeing around as though she were a sick old lady, until she really was sick. Sick of being in bed, sick of their refusal to so much as give her a proper kiss.

"What things?" Andrew asked now, gently tugging her hand back into his when she moved it to his sex.

She sighed. "I can heal."

"We know that, darling," Andrew replied.

Logan merely grunted.

"No, I mean, I can heal anyone. I can even heal myself."

They wanted to pat her head and say, "*that's nice, dear.*" She could feel it. She laughed. "I'm not crazy, you two. I can. I'll prove it to you soon enough." She sat up. "Let's have wild, hot sex."

The men looked at each other, then at her. "What?" asked Logan.

“Sex,” she repeated. “S-E-X. You remember what that is, right? Because I think I’ve just about forgotten, seeing as how you two have decided to deprive me for so very, very long.”

“We want you to take time to heal, Kimber.”

“Oh Andrew, come on. I’m fine. I’m better than before. You know that.” She turned to Logan. “*You* know that, right, Logan?” Every day she felt better. She shifted as often as she wanted, and of course, that sped the process. “I’m alive, and I want to *live*. I want to feel you inside me. I want your kisses, your love...”

She jumped up, bouncing on the mattress, tearing open her pajama top. Reveling in their sharply indrawn breaths, their parted lips. Andrew beautiful with his soft smile, Logan with his hard, impenetrable stare, gaze hot enough to singe her skin.

She wanted to tell them how she felt, how full of life she was, how full of peace, but there were no words.

Naked, she lifted her arms and swayed, closing her eyes. One of the men wrapped a hand around her ankle, running his hand so slowly and lightly up her calf that she stopped swaying and held her breath, waiting.

She darted a quick look at Andrew. He smiled as he touched her, and she glanced at Logan. He lounged against the headboard, watching her through narrowed eyes but keeping his hands to himself.

*Damn it. Touch me, Logan.* But she knew him. He’d make her wait. But not for long. Just long enough. She bit her lip and grinned at him. *That’s okay, baby. I enjoy a little anticipation.*

Oh, how she did.

“You’re so thin, Kimber,” Andrew said, his voice low, soft. “Are you sure—”

She dropped to her knees before he was finished speaking, jerking the top of his boxers away from his belly. Wrapping her lips around his erect, hard penis, she slid him into her mouth, hungry for his taste.

“She’s sure,” Logan murmured, a smile in his strained voice.

Andrew was hard satin in her mouth, his thighs hard beneath her palms. She sucked hard, the flavor of him bursting into a million colors of bliss upon her tongue.

“My wolf,” he gasped. “Ease up, ease up...”

But she couldn't, *wouldn't* stop. She craved his release, needed his hot seed filling up her throat, her stomach. She needed his groans and gasps and gratification, for his pleasure was her pleasure.

Logan was suddenly at her back, his hands gripping her bottom as she knelt with her mouth, and her concentration, on Andrew. The skin of Andrew's thighs gave beneath her nails, and his moans of pleasure mingled with his groans of pain.

His fingers were hard in her hair as he gripped her head, and should she have tried to withdraw, he wouldn't have allowed her to do so.

She screamed around the heat of his dick as Logan parted her buttocks, prodding, stroking, massaging. He thrust his fingers into her openings, his touch ruthlessly determined. Holding her still as she squirmed, trying to escape the overpoweringly painful pleasure.

His damp, slick fingers slid over her clit, pinching with a rhythm that had her unable to breathe, unable to think. Andrew, still holding her captive, began thrusting into her lax mouth as she knelt frozen under the onslaught of Logan's unrelenting fingers.

With a sudden movement that made her numb brain fight to protest, he left her, but only briefly. Grasping her cheeks, he plunged into her wet, ready pussy.

It was a thousand, a *million* times more intense than she remembered. Her nerve endings screamed with raw exposure, the force of the pleasure throwing her into chaos. She shrank from the sensations, fighting the pleasure that was overpowering enough to cause madness, surely.

“Stop fighting,” Logan whispered, his low voice scraping over her skin. “Relax, baby.” He leaned over her, his body still thrusting, balls slapping against skin that had become too sensitive. He kissed her sweaty back, his lips as soothing as his cock was demanding.

Her jaw seized, her mouth clamping around Andrew's cock with enough force to wring from him a cry of distress. Or a cry of ecstasy, she wasn't sure which. She didn't care, either.

Logan's huge erection stretched her, filled her, rubbing against the walls of her core with so much friction that a fire of sheer pleasure was unavoidable.

She stopped fighting.

The orgasm started in her pussy, a vast pleasure cramp of throbbing vibrations, then spread to her belly, her legs, and finally, her entire body. There was no part of her left untouched by that joining, no part of her left unpleasured.

Had she the air, she might have screamed, but her breath was snatched away in the moment of sheer bliss. She could only feel.

Andrew's hardness remained in her mouth, and his cries mingled with Logan's as they both came. It was as though their seed met in the middle of her body, creating a line of power inside her that began to throb with a thunderous beat.

And as her body began to calm from that first orgasm, the line of seed inside her exploded.

She wasn't strong enough for this. No one was...

Spasms of energy, white-hot and icy cold, shot through her. Logan's breath blew strong and warm upon her back; his hands, sure and safe, gripped her hips. She concentrated on him, on his body. She forced her mind to Andrew's love, his sweet sex inside her mouth, his hands squeezing her breasts.

Then she let go, trusting her men, herself. Suddenly the pleasure was manageable. Still vast in its amazing power, it bathed her in joy. She did scream, giving voice to the pleasure, and let it take over.

Her sex pulsed and beat like a thousand drums, the music of it calling to her men. Logan groaned and reached to touch her clit, and Andrew slid his hand down her body to touch Logan. A siren song of need, of love, of pleasure, her body called to her men.

And they answered.

When the bed dipped under the weight of a third man, she smiled.

At last he'd come, unable to resist the call of her body, her soul, to his.

It was right.

There was one other, and when it was his time to find them, they would be complete. *Sanctuary* would be complete.

She reached for him, drawing him into their circle of love.

“I'm so glad you're here,” she said, or thought she did. It might have been only a whisper in her mind.

Sighing, she gave herself to her men, her destiny.

Her sanctuary.

THE END

## Cassidy Hunter

Cassidy is a writer of urban fantasy romance and paranormal romance. She lives in Ohio.