



Good girl, bad boys. Going off-path was never this much fun.

Urban Fairytales, Book 2

Yvonne Rousel is having trouble keeping up a brave face. Ezekiel Crawford and Daniel Hunter are her best friends—and she’s about to lose one of them to another woman.

Thanks to a pact between the human residents of Monroeville and the local werewolf pack—brides for protection—Ezekiel has won the right to choose a mate. Yvonne’s doing her best to be happy for him, but fear persists that his marriage could signal the beginning of the end of their charmed friendship. Because once Ezekiel’s preoccupied with his new bride, how long will it be before Daniel, too, drifts away?

Ezekiel and Daniel have no intention of letting their happy threesome come to an unhappy end. Their plan is a little unconventional, a tad kinky, and destined to be a whole lot of fun. Now all they have to do is convince their good-girl girlfriend to take a walk on the big, bad side. And stay one step ahead of a jealous lawman...

Warning: It’s not your grandmother’s fairytale...unless she likes big bad wolves, hot three ways and double penetration.

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The Better to Eat You With

Lena Matthews

Dedication

To Eve Vaughn, my iPod soul mate and my friend.

Chapter One

“She’s not here?”

“She’s here.” Ezekiel Crawford leaned against the wall, bored as hell and twice as annoyed. He could easily think of a million and one different things he’d rather be doing tonight, other than this. But being here, as lame as it was, was necessary if he wanted to claim his mate. And he did. More than anything else in the world.

“How do you know?” asked his best friend and confidant Daniel Hunter, who was braving the throngs of power-hungry mothers and their desperate daughters with him tonight.

“Because I smell her.”

“Really?” Daniel waved his hands around. “Even through all these...”

“Meatcicles?”

“I was going to say people,” Daniel said dryly.

“Sorry. People.” Ezekiel chuckled at his friend’s disgusted tone. He knew it couldn’t be easy for the human man to be friends with a werewolf at times, but that’s what made their friendship fun. For Ezekiel at least. “To answer your question though, yes, I can smell her.” Yvonne’s scent was like no one else’s. A combination of the sweetness that lingered on her from the bakery as well as her own earthy aroma.

“Then where is she?”

“Not in here.” Where she was supposed to be along with all the other single eligible women of town. “So the question, my friend, is why?”

“Bathroom?”

“No. This is no coincidence. She’s been kept from me on purpose.”

“Who would be stupid enough to do that?”

The list was long, but the top offenders were easy to point out. “We can start with granny.” Ezekiel nodded to the front of the room toward an older African-American woman who was doing her best to blend in with the crowd. “Daddy.” This time he gestured to Mayor Tyrone Rousel, Yvonne’s father. “Or Deputy Dawg,” he drawled, staring straight ahead at Sheriff Jasper Phelps, who was watching the two men intently from across the room.

“So many enemies...”

“So few places to bury their bodies.” Just to annoy the sheriff more, Ezekiel winked at him, laughing to himself as Jasper rested his hand on the butt of his gun. His animosity amused Ezekiel in the worst way.

In Jasper's head, they were nemeses, in Ezekiel's, Jasper didn't even warrant a second look. Bored now with the supposed standoff, Ezekiel sighed and crossed his arms. "Can we go home yet?"

"Not without picking a mate first, I'm afraid."

"I've already picked my mate." Years ago, as a matter of fact. He'd just given Yvonne time to come into her own before he made his move.

"They don't know that." Daniel gestured to the crowded room and the preening women who were staring at Ezekiel as if they were the wolves and he was the prey.

Damn. Didn't anyone ever tell them it was the wolf who was supposed to do the chasing, not the other way around? "Then let's make the announcement so I can get her and bail. I'm starving." And horny and anxious to finally make her his. But Ezekiel didn't have to tell Daniel that. His friend knew his heart and mind as if they were his own.

"No, you can't." Daniel sighed in a long-suffering manner. "You know as well as I do there's a protocol to follow."

"Protocol sucks." All Ezekiel wanted to do was get Yvonne and leave. He didn't think he was asking for too much.

"Titty baby."

Ezekiel let out a sharp bark of laughter at his friend's crass comment. There weren't many humans or wolves who would dare speak to him in that way, especially considering he could tear Daniel limb from limb without even breaking a sweat.

"Can't you just enjoy this for a moment? Look around, man. Every woman in this room wants in your bed."

"Lucky me."

"You don't sound like the man who could have his pick..." Daniel smiled, "...pardon the expression, of the litter."

"Funny."

Daniel shook his head in disgust. "Sex appeal is wasted on the jaded."

"Sex appeal." Now that was amusing coming from Daniel. The fair-haired muscular man had been turning down pussy from the moment he hit puberty. "I sincerely doubt they're here because they find me attractive as much as they find what I can offer attractive. If they're chosen, then not only will their bellies increase with an heir to a large dynasty, so will their bank accounts."

Money. It always boiled down to money. Ezekiel didn't consider himself a cynical were by far, but he knew if it wasn't for the monetary compensation, a deal between his pack and the people of Monroeville would have never come about.

Protection for wives. It was the deal that had sealed the fate of everyone involved. Protection for the town against unsavory sorts plus the bonus of financial stability, while the wolves gained the mates who could help them reproduce and keep their species alive.

Mother Nature was a finicky bitch. Although she gifted the wolves with many things, the ability to father daughters wasn't one of them. Their unique werewolf DNA made it impossible, so they had to reproduce with humans to keep their lineage going. It was a deal lucrative for all involved. But it had nothing to do with love, a fact Ezekiel was about to change.

"Don't sell yourself short, my friend," Daniel said.

"I'm not. I'm honest. Half these women hadn't given me so much as a second look until I defeated Lars last month in the pack challenge."

"You have to admit, you winning the challenge was a long shot."

"It wasn't a long shot. I was underestimated." A mistake he was sure his packmates wouldn't make again. A quiet man, Ezekiel preferred to play his cards close to his chest. He didn't talk to hear himself speak, he didn't wrestle to prove he was strong, and he didn't throw down a challenge unless he meant to win. "We're allowed to fight for the right to pick a mate every five years. I couldn't chance Yvonne would still be single in another five."

"You had motivation, all right, my friend. They..." Daniel gestured to the fawning women in the crowd, "...just don't know that it wasn't them."

"They'll know soon enough."

"That they will."

Ezekiel knew he should feel bad since some of the women there may have genuinely been interested in him, but he had a difficult time summoning up the proper guilt. Yvonne was all he cared about.

"Look." Daniel jabbed him lightly with his elbow. "Your father has arrived."

Ezekiel looked over at his father and Alpha, Lehi, as he entered the room followed by several of his packmates, including his older brother Azarel. As if sensing his son's stare, Ezekiel's father glanced over at the two men and gave a small nod. "Looks as if we're finally going to get this party started."

"And yet Yvonne is still unaccounted for." Uncrossing his arms, Ezekiel pushed away from the wall. "This will never do." He didn't damn near kill his packmate to be waylaid now. This was too important. *She* was too important.

"Before you get all riled and furry, let's go look for her. But—and I hate to say this because of how much I have riding on this as well—have you ever considered there's a chance Yvonne's not here because she doesn't want to be here?"

"No. Never." There wasn't a chance in hell of that.

"Cocky much?"

"No. I know my mate."

“Your mate?”

Daniel sent him an annoyed look from the corner of his eyes that made Ezekiel laugh. For someone who didn’t have dual forms, Daniel possessed a very strong beta vibe. Ezekiel was more than sure there had to be a strain of wolf DNA coursing through his friend’s blood. “Mine, yours, ours. Is there a difference?”

“I’m making sure we are on the same page.”

“Maybe not the exact same, but somewhere in the same chapter for sure.”

“Then by all means. Let’s go find her.”

“Yes. Let’s.”

The two men left the main hall and headed toward the back rooms where her scent was stronger. Ezekiel followed her heady aroma to the small kitchen. There they found Yvonne humming to herself as she lined the silver serving tray with cookies from her bakery. She was staring down at the dish and swaying about as she listened to the music blaring out of the small white earbuds connected to her iPod. From the way she continued to arrange the food, Ezekiel knew she hadn’t heard them approach, which was fine with him. He enjoyed watching her while she was unaware.

It was the only time he could freely look at her and not have to worry about guarding his expression. Ezekiel had been told plenty of times by Daniel that everything he felt for her was written all over his face whenever she was about. And Ezekiel believed him. She was his mate, and in a word, Yvonne was perfect.

He’d known her since she was a little girl, but there was nothing kid-like about the woman in front of him now. Gone was the dark-skinned, knobby-kneed tomboy who was constantly into mischief, and in her place was a self-assured, voluptuous woman who made his cock hard whenever he caught a glimpse of her.

The pretty African-American woman was the epitome of beauty in his eyes, and he couldn’t wait until she was finally his.

“What is she humming?” Daniel whispered.

“Somewhere Down the Road’,” he answered without thinking. “Manilow song.” It was one of her favorites, a fact Ezekiel had filed away in his mental rolodex a long time ago.

“And why do you know that?”

There wasn’t much about her he didn’t know. “He’s her favorite singer.”

“Yes, I know, but leave it to you to show me up by being able to name the damn song.”

Ezekiel chuckled at the annoyance in his friend’s tone. Daniel hated being out of the loop, especially if it had anything to do with the woman they both loved. As if suddenly sensing their presence, Yvonne looked up and gasped, dropping the spatula she was holding.

“Oh, my God.” She tore the earbuds from her ears and pressed her hand against her breasts.

The two of them entered the room, coming to a stop when they reached the island where she was working. “Did we scare you?” Ezekiel’s question didn’t warrant an answer, but he asked it all the same.

“You know you did,” she said with a mock frown. “What are you two doing back here?”

“We could ask the same thing of you.” Daniel snagged a cookie from her tray, earning him a smacked hand in the process. “Hey.”

“Keep your grubby paws off of my food.” Her harsh words were softened by the warm look in her big brown eyes. Yvonne was a natural nurturer. He knew for a fact she gave away more cookies than she sold, but making a buck never seemed to be an issue with her. He couldn’t wait to see how she was with their cubs.

“He’s the one with paws, not me.” Daniel popped the cookie in his mouth with a grin, looking not at all remorseful. Not that Ezekiel blamed him. Her delicious treats were worth a smack or two.

“Like I can tell one from the other.” She countered her gruff tone by scooping up a cookie on her spatula and holding it out to Ezekiel. “Here, you might as well take one too.”

“Can’t you?” Ezekiel asked quietly as he took her offering.

She frowned. “Can’t I what?”

“Tell the difference.”

“Of course. He’s the blond human hottie and you’re the brunet wolf hottie.” She tempered her sassy words with a wink that had him grinning. She was one of the few souls who had that effect on him.

“The real question is who’s hotter?” Daniel pulled up a stool and sat down in front of the island.

“I’m not touching that one with a ten-foot pole.” She smiled and shook her head, sending her shoulder-length twist braids bouncing about.

“You never did answer his question.” Ezekiel reminded her, grabbing a stool for himself and sitting.

“Which one?”

“What are you doing back here?” He needed to hear for himself she wasn’t avoiding him or the chance to be his mate.

“My grandmother asked me to help in the kitchen for a bit.”

Ezekiel glanced over at Daniel and smiled. He loved it when he was right, and lucky for him, he was right enough times to make being him fun. “For how long?”

“Until the ceremony started.”

“Is that what she said?”

Yvonne frowned. “Well, no.”

Ezekiel didn’t think so. His attraction to Yvonne was clear to everyone but the woman in question. And her family knew according to the rules laid out centuries ago, Yvonne had to actually be present in the hall in order for him to claim her. “The ceremony is about to start.”

Yvonne arched her brow in her cute and bossy way. “Then shouldn’t you be out there?”

He matched her brow for brow. “Shouldn’t you?”

Before she could comment, Daniel, the peacemaker of the duo, butted in. “Were you even going to come out into the hall?”

“Of course.” She smiled, dropping her haughty act. “You think I’m going to miss the opportunity to meet the woman who finally reins him in?”

“What makes you think you don’t already know her?” Daniel asked.

“Better question,” Ezekiel interrupted before she could answer. “What makes you think it isn’t you?”

For a second, Yvonne’s heart stopped beating, then common sense kicked in. He wouldn’t pick her any more than she’d sprout wings. He was teasing her. As usual. Ezekiel was always doing stuff like that. Both men did, in fact. Sometimes she wondered if either of them drew pleasure from doing anything else.

“Well?” Daniel queried. The handsome blond reached out and brushed his hand against the back of hers.

Her skin tingled, as it normally did when either of them touched her. She was such a goner and they didn’t even know it. “Well what?”

“How do you know he’s not picking you?”

“For one simple reason,” Yvonne teased half-heartedly. “He can’t handle me.”

“Oohhhh,” Daniel instigated, smiling broadly. “Did you hear that, man? She thinks you can’t handle her.”

“Of course I heard her. I’m standing right here.”

And not denying her words at all. Yvonne’s spirits sank. Even though she knew he would never in a million years pick her as his mate, she didn’t necessarily enjoy having the proof of it waved in her face.

In all honesty, Yvonne had dreaded this day for as long as she could remember. The day when some perfect little thing would swoop in and take Ezekiel from her once and for all, and with him, Daniel as well.

“Are you going to tell me who it is?” *So I can learn the name of my new mortal enemy.* “There’s a pool going on, you know.”

“Who are you betting on?” Daniel asked, snagging another cookie. With as much as he ate, she would have thought he would be big as a house. Instead he was as fit as his partner in crime. Ezekiel was far more muscular, but that didn’t mean he was more attractive than Daniel.

In fact both men were finger-licking good and they complemented each other in the best of ways. Where Ezekiel’s hair was dark as oak, Daniel’s was light as wheat. Daniel was clean shaven and Ezekiel had a goatee and mustache. They were opposites, but both gorgeous all the same.

“Well?” Ezekiel prodded. “Who gets your vote?”

“I actually didn’t place a bet.” Yvonne grabbed the plastic wrap and ripped off a good portion to cover the cookies. If she didn’t do something fast, there would be no snacks for anyone after the choosing ceremony.

“Why?”

“Because I’m not sure what your type is. If you even have one. It’s not that you’ve dated anyone. Ever.” Much to her immense delight. Since they started hanging out more than three years ago, she’d had them all to herself, just the way she liked it. “Hell, you could have knocked me over with a feather when I heard you’d won the challenge.”

Ezekiel bristled. “Why, didn’t you think I could fight?”

Despite his werewolf DNA, Ezekiel was still very human, especially when it came to stupid things such as his male pride. “I wasn’t surprised you won.” She placated him with unsuppressed amusement. “I mean, look at you. You’re built like a freaking prizefighter.” And that was putting it lightly. Ezekiel didn’t have a six-pack, he had an eight-pack. Hell, his muscles had muscles. “I was surprised there was someone in your life worth fighting for.”

“Then I guess you don’t know me as well as you think you do.”

“Apparently not.” And that hurt too. There wasn’t any doubt in her mind Daniel and Ezekiel were best friends, but Yvonne had at least thought she was a *good* friend, if not a *best* friend. The least they could have done before they broke her heart was to give her a little warning. “Look at you having secrets.”

“It’s not as if I’m the only one.”

“Excuse me? I know you’re not referring to me.” Her life was an open, boring, sleep-inducing book.

“Oh, but I am.”

“What secret do I have?” Apparently it was such a mystery even she didn’t know about it.

“The one about you and Deputy Dawg dating.”

“Dating?” Yvonne rolled her eyes. *Not even.* She wouldn’t date him if his semen shot out fourteen-carat gold. “I am not seeing Jasper.”

“That’s not what I heard,” Ezekiel said.

“Then you heard wrong. We had coffee. Once.” She grimaced at the reminder of her mistake. One she wouldn’t make again. The African-American man was more in love with himself than any woman could ever be with him. Yes, he was handsome, very, but he was also an ass. And ass trumped handsome any day of the week. “Just once.” In fact, if it wasn’t for her matchmaking grandmother, she wouldn’t have even agreed to have a drink with him. “And trust me, that was enough.”

Her revulsion appeared to amuse them both, especially Ezekiel, who wouldn’t let the matter rest. “And isn’t that a date?”

“No. I have coffee with the women in my book club. That doesn’t mean we’re having a big old daisy-chain gangbang every third Wednesday of the month.”

“Damn.” Daniel snapped his fingers in mock disappointment. “Another fantasy bites the dust.”

“Pervert.”

“Or maybe,” Ezekiel said, not letting up, “you don’t want to admit to me you’re seeing him.”

Now he was being ridiculous. “Why would I lie about it if I were?”

“Because you’re ashamed of your horrible taste in men,” Ezekiel suggested.

That was funny coming from one of the men she was in love with. “I happen to have very good taste in men.”

“Really.” The interest in Daniel’s big blue eyes unnerved her. “Give us an example of someone you fancy, and we’ll let you know whether or not he passes muster.”

“No.” There was no way she was going to say anything to the two of them. It would be way too easy for them to recognize themselves as the men she described.

“Why not?” Ezekiel asked.

“Maybe I don’t want to hurt your feelings.”

“Maybe she only likes black men,” Daniel offered as way of explanation.

“You know that’s not true. I like all men.” Yvonne stole a quick look at Ezekiel, who was staring at her intensely with his golden eyes. They were her favorite feature of his, besides his body, that was, and the only attribute on him that stayed the same no matter what form he was in. “Even the ones who turn furry every now and then.”

“Really?” Ezekiel leaned forward. “You’d date a werewolf?”

Not any werewolf. Just the one sitting across from her now, but she couldn’t say that to him at this moment. Not with him only minutes away from picking a mate. “Sure, why not?” Yvonne tried to be cavalier about the whole thing in hopes of hiding her true emotions. “Why, do you know one who might be interested in me?”

“Maybe. You willing to wait around another five years if I do?” His penetrating gaze bore right through her.

Yvonne pushed down the despair she was feeling at the fact it wouldn’t be him she’d be waiting for, and answered honestly. “For the right person, I’d wait forever.”

“Let’s hope that’s not necessary,” Daniel teased, cutting some of the tension in the room.

Thankful for the reprieve, Yvonne forced out a laugh. “I hear you, because unlike you two, I don’t get better looking the older I get.”

“I would disagree with that.” Daniel’s tone suddenly turned serious.

“As would I.”

“Aww...” She only wished their compliments weren’t merely lip service. “What am I going to do without you two sweet talkers around all the time?”

“Hey,” Daniel protested. “He’s the one getting mated, not me. You can’t get rid of me that easily.”

“Thank God. I can’t go losing both my guys at once, can I?”

“Maybe you won’t have to lose either one of us.”

Yvonne shook her head regretfully. “If you think that, Ezekiel, you have a lot to learn about women.”

“Why do you say that?”

“I think it’s a pretty safe bet no matter what woman you pick, she won’t be thrilled with you hanging at my crib to the wee hours of the night watching really bad Asian game shows. Women are possessive creatures.”

“You’re not possessive.”

“Maybe you don’t know me as well as you think you do,” she said, tossing his words back in his face.

A small smile flashed across his full lips. “Touché.”

“I should have known I’d find you here.”

Yvonne looked over the two men’s shoulders and smiled at the robust, distinguished-looking gentleman standing in the doorway. “Lehi.” She walked around the counter and gave Ezekiel’s father a hug. “I didn’t know you were here already.”

“Just came in a few minutes ago.” The older man returned her hug, careful as always of his strength. “Smells good in here. Did you bring something in from the bakery?”

“Of course.”

“And they’re delicious,” Daniel said as he rose from the stool.

“Did you two eat them all? Again.”

“Not all,” Ezekiel denied, joining his father at the door. “She covered them up before we could.”

“That’s because she knows you so well.” Lehi’s expression turned serious. “It’s time to begin, Ezekiel. We don’t want to keep everyone waiting.”

That made one of them. Smiling falsely, she looked at Ezekiel. “You better get out there before the horde huffs and puffs and blows this place down.”

“I thought that was our job,” Lehi teased.

Yvonne rolled her eyes. Stereotypes were so 2008. “Please, there’s nothing big or bad about you.”

“Tell that to Deputy Dawg,” Ezekiel said.

“Did you ever think...” she turned her attention back to Ezekiel, “...Jasper might like you more if you didn’t call him names?”

“Don’t care.” He grinned.

“Of course you don’t.” Yvonne shook her head. “What am I going to do with you?”

“We can discuss it after the ceremony.”

“There won’t be a ceremony if you don’t get out there,” Lehi reminded him.

“True. Come on, Yvonne, let’s go.”

“I’ll be there in a second,” she hedged.

Ezekiel’s easygoing grin slipped away. “No. Let’s go now.”

“I have to fini—”

"It can wait, my dear," Lehi said jovially as he placed his arm around her shoulder. She was barely able to grab her red shawl before he pulled her out of the room. "You don't want to miss this."

Says you. "But—"

"No buts. This is a very important day for our families, yes?"

Maybe his. No, that wasn't fair. The Crawfords had always made her feel as if she was one of them, despite her inability to turn furry. "Yes. Yes, it is."

While Ezekiel walked with his father to the front of the main room to begin the ceremony, Daniel guided her to the back of the room, where the two of them leaned against the wall to watch. Chilly as usual, Yvonne wrapped the shawl around her shoulders to ward off the cool temperature of the room.

"You look nervous."

It was nothing compared to how she felt. "As I said earlier, I don't want to lose either one of you."

"You won't."

"You can't make a promise like that." No matter how much she might want him to.

"I know the woman he's going to choose. Trust me when I say she won't stand in the way of our...friendship."

He knew her. Yvonne stole a quick glance at Daniel. "Do you...?" She paused and licked her lips before continuing once more. "Do you think she'll make a good match for him?"

"Yes." His voice took on a husky quality. "I approve his choice wholeheartedly. In fact, if he hadn't picked her for a mate, I would have pursued her myself."

"Really?" That was news to her. Daniel never seemed all that interested in anyone either. "So she's good people?"

"The best. She's kind and giving to a fault."

"Sounds like a paragon of virtue." And not like anyone she knew who lived in town.

"She's no saint." He chuckled. "But she's as close to perfection as one can get on earth."

It was beginning to sound as if Ezekiel wasn't the only one taken with this woman. "As long as she's deserving of him. That's all that matters to me."

"She is."

"Good."

"And now..." Lehi's voice boomed throughout the room, "...my son will pick his mate."

Yvonne took a deep breath and prayed for the strength to make it through this. Without thinking, she threaded her fingers through Daniel's and held on tight as Ezekiel began walking down the center aisle toward his destined mate. Her grandmother rushed to her side.

"Yvonne. What are you doing in here?"

Yvonne looked down into the desperate face of her grandmother. "I'm watchi—"

“No. No.” The older woman grabbed hold of her arm and began to tug on her with a strength that surprised Yvonne. “You can’t be in here. You have to leave.”

Frowning, she tried to pull her arm free. “Granny. Stop it.”

“You have to go. Now.”

Daniel held on tight to her. “Let her go, Mrs. Rousel.”

“No. She has to leave. Right now. Right now.”

“The only place she’s going is home with me.”

Shocked, Yvonne turned and stared at Ezekiel, who was standing in front of her. “I choose you, Yvonne.”

This was ridiculous. Crossing his arms over his chest, Daniel sat back in his chair and watched the shit unfold. When Ezekiel told him he was going to fight for the right to mate with Yvonne, Daniel had thought it wouldn’t go well. He hadn’t expected it was going to be this bad though.

After Ezekiel’s announcement, Sheriff Phelps made quick work of clearing out the hall, leaving the Crawfords, the Rousels, the sheriff and Daniel to witness the meltdown occurring now. Not that the rest of the town had gone back to their homes. The parking lot of the town hall was as packed as it was before the claiming, only this time with people standing by in hopes Yvonne would turn down Ezekiel and he’d pick again.

Despite the stunned expression on Yvonne’s pretty brown face, Daniel didn’t have a doubt in his mind she was going to say yes. She loved Ezekiel just as Daniel knew she loved him. She merely needed to come to grips with everything that love encompassed. Hopefully she’d do it soon though, before their little group imploded.

Which wouldn’t be long from the looks of things. The way Mrs. Rousel was carrying on in the corner, one might think she was about to plan Yvonne’s funeral, not her wedding. And her father, the mayor, looked anything but the proud father of the bride. He was as upset as his mother, but with less tears.

Yvonne, on the other hand, was sitting next to her grandmother, trying her best to comfort the older woman as she stole not-so-subtle glances at Ezekiel, who looked as if he didn’t have a worry in the world. Then again, he was backed up by two of the largest men in creation, with several more strolling about outside.

It was easy to be confident when you had might and right in your corner.

“If no one else is going to step forward and say something, I will.” All eyes turned to Jasper, who was standing as he usually did when he felt threatened, with his hand on the butt of his gun. “This must come to an end.”

“This what?” Lehi asked, in a calm and cool manner. Ezekiel’s father wasn’t the Alpha of their pack just because he was a badass motherfucker. He was also their leader because he was the epitome of grace

under pressure. He never became flustered and didn't allow himself to be influenced by the storm around him.

"This debt we pay with the sacrifice of our women. We don't need your protection anymore. This town can survive without you."

"Oh shit," Daniel whispered, sitting up. Things were about to get good.

"Really?" Instead of looking insulted, Lehi appeared amused.

"It's sick the way you people hold a centuries-old deal over our heads."

"You people?" Azarel growled.

"Silence," Lehi warned. "Let the man speak."

"Maybe back in the day we needed your protection, but we don't anymore. The only wolves at our door are you."

"You forget, Sheriff Phelps, protection comes in many incarnations. For instance, is it not our money that keeps this town afloat in these nefarious times? Is it not us who brought in contracts for the mills and helped put this small town on the map?" Lehi shook his head in disappointment. "If you really think you don't need our protection anymore, Sheriff, I suggest you have a talk with the mayor. And after that, the president of the banks, then the good people of this town and ask them if they want us to withdraw our funds and close down our businesses that provide them jobs."

"Let's not act too hasty," Tyrone said, coming out of his self-imposed funk. "No one is saying that, Lehi."

"Really?" Lehi turned his gaze to Yvonne's father. "Because that's exactly what it sounds like to me. This agreement was made between our pack and your town centuries ago, Tyrone. Are you really so willing to end it now that it's your daughter being called to the altar?"

"No. Not at all," Tyrone blustered.

"Maybe he should be," Jasper interjected, not at all dissuaded by Lehi's speech.

"And maybe the person with the least at stake here should mind his tongue before it's handed to him on a silver platter." Daniel was beginning to wonder when Ezekiel would finally speak up.

"Are you threatening me, boy?"

"Boy?" Ezekiel raised a brow. "Did you really just go all 'back of the bus' on me? From the way you're acting, Sheriff, one might think you have more at stake here than is public knowledge." Ezekiel looked over at Yvonne. "Is that the case?"

"Yes," Jasper replied. "Yvonne is already spoken for."

Without bothering to avert his gaze, Ezekiel pressed on. "Is that right? Does this man speak for you?"

Daniel stared intently at Yvonne, willing her to answer in the negative. He had as much riding on this as Ezekiel, and he'd be damned if he let her slip away from him when he was so close to claiming her.

"Tell him, Yvonne," Jasper ordered. "Tell him you don't want to be with his kind."

“Yes,” Ezekiel said in a cool voice. “Tell me.”

“You’re trying to intimidate her,” Jasper accused.

Daniel shook his head and sighed. He wasn’t fooled at all by his friend’s calm demeanor. Ezekiel was seconds away from pouncing on the sheriff, and the man was too stupid to know it.

“Yvonne.” Lehi said her name in a paternal manner. “Never fear, child. Answer with honesty. Our pack has never forced a woman to intermarry with us. Ever. And we wouldn’t start with you. If this man has prior claim to you, say so, and Ezekiel will ask someone else.”

Daniel seriously doubted that. Ezekiel was too in love with Yvonne to ever consider becoming involved with someone else.

“Great.” Jasper threw his hands into the air in disgust. “Now you want Yvonne to feel as if she’s trading her life for another. This town doesn’t want you or need you, Lehi.”

The patient tone in Lehi’s voice was quickly replaced with ice-cold disdain. “If you represent the entire town, Sheriff, then we could easily relocate and find people who were more accepting of our *sickness*, as you call it. Our goal is not to make whores of your women, but wives.”

“Lehi.” Yvonne rose from her seat and stepped away from her clinging grandmother. Or at least she tried to. The other woman was holding fast and true, one hand on her granddaughter’s wrist, the other on Yvonne’s red shawl. With a sigh, Yvonne gave up and continued on. “Jasper doesn’t speak for the town or for me.”

“Yvonne,” Jasper cautioned. “Think before you continue.”

“I am, and I don’t need you or anyone else talking for me. I’m my own woman and I’ll thank you to remember that in the future.”

“You don’t have to sacrifice yourself. Let him pick someone else.”

“You don’t care if someone else sacrifices their lives as long as it’s not her?” Daniel couldn’t help but to ask. The hypocrisy of the other man sickened him. “Nice, Sheriff. Very, very nice.”

“Yvonne is special,” her father said, finally finding his voice again. Of course it was at the wrong time and for the wrong reason.

“Yes, she is.” Even Daniel couldn’t disagree with that.

“Ezekiel, spare her.” Her grandmother had stopped crying long enough to beg. “Let her have a normal life. With a normal man. Don’t take her away from us.”

“Oh for Pete’s sake,” Ezekiel muttered. “You act as if I’d marry her and take her to a different land. My house is at most a fifteen minute walk from yours.” Daniel could tell Ezekiel’s patience was quickly coming to an end.

“But the last woman to take a werewolf to mate died in childbirth,” the older woman continued. “And the one before her disappeared in the middle of the night.”

Daniel scoffed at the claim. Marcella disappeared all right, with half a million dollars of her husband's money and her former high school sweetheart. Daniel loved how people left facts out whenever it suited them.

But instead of bringing up that little tidbit, Ezekiel took the higher road. "I'm not going to let anything bad happen to Yvonne."

His friend's assurances had no effect on Jasper. "How can you be sure?"

"Oh, stop it, all of you." Yvonne sounded as disgusted with everything as Daniel was.

"I think it's a fair question." Jasper plodded on as if she hadn't spoken. "How can he be sure he won't be putting you in harm's way?"

Christ on a cross. Enough was enough. Rising from his seat, Daniel joined his friend and faced the pestering sheriff. "Because he won't be the only one protecting her. I will be too."

"And how do you plan on doing that? You can't be with them every second of every day. I know you're friends and all, but eventually you'll have to go home," Jasper said.

"Not if their home is my home."

"What do you mean? Are you planning on moving in with them? Sharing a house?"

Daniel met Jasper's unflinching gaze and answered honestly. "And a bed."

Chapter Two

Ezekiel could see it now. Before the night was over, he was going to have to kill the sheriff. The annoying elect-a-cop was messing everything up. Just seconds ago he would have sworn Yvonne was on the verge of saying yes. Now she was all slack-jawed and shell-shocked, staring at him and Daniel as if they'd grown extra heads. This wasn't the exact way he'd hoped on breaking the ménage news to her, not with this crowd, and not in this manner.

"What did you say, Daniel?" Jasper's icy words drew Ezekiel's attention away from Yvonne and toward the sinewy man with the tin badge. "I don't think I heard you correctly." Jasper's hand went back to the butt of his gun.

His tough-man action made Ezekiel want to laugh. If his hand on his gun was supposed to be a threat, it was a poor one. Even on Ezekiel's worst days he could make it across the room and break every finger in the sheriff's hand before Jasper could pull the gun out and point it at his friend. How sad. The man who was supposed to protect the town didn't know much about half of its inhabitants.

"I think you heard me just fine, Sheriff."

"You're planning on joining them." Disgust filled Jasper's face as he looked from Daniel to Ezekiel. "In bed."

"Or the floor, or table, or couch." Daniel shrugged as if he didn't have a care in the world. "I'm not all that particular."

Unfortunately for Daniel, Jasper didn't take too kindly to his sense of humor, and he unsnapped his holster, which earned him a growl from Azarel.

"Careful there, Sheriff," Lehi said softly. "We'd hate to hold elections before your term is up."

To Jasper's credit he didn't flinch or take his hand away from his gun. The man had balls, even if he didn't have brains. "Tell me again, Lehi, how your pack's goal isn't to make our townswomen whores."

"It isn't," he replied. "This is the first I've heard of my son's plan."

And there was a reason for that. This was really no one's business but his, his mate's and the man who would soon be her second husband. Everyone else could eat shit and die if they didn't like it.

"Then tell me, Lehi, how do you feel about it?" Tyrone asked, moving closer to his daughter.

Ezekiel didn't bother to look at his father. He already knew Lehi would support him. His father knew how important Yvonne was to him and that Ezekiel wouldn't share his mate with just anyone. This wasn't a

decision Ezekiel had made on the spur of the moment, nor was it one he made lightly. He knew Daniel loved Yvonne as much as he did and neither one of them wanted to lose her.

"I feel..." Lehi was cautious with his words. As always. "This is a discussion between my son, Daniel and their mate."

"Well I'm disgusted by it." Tyrone's lip curled with revulsion.

"What's disgusting about it?" Daniel asked.

That was a question Ezekiel wanted an answer to as well. Although triads weren't common, their union wouldn't be a first in his pack. True, the last time a wolf had shared his mate knowingly had been over thirty years ago, but that didn't make what he was suggesting all that unacceptable.

"How can you even ask that of her? My daughter is not a whore."

There was that word again. "On that we agree." Ezekiel looked at Yvonne again and willed her to trust him. "I treasure Yvonne more than I do my own life. I would never do anything to purposely cause her harm or bring shame to her name. But I want her in my life and I would do anything to have her, even share her."

"But will you give her up?" Jasper asked. "That seems a far nobler act to me than inviting another man to your bed."

"I never said I was noble." His words brought a small smile to Yvonne's lips before she turned wary again. Damn it. He didn't like that look. He didn't like her doubting him.

"Boy, you ain't never lied," Jasper snarled.

That was the last straw. "Call me boy..." Ezekiel slowly turned his head until he was looking at Jasper again, "...one. More. Time."

When Jasper opened his mouth as if he was going to do just that, Yvonne broke free of her grandmother and stepped quickly in front of Ezekiel to block his path. Her red shawl lay like a puddle of blood at her grandmother's feet. "Please, Zeke. Don't."

Zeke. Fuck. She had to pull out the big guns. "Get rid of him before I do. Permanently." He spoke low so only she and the werewolves in the room could hear, but he didn't once let his gaze waver from his prey. Jasper didn't know how close he was to becoming roadkill.

"I will." She licked her full lips as was her way when she was nervous. "Just don't go all furry on me."

As if he would need to change forms to take Jasper out. But still, he did enjoy having options. "I make no promises."

Yvonne shot him an annoyed look before she turned around and faced her disapproving audience. "Jasper, I need you to do me a favor."

"Of course." Smirking, the sheriff took a step forward. His cocky smile was going to be the first thing Ezekiel smashed in when the opportunity afforded itself. And it would. Soon. "I'll do anything for you."

Oh brother. What a waste of brain matter.

“Take my father and grandmother home.”

Jasper’s pompous look disappeared in a blink of an eye, much to Ezekiel’s immense satisfaction. Served the self-righteous bastard right. He was still going to fuck him up though.

“You have to be kidding me. I know you’re not picking this fre—”

“Watch yourself, son,” Lehi warned the sheriff. The man’s anger stunk up the room and gave Ezekiel one more reason to want him dead. Not that he needed many. “It’s fine to disagree, but we’ll all be respectful in here.” Lehi glanced at Ezekiel. “All of us.”

“I’m not picking anyone.” Yvonne glanced over her shoulder at Ezekiel. “Tonight. I need time to think. But first I need some questions answered.”

Ezekiel nodded. He could give her time, as long as he didn’t have to give her up.

Seeing his agreement, Lehi walked over to Tyrone and placed his hand on his old friend’s shoulder. He led him away a few feet and leaned forward to speak softly to him. At first the mayor was stiff, but he began to relax a bit as the conversation wore on. From where they were standing, Ezekiel couldn’t clearly make out what was being said, as he assumed was his father’s intention. Ezekiel didn’t have a clue as to what the two men were discussing, but he trusted his father to act in his and the pack’s best interest.

“Azarel.” Yvonne faced his brother and smiled weakly. “Can you please step outside as well? I know Ezekiel will probably tell you—”

“You don’t have to explain anything to me, Yvonne.” Azarel’s potshot was missed by a scowling Jasper. “And by the way, welcome to the family, little sis.” With a wink to Yvonne, he turned and walked down the aisle. As he passed the sheriff, he let out a low growl that made Jasper jump and Ezekiel and Daniel laugh.

The brief moment of hilarity earned Ezekiel a frown from Yvonne and a censoring look from his father, but it was well worth it to see the sheriff’s true nature come to light. It was funny how his gun gave him balls but not courage. Didn’t it figure? Jasper was just another bully with a badge.

By the time Azarel was out the door, Lehi and Tyrone were through talking. The tension between the two men seemed all but gone, which Ezekiel could only hope meant good things. Tyrone smiled when Lehi offered him his hand, making Ezekiel wonder if he had to worry after all. There was something very self-satisfied about the other man’s grin.

“My word is my bond,” his father assured Tyrone, much to Ezekiel’s confusion.

“I’m counting on that.” Tyrone shot Ezekiel and Daniel one more disgruntled look before going to his mother’s side and helping her rise. “Let’s go home.”

Unfortunately, Jasper wasn’t so easy to get rid of. “What the hell,” he fumed. “Mayor, are you really going to leave her here?”

“Yes. Nothing is going to happen tonight. Lehi has given me his word. Yvonne has three days to make up her mind, and whatever her decision is, they’ll honor it with no grudges held.” Tyrone sent his daughter a pointed look. “I’m sure she’ll make the right choice.”

Three days! Ezekiel glanced at his father in outrage. Maybe he shouldn’t have trusted him after all. He’d said he’d give Yvonne some time to think, but he meant hours, not days.

Tyrone’s answer apparently left Jasper displeased as well. “If she has three days, then why does she have to stay tonight?”

“Because *she*...” Yvonne crossed her arms over her breasts and turned to face the sheriff, “...is a grown-ass woman and can make decisions for herself. Now will you please leave so I can ask a few questions? *In private.*”

“Well, why is he allowed to stay?” Jasper gestured to Daniel, who for once just smiled and kept his mouth shut. Maybe it was possible to teach an old dog new tricks after all.

Yvonne tilted her head to the side and placed a hand on her hip, as she did whenever she was annoyed. “Oh why do you think, Jasper?”

Hmmm. The more he was around the sheriff the more Ezekiel worried for the future of Jasper’s bloodline. The man was dumb as a stump. This was not a good sign for his offspring.

“Fine,” Jasper said stiffly. “I just want to go on the record to say I think this is a piss-poor idea.”

“Fine,” Yvonne sighed, clearly agitated. “It’s on the record.”

“Good.” Without saying another word, Jasper turned and stormed out of the room. Yvonne waited patiently for her father and grandmother to leave the hall before picking up her wrap and facing Ezekiel and Daniel once more.

“Now which one of you wants to explain to me what the hell is going on here?”

Ezekiel and Daniel shared a quick look. Yvonne’s mood didn’t bode well for the conversation at hand. His mate was grumpy. Three days might not be long enough after all.

Confused and frustrated, Yvonne wrapped the shawl around her and stared at the two men in the room. Two men who before today she would have called sane, rational people.

Like the fool he pretended to be all too often, Daniel waved his hand widely over his head in an exaggerated manner. “Pick me.”

“Fine.” If he wanted to be the first one to walk the plank, who was she to say no. “Go, Daniel.”

“Before you start chewing our asses, can we grab the snacks from the back?”

Out of everyone in the room, Daniel was the one who appeared least troubled by the revelations made today. Normally, his ability to turn lemons into lemonade was something Yvonne loved about him. *Normally.* “Snacks,” she muttered through clenched teeth. Was he serious?

“Yes.” He rubbed his stomach. “I’m starving.”

“You can eat? *Now?*”

Daniel laughed. “Darling, I can eat anytime. Don’t you know me well enough yet to figure that out?”

“I thought I knew you.” Yvonne felt as if she was completely out of her depths. “I thought I knew both of you, but I guess I was wrong.”

“You weren’t,” Ezekiel said quietly. “You do know us.”

Yvonne snorted and tightened the wrap around her, comforting herself in the only way she knew how. “I certainly don’t feel as if I do.”

“But you do,” he insisted, much to her annoyance.

“Right now I feel as if I don’t know anyone in this godforsaken town, including myself.” Especially herself. How could she be so blind?

In all her life, Yvonne had never felt as stupid as she did now. How was it she’d spent all this time with Ezekiel and Daniel and not once known they wanted her? Singular or together. She considered herself to not only be a really good judge of character but also a very astute individual, someone who wouldn’t miss the obvious. So how in the hell had she?

“I think Daniel’s right. I think snacks might be in order.” She couldn’t eat a thing, but she needed time to process everything. “Let me go make a tray.” She had to do something before she had a nervous breakdown. Tense beyond belief, she started toward the kitchen.

“Yvonne.” Her name on Ezekiel’s lips stopped her in her tracks.

Everything inside her yearned to turn around and run into Ezekiel’s arms, so he could make it all better. But how could he make it better when he was half the problem? “I’ll be back, Ezekiel. I need a minute.”

“But you will be back.”

It was less of a question and more of an order, but she was too weary to fight with him now about his caveman ways. Instead she nodded and continued on toward the kitchen. The heavy gazes of the men weighed her down as she silently made her way to the kitchen. When she entered the smaller room, she let out a relieved breath.

Looking around, she tried to focus on anything but the subject at hand. Noticing the cluttered island, she made quick work of cleaning it up. When that was done she searched for something else to do. She wasn’t quite ready to go back yet, and it was better to keep busy than actually grab the cookies as she’d said she would. Spotting the crumb cake on the counter, she walked over to it with a new sense of purpose. Cake was much more filling than cookies. And it would waste more time than simply putting cookies on a plate and carrying it back to the waiting men.

With a new goal in mind, she carried the cake caddy to the island and popped open the locking latches so she could remove the plastic dome. Carefully she transferred the sweet dessert from the base to a cutting board and grabbed a knife to begin slicing it.

Yvonne wished she was at home or at her shop, somewhere she could put her anger and frustration to good use. Desserts never tasted better than when the dough was pounded by fists of fury. Besides, she could use the extra treats, because she knew come tomorrow her shop would be the busiest on the block. Thanks to Ezekiel's pick, she was now the belle of the ball. She could only imagine how the tongues would wag once everyone caught wind of Ezekiel's plan to bring Daniel along for the ride.

Shit. Maybe she should hire help.

"Eww."

Startled, Yvonne glanced up from the cake and looked straight into the faces of the two people she least wanted to see right now.

Great. Just great.

Daniel walked over to her and glanced at the island with a curious look on his face. "What's that supposed to be?"

Frowning, she followed his gaze and let out a frustrated grumble. She'd been so lost in her thoughts she hadn't heard the men approach nor had she noticed how she'd turned her crumb cake into just crumbs.

Wonderful. Not only had they ruined her night, they ruined her dessert as well. Angry, she looked up at Daniel and snapped, "Metaphorically, your face."

"Ouch." Daniel wisely took a step back.

Ezekiel, on the other hand, wasn't as smart, and he moved closer to the island—the only thing standing between them and certain death if she got her hands on the two men. No, two traitors.

"You don't really mean that," he said, in his calm and infuriating manner. For a werewolf, Ezekiel was light on the short fuse. Well, with her anyway. Several times tonight she wasn't so sure Jasper was going to leave the hall in one piece, let alone alive. "Do you?"

"No, I don't," she admitted begrudgingly, but the fantasy was sort of fun for a second. "If I wanted to do you harm, trust me, you'd already be on the floor in pain." She dropped the knife on the island with a loud thud and picked up the crumbled mess, tossing it into the trash, cutting board and all. What a freaking waste.

To add insult to injury, Ezekiel, king of responsibility, reached in to the trash. He took out the board and calmly placed it back on the island. "I don't like to see you upset."

"Then you might have thought about dropping a hint or two over the last few weeks that you were thinking about this."

"I don't know how I could have made my intentions any clearer."

"You might have tried to, oh I don't know, say something." Her bitterness overflowed into her words, but she couldn't have held it back if she tried. "And you," she said, turning her rage onto Daniel. "You could tell how upset I was out there. Did it occur to you to maybe tell me what was going to happen?"

Smug boy wasn't smiling now. In fact he looked anything but pleased. "I thought you would figure it out."

Had the world gone mad? "How could I?"

"How could you not?" Ezekiel argued right back. "I've been your shadow for years."

"How is that supposed to translate into you wanting me to be your mate? Hell, you've been Daniel's friend for even longer," she pointed out. "Does that mean you want to mate with him too? Is that what's going on here? Am I supposed to be a beard for you two?"

Ezekiel's eyes widened in shock. "What?"

"Hell no," Daniel retorted in the same instant.

"Don't use that tone with me, Daniel. It was a reasonable assumption." That apparently was way off the mark. *Thank God*. Yvonne didn't know if she could handle much more right now.

"We don't want each other, Yvonne." By Ezekiel's exasperated tone, Yvonne could tell he was losing patience. "We want you. And if you'd look past your accusations and anger you'd admit you want us too."

"Oh, suddenly what I want matters to you?"

"It's always mattered," Daniel said softly.

"Ha," she scoffed. She didn't believe them for a second.

"What I don't know is why you're upset." Ezekiel's tone was anything but calm now. In fact, he seemed furious. "Be truthful, Yvonne. Are you mad I picked you or are you upset I want Daniel to join us?"

"What I'm mad about is the lack of forewarning. There is no reason under the sun the three of us couldn't have talked about this before now." Her voice was filled with anger and humiliation, but she couldn't help it. With these two, she always wore her emotions on her sleeve. "Before you made me cry every night for two weeks, because I thought you were going to marry someone else."

"Cry?" Ezekiel bit out through clenched teeth.

"Yeah, but don't worry. It won't ever happen again." She couldn't do this. She was too vulnerable where they were concerned. "I'm out of here." Done with the whole sordid mess, Yvonne went around the island and headed for the door, intent on escape. Her plans were waylaid though by Daniel, who grabbed hold of her hand and pulled her over to him.

"We never meant to hurt or embarrass you, baby," Daniel said. "Nor did we mean to make you cry."

"But you did." She glanced over at Ezekiel, who had moved up behind her and to the side a bit, blocking her other exit strategy. "Both of you. I thought I was going to lose Ezekiel to his mate, and you, Daniel, would just lose interest in hanging out if he wasn't with us."

"You figured wrong," Daniel said firmly. "On all counts. I could never lose interest in you. How could I? You're the most interesting person I know."

That was news to her. "Am not."

“The hell you aren’t. You’re also funny, sexy as all get out and pretty much the type of person I want to be like when I grow up.”

“Good luck with that.”

“Don’t you remember what I said, Yvonne?” Daniel asked. She shook her head, unsure what he was referring to. “If Ezekiel hadn’t picked you for a mate, I would have pursued you myself. I’m not in this because I want to help out a friend. I’m here because I’m in love with a friend. You.”

“Love?”

“Yes, and he’s not the only one.”

Stunned, Yvonne spun around to stare at Ezekiel, who took one look at her face and chuckled. “Why are you shocked? I did ask you to be my mate.”

“No. You told me ‘you picked me’. You didn’t ask me shit.”

Ezekiel arched a brow. “Now you’re grasping at straws.”

“No, I’m not.” Not entirely anyway.

“Fine then. Formalities aside, I wouldn’t have asked you to share my life if I didn’t love you.”

“Mating isn’t always a love match.”

“Ours is. You know I’m not one to speak flowery phrases. I’ve never been good with words, but I love you. More than life itself.” Ezekiel’s words weren’t poetic, but they did get right to the heart of the matter. “And I think you love us too.”

Daniel moved closer behind her as Ezekiel flanked her from the other side, effectively trapping Yvonne between the two of them. “Don’t you, Yvonne?” Ezekiel brought his hands to her waist and pulled her flush against his body as Daniel brushed her hair off one shoulder and gently placed his lips against her nape. They held her more intimately than either ever had before, and she was damned if she didn’t enjoy it. “Tell me you don’t want to be like this, in the middle of us, forever, and I’ll walk away. It will break my heart to do it, but I would. For you.”

To think he said he wasn’t good with words. “I...I...”

Daniel’s tongue dashed across her skin, stealing all reason from her mind. Gasping, she grabbed hold of Ezekiel for balance and for the sheer pleasure of touching him.

“Say it. Tell us to go,” Ezekiel said.

She wasn’t saying any such thing. Closing her eyes, Yvonne tilted her head to the side, giving Daniel free rein as she dug her nails into Ezekiel’s arms and pulled him closer to her.

“Say it,” Ezekiel ordered softly. “This is the last chance I’m going to give you.”

Yvonne opened her eyes and stared at Ezekiel, whose golden eyes were swimming with passion. She had a choice here. She could either keep punishing them all by denying what the three of them so obviously wanted. Or she could give in and experience the joy of being with the two men she loved, and maybe punish them later. With rope, and kinky toys. “Hmm...last chance, huh?”

“Yes.”

“Then it’s probably a good thing I showed up when I did.” Lehi’s statement had the three of them turning to stare at the doorway where the older werewolf was standing.

Busted.

“Your dad is a cock blocker.” Daniel loved Lehi like a second father, but right now he could have cheerfully strangled the other man.

“Tell me about it.”

“And he has the worst timing known to man or werewolf for that matter.” Daniel paused in the middle of his rant to signal the bartender for another round. If he wasn’t going to get laid tonight, the least he could do was get drunk. “Things were beginning to look up.”

“I know,” Ezekiel said dryly. “I was there too.”

So true, yet Daniel was the only one ranting and raving. Here they were at damn near midnight, snuggled up next to a bar instead of Yvonne. Life was unfair on so many different levels. They’d had her. He knew they did. Yvonne had been on the verge of giving in when Lehi had stormed in and blown everything to hell and back.

To make matters worse, Lehi had walked her to her car like an overbearing chaperon and waited with the men as she drove off. To Daniel’s annoyance, Yvonne let Lehi, and she didn’t even offer a word of complaint. Not one. Instead she chose to meekly leave without a backward glance. She even seemed a little relieved to go home. Alone. Then, to add insult to injury, Lehi ordered the two men to stay away from her tonight to give her some time to think.

Time to think! That was the last thing Daniel wanted to do. He knew without a doubt if given the opportunity Yvonne would come up with a million and one reasons why the three of them shouldn’t be together. That was why they needed to strike while the iron was hot and claim her, body and soul, before she erected any more walls.

She loved them. He knew she did, despite the fact she was the only one of the trio who had yet to say the words. There was time for that though. Plenty of it. First, however, he and Ezekiel were going to have to get past her doorway, and there was no way of doing that without earning them Lehi’s ire. Then again, the more he thought about it, the more he wondered why the fuck he cared if Lehi was pissed off. Lehi wasn’t his father or his Alpha. In no way, shape or form was the other man the boss of Daniel or his cock.

And speaking of his dick, sharing Yvonne with Ezekiel was appealing on so many different levels. The idea of making love with her at the same time Ezekiel did was the sexiest thing he could imagine. The mere thought of her beautiful brown body sandwiched between their lightly tanned ones was enough to get him hard in a second. The three of them were so close it seemed only natural their relationship would take this next turn.

Together.

But if they couldn't do it together, then Daniel would be more than willing to take one for the team and be first up to bat. He didn't *need* Ezekiel with him to make love with Yvonne. It would be nice if his friend was part of it, but it wasn't a necessity. If the other man wanted to be an obedient drone, more power to him.

Looking into the mirror behind the bar, Daniel met Ezekiel's gaze. "Explain to me again why I have to be the one to wait when it was your father who gave his word about you not pressuring her to be your mate."

"Because I'll kill you if you touch her without me."

"Oh yeah. Now I remember." The whole his-friend-could-turn-into-a-scary-monster-and-kill-him-with-one-swipe-of-his-paw put things into perspective for Daniel. He could either sit here in the bar and complain about not getting the girl, or he could go after her and risk life and limb. It wasn't really much of a choice when he thought about it. Life wasn't worth anything if he was without the woman he loved.

Daniel waited until the bartender placed fresh bottles of beer in front of them and wandered away before speaking again. "Look, when we first broached the subject a year ago, I begrudgingly agreed to wait until the next claiming challenge arose before we approached her. Well guess what, the deadline has come and passed and we're still not with her. I'm done with delays. I don't want to wait. No," he said more firmly. "I'm not *going* to wait. If you want to turn furry and take this outside, then let's do it, but nothing except death is going to keep me from her."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"Okay." Ezekiel picked up his bottle and took a swig. And that was it. He didn't push his stool back from the bar and toss Daniel ass over head out the window. He just swirled his ale around his bottle and tapped his foot in time to the cheesy eighties hair-band music playing from the beat-up jukebox sitting in the corner of the bar.

"O...kay then." Daniel was puzzled by his friend's easy acceptance of his statement but pleased neither would have to die tonight. "That's settled."

"Great." Ezekiel's tone was casual, but his eyes were lit with humor. "Nice speech by the way."

"Thank you."

"Been practicing it long?"

Daniel's mouth twitched with amusement, unable to resist being affected by Ezekiel's lighthearted reply. Others might have thought Daniel was the jokester of the two, but Ezekiel had the ability to turn shit into sunshine with a simple turn of a phrase. "Since the drive over. Why, did it seem too preachy?"

"No, the delivery was very smooth."

"Thanks."

“You’re welcome.”

“I’m not joking, by the way.” Daniel twisted on his barstool and focused all of his attention on his friend. He was fine and dandy with Ezekiel’s laid-back attitude, but he didn’t want his friend to think for a second he wouldn’t take or give a beating for Yvonne. “I’m not waiting three days.”

Ezekiel turned his head so they were facing one another. “Can you wait ten minutes longer?”

“Why?” Confused, he stared at his friend, unsure what a few minutes more would accomplish.

“Because then it’ll be tomorrow and we can go claim our mate.”

“Ex-squeeze me?” Daniel shook his head to try to clear his brain. He couldn’t have possibly heard what he thought he did. “Go claim her? What about what Lehi said?”

As long as he’d known Ezekiel, the werewolf had never gone against his father. It wasn’t only because Lehi was his dad and he was following an outdated commandment. It was because Lehi was Ezekiel’s Alpha and that card trumped the dad card any day of the week.

“What about it?”

“Your father forbade us from going near her tonight.” Much to his irritation.

“Right.” Ezekiel cocked an eyebrow. “Tonight.”

“And what doe—” He stopped in mid-sentence as clarity dawned. “Oh ho, ho. Your deviousness astonishes yet impresses me all at the same time.”

“Why thank you.” Ezekiel downed the rest of his beer, setting the bottle back on the bar. “I have to say I’m a little surprised you didn’t catch on sooner.”

“I’m not afraid to admit it. I was given all the looks while you were given all the brains.”

“Are you sure I didn’t receive the looks *and* the brains?”

“Positive.” Daniel rose from the stool and dug his wallet out of his back pocket. “And to prove you’re the one with the smarts, I’m going to pay for the drinks.”

“Oh, I guess you showed me.” Ezekiel stood as well and gave a feline-like stretch before leaning his head from side to side and popping his neck. The comparison amused Daniel to no end. Especially knowing how much it would annoy his friend to be linked to what Ezekiel considered a “lesser being”. But then Ezekiel smiled in his predatory way that reminded Daniel in no uncertain terms that despite the feralness of his friend’s movements, he was no pussy. “Let’s go claim our mate.”

No words had ever sounded sweeter.

Chapter Three

The drive from the bar to Yvonne's house was done in record time, at least for Ezekiel. Daniel, on the other hand, was acting as if he was out for a Sunday cruise. This whole fear of crashing and breaking bones Daniel had was going to be their downfall. One would think after all this time, he would be comfortable riding with Ezekiel, but no, the pussy had a problem with a little speed. Hence, he was still en route to Yvonne's house and Ezekiel was already out in front.

If he didn't think it would make Daniel drive slower, Ezekiel might have called to give him a hard time. Unfortunately, talking while driving wasn't his friend's forte. Irritated, Ezekiel tapped his fingers on the steering wheel as he alternated his attention between his rearview mirror in search of Daniel and his passenger-side window, which faced Yvonne's house.

Despite the late hour, the faint glow from her television could be seen through the closed blinds of her front window. Good, she was up. Hopefully that meant she was pondering the proposal placed on her tonight. Lord knew that was all he could think about. But there was nothing new about that. Yvonne was always front and center in his thoughts. Especially of late.

For a werewolf, picking a mate was a serious undertaking and not all of them did it for love. But Ezekiel did, and whether she was ready to admit it or not, Yvonne would say yes because she loved him and Daniel as well. Ezekiel was counting on their love to see them through the tough parts. Relationships were hard enough with only two people in them. Throwing a third into the mix only stacked the odds against a happily ever after. But it had to work. Ezekiel would accept nothing less.

Five minutes after his own arrival, Daniel showed. He pulled his SUV behind Ezekiel's four-by-four, then shut off the engine and exited his car. By the time he was at the bed of the truck, Ezekiel was already out and heading up the walkway. Ezekiel walked like a man with purpose, not bothering to slow down so Daniel could catch up. He had waited as long as he cared to in order to have Yvonne.

But because it was the right thing to do, he lingered on the doorstep until Daniel arrived before pressing the doorbell. They needed to show her a united front to push past the barriers he was sure she was sealing in place. The two men waited in silence for what seemed like a lifetime but in reality was probably less than a minute. The porch light clicked on a few seconds before Yvonne answered the door.

The first thing that hit him when she stepped into the entryway was the tropical scent that clung to her skin. From the faint aroma surrounding her, he could tell she was freshly showered. He inhaled deeply, letting the luscious fragrance of coconut and vanilla run rampant through his senses.

Damn. She smelled good enough to eat.

At the sight of them, Yvonne shook her head and glanced from one man to the other. "I should have known."

"Yes, you should have." Ezekiel ran his gaze down her barely covered body, taking in the black and yellow football jersey she wore in lieu of a nightgown. "It looks as if you were expecting us."

"Look again."

"Don't worry. I am." At five nine, Yvonne was reasonably tall for a woman, and blessed with the sexiest, longest brown legs he'd ever seen. Ezekiel couldn't stop staring at her or hoping they could quickly move from the stoop to the bedroom with little downtime in between.

"That jersey looks awfully familiar." Daniel moved until he and Ezekiel stood shoulder to shoulder, before reaching out and fingering her sleeve.

"It should." She slapped his hand away from the shirt. "I stole it from you."

"Thief."

Yvonne shrugged. "It looks better on me."

"I personally think it will look better on the floor," Ezekiel said. "Why don't we take it off and find out?"

His comment brought her attention back to him. "Trying to get me out of my clothes?"

Finally, she was catching on. "Most definitely." Ezekiel lowered his voice and leaned forward. "Let us in."

"Why should I?"

"Because you want to," Daniel insisted.

"Maybe." She didn't budge an inch. "But I seem to want a lot of things that aren't necessarily good for me."

Ezekiel frowned. He didn't like the sound of that at all. "You think we're bad for you?"

"I'm not sure. I know when I'm with you two it's as natural as breathing."

"And when you're not?" Daniel pressed, asking the question they both wanted to know the answer to.

"I count down the hours until I am again," she admitted with obvious reluctance.

Her answer, even though given hesitantly, satisfied Ezekiel in ways he could never explain. "What does that tell you?"

"That I'm a fool."

"Love tends to make people feel that way," Daniel said softly.

"I never said I was in love with the two of you."

Maybe not in words, but in deeds she had. So many times and in so many ways. "You didn't have to."

"I'm confused." Yvonne's voice quavered as she spoke.

"I know, baby."

“Let us in and we’ll talk this through,” Daniel promised. “Just the three of us.”

Yvonne looked from one man to the next as if she was carefully weighing her objections. In her eyes, he could see the war taking place. On one side was the good dutiful daughter and upstanding citizen who’d never done anything scandalous in her life. On the other was a woman of unseen passions, one who wanted to explore all the options they were offering her.

“You guys can come in, but you have to be good.”

“I plan on being very good,” Daniel said in a playful, suggestive tone.

Her full lips twitched. “That’s what I’m afraid of.”

“There’s no reason for you to ever be afraid of us,” Ezekiel said firmly.

“It’s not the two of you that scares me.”

Ezekiel scrunched his brow in confusion. “Then what does?”

“I’m scared of myself and the way I feel when I’m around the two of you.”

“That’s nothing to be scared of.” Daniel’s voice was filled with masculine pride.

“Says you.” Yvonne took a deep breath then a step back, finally giving them room to enter her house. “You might as well come in so we can talk.”

Talking wasn’t going to be the only thing they did tonight, but Ezekiel was wise enough to keep that to himself. Instead, he murmured a thank you as he slipped into the dimly lit room. As was his habit, he took off his jacket and hung it up on one of the coat hooks on the entryway wall mirror, before taking a seat in what he’d come to think of as his spot on her red couch.

Daniel did likewise with his jacket, then joined Ezekiel on the couch, in his spot, leaving an empty space in the middle for Yvonne. To Ezekiel’s surprise though, she didn’t take her usual seat between them. Instead she walked over to the wall and flicked on the light switch, then over to the television to turn it off. When she was done with that, she pulled the coffee table back a bit then walked around it and sat on the wood-incased glass top.

The confidence Ezekiel had felt on the stoop began to slowly slip away. She was trying to distance herself from them. Frustrated, he reached out and took her hand in his. “Don’t.”

Ezekiel didn’t have to say what he didn’t want her to do. From the guilty look on her face, Yvonne knew all too well. “I need to know why,” she said, as she pulled her hand free of his.

“Why what? Why you?” Ezekiel asked.

“No, not why me.” Yvonne bit her lip and stole a quick glance at Daniel. “Why us? Why do you want us all to be together?”

Surprised, Ezekiel glanced over at his frowning friend, then back to Yvonne. “Could you pick between us? If we’d both asked you out, could you choose between us?”

“No.” Yvonne flushed and looked away. “I couldn’t.”

“There’s your answer,” Ezekiel said. “We aren’t saints—”

“That’s no lie,” Daniel interjected, adding his two cents.

“Neither one of us were willing to take the high road and bow out for the other.” Ezekiel was unapologetic. “We both want you. We both love you.”

“And we both plan on having you,” Daniel insisted.

Yvonne cocked an eyebrow. “Do I get a say in the matter?”

“Only if your response is yes to being our mate.”

“Or,” Daniel cut in, “harder, faster, don’t stop.”

Yvonne stared at Daniel in shock. “I can’t...” She shook her head as if to clear her mind. “I can’t believe you just said that.”

“Neither can I.” Ezekiel shot his friend a disgruntled look. They were supposed to be wooing her, not letting their inner freaks out. At least not yet.

“What?” The small smile Daniel flashed was anything but innocent. The man was a menace, and if it wasn’t for the fact they were friends, and his mate was in love with him, Ezekiel would have killed him on the spot.

“I...I don’t think I’m ready for this conversation.”

“Oh but you are.” Ezekiel wasn’t letting her backtrack, no matter how frightened she was. The time for hiding was at an end.

“No, really. I’m not.” Yvonne knew she should have never opened the front door. Separate, the men were trouble, together they were lethal. Although she’d imagined being with the two of them time and time again, now the actuality of it all was staring her in the face and she was scared shitless.

“You were more than ready in the kitchen at the meeting hall before my father interrupted.”

“Yes, but then reality kicked in.”

“What reality?” Ezekiel asked, much to her dismay.

“This one,” she said, gesturing between the three of them. “Come on, guys, you know this could never work.”

Daniel’s brow furrowed. “Why not?”

“Because it’s not normal.”

“You do know you’re talking to a werewolf, right?” Ezekiel questioned in a dry tone.

“Okay, well.” She had to give him that. “But werewolves are part of the norm now. Ménages, not so much.”

“I strongly feel the need to interject here,” Daniel said, speaking up. “I have two questions. One, what’s so good about normal and two, since when do you want to be like everyone else?”

“I don’t necessarily, but I couldn’t even fathom how we should go about this.”

“Don’t worry.” Daniel smiled. “I have ideas enough for all of us.”

Amazed at his bravado, Yvonne shook her head. She'd definitely bitten off more than she could chew with the two of them. There was no way in the world she'd be able to handle them both, either in bed or out of it. "I think this was a bad idea. You should pick someone else. Both of you." Even though it pained her to say, she had to. She couldn't ever give them both what they wanted, and she'd rather see them happy with someone else than miserable with her.

"Someone else," Ezekiel echoed. "Don't you know, Yvonne? There is no one else. Only you."

Only her? She was totally bewildered by his comment. "Since when?"

"Since the day I walked into your shop and realized you were all grown up. It threw me for a loop, to tell you the truth. One day, you were this girl I knew and the next you were this woman I wanted to know better. The more we hung out, the harder I fell. I've been addicted ever since."

"I opened the shop three years ago."

"I know," he said simply, as if that explained everything.

"Are you saying you fell in love with me that day? Three years ago?"

Ezekiel nodded. "Pretty much."

"And you?" Yvonne turned to Daniel, who'd been silently watching their exchange. "Did you fall in love with me then too and not say anything?"

"No." He smiled. "I was slower on the uptake than Ezekiel. It didn't hit me until about a little over a year ago. But by then I was dealing with guilt of my own. I've known how Ezekiel's felt from almost the moment he did and I couldn't help but believe as if I was doing him dirty by loving you too."

"But the two of you worked it all out and came up with this great idea of sharing me."

"No." Ezekiel chuckled. "I wish it was so simple."

"Amen," Daniel muttered.

"This was not an easy call on either of our parts, but we've had a year to become accustomed to the idea. You've had what..." Ezekiel looked down at his watch, "...four hours?"

Who was he telling? Yvonne was painfully aware of every minute that had passed since his announcement. "Then are you guys going to give me a year to adjust to the idea?" Maybe by then she could work up the courage to reach out and take what she wanted.

"No." Daniel shook his head. "You have about five minutes, starting...now."

"Five minutes, I see." She should have known it wouldn't be that simple. "What happens if I haven't decided by then?"

"Then we begin convincing you." Ezekiel smiled his feral grin. "Slowly."

"Oh no you don't." Yvonne rose from the table and walked around it, putting a little distance between them. If he touched her, she was as good as done. "You still haven't answered all my questions."

"What more do you want to know?" Ezekiel asked calmly. "We're here at your command."

"Doubtful." They were far too bossy to ever follow orders.

“Try us.” Ezekiel sat up, rising to the challenge in her voice. “Try me.” The way he said it sent goose bumps racing across her arms. His stare was bold, his voice was like velvet and his smile was so animalistic it was frightening.

Never before had he appeared more wolf-like than he did at that moment, and without thinking, she said the first thing that came to mind. “My, Grandma, what big teeth you have.”

“The better to eat you with,” he parlayed back, apparently pleased with the comparison she made. “Do you want me to put it to the test?”

“Putting it to a test gets my vote.” Daniel rose to his feet. “In fact, the more I think about it, the better it sounds.”

Ezekiel wasn’t the only one who could make her squirm. “Oh no.” Yvonne took a step back. “Stay back, Daniel.”

“Why?” he asked, as he began to slowly move toward her. “So you can keep putting up roadblock after roadblock, hiding from what we feel? Hiding from what you feel.”

Yes, that was sort of her plan. “I’m not doing that. I’m merely trying to be logical here.”

“Fuck logic,” Daniel bit out. “No, fuck me.”

“Wait.”

“No, I’m tired of waiting. Tired of sitting idly by the person I love more than life itself and being unable to hold her, touch her or tell her how I feel.”

“Love?” She still couldn’t wrap her mind around the fact they loved her too.

“Yes. Love. I love you. Ezekiel loves you, and damn it you love us. Now say it. Tell me you love me. Tell me it hasn’t all been one-sided. Or tell me you don’t feel the same way about us that we feel about you.”

“I...can’t.”

Daniel stopped in mid-step and stared at her incredulously. “You can’t say you love us?”

“No, I can’t say I don’t feel the same way about you. I do love you.” Tears pooled in her eyes as she looked from one man to the other. “I love both of you.”

Daniel reached out and pulled her into his arms. “God, baby. You had me scared there for a moment.”

Yvonne clung to him. “I’m scared too. Scared of what my family will say, how people will react to the three of us, but mostly I’m scared of losing either one of you.”

“You won’t.”

“Never.” Ezekiel joined them, wrapping himself around her from behind, trapping Yvonne in a cocoon of their love. They stood together in silence for a few minutes before Ezekiel spoke again. “You have no idea what we had to do to get here today.”

Yvonne leaned back against his chest. “You kicked butt is what.”

“Damn straight I did. Lars didn’t stand a chance, and do you know why?”

That was a no-brainer. “Because you’re a major badass.”

“No, but thank you for thinking so.” Ezekiel kissed the top of her head. “But the reason he lost was because he was fighting for the right to marry. I was fighting for you.”

“But that’s not the only thing we had to endure.” Daniel had a faraway look in his eyes as if he was remembering something before he spoke again. “Ezekiel and I had to come to terms with our feelings for you and overcome our own jealousies and insecurities. I never dreamt I’d share the woman I love with another man.”

“Neither did I. Wolves are very possessive by nature, but this just feels right to me. Maybe not at first.” Ezekiel’s words caused Daniel to grin, which made her wonder what exactly the two of them had to do in order to come to terms with their feelings for her. “But now I know it could never be any other way.”

“I know we might seem a little pushy, but don’t think for one second we don’t realize the difficult situation we’ve put you in.”

“We just knew in the end it would be worth it.”

Yvonne wished she could feel as secure as they obviously did. Despite how warm and cozy she felt when surrounded by the two of them, Yvonne moved out of their arms. She needed to think and that was next to impossible to do when they were so near. “Let’s say I agree to this madness. How would it work?”

“How?” Daniel’s brow furrowed with confusion.

“For instance, where would we live? We all three own homes.”

“True,” Ezekiel agreed, “but my house is larger with more land if we ever feel the need to expand.”

“Plus,” Daniel added with a smile, “his does come with the already built-in doggy door.”

Ezekiel chuckled. “There is that.”

Moving out of her house made things seem even more real, and it also brought up another question. “How is the sex thing going to work? Do I share a room with you for half the week then one with Ezekiel for the other half?” There were seven days in a week. To be fair, would she spend Sunday alone in the guestroom? “How do we decide who—?” In the midst of talking, she noticed the two of them glance at one another with a look that was too close to amusement for her peace of mind. Were they laughing at her as she tried to piece together their modern-day Brady Bunch? “I don’t think so. What the hell was that?”

“What?” Daniel asked, his lips twitching as if he was fighting back a smile.

“That, that.” Yvonne narrowed her eyes and gestured between the two of them. “The little ‘isn’t the naïve girl cute’ look the two of you shared.”

“The only thing the two of us are going to share is you,” Daniel said. “There’s no look.”

“Liar. From here on out, there will be no secrets. No secret looks, no secret talks behind my back, no secret planning. Tell me what’s going on. Now.”

“There are no secrets, baby. In fact, so there is no mistake, let me go ahead and put it right there on the table. There will be no alternating days, weeks, months or even holidays. You’ll legally be married to

me, my mate in the eyes of the pack and in the eyes of the law, but you will be wife to both of us. Live with both of us.” Ezekiel held her gaze. “Fuck both of us at the same time.”

“Well sometimes it will be just one of us, but not for days or weeks on end,” Daniel added.

“When we say we want to share you, Yvonne, we mean all of you. At all times.”

She couldn’t have understood them correctly, could she? Yvonne glanced from Daniel to Ezekiel and all she could think was *double gulp*. “I’m not sure that’s feasible.” Her words came out in a hesitant whisper.

Daniel chuckled. “Of course it’s feasible.”

“More than.” Ezekiel smiled. “And we can prove it.”

“You can?”

“Yes,” Ezekiel said. “The only question is, do you trust us enough to find out?”

And what a mighty fine question it was. “I...I...”

“It’s us, baby,” Daniel reminded her. “Just say yes.”

“And what happens if I do?”

“Then we show you why two is better than one.”

Well damn. Try as she might, Yvonne couldn’t walk away from that. “Then yes. Show me.”

A sweeter challenge had never been laid down before him. Daniel felt as if he’d been waiting for this moment for what felt like a lifetime, and he planned to enjoy every single second of it. With his gaze firmly centered on her, Daniel walked around her until he was standing behind her.

When he was in position, he glanced over at his friend, who was watching them with a predatory look in his yellow eyes. It was a feeling Daniel could attest to. The hunger he felt for Yvonne was like none he’d ever experienced before, and he couldn’t wait a second more to have her in his arms.

Gripping the bottom of her shirt in his hands, Daniel slowly began to edge it up her supple thighs. Even though he needed her more than he needed his next breath, he wanted to make sure she had plenty of time to call a halt to things if she so desired. “Raise both hands.”

She turned her head to stare wild-eyed at him. “What?”

“You heard me,” he said, this time in a firmer voice. “Raise your hands.”

Still watching him, she did as he requested. “Good girl.” Acting swiftly, Daniel pulled her shirt up and off with one sure move.

“Daniel,” she gasped as she quickly covered her bare breasts.

“What?” he asked calmly, amused by her outrage. “What did you think I was going to do, ask you to do the hokey-pokey?”

“No, but you could have given me some warning.”

“Like what, raise your hands?”

“You...” Yvonne paused in mid-rant to shake her head and smile, “...are such a brat.”

“And you are the sexiest woman I’ve ever seen.” Daniel ran his gaze over her back, smiling at the dragon tattoo on her right shoulder blade, then groaned when his gaze landed on the sight of her full, mouthwatering bottom, framed ever so nicely by a pair of pale yellow bikini panties. “Speaking of sexy.” He reached out and lightly ran his hand over her firm cheek, giving it a little squeeze for extra measure. “Nice ass.”

“Thanks,” she said, her voice filled with humor.

“No, no. Thank you.” Reluctantly, Daniel removed his hand and walked around Yvonne until he was standing at Ezekiel’s side, facing her. “Take your hands down.”

Watching them, Yvonne slowly lowered her hands to her side, bringing her large, full breasts into view. Her dark brown nipples beaded under their stare, making his mouth water and cock ache to delve deep within her. He watched her hungrily as she stood proudly before them, dressed only in bikini-cut panties. The golden color of the underwear made her dark skin appear even more decadent.

“Damn.” The word slipped out before he could stop it, spilling into the silent room like a dirty secret. It wasn’t what he meant to say. Daniel prided himself on his silver tongue, but right now he couldn’t come up with a better compliment if he tried. She was truly breathtaking.

“Flatterer.” Yvonne let out a soft, husky laugh that had his cock shooting past semi-straight to sledgehammer hard. God, he loved her laugh. There was something about the sexy, throaty sound that made him want to drop to his knees before her and delve his tongue deep within her pussy. Daniel knew if the mere resonance of her laughter had this sort of effect on him, then the sound of her coming undone was going to be the death of him. “Are you two still here with me?”

“Oh yeah.” Daniel glanced over his shoulder at his silent friend, who was staring hypnotically at Yvonne. “Ezekiel? Still here?”

“Yes,” he answered without taking his gaze off Yvonne. “I can smell your sweet heat from here.”

“You can?” she asked.

“I can always smell when you’re aroused.”

Interesting. Daniel turned his attention back to Yvonne, who now had her hands covering her cheeks.

“How embarrassing.”

“There’s nothing to be embarrassed about,” Daniel said, trying to reassure her. In fact he found himself jealous for the first time of his friend’s supernatural abilities. The idea of being able to tell whenever his woman was aroused appealed to him on so many levels. “Nothing at all.”

“That’s what you think. If you only knew how often—”

“I know,” Ezekiel interrupted her huskily. “I’ve always known.”

“You mean...” Her eyes widened to comic proportions. “Oh my God.”

“Known what?” Daniel was beginning to feel out of the loop here.

“That Yvonne gets turned on when the two of us sit close to her on the couch, especially when we’re watching horror movies, and she gets to jump and grab hold of us.”

“Kill me now.”

“Is this true, baby? Do you enjoy being sandwiched between us?”

Yvonne sighed and dropped her hands back to her side. “What do you think?”

“I think I can’t wait until I give you what you really want. A true sandwich with me and Ezekiel.” Daniel grabbed her and pulled her close to him. Moving swiftly, he tangled his hand in her hair and tightened his grip on her twisted braids. “With one of us in your pussy and the other in your ass.”

“God yes.”

It was all he needed to hear. Bending forward, Daniel covered his mouth with hers, pressing his tongue between the soft swell of her parted lips. If there was a single moment he longed for more than any other, it was this. His first taste of Yvonne.

Sweet. It was the only word he could use to describe her perfect taste. Their tongues slipped and slid against one another, intertwining as he drank in every drop. Then before he forgot himself and took her against the wall like the horny, rutting fool he was fast turning into, Daniel broke away from her too-tempting mouth and released her. After taking in a much-needed deep breath, he looked to his friend. “Ezekiel. Want to do the honors?”

“Hell yeah,” his friend said. The other man stared hungrily at her mouth for a split second before dropping to his knees before her. Looking up at her, he grabbed hold of the sides of her panties and slowly pulled them down her supple thighs to the floor.

“Ohhh.”

Like before, words escaped Daniel at the sight of her newly exposed flesh. With the exception of a neatly trimmed rectangular strip of hair, her pussy was bare.

Ezekiel, on the other hand, had no problem expressing himself. “Fuck, baby, your pussy is so pretty.”

“Thank you.” She laughed hesitantly. “I think.”

“No thanks needed.” Ezekiel moved in closer to her cunt and breathed in her sweet aroma. “Do you know how hard it’s been sitting next to you all these months, knowing you wanted us but being unable to do anything about it?”

“Probably about as hard as it was for me to sit between the two of you and not take what I wanted.”

“Take it now, Yvonne,” Daniel encouraged. “Whatever you want is yours for the asking.”

Yvonne raised her gaze to meet his and smiled in her slow, seductive way. “What I need most is for you two to touch me. Please don’t make me beg.”

“I make no promises,” Daniel said, stepping closer to her. “I do like the idea of you begging.”

“Tyrant.”

“Wait,” Ezekiel growled.

Startled, Daniel looked at his friend. “Are you serious?”

“Yes.” Ezekiel rose to his feet and stared at the front door. “Someone’s here.”

“Here?” Yvonne whirled around and stared at the door. “Who?”

Ezekiel’s nostrils flared and his eyes narrowed. “Deputy Dawg.”

“What the hell?” Yvonne bent over to scoop up her shirt and pulled it over her head. “What is he doing here?”

“Good question.” Daniel strolled over to the window, parted the blinds and looked outside. Sure enough, the sheriff’s car was double-parked alongside Ezekiel’s with his lights flashing. “What the fuck?” he muttered, turning back around to face Ezekiel and Yvonne. “What is he doing here?”

“How the hell would I know?” she replied.

“Tell me again there’s nothing going on between the two of you and I might let him live,” Ezekiel warned.

It was weird how Daniel had been seconds away from sharing her with Ezekiel, but the thought of her having any sort of relationship with the sheriff had him seeing red.

“Do you think I’d be here with the two of you if there was?”

“I think you better not be,” Daniel said.

“My vote is to kill him just to be on the safe side,” Ezekiel growled as the doorbell rang. “That fucker has to go.”

Daniel could not agree more. “Most definitely.” In fact, the sooner the better.

“Both of you need to chill out before I forget why I let the two of you in here in the first place.”

Daniel bent over and scooped up her discarded panties from the floor, then stood, dangling the yellow fabric from his fingertips. “Somehow I don’t see that happening anytime soon.”

“Gimme those back.”

“Not going to happen.” Daniel shoved them in his pants pocket. “Unless you think you’re badass enough to come get them back.”

“You bas—” The ringing turned into frantic knocking, accompanied by Jasper bellowing her name. “Good Lord,” she muttered as she rushed across the room and opened the door. “What the hell are you doing? I have neighbors.”

“Which is why I’m here.” To Daniel’s irritation, Jasper pushed past Yvonne and entered her house. He walked in with his hand on the butt of his gun as usual, looking around as if he was casing the place. “We received a complaint there was shouting going on over here.”

“Bullshit,” Ezekiel spat, walking over to stand next to Daniel. “No one over here was shouting. At least not yet.”

Jasper ignored Ezekiel’s comment; instead he turned back around to face Yvonne. “What’s going on here?”

“None of your business,” she said, crossing her arms over her chest. The move raised her shirt up a tad.

“I’m thinking of your safety.”

“I bet you are.” Daniel snorted.

“I’m fine,” she insisted, a whole lot nicer than Daniel would have preferred. “In fact I was about to call it a night. It’s getting late.”

“That it is,” Jasper said, turning back to face them. “You heard the lady. Leave.”

“I don’t think that’s exactly what she said, but who am I to argue with the law.” Daniel slapped Ezekiel on the back to motivate the obstinate man to move. “Besides, we found out what we needed to. It’ll do for tonight.” His comment made Jasper frown, which in turn made Daniel smile. The sheriff might be putting a halt on tonight’s festivities, but it was in no way bringing an end to the things to come.

As he and Ezekiel made their way out the front door, Daniel paused in front of Yvonne and patted his pocket that contained her panties. “See you tomorrow, baby.” And every night after, he thought with a grin. This was only the beginning.

Chapter Four

Waiting was for the fucking birds, Ezekiel thought as he stared at his bedside table clock willing the fifty-nine to switch into double zeros. Never before had seven o'clock taken so long to rear its head. It probably didn't help that despite getting home last night after two, he awoke promptly at six as was his habit every morning. And it definitely didn't help that he woke alone. That was not the way things were supposed to go down last night. Not in the slightest and it still irked him six ways to Sunday that it did.

Now, thanks to his father, Ezekiel had to wait two more days to claim his mate officially. He knew in his father's eyes officially meant a whole hell of a lot more than giving her his ring. It also meant he couldn't have sex with her either. But there was a lot of gray area between first base and home plate, and Ezekiel planned to round as many bases as he could without defying his Alpha.

Last night he could have gladly killed Deputy Dawg for interrupting, but spending the next twenty to thirty years in prison went against his five-year plan. So he abstained, knowing Jasper would give him ample reason in the future to kick his ass. He didn't want to have Jasper on his mind this morning, however. Instead, he only wanted to be thinking of Yvonne. Last night was the start of something wonderful. This morning, he planned to take things up a level, starting with a phone call.

When the clock finally showed him some mercy and changed, Ezekiel picked up the phone and dialed Yvonne's number from memory. It was seven o'clock. His sleeping beauty should be rousing. It was still early enough for her to be in bed, but late enough she wouldn't curse him out. He hoped. Yelling in the not hot and sexy way made phone sex much less fun.

By the third ring, Ezekiel was beginning to wonder if perhaps he'd called too soon, and as he was about to hang up, he heard the unmistakable sound of the phone being picked up. It took a few seconds longer though before Yvonne spoke. Her voice was raspy and filled with sleep, causing him to wince at his now more-than-obvious social faux pas. "Lo."

But then again, in for a penny... "Good morning, sunshine."

"What's so good about it?"

A million things popped in his mind, but somehow he figured that would make things worse, not better. "Someone sounds tired."

"Imagine that. People tired at seven in the freaking morning. I should hang up on you. No," she said, her voice more grouchy than ever, "I should yell at you then hang up on you."

"I'd only call you back."

“Don’t think I don’t know that,” she grumbled, much to his amusement. “Tell me something, Zeke.” Things were looking up. She couldn’t have been too homicidal. She called him Zeke. “Yes?”

“Why are you so cheerful?”

“Because I’m talking to you.” The sharp biting sound of her snort caused him to laugh. “It’s true.”

“I think the lack of sleep is rotting your brain. How long have you been awake?”

“An hour.”

“You’ve been up since six and you’re still cheerful?” Disbelief colored her question.

“Yes.”

“I hate you.”

Ezekiel chuckled at her surly tone. “No, you don’t.”

“No,” she said with a long-suffering sigh, “I don’t, but it’s still freaking early.”

“Don’t you have to open the shop this morning?”

“No, which makes your actions ten times crueler.”

Ezekiel winced. Maybe he was a tad overeager. “Let me make it up to you.”

“How?” He could hear her moving around and imagined her sitting up in her bed, her hair slightly mussed, the sheet barely covering her generous breasts.

“Oh trust me, I can think of a million ways.”

“It’s too early for innuendos. Call me back in a couple of hours and try again then.”

“Spoilsport.” Grabbing his spare pillow, Ezekiel sat up and set the cushion behind him, plumping it before leaning back.

“Don’t you have to be at work soon yourself, or did your dad give you time off from the mill in order to woo me?”

“No, courting I have to do on my own time.”

“You need to pick a new time.”

“Aww, sleeping beauty, do I need to kiss you awake? Narcolepsy can be sexy.”

“Don’t make me hang up on you.”

“I could always pick up Daniel and we can come over and let you be our breakfast in bed.” It was a baseless threat, since Daniel was already doing rounds at the Animal Medical Center that he co-owned, but Ezekiel was interested in seeing what she had to say.

“Thanks, but no thanks.”

Ezekiel chuckled. “Chicken.”

“Sticks and stones.”

“Last night you were more than fine with us making a meal of you.” He wondered how things might have gone differently if they hadn’t been interrupted.

“That was last night.”

“Backpedaling already?”

“No, just...nervous.”

Neither he nor Daniel wanted her anxious. Instead he preferred she be anticipatory. “There’s no need for you to be nervous.”

“Easy for you to say. You’re not the one who’s going to be the stuffing in a reverse Oreo.”

“True, but you know Daniel and I would never hurt you. We can build up to reverse Oreo.”

“Really?” The hope he heard made him wince. Didn’t she know they’d do anything to make this good for her, even wait until she was ready?

“Yes, there are several other household-snack positions we can try before we attempt that one.”

As he was hoping, his teasing words caused her to burst out laughing. “It’s far too early to even touch that.”

“Is it too early to touch that, or does the comment apply to everything that’s touch worthy?”

The humor in her voice evaporated as quickly as it had come, leaving her tone hesitant and inquisitive. “Like what?”

“Oh, I can think of many things worthy of touching.”

“Are you touching yourself?” The slight hint of disbelief made him smile.

“Do you want me to?”

“Oh...Ezekiel...” Through the phone line he could hear her escalated breathing. “I’ve never done anything of this sort before.”

“Such as?” he asked softly, even though he very well knew what she was referring to. Ezekiel hadn’t called to say good morning, he’d called to take back a fraction of what was stolen from him last night.

“What you’re doing. What you want me to do.”

She sounded panicked and that would never do. “You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do.”

“That’s the problem,” she murmured, much to his delight. “I’m not sure what I want to do.”

“Don’t you?” Ezekiel pushed the sheet down his lap and away from his throbbing erection. “Because I know what I want you to do.”

“What?” Her voice was barely above a whisper.

“I want you to let me listen to you come.”

“Oh God.” The catch in her voice caused his cock to harden further.

“That’s a step in the right direction.”

“I don’t know what to do.”

He knew enough for the both of them, but he was more than willing to walk her through this. “Do you know what I’d do if I were there?”

“No, what?”

Ezekiel closed his eyes and allowed his imagination to take over. He'd fantasized about being with her for so long it didn't take much to jumpstart his masturbatory mojo. "I'd have you straddle my lap, sitting that sexy ass of yours directly over my cock. Once you were settled I'd make you cradle your breasts in your hands, then lean forward offering first one nipple then the other to me to suckle as long and as hard as I wanted."

"Wait," she said with a shaky laugh.

"Yes?"

"Shouldn't we start off with something simple, such as, what are you wearing?"

Ezekiel opened his eyes then glanced down at his nude body. "That's easy. Nothing."

There was a moment of silence before she spoke again. "Nothing? Real sure of yourself, huh?"

Before she could rush to conclusions, he hurried to answer. "No, I never sleep in anything."

"Oh." His reply seemed to take all the wind out of her sails, because when she spoke again, her voice was unsteady and came off a bit unsure. "Don't you get cold?"

"Dual nature, remember? My body temperature is naturally high. In fact, I only sleep with a sheet and half the time I end up pushing it off. What about you?"

"I have a goose-down comforter."

Ezekiel chuckled at her naiveté. "I meant what are you wearing?"

"A pink nightshirt. I'm cold-natured," she said as an afterthought, as if she felt it was necessary to justify her choice of clothing. Not that he needed her to tell him that fact about her. Yvonne's red shawl was never far from her at any given time. So much so, Ezekiel had become infatuated with the idea of making love to her on the bright red wrap.

"Don't be concerned, you won't have to worry about being cold anymore. I'm sure between Daniel and myself we'll keep you very warm."

There was a long pause again, this time accompanied by the sound of her bedcovers rustling. The noise painted a very vivid picture in his mind. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"Moving my comforter. Suddenly I'm feeling warm."

"I can relate."

"Dual-nature thing?"

"No," he said honestly. "You. You always make me hot."

"Liar," she whispered.

"If only you were here or I was there, I could show you how wrong you are." Ezekiel took his cock in hand and began to run it up and down the length of his turgid erection. "Even now, I'm hard enough to split stone."

"Did I mention it was getting hot in here?"

"Why don't you take something off? It might help to cool you down."

“Any suggestions?”

“Your underwear.”

“You think I need to cool that part of me?”

“No, I think you need to put out the heat, and I have water to douse your flame.”

“But you’re all the way over there, and I’m all the way over here.”

“I’m sure we can work around that.”

“Can we?”

“Yes, do exactly as I say and I promise in a few minutes you’ll feel just fine.”

“Do I need to click over and call Daniel on three-way? I don’t want to break any poly rules.”

“Don’t worry about that.” Ezekiel smiled. “Daniel has his own plans for saying good morning to you.”

“The two of you are going to be the death of me.”

“Not hardly. We’re going to show you what it really means to live. Trust me, if you’re willing to step off the path, I’ll show you a side of the forest you’ve never seen.”

“Says the lion to the lamb.”

“I’m no lion. I’m a wolf. And all yours. The real question is, are you mine? Do you belong to me as surely as I belong to you?”

“You know I do.”

“Then give me what I want. Take down your panties and play with that juicy pussy of yours.”

“You are so bad.”

“And that’s why you love me. It’s also why you’re going to do exactly as I command, isn’t it?” Leaning to the side, he opened the top drawer of his nightstand and extracted the oil he kept there for extra lubrication. He pressed the phone between his shoulder and ear as he dribbled a little of the thick, clear liquid into his palm. “Isn’t it, baby?”

“Yes, you bastard. Yes.”

“Are you already doing it? Already touching your pussy for me?”

“Mmm...don’t make me say it.”

“I’m going to make you say it more.” He closed his eyes as he concentrated on the sound of her voice and the feel of his hand. Yvonne let out a soft moan. The sweet sound caused his cock to arch in response. Fuck, he wished he was there. “What are you doing?”

“The same as you.”

He chuckled roughly as he ran the heel of his hand over the crown of his cock, bringing the lubrication from the oil down farther onto his aching shaft. “I seriously doubt that.”

“I’m...rubbing my fingers against my...clit.”

This was what he wanted to hear.

“Which hand and how many fingers are you using?”

“My right hand and I’m using two fingers.”

“Tell me more.” Ezekiel pressed his ear harder to the phone, trying to ensure he heard every sound she made. He’d waited way too long to miss out on a single thing. “In detail.”

“Feels good. Using light strokes.”

“To warm you up?” he asked, as he took to mind what she liked so he could revisit it later, in person.

“Yes. I prefer to start off slow and soft, then finish fast and hard.”

“Duly noted.” Ezekiel squeezed his aching cock as he envisioned the image Yvonne painted for him.

“What else do you enjoy?”

“Oral sex. A lot of it.”

“Check and check.”

“And I like...” Yvonne hesitated.

“Don’t be shy now. Tell me what you want, because if you like it, I love it. I’m sure I speak for Daniel when I say this, but there is nothing we won’t do to get you off.”

“God. When you say things like that...”

“What? It makes you wet?”

“Yes,” she moaned into the phone. “And I’m talking *Katrina* wet here.”

“That’s what I want to hear, your pussy soaked and ready for me.” Ezekiel picked up his tempo, stroking himself to the sounds of her moans. This was better than anything he could have ever imagined, yet still he wouldn’t be satisfied until he was able to quench his lust inside her tight cunt.

“God I’m ready. I want you to...”

“You want me to what?”

“Fuck my pussy while...”

“Yes.” Things were getting too good to slow down now.

“...while Daniel fucks my mouth.”

Her words sent a lightning bolt of pleasure straight to his cock. It took everything out of Ezekiel not to come right then and there. “Is that what you fantasize about?”

“That and more.”

“Don’t worry, we’re going to make all your fantasies come true.”

“Pro-promise?” From the choppy noises she was making in his ear, he could only surmise she was getting closer. Which was fine with him. Ezekiel was so aroused he was sure he would come at any second.

“Oh yeah, cross my heart. We’re going to fuck you so hard, so long, you’ll forget what it feels like not to have one of us between your legs.” Ezekiel thought back to her fantasy. “Or your lips.”

“Hmmm...”

Her moan sounded far too good for her not to be past the light clit stage. “What are you doing now?”

"I'm pumping my fingers in and out of my pussy. Feels so good, but it's not enough."

"Why not?"

"Because it's not you, or Daniel."

"It will be soon."

"Can't wait," she said shakily into the phone, sounding somewhat out of breath.

"Me either. I can't wait to sink balls deep inside you. To see your pretty pink flesh part to take my cock." He thrust into his fist while imagining it was her pussy surrounding him. "Or wait to feel how tight your pussy clenches around my dick when Daniel takes your ass."

Her voice had a frantic edge, as she spoke. "Yes. Oh, God. I can't wait. I want you. I want you both so badly."

"Come for me. Show me how much you want me."

"Ohh...ohh...Zeke."

"That's it, let me hear you come."

Yvonne called out his name as she gave in to his demand. Her cries of passion resonated through the phone lines and the sweet sound of her release sent him soaring. Groaning, Ezekiel tried to keep the sounds of his pleasure under wraps but it was akin to trying to hold the tide back from the shore.

"Yeah, baby, yeah," he moaned as he worked jet after stringy jet of come from his spurting cock. "Fuck...Yvonne...baby."

With his heart beating an uneven tattoo, Ezekiel opened his eyes and tried to catch his breath. If phone sex was this good, the real deal was going to kill him. But then again, what a way to go.

"Ezekiel, are you still there?" Yvonne's voice held a hint of shyness, and he couldn't help but chuckle at the irony.

"I'm here." But he wouldn't be able to lie there much longer. He could already feel the build up of energy tingling below the surface. His wolf was hungry for his mate, and until Ezekiel actually made Yvonne his, he was going to have to burn off his hunger some other way. "Get some rest. I need to go for a run."

If Yvonne thought she was confused before this morning's little wake-up call, it was nothing compared to how she felt after. She worked in the kitchen in hopes her lack of presence in the storefront would encourage the lookie-loos who'd been nursing the same cups of coffee since Yvonne came in this morning to finally give up and go home. The group included Chaney, the editor of the local paper, who was trying to get a quote from her, but in fact led her to sequester herself away from the prying eyes of the public.

Sales were up as she predicted, but instead of relishing in the sound of the cash drawer opening and slamming almost as if to the beat from one of those Stomp shows, Yvonne was in the warm kitchen, hands deep in dough.

Not that she minded so much. Yvonne had always loved to be in the back baking or at one of the large wooden tables she was at now, pounding on the dough for the cobbler she was going to take to her grandmother, who she'd heard was feeling a bit poorly. Yvonne hoped it wasn't anything too serious. With her mother out of town, it was Yvonne's responsibility to see after the elderly woman. Even if her grandmother wasn't happy with her right now.

Just thinking about her family's reaction to Ezekiel's announcement had her pounding the dough a bit harder than necessary. There was no way in hell they were going to accept her decision not only to be with a werewolf, but also with the werewolf's best friend.

Their disapproval of Ezekiel for merely being a werewolf was ridiculous to her. The only reason that made any sense was one she didn't want to consider. Her family was being prejudiced.

Sometimes it was hard to believe because it was done under cover the majority of the time. Although everyone in town benefited from werewolves living amongst them, there were still some townsfolk who held their dual nature against them. For Yvonne, it was doubly disheartening to find those people in her family. But even if Ezekiel wasn't a werewolf she knew her family would have a hard time dealing with the fact she wanted to be in a triad relationship. It was one thing for her to say she was in love with two men and something altogether different to actually have an open life with them. Together. At the same time.

It was a heady concept even to her, and she was the one going through it. She had friends who were married and complained nonstop. The idea of being married to not one, but two men was frightening. Then there was the plus side to two husbands. Two cocks that belonged to her and her alone. She smiled at the thought. It wasn't difficult to get on board with the idea of being with both men sexually at the same time. Maybe it was possible to have a fantasy come to life.

Speaking of fantasy, Ezekiel had hit one right out of the park this morning. Phone sex was on her naughty bucket list. The list she would never admit to under torture was somehow the same one her men were unknowingly working through. Yvonne couldn't help but wonder how possible it would be to accidentally on purpose let her list fall into their hands and really surrender herself to them.

The mere thought had her smiling.

"Hmmm...now that's what I like to see. My woman happy."

The lighthearted voice drew her from her naughty thoughts and brought her gaze up from the dough to one of the very men she was thinking about. As if she'd conjured him, Daniel stood in the entryway, dressed casually in dark jeans and a gray T-shirt, looking handsome as hell. His gaze was firmly centered on her and filled with enough heat to bake every last dessert filling her fridge.

“Daniel.” The pleasure that radiated from her voice, and the joy which filled her at the mere sight of him, surprised even her. It wasn’t as if it was an oddity for him to come by the store, but his presence today took on such a different level considering what they were doing last night. “I didn’t know you were coming by today.”

Daniel made his way across the room, stopping only when he was standing next to her. Right next to her. He was closer than polite company would have called for, but she didn’t mind at all. As silly as it sounded, she missed him and she wanted him as near as humanly possible. “Didn’t Ezekiel mention it?”

Frowning, Yvonne thought back over the conversation she and Ezekiel had, but unfortunately the only thing that came to mind was the sound of his growls and groans when he came. “He could have, but I don’t recall.”

“From what I heard, I’m not surprised. It sounds as if the two of you were a little busy.”

“Jealous?” she teased.

“Very.” The serious tone of his voice was nothing compared to the heated look in his eyes.

The smile she’d beamed from the second he walked in slowly slid away and her heart dropped to her stomach. Daniel. *Jealous*. That wasn’t good. Not for any of them. “Ohh...reall—” Yvonne took a deep breath and tried to figure a way around this problem. “Dannie. If...if you’re going to get...” she paused, searching for the right word, “...*upset* every time Ezekiel and I are together, I think we’re going to have a problem.”

“It wouldn’t be a problem as long as one thing happens.”

She felt frozen in limbo. The last thing she ever wanted to do was hurt one of her guys, but if there was a no-messing-around-with-one-unless-the-other-was-around rule, someone needed to let her know. And fast.

“What’s that?”

“You remind me I’m your man too.” His voice was firm and brooked no argument.

But that was okay, she didn’t have a single problem with his request. “I think I can do that.”

“Then show me.”

The challenge in his gaze spurred her on. More than anything she wanted to pick up the gauntlet he’d thrown down. She really did, but there was one problem. “I don’t want to dirty up your shirt.” Yvonne glanced at her hands, which were covered with dough and flour.

“Get me dirty, because I damn sure plan on getting you dirty.” Before she could respond, Daniel pulled her into his embrace. Acting quickly, she raised her arms to avoid mucking up his shirt, then leaned into him and offered her lips to his.

It was an offer he didn’t refuse. Daniel covered her mouth with a hunger that rivaled the most ferocious of beasts. Closing her eyes, she surrendered to the power of his kiss. Although the morning’s

escapade had left her physically sated, it was nowhere near as satisfying as being pressed up against a living, breathing man. And it in no way held a candle to the way Daniel's lips felt pressed against hers.

Yvonne drank in the sweetness of his kiss as he coiled his tongue against hers and pulled her closer. She submitted to his forceful will, following his lead as he did his damndest to remind her she had two men, not one. And while she stood like an idiot, hands raised to the sky, breasts to his chest, Daniel took sweet advantage of her, using the freedom she gave him to familiarize himself with her ass.

His touch, so possessive and firm it made her weak in the knees and damp between her thighs, reheated her sex as if the orgasm she'd had earlier was a faint glimmer in the past.

Shirt be damned. She needed to touch him.

Yvonne dropped her hands and slipped them under his arms to caress the muscular length of his back. She dug her nails into the thin material of his shirt, her passion as unchecked as his own. Just when she thought she couldn't take a second more of his heart-stopping loving, Daniel pulled back and took in a deep breath. From the wild look in his eyes she could tell he was as desperate for her as she was for him, which meant to her it was definitely time to slow down.

Yvonne let out a shaky laugh and took a step back, needing a little breathing room to gather her thoughts in order. She ran her tongue over her swollen lips and tried to speak even though she could hardly breathe. "Happy now?"

"Nowhere close." Daniel grabbed hold of her hips and lifted her, setting Yvonne on the counter next to the dough she'd been kneading. He pushed his way between her thighs and pulled her covered sex over the thick evidence of his arousal. "But that's easily fixed."

Before she could reply, he captured her lips with his once more. Daniel's hands moved boldly over her body, down her sides and under her shirt to cup her breasts through the lace confines of her bra. He kneaded her heavy mounds much in the same way she'd done her dough, caressing and squeezing her tender flesh until she thought she'd go mad with pleasure.

His wicked kiss was like a drug for her soul, stealing away everything but the barest of reason from her mind. If it weren't for the sound of the shop phone ringing, Yvonne would have been content to give in to the promise of his touch. But the shrilling noise brought her back from the brink seconds before she did something entirely stupid, such as dropping to her knees before him and taking him into her mouth.

With a groan of regret she turned her head and broke their kiss. "We have to...stop."

Daniel didn't let something as simple as the lack of her lips stop him from driving her crazy. Instead, he merely brushed his lips against the sensitive column of her neck as he spoke. "No, we don't."

"Daniel." But even to her it didn't seem like a plea for him to stop, and Yvonne knew if she couldn't fool herself, there was no way in hell she could trick him. That left only one other option. To give in, but even then there had to be rules. "Let's go..." she trembled as he teased her neck with his lips, "...somewhere else and say hello properly."

“What’s wrong with here?”

The way his mouth felt against her skin was almost worth staying exactly where they were, but there were other things to consider than her own libido, although it was getting harder and harder to remember what they were. “Anyone can walk in,” she said, once she could command her brain to function again.

“And I care why?”

“You may not, but I do.” Less and less than she did the second before, but still, it was a bad idea for them to continue on the counter, no matter how good it felt.

“I bet I can change your mind.”

“No bet.” Yvonne moved her hands between them and pressed weakly against his chest. “Please, Daniel. Let’s go to my office. Your car. The alley.” Somewhere. Anywhere she wouldn’t have to worry about holding back her moans or risk the wrath of the health department.

To her surprise and dismay, Daniel pulled back and stared at her. “On one condition.”

“Anything.” Her quick agreement surprised even her.

“You do exactly what I say.”

That sounded extremely dangerous yet unbelievably exciting all at the same time. “Deal.”

That was just what he wanted to hear. When he’d found out about her morning phone call with Ezekiel, he had to admit he became a little jealous. He knew when they started this thing there would be instances each of them would have their own time with her. Still, he couldn’t help but be happy to know she wanted to be with him enough to forget about her business for a while.

“Good.” Daniel moved back a bit. “Lead the way.”

“To where?”

“Your office.” It was a small room, off the kitchen, but she had a desk he’d been eyeing for a while now.

For a split second Yvonne glanced behind her at the door leading to the front of the store. Her action didn’t go unnoticed.

“Changing your mind already?” Daniel stepped toward her. “Because I’m more than willing to continue.”

“No.” To his amusement, she pushed against his chest, moving him back a few steps, then hopped to the floor. “My office is fine.”

He couldn’t have agreed more, although he was a man of his word and if need be he would be fine continuing right there on her worktable. In fact, the idea was extremely intriguing to him. Maybe one night when the shop was closed they would have to pick up where they left off today.

“I don’t know how long we have,” she said over her shoulder as she entered the office.

“Long enough,” he replied, following close on her heels. On the way into the room she turned on the light and then made her way over to the desk. Acting quickly, she removed the laptop and set it in a small bag on the floor, before continuing to clear off the remaining clutter.

Daniel closed the door behind them and locked it as he watched her. He liked the way her mind worked, especially since it was on the same wavelength as his. As soon as she was done she hopped on the top of the desk and gestured for him to come to her.

Aww, how cute. She thought she was running this. “It’s going to be awful hard for you to take off your pants sitting on the desk.”

“My pants...off.”

“Yes.” He leaned back against the door and crossed his arms. “Off.”

“You don’t want to pick up where we left off out there.”

“That is where we left off. Either out there or in here, I’m getting a taste of your sweet pussy.”

“But what if someone...”

“You better hurry up then.” He nodded with encouragement toward her. “‘Cause the longer it takes us to come, the longer your shop will be without a baker.”

“But...”

“Don’t make me tell you again. Time’s a wasting.”

“Bully,” she muttered as she slid off the desk. In a huffy manner, she kicked off her shoes then reached behind her back to undo her apron. He watched as she dropped the soiled white covering on her desk then reached under her shirt to unfasten her slacks. Once she was done, she placed her hands on her sides and pushed the black material past her hips. She stepped out of them when they dropped down her legs and pooled at her feet.

The sight of her once again dressed only in a shirt and her undergarments was a thing of beauty. Yvonne took his breath away. Daniel didn’t think he could ever grow tired of watching his lover undress, only resentful of the time it took to get her naked and beneath him. “Don’t stop there,” he ordered. “Take off your shirt too.”

Yvonne brought her fingers to the buttons on her blouse, but paused. “The way you’re staring at me is making me nervous.”

“Really? Because staring at you is making me hard.”

Her gaze lowered to the front of his jeans, then widened when she noticed the bulging truth of his words. Although to be fair, he’d been hard since he kissed her in the kitchen, but watching her undress had definitely revved his engine even more.

“Am I...” Yvonne raised her heated gaze back to his. “Am I the only one who’s going to undress here?”

Her words surprised him. He didn't think she'd have the nerve to ask for what she wanted. He was very happy to find out he was wrong. "You want me to take something off?"

"Yes." She nodded as she began to undo her buttons.

"Like what?" Daniel grabbed the hem of his tee and raised it a little. "You want the shirt off? The shoes? Tell me what you want and it's yours."

"I want..." She licked her lips before continuing. "I want you to take off your jeans."

Daniel released his hold on his shirt and brought his hands to the top of his belt buckle. "Why?"

"Because I want to see you too."

There was no way he was going to let her get off that easy. "See my what?"

"Your...your dick."

"No, baby, this dick..." Daniel cupped himself, "...belongs to you."

"I want you to show me *my* dick." Her voice took on a more confident tone that pleased him. He was hers as she was his, and he didn't want there ever to be a doubt in her mind about it.

"Take off your panties, climb on the table and spread your legs for me."

Any hesitation she felt she kept to herself as she made quick work doing as instructed. Once she was bare from the waist down, Yvonne settled her ass on the desk, leaning back on her arms to brace her weight, and parted her legs.

The position she was in caused her shirt to separate and her lace-covered breasts to thrust out toward him. Yvonne was reminiscent of one of those sexy pinup models of the past, but better because she was live and in color and at his merciless will. "Damn, baby, you look mouthwatering."

"I kept my end of the bargain," she reminded him unnecessarily. "It's your turn now."

Since there was one thing and one thing only she was interested in seeing, Daniel went straight to the heart of the matter. He moved until he was standing directly in front of her then unbuckled his belt and undid his pants button. Careful of his straining erection, he slowly lowered his zipper and pulled the sides of his jeans apart, before reaching into his boxers and freeing his aching cock to her heated stare.

Knowing he had her full attention, he took himself in hand and began to stroke his shaft. "Like what you see?"

"Very much."

"I'm pleased to hear that. Now pull your bra down and show me your breasts."

"Do you want me to take it off?" she asked, sitting up.

"No, just down." Daniel's cock jerked in his hand when she did as she was told. "Beautiful."

"Can I...?" She stopped, changing her tone. "I want to touch you."

As much as he wanted her to as well, Daniel knew he wouldn't be able to refrain from pushing her down on the desk and sinking into her then and there if she did. Today was supposed to be a prelude of what was to come, not the full shebang.

“No, but if you want to touch something, touch yourself.” Daniel dropped to his knees before her and peered eagerly at the gates of heaven. Her cream was glistening on the tight, trimmed, dark curls of her pussy, but her desire was no match for his own. His hand kept up a steady rhythm on his straining cock as he counted the seconds until he had his first taste of her. “Move your hand to your pussy and open yourself for me.”

“Okay.” Her voice was husky and filled with desire as she reached with a trembling hand and spread apart the lips of her pussy. Daniel didn’t need Ezekiel’s dual-nature abilities to see or scent the evidence of her arousal. She smelled as good as she looked. His mouth watered just looking at the tender flesh of her sweet cunt.

Unable to hold back any longer, Daniel peered up at her from between her parted legs. “Now whatever you do, don’t let go. If you move your hand I’ll stop. Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

“Good girl.” Although he wanted nothing more than to bury his face between her thighs and feast, Daniel held himself back, refusing to rush their first experience together.

With her pussy spread open in this manner, he was able to continue to stroke his cock yet touch her all at the same time. He moved his free hand to the apex of her dark brown thighs and brushed his fingertips lightly against her swollen clit. Yvonne jerked and her hand shuddered as if she was ripe to move it, but he stopped her by reminding her of their agreement. “Don’t move.”

“I won’t,” she insisted. “Just don’t stop.”

“Wouldn’t dream of it.” Closing his eyes to make the experience even more intense, he leaned forward and trailed his tongue over the path his fingers just traveled, taking his time to enjoy her erotic flavor. The taste of her pussy was as good as he imagined. No, better.

Despite the busy world a few feet away from the door, Daniel was in absolutely no rush. The shop could burn down around them and he wouldn’t move an inch. He’d waited too long to rush this. He’d waited too long for her and he was going to enjoy this moment to the fullest.

He teased and tormented her heated flesh, frenching her pussy as passionately as he did her mouth. He was hell-bent on making her as frantic for him as he was for her. And from the guttural moans she made, he could tell he wasn’t the only one enjoying himself.

With her free hand Yvonne gripped his hair and pulled him closer, groaning as he laved her clit. Her breathing became sporadic and her passionate sounds louder, especially when he thrust two fingers deep into her slick channel.

“Oh God!”

The walls of her pussy quaked around him. Curving his fingers inside, he stroked her flesh, drawing a gasp from her.

“Daniel! Oh, right there.” She tightened her grip on his hair. “So close. Going to...going to...”

So was he. Needing no further encouragement to put an end to the madness he created, Daniel buried his face in her sex again and took her swollen clit into his mouth. He lashed the sensitive bundle of nerves rapidly, pumping his fingers into her cunt, all the while stroking his cock at a fevered pace. Her inner muscles grasped hungrily at him with each steady thrust, clenching and quaking as he fingered her tight cunt.

“Ohhh, Daniel.” Yvonne tensed for a brief second then bucked and let loose a muffled moan. Her pussy spasmed, bathing his fingers with her thick cream.

The feel of her coming was the catalyst to his own release. Daniel tore his mouth away from the heaven of her sex and rested his head on her thigh as he shuddered and milked the last few strains of come from his throbbing cock.

Feasting on her was a dream come true, but he knew it was nothing compared to how it would feel to be buried balls deep inside her. The image alone was enough to make his spent cock stir once more.

Breathing heavily, she released her grip on his hair and her pussy and dropped her arms to his shoulders. “Daniel,” she moaned, tugging on his shirt. “Fuck me. God, please.”

Although he hated to deny her anything, he couldn’t give in to both of their desires. “We can’t, baby.” Grabbing the apron she’d worn earlier, Daniel cleaned himself up, then the mess he’d made on the floor before standing and tucking his cock back in his pants. He felt weak and spent, but far from satisfied. It would take a lifetime for him to ever sate his passion for her.

“What?” Yvonne straightened and reached for him once more. “Yes. Yes, we can. I don’t care who might hear.”

Daniel sidestepped her and put much-needed room between the two of them. He was on edge, one false move and he’d be in her, pounding away despite his vow. “I can’t. I made a promise.” One he couldn’t help but regret a little now. “The first time will be the three of us, together.” At the time he and Ezekiel had struck the agreement it had seemed as if it were a good idea. Looking back now, Daniel could see the flaws in their misguided plan. But a deal was a deal.

“Oh God. You guys are trying to kill me.”

“Only with pleasure.”

“Doubtful.” Yvonne jerked her shirt closed and attacked her buttons, much in the way Daniel imagined she wanted to do him. “If the two of you aren’t going to make love to me yet, then why on earth is he calling me for phone sex and why are you showing up out of the blue for an afternoon delight?”

“To keep you on edge.”

“Well fuck you very much. It’s working,” she grumbled as she moved off the desk. To his immense amusement, she was pouting and looked far from pleased at his comment.

“Why so tense, Yvonne?” He watched her stomp over to where she’d dropped her pants and picked them up.

“Because my lovers are refusing to make love to me.”

“We’re not saying no.” Nowhere near it. Daniel wasn’t sure he could ever utter that word to her. “We’re merely saying not now.”

“Then when?”

The fact she was as ready for them as they were for her thrilled him to no end. There was a time after Ezekiel made his announcement Daniel worried if their plan would ever come to fruition, but now he could see his apprehension was in vain. She did want them. It was only a matter of getting her to admit it to everyone else. “When you’re ready.”

Yvonne grasped his hand and shoved it between her legs, resting it on her heated sex. “It doesn’t get much more ready than this.”

Not one to turn down a little finger action, Daniel turned his hand so he was cupping her mound and began to thrust his fingers into her pussy again. He watched with pleasure as she closed her eyes and sank her teeth into her plump bottom lip. “As deliciously wet as you are,” he murmured, “it’s nothing compared to what you’ll be when you’re finally sandwiched between us.”

Yvonne pushed his hands away. “If you keep this up, I may not say yes.”

“If we keep this up, you may not have the energy to say much of anything.”

She flashed him a look of pure aggravation. “You might as well leave if you’re not going to fuck me.”

“I plan to fuck you, just not now.” Before she could counter his moves, Daniel pulled her to him for a short but sweet kiss. “Have a nice rest of the day, my love. We’ll see you tonight.” With that, he slipped out, hopefully leaving her to ponder his words and their plans for the evening.

Chapter Five

The brisk air rippled along his fur as Ezekiel cantered through the tall trees. The smell of the earth, combined with pine needles, leaves and moss crushed under his paws, permeated the air around him. His sharp eyesight noted a brown rabbit taking off from the underbrush to race toward its burrow. Ezekiel went after it, his mouth watering at the idea of capturing his prey. He wasn't hungry, but he was always in the mood for a hunt.

On a straightaway, the rabbit wouldn't have stood a chance. Not only was Ezekiel faster and more agile than an average run-of-the-mill wolf, he also possessed the foresight of man. But the forest was littered with nooks and crannies that provided the four-legged Happy Meal lots of room to maneuver away from Ezekiel and into the hole seconds before Ezekiel's jaw would have clamped down on it.

Irritated, he skittered to a halt and sat back on his haunches, tongue lolling from his mouth as he panted from the exertion. So much for the thrill of the chase. Just for fuck's sake, Ezekiel growled an "I'll get you next time" warning toward the hole before loping off for home once more.

Normally he ran with his pack, but today his change was more of a need than a want. On average a werewolf could go days without switching forms. The change wasn't lunar as legends told, but it was necessary especially when emotions ran high. And right now, Ezekiel didn't think his could get much higher.

If he didn't possess his mate soon, something was going to give. And since there was no chance in hell he'd ever hurt Yvonne, the something was more than likely going to be his sanity. The man half of him understood the decision he wanted her to make wasn't an easy one by far, but his wolf side wasn't as logical. All it saw was his mate backpedaling away as fast as the rabbit, and just as it did in the case of the animal, his wolf wanted to pursue her with all the strength and speed God afforded it.

He knew he'd promised to wait until Yvonne was ready. Hell, he and Daniel had gone as far as to make a pact. They both knew it was imperative she wanted them as much as they wanted her. But it was difficult to explain to his beast. The wolf was ready to claim his mate. Then again, so was the man.

When he finally reached his home, Ezekiel trotted up the steps of his back porch. His long nails clicked on the winterized wood as he made his way over to his favorite spot under the window. Ezekiel caught a glance of himself in the glass and snarled. His chocolate-colored fur was matted with bits of leaves and debris, giving him a savage appearance, not as if he needed help in that department.

In wolf form, Ezekiel was taller than the average Great Dane and twice as heavy. His coloring and facial features resembled a Husky but his sheer size ended the resemblance right there. He and his kind were as fierce and frightening in appearance as the legends had always painted them out to be, but they weren't the monsters people feared, just men with a few extra chromosomes.

Ezekiel turned from his image to look around the yard once more. Satisfied everything was as it should be, he walked around in a small circle to get the lay of the land, before settling down and closing his eyes. Inhaling deeply, he prepared his mind and braced his body for the change from wolf to man. It wasn't a scene from *An American Werewolf in London*, but it wasn't pretty either. Nor was it painless and easy. Bones shifted and his fur rippled as the wolf retreated inside and his male form took shape, leaving a nude Ezekiel lying on the porch.

With a groan, he stood and stretched. He cracked his neck to work out the last of the kinks as he reacquainted himself with the feel of being on two legs instead of four. When he was in his wolf form, things seemed much simpler. His basic needs were in the forefront of his mind and they were all that mattered. There were many more things to consider when he was human, however.

Like clothing.

Modesty wasn't something Ezekiel had an abundance of. Lord knew he'd scared more than his fair share of solicitors in his time. In order to keep the peace he and every one of his kind kept a large supply of pants on hand around their property. Sometimes in very odd places. One never knew when one might need to change or dress in a hurry.

Pulling on the denim he'd left folded on the chair, he buttoned and zipped up just as the sound of tires crunching on the gravel reached his ears. Ezekiel stilled. He wasn't expecting visitors. A car door opened and slammed shut. The air picked up Daniel's scent, but also that of Yvonne.

"I'm around back," he called out, excited to see his mate so soon. This was a very welcome surprise. When they talked earlier she said she had to work. Maybe her visit with Daniel had convinced her to move things forward. The thought made him smile. He was more than ready for the three of them to take things to the next level.

When Daniel rounded the corner, Ezekiel's smile slid away. Yvonne was nowhere in sight, but her scent was stronger than ever and it was radiating off Daniel like heat waves from the sun.

Ezekiel's nostrils flared and he inhaled deeply. Daniel didn't just smell as if he'd been around Yvonne. He smelled as if he'd been *with* her. A growl rumbled low in Ezekiel's throat. Daniel's skin was marked with the muskiness of her arousal. Her scent permeated the air, too intense to be that of a passing glance, and his shirt was covered in dusty white marks in the shape of fingers.

Bastard!

Ezekiel moved to the edge of the porch and with one swift motion vaulted himself over the railing and onto the ground a few feet in front of Daniel. The other man stepped back, his eyes widening.

“What’s up?”

Ezekiel’s eyes narrowed. “I could ask you the same question. You were with Yvonne.”

“Yeah.” Daniel shot him an odd look. “I just came from the bakery.”

His friend’s words weren’t welcome ones. Angry, Ezekiel advanced. “And did you fuck her while you were there?”

“No. You know we have an agreement.”

“Agreements have been broken before.”

“Not by me to you,” Daniel said in a calm and level manner.

“The smell of her pussy is all over you.” Ezekiel took a shuddering breath, trying to calm his beast. He wanted to howl his frustration and take his friend apart a piece at a time.

“True. But I’m a man of my word. I didn’t fuck her.” Daniel crossed his arms over his chest and met Ezekiel’s straightforward gaze with one of his own. “I swear I didn’t. Not even when she was begging me to.”

That little piece of knowledge was something Ezekiel could have done without. “Begged you? And you resisted?”

“Barely,” Daniel admitted sheepishly. “It wasn’t easy.”

“I can imagine.” Ezekiel believed his friend, but the thought of Daniel and Yvonne together still had him on edge. His wolf wrestled inside him, hungry for a fight. But Ezekiel kept a tight rein on his beast, refusing to give in to his baser needs. He would learn to share Yvonne if it was the last thing he did. It wasn’t going to be easy though, especially wanting her the way he did.

Jealousy was an ugly cross to bear, but it was a whole lot easier than never having her at all. Without a doubt, he knew for Yvonne it would have to be both of them or neither of them and that was not a choice he could live with.

Glancing away, Ezekiel stumbled over something to say. He wasn’t big on apologies. He knew the correct thing to do was to say sorry and then shake the other man’s hand or something equally congenial, but his beast wasn’t quite that magnanimous and he was a bit of jerk. So instead he gestured with his head toward the door. “Beer?”

“Sure.”

Without another word, the two men walked up the steps and into the house. Ezekiel didn’t bother to lock his door when he was out. He dared anyone to try and rob him. Dared.

After entering the kitchen, Ezekiel headed to the refrigerator and grabbed a couple of beers. He handed a cold bottle to Daniel before popping the top of his own and settling himself at the kitchen table. Ezekiel played with the label on his bottle as he tried to come up with something to say to ease the rift between him and his best friend. Before he had the chance to mutter some nonsensical comment Daniel spoke. “Feeling pretty stupid, huh?”

Startled, Ezekiel looked up and into the laughing eyes of his friend. A wry grin parted Ezekiel's lips. "Maybe."

"Good." Daniel smiled. He opened his beer and took a long drink before speaking again. "For a moment there I thought I was the only one who wasn't handling this sharing thing very well."

"You too?" Ezekiel was begrudgingly pleased to hear his friend's confession.

"Oh yeah. When you told me about your wake-up call I became jealous as hell."

Ezekiel didn't blame him. It was a feeling he knew well. "Think we're going to be able to make this work?"

"I don't think we have a choice." Daniel shot him a sly look. "Unless you're willing to back off."

"Over your dead body."

Daniel cocked an eyebrow. "I don't think the saying goes exactly like that."

"I know."

"I was afraid of that." Daniel let out a heavy sigh. "What are we going to do about this?"

"I think..." Ezekiel hesitated before continuing. He didn't believe he was about to make the suggestion that he was. "We're going to have to do something neither of us wants to do."

"No...don't say it."

"I have to." Ezekiel took a deep breath. "I think we're going to have to talk about our...feelings."

Daniel winced. "God, why did you say it?"

"Trust me, it goes against everything I believe. It breaks so many man rules, not to mention wolf ones, but we have to do what we have to do."

"This is going to be painful."

"It'll be a whole lot less painful than losing her."

"True," Daniel hedged. Ezekiel could see this was just as awkward for his friend as it was for him.

"Do you, uhh, want to go first?"

Hell, he didn't even want to go last, but something had to be done. "Let's start with a few simple questions. Tell me what happened at the bakery."

"Ugh." Yvonne groaned as she shifted in her seat once again. She tried to find a more comfortable position for what had to be the hundredth time but, just as before, the sit dance provided no comfort. She was antsy, irritated and horny as hell.

This was all *their* faults. If it weren't for the demonic duo, Yvonne knew she wouldn't be all out of sorts. It didn't help that the scent of sex, well almost sex, still lingered in the room like a heavy perfume. The heady aroma made it impossible for her to concentrate on the accounts she was working on. The columns of numbers were all blending as her mind wandered to the two men who'd apparently made it their life's purpose to slowly drive her insane.

Yvonne didn't know which she wanted to do most, kill them or fuck them stupid. Before she could decide which one to choose, the phone rang. Grateful for the interruption, she picked up the receiver. "Thank you for calling Rousel's Bakery, how may I help you?"

"Hey, baby."

"Mom." Yvonne smiled, as she normally did when she heard her mother Shirley's voice on the other end. "How are you?"

"Not as good as you are, I hear."

"Ughh." Yvonne closed her eyes and groaned. "You heard about that."

"Please." Her mother's voice was filled with amusement. "My cell blew up the second the announcement was made, but it wasn't until I checked my Twitter feed today that I heard your little duo is really going to be a trio."

"Shut. Up." Yvonne opened her eyes and sat back in her chair. So much for keeping things on the down low.

"No can do." Her mother chuckled. "Your love life, my dear, is causing gridlock on the information superhighway. And to think I missed it all."

"First, no one calls it the information superhighway anymore. And second, be thankful you're out of town."

"Oh, honey, I'm home."

"Mom, tell me you didn't cut your vacation short." Shirley had planned her girls-only vacation with her sister and Yvonne's aunt over a year ago and she wasn't due home for a few more days.

"Of course I did. You didn't think I was going to miss my own daughter's wedding."

"Wedding! Mom, no one is talking wedding just yet." Although it had been implied heavily.

"Honey, everyone is talking wedding."

"I'm not," she grumbled. Damn wagging tongues. "Right now, I'm not sure if I want to talk to either of them again, let alone go along with them and this crazy plan."

"Uh-huh. Why don't you come by and break bread with your mother and tell me all about it."

"Mom, I'm at work."

"I know," Shirley replied dryly. "That's where I called you. I've already begun to prepare a light late lunch. It'll be ready by the time you get here."

"It's my turn to close. Robin's been here since eleven."

"I'm sure she could use a little overtime. See you in a bit. Love you."

Before Yvonne could utter another word, her mother hung up. Irritated, Yvonne did likewise. "Is there anyone who doesn't boss me around?" she muttered, as she crossed her arms over her breasts and leaned back in her chair.

She shouldn't go. Maybe if she stayed at work, she could pretend everything in her world was under her control. And then maybe she would wake up. Sighing, Yvonne gathered her keys and purse. After speaking to Robin, she headed out to her car. If going was a must, then she'd at the very least do it on her own terms. There was one must-do stop she had to make first though, and that was to go to her own home and shower.

An hour and a half later when Yvonne arrived at her parents' house, she felt more capable of handling a civilized conversation with her mother. She had her talking points ready, the reasons why the three of them together could be good and also why it was most assuredly a bad idea, all cataloged in her mental Rolodex. Understanding her mother as she did, Yvonne knew Shirley wouldn't be satisfied with just the list though. She would expect more, and Yvonne wasn't sure if she had it in her to give.

Yvonne could hear the music blaring from the back patio the second she walked into the house. She shut the front door behind her and cautiously made her way toward the kitchen. "Mom," she called out.

"Hey, baby." Shirley stepped out of the kitchen. Even though it had only been a few days since Yvonne had last seen her mother, the older woman was a sight for sore eyes. Dressed casually in jeans and a T-shirt, Shirley looked at the very least half a decade younger than she really was. Her dark chocolate skin bore no telltale sign of the years gone by, nor did her shoulder-length ebony dreadlocks have a hint of gray. She was as youthful appearing as she was beautiful, and it was damn good to see her again.

"Hi, Momma."

Grinning, Shirley pulled Yvonne into her arms and crushed her in her exuberant embrace. "Oh my goodness. I've missed you so much."

"I missed you too." Yvonne tried to pull back but was unable. "Not necessarily in the same bone-crushing manner though."

"Oh, you." Shirley released Yvonne and smacked her daughter lightly on the arm. "Always with the sarcasm."

"Wonder where I get that from."

"Your father," Shirley replied, before turning around and strolling back into the kitchen.

Somehow Yvonne didn't quite believe that. Shaking her head, she followed her mother into the other room. "How was your trip?"

"Brief."

"I know." Yvonne groaned. Just what she needed, a heap of guilt. "Mom, you didn't have to come back."

"Please." Shirley waved her hand as if to shoo Yvonne's concerns away. "The drama going on around here is so much more fun than sitting on a beach watching your aunt trying to suck in her gut and reenact the first half of *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*."

"I'm glad my love life amuses y—" In mid-rant, Yvonne caught sight of the island's granite countertop. There was not one but two blenders filled with some sort of red icy beverage as well as a couple of plates overflowing with diced-up strawberries, pineapples, peaches and mangos, but no real food in sight.

What kind of lunch was this and how many people did her mom plan to feed? "Is Dad here?"

"Lord, heavens no." Shirley opened an overhead cabinet and took out two martini glasses. "It's just us girls."

Yvonne froze. Her mother put a little bit too much swirl on girls. "Which girls, you and me?"

"And your aunt and her two daughters." Then as if in afterthought she added, "Oh and Robin from the shop."

"My shop!" she gasped.

"Yes." Shirley set the glasses on the counter.

"If she's here, then who's there?"

"No one. It's closed for the day."

Her mother's casual demeanor floored Yvonne. As did the calm way her mother went about sugaring the rims of the glasses as if she didn't have a care in the world. Of all the nerve. "Mom!"

Shirley looked up and frowned. "What?"

"How are you...?" Yvonne paused and held up her hand as she took in a deep and cleansing breath. She waited until she had her temper in check before she spoke again. "How are you going to close my shop without asking me?"

"Your shop?" Shirley crossed her arms over her breasts and leveled Yvonne with a parental glare. "Not only did I give you the start-up capital, I also own twenty-five percent of the bakery, so technically it's not just your shop."

"Well, when you put it that way, it isn't."

"Which is why I put it that way. So go ahead and get mad then get over it." Shirley dropped her arms and pulled the top off one of the blenders. "And then let's have drinks."

Just like that, her mom's attitude was gone. The quick about-face showed the older woman's true colors. She hadn't been mad at all, and Yvonne had fallen for it. Hook, line and sinker. Damn it.

"Something..." Yvonne narrowed her eyes and waggled her index finger at her mother, "...is seriously wrong with you."

"Don't I know it." Shirley laughed as she filled the glasses then offered one to her daughter. "Now come on. I have a present for you and the girls are waiting."

Resigned and slightly amused, Yvonne took the drink from her mother. "Today is coming out of your take."

"Fine. Fine." Her mother placed her hand on Yvonne's lower back and ushered her toward the patio doors. "Now tell me what's going on with my future sons-in-law."

Ezekiel hung up his phone with a frown and glanced over at Daniel who was doing the exact same thing. "She's not answering her cell."

"Nor her house." Daniel slipped his cell in his shirt pocket. "The shop was a no-go too."

"What exactly happened between the two of you?"

"I already told you what happened." And in more detail than he was comfortable with, but if they were going to start out on equal footing, then Daniel knew this was the way it had to be.

"Apparently you left something out."

"Such as?"

"The part where you scared her away."

"Scared her." Daniel snorted. "This is Yvonne we're talking about. She doesn't scare easily."

"Then where is she?"

"How the hell should I know? I've been here with you Golden Girling our feelings, remember?"

"I remember." Ezekiel grimaced. "I also recall us saying we'd never talk about it again."

"True." Daniel shivered at the mere thought of sharing his feelings again. "Let's change the subject back to the matter at hand, like where is our missing woman."

"Think we should call the mayor?"

"And tell him what? His daughter might be running scared because I went down on her in her place of work and you had phone sex with her this morning?"

"Yes," Ezekiel said dryly. "And in those very words."

"I'm okay with that." Daniel smiled. "As long as you're the one making the phone call."

"Don't tell me you're afraid of our soon-to-be father-in-law."

He wasn't afraid. Daniel just wasn't stupid. "Not at all. I'd only prefer if one of us was going to take a bullet, it be you."

"Thanks, buddy."

"Hey, you're the one who can heal and shit."

"So can you."

"With medical assistance. All you have to do is turn furry and *bam*, bullet pops out and you're a new man."

"You've been watching way too many cheesy late-night movies."

"Hey don't go knocking horror movies. Besides if you get shot, I, as a vet, have a better chance of helping you than you as a manager of a mill have of helping me. It's elemen—" The doorbell rang, cutting off the rest of Daniel's spiel. "Is it...?"

Ezekiel inhaled deeply then smiled. “Yes. She’s here.” Ezekiel stood and made his way over to the front door, with Daniel right behind. He wasn’t very pleased with the way Yvonne up and disappeared on them, and he had half a mind to put her over his lap to show her.

The second Ezekiel opened the door, the other half of Daniel’s mind kicked in and the punishment quickly disappeared. He was just happy to see her. Unfortunately he was the only one thinking happy-to-see-her thoughts.

“Where the hell have you been?” Ezekiel growled.

Yvonne peered up at Ezekiel, brow raised. “Good evening to you too.” Yvonne tightened her hold on her red shawl. She’d changed clothes since he saw her last, into a pair of faded blue jeans and a black T-shirt, but she looked as scrumptious as ever. “May I come in? It’s a bit chilly out here and this is getting heavy.” She dangled the picnic basket.

Since Ezekiel didn’t seem capable of thought, Daniel decided to act. “Of course. Move.” Daniel shoved his friend out of the way and took the basket from her hand. Smiling, he pressed a kiss to her cheek then stepped back to allow her room to come inside. “Where do you want me to put this?”

“In the kitchen is fine,” she said. “It’s for my grandmother. She’s still not feeling well. I’m going to stop by in the morning and see her.”

Morning. Daniel shot Ezekiel a look over her head. That sounded promising. “I’ll be right back.” Daniel made quick work of putting the basket on the counter, then hurried back into the living room and joined Yvonne on the couch.

“Where have you been?” Ezekiel repeated, as he sat on the coffee table in front of her.

“At my parents’ house. My mom is home and she was in the mood for a little...” Yvonne paused as if searching for the right word, “...girl talk,” she finished with a small smile.

“Girl talk?” Ezekiel cocked a brow.

“Euphemism, apparently, for getting drunk and prying.”

“You were drinking with your mom.” Daniel always did think Shirley was pretty damn cool, now he knew he was right.

“To be truthful she and my aunt did most of the drinking.” Yvonne smiled wryly. “I was too busy fending off nosey questions.”

“And in the midst of fending you couldn’t find time to pick up a phone.”

“I could have, I suppose, but I thought it would please the two of you more if I showed up, ready and willing.” Yvonne rose to her feet. “But I see I was wrong. Maybe I should go.”

The hell she should.

Daniel opened his mouth to say just that, but was beat to the punch by Ezekiel, who sounded far from pleased by the prospect of Yvonne leaving. “If you take a single step toward the door, I’m going to toss you over my lap and give you the spanking you so rightly deserve for making me worry.”

Yvonne narrowed her eyes and placed her hands on her hips. "I'm not afraid of you."

"Good, I don't want you to be."

"Then don't try to threaten me. I'll leave if I want." Despite her feistiness, Daniel noted Yvonne didn't budge an inch.

"It wasn't a threat. It was a promise." There was a feral look on Ezekiel's face that warned of trouble to come. It was a look Yvonne ignored.

"More like a dare." Yvonne's sassy attitude was going to get her bottom lit up and good.

"I'd sit if I were you," Daniel warned good-naturedly. Although he was sort of hoping she wouldn't. The very idea of watching Ezekiel heating her ass had Daniel's cock stirring. "I'm thinking you're only getting a warning tonight, baby."

"You're enjoying this, aren't you?"

Daniel smiled. "Very much. But I'm rooting for you," he teased, "to get your ass spanked."

"Ezekiel wouldn't dare."

"Oh." Ezekiel stood. "But I would. Try me."

"I think he just double-dog dared you." Oh yeah. This was fun.

"You'd never raise your hand against me."

"In anger, you're absolutely correct, but to teach you to mind me, that's an entirely different thing."

Yvonne took in a quick, sharp breath. "Did you say *mind*?" She glanced at Daniel, surprise written all over her face. "Did he just say mind?"

"I do believe he did."

Yvonne moved. Fast and furious, she stepped toward Ezekiel and poked him in the chest with her index finger. "I. Don't. Mind."

"Did you take a step?"

"Several of them," Daniel offered.

Yvonne turned to look at Daniel, a frown marring her beautiful brown face. "Whose side are y—" Before she could finish her sentence Ezekiel leaned over, picked her up and tossed Yvonne onto his shoulder. The new position left her sexy rump in the air and her head hanging down behind Ezekiel. "No, you didn't. Let me go. Right now."

Ezekiel delivered on his promise and smacked her upturned bottom. "I warned you."

"You...you are such a bully," she yelled, holding tightly to Ezekiel's pants leg. "Daniel! Daniel!"

Ezekiel turned to the side so Daniel could see Yvonne's face. Daniel tilted his head and grinned at the upside-down woman. "Yes, love?"

"Aren't you going to help?"

"Of course I am." Daniel rose and looked at his friend. "We're heading to the bedroom?"

"Yes," Ezekiel replied.

“Good. I’ll get the door.” This night just kept getting better and better.

Chapter Six

The walk into the bedroom barely took a few moments, but it was almost too long for Ezekiel. Yvonne had fired his blood from the second she'd walked in the door. His need to claim his mate was boiling to the surface and her defiance, whether feigned or real, was like gasoline to the embers. His domineering tendencies rose and Daniel's encouragement only spurred him on.

"Ezekiel, you better let me down this instant." Yvonne's voice drifted from behind him as did Daniel's chuckle.

"No problem, baby." Ezekiel flipped Yvonne forward, and she landed with a bounce on the newly purchased king-sized bed.

"Ouch." Grumbling, she rose onto her knees and made her way over to the edge. Her eyes were alight with passion and fire. Yvonne wasn't one to easily be tamed, which was probably one of the reasons he loved her so much. "Watch it."

"Don't worry. I plan to." Lord did he. With his eyes on the prize, Ezekiel began to unbutton his shirt.

"Oh no." Yvonne held her hand up. "You're crazy if you think we're going to have sex *now*."

"I don't think that at all." Ezekiel shrugged his shoulders, dropping his shirt to the floor.

Her eyes widened in surprise and she seemed taken back by his proclamation, much to his amusement. "We're not?"

"I don't think it," he clarified. "I know it. Admit it. You came here tonight ready for us."

"Maybe." Yvonne lowered her hand back to her side and licked her lips nervously. "But I might change my mind again."

"Might?" Daniel picked up the gauntlet she'd tossed down and stepped closer to the bed. Like Ezekiel he was also now shirtless, a fact that wasn't missed by Yvonne whose attention kept darting down to their chests. She could barely keep her gaze above either man's chin, which only made her argument all the more laughable.

But that didn't stop her from trying to make it. "Well, it all depends."

Humoring her, Ezekiel asked, "On what?"

"On whether or not you were serious about spanking me. I'm into kink..."

"You are, are you?" Daniel interrupted.

"Obviously." Yvonne placed her hands on her hips. "I'm here, aren't I?"

Daniel chuckled. "Taking on the two of us isn't kinky."

“Then what is it?”

“Meant to be,” Ezekiel answered. “You belong to us.”

“Just as we belong to you,” Daniel pointed out.

Yvonne frowned and crossed her arms over her ample breasts. “All that might be true, but I’m still not going to let you spank me.”

“You said let,” Ezekiel flashed her a wolfish grin. “How cute.”

She narrowed her eyes in what he could only assume was supposed to be a threatening manner. “I’m not going to be pushed around either.”

“Neither of us has any desire to push you around.” Daniel joined her on the bed, sitting slightly behind her kneeling form. “Tell us what you’re worried about.”

Yvonne glanced over her shoulder at Daniel. “Do you want the list?”

“Why don’t you condense it to the top ten?” Ezekiel suggested.

Turning back toward Ezekiel, she poked her finger into his bare chest. “How about the fact you’re too bossy?”

Ezekiel grabbed her hand and brought it to his lips. “Yeah, so?”

“Maybe I don’t like bossy.”

“I think you like bossy just fine. In fact...” Ezekiel pressed one knee into the bed and leaned into her, “...I’m willing to bet you love it.”

“And you’d be wrong.”

“Maybe you haven’t been bossed around in the right way,” Daniel offered, placing his hands on her waist.

“Or by the right people.”

Daniel began to move his hand under her shirt. “At the same time.”

“I think you two are working in tangent...” Yvonne closed her eyes as Daniel centered his palm against her breast, “...against me.”

“I think you’re right.” Ezekiel pressed his advantage. He cupped the back of her head in his hand, pulled her close and lowered his mouth to hers. Despite her sullen behavior earlier, Yvonne was more than receptive to him. She kissed him with a passion and hunger that matched his own.

Her full, supple lips parted under his, allowing his tongue to slip into the welcoming haven of her mouth. Ezekiel easily became lost in her heady flavor, but the sweet taste of her wasn’t enough. He needed more. There was no way he could stop as easily tonight as he had the night before. This moment was too long in the making. Their time was now.

Reluctantly, Ezekiel ended the kiss and took a deep breath. One touch from her had him ready to explode. It felt as if he’d waited forever for this moment, forever for her. Trying to regain some control, he backed off the bed and stood.

“My turn,” Daniel murmured, the second Ezekiel moved away. Daniel took his hand from under Yvonne’s shirt and pulled her down so she was sitting on the bed, legs curled beneath her. He wound his free hand in her braids and used it as leverage to turn her head so she was looking at him. Without uttering another word, he covered Yvonne’s mouth with his, picking up exactly where Ezekiel left off.

Standing back, Ezekiel unfastened his pants and slipped them past his bulging erection and down to the floor before stepping free. All the while he watched the erotic vision of Yvonne becoming lost in the pleasure of Daniel’s embrace. He waited for his wolf to howl its displeasure. To his surprise the jealousy that damn near drowned him earlier in the day was nowhere to be found. Even his possessive half knew this was the way it should be. The three of them bound together.

He waited until Daniel broke their kiss and the two of them seemed able to focus their lust-filled minds on other things before Ezekiel spoke again. But when he did, his words were directed to the one person who was wearing far too many clothes and who looked entirely too pleased with herself. “What was this you were saying earlier about changing your mind?”

“I said might. It was never a definite,” she backpedaled, much to his amusement.

“And now?” he asked, needing her to voice her consent before he stole her breath away.

“Now I’m definitely sure if the two of you stop tonight, I’ll go mad.”

Daniel shot him a satisfied look. “We can’t have that, can we, Ezekiel?”

“No, we can’t.”

Daniel took hold of the bottom edge of her shirt and raised it over her head. Yvonne didn’t protest as the bountiful curves of her breasts, encased in a lace red bra, were bared. Ezekiel’s mouth watered to taste her. But first he needed her to undress.

“Jeans next.” Daniel was on the same wavelength as he was.

“You first,” Yvonne countered. Daniel shrugged and stood, but Ezekiel wasn’t willing to wait any longer.

“No negotiating.” Ezekiel knelt on the bed, his hand moving to her waistband. “Do you need some assistance?”

“Maybe I do.” A small smile played over her lips as she stretched her legs out in front of her. She folded her arms behind her head then lay back on the pillows to allow him better access. He made quick work of her button and zipper and stripped her of the denim in record time, leaving her clothed only in her bra and panties. The matching scarlet ensemble looked decadent against her skin, making Yvonne appear even more scrumptious and erotic. “Nice. Red is definitely your color, little one.”

Yvonne chuckled nervously and moved her hand over the gentle swell of her stomach. “I’m not exactly little.”

“I think you’re wonderful.” Ezekiel said. “I wish I could make you understand how beautiful you are to me.” Daniel let out a fake cough. “To us. Your face, your luscious breasts...” his fingers trailed across

the pebbled peaks pressing against the lacey bra, "...the sweet scent of your pussy. Everything about you is perfection," Ezekiel stated firmly, daring her to argue. "You're built as you're supposed to be, soft, supple and extremely feminine. Perfect."

"I could not agree more," Daniel said, joining them back on the bed once more. Like Ezekiel he'd slipped out of his pants, but kept his boxers in place. Reaching out, he ran his finger over the dark lace covering her tips. "Is it new?"

"Yes." Yvonne blushed. "My mother called it her welcome-to-the-family gift for the two of you."

Ezekiel let out a deep chuckle as he tossed her pants carelessly to the floor. "Remind me to thank her later."

"Much later." Yvonne propped herself up on her elbows. "Right now we have a few household-snack positions to try out."

Daniel furrowed his brow. "Household-snack positions?"

"I'll explain later," Ezekiel promised Daniel as he held out his hand to her. "Come here."

With a bold smile, Yvonne did as he demanded, rising to her knees and moving into his embrace. Ezekiel gathered her into his arms and pulled her tight against him. Her softness molded against the hard contours of his muscular body. Bending his head, he took her mouth under his, parting her lips with his tongue as he roamed the voluptuous curves of her backside with his hands. He marveled at how perfectly she fit him.

While he was busy feasting on her mouth, Daniel was familiarizing his lips with her nape, shoulder and upper back. The other man kept busy touching and teasing Yvonne, going as far as to move Ezekiel's hands out of the way so he could unhook her bra.

When the clasp was undone, Yvonne turned her head from Ezekiel, breaking their kiss and softly whispered Daniel's name. The other man wasted no time answering her call, covering her mouth with his.

Since Yvonne was otherwise occupied, Ezekiel graciously freed her from her bra, baring her large dark-chocolate-colored breasts to his hungry gaze. After dropping the bra to the bed, he cupped her generous mounds in his hands. He rolled her hard buds between his thumbs and forefingers, tugging and teasing her nipples before leaning down and taking one dark tip into his mouth. He laved her nipple greedily all the while Daniel devoured her mouth. Her peaks were hard as stone, much like his straining cock. Ezekiel couldn't wait to fuck her, but first he wanted to make her as crazy for him as he was for her.

With a groan, he released her nipple from his mouth and quickly replaced it with his fingers, squeezing the wet flesh with as much pressure as he'd used to suckle it. "Feel good?" Ezekiel murmured, watching her face as she reacted to his touch. "Or do you need more?" he asked, squeezing harder.

Moaning, she tightened her fingers in Ezekiel's hair and held him securely to her breast. There was no other place he'd rather be. Her reaction was answer enough. Their girl liked it a little rough. She was a

woman after his own heart. Pulling back, Ezekiel blew a soft gust of air over her erect tips, causing Yvonne to break away from Daniel and gasp.

“Zeke...”

“Too much, baby?” Daniel asked, his deep voice hoarse and filled with need. It was a feeling Ezekiel was more than familiar with.

“Yes. You guys are driving me wild.”

“You haven’t seen anything yet.” Ezekiel moved backwards a bit on the bed. “Lay back,” he ordered huskily. Daniel helped her get situated on the bed and then scooted over a little to give her some room.

“Just like that,” Daniel encouraged, as she lay flat on her back as Ezekiel had commanded.

When she was positioned in the right place, Ezekiel took her long brown silky-smooth legs in his hands and pushed them apart then moved up between them. He leaned forward until he was within kissing distance of her pussy and inhaled deeply. The aroma of her sweet sex filled his mind and his senses as nothing else ever had before.

She smelled divine.

Ezekiel licked his lips, tasting the air. Without bothering to take off her panties, Ezekiel lowered his mouth to her pussy and swiped his tongue across the lace-covered treasure. She writhed beneath him and pressed her pussy toward him.

“Hungry?” Daniel questioned.

“Yes,” she moaned. “Stop torturing me.”

As much as Ezekiel wanted to continue to tease, he knew it was long past the time for games. Ezekiel looked up at her. “Tell me something?”

“Anything.”

“I know they’re new, but are you overly fond of these?” Ezekiel hooked a finger under the material on her hip and gave it a little tug.

Yvonne propped herself on her elbows and gave him a look that was more provocative than any words he’d ever heard. “Not at all.”

“Good.” Ezekiel pulled harder, ripping the side of the flimsy lace. “I’m glad we’re on the same page,” he said as he did the same to the other side, then tugged the material from underneath her and tossed it over his shoulder.

The second he freed her of the sexy red bottoms, Yvonne spread her legs farther apart and exposed her pussy to his gaze. Ezekiel’s mouth watered at the sight and his cock jerked in anticipation as the word *finally* reverberated in his mind.

Mmm...he was home.

Smiling seductively, Yvonne gestured with her index finger, *come here*.

It was a command he was more than willing to follow. Spreading open her nether lips, he lowered his head and swiped his tongue over her moist opening. Yvonne bucked at the slick touch against her bare flesh, but Ezekiel tightened his grip on her legs and kept her in place. Her sweet nectar poured over his tongue like cream. His wolf howled in appreciation. This was what he'd waited so long for.

Growling, he lowered his mouth a few inches and speared her soaked sex with his tongue. He drank her dew like the thirsty animal he was, but the pleasing taste of her wasn't nearly satisfying enough. Anxious to have her, Ezekiel suckled her swollen clit into his mouth and slid two fingers into her heated core.

The way her tight pussy closed around his surging fingers made Ezekiel all the more hungry to have her. If she was this snug with only his two thick digits filling her, he couldn't imagine how she'd feel surrounding his cock.

Yvonne's moan drew his attention away from his feast. He eased up so he could peer at her. She was still propped on her elbows but this time her eyes were closed and her mouth was filled with the long length of Daniel's cock. From the way Daniel's boxers were pushed only past his buttocks, Ezekiel could tell his friend was as hungry to have Yvonne as he was. Not that Ezekiel could blame him. This thing between them was a long time coming, but worth every minute they had to wait.

For a moment Ezekiel was torn between watching the erotic, arousing action and eating her pussy, then sanity returned and reminded him where he was supposed to be. Lowering his mouth, Ezekiel thrust his tongue deeper into her channel while rolling her clit between his fingers, applying just enough pressure to keep her perched on the edge yet not quite enough to send her over.

"Whatever you're doing...don't stop." Daniel's voice was filled with awe. "The feel of her moaning around my cock is sin-fucking-sational."

Her hips rocked back and forth as he tongued her slit. After a few seconds of the sexual tango, Yvonne gasped and Daniel let out a moan of disappointment. Ezekiel lifted his mouth from her sweet sex to see Yvonne with her head thrown back and her teeth sunk into her lip as if she was trying to keep her screams of pleasure at bay.

That would never do. "No, don't hold back. Let me hear how much you enjoy me tonguing your cunt." He could see her body quake at the intensity of their connection.

Yvonne dropped onto her back, reached out and grabbed hold of Ezekiel's head, pulling him back to her pussy. "Yes," she cried. "Please, Zeke. Please."

"I think our girl has found a better use for your mouth." Daniel's voice was filled with amusement. "Why don't you give her what she needs?"

Ezekiel had exactly what she needed, but right now she'd have to settle for his tongue. Following her lead, Ezekiel lapped at her clit. Her aroma was so thick he wanted to change forms and roll around in her heady scent. The very idea made him want to laugh and it would probably make her run screaming from

the room...the first time he asked. Eventually though, she would be as comfortable with every cell of his dual being and come to love both halves of him in much the way they loved her.

The sounds of ecstasy ripping from her throat were so loud it pulled him back from his wayward thoughts. But they were also loud enough to let him know she loved, not liked, what he was doing to her body, which only spurred him on.

Yes, this was what she wanted, but it was also what he wanted. To see her come undone.

“Yes. God yes,” she chanted.

“Look at me when you come,” Daniel demanded. “Show me how much you need his tongue.”

“So bad. So bad,” Yvonne pleaded.

“Good.” Ezekiel could hear the sound of flesh hitting flesh, a sound all boys learned right around puberty. Daniel was jerking off in front of her, hell maybe on her, and they both seemed more than pleased by it.

“Fuck that’s hot.” Her voice echoed his friend’s frantic need. “Let me...”

“No, you’ll make me come and I want to last long enough to sink into your hot cunt.”

“At least...at least one of us will be lasting... He’s killing me.”

“Eating that pussy good, huh?”

“Too good.” She pumped her hips toward Ezekiel, her every word and motion begging for release. “I’m gonna...gonna come. So close. So close.” Her hips rocked against the bed as she fucked Ezekiel’s face, chasing after the release like a waning dream.

“Then show him. Fuck his mouth with your sweet pussy,” Daniel insisted, his voice thick with desire. “And while he feasts on your pussy I’m going to toy with your tits. Rub my cock all over your dark berries, make them glisten for us.”

“Giv—ohh...ahhh.” Legs taut, back bowed, she cried out her release, damn near shattering Ezekiel’s eardrums in the process. The sounds of pleasure ripped from her throat. Yvonne quivered as her orgasm rocked through her body and around his fingers and tongue.

“Ohh...oh man.” Yvonne released the death grip she had on Ezekiel’s hair and dropped her arms back to the bed. She tried to catch her fleeting breath and struggled to recover.

Ezekiel looked up from between her legs, his mouth slick with the evidence of her desire. “On your knees,” he ordered, his voice husky and filled with urgency. “Now.”

Ezekiel’s domineering tone excited Yvonne more than she could ever say, and even though she felt a little lightheaded from her powerful orgasm, she still scrambled to move into place. She might have been apprehensive at first. Hell, in some ways she still was. But her body was telling her how right this was, the three of them together. She didn’t feel torn between her two lovers. Instead she felt cherished and loved, doubly so.

As she assumed the position Ezekiel dictated to her, the two men climbed from the bed and undressed completely. Slyly, Yvonne cast her gaze about, taking in their more-than-adequate attributes. As well-endowed as the two of them were, she couldn't help but think she was a very lucky girl.

While she was occupied drooling over her men, Ezekiel busied himself in the nightstand where he withdrew two condoms, handing one to Daniel before tearing into one himself. As she watched he pulled the silver wrapper off with his teeth and spat the sliver of foil on the floor before climbing onto the bed behind her again and placing a hand on her hip.

To her utter surprise, instead of Ezekiel slipping inside her, he brought his hand down on the upturned curve of her bottom. The sharp smack forced her forward.

Yvonne gasped at the stinging sensation. "Zeke!" she growled, whipping her head around to stare in shock at him. He'd done it. He'd hit her. "What are you doing?"

"Exactly what I told you I was going to do. Did you think I forgot?"

She'd hoped at the very least. "But...but..."

"I warned you," Ezekiel said as he brought his hand down again.

"Daniel." She tried to appeal to her other lover. "Help."

"Of course." Daniel sat on his ass and reached under Yvonne to take her nipples in his hands and squeezed.

"Not exactly what I had in mind." She moaned but didn't pull back, nor did she try too hard to escape when Ezekiel rained down another smack on her smarting bottom.

As before, the slap was sharp but not painful. Not in the least. Even though Yvonne knew she wasn't supposed to enjoy it, she couldn't resist. It didn't help that Daniel was driving her crazy by stimulating her nipples.

Ezekiel's palm making contact with her heated ass caused her pussy to clench with arousal. Her butt might be tender, her nipples might be a tad sore, but her pussy was wet. She needed to be filled and she needed it now. "Ezekiel. Daniel. Please stop teasing me."

"Have you learned"—*smack!*—"your lesson?"

"If I say yes, will that mean no more spanking?"

"Yes." Ezekiel caressed her tender flesh. His gentle touch made her skin tingle all the more.

"Then no."

Her reply caused Daniel to laugh and unfortunately release her nipples. "I don't think our little wanton is learning her lesson."

"Maybe we should teach her another one."

"Like what?" Daniel asked.

"How about not talking with your mouth and pussy full?"

“That’s a very important lesson.” Daniel rose back to his knees and positioned himself in front of her with his jutting cock in his hand. Unlike Ezekiel, Daniel hadn’t slipped the condom on, leaving his thick cock bare to her view. The sight of his erection caused her mouth to water. She couldn’t wait to have him inside her.

Yvonne licked her lips with enthusiasm as she stared at Daniel masturbating right in front of her. She had no doubt she could give him ten times more pleasure than his hand ever could. Without thinking about it, she tried to move her head forward so she could take him in her mouth, but to her dismay, Ezekiel tightened his grip on her hips and held her in place.

“Ah, ah, ah,” Daniel chastised, stroking his cock teasingly in front of her. “Wait for it.”

“Bastard,” she growled.

Ezekiel tsked. “We’re definitely going to have to do something about that mouth.” Ezekiel stroked the crown of his condom-covered shaft over her wet slit. Shamelessly, she thrust her ass back toward him. They were tying her up in knots.

“Any suggestions?” Daniel asked.

“Yes, fill it.” Ezekiel tangled his hands in her hair and pulled her head back a bit. “Open your mouth and suck Daniel’s cock.”

She didn’t have to be told twice. Eager for the taste of Daniel once more, Yvonne swooped her mouth down onto him, taking as much of his hard, thick length as she could.

Daniel groaned. “Ohh yes.”

“Good girl.” Ezekiel released his hold on her hair, centered the crown of his shaft against her sex and thrust into her pussy. Ezekiel didn’t sink balls deep inside her on the first thrust, nor the second or the third.

To Yvonne’s utter surprise it took several long, steady strokes before he was able to seat himself in her completely. “Damn, man.” Ezekiel’s voice sounded strained. “She’s so fucking tight.”

And he was so fucking big. His shaft filled and stretched her tender pussy almost to the point of pain, but Yvonne would be damned if she asked him to stop. She finally had both men where she wanted them and she wouldn’t give them up now for anything in the world. Instead she forced her body to relax and take pleasure in the filled-to-the-brim feeling Ezekiel gave her. Sooner rather than later his thrusts became smoother, thanks to her body’s lubrication and the strong unbreakable desire she felt for her men.

“Oh that’s right, baby. Open up for me. Take me deeper.”

Yvonne moaned as Ezekiel fucked her with hard, even strokes. She’d fantasized about being in this exact position forever, but her imagination didn’t hold a candle to the reality. Surrendering to the onslaught of pleasure, she closed her eyes and relinquished her body to the two men who worked in tandem. As one pushed forward the other retreated, keeping her off balance and always occupied in the best of ways. She could barely tell if she was coming or going. Well that wasn’t entirely true, she knew she wasn’t coming, but she was close. Very close.

“You look beautiful,” Daniel murmured, as he pushed his dick deeper in her mouth. He slipped his hand into her hair and held her head. “So sexy with your mouth and pussy stuffed full with our cocks.”

His naughty words spurred her on. She hollowed her cheeks to suck him hard as her tongue stroked over his thick shaft.

Daniel’s thighs tensed and his fist tightened in her hair. “Shit...right there, baby. Going to go deeper now. I want you to swallow my length.”

Ezekiel stilled inside her, for which she would be forever grateful. Yvonne liked to believe she was very good at multitasking, but deep throating while getting fucked from behind was not the ideal situation to discover whether or not she was wrong.

Yvonne raised her gaze and her head a bit so she could watch Daniel’s face as she pleased him, and opened her mouth wide. She relaxed her jaw and remembered to breathe out her nose as he began to sink into her mouth. His cock was large and for a moment she thought she wasn’t going to be able to do it. But Daniel moved slowly, allowing her to adjust to his length and width as he surged forward. Yvonne loosened her throat and swallowed, loving the feeling of power she experienced at Daniel’s shuddering groan.

“Damn, baby,” he exclaimed with wonder. “Damn.”

“Feel good?” Ezekiel asked.

“God. Yes.” Daniel punctuated his words with a thrust. He lingered for a second then pulled completely out of her mouth.

“What? Why?” Yvonne’s throat was a little sore, but she didn’t want him to stop. She reached out a hand toward Daniel, determined to bring him back where he belonged. Inside her. Before she could get another word out, Ezekiel began his deep thrusts anew, stealing her breath and her thoughts with his steadily increasing surges.

“Don’t worry about me.” Daniel moved to sit next to her and slipped his hands beneath her bowed body. He eased his fingers between her legs and stroked her clit as Ezekiel powered into her from behind. “Just come for us.”

That wouldn’t be hard to do at all. Yvonne already felt as if she was on the edge of something grand.

“Ah, ah, ah,” Ezekiel chastised. “If you want to come, I want you to work for it. Move against me, baby. Fuck my dick.”

Yvonne did as he requested, pumping her hips back and meeting him thrust for thrust. And while the two of them fucked, Daniel kept up his wicked caresses. He rubbed her clit in circular motions. The dual sensations were far too much for her to bear.

Unable to hold out any longer, she gripped the quilt tightly as she came, flooding his cock with her cream. The intensity of her orgasm made her weak and if it wasn’t for Ezekiel’s grasp on her hips, she

would have collapsed into a ball onto the bed. She wasn't the only one who went over. Ezekiel was right behind, powering into her again and again until he too came with a strangled moan.

Yvonne stayed in her exact position, butt high, head low as she struggled to catch her breath. After a few seconds, Ezekiel pulled out of her and gently nudged her onto her back. His presence was soon replaced by Daniel. The other man slipped on a condom then eased between her legs and slid smoothly into her.

With a whimper, she accepted his length into her body and looked into the eyes of her other lover as he picked up where her last one left off.

"My turn," Daniel muttered, before covering her mouth with his and beginning an all-too-familiar rhythm inside her tender pussy.

Two men for the price of one. Yvonne knew she was one lucky, lucky woman.

It took everything out of Daniel not to come the second he slid into her warm, wet haven. The feel of her pussy surrounding his cock was better than he could have ever imagined. Unfortunately he was far too primed from her masterful oral skills to last long in her hot sex. And even though she'd just spent the last few minutes getting fucked, her pussy was still as tight as a fist.

Pulling back, he broke their kiss. "Fuck, baby," he groaned. Daniel tried to concentrate on not coming, but unfortunately for him Yvonne wasn't making it easy. Her pussy walls gripped his cock, squeezing it within an inch of its life as she rolled her hips up, meeting him thrust for thrust.

His little hellion was intent on wringing every last drop from his dick, and at the rate she was going, it wouldn't be long. Closing his eyes, Daniel tried to block out the look of ecstasy written on every inch of her face.

Football.

Old men with plumber's crack.

Baseball.

Random thoughts flew through his mind as he tried to curb his passion.

"Daniel."

The sound of her hoarse voice sent tremors down his body. He knew why her throat sounded scratchy. His cock had damn near carved his name on her vocal cords, making her sound even sexier every time she muttered a single word.

Fuck. Thinking about baseball wasn't going to do dick.

"Daniel." She called his name again, forcing him to open his eyes. Propping his upper body up on his arms, he stared down into the face of the woman he loved.

"Yes, baby?" He could deny her nothing, for she was everything to him. "Do you want to come again? Is that it?"

“Yes. God. Yes.” She dug her nails into his hips. The sharp pain was a welcome one. It served as a reminder that their woman was as ferocious in her need as they were in theirs, but it also pushed him closer to the edge than he was ready to go.

He fucked her harder and faster, determined to make her scream out her release. Vaguely, he felt the bed dip as Ezekiel moved off and disappeared from his line of sight, leaving the two of them alone for a brief second to enjoy the taste and touch of one another.

When Ezekiel came back, he climbed back on the bed and lay beside them. His friend appeared calm and sedate now, not at all like the raging beast he’d been earlier in the day. Apparently Yvonne’s pussy was the key to soothing the savage beast inside Ezekiel. “I can smell how close she is.”

Lucky bastard. “How close? Tell me.”

“Three or four thrusts should do it.”

“Is he right?” Daniel pulled out and pushed forward with all his might. He ground his groin against her clit. “You ready to go over already?”

“More than. Please, Daniel.”

“I do love the sound of *please* on your lips.” Daniel thrust deeper inside her. His control was hanging on by less than a thread, but he refused to come before her.

Short pants punctuated her breathing. “Please. Please. Please.”

God, she was killing him. Daniel rose to his knees and grabbed hold of her hips. Using them as leverage, he pulled her back on him as he powered into her. “Hold on, Yvonne. It’s going to be a rough ride.”

Eyes wild, breathing ragged, Yvonne grasped hold of her breasts and squeezed her nipples between her fingers as he pounded into her for all he was worth. Not one to sit on the sidelines for long, Ezekiel moved back into the game and brushed one of Yvonne’s hands away as he covered her nipple with his mouth.

The extra stimulation appeared to be the impetus she needed to come. Daniel began to feel the faint ripples of her pussy contracting around his cock.

“So close. So...” Yvonne cried. “Feels good. Don’t stop. Please.”

“That’s it,” Daniel urged. “Come for us.”

“Daniel...ohh...” Her pussy clutched at his cock when she came, clamping down on his thick shaft. The sound and the feel of Yvonne’s release sent Daniel careening over the edge as well.

“Fuck, baby. Fuck.” With a roar, he jerked her back onto his dick and came undone. He fought it for as long as he could before gladly surrendering to the pleasure. Groaning Yvonne’s name, he held tightly to her hips. His body quaked with aftershocks almost as pleasurable as his release had been. Lightheaded, he tried to steady himself and calm his ragged breathing.

Shuddering, he withdrew from her pussy slowly then collapsed onto his back on the free space on the bed next to her. His condom-covered cock, sticky with the evidence of her release, lay against his stomach, but Daniel was way too tired to do anything about it. He preferred to save his energy for things like breathing.

“Oh. My. God.”

He felt exactly the same way. This was better than any sex he’d ever had in his life. And having Ezekiel there made it all the better, further proving to Daniel that the three of them belonged together. When he could finally feel his legs once more, he rose shakily from the bed and made his way to the bathroom where he cleaned up.

When he returned to the bedroom, he found Yvonne facing toward him under the covers with Ezekiel spooning her from behind with his head propped up on his hand.

“Room for one more?” he asked, nearing the bed.

“For the right ‘one more’,” Yvonne said as Ezekiel threw back the covers.

Smiling, Daniel joined them in the bed and faced the two cuddling lovers. “You okay, baby?” He brushed his thumb down the side of her cheek.

“More than okay.” Yvonne kissed his palm. “You two sure know how to show a girl a good time.”

“We try.”

Smiling, she brought her leg up and laid it across his hip. “Question is, how did the two of you become this good at it?” There was a warning lilt in her tone that spoke volumes about the fine line they were walking. “Practice much?”

Yvonne apparently had no problem with the two of them sharing her, but it didn’t appear as if she’d be as generous if the shoe was on the other foot. She had nothing to worry about though. “Tonight was a first,” he assured her.

“Honestly?”

“Yes.” Ezekiel brushed his lips across her nape. “You’re the first and you’ll be the last, baby.”

“First and last.” Yvonne smiled and let out a little sigh. “I like the sound of that.”

As did he. But Daniel still had one question. “Done running?”

“From myself,” she said sleepily as she closed her eyes. “And from the two of you.”

Chapter Seven

Ezekiel sipped his coffee as he watched Yvonne prepare her grandma's basket. Before going to sleep last night she asked him to put all the contents into the refrigerator, which of course meant she had to rise extra early this morning to cook the soup and bake the cobbler. Her culinary expertise was made even more mouthwatering thanks to his long-sleeve blue shirt she wore as she cooked.

He and Daniel had voted for nothing, but they conceded to allow her to wear the shirt after she threatened to go home and cook. Ezekiel wasn't sure who'd won in their battle of wills, but he definitely couldn't consider himself a loser. Especially not when she bent over to open the oven. It was all win then.

Leaning back on the counter, he watched with a smile as his woman worked. Never before had he ever felt as satisfied as he did this morning. Waking up with Yvonne inches away from him made up for even having to listen to Daniel snore all night. Being with her in general made everything better.

Yvonne looked up, caught his smile and shook her head. "You're enjoying me cooking in this shirt way too much."

"No such thing."

"Pervert," she teased.

"And your point would be what?" Ezekiel watched her move with ease. Skillful, she transferred the chicken noodle soup from the pot to the thermos without burning herself or making a mess. Yvonne was as at home in the kitchen as he was in the woods. "You know, if the smile is bothering you, I'm sure I can think of a couple of ways to take the shirt off my mind."

Yvonne set the pot back on the stove and turned to face him. "Such as?"

"I could always bend you over the counter and sink my dick inside you."

"As lovely as that sounds..." Yvonne placed the lid on the container then set it in the basket next to the peach cobbler she'd put in there earlier, "...and it does sound lovely, I'm going to have to decline. I want to take this over to my grandmother's house before it cools."

"She has a microwave." And if she didn't, Ezekiel was more than happy to buy one for her.

"Yes, but it's not the same. Besides, reheating in the microwave is terrible. It cooks the taste right out of the food."

"Afraid you're not going anywhere for awhile, Betty Crocker," Daniel said as he came into the room with her garment bag slung over his arm. "You left your car door open last night. I tried to start the car but the battery wouldn't turn over. It's completely drained."

Yvonne glanced over at Daniel and frowned. "Door open? That's not like me."

"You were in a hurry last night," Ezekiel reminded her.

"I guess."

"Looks as if you're stuck here for a few more hours." Daniel laid her garment bag over the back of one of the kitchen chairs and then rubbed his hands together gleefully. "However will we keep busy?"

"I have a couple of ideas," Ezekiel offered, setting his coffee cup down.

"I'm sure you do." She laughed. "But can't one of you jump the car?"

Daniel was shaking his head before Yvonne even finished speaking. "If it's truly drained, you need to charge it, not merely jump it. A jump will get it going, but a charge will keep it that way."

"I can call a tow truck."

Ezekiel frowned. He didn't need another man taking care of her. One extra was already enough. "I have a charger in the garage. If you're hell-bent on going..." and unfortunately it looked as if she was, "...you can take either my truck or Daniel's SUV."

"Or I can walk." Yvonne glanced out the kitchen window and smiled. "It's a nice day and a walk will do me some good."

"You don't have to walk," Daniel argued.

"I know, but I want to. Besides, my grandmother lives fifteen minutes away."

This conversation was not going the way Ezekiel would have preferred. "Only if you take the shortcut through the woods and we all know that's not a good idea."

"He has a point," Daniel said.

"On his head. Sheesh." She closed the lid to the basket. "You guys really need to let it go."

Daniel looked pensively at her. "You were lost for hours."

"Once, when I was a kid."

"It wouldn't have happened if you'd stayed on the path," Ezekiel reminded her.

"A lesson I learned years ago. I won't get lost again."

"You may not get lost again, but you never stick to the path." She was too stubborn to.

"That's because the path is stupid and it takes longer. I can navigate the woods now. I've done it before."

And he hadn't liked it then either. Wolves weren't the only dangerous things that wandered the woods. "If you wait twenty minutes, your car will be charged enough for you to drive it over there. Then you can leave it running while you're inside visiting with your grandmother."

"That's five more minutes than it would take me to make it over there." Yvonne walked around the island and picked up her garment bag. "Be right back."

Before he could utter a word of protest she slipped out of the kitchen. Daniel crossed the room and opened the basket. Leaning down, he inhaled deeply. “Mmm, peach cobbler. My favorite. Think Granny will notice if I snag a small slice?”

“Her grandmother may not, but Yvonne will. She doesn’t miss a thing.”

Dejected, Daniel straightened and closed the lid. “True.”

“And she doesn’t listen worth a damn either,” Ezekiel grumbled.

“Did you think that was going to change because she agreed to be with us?”

“Think, no. Hope, yes.”

“Then you’re an idiot.”

He didn’t need Daniel to point out the obvious. “Just remember, we have to live together the rest of our lives. Insults are *not* going to endear you to me.”

“Better get used to it. I call ’em as I see ’em.”

“Oh boy, I can’t wait.” This was going to be fun. “Keep it up, chucklehead, and I’ll turn you into a chew toy.”

Daniel pretended to shiver. “I’m so scared, fur ball.”

“Not yet, but I—”

“So,” Yvonne said, breaking up their banter. “What do you two think?”

Ezekiel turned his attention to her and lost all ability to speak. He didn’t believe anything could top the way she looked in the shirt. Man was he wrong. The retro red and white sundress Yvonne was wearing put the shirt to shame. Blown away, Ezekiel let out a low wolf whistle. Yvonne smiled at his gesture and preened. She took hold of one side of the gingham dress and held it out, spinning for a quick moment to give them the full effect.

Daniel slowly applauded, speeding up his hands with every clap. “You look like a hot black version of June Cleaver.”

“Doesn’t surprise me. My grandmother made this dress. I’m wearing it to try and earn some brownie points.”

“And you succeeded. Points for all. That is officially my favorite outfit.”

“Ditto.” Ezekiel had never been one for role-playing, but the vintage outfit was giving him all kinds of dirty thoughts.

“You like?” she asked, tilting her head to the side in a flirty manner.

“I love it.”

“Me too,” Daniel said. “It’s very retro of you. All you need is a string of pearls and a bomb shelter nearby to make it more authentic.”

Laughing, Yvonne picked up the picnic basket. “I’m all out of bomb shelters, but I have a freshly baked cobbler and homemade chicken noodle soup. Will that do?”

"That is so hot." Daniel revved his eyebrows. "I so want to fuck you while you're wearing that dress."

"I'm sure we can work something out," Yvonne promised with a smile as she grabbed her red shawl from the kitchen table. "But later. I have to go over to my grandmother's house and kiss ass."

"I have something you can kiss right here."

"Kiss?" Yvonne arched an eyebrow.

"Suck, kiss." Daniel waved his hand as if his words were of little importance. "You get my point."

"I'll suck, kiss you later. I promise. But now I have to go."

Ezekiel opened the door and all three of them stepped outside onto the back porch. "Before you go..."

"Yes?"

"Take off your panties," Ezekiel ordered.

Yvonne's mouth dropped open. "Are...are you serious?"

"Haven't you realized by now I'm a man of my word?"

"But..." Her disbelief was slightly amusing. "I'm going to visit my sick grandmother."

"And maybe this will make you come back all the sooner."

"Have I told you lately how much I like the way you think?" Daniel remarked to him. Smiling, Daniel took hold of the basket and the shawl. "Let me hold this for you, baby."

"You're too good to me."

"I try." Daniel leaned back against the porch railing. "Now take them off."

"You two are perverted bastards," she grumbled, as she raised the sides of her dress and hooked her fingers in the waistband of her panties.

"Yes, but we're your perverted bastards," Daniel teased.

"And you love it. You love us." Ezekiel's gaze was centered directly on her covered sex. Even after their busy and rigorous night, he was far from sated. He could have gone again, right then and there before God and country, but Ezekiel figured he was pushing her enough as it was with the underwear.

"You're lucky I do." With a frown pursing her lips, she pushed her panties to the floor then stepped out of them. "Here." She tossed them at Ezekiel. "Happy now?"

Ezekiel caught them in midair and grinned. "Yes. Yes I am."

"And you." Yvonne held her hand out to Daniel. "Give it to me."

"Is it me or did that sound extremely dirty?" Daniel asked, handing over the basket and shawl.

Ezekiel couldn't agree more. "Oh no, it wasn't just you."

Yvonne broke into laughter. "You two are nuts. I need to leave before it rubs off on me."

"Rubbing off," Daniel teased. "Just as dirty."

It appeared as if Ezekiel wasn't the only one who was ready for another go around. "I think if you want to leave before next week, you should probably go. We'll drop the car off when the battery has a semblance of a charge and leave it running so you don't have to walk back."

“What’s the chance of your grandmother inviting us in for cobbler?” Daniel asked.

“Slim to none, but I know her baker. I can put a good word in for you.”

Daniel smiled. “See that you do.”

“Will do.” With her shawl wrapped around her shoulders and the basket in her hand, Yvonne leaned over and pressed a quick kiss against Daniel’s lips before turning to Ezekiel and doing the same. With a parting smile, she made her way down the stairs.

The fullness of her skirt blew up slightly in the breeze, causing Daniel to groan good-naturedly. “Man, I really don’t like her grandmother right now.”

Daniel wasn’t the only one. “Little Red,” Ezekiel called out after her. “You be careful out there.”

Yvonne turned at his warning. “No need to be. I’m friends with all the wolves in the forest.”

“No excuse to stray from the path,” Daniel reminded her.

“I won’t.” Yvonne smiled and waved. “Love you guys. I’ll see you in a couple of hours.”

Even though he knew she wasn’t going far, Ezekiel didn’t like her going off alone. It may only be to her grandmother’s house, but he was counting the minutes until he would see her again.

As Yvonne traipsed through the woods her thoughts were not on her familial visit but rather her activities from the night before. She could feel herself flush, but it wasn’t from embarrassment. The remembrance of the feel of two mouths, four hands and two hard dicks had her body tingling. It had all felt so right, as if the three of them *fit*. There was no other way to describe it. And now that she’d made her commitment to her men she wanted to shout it from the rooftops. Before she did though, she had to break the news to her family.

Yvonne knew her mother was on team ménage, but her father and grandmother weren’t on board. With her mom’s help, she hoped they could eventually bring her dad around, but her grandmother was an entirely different ballgame. Even though the older woman was on the persnickety side, Yvonne loved her. It was just going to take time and a whole lot of cobbler to make her grandmother change her tune.

Before too long she was clearing the thicker woods and approaching the house her grandmother owned. The older woman had refused to move to town when Yvonne’s grandfather died, preferring the quietness of the remote location. As soon as she headed up the walkway, Yvonne automatically slipped her hand in her pocket to retrieve the key. Unfortunately she came up empty. Not only was she careless, she was keyless, which meant she had no way of entering the house without forcing her grandmother to get out of bed.

Knowing this wasn’t a good way to begin their visit, Yvonne pressed on the buzzer then waited a few seconds before doing it again. After a couple of minutes she pressed the buzzer again, holding the button down longer this time, but as before no one came to the door. Worried her grandmother may have fallen

and injured herself, Yvonne tried the doorknob. To her surprise it turned in her hand. Cautiously, Yvonne pushed open the door slowly and called out. “Grandma?”

“Come in.”

The faint voice was too muffled to make out the direction. Concerned, she shut the door partially behind her and walked farther into the hall. “Gran?”

“Close but no cigar.” The deep male baritone startled her. With her hand over her heart Yvonne spun around and faced the living room. Instead of finding her sickly grandmother, Yvonne spotted the sheriff sitting in her grandmother’s rocker.

Her reaction seemed to amuse him, which only fueled her anger. The bastard had scared her on purpose, but she’d be damned if she let him know it. “My, Grandmother,” she said dryly. “What a big shiny badge you have.”

“I was wondering when you’d make it over.”

“You made yourself comfortable while you waited, I see.” Trying to appear calm, she walked farther into the room and set her basket on the table. She slipped off her shawl and laid it on top of the basket then took her time looking around the room. “I didn’t notice your car outside.”

“That’s because I parked it around the corner. I didn’t think you’d come in if you knew I was here.”

He knew her so well. “Where is my grandmother?”

“I have her tied up in the closet.”

Horried, Yvonne glanced toward the coat closet then back to the sheriff.

Jasper made a sound of impatience and rolled his eyes. “It was a joke.”

“I’m laughing on the inside.”

“I can see.” Jasper rose and walked over to her side. His mere presence made her skin crawl, and it took everything inside her not to step back. Yvonne knew he would see her move as a sign of weakness and try to use it against her.

Instead, Yvonne raised her chin and forced herself to meet his gaze. She could do this. “Where is she really?”

“Over at your parents’ house. I drove her there myself.”

“Why?”

“Because your grandmother believes as I do that someone needs to talk with you about the choices you’re making. She agreed to give us some time to talk. Just the two of us.”

“Am I supposed to take your word?”

“You can call over there and confirm it if you want,” he offered. Yvonne glanced toward the kitchen where the phone was kept. Before she could make a move in that direction though, Jasper took hold of her hand. “Later. After we talk.”

Frowning, she snatched her hand back. “We don’t have anything to talk about.”

“How about the furry sickness poisoning our town, our community?” Jasper ran his gaze possessively over her. “Our women.”

Her spine stiffened. She’d had just about enough of him. “Maybe you need to consider running for Sheriff in another county. One less fur friendly.”

“With the way these people are popping up out of the woodwork I think I’d be stretched to find one.”

These people. Jasper’s ignorance knew no bounds. “I’m more than positive there are lots of places where you’ll find people with more of your mindset. Maybe somewhere a little more country and little less rock and roll.”

“I shouldn’t have to move.” The bitterness in his voice was chilling. “They should, somewhere more secure. Preferably somewhere with bars and feeding times.”

“Your prejudice is sickening.” She moved behind the rocking chair, no longer able to stomach being near him.

“As is the idea of you sleeping with him. With both of them. Daniel, I might be able to forgive. He’s at least human. But Ezekiel, I doubt he’s even housebroken.”

“What they are is none of your business. I didn’t ask you for your advice.”

“You’re damn well getting it.”

This was going nowhere. “Fine. You’ve given me your advice. Message received loud and clear. Can I go now?”

“Back to them?”

“Yes.”

“No,” he spit out, his face creased with determination. “Not until you see reason.”

“Reason, or your way?”

“Same thing.”

Yvonne snorted and crossed her arms over her chest. “Not hardly.”

“You think this a joke?”

“No, what I think is this is a crime. First you break into my grandmother’s house, then you force me to stay here against my will. You’re a man of the law. Tell me, how long does breaking and entering added to kidnapping get you?”

At her accusation his somber expression brightened. “First of all, I was invited over for cobbler by your grandmother, who’s beside herself with worry over the direction your life is going. She was more than pleased by my suggestion to stay here and talk some sense into you. And second, as an officer of the law I’m more than in my rights to detain you for questioning. You should be thankful I’m doing it in this nice surrounding instead of downtown in the station.”

If he thought she was going to thank him, he had another think coming. Instead she narrowed her eyes and didn’t say a word, keeping her negative thoughts to herself. Jasper, on the other hand, didn’t appear to

be bothered by her less-than-pleased demeanor. The obviously unbalanced man walked over to the basket and flicked her shawl to the ground. As if he had all the time in the world, he flipped open the lid of the wicker container and glanced inside. When he looked up again he smiled. "Peach cobbler. My favorite."

Of course it was. Tired of the foolishness, Yvonne walked back around the chair, took the dessert out and offered it to him. "Glad to hear it. Why don't you take it and go? I insist." She could make her grandmother a treat another day. Right now she just wanted to get rid of him.

"How about we eat it here. I sure am hungry." Jasper rubbed his stomach. "Mind serving me?"

Was he fucking for real? "Yes." She'd rather serve Satan himself in hell.

Jasper grabbed hold of her arm, causing her to drop the dessert to the floor. "I bet you didn't mind waiting on those two bastards all night long," he said in a nasty, bitter tone.

"Let me go." Yvonne tugged, trying to free herself to no avail. Jasper was as strong as he was deranged.

"I saw you. Saw you go inside his house, and I waited for you to come out so we could talk. But you never came back out, did you?" His eyes were cold and filled with a savage anger that took her breath away. Suddenly the fact her car didn't start was beginning to make sense. Yvonne seriously doubted she was the one who left her car door open. "You stayed there all night long, doing God knows what with that filthy animal and his friend."

Yvonne grabbed his wrist and dug her nails into his flesh. "Let. Me. Go."

"You'll let them touch you." Jasper tightened his hold on her. His grip was so tight for a moment Yvonne worried he might snap her wrist. "But not me."

Fear for her safety didn't keep her temper in check. If he was going to hurt her, at the very least she was going to wound him with her words. "I let them do more than touch me."

"You bitch." Jasper raised his hand to strike her, but a deep growl stopped him dead in his tracks.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you."

Relieved, Yvonne glanced over to the doorway where her lovers stood. One on two legs. The other on four. Never had she been so happy to see them in her life. "Battery charged?"

"Yes." Daniel shut the door behind them as Ezekiel edged closer, ears back, teeth bared. Even though one was in wolf form and the other was pure human, to Yvonne they both looked like mad dogs, and their sights were set on the man who foolishly still held her. Before Ezekiel and Daniel had entered the house she'd been scared of what Jasper was going to do to her. Now she was scared of what they might do to him. It was amazing what a difference a few seconds could make.

For the first time in his life, Daniel had an inkling what it must be like to be Ezekiel. Standing in the hallway, inches away from the woman he loved in the hands of a madman, gave Daniel a glimpse into his

animalistic nature. He felt raw. He felt rage. He felt the need to see Jasper's throat in his hands. The bastard dared to touch Yvonne. For that, he had to die.

"If I were you, I'd let her go," Daniel warned.

"No, if you were me, you wouldn't have let that *thing* touch her."

Daniel could feel Ezekiel bristle. But instead of immediately leaping across the room and ripping the sheriff's throat out, the wolf hung back and waited. "I'd be careful of what I say if I were you, because the only thing standing between you and this *thing* is me."

"I'm not afraid of either of you." Jasper's eyes revealed another truth. They were wild and wide and not focused at all. The good sheriff was high on something, and it wasn't life.

"You should be." Daniel took two steps into the room with Ezekiel right beside him. "Because fear will allow your fight-or-flight mentality to kick in. And if I were you, I'd go with flight." It was the only warning Daniel was giving to the sheriff.

"Fuck you." Jasper tightened his grip on Yvonne's wrist, causing her to cry out in pain, and reached for his gun with his free hand. His action sealed his fate.

Before Jasper could grasp the butt of his gun, Ezekiel launched himself across the room at the sheriff, who barely had time to release Yvonne. She fell backward onto the floor as Jasper raised his hands as if to ward off the beast. The man and wolf crashed into the coffee table, sending magazines and doilies flying as they turned the once-cozy room into a boxing ring.

"Fuck. Yvonne." Moving quickly, Daniel dashed behind his friend, knocking over a lamp in the process as he rushed to swoop up Yvonne from the floor and away from the fray. Once she was standing, he focused his attention on her, running his hands over her body and checking for any signs of injury.

Instead of sinking into his embrace, Yvonne fought to be released. "Ezekiel, no. Stop." She tried to tug free of Daniel, but he refused to let her go. "I have to stop him. He's going to kill him."

"And..." As far as Daniel was concerned death was only fitting.

Yvonne crooked her neck to the side and looked up at him. "What do you mean 'and'? We have to do something."

"We are." In their fight for dominance, the duo on the floor rolled closer than Daniel would have preferred to where he and Yvonne were standing. Sidestepping the wrestling pair, Daniel lifted her and moved her away from the fight. "We're watching."

"I don't want to watch. I want them to stop."

"Oh, they will." When Jasper was limp and comatose. Daniel would never forget the way Ezekiel had stiffened when the werewolf caught the sheriff's scent on the wind. With barely a word of warning, he changed, going from man to wolf all in the space of a few seconds. Daniel had never been up close and personal when his friend switched forms, and God willing, he wouldn't be again. There had been a horrific element about seeing skin morph into fur in the blink of an eye Daniel would never forget. But the sight

that would stay with him forever was the one of Jasper raising his hand to strike Yvonne. The vision would haunt him for the rest of his days.

“Damn it.” Yvonne turned her attention back to the commotion and tried once again to reason with Ezekiel. “I’m fine. Zeke. Stop it.”

Daniel shook his head but held his tongue. Yvonne had a better chance of convincing the sun not to rise tomorrow than she did controlling Ezekiel. His friend was on a mission, one Daniel wholeheartedly supported.

Unfortunately the only thing keeping the fight even semi-fair was the fact Jasper still had access to his gun. But after a few moments even that was a moot point. Ezekiel rolled the sheriff onto his back, his powerful paws holding down the screaming man. Then the werewolf chomped his jaw onto Jasper’s arm, effectively immobilizing the sheriff’s attempt to draw his weapon.

A loud, piercing whistle overrode the screeching and the arguing, causing Ezekiel to tense and Daniel and Yvonne to shut up. In sync, they glanced over to the doorway to where Yvonne’s parents and her grandmother were standing. The elderly lady looked far from sick but very upset. “What the hell is going on here?”

“Consider the living room clean,” Daniel said softly to Yvonne as he walked over to the stove where she stood, finally warming up the soup she’d brought for her grandmother. For someone who had been at a crazy man’s will only a short while ago, she seemed to be perfectly fine now. “I picked up the glass and hauled the table out to the truck. I think between Ezekiel and me, we can probably fix it good as new.”

Yvonne turned off the stove and faced him with a smile. “Trying to get on my grandmother’s good side?”

“Yes.” Daniel stole a quick glance over to the older woman, who was sitting at the kitchen table glaring daggers in their direction. “I don’t think it’s going to work though, do you?”

“Nope. First you steal her granddaughter, then you get into a fist fight in her living room.”

“I didn’t have the opportunity to hit him.” Much to his dismay. “So technically it wasn’t a fist fight. More like a claw-teeth fight.”

Yvonne’s eyes were filled with laughter. “I don’t think that’s going to matter much to her.”

“Don’t we get points for defending you against a crazy guy?” A crazy guy who’d been invited in by a sad woman and who had to be hauled down to the station by the very people he worked with. Daniel hoped for the sheriff’s sake that despite his rather good standing in town he’d be tried as he deserved and the matter wouldn’t be pushed under the rug. Because if it was, Daniel didn’t think Jasper would live long enough to boast about his victory. The slashes and bite marks would seem like love taps if Ezekiel and his pack ever got a hold of the sheriff.

“Probably not. You guys did break her coffee table.”

“Technically that was Ezekiel’s fault.” Daniel had just shattered her lamp. A fact he hoped would go unnoticed by the scowling woman.

“Speaking of Ezekiel, where did he go?”

“He split after the police took Jasper off.” And after giving Daniel a warning growl and a pointed look in Yvonne’s direction. Not that Daniel needed his friend’s advice. There was no way he was letting her out of his sight for at least the next fifty years.

“Why?”

“I can’t speak wolf, but I assume it was to go get dressed.” Daniel leaned back against the counter. “It wasn’t as if he took time to undress out there.”

Yvonne’s lips turned up. “I guess not.”

“Plus, hasn’t your grandmother been through enough today? Does she need the extra stress of seeing her future grandson-in-law’s penis on display?”

“Definitely not.” Yvonne tilted her head to the side and regarded him quizzically. “How are we going to do this?”

“Do what, my love?”

“Make this legal.” Yvonne’s face clouded over for a moment. “Assuming you guys still want to, that is.”

“Oh, there is no need to assume.” He pushed off the counter and stepped toward her. “We do. The sooner the better, in fact.”

“Good.” She smiled. “But how are we going to do it?”

“We’ll find a preacher and make it legal. Or as legal as it can be with three people.”

“But am I going to become Mrs. Yvonne Crawford?” She frowned. “Or will I be Mrs. Yvonne Hunter?”

Daniel didn’t care how they did it, as long as they did it. Crawford. Hunter. Hell, if she wanted they could both adopt each other’s names plus hers and just have an extremely long, stupid surname. They would probably never find monogrammed towels, but they’d be together and that was all that mattered to Daniel.

“Oh hey, maybe I can legally change my last name to Hunter then when we marry I can hyphenate it. That way it can be both, Hunter-Crawford.” Yvonne beamed. “Perfect, right?”

If it made her happy, it worked for him. “Perfect.” Speaking of perfection, Daniel pulled Yvonne into his arms. If he wasn’t going to win brownie points with her grandmother, he might as well make himself happy. “But to be on the safe side, I think we should discuss this more. At home. Preferably naked.”

“You’re terrible.”

“And you love me.” And in the end that topped disapproving grandmothers and psychotic sheriffs every time.

Chapter Eight

Intent on returning to Yvonne as quickly as possible, Ezekiel busied himself in the shower. When he was through, he stepped out of the shower and grabbed a towel off the rack, flinging it around his waist as he headed into his bedroom. To his surprise and delight, Yvonne and Daniel were already waiting for him.

Yvonne stood as soon as he entered, looking no worse for wear after her horrible ordeal. His heart clenched at the thought of what she'd gone through at the hands of that deranged bastard, Jasper. She had suffered because of her relationship and Ezekiel couldn't help blame himself a little bit. Yet despite feeling partially responsible for what happened to her, Ezekiel couldn't do the right thing and give her up. He was a werewolf, not a saint.

With warring emotions coursing through him, Ezekiel walked across the room and took Yvonne in his arms. Threading his fingers through her hair, he tilted her head back and kissed her soundly, putting all the love and desire he felt for her into his embrace. When the need to breathe again finally made itself known, he released his grip on her locks and pulled away from her tempting lips. His wolf let out a self-satisfied growl as Ezekiel locked his hands behind her back and held her to him. He rested his head on top of her hair and breathed in her homey essence. "I was on my way back over there."

"You were?"

"Yes, but I had to shower first. I ran into some mud and tracked it everywhere." One of the many hazards of his dual nature. "How are you, baby?"

"I'm better." Yvonne squeezed him tight.

Ezekiel pulled back so he could stare into her dark, expressive eyes. "God, I was scared. I don't think I've ever been that scared in my life."

"It wasn't rainbows and butterflies for me either." She smiled at him in a reassuring way. "Next time try not to fight with a man with a gun. My heart can't take it."

He stroked his hand over her smooth cheek. "I'll see what I can do."

Ezekiel looked over at Daniel, who was lounging on the bed as if he didn't have a care in the world. Though his friend pretended to be easygoing, Ezekiel knew what it cost him to let Ezekiel handle Jasper. Ezekiel was grateful for his friend not only stepping back but also for being there in the aftermath to help Yvonne. Ezekiel wasn't one to say thank you. Instead he caught his friend's eye and gave Daniel a curt nod, to which his friend answered with a smile before sitting up and speaking. "I'd say after our little adventure today, we're all deserving of a reward."

Yvonne turned in Ezekiel's arms to face Daniel and leaned back against Ezekiel's chest. "Whatever did you have in mind?"

"While you were busying traipsing over the hills and through the woods—"

"Or down the way a few miles," Yvonne cut in.

"That's what I said." Daniel moved to the edge of the bed and stood. "While you were busy doing your good deed, Ezekiel was filling me in on a little conversation the two of you had yesterday morning. One involving fantasies and household-snack items."

"Ahh. That conversation."

"Right. That one," Daniel said as he walked over to them.

"So you think as a reward of sorts we should all get naked and take advantage of my flexibility and desire to please."

"I wouldn't say take *advantage*, more like encourage your kinky side to come out and play."

"That's right," Ezekiel said, warming to the idea. Not that he needed much to get on board with Daniel's plan. Daniel had him with reward. "Encourage."

"You know the two of you teaming up on me isn't exactly fair." Yvonne licked her lips and smiled seductively. "But it is fun."

"Baby," Ezekiel growled in her ear. "You haven't seen fun yet."

Yvonne tilted her head back to look at him. "Hmm, I can't wait."

"Neither can I," Daniel added. "In fact, I think *someone* needs to lose her clothing." Ezekiel watched with heated pleasure as Daniel stroked his hand over Yvonne's collarbone and down over the exposed curves of her breasts.

"Here, let me help you." Ezekiel released his grip and trailed his hands over Yvonne's shoulder blades. "Raise your hands, baby."

Yvonne lifted her arms and Ezekiel's cock stiffened at her immediate compliance to his command. After unzipping the side of the dress under her arm, he grasped the stretchy material in his hands and tugged it upward and over her head. With little thought to the vintage-styled garb, Ezekiel tossed it over his head and stepped back so he could move on to her bra.

"Now that's a beautiful sight," Daniel said.

Ezekiel couldn't have agreed more. Even though he wasn't privy to the frontal view, Ezekiel was far from disappointed. Yvonne's breasts were covered by the sexy red bra, but her pussy and ass were still delightfully bare, giving him a mouthwatering view of her luscious ass.

Forgoing her bra for the moment, Ezekiel stroked his palms over the rounded curves of her bottom and squeezed the generous flesh. He chuckled when she groaned, and leaned down to nip at the tender skin between her shoulder and neck before slowly lowering the bra strap closest to his lips off her shoulder and onto her arm.

Closing his eyes, he inhaled deeply, filling his lungs with her intoxicating scent as he brushed his lips across her nape again. He could smell her arousal in the air. The scent of her heady aroma caused his cock to harden and poke out from beneath his towel.

“It feels as if someone’s happy to see me.”

“Oh, he is. Very happy.”

Yvonne tilted her head to the side, allowing him more access to her sensitive skin. “Are you happy too, Daniel?”

“I’m getting there.” Daniel stepped closer to them and slipped his hands around her. The back of his fingers brushed against Ezekiel’s chest as Daniel unhooked her bra.

On a normal day Ezekiel would have growled a warning to Daniel to back off, but Ezekiel realized eventually he was going to have to come to grips with the reality of ménage physics. No two matters could possibly occupy the same woman without occasionally coming in contact with the other. With that in mind, he didn’t utter a sound and allowed the other man to work diligently to free Yvonne’s breasts.

When the red lacy material dropped to the floor, Daniel cupped her breasts, causing Yvonne to tremble under their dual touch. “Well, well, well.” The other man glanced down at the bulge thickening beneath his zipper, then back at her. “Happiness level achieved.”

“Nice.” She laughed.

“I’m glad you think so,” Daniel said, before stepping forward and sandwiching her between them. He grabbed her hips in his hands then leaned down and covered her mouth with his.

As the two of them kissed, Ezekiel nuzzled her shoulder, pleased to have their woman where she belonged, smack-dab in the middle of them.

At the same time, Yvonne reached one hand behind her, grasped the back of Ezekiel’s neck and lightly caressed her fingers along his nape. Her gentle touch sent a shiver of anticipation through his body.

With a disappointed moan, Yvonne broke the kiss and let out an unstable breath. Laughing, she released her hold on Ezekiel and moved to his side so she was leaning against him and able to see both men at the same time. She rubbed against him like a cat in heat.

“I have to say...” her voice was shaky and filled with need, “...if this is the way I’m treated after being attacked by psychos, I’m going to go post Jasper’s bail myself.”

“You better not,” Ezekiel growled, and pulled her closer to him. The very thought of her anywhere near that rent-a-cop caused his blood to boil. “One scare per lifetime is enough, I assure you.”

“Spoilsport. Speaking of spoilsports, why is it I’m the only one undressed around here? I think we should institute a new rule. The first man undressed is the first one who gets to fuck me. In any position.” Yvonne ran her fingers down the length of buttons that held Daniel’s shirt together. “In any way he desires.”

Before his friend could react, Ezekiel moved his hand to the top of his towel and unwound it, causing the terrycloth to puddle on the floor. "I like this rule."

"Hey. No fair," Daniel complained. "He hardly had anything on to begin with."

Yvonne laughed at the perturbed expression on the man's face. "I guess that will teach you to start undressing the second you see me."

"It will make meeting for lunch in town a bit awkward," Daniel grumbled good-naturedly as he began to unbutton his shirt.

"You'll have to take your chances." Yvonne turned around to face Ezekiel. "Name your pleasure."

"Yvonne," Ezekiel answered automatically.

His words caused her to smile. "I meant position."

That was easy. "I want you to ride me." The idea alone was enough to make his cock jerk. His dark beauty astride him, just the way he'd described it to her during phone sex.

Daniel groaned and dropped his shirt to the floor. "Is there a runner-up prize?"

"Yes, you can watch." Yvonne released Ezekiel. Moving over to Daniel, she placed her hands on his shoulders. She rose on her tiptoes and brushed her breasts against his chest. "Then when I'm through with him, I'll take care of you."

"Only if I don't take care of myself while I watch the two of you."

"If you wait for me..." Yvonne lowered herself back to the balls of her feet and walked around Daniel, slowly dragging her hand down his shoulders, past his waist until her fingertips trailed across his pants-bound erection, "...I'll make it worth your while."

"Deal," Daniel replied with no hesitation.

Yvonne turned her attention back to Ezekiel. "Now you." She raised her hand and gestured in a *come here* manner with her index finger. "Grab the condoms then lay on the bed."

Ezekiel shook his head and turned to his friend. The two men shared a grin. "Notice how she always gets bossy right before we fuck."

"Yes," Daniel said, as he pushed his jeans down and stepped out of them. "That's going to take some getting used to."

"Think forty or fifty years will do?"

"Just about." Daniel smiled.

"That's what I was thinking too." Ezekiel walked over to the drawer and opened it to retrieve the condoms as Yvonne and Daniel pulled back the comforter and top sheet. Working together, they folded them neatly and set them on the floor. When they were done, Ezekiel tossed one of the foil wrappers to Daniel, who caught it midair, then climbed onto the bed. Ezekiel moved to the center of the mattress and held out his hand to Yvonne. "Come here."

"Eager much?"

“Hell yeah.” It felt as if it’d been forever since he’d last been with her.

She laughed with delight and joined him on the bed. She knelt next to him and ran her hands over his chest and abs. The little minx deliberately avoided touching his cock, which was hard and standing at attention. “Poor baby, we can’t have you suffering.”

“No, we can’t.” Ezekiel took the condom in both hands and began to tear into it. “Let me—”

Before Ezekiel could finish his sentence, Daniel leaned over and snatched the prophylactic from Ezekiel’s hand.

“Hey.”

“Let her put it on. It will be more fun.”

Ezekiel narrowed his eyes and glared at his friend. “For who?”

“For me.” Daniel held the square package out to Yvonne, while grinning evilly at Ezekiel. “The one who has to wait.”

“Aww.” Yvonne tutted as she took the offered prize. “You’ll have your turn.”

“I’m counting on it,” his friend, no scratch that, former friend said. “But until then, I plan to take pleasure in everything I can. And seeing her tease you will please me greatly.”

“Teasing, huh? I like the way you think.”

Fuck. If the glimmer swimming in Yvonne’s big brown eyes was anything to tell by, Ezekiel knew he was in trouble.

With a wicked grin on her pretty face she opened the foil wrapper and took out the condom. She rolled the latex over Ezekiel’s straining erection. Slowly.

“Are you trying to kill me?”

“Of course not.”

Ezekiel bit back a groan as her finger danced over his covered cock once he was completely sheathed. “Then stop teasing me.”

“Come on, I can’t believe a big bad wolf such as yourself can’t take a little teasing.”

Daniel chuckled in the background. *Bastard*. His friend was deriving far too much enjoyment in his torture.

Ezekiel cocked an eyebrow and focused his attention on his tormentor and not his straining cock. “Do you want another spanking?”

“Possibly.” Yvonne straddled his body. “But not right now.” Grasping his erection, she lined it up against the moist opening of her heated sex. With her teeth pressing into the plump flesh of her lower lip, Yvonne sank down, engulfing the first few inches of his shaft in her pussy. “Later.” She moaned. “Much, much later.”

“I’ll hold you to it,” he bit out.

“See that you do.” Bracing her hands against his chest, she rocked her hips back, taking more of his cock with each downward motion until he was fully seated in her tight sex. “Mmm...”

Her heated gaze stayed locked on his the entire time, making the moment all the more intimate.

“Easy, baby.” His voice was rough, but he purposely kept his touch gentle. After everything she’d been through today, Ezekiel couldn’t do it any other way.

“No.” Her pussy clenched around his cock. “Don’t be gentle, my wolf. Take me the way you were meant to.”

“My way will have you double stuffed.” Just putting the words out there made Ezekiel’s gut clench with desire. “Are you ready for us both to take you at the same time?”

“More than.” Yvonne leveled her heated gaze on Daniel, including him in her answer. “Please, don’t make me wait another second.”

“You heard her, man. Give her what she wants.”

Daniel dropped his boxers and joined them on the bed. “My pleasure.”

“No.” Ezekiel reached up and ran the back of his hand against her soft cheek. “Our pleasure.”

Daniel’s fingertips trailed down her back and over the curves of her buttocks. “You want me to fuck this pretty ass of yours.”

“Yes,” she whispered.

“Then lean forward and brace your hands on Ezekiel’s chest,” Daniel ordered huskily. He waited until she did as he requested before issuing his next command, this time to the lover buried inside of her. “Ezekiel, hold her open for me.”

Yvonne gasped as Ezekiel spread her cheeks apart. Never had she felt as naughty before, or as wet. If it weren’t for the fact Ezekiel was balls deep in her pussy, Yvonne was sure she would have soaked the bed by now with the evidence of her desire.

“Oh, baby, you’re so sexy.” Daniel ran one of his fingers along the valley of her ass, pausing to circle her crinkled hole. “I can’t wait to sink my cock into you.”

“Daniel.” Yvonne closed her eyes and buried her face in Ezekiel’s neck. Words alone could never explain how exposed and sensual she felt. Never had a lover looked at her or touched her in such an intimate manner.

“Yes?”

“I...I...” Yvonne wasn’t sure what she wanted to say and before she could try again, Daniel replaced his finger with his tongue.

“Ohh...” she groaned. She’d prepared herself to surrender her anal virginity to his thrusting cock, but never did she think the first part of him to enter her forbidden hole would be his tongue. “What...what are you doing?”

Daniel swiped his tongue across her rosette before replying. "Making sure you're ready for my cock."

"Ohh...good...good idea," she said breathlessly as her body quaked with pleasure. Ezekiel began to gently rock into her as Daniel teased her back door. The dual sensations were like nothing she'd ever experienced before.

Just when she thought she'd go mad from the sheer pleasure of it all, Daniel pulled back. "Keep her steady for me."

"Where...where are you going?" Yvonne felt dazed and not quite there.

"Getting the lube. I want you slick and ready for me."

"Good idea." Yvonne was glad at least one of them was thinking clearly.

"Same drawer as the condoms," Ezekiel offered as he once again started flexing his hips. With his grip firmly on her ass, he worked her up and down his shaft as Daniel moved from the bed.

"Okay." Daniel stood and made his way to the bedside table. He delved around inside for a few seconds before pulling out a small, clear bottle. "Found it."

"Good. Hurry." Yvonne dug her nails into Ezekiel's chest. "Oh God, it feels good," she groaned. "Please."

The bed dipped as he joined them once more. "I'm here, baby."

Ezekiel paused inside her while Daniel spread a generous helping of the lubrication over her dark hole. The preparation was making her even more eager for his possession.

Her heartbeat increased when he moved into position behind her. Her rosette was slick with a mixture of his saliva and the lube coating the head of his condom-covered cock.

With a guttural growl, he gripped her hips tight and pushed against her rosette slowly. "Oh my God," she gasped as the head of his cock slipped past her resisting ring and into her snug depths. Yvonne dug her fingernails deeper into Ezekiel's chest as her body opened to Daniel's steady but never wavering invasion. The first inch was killer, but gradually the burning, stinging pain lessened and she began to adjust to the sensation of two cocks filling her.

"Oh...oh...oh my God," she stuttered.

"Baby. Talk to us. You okay?" The worry in Ezekiel's tone forced Yvonne to open her eyes and focus on her lover.

She flashed him what she hoped was a reassuring smile before leaning down and brushing her lips over his. "Zeke?"

"Yes?"

"If you guys stop, I'll go mad."

"We can't have that." Daniel flexed his cock inside her. The feel of him in her ass above her as Ezekiel filled her pussy from below treaded the thin line between pain and pleasure. "If you're sure."

"Very," she said, pushing back on them. "Fuck me, lovers."

Daniel took her at her word and slowly pulled back as Ezekiel pushed his hips up. They both held on to her waist, one pair of hands above the other, using their grip to work her between them. They found a natural motion, with Daniel thrusting in as Ezekiel retreated. In tangent with one another the two men set a rhythm that had Yvonne moaning and trembling with pleasure. Lost in her own world, she closed her eyes and dug her fingers into the sheet with all her might. Her orgasm was so close she could practically taste it, but she didn't want the experience to end.

"Feels good. So good." Yvonne's words spurred them on and they sped up their movements. Every stroke brought her closer to the Promised Land. Never had Yvonne known loving could feel so taboo yet so right.

Out of the blue they changed their tempo, with them both thrusting into her at the same time, pushing her harder and faster with every stroke. Each pleasure-filled moan she released seemed to spur her men on more. Her body was tingling from head to toe and she felt fuller than she had ever felt before.

"Fuck." Ezekiel's voice was ragged and raw. "Not going to last much longer."

"I'm ready," Yvonne assured him. "So fucking ready."

"Then come for us, baby," Daniel urged, powering into her body at a mind-numbing speed.

It was as if his words were exactly what she needed to come. Yvonne's body began to tremble under the force of her climax. Her cries of passion sent her men over, one after the other, with a groaning Daniel succumbing first. Hot on his trail, Ezekiel dug his nails into the flesh of her hips, pushed up once more with all his might and let out a hoarse shout. Yvonne felt so lightheaded that for a moment she worried she might black out. She collapsed between them, completely boneless and sated.

For a second the three of them lay in something akin to suspended animation, before Daniel finally mustered up the energy to brace himself and remove his spent prick from Yvonne's body. Then, with a telltale groan, he collapsed next to them on the sheets.

Yvonne thought Daniel had the right idea, moving while his limbs still worked, but she couldn't gather the willpower to do the same.

"Oh...man." Exhausted, Yvonne lay spent on top of Ezekiel, her pussy fluttering with gentle aftershocks around his cock. "I'm...wow."

"Can I..." Ezekiel paused to catch his breath, "...assume the lady approves?"

"Wholeheartedly."

Daniel turned on his side so he was facing them and propped his head up on his hand. "Then you're okay with doing it again?"

Yvonne smiled. "And again and again." Even though her body ached in places she didn't know it was possible to ache. Being made love to by two men at once was better than she'd ever imagined it could be.

"You know," Daniel said on a self-satisfied sigh, "Lehi gave you three days to make up your mind. If we count that night as the first, then today would officially be your deadline day."

"I guess I'll have to call him up and give him my answer."

"Call him?" Ezekiel raised his head and peered down at her. "No need, honey. Everyone already knows we're keeping you."

"But am I keeping you?" she teased. "Now that I've had a taste of what ménages are like, I think it's only fair I go find two other guys to make love to. Just to make sure it's you two I love and not threesomes."

Ezekiel wrapped one arm around her and lifted her up and off his cock, then rolled her until she was lying on her back between the two men. "I wouldn't do that if I were you."

"Oh-oh." Daniel placed his hands across Yvonne's waist and brought her in closer to him. "Be careful, baby. You don't want to rouse the wolf."

"I'm not afraid of the big bad wolf. Just in love with him." Yvonne looked up at Daniel. "And with you too."

Daniel kissed her lightly on the lips. "You're keeping us then?"

"For now." And forever, but forever would take care of itself. Tonight Yvonne was going to simply enjoy being with the wolf and man of her dreams.

Six months later

"Do you want another piece of peach cobbler, babe?" Yvonne rubbed the back of Daniel's shoulder as she asked, in the nurturing, loving manner of hers that had yet to grow old. "Last call. I'm going to let Grandma take whatever cobbler I have left home with her."

"Why?" he grumbled, as he glanced over at the older woman sitting catty-corner from him at the small table. As usual she was giving him major stink-eye. Some things had changed in the last six months, then again some things hadn't. Even after all his blustering, Tyrone had come around once he realized how happy Yvonne was. Tyrone's mother, however, was another story.

Daniel's grandparents had passed away before he was born, but he was more than sure grandmas were supposed to be nice, and that woman was far from nice. Even Lehi, who was known to have patience that rivaled a saint's, had offered to huff and puff and blow her house down while she was in it.

"Because she asked so nicely."

"If I ask nicely, can I take it home?" He wasn't even hungry. He just didn't want the other woman to have it.

"No, and be good," his wife insisted.

"I don't want to." Daniel folded his newspaper and tucked it under his arm. "She never is."

"You know..." Yvonne chuckled and shook her head, "...you are becoming as surly as Ezekiel. Sometimes I can't tell which one of you is the big bad and which one isn't."

"I'm big and bad all right." Daniel rose to his feet. "I just don't turn furry."

“And for that I’m eternally grateful. Cleaning up after one shedding werewolf is bad enough,” she grumbled good-naturedly.

“You love him though.”

“One has nothing to do with the other.” Yvonne wrapped an arm around his waist. “Are you heading back to the clinic?”

“Yeah, I have a few animals I want to check in on before I call it a night. What about you? You’re not closing tonight, are you?”

“No. Actually Grandma’s feeling a little dizzy. I’m going to use her car to drive her home.”

Daniel shot the older woman a quick glance. She didn’t look any sicker than he did, but Yvonne had a soft spot for her grandmother and Daniel was learning to live with it. Slowly. “You want me to swing by and pick you up when I’m done with work?”

“No, I’ll walk home.”

Daniel frowned. “It’s a little chilly out there.”

“I have my shawl. I’ll be fine.” Yvonne gave him a squeeze of reassurance.

“Uh-huh.” Daniel dropped a kiss on his wife’s upturned lips. “Stick to the path, honey.”

Yvonne rolled her eyes at the overused order. “I know.”

“You know we worry.” Just as he knew she’d take whatever trail she wanted. Six months hadn’t turned their stubborn wildcat into a kitten, but Daniel was learning to live with that as well. “Love you, baby,” he said softly before heading toward the door.

“Love you too,” she called after him.

Daniel waited until he cleared the café completely and was next to his SUV before he pulled his cell phone from his pocket and called Ezekiel. It took three rings before his friend picked up.

“Lo.”

“In the mood to go for a run?” Daniel opened the door and climbed inside.

There was a brief pause before Ezekiel replied. “She’s taking a walk?”

“Yep.”

“Did you tell her to stay on the path?”

“Of course.” As if Ezekiel even had to ask.

“Think she’s going to do it?”

Knowing their wife as he did the answer was easy. “Not a chance.”

“Crap.” Ezekiel’s dismayed tone made Daniel chuckle. “Fine, I’m going to change so I can follow her, but I swear if she goes off the trail even one step, when she finally makes it home, I’m going to spank her ass.”

That was what Daniel was counting on. “See you at home.”

“Bye.”

Smiling, Daniel hung up the phone. Maybe having Yvonne's grandmother around wasn't such a bad thing after all.

About the Author

Lena Matthews spends her days dreaming about handsome heroes and her nights with her own personal hero. Married to her college sweetheart, she is the proud mother of two beautiful daughters, two evil dogs, and a mess of ants that she can't seem to get rid of.

When not writing she can be found reading, watching movies, lifting up the cushions on the couch to look for batteries for the remote control and plotting different ways to bring Buffy back on the air.

You can contact Lena through her website: www.lenamatthews.com.

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Light My Fire

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Aiden Fortune's orders are clear: Find the woman, claim her as a sexual sacrifice—and share her with his horndog twin brother. Distasteful as it is, the Drakoni council insists the ancient custom be honored. Or Aiden will be banished.

One glance at Dana Cooper, and Aiden is thrown into the dragon version of a tailspin. Claim her? Hell, yes, he'll claim her. Problem is, she has no idea her father signed away her destiny at birth.

Dana has dated enough whack-a-doodles to fill an insane asylum. Two gorgeous men claiming to be dragons? Par for the course. Until they give her a tantalizing glimpse of their inner beasts, which makes her think she's the one headed for a padded cell—for actually considering their offer of the hottest sex of her life, for life.

Her resistance melts away under the onslaught of two men who pack enough heat to set off smoke alarms in a six-block radius. Especially when she realizes she's falling for Aiden. But with a town full of dragon hunters and an enemy lurking in the shadows, surviving a week of Aiden and Jace's double-teaming will be the least of her problems...

Warning: Contains two smokin' hot dragons and their not-so-unwilling sacrifice. A few wardrobe malfunctions and inappropriate use of paintbrushes. You might want to have your local fire department on speed dial.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Light My Fire:

Aiden sank behind her onto the sleeping bag, the nylon material whispering a sensuous sigh. His radiant heat reached her before his skin did. Pressing his chest against her back, he branded her with all that toasty warmth, coaxing a purr of pleasure from deep in her throat. His fingers wrapped in her hair—not exactly gentle but also not rough to the point of pain—and tipped her head back. She caught the briefest flash of fire in his irises before his mouth claimed hers in a hot, possessive kiss.

She'd sensed the beast lurking within Aiden, but he'd always kept it in check. This time the dragon would not be denied and made its presence known. She felt its dominance, its mastery, in the hands holding her hostage. In the tongue plundering her mouth. And she loved it.

Dear God, how she loved it.

Writhing against Aiden, she bit at his bottom lip, a strange desperation clawing at her to please both man and beast. He groaned, and giddy triumph raced through her. Their tongues rasped together, a marked contrast to the soft flicker Jace was employing on her nipple. Friction taunted every pleasure point in her

body. Even Aiden's thigh and the crotch of her jeans did their part to add to the torment, forcing her damp panties to ride against her clit, making her squirm.

Emboldened by the fever lust rocketing through her veins, she groped around blindly until she encountered their rock-hard erections. She stroked the velvet-sheathed steel of the twin shafts, earning a guttural groan from Aiden and Jace. Her fingertips swirled over the silky heads of their cocks and encountered the pre-come weeping from both slits. Taking advantage of the natural lubricant, she slicked up and down their lengths, pumping faster. Almost in unison, they clamped onto her wrists, halting her. She groaned in frustration.

"Patience, baby." Ducking his head, Jace traced the bow of her mouth with his tongue. "I want to watch my brother sink balls-deep into your sweet pussy while you suck me."

Aiden's harsh inhale ruffled her hair and she felt the rapid thud of his heartbeat against her shoulder blade. Both were strong indications that he not only liked Jace's suggestion, he was fully on board with making it happen. But was she?

Her clit throbbed in anticipation. *Guess that answers that question.* Reluctantly, she released their cocks. "I—" She struggled to moisten her suddenly dry mouth. "I want that too."

Jace's eyes darkened and Aiden's heartbeat pounded faster against her skin. She reached for the button on her jeans but Jace brushed her clumsy fingers aside. His tongue parted her lips, delving inside while he freed the button and eased her jeans down her hips. She scooted onto her rump so he could remove her tennis shoes and pull her pants the rest of the way off. Aiden leaned over her. Feathering a lock of her hair aside, he kissed her with exquisite tenderness as Jace slowly dragged her panties down her legs. Jace's finger dipped inside her and she gasped, arching her back.

"So wet and tight. You are one lucky bastard, bro." Jace crooked his finger, hitting her G spot while his thumb brushed over her swollen clit. A strangled cry lodged in her throat and she clutched frantically at Aiden's bulging biceps. Lifting his head, Aiden revealed a face flushed dark with determination and passion. A muscle twitching in his jaw, he glanced at Jace. Without verbalizing a single word, Jace ducked beneath the edge of the sleeping bag and picked up a small foil packet. He flipped it toward Aiden.

She stared at the condom wrapper before glaring at Jace. "Presumptuous much?"

He hitched his shoulder with a chuckle. "More like hopeful." Grasping her hands, he helped her up, not quite distracting her from the sound of foil ripping behind her. She imagined Aiden smoothing the condom over his cock. Imagined that thick cock sliding deep inside her pulsing core. Her breath quickened.

Jace sat back on his haunches and stroked his erection, reminding her that he was the proud owner of a very nice package of his own. She licked her lips.

"Sweetness, you giving me a preview of what you can do with that tongue?"

She gave a coquettish bat of her lashes. "Wouldn't you like to know?"

“Fuck yeah.” He leaned forward and nibbled her bottom lip. She paid him back by capturing his tongue and sucking it between her teeth, providing a mock demonstration of what she had in store for him. A drawn-out moan that was too sexy for words shuddered from Jace. They broke the kiss and he stared at her. “*Damn.*”

Poking a finger in the center of one of Jace’s sculpted pecs, she scooted him backwards. “I need a little working room here, fella.”

He happily complied and she dropped onto all fours. For a moment she suffered a bout of self-consciousness about giving Aiden a bird’s-eye view of her generously proportioned butt. *Oh, hell with it.* Pushing her female insecurities aside, she contemplated the gorgeous cock bobbing in front of her face. Using only the tip of her tongue, she traced the prominent vein running along the underside of his shaft. Aiden had seemed to really like it when she did that to him, so odds were good that Jace would too. Reaching the mushroom-shaped cap, she delicately licked the glistening drop pearling from the slit. Jace’s abdomen quivered and tensed.

Oh yeah, he most definitely liked it.

She took Jace all the way into her mouth, the fat knob of his dick hitting the back of her throat just as Aiden eased two fingers into her. The sensation was so unexpected and breathtakingly good that she inhaled hard and almost choked on Jace.

“You okay, sweetness?”

She barely registered Jace’s concerned tone. Closing her eyes, she concentrated on the fingers stretching her open, making her ready. Wet, succulent noises came from her pussy, verifying that she was more than ready for everything Aiden had to give her. She pushed backward, mindlessly riding his hand, wishing it was the thickness of his cock filling her instead. Sliding her mouth off Jace, she sent Aiden a desperate stare over her shoulder. “Please. I—I need you to—” She swallowed, trying to focus, trying to shove the words past her lips. “To take me. Now.”

Aiden’s eyes glowed with an intense blue fire. Growling, he fisted his cock and rubbed its latex-sheathed head against her slit. He skimmed along her labia and prodded her sensitized clit. Her entire body jolted at the contact. “*Ooh.*”

Jace cupped her jaw, bringing her attention back to his waiting erection. Disoriented, she bobbed at him and missed. Steadying her, he guided his shaft past her lips. He tasted wonderful, musky with a slight salty tang from the pre-come flowing freely, but all she could think of was Aiden and his wicked taunting.

Panting, desperate and needy for the first thrust she knew was coming, she waited.

And waited.

Impatient, she reached for Aiden. His fingers cuffed her wrists, holding her immobilized. The sense of powerlessness sent a shock of excitement careening through her. Aiden nudged at her opening again, this

time with obvious intent. The delirious grunts coming from her throat probably should have embarrassed the hell out of her. Thank God she was too blindsided by lust to care.

Aiden's furnace-like heat blanketed her back, his tongue tracing each vertebrae of her upper spine as his cock teased her slippery folds. His lips reached her shoulder and his teeth grazed her skin. A love bite to mark his territory? He released one hand and briefly danced his fingers across her clit before he eased inside her in agonizingly slow increments. She bucked wildly and he canted his hips back, denying her silent plea. The bastard was bound and determined to drive her insane.

In sharp contrast to Aiden's leisurely conquering of her body, Jace's movements sped up, the silky gland of his cock tunneling toward the back of her throat. On his retreat, she lightly scraped her teeth over the plump head.

A hiss broke from Jace. "*Fuck*. Sweetness, you're killing me."

She hummed around Jace and he jerked in response. He tightened his hold on her hair, his grip sending a tiny sting through her scalp before his fingers flexed and relaxed. Aiden chose that moment to thrust the final few inches of his shaft into her, filling her completely on one languorous glide.

Oh God.

Animal attraction is the essence of their power.

Shifters' Captive

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Magical Ménages, Book 1

Waitress Sherrie Stolz never thought she'd need her chatting-up skills to play along with a hot, sexy kidnapper who rants about were-animals and psychic possession. Then he proves his story by changing into a wolf before her eyes.

Human contact never interested John Walker, but his mission is desperate. The pack seer insists Sherrie is the only one who can save his pack from a rash of mysterious comas. His connection with Sherrie is instant, powerful and beyond rational explanation...until a third piece of the puzzle enters the picture.

Grant Perron follows his instincts only to find his prize in the hands of his rival. He's poised for battle—until he learns his panther shifter clan suffers the same fate as John's pack. And there's more. When the three of them touch, the primal, erotic power surge swells like the waves of an earthquake.

Sherrie's hands—and bed—are suddenly full, figuring out how to manage two snarling alpha males without giving in to the urge to knock their heads together. And channel her new-found power before a villain uses it to destroy them all...

Warning: Contains abduction, m/f/m ménage, oral & anal sex, rough sex, wilderness sex, astral projection sex and plain old sex in the bedroom—times three.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Shifters' Captive:

"We're trapped." Sherrie stated the obvious as she craned her neck to look up the wall of rock. Somewhere at the top was the cave where their nemesis lived. Was this avalanche a coincidence or had he meant to kill or capture them?

John moved around the perimeter, pacing the limits of their enclosure. Perron got to his feet, tossing the bloodied T-shirt aside and scaled a pile of stony rubble. He attempted to climb over the boulder that had nearly crushed him.

"Damn it!" he roared in frustration as he fell back and landed on his feet.

"I told you rushing into this was a bad idea," John said. "Now we're trapped. I'm sure it's no accident."

Grant scowled and started to take off his shirt. "You can stand here and complain about being stuck. I'm shifting and finding a way out."

Without another word, Walker followed his example, quickly stripping. Once again their bodies rippled. Charged static electricity lifted Sherrie's hair and made her arms prickle. Suddenly, she longed

fiercely to be able to shift too. Into what form she had no clue, but the idea of releasing the primitive animal inside her to howl and run was deeply seductive.

She pressed back against the stone as the two wild beasts ranged around the pen in a similar way to their human counterparts. The wolf nosed the ground and whined as he searched for a break in the rock pile big enough to squeeze through. The big cat gathered its weight and sprang with a powerful thrust of his hind legs, but the leap carried him only halfway up the boulders. His nails scrabbled on stone before he fell back into the debris with a howl of rage, tail lashing.

There's no way out, but feed me their energies and I'll release you. The voice sounded in Sherrie's head as clearly as if she wore headphones. She clapped her hands to her ears. It was one thing to receive silent communications in a dream, but shocking in her waking life.

Join me, and together we can have limitless power.

Get out of my mind! She shook her head, clearing it of the seductive haze that had settled over her like morning mist. She was beginning to understand how this guy worked—a chance meeting, mesmerizing eye contact and next thing he was inside your mind, manipulating it. Well, she was too strong to give in to that.

Besides, her animal companions were starting to squabble. Perron brushed past Walker in his furious pacing to and fro, and the wolf bared his teeth and growled. In response, the giant cat roared. The pair faced off, hackles raised, their bodies tensed to attack.

“Hey!” Sherrie shouted. “Stop it!”

They ignored her and continued to stalk in a circle around each other, gazes locked together. John's menacing growl rumbled louder. Grant's ears were laid flat. He hissed and sprang at John, his huge body bowling him over. They wrapped around each other, teeth flashing, claws ripping, tumbling over and over. The wolf managed to grip the cat's throat and pin him for a moment, but a heartbeat later, the much bigger panther was on top.

“Shit!” Sherrie could see John was going to get the worst of it since Grant outweighed him and had razor sharp cat-claws. She scooped up a rock and threw it at the fighting animals. It didn't slow them down. They continued to bite and claw at each other with a ferocious noise that made gooseflesh rise on her skin.

Sherrie picked up a larger rock and heaved it at the panther's head. It crashed into his shoulder and knocked him sideways. The panther released his opponent and turned toward her, showing sharp fangs. Her heart pounded. At that moment, she was terrified for her life. These were two dangerous animals who might not remember their human side in the heat of battle.

“Stop fighting,” she yelled. “This isn't helping.”

The wolf crawled from beneath Perron's body and staggered to his feet, whining and shaking his head. One ear was bent and bleeding. The panther backed off, still hissing, before turning to lick his wounded flank.

“We have to work together to get out of here. Stop acting like idiots.” She felt like the idiot, talking to a pair of animals as if they’d understand her. She wondered how much of their intellect was functioning. Moving closer, she held out a hand toward each beast, palms open. She touched John’s muzzle, the top of Grant’s head, and stroked both soothingly. Soft fur caressed her palms and, once again, an electric charge entered her from contact with the two shifters. Lust, power, strength and awareness flowed through her.

Almost simultaneously, the two beasts began to change to human form. She felt the vibration, the twisting beneath her hands, and pulled away to watch while skin replaced fur and animal features became human once more.

Given their situation, she shouldn’t have had a lustful thought to spare at the sight of their nude bodies, yet her body seemed to have a will of its own. One glimpse of John’s dark-haired chest and groin and his semi-rigid cock made her stomach flutter. He bent his head to examine the clawed flesh on his side, and she longed to kiss his wound better. Grant looked just as sexy with his rumpled blond hair, one hand rubbing a band of tooth marks around his throat. An image of the pair of them locked together, not in combat, but in a sweaty sexual clinch, flashed in her mind. Liquid heat bloomed between her legs.

“Are you two quite finished?” she demanded, using anger to distract her from the mounting urgency of her desire. She threw a pair of jeans at Grant, and he caught them, but didn’t put them on. They dangled from his hand as he stood like a glorious statue and examined their rocky prison.

“Maybe we could boost you up,” John said. “You could find your way back to the Blazer and drive to town for help.”

Sherrie stared at the imposing height. “I think we’re pretty well trapped.”

She had a growing sense this was playing out exactly as it must and they’d find it impossible to escape their cage even if she was able to reach the top of the rock. They were trapped here together for a reason. Deep inside, she felt something was about to happen between her and these two men—a union that couldn’t be stopped. It both frightened and excited her, but it was undeniable. Only together could they free themselves and overcome their enemy.

Grant was near panic, although he’d never let the others know it. He hated being caged with a fiery passion. His palms were slick with sweat, and his breathing was shallow, but damned if he’d have a panic attack in front of Walker. He’d turned his fear into rage and directed it at the wolf. Rolling around on the ground biting and scratching had been better than falling apart. Now he scanned the top of the cliff wall and the morning sky overhead. Somewhere up there was the asshole who was playing with them like marionettes.

“Hey.” Sherrie was suddenly beside him, offering a bottle of water from the knapsack. “You look really pale. Sit down and rest.” She pressed her hand on his shoulder, and the warm contact distracted him from his apprehension. In two seconds flat, he went from near panic at the idea of being trapped to wanting

her with a bone-shaking desire. His libido always ran hot, but his instant reaction to this woman was abnormal. More magic like the dream travel.

Grant stared down into her light green eyes then at her plump lower lip that beckoned him to kiss it. Obeying his instinct, he dipped his head to cover her soft mouth with his. Potent energy passed between them. He closed his eyes and drank it in—until a hard hand thumped his shoulder, pushing him away.

“Hey!” Walker stood between them, fists clenched.

Sherrie grabbed his arm. “It’s all right.” She put her hand on his cheek, drawing his attention to her face, and repeated softly, “It’s all right.”

Rising on her toes, she kissed the wolf, a light peck at first that soon became a deep, searching kiss. Grant’s already hard cock stiffened even more. He palmed his erection, squeezing lightly as he watched the hungry mashing of lips and tongue. Then he put a hand on Sherrie’s hip, completing the joining, and once again a powerful jolt crackled through all three of them, their energies entwining as well as their bodies.

Grant accepted the sensation with a satisfied grunt, but the wolf broke away, his eyes wide and worried. “Damn!”

“This is supposed to happen, the three of us together.” Sherrie sounded confident, almost serene. “Can’t you feel it, John? Don’t fear it or fight it.”

Sometimes you have to make your own happily ever after.

Head Over Heels

© 2008 *Lena Matthews*

Working at the Glass Slipper is anything but a fairytale for Cyn Elder. After one especially long day, all she wants is to kick off her shoes and put her feet up, but she reluctantly lets her friends drag her out to a new club.

Movie mogul and fledgling club owner Parker Maguire is bored with the Hollywood scene and its plastic women, and the club scene isn't proving to be much better. Until he finds a sassy woman refusing to back down from his overzealous bouncer.

Cyn is a breath of fresh air, neither impressed by celebrity status nor bowled over by his charisma and wealth. She's honest, genuine—and arousing in more ways than he could have ever imagined. For once, Cyn puts herself before her shop and lets herself be swept off her feet by a man who pursues her with a delightful vengeance.

Her father's evil girlfriend and her two lazy daughters, however, see Cyn's new happiness as nothing more than a threat to their own comfortable lives. Their plot to break the two lovers up could turn Parker and Cyn's "once upon a time" into a "happily never after."

Unless Cyn's Fairy Drag Queen can pull something out of her pink-chiffon sleeve...

Warning: This title contains hot, dirty, workplace sex; hot, dirty, sauna sex; heck...just hot, dirty sex in general. As well as fairies of the non-magical variety, and dreams coming to life.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Head Over Heels:

He racked up the balls, centering them as perfectly in the triangle as he could, trying to make sure everything evened out. This was the official tie breaking game and he had absolutely no intention of letting her win because she was a girl. Female or not, the woman was ruthless.

He should have known he was in for it when she offered to break. No one offered to break if they "played just a little" as she'd claimed. Not only had she made sure the balls scattered around the table, she'd also knocked three solid ones in with the first stroke of her stick. The damndest part was the vixen had the nerve to give him a little smile and say "beginner's luck", as if he would buy that.

But it wasn't just luck kicking his ass all over the green felt table; it was also her body, which always seemed to be in his peripheral vision whenever it was his turn to make a shot.

Cyn did everything from passing behind him and accidentally stroking his ass, to leaning down to check out his shot and pressing her full breasts against his arms. She was a cheat. A dirty rotten, sexy-as-all-hell cheat and Parker was loving every second of it.

She came up behind him and breathed on his neck. "Here let me help you line that."

Parker stifled a grin. She just wasn't going to play fair. "Get your little sweet ass on the other side of the table."

"I'm just trying to be helpful." She pouted, making her lips look even more kissable than he could have imagined. Not that he needed any help in the imagination part. All night long he'd been thinking of things to do with and to her, and half of them involved tying her naughty body to the very table he was using to hide his erection.

Parker steadied the shot and forced himself to concentrate on the white ball in front of him instead of the blue balls in his pants. He brought the stick back and sent it barreling towards the ball, giving himself a little mental high five as the balls scattered in every direction, sinking three stripped ones at the same time. Standing, he eyed the table, calculating his next shot, before looking over at Cyn, who was frowning at the table. "For some reason, I'm not believing the whole you trying to be helpful thing."

"Now why is that?"

"Corner pocket," Parker called, as he lined up his next shot. "Hmm, could it be you're a hustler."

"Now, now, Parker, if I was trying to hustle you, I would have made a wager."

"It's not too late." He could think of several things he'd be willing to bet on. "I'm willing."

"So I see."

He froze on the down stroke and looked up into her twinkling eyes. If he had any doubts before that she wasn't aware of his attraction to her, those were now laid to rest. He was certain she missed very little. "What do you mean?" he questioned as he took his shot, cursing to himself as he missed. She was getting to him.

"I just meant you look like a betting man." Taking the stick out of his hand, she nudged him with her hip and leaned over to take her shot. She looked up before she thrust her stick between her long brown fingers and cocked a brow, "What did you think I meant?"

She executed her shot perfectly, winking at him as she stood. *Fuck this*, Parker thought,

as he watched her bend over again. Her dress rose a bit in the back, flashing smooth, groin-tightening chocolate thighs at him, forcing a savage growl from his throat as he noticed he wasn't the only one looking.

A couple of guys at the next table were watching her intently, *too* intently for his peace of mind. He didn't mind she was teasing him, but the thought of anyone else enjoying the view was enough to piss him off. Glaring at the men in question, he walked behind her, blocking her ass from their sight.

"Aww," one complained, earning a scowl from him as he twisted around to see who said it.

"What did you say?" she asked when she stood once again. "Nothing," he replied as he turned back to face her. "Did you make it?"

"Weren't you watching?"

"No."

"Then yes." The laughter in her voice told him another story.

"Cheat." He reached for the stick, brushing his hands against her. All the laughter froze as the touch forced them to make eye contact, real contact for the first time, and he really liked what he saw. He wasn't the only one feeling the pull between them. He was just the only one not fighting it. "You know you worried me there for a moment."

"*Moi?*" she asked, pressing her hand flush to her chest. Once again his mind went back to the pool table, and her on top, arms spread wide gripping the pool stick as he feasted on her body. "How did I do that?"

"I wasn't sure if you were going to show tonight."

"And stand up the Prince? Never." Her pretty brown face was relaxed in a smile. Never had he been turned on before by just simple foreplay. And that was what it was. They hadn't touched, not really, but he was just as aroused as if they had.

It was something about her—no—it was everything about her that was a turn on from her smooth, chocolate skin, to the sexy sway of her ass. He was intoxicated on her beauty and enraptured by her charm. "So does this mean I get your phone number this time?"

"If you're a good boy."

"Oh, baby, I promise you. I'm good."

"I bet." Glancing down at his outfit, she looked him over in a way that made him feel it

as if it were her fingers instead of just her gaze. "I like you in black."

He was willing to bet he'd like himself in black as well. "Thank you."

She looked at him with a twinkle in her eyes as she picked up her drink. "I have this theory."

"Do tell."

"All men look good in black. Black clothes, black cars..." she toyed with the straw in her glass, with a soft demure smile across her lips as she continued, "...black women." Damn! He went from intrigued to aroused in two seconds flat. Leaning in closer so there was no chance she would miss his words, he teased back, "I'm a man of science you know, and I'm a big believer in theories. The '*big bang*' is one of my personal favorites."

She coughed on her drink, bringing her hand quickly to her mouth to stifle the soda that was surely about to fly out. Sputtering, she reached behind her on the table and grabbed a napkin to wipe up her mess. "Boy..." she chuckled, in between coughs, "...you are too much."

"Just enough I'd say." He could tell she was used to having the upper hand in relationships. She was in for a mighty fall if she thought he was going to roll over and play lap dog for her. "Are you a betting woman?"

"Could be. Depends on the bet I guess."

"I win this game, you come home with me."

"Hollywood?" She quirked her eyebrow questioningly.

"No, I have a townhouse here, as well."

"Okay, and if I win..." Her voice trailed away as she waited for his response.

"We'll go out for coffee instead," he offered nonchalantly.

She pondered the comment for a moment, before setting her drink back on the table. "Sounds like a great bet."

Bending, he took aim. It was a win-win situation as far as he saw it. Yes, he wanted to go to bed with her, but half an hour spent in her presence was a great consolation prize. As he pulled the stick back, she chimed in, "I want to change the bet a bit."

Damn, he knew things were too good to be true. "You want me to change my wager?"

"No." Walking around to where he was, Cyn ran her hands down his stick suggestively. "If you win, I go home with you. If I win, you go home with me."



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