

ELLORA'S CAVE TWILIGHT



Shadow's Embrace

Tielle St. Clare

Book 5 in the Wolf's Heritage series.

Kalen is happy living her normal, human life. Though she's the daughter of two strong werewolves, she inherited almost none of the wolf's traits. She has a great job, a comfortable house and Brennan, her very sexy, very human fiancé. She has no intention of ever telling him that her family turns furry and howls at the moon.

Then Rebel returns, a childhood friend Kalen hasn't seen in years, stepping out of the shadows of her past. Despite the desire simmering between herself, Rebel and Brennan, Kalen is not about to let Rebel screw up her plans for a normal existence.

But when an injury puts Brennan on the edge of death, there's only one way to save him. Now Kalen must watch her fiancé turn into the very creature she fears, drawing her back into a world she left behind long ago. Her new werewolf's lust and needs and their mutual attraction to Rebel awaken hidden depths in Kalen. Is she strong enough to keep two werewolves?

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Shadow's Embrace

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SHADOW'S EMBRACE

Tielle St. Clare

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Prologue

Kalen stepped deeper into the shadows and let the darkness comfort her.

She stared out at the living room. Smiles lit the dozen or more faces of the people swaying on the makeshift dance floor. Taylor's wedding dress swished back and forth, curling around the legs of her mates. Mikhel moved with the slow, easy rock of a man who didn't want to look stupid. Zach was bumping and grinding, just reveling in the music and energy.

The full moon had been last night. Its power still influenced most of the wedding guests. Zach wrapped his arm around Taylor's waist and dragged her up against his body. He bent forward and placed his lips against hers. It was much more than a simple "may I kiss the bride?" kind of kiss.

A soft smile bent Mikhel's mouth as he watched his lovers. *His wife* and his lover. The idea of Mikhel taking two mates still blew Kalen's mind.

But she didn't know if she'd ever seen her brother so happy. Not that most people would be able to tell. He was an Alpha wolf after all. He kept his emotions well concealed but Kalen recognized the subtle signs. He was practically pounding his chest at publicly claiming both Taylor and Zach. Taylor looked stunning in her wedding dress, tall and sleek. A perfect complement to Mikhel and Zach. She fit in so well with the family.

As did the women Max and Jax had brought to the wedding. Lovely, both of them. Even the shy one seemed to be adjusting to being around the pack. Of course, having her brother and another male watching over her had to ease some of the stress.

"Kiki, what are you doing hiding out here?"

The greeting jolted Kalen out of her thoughts and she turned to look at her little sister. Or younger sister to be more precise. Bridget was the iconic female werewolf—tall, thin, strong. Everything Kalen wasn't.

But she loved her sister and Kalen let the childhood jealousy drain from her.

"Just watching the dancing. I don't know if I've ever seen Jax dance before."

Bridget giggled. "I think Dani's got him trying all sorts of new things."

Kalen nodded her agreement. "Why aren't you dancing?" She knew there had to be a dozen males who would love to get with Bridget. Hell, *she'd* had half a dozen requests and the only lure she had was being daughter to the pack Alpha.

Bridget sighed and brushed a strand of hair away from her face. "Nothing interesting." She had perfected that jaded, arrogant tone. Kalen loved her sister, she really did, but sometimes the girl was a little wild. "But let's talk about you. When were you going to tell me?"

Kalen's throat tightened up, but she forced a smile.

"Tell you what?"

"That you're engaged."

Kalen felt her eyes widen. How had Bridget known? She'd hidden evidence in the car.

Bridget shook her head. "Ring indent on your finger."

Kalen sighed. Damn werewolf vision. "I was going to tell you but I didn't want to steal any of Mikhel and Taylor's thunder."

"Right," Bridget scoffed. "Like you getting engaged would be more shocking than Mikhel mating two wolves, one of them male."

"And our parents coming out."

Bridget joined her in an eye-roll. "And Jax and Max, and sweet heavens, tell me you're engaged to just one person."

Kalen laughed. "I am."

"What's his name?"

"Brennan."

"Hmm, don't know him." Bridget turned and scanned the crowd. "Which one is he?" Few humans had been invited. The wolves clumped together, males on one side, females on the other, eyeing each other. Kalen had no doubt the evening would progress into an all-out orgy. Not here, her parents would never stand for that, but the party would move on after the bride and groom – and groom – left.

"Uh, he's not here."

"Why not?" Bridget cocked her head to the side and stared into Kalen's eyes. She used to do it when they were kids. It was like she could read minds. Kind of creepy, really. "He's human," she accused.

"Shh, not so loud."

"What? Like Mom and Dad don't expect that? You haven't lived with the pack for fifteen years."

"There's another problem."

"What? He's allergic to dogs?"

"He's a lawyer."

It was time for Bridget's eyes to get wide. "Dad's going to flip."

"Dad will love him." She had to believe that. "Eventually."

"Well, I'll love him. Can't wait to meet him. Bring him early to the next pack meeting and we can – oh, that wouldn't be a good idea." Bridget seemed to deflate in front of her.

"No kidding." She wasn't going to expose Brennan to the pack. Not now, hopefully not ever.

Bridget shook her head and looked at Kalen with serious eyes. Bridget wasn't serious often but when she was, Kalen knew to pay attention.

"You probably haven't heard."

"Heard what?"

"Rebel's back."

"What? When?" Her heart started to thump in her chest.

"A couple of weeks ago."

And he hadn't contacted her. Guess that wasn't a surprise.

"Dad's letting him live in the old hunting cabin," Bridget continued. "He's kind of keeping a low profile after what happened, but Dad said something about insisting he be at the next full-moon run."

Kalen barely heard her. Her mind did a quick trip through her memories. Every childhood adventure, good and bad, had involved Rebel.

Until that night. She hadn't been able to face him. And now he was home.

"Now, come on." Bridget grabbed her arm, dragging her out of her thoughts and pulling her toward the food table. "Let's get something to eat, find a quiet corner and you can tell me all about your man."

Kalen followed, her head still spinning.

Just when her life was calm and steady, Rebel had returned.

* * * * *

He slipped back into the shadows and watched Kiki leave the party. Kalen, he thought. Almost everyone called her Kalen now. Or that's what she called herself.

And that wasn't the only thing that had changed in fifteen years.

She'd grown up, transformed from an insecure girl to a confident woman. She flipped her hair away from her face, the red mane streaming down her back in corkscrew curls. She'd let it grow out. His chest tightened.

As a child she'd kept her hair cropped short, hating the color and the curls. His fingers clenched. Fuck, it must look wild when she woke up after a night of hard fucking.

She slipped into her car and reached forward. He risked poking his head out, wanting to see what was so important. She sat back and draped her left hand over the steering wheel. A huge diamond glittered on her third finger.

Engaged. Of course.

The engine started and she pulled away.

He watched until her taillights had disappeared down the gravel road and then slipped out of his hiding place. He skirted the edge of the parking lot, drawing close to the corner of the building. Sounds from the party rang through the open window. The

scents assaulted him. Bodies—male and female—hot and just a little sweaty from dancing. His wolf growled, the strange smells confusing the animal. And a confused werewolf was a dangerous thing.

He peeked in one window. The person who could give him answers was inside and he didn't feel like interrupting. Didn't want to make a scene, and his arrival would do more than that.

He picked out Bridget's car and eased himself into the shadows to wait. She'd probably be one of the last to leave but she would have all the answers...like who Kiki had become and who she was engaged to.

Not that he expected to lure her away from her lover. She deserved whatever happiness she could find. But he wanted to be prepared when they met face-to-face.

Chapter One

Kalen leaned her bare shoulder against the doorframe and watched Brennan push his key into the deadbolt. God she loved to watch him move. Even something as simple as opening her front door. Which wasn't so simple right now. The lock was sticking and she hadn't had a chance to call a locksmith. Brennan's brow crinkled in concentration as he jiggled the key.

The quarter moon caught Kalen's eye. Tipping her head back, she watched the bright crescent. Just a week ago, the moon had been full and she'd watched her brother claim his mates. Tonight she was back in her human world where she belonged.

Brennan grunted, capturing Kalen's attention again. All thoughts of the moon and mates disappeared. He was still hunched over, staring intently at the lock. The porch light created a halo over his dark head, designing interesting shadows on his cheeks. Gorgeous. The serious line of his jaw, the crisp cut of his hair to just above his collar. In the conservative suits he wore to the office, he looked sexy.

In the tuxedo he had on tonight... She licked her lips. Yummy.

He glanced to his right as if he sensed the direction of her thoughts. The desire in his eyes made her stomach flip, as did the laughing twinkle. *Oh yeah.* She eased her hip to the side, drawing his focus, knowing the slick material of her gown molded to her thighs and ass. Brennan paused and stared for a moment, taking in the picture she deliberately created as he cranked the key right. The lock tumblers rolled over. He flashed her a triumphant grin and opened the door, stepping back to let her go in first.

Kalen ignored the invitation and walked toward him. The drive home had drained away the last of her adrenaline and left behind a smooth, seductive need.

For Brennan.

She pressed up against him and draped her arms around his neck, pulling him down for a long, slow melt-his-shoes kind of kiss. He moved with her—bending to meet her, taking subtle control. He dipped his tongue between her lips, a quick taste that made her ache for more. She moaned into his mouth, loving the flavors and the power that wove through the kiss. There was nothing better than Brennan's mouth on hers. Unless it was Brennan's mouth doing wicked, wonderful things to other parts of her body.

She eased back and gently bit his lower lip. She had a tendency to bite. It was one of the few traits she'd acquired from her werewolf parents. Thankfully Brennan didn't seem to mind. He enjoyed it...as long as she didn't leave any visible marks.

She allowed the weight of her body to settle into his. Warmth invaded her pussy, turning liquid, melting her. He wrapped his arms around her and put his hands on her

hips, holding her for a moment before one slid down and cupped her ass. She wiggled into the caress.

"You are in a good mood," he said, the teasing accompanied by another squeeze to her butt cheek. She pressed her hips back, pushing into his hands. She might not have the svelte figure of a werewolf but Brennan didn't mind. He loved her curves, spent *hours* loving them.

"And why not?" She whispered a kiss across his chin. "The event—" A fundraiser for AIDS Hospice. "Was a huge success." Another kiss. "I picked up three more possible clients and my date was the hottest guy there."

"You think so, huh?"

"Uh-huh. Hot and sexy and all mine." She punctuated each word with a brush of her lips, a flick of her tongue.

His cheeks turned a darker shade and Kalen couldn't help but smile. It was sweet.

And on a guy who ate career criminals for breakfast, it was a shock.

He kissed her lips, a quick peck, and gave her a light squeeze. "You're right about the last point." It was a gentle, loving embrace and so not where she wanted this to go. Gentle and loving was wonderful, but tonight her body was primed for a good hard fuck. She pulled back just a bit and pressed up on her toes, putting her lips to his ear.

"Now that hot, sexy guy is going to come inside and fuck me until I scream." His hands tightened on her back. She knew he liked it when she talked a little dirty, a little out of character. She bit down on his earlobe and trailed kisses down his neck. His hands were sliding back down to her ass. She rubbed against him, cuddling his growing erection between her thighs, making it harder. She had him.

"Baby, I can't."

He eased away, putting actual space between their bodies. The shock made her look up, hoping he was teasing, that he wanted her to seduce him. But the regret in his eyes was real.

"I have an early meeting with the mayor. Six a.m."

"On a Saturday?" She tried to keep the whine out of her voice. Brennan was a rising star in the prosecutor's office and when the mayor called, Brennan went. That was how the game was played. She understood it but she didn't always like it, especially when she had plans for her man that involved getting hot and sweaty for hours. "You could just leave from here," she suggested, not holding out much hope. Once Brennan set his mind to do something, he did it.

"And show up to meet the mayor wearing a tux?"

"You'll be the best-dressed man on the tennis court."

Brennan smiled. "I'd be doing the walk of shame for my boss." He shook his head. "Not going to happen. But how about we make a plan to meet—" Brennan paused and looked to his left, his gaze darting down the hall. "Did you leave your TV on?"

"No." She paused and concentrated on the sound. Faint voices chattered from her living room. He was right. That sounded like her TV. But she hadn't had it on today. Too busy getting everything finalized before the event started. She looked up and realized her entryway was lit up. The hall light was on. Even her kitchen light was on. "And I didn't leave any lights on."

Brennan stepped forward and Kalen had little choice but to move back. He stopped just inside the door and looked around. The noise definitely came from her living room.

"Stay here."

She bristled at the firm command but quickly realized this was how movie heroines got in trouble...following after the hero. Except it was kind of creepy standing in her entryway all alone. With her TV blaring. It seemed really unlikely that a criminal had broken into her house just to run up her electric bill.

Brennan started down the hall. And Kalen tried to hang back but dismissed that urge. Whoever, whatever, had entered her home, she was going to feel safer next to Brennan.

She hurried behind him reaching him just after he walked into her living room.

"Who the hell are you?" he demanded.

Kalen peeked around his shoulder and choked. There was a body stretched out on her couch, blanket draped over tight male abs, remote in one hand, popcorn with the other, some gory forensics show on her television. He turned his head and looked up.

Golden eyes passed over Brennan and went straight to Kalen. Breath locked in her throat. She hadn't seen those eyes in fifteen years.

"Rebel?" His name came out of her mouth as a strangled gasp.

Memories assaulted her — the last time she'd seen him, talking on a phone through a window made of safety glass. He'd been furious at her for coming to visit him, and in those brief moments she'd seen just a hint of the dangerous man he'd become.

Brennan looked at her then whipped his stare back to Rebel.

"You know him?"

Rebel didn't get up. He didn't do anything except smile. "Hey Kiki." The words came out as a wicked, sexual drawl. Or they would have been sexual if she didn't know Rebel.

"Kiki?" Brennan asked.

"A childhood name." She waved her hand, dismissing the question. Her mind locked on more important things like "what is Rebel doing here"?

Rebel chuckled and tossed the remote on the coffee table. "Her little sister couldn't pronounce Kalen." The rumble of his voice held an intimacy she wasn't expecting. He looked at her, his eyes calling up the memory, dragging her back almost thirty years. "Kept coming out 'Kay-wen'. It was cute." Rebel winked at her and just like she had every other time he'd flirted with her, she blushed.

The edge of his mouth twitched almost into a smile. She waited for his classic teasing grin but it never appeared. His lips turned flat and the light in his eyes dimmed.

Brennan looked at her. His gaze glittered with questions and more than a little irritation. The line of his jaw tensed, a subtle reveal of his inner emotions. She gave herself a mental shake. She wasn't a young woman anymore, fascinated by Rebel's charisma. She was all grown up and engaged to Brennan.

Rebel couldn't just appear and —

He pushed himself up off the couch and it registered that he was wearing jeans. Just jeans, tight, low on the hips jeans. His abs rippled as he stood, and her mouth dropped open.

"Oh my."

Stick-straight black hair hung to just below his shoulders. His skin was tan, as if he'd been working outside. Dark amber eyes stared at her, reminding her of the young man he'd been, but then the color lightened, turning into that strange feral color of his wolf. She didn't have an animal inside her to respond, but even she could see that his wolf hovered close to the surface.

A dangerous situation. And she hadn't exactly explained to Brennan about the whole werewolf thing.

Rebel had been a young man when he'd gone to prison. He'd been strong and powerful then, but now his presence invaded the room. He'd filled out in the intervening years. Prison had obviously been good for him.

She mentally slapped herself at the thought. It hadn't been good for him but dang, there wasn't an ounce of fat or unused muscle on his body. He rolled his shoulders back and she crushed a whimper. His pec muscles tightened and he flexed his arms, making them bulge just a little, just enough that she really wanted to know what it would be like to run her tongue across that hard, smooth flesh.

She knew it was deliberate. That he was showing off but dang, she couldn't pull her eyes away.

She loved Brennan. He was gorgeous and well built but...wow.

An encouraging cough—encouraging her to do something besides stare—nudged her back to reality. Reminding her that Brennan stood beside her.

And that Rebel was here. In her house. She met Rebel's eyes and the years disappeared.

For a moment she forgot everything else, everything except Rebel—her protector, her friend, her first love.

"I can't believe you're here." She moved around the end of the couch and reached for him. He flinched, jerking away before she could touch him. "Oh, sorry." The new reality slammed into her again.

"No. My fault." Before she could retreat, give him the space he needed, he looped his arm around her back and yanked her against his body. She landed with a thump,

her cheek hitting the solid wall of his chest. Her grunt mixed with his chuckle. "Sorry, honey. Forgot you're just a little bitty thing." Childhood returned and she dug her fingernails into his bare back.

"I am not. I'm normal. You're the freak."

He laughed and tightened his arms around her, his big hands pressing her against him. She sank into the hug, memories clouding her senses. Her body remembered his and she fell into the old routine, turning to Rebel for comfort. Her arms wrapped around his back and she held on, savoring the heat and strength. It wasn't sexual – this was Rebel after all – but his presence reached inside her and smoothed over the rough edges.

A missing piece of her life seemed to click into place.

Rebel was back.

Knowing Brennan was watching, she resisted the urge to press her nose into Rebel's neck and cuddle. She'd spent hours leaning on Rebel, using his strength when her own failed.

But that was fifteen years ago. She was a different person – and no doubt so was he.

Brennan was in her life now. And she'd learned long ago that she didn't need to lean on anyone else.

She intensified the squeeze for a moment then pulled back. When Rebel didn't immediately release her, she ground the heels of her hands against his hips and shoved, forcing some space between their bodies.

Laughter flared in his eyes and she knew he was messing with her. Maybe he hadn't changed that much in fifteen years. Jerk. The laughter turned to something else as he stared at her. She didn't recognize the emotion but something deep in her core rumbled in response. Her fingers fluttered, preparing to reach out for him.

Brennan cleared his throat – again – another not so subtle reminder that he was there. The sound gave her the jolt she needed. She backed up and found herself standing between the two men.

She took a deep breath and found the courage to meet Rebel's eyes again. The strange emotion was gone, masked by a wicked teasing light. That more than anything gave her the strength, the focus.

"What are you doing here?" she asked, knowing Rebel well enough know that only a direct question would get her an answer.

"Here in town or in your living room?"

"Both."

"I'm in town because I have some business and I'm here because I missed you." He tipped his head to the side and blinked. It was the "lost puppy" look, cute as a child, infuriating as an adult. He didn't seriously believe she'd fall for it, did he? "Didn't you miss me?"

"Of course," she said through tight teeth. His eyes lit with laughter and she remembered that Rebel could be a royal pain in the ass when he wanted. "How did you get in?" she asked, using her irritation to add an edge to her words.

"Back door." He shook his head. "You need better locks. You never know who might just walk in." He winked then shifted his focus.

"You must be Brennan." Rebel reached out, offering his hand. It looked almost civilized but the energy bouncing between the two males was pure aggression. And Kalen had enough sense not to get between them. "I've heard a lot about you," Rebel drawled.

She choked. She hadn't told Rebel about Brennan. She hadn't told anyone about Brennan, except Bridget, and that meant...

She opened her mouth to protest but Brennan spoke before she could.

"That's interesting." His tone was cool. He reached out and gripped Rebel's hand in his. "Kalen hasn't mentioned you at all."

The corners of Rebel's eyes tightened at the subtle slapdown.

"Don't worry. I'm back now. I'm sure we'll get to know each other very well." Then, all sweetness and light, he turned to her. He even had the gall to flutter his eyelashes. "It's okay that I crash here, isn't it? I really didn't have anyplace else to go."

Bridget had said Rebel had moved into the old hunting cabin. It was a few miles from the pack house. It was small with basic plumbing and limited electricity. But it was livable. Unless something had happened. Rebel had never gotten on well with her father.

"I thought you were staying in the hunting cabin."

"I am." He smiled and tipped his head to the side. For the first time tonight, she felt like she was seeing real emotion from Rebel. "I just needed a place to crash tonight a little closer to town. I thought I'd come visit an old friend."

The warmth in his voice brought tears to her eyes. But why now? He'd been out for over a month and he showed up on her doorstep late on a Friday night? With Brennan standing right there. Even for Rebel this was an odd time for a visit.

"What's going on?" she asked. She knew enough to be cautious when Rebel was hiding something.

His gaze flicked over her shoulder to Brennan then back to her. "Maybe we could discuss it in private?" he asked, his voice low and intimate.

"Maybe you could discuss it in the morning," Brennan suggested.

His interruption made Rebel step back and she heard the softest growl start in his chest.

Yeah, this wasn't good. Getting these two boys separated was probably the best idea.

"It's late," Brennan said. "And we were just heading to bed."

She started to point out that he'd been ready to leave, that he had an early meeting, but she looked at Brennan. Really looked at him. The hardness in his voice mirrored his stare.

Curiosity drove her to find out why Rebel chose her couch to sleep on, but she dismissed it. She needed to go with Brennan, needed to soothe her lover's concerns.

She took a breath and turned back to Rebel. "He's right. We were just going to bed."

Rebel opened his mouth as if he was going to plead his case. She widened her eyes, silently begging him to let it go until morning. Once Brennan was off at his meeting with the mayor, she and Rebel would have the house to themselves and he could tell her all about it. They had a lot to discuss and she wasn't sure she wanted Brennan hearing most of it.

Rebel hesitated, just enough to make her heart speed up, then he smiled. It wasn't a real smile. It was the fake, Eddie Haskell grin he used when talking to her parents.

"No problem. We'll talk in the morning." He turned to Brennan. "It was so nice to meet you. I can't wait to get to know you better." The sweet sound of his voice made the hairs on her neck stand up and she felt Brennan shift, his instincts coming alive at the subtle threat of a predator.

She glared at Rebel, no longer pleading but warning him to back off.

She thought she heard a chuckle but ground her teeth and ignored it. She'd deal with Rebel tomorrow. Tonight she had to attend to Brennan.

* * * * *

Kalen walked upstairs. The sensual, fluid motion of her muscles evaporated, absorbing the tension emanating from deep inside Brennan. He followed her, silent, the distance between them wider than a few feet.

At the click of her bedroom door closing behind them, she spun around. Brennan stood, his back against the door, his arms folded on his chest.

"He's an old friend. Very old."

"And he decided he needed to break into your house and sleep on your couch, why?"

She shrugged. "I don't know." Her lips kicked up in a half smile. "And you went all He-Man on me and dragged me up here before I could find out."

The light in his eyes shifted just the tiniest bit but she wasn't out of the woods. She could understand his reaction. If she'd found a half-dressed "friend" in his house, she'd be pissed as hell. Probably throwing things. So a little jealousy was expected.

She dropped her purse onto her dresser and strolled toward him, letting her hips sway, pushing her shoulders back, knowing what it did to her breasts. Her plans for a hard, up-against-the-wall fuck were probably gone. Instead it would be a full-on seduction. She'd show him how much she loved him, how much she loved his body. It would be a delicious distraction.

She licked her lips as she imagined tasting him all over, spending long moments seducing each part of his body. She drew close then turned, giving him her back.

"Would you unzip me?" she asked. Desire deepened her voice, giving it a hungry, throaty whisper.

Brennan didn't respond. He silently unzipped the low back of her dress. She could have reached it herself but needed something draw Brennan's attention away from Rebel. It didn't quite work.

"So, does he do this often? Just appear and expect to stay."

The bodice of her gown fell forward. She caught it and stepped away, slowly turning around to face Brennan. Once she was sure he was watching, she lowered her hands and let the material cascade to the ground, leaving her in a bright red strapless bra and matching panties.

"No. I haven't seen him in fifteen years."

"Fifteen years? And you're just going to let him sleep on your couch? Do you even..."

She reached behind her, her fingers wrapping around the clasp of her bra. The motion pressed her breasts forward, straining the lacy cups.

Brennan's eyes dipped down to her breasts. He watched, his mouth open just a bit. He loved her breasts. In most situations he behaved like a respectable gentleman and kept his eyes focused above her shoulders, but the minute she showed a bit of cleavage, he had to work to keep his attention off her tits.

"You're trying to distract me," he muttered.

"Is it working?"

She undid the bra clasp and let the lace drop away, leaving her bare. A moan that wasn't faked or exaggerated tickled the back of her throat. She slid her hands around front and cupped her breasts. They ached from being bound so tight all evening.

Brennan's breath grew heavy and deep. The sound spiraled into her pussy. There was nothing sexier than knowing her man wanted her.

With one hand she reached up and pulled the clip from her hair, letting it tumble down her shoulders. It hit her bare skin midway down her back. She swung her head side to side, loving the feel of her curls against her skin. The motion arched her back, pushing her chest forward.

Long calloused fingers slipped beneath her hand and cupped her breast, taking over the soothing massage...only Brennan's touch didn't have the same calm affect. His fingertips teased her nipple and sent a delicious shiver into her pussy.

He moved behind her and palmed her other breast, squeezing almost too hard, just enough for her to feel it. She groaned and pushed her hips back, rubbing her ass against his erection. The hard, lovely ridge sent a wicked flutter into her pussy. He shifted, matching her height, bending forward and placing a hot kiss on her neck. Sensual heat flowed into her skin and she tipped her head to the side, wanting more.

"You can distract me but we aren't done talking about the naked guy in your living room." The warning was followed by a sharp nip to her shoulder. The bright pain zipped into her core.

She took a deep breath, pushing her breasts into his hands. "He wasn't naked."

"Close enough," Brennan said. His tone made her heart pound. It wasn't just jealousy. Pain rumbled beneath his words. She never wanted him to think she didn't love and lust after his body.

She spun out of his hands and took a step away.

"The only guy I'm interested in seeing naked is you." She backed up until her ass bumped into the high mattress. "And I've obviously distracted you too much if you're still dressed." Hunger filled his gaze and she resisted the urge to smile. She loved making love with Brennan—the actual fucking part was insanely hot, and this, where she could tease and tempt, made her crave it even more.

She put her hands behind her and hitched her backside onto the comforter. It was getting colder at night so she needed the extra warmth when Brennan didn't sleep over.

His chest rose in a long slow breath as he watched, and Kalen was pretty sure she'd succeeded in making him forget Rebel was downstairs.

Feminine power surged through her as she slid into the center of the mattress. Knowing that he watched, she draped herself across the purple comforter and slowly, slowly spread her legs. A quick glide of her fingertips up the insides of her thighs made sure he didn't look away. With a dramatic sigh, she let her arms drop to the side.

"I'll just lie here while you undress, so I don't distract you anymore."

Brennan stared at her for a moment, his gaze a mixture of lust and warning. She bit down on her lower lip, tugging the corner into her mouth. He'd never actually spanked her but the heat in his stare made her backside burn.

Part of her wanted to behave, to be the good, patient lover. But another side wanted to push him, see how far he'd go.

He bent down and pulled off his shoes and socks. She was tempted to sit up and watch—even his feet were sexy—but she stayed still, waiting, until he straightened and his attention was back on her.

She tipped her head to the side so she could see him better. He undid his tie and pulled off the tuxedo jacket. Every movement was smooth and confident, but he didn't linger. His gaze drilled into hers, telling her to move, to tempt him. The silent command swirled through her core. She arched her back and dug her heels into the mattress. Her hips rocked up, an invisible wave moving deep into her cunt, making it ache. She gripped the comforter, her mind filling with pictures, his lips on her breasts, the hot, hard slide of his cock driving into her. Her pussy clenched. A low vibration rumbled from his chest...almost a growl, almost animalistic. Her gaze snapped to his face. That sound was familiar. If he were a werewolf, his eyes would be glowing. Thankfully he was fully human and all hers.

A subtle ripple went down his chest as he pulled the white shirt aside, opening it but leaving it on. Her palms tingled, anticipating all that hard male flesh beneath her hands. Wet heat flowed from her pussy, the gentle ache growing into something more powerful. She slid her hand over her hip, across her stomach, down, slipping beneath the silk panties and into the hot space between her legs. Her fingertip slid into her folds, skimming across her clit, a teasing brush that sent a wicked shiver into her pussy and pulled a tiny gasp from her lips. Liquid drenched her skin. She wanted to be fucked, wanted something hard and thick inside her. Knowing it wasn't enough, but she needed... She pushed her finger into her passage. The slick flesh closed around her finger and she thrust deeper, imagining Brennan inside her, fucking her.

Good. So good. But not enough. She needed Brennan. Hard and deep. She loved his cock inside her, loved how he fucked her.

She pumped her finger into her pussy again, lightly brushing her clit. A lovely tingle shimmered into her core. It wouldn't take much but she didn't want to come this way. She wanted Brennan.

She opened her eyes and sighed, "Brennan."

Chapter Two

Brennan dragged back the edges of his shirt and froze. And watched. How the hell could he not watch? Kalen stretched out on her bed, her pale skin bright against the dark bedspread. She squirmed, making her tits shimmy, enough to make him lick his lips.

Despite her promise not to distract him, that's exactly what she was doing. Intentionally. He knew it but that didn't stop it from working. They would continue their discussion about... She slipped her hand into her panties and began a slow, steady finger-fuck. A band squeezed his chest and his thoughts blanked. What the hell were they going to talk about any way? Wasn't important. Fucking her. That was important.

She opened her eyes and stared at him. "Brennan."

Her other hand drifted up, squeezing her breast, pinching the tight peak and pulling on it. Her mouth opened slightly and a tiny moan escaped. He knew that sound. She made it when he fucked her, just as he pushed his cock into her.

His dick jerked inside his tuxedo pants. He tore open his fly and shoved his shorts and trousers down, stepping out of them as he moved toward the end of the bed. The white shirt fluttered around him and he yanked it off, letting it fall to the ground.

Reaching out, he wrapped his hand around Kalen's ankle and pulled, dragging her to the end of the bed. She yelped and giggled, her arms flailing to stop her slide. He was having none of that.

"Brennan." Her laughing gasp further pushed the invader from his thoughts. He kept pulling until her ass touched the edge of the mattress. Perfect position for what he wanted to do to his sassy little lover.

He leaned over her, planting his hands on the bed next to her shoulders, caging her.

She looked up and the amusement faded from her eyes, overcome by lust and hunger and just a hint of worry.

"Pretty little girls should be careful how they tease." He kept his words formal, just a hint of the schoolmaster in his tone.

She giggled. "But it's fun." She bent her legs and placed her feet against his ribs. Slowly she slid them back, drawing him closer, until her ankles crossed behind him. He didn't fight her subtle attempt to pull him near. He lowered his hips and pressed his cock against her pussy. The thin layer of her panties barely muted the heat. He ground against her, watching her eyes glaze over, feeling the dig of her heels into his back.

He loved it when she was in this mood. Slow and sexy was good but when Kalen was like this, she wanted to fuck, hard and long. And he was just mad enough to give it to her.

The image of her staring at Rebel's body—her stunned, sexually charged gulp—made his jaw ache. She belonged to *him*. And no long-haired bad boy from her past was going to take her away.

He looked into her eyes. His own reflection glowed back at him. The tightness in his chest relaxed. Here in this bed she was focused solely on him.

And he was going to make sure it stayed that way.

He rocked his hips in a circle, pushing almost too hard against her pussy. Keeping the slow rhythm going, he reached out and picked up her right hand, the one she'd had between her legs, fucking that pretty little cunt that belonged to him.

He lifted her hand to his mouth. His eyes captured hers, holding her gaze as he licked across her palm and slowly up her fingers. Faint traces of her pussy juices clung to her skin and teased his tongue. She watched, her breathing getting deeper as he bit the tip of her finger. Her hips wiggled and she pressed harder against his erection. The silent plea for his cock was sweet but not enough.

He wanted more than silent begging. He wanted her out of her mind, needing him, consumed by him.

He piked his hips back, breaking the grip of her legs. The sudden withdrawal of his cock seemed to shock her. Her eyes grew wide and she reached for him. He shook his head and pulled back. He wasn't going far but he wasn't going to give her what she wanted. Not just yet.

"Brennan—"

"That's it, baby," he said as he hooked his thumbs into the waistband of her red panties. He dragged them down over her round ass, pulling the elastic tight so she felt it burn across her skin. She might appear like a delicate flower but she liked a little pain, craved it. Masculine pride swelled in his chest. He was pretty damn sure he was the only one who knew that. She arched into the stinging caress.

He bent down, leaving her thighs trapped together by the silk, and nipped her lower lip, not staying long enough to make it a real kiss. "I like hearing my name on those pretty lips." He slid the panties the rest of the way down. He thought he heard a bit of the silk tear but he ignored the sound. He'd buy her another pair.

He tossed the panties over his shoulder. "Begging me to fuck you."

Her chin lifted. Defiance mixed with hunger in her eyes. His cock got even harder, pressing up, straining to be inside her. Fuck, he loved her. She was the perfect mix of demure and slutty, submissive and defiant.

"I wasn't begging."

The edge of his mouth pulled up in a smile.

"You will be."

He looked down to the hot space between her legs. The neatly trimmed hair glittered with her pussy juices. The musky scent rose from her and invaded his brain.

The intention of making her beg stuttered but he grabbed hold of it. He needed to hear his name on her lips, needed to hear her beg *him* to fuck her.

"And if I don't?"

He met her stare with his own, daring her to defy him. It would make it that much more fun to win.

"Then you'll be punished, baby – and you won't get fucked the way you want."

She gasped, making her tits sway, tempting him. He placed his hands on the insides of her knees and trailed his fingers down the soft skin of her thighs. She trembled beneath his touch but she didn't move, waiting to see what he would do. He watched his hands skim close to her pussy, wet and open for him.

From the corner of his vision he could see her breasts and the tight peaks of her nipples. Fuck he loved being inside her and wrapping his lips around her nipple, sucking hard, making her feel it deep in her cunt. Yeah, soon. But not just yet.

"Hold on, pretty baby," he said. She seemed to know what he meant. Her fingers curled into the comforter and her heels pressed into the mattress. She was perfect, wet and slick, displayed for him. Tension rippled through her body, a mixture of need and apprehension. And that trace of defiance. His lips widened into a grin. He couldn't help it. He loved that she thought she could resist him. It made him want more, to break through her defenses and consume her.

That thought filling his brain, he sank down, kneeling beside the bed, her pussy perfectly positioned for his mouth. He slid his hands beneath her ass, squeezing as he pulled her forward just a touch, just enough that she teetered on the edge. Unbalanced, she clung to the bedspread. Brennan caught her, holding her, supporting that round ass in his hands. She held still for a moment then draped her legs over his shoulders.

The hot scent of her cunt enveloped him and he needed the flavor to match. He bent forward and flicked his tongue out, one quick swipe – teasing them both. She gasped and Brennan grinned. Kalen was very oral – giving and receiving – and wiggled to get closer. Brennan tightened his grip on her ass and held her in place. Knowing he had her attention, he licked again, slower, dipping the tip of his tongue into her pussy opening, easing up to circle her clit, slow, delicate flicks that sent shudders through her body.

Her thighs quivered around his head and her fingers slid into his hair. The sensation tempted him but he pulled back. He had a lesson to teach tonight.

"No touching, baby."

She raised her head and stared at him. Her eyes glittered with need. "But –"

He shook his head. "Tonight you have to take what I give you." He lashed his tongue across her clit once more. "Now lie back and hold on."

Her thighs pressed against his shoulders but she relaxed back and released her hold on his head. He waited, watching as her hands slammed into the bedspread beside her hips and her fingers turned to claws, grabbing the soft material.

Perfect.

She wouldn't last long—Kalen never did—but for a moment he had full access to her cunt and he was going to enjoy it. He bent down, spreading her pussy lips with his fingers. The wet pink flesh opened for him and he eased the tip of his tongue back into her passage, shallow pumps, teasing the tight entrance. She cried out but didn't reach for him. Good girl. Heat and the delicious taste unique to Kalen pushed him deeper. He fucked her hard with his tongue, anticipating the moment she started to lose control. Her hips pushed up, meeting his thrusts, fucking herself on his tongue. He pushed into her and then pulled back, retreating to her clit. He'd spent hours licking her cunt and knew how to stroke her, swirling his tongue around her clit, sucking a soft, shallow rhythm, enough to drive her insane.

She moaned and twisted on the bed but Brennan held her still, loving the hot, musky scent of her pussy, the way she lost herself when he had his tongue inside her.

He sucked a little harder. She dropped the comforter and reached for him, her fingers sinking into his hair, nails biting into this scalp as she held him in place.

"Brennan!"

He considered withdrawing, punishing her for disobeying him, but he wanted this, loved pushing her over the edge. The taste of her pussy was too addictive for him to stop. He rubbed his tongue along the sensitive side of her clit, working that spot hard, knowing what she needed.

Her back arched up and she groaned, pressing against him. A growl rumbled in his throat. Her body stretched tight, straining to come. Fuck she was gorgeous. He wrapped his lips around her clit and sucked. Delicate shudders spread through her body. Her thighs tightened around his head but Brennan didn't quit. He sucked and licked, teasing her clit, pushing her higher. She pumped her hips up, demanding more.

The powerful flavor of her pussy consumed him. He gripped her ass and plunged his tongue into her passage, groaning as the hot, wet flesh closed around him. Her body tensed and she cried out, the sound splintering above them, her pussy contracting around him. He groaned, his cock hard, aching to sink into that same tight hole.

He rose up, her thighs sliding off his shoulders, her pussy juices still coating his lips and tongue, the flavor making his cock solid. Pre-cum dripped from the tip. His turn. He lifted her back onto the bed but Kalen sat up and reached for him, her hands curling around his shaft, squeezing, drawing him closer.

She licked her lips and bent forward, starting to slide off the bed to kneel at his feet. The thought of his cock sliding in and out of her lips pulled on his resolve. Fuck he loved her mouth, but that wasn't what he wanted tonight. He shook his head and eased her hands away, pushing her back onto the bed and following her down. His fingers locked on her wrist and held them to the mattress.

"What did I tell you about touching?"

She squirmed, fighting his hold. "But I want to taste you," she whispered.

He moved over her, bending down to kiss the protest from her lips. "You want to get fucked," he said against her mouth, sharing the taste of her pussy. He rubbed his

cock against her pussy, the slick heat coating his dick. "I'm going to have your pretty little cunt." Another kiss. "Come inside you." He captured her lower lip between his teeth and bit down, gentle, not too much. She shivered beneath him. Her hands clenched and unclenched as she struggled to be freed, trying to reach him. A soft growl, like a kitten learning to fight, rumbled from her throat. The sound made his cock twitch.

"Please."

"Please what?"

"Please, Brennan."

He looked down. Her body strained against his hold, her full breasts pressing up, her back arching to get more. He bent down and stroked the flat of his tongue across her nipple, loving the tight surge of need that ran through her body. Breath caught in her throat and she froze, waiting. He swirled his tongue across the peak then closed his teeth around it and bit down, letting her feel it.

She pressed her lips together but a whimper slipped from her throat.

"Ask me, baby. Beg me." He whispered the words against her skin then slid over to lap at her other nipple, teasing it. Delicate shudders ran through her body. It was sweet but not enough. He sucked the taut peak into his mouth and lashed his tongue around the tip. She cried out and pressed up, pushing more into his mouth. He drew back, letting his breath wash across her skin. "Come on, baby, you know what I want to hear."

He kissed his way down between her breasts, trailing his tongue across her skin. The mellow flavor spiraled through his body making him crave more. He could lose himself in her.

"Please, Brennan, fuck me." She twisted, straining to get to him, a pale flush of red across her skin. The hunger in her eyes was sweeter than any plea.

He wrapped his hand around his dick and placed the head against her opening, pressing forward just an inch, to give her a taste. She reached for him but he shook his head. "Not yet, baby. Put your hands over your head. I want to see your pretty tits shake when I fuck you."

Kalen groaned but followed his instructions. She grabbed the bedspread above her head, holding herself in place as he fed another inch into her pussy.

They'd fucked for five months without condoms, since they'd gotten engaged, but tonight it felt special, sinking into her bare, knowing the man downstairs would never feel this. His jealousy spiked again but he knew Kalen, knew she would never cheat on him.

Still, that fierce masculine instinct to mark and claim his woman—to fuck her so she remembered only him—reared up in his soul and he thrust forward, driving his cock hard and deep into her pussy. She cried out but he recognized the sound—all pleasure, no pain.

"Fuck, baby, that's what I need." He wasn't sure he said it aloud until she agreed.

"Yes. More. Again."

"Greedy wench," he teased, slowly pulling back until just the head of his cock was inside her. He held back, fighting temptation, fighting the need.

"Yes, Brennan." She released the bedspread and reached for him. He shook his head and leaned back. The threat of losing his cock seemed to be enough. She dropped back onto the mattress and placed her hands over her head. Her eyes sparkled – but this time anger and frustration mixed with the need. Perfect. Every part of her was focused on him.

"That's a good girl."

"Fuck me."

His cock twitched and he pressed forward, not deep, but keeping the connection.

"Demanding little thing."

Her eyes darkened. "Brennan." The warning in her voice made him smile.

He fought his body, resisting the urge to plunge into her. Soon. Soon he would have her but not quite yet.

He placed his hands on her hips, curling his fingers around the soft flesh. He eased closer, sliding up until he cupped her breasts, the tight nipples pressing into his palms. He stayed still one breathless moment, her breasts hot beneath his hands. He thrust forward, his cock sinking deep once again, giving her what she wanted. Her gasp echoed in his ears but he wanted her screaming. His name. He wanted her to tell the world who fucked her.

"That's it, pretty. Let me hear you."

Kalen forced her lungs to breathe, fighting the haze that threatened from the corners of her mind. She pushed the irritating red fog away and allowed her mind to sink into her senses. His cock filled her, stretched her, the hard, heavy thrusts making her ache for more. Her pussy clenched and she struggled not to move.

She dug her fingers into the blankets beneath her head, knowing that if she reached for him, Brennan would pull away. He eased his cock out her, again holding just the tip inside her entrance.

"Fuck me, Brennan," she demanded again, the sound low and harsh in her ears. He rolled his hips up, not pushing deeper into her, but rubbing up, hard against her clit. The delicious caress sent a shiver into her pussy and she groaned.

"You feel so good, baby. I don't want to rush it."

Kalen pulled on the blankets, holding her body still. When Brennan was in the mood for a slow fuck, there was no pushing him. If she did, he'd just drag it out, make her insane before he finally let her come.

His eyes glittered in the pale light, a battle of wills...the kind that Kalen loved. They would both win.

He eased forward, entering her slowly this time, so she felt every inch filling her. She closed her eyes and concentrated on the lovely cock sliding into her. The long,

delicious penetration highlighted her nerve endings and made them sing. She squirmed, curling her knees up to cuddle his hips.

He pulled back but didn't stop this time. He filled her again, the long, slow stroke driving her insane.

"Brennan..." His name was part begging, part warning and part whining.

His chuckle rumbled into her body and she opened her eyes to watch him.

"I like the way you feel, baby. This tight little cunt holding me, wanting me inside you."

The words wrapped around her chest like a band, making it hard to breathe. She fought to hold still but couldn't. She rocked her hips up, trying to send him deeper, harder into her. He fought her, giving her a slow slide into her, every inch gliding against her clit, teasing the already sensitive flesh, but it wasn't enough. She needed him hard. Pounding into her.

"Brennan." She growled his name. His lips twitched almost into a smile and he moved even slower. She grabbed his arms, letting her nails bite into his skin. "Dammit, fuck me."

The light in eyes sparked and he drew back, almost out of her.

"Fuck me," she said again, wrapping her legs around his back, trying to force his cock back inside her. "I want to feel you. Hard. Fuck me."

For a heartbeat he resisted. Then he broke. He shouted and plunged forward, driving his cock into her. Her cry blended with his, every nerve in her body tingling. He bent down and dragged his teeth across her neck, bright little streaks of pain that matched the steady hard pounding in her cunt. She moaned, his name slipping from her lips low and hungry.

"Louder, pretty baby."

He bit her again, harder. The tiny shock of pain raced across her skin and drove into her pussy. She dug her heels into his ass and pulled him into her, adding her strength to his, slamming his cock into her pussy. Delicious sparks rippled through her core. Her back arched, her body tensed, and she came. She might have screamed. She didn't know. Didn't care. Her world was centered on the cock sliding in and out of her. And the man fucking her.

"Again. Let me feel it again." He didn't stop the steady pump of his hips.

"I can't... I..."

"Come on, baby. Squeeze me. Let me feel you come."

His words, voice, cock...they worked her body, driving her fast up and over again. This time she screamed his name, the sound ringing in her ears. She clung to him, holding him as the pleasure sparkled through her.

He roared, slamming into her pussy one more time. Tension ripped through his body as he held himself still, his cum pulsing inside her. She eased her arms around him and pulled him down, taking his weight, rubbing her hands up and down his back.

His heart pounded against hers, his lips pressed to her neck.

"I love you," he whispered, so soft she almost didn't hear him, so soft she wasn't sure he knew he'd spoken aloud. Didn't matter. She took the words inside and held them just as she held his body to hers.

* * * * *

Kalen closed her eyes and just let the sensations flow through her. Her body hummed with pleasure—well used and well fucked. The tiniest traces of her orgasm still whispered through her core, the memory lingering in the deepest parts. His lovemaking had overwhelmed her body, but this moment—the quiet afterward, his heat surrounding her, his fingertips slowly stroking her hip—bound her soul.

She would never know what it was like to claim a mate, would never experience that soul-deep connection, but she had to believe this was as close as a human could get.

She reached down and took his hand, intertwining their fingers and carrying their connected hands to her lips. Brennan placed a kiss on her shoulder, a silent acknowledgement to the bond.

They lay in the quiet. The only sound was their breathing.

An awareness grew inside her as she stared into the dark, the reminder that Rebel was downstairs, on her couch.

She'd completely forgotten about him. Of course, when Brennan had his mouth—and cock—between her legs, it was hard to think of anything else. And living alone for so long, she'd completely forgotten the need to be quiet. And Brennan had pushed her to scream.

There was no way Rebel could have missed it. With his sensitive werewolf hearing, he might be hiding under the couch.

How was she going to face him in the morning?

She felt her cheeks heat up, thankful for the dark, that Brennan couldn't see.

Of course, he was the cause of her blushing. She might have started out seducing him out of his grumps but he'd ended up giving her the hard fucking she'd been craving all night.

He'd taken over...a male marking his woman, proving to her—and anyone who might be listening—that she belonged to him. Somehow she'd always imagined that to be a werewolf trait. It was obviously standard across all males.

She chuckled at her thoughts, the giggle breaking the solid silence between them.

"What's funny?" he asked. His voice was drowsy and low, words barely escaping his lips as if he'd been on the verge of falling asleep.

"Nothing. I was just thinking about men and sex."

Tension invaded his body and radiated into hers.

"One man in particular?" His question was neutral but she sensed the underlying strain, his jealousy not completely assuaged.

"Just in general." She wiggled and rolled almost onto her back, her shoulder still pressing against his chest, but now she could see his face. The dim light made the angles of his jaw appear sharper. She reached up and stroked her fingers across his cheek and jaw. "While I appreciate the macho display," she grinned, remembering the delicious way she'd benefited from his emotional reaction to Rebel's presence, "there's no need. Rebel is just a friend."

"Was he 'just a friend' fifteen years ago?" The question had an edge to it.

"Yes. He's always been a friend. That's all."

His teeth clenched and the muscles contracted beneath her fingers.

"That's not all he wants to be."

She shook her head. "You don't know him."

"I saw the way he looked at you. I recognize it because *I* look at you like that. It means he wants to fuck."

She giggled. "I think he might have been looking at you." Brennan's eyebrows squished together. "He's gay."

"No way."

"He is." She pushed up on her elbows. "I've known him since I was six."

"And you haven't seen him for fifteen years."

"Trust me, babe. He's most definitely gay. I've met the guys he dated, uh, fucked, whatever you want to call it."

Again he shook his head. "And I know how a guy looks at a woman when he wants to have sex with her. That guy downstairs would have loved it if I'd just disappeared."

She shrugged and turned toward Brennan, resting her head on his chest and closing her eyes. "That's just because he's always been a bit protective of me. I'm sure you two will get along great once you get to know each other."

The chuffing laugh that left Brennan's lips did not inspire confidence.

Chapter Three

Brennan carried his shoes down the stairs, skipping the board that squeaked so he didn't wake Kalen. Not that much woke her. She was a heavy sleeper to begin with and he'd left her in a satisfied slumber, her body sprawled across the mattress, moving into his side of the bed once he'd slipped out of the sheets. He couldn't deny a smug smile when he thought about how she'd gotten that way. He'd made her come three times and she'd collapsed afterward, her body hot and loose as she lay against him. A touch of jealousy did a lot for a man.

He sat down on the bottom step and slipped his shoes on. He didn't have time to go home. The mayor liked to do business over early morning tennis, very early. Thank God Brennan had his gym bag with him and ready to go. He'd fallen asleep moments after Kalen and only the incessant beeping of his watch alarm had dragged him to consciousness. Hopefully he could be in the locker room and changed before the mayor noticed he was wearing last night's tuxedo.

"Leaving so soon?"

Brennan flinched at the rough, mocking voice but managed to crush the movement. He didn't bother looking up.

"I have an early meeting." Now he raised his eyes and drilled his gaze into Rebel's. Bigger men with badder attitudes had tried to intimidate him. He wasn't backing down. "But I'll be back," he said deliberately.

Rebel didn't react. He leaned against the wall, a coffee mug in his hand. Like last night, jeans—almost new—hung low on his hips. Still shirtless, he looked perfectly comfortable, like he'd made himself at home. Tattoos marked his upper arms. From this angle Brennan couldn't see the design, but narrow black streaks draped around the fronts of his arms, like claw marks. They weren't balanced. The right one had four stripes, the left had three.

God I hope those aren't kill marks.

He didn't think that Kalen would let a killer roam around her house but this just highlighted how little he knew about Kalen's family and childhood. He'd never met any of her family though she talked about them a lot. From everything she'd said, it was clear she loved her parents, brothers and sister but somehow she'd managed to circumvent every hint he'd made about meeting them.

"Good to know it wasn't just an excuse to get out of spending the night."

Rebel's words intruded on Brennan's thoughts and it took him a second to catch on. "What?" He stood up and walked the few feet to stand in front of Rebel. That faint

mocking tone was already on his nerves and he'd met the guy less than twelve hours ago. "Why would I want an excuse *not* to spend the night?"

Rebel shrugged and took a sip of what Brennan could now smell was Kalen's mocha blend. "You know how some guys are...after they get a woman, they lose interest. Start sniffing around."

"I'm not like some guys. I'm going to marry Kalen and I intend to spend the rest of my nights with her."

A spark flared in Rebel's eyes. And Brennan blinked, trying to process what he'd seen. It hadn't been a metaphor. For a moment it really looked like a red spark in his eyes. The flicker vanished and Brennan decided he'd imagined it.

"Good to know," Rebel said lazily. Brennan fought the urge to snarl. That damn drawl made his spine tingle.

He pushed his shoulders back and drew himself up to his full height. He was still an inch or so shorter than Rebel but that didn't matter.

"Are you staying long?" he asked, tired of feeling like he was on the defensive with this guy.

"Hmm?"

"Can we plan on this being a short visit?"

Rebel's lips spread wide into a cocky grin.

"You don't like me."

"I don't trust you."

"Kalen does."

And that was the rub. Brennan nodded and folded his arms across his chest.

"Kalen also believes you're gay."

Rebel's voice dropped. "That bother you?" The arrogance shifted to warning.

"Not a bit," Brennan answered honestly. "But I saw how you looked at her last night. And that's not how a gay man watches a woman."

Rebel tossed his head to the side, flipping his hair back away from his face. For just a moment, Brennan saw a crack in the shield, some small hint that Rebel wasn't a true badass. But like the flame in his eye, it disappeared in a flash.

The edge of his mouth kicked up and he took another sip from his coffee cup.

"And what did Kalen say when you told her that? Because I'm sure that's something you needed to share."

"She said you were probably looking at me." He stepped back and grabbed his jacket off the newel post and headed toward the door. "We both know that's not true."

Rebel stayed silent until Brennan had his hand on the doorknob.

"The truth is..."

Brennan looked over his shoulder and waited.

"I'd do you both in heartbeat and come back for seconds."

There was no laughter or taunting in his voice. He kept his gaze locked on Brennan's—heat, intent and power flashing in those strangely yellow eyes. *Damn, he's serious.* As if he could hear Brennan's thoughts, Rebel nodded and strolled down the hall, back to Kalen's living room.

Brennan watched Rebel's back until he disappeared around the corner. He considered canceling the meeting, not wanting to leave Kalen alone with Rebel, but he needed to meet with the mayor. This was a strategy meeting. No one would call it that. It was officially just a game of tennis but he knew they'd be discussing the future—when the current mayor would run for governor and Brennan would take his place running the city.

He looked up the stairs. Kalen trusted this guy and while *he* didn't trust Rebel, he hadn't seen any threat to Kalen last night. Except maybe the desire to seduce her.

The unsettling thought followed him out the door. He was going to make this a short meeting and get his ass back here. He didn't trust that man.

* * * * *

Kalen came awake in slow lovely moments. Her body ached in delicious ways—the insides of her thighs stretched and her pussy just a touch sensitive. Her lips felt tingly, almost bruised from Brennan's wicked kisses. The heat from his body drew her. She arched her back and rolled into that warmth, draping her arm over his shoulder and cuddling her face into his shoulder. She drew in a long breath, savoring the masculine smell of the shampoo he used.

A smile curved her lips and she pressed a kiss against his neck. His long hair teased her nose and made it twitch.

Her eyes popped open. *Long hair?* Brennan didn't have long hair.

She jerked back and looked up at the man holding her naked body against his bare chest. Rebel. She moved her leg and sighed with relief to feel soft denim covering his thighs. They weren't both naked. *That was good. Right? Yes, that was good.*

She looked down. Her breasts were pressed against his chest, looking shockingly pale against his tan. She took a breath and felt her nipples brush against his skin. Zippy little tingles fluttered into her core and she gasped. What did she do now? If she pulled back, he'd see her naked, but really she couldn't lie there plastered against his body. *That's bad, right?* Every teenage and college-age fantasy she'd ever created had centered on Rebel and being in a situation like this. Almost. In her fantasies, he'd been naked as well. Well, not her early fantasies but later, after she'd learned a bit about sex, he'd been naked and in bed.

But that had been before Brennan.

Brennan. Right. That's why this is bad.

"What are you doing here?" she asked, pleased that her voice didn't tremble. She couldn't quite muster up irritation so she contented herself with cool and sophisticated.

"I told you last night."

"No, what are you doing in my bed?" She separated each word carefully from the previous one.

He sighed, drama just oozing from the sound. "Well, since tall, blond and human slipped out earlier, I wanted to make sure you didn't get cold."

"His name is Brennan and he had an important meeting with the mayor."

"In a tux?"

"He had his gym bag in the car. They're playing tennis."

"Or maybe that bag carries his Superman jammies."

Kalen pinched the tight skin at the base of his spine.

"Ow, okay. He's playing tennis with the mayor." She released her grip and he shrugged. "Really, what woman would get up at that hour to have sex with him anyway?"

Kalen's lips pulled back from her teeth and she growled. It didn't have the same power as when the rest of her family did it but Rebel seemed to recognize the sound. Not that it worried him. He wagged his eyebrows up and down.

"Fifteen years in prison didn't help your manners," she said, her teeth clenched together.

Laughter made the corners of his eyes crinkle. "Did you really think it would?"

She smiled in return and the tension disappeared from her body. But within seconds, the laughter between them changed, turning to concern.

"How are you doing?" she asked. She'd asked him that fifteen years ago when she'd gone to visit him the one time he'd agreed to see her. He hadn't answered her then. Now he stared at her, his gaze serious, honest. He shrugged.

"I'm making it."

"I'm glad you're here." As she said the words, she knew they were true. The turmoil he would bring to her orderly life was worth being able to see him again, to know he was near. She didn't know what the future would bring but someone, *something* had brought Rebel back into her life and she wasn't going to let him slip away. The high curves of his cheeks turned red.

"Yeah, me too. And..." He took a deep breath. "We'd better get moving. I don't think your guard dog would like it if he came home and found us in bed together."

Referring to Brennan as a "dog" was outrageously rude in their world. And her glare turned real.

"We're not in bed together!" she protested.

She expected him to laugh, but instead heat, lust flared in his eyes. Or so she thought. It disappeared so fast, Kalen knew she had to have imagined it. She looked

again and his stare sparkled with laughter and teasing. He deliberately looked down between their bodies, at her breasts still pressed against his chest. She gulped and tried not to think about her nipples and that they were hard and that he could probably, undoubtedly, feel them. It was her turn to blush.

"Doesn't look that way to me."

"You're being an ass," she said.

He peeked up and over her back. "Speaking of asses...as cute as yours is, it must be chilly."

She reached for the blankets, hoping to drag them over her hips, but there was nothing behind her.

"Go away." The command was a mixture of sob and whimper. She wasn't sure she could put up with this for much longer.

"Are you getting up finally?" He didn't move out of the bed. "I've gone shopping, did laundry, made coffee, cooked breakfast and still you wouldn't wake up. You sleep like the dead." He drew back and squinted, like he was trying to focus in on some in-depth feature. "Are you sure you aren't part zombie instead of werewolf?"

They'd watched *Night of the Living Dead* together a dozen times. "No body parts falling off."

"Good, because ewww."

They shared a grin that went all the way back to childhood.

He tapped his palm on her butt cheek and rolled away, leaving her naked in the bed. She had a fast choice—either lie there on display or roll over onto her stomach and let her ass be the only bare part of her visible. That seemed best and she flopped forward, hiding her front in the mattress. She lifted her head and looked at Rebel, expecting his teasing, something about the size of her butt.

His eyes were locked on her ass and this time there was no disguising the hunger in his stare. Rebel seemed to sense her observation and looked away, focusing on the carpet for a moment before he looked back.

"Breakfast is ready and still warm. But take much longer than five minutes to get ready and I can't guarantee it will be edible."

There hadn't been any emotion in his voice, just a forced teasing. That seemed so odd with Rebel. He'd been her friend since forever. Sometimes her only friend. But it had never been anything more than that. Was it possible Brennan had been right?

Rebel forced his eyes away from her delectable body and turned so she couldn't see his hard-on. He didn't need to try to explain that away.

"Get your ass in shower," he said, adding a wink and enough mockery to his voice that she would think he was just flirting. "I'll get breakfast ready."

He didn't look to see if she followed his instruction, couldn't let his gaze land on her round, sexy form one more time. Instead he walked out of the bedroom and loped

down the stairs, which was a challenge because he really needed one of his feet to kick his own ass.

"What the hell are you doing?" he asked aloud once he was clear of the bedroom. He'd gotten into the habit of talking out loud to himself. Living alone it provided a voice in the house. "You're supposed to be her friend. She's got a man. She's going to marry him. You're happy for her."

He knew there was no future in any relationship with Kalen beyond friendship. He'd been honest as fuck when he'd told Brennan he'd do them both. And want more.

That would be the problem. Making love, fucking Kalen, would no doubt be the highlight of his life, but he wasn't sure he could give up fucking guys. He loved a thick cock in his mouth and occasionally, very, he liked to take it up the ass. It had to be the right guy, the right moment.

"The right lube," he muttered to himself as he opened the oven door. The sausage and hash browns looked perfect, hot but not burned. All he had to do was scramble the eggs. He'd wait until the shower clicked off before he started those. He'd told Kalen five minutes but he had no illusions that she'd make it downstairs in that time. He heard the shower go on and smiled.

He had no illusions. About anything.

Despite the fact that her parents and now all her older brothers were involved in three-way committed relationships, he had no hope that she'd ever agree to that. She was too human.

It was the presence of the wolf that made those threesomes work and Kalen had no wolf. She didn't even have the sense of smell strong enough to know that it had been him in her bed, not her lover.

Of course, part of him wanted to think that she hadn't immediately pulled away because she'd been dreaming of him but self-delusion was never his style. He'd heard the two of them last night. It would have been impossible not to. She loved Brennan. It was in her voice when she talked about him, her eyes. Hell, he could practically see it in her soul.

He'd missed his chance. And he had to accept that.

Didn't mean he couldn't torment Brennan with his presence a little longer, though. Brennan needed to get used to abuse if he planned to marry into that Alpha family. Even the females were tough.

The water stopped running and Rebel fired up the stove. He dumped the beaten eggs into the hot pan and scrambled them, timing it perfectly. Kalen walked in, wearing her robe, her hair damp but combed, just as the eggs hit that barely beyond the runny stage.

"Grab the plates," he commanded as he pulled it off the heat. In moments he had two plates laden with eggs, sausage and hash browns. He hadn't made toast but really, they both needed animal protein. Kalen might be a latent werewolf but she still needed

meat. Her brief attempt at being a vegetarian in college hadn't ended well. Last he'd heard, the IHOP employees still told the story to scare the new waitstaff.

They sat down in her dining room. The room was spacious and held a table far bigger than two people needed, but then she was marrying a politician. She needed to be able to entertain. Strange. Kalen had never been very social growing up. That was probably more to do with not fitting in, he realized now.

He'd had hours to study and learn her house. He didn't sleep well, particularly in his human form. Normally he would have made the change, but with Kalen and the human male so near, he wasn't sure his wolf would have restrained itself.

After fifteen years of not being able to change into his wolf form, he's spent much of the last month letting his inner animal roam free. The land around the pack house and the hunting cabin was unpopulated except for the occasional wolf or werewolf and they knew enough to stay out of his way. Having the freedom satisfied the wolf in some ways, but in others it made the animal want to be in control at all times.

His stomach rumbled and he realized he'd been lost in his thoughts and hadn't eaten. That was one primal need he kept satisfied or he'd be chasing bunny rabbits in the backyard before the day was over. He scooped up a forkful of eggs, added some hash browns and stabbed a piece of sausage onto the tips of the tines. He pushed the whole mixture into his mouth and went back for more. It served two functions. He liked the combined flavors and he'd learned to eat fast and never let any go to waste.

He kept his head down and concentrated on his food. Biological necessity and fifteen years hard time had taught him to eat like a barbarian.

"So—"

Kalen's voice jolted him out of his mental silence and he looked up, confused for a moment. He glanced at his plate. He was almost finished and it looked like she'd taken three bites. He lowered his fork and hated the fact that he felt his cheeks burn. Embarrassment turned to anger. The wolf lived at the surface of his mind. It was how he'd survived the past fifteen years. His lips peeled back, just hinting at a snarl.

The light in Kalen's eyes darkened and she tipped her chin down. The true power of this woman, one she probably didn't even know she had, poured out of that stare.

"Are you growling at me?"

The reprimand silenced his wolf and Rebel shook his head even as he apologized. "Sorry."

She blinked and sighed, as if she was pleased the moment had passed.

"So, as I was saying, why are you here?" She lifted the hand that had been politely placed in her lap. "Not that I'm not thrilled to see you, because I am." He could feel the honesty in her words. It allowed her slip under one of the walls he'd built, invading that sacred space around his heart. She smiled and he felt the next wall start to crumble. "I really am glad you're here. A little startled that you decided to break into my house. But I'm going to assume you had a good reason. So what's going on?" She took a bite of eggs. "And you're fixing that lock before you leave." Her eyes twinkled.

God he'd missed her. She'd been in Europe when he'd been sent away, and at his request, no one had told her about it until she'd returned. She'd come out to the prison, but seeing her was too painful and he'd asked her not to visit. It was too hard. It was better if he just forgot the outside world, made prison his life. He tried to get her to stop writing letters but she'd ignored that command. And he'd cherished every word. The letters had grown less frequent over the years—she'd gotten busy and fifteen years was a long time to keep writing to a man who never responded.

He hadn't heard from her in the past year. Now he knew why. Brennan.

"Rebel?"

He nodded and managed a smile. "Yes, I'll fix the lock. I'm surprised boy-wonder hasn't done a full on security review of your place." He winked. "Make sure his woman is safe."

"His name is Brennan," she repeated. "And you *will* be nice to him."

There was that voice again. Like a school teacher and porn star rolled into one. It made his dick hard and every cell in his body wanted to obey. He'd fucked a few women but Kalen was the only one who could make his cock hard with just a look. In one moment he felt the need to dominate and submit.

Not that he was going to let her see that. He hadn't before and he definitely wouldn't now that she was engaged to the human.

He put his elbows on the table and leaned forward. "He was certainly *nice* to you last night."

She gasped and her fingers tightened on the fork. His eyes tracked to the muscles in her arm, watching to see if she was going to use the fork as a weapon. His mind told him she wasn't a threat, that she would never hurt him, but he couldn't fight fifteen years of training.

"I can't believe you listened." Her voice was tight but she made no move against him.

He took a breath, forcing his lungs to relax. He gave what he hoped was a casual shrug.

"I couldn't exactly avoid it." He leaned away and took another bite, this one a little more controlled, not so paranoid. "You're a bit of screamer, which frankly I wouldn't have imagined. Wait until I tell your brothers what stuffy, reserved Brennan likes to do their sister in bed."

Kalen smacked her hands on the table and stood up. "You wouldn't dare." It wasn't "the voice" that time. This was a purely feminine, purely outraged response.

Rebel couldn't hold it back any longer. He tipped his head back and laughed. "God you are so easy. I would have thought fifteen years living in the real world would have made you a little less gullible."

Her cheeks turned bright pink which Rebel found adorable but knew now was not the time for him to say anything. She huffed and plopped back down in her chair,

tugging it forward. She picked up a sausage in her fingers and shoved it her mouth, the juices dripping out the side of her lips.

She swallowed. "I am. Less gullible that is." She wiped off her fingertips and grabbed her fork, as if her manners had suddenly returned to her. "I just never know what you'll do."

Rebel looked at her. His heart thumped in his throat. Kalen lifted her gaze.

"I will never hurt you."

His words crashed around them like a weight, making it hard to move. Tears pricked her eyes.

She stared at him, hoping he could see the truth in her eyes. "I know."

Fifteen years but one thing hadn't changed. Rebel was still her friend. She didn't know him well—not anymore—but something in his soul called to hers.

He'd gone to prison because of her.

There might be a day that they would talk about that, but she wasn't ready for that conversation. And somehow she didn't think Rebel was either.

So she would focus on the now and figure out why he was here. She didn't think it was just to see her. He'd been out of prison for over a month. Why was he now sitting at her dining room table, bare-chested and really hot?

He'd pulled his hair back into ponytail at the base of his neck. She loved his hair. Down, he looked like a rocker. Pulled back, he looked like a pirate. It was a win-win for her.

Not that you're looking, she reminded herself. And she wasn't. She loved Brennan. Rebel was just a childhood dream and she'd let it go years ago.

At least she had until she'd seen him nearly naked. Well, it didn't hurt to look right? Men did it all the time and there was no way to deny that Rebel was gorgeous. He was the epitome of a werewolf male—tall, broad shoulders, thick chest muscles that made her want to sink her fingers into the firm flesh, narrow waist and that perfect six-pack stomach. She'd grown up around males like this and found herself surprisingly immune.

Except for Rebel.

"So going back to my earlier question...why are you here?" The eggs were a little chilled on her plate and the thought of cold eggs made her queasy so she turned her attention to the sausage. Her heritage hadn't given her the tall svelte figure of her mother or the power of her father, but she'd ended up with a love of pork. It seemed to run in their family and in every werewolf created by one of her family. *Great. Another inch on my ass.* Even that thought didn't stop her from picking up another sausage link. She didn't do it often and being around Rebel just seemed to draw out the few werewolf tendencies she had.

She tipped her head to the side and waited for Rebel to finish the bite in his mouth. He gulped down another gigantic mound of food before he spoke.

"Chas has got himself into some trouble."

Kalen nodded. Rebel's stepbrother didn't always make the best decisions. "What kind of trouble?"

Rebel released a sound that was a cross between a sigh and a groan. "Money, gambling, being a stupid little shit."

Kalen sighed. She knew Rebel's problem with his stepbrother. Rebel's father had married Chas' mother when Rebel was in his teens and Chas was about ten. Neither boy took to the other but Rebel was a pack animal, and even though he hadn't really liked Chas, he'd protected him.

"And he's come to you for help," she said. Rebel nodded. "What do you need from me? Money?"

His lips clamped shut and the glare across the table made her heart skip a beat. There was no mistaking the heat in his eyes this time. Pure masculine outrage.

"Okay, sorry. It was just a first guess. It would have been my first guess with anyone." That didn't dim the anger. "But I should have known better." Rebel wouldn't accept any help from her. He never had. She'd had "friends" who'd gotten close to her because of her relationship to the Alpha. Rebel had always been very clear that he wanted nothing more from her than her friendship. "And I do. It was a knee-jerk reaction." She fluttered her eyelashes at him, just enough to draw him out of his irritation. "Emphasis on 'jerk'."

That made him smile and in that instant the tension evaporated. Kalen sighed with relief. It would take them a bit to get their relationship back to normal. They'd both changed a lot. Still, she sensed the boy she knew had grown into a man she could love.

"Why did you come here?" She ate another piece of sausage. "You know I'm just going to keep asking until I get an answer."

"Persistent little snot, aren't you?"

It was her turn to grin.

Rebel put down his fork. He'd cleared his plate but she knew he could eat more and she slid hers across the table, offering him the last sausages and whatever else he wanted. He took the meat and left the rest.

"I have to drive up to my dad's cabin. Chas is..." He paused and rolled his eyes. "Hiding out there. He owes these guys some money, doesn't have it. I'm going to take him the cash and try not to beat the shit out of him when I see him."

"I'm sure you'll manage restraint."

She meant it as a tease but there was nothing approaching laughter in his eyes. "I hope you're right." He shook off the somber tone and the light returned. "I was thinking you might want to come with me." He said the words casually but Kalen heard the strain beneath the words. It took a lot for him to ask this. "I could run see Chas and then you and I could go to that clearing near the waterfall." He placed his elbows on the table and leaned forward. The intensity of his stare drew her in and she

leaned in as well. "Just the two of us. Pack a picnic lunch, some wine." The heat returned to his gaze and there was no ignoring it this time. The middle of her stomach dropped away as he continued to seduce her with his words and voice. She wouldn't say yes, couldn't—she had to work—but she also couldn't completely resist the lure. "We'll talk about old times and see what happens..."

His voice trailed away and another entered the mix.

"That sounds romantic."

Kalen practically jumped out of her chair and Brennan felt just a hint of guilt. He hadn't deliberately sneaked into the house—he'd used the key Kalen had given him nine months ago—but once inside he'd heard their voices and had to admit he'd done a little sneaking, kicking off his shoes at the front door, avoiding floorboards that he thought might creak. Kalen clearly hadn't heard his approach. She'd been too wrapped up in Rebel's plans for the day.

"Brennan!" She used the momentum of flinching to push away from the table and come around to the doorway. Her eyes glittered overbright as she pressed up on her tiptoes to give him a kiss. He bent down and gave her a peck on the lips, trying to keep a balance between reason and jealousy and not sure which side he wanted Kalen to see. He licked his lips and tasted grease. Almost like bacon. He and Kalen had cut out most pork six months ago and certainly they'd stopped bacon or sausage or whatever it was she'd been eating with Rebel.

For some reason that made the hair on the back of his neck stand up worse than any intimate plans.

Clearly the jealousy must have shown through because she jumped in front of him, not putting herself directly between him and Rebel but drawing Brennan's attention.

"How did the meeting with the mayor go?" She placed her hand on his chest and gave it a gentle pat. That one move soothed numerous nerve endings. It was familiar and wifely and he knew better than to say those words aloud. "How was tennis?"

"Fine." He blinked, trying to shake off the mood. Brennan looped his arm around Kalen's waist and pulled her close. The easy way she fit against his body continued the work of her hand on his chest and he realized he had nothing to worry about. Kalen was loving and loyal.

But that didn't mean Rebel couldn't tempt her, maybe even trick her into some liaison, using the memory of their childhood as a lure. "We had a great game. Good conversation." Great conversation. He had news to share but he wasn't going to do that with Rebel sitting there.

"Did you let him win?" Rebel asked. He turned in his chair and draped his arm across the back, looking casual and way too comfortable.

"I never *let* anyone win."

Rebel stood up and strolled toward them. "Then you must fun to play with," he drawled and flashed Brennan a wink. Rebel brushed close, ostensibly slipping between them and the table but Brennan was sure it was so he could rub up against Kalen. She

slid out of the way, curling around to Brennan's other side. The movement moved her closer so Brennan shifted his hands, sliding them down to rest on the top of her ass. Marking her body as his territory.

Rebel paused just outside the kitchen door and looked back, his shoulders turned, keeping both his ass and his abs visible. Brennan was sure the pose was deliberate. The bastard still hadn't put on a shirt. Brennan considered himself in shape but Rebel was ripped, there was no other way to describe it. He could see why Kalen might be attracted to him. With that and their history together, it probably made a tempting package. Not that Brennan was worried.

"I'll go wash the dishes and then we go," he said, speaking directly to Kalen and cutting Brennan off completely.

"But I—" Kalen tried to interrupt but Rebel kept talking.

He turned his stare to meet Brennan's. "I'd ask you to join us but I'm sure you have work to do. Prosecutor, right? I bet you have bad guys to put away."

The way he said it with just a sneer gave Brennan some insight. Rebel had been involved with the judicial system at some point.

Not a hint of sympathy swelled in his chest. In his experience, if someone ended up in court, there was usually a reason. There were a few exceptions but most were there for a reason.

"Yes, but I c—"

Brennan sort of heard Kalen start to speak but he was focused on Rebel.

"Actually, I'm free for the day. We seem to have crime under control for another few hours."

It was amusing to see the smarmy light in Rebel's eyes dim just a bit.

"Well, then please join us." He turned and faced Brennan full on, his body challenging him even if his words were not.

Brennan shifted away from Kalen and faced Rebel. "I'd love to," he said sweetly.

"Good."

"Fine."

"Well, you two have a good drive." Kalen patted Brennan's shoulder and walked by them both, heading down the hall.

"Wait, what about you?" Rebel called, starting after her. Brennan followed her to the bottom of the stairs.

Kalen stopped three steps up and turned around to face them. "As I tried to say several times, I have to work today. I have an event that begins in six hours so I have just enough time to get ready and start getting everything set up." She tipped her head to the side and blinked innocently. "You two, have a nice drive. If you still want to do the picnic lunch, there's plenty of food in the kitchen." She went up another stair. "I think a drive is a wonderful idea." She looked at Rebel then to Brennan, the warning

very clear in her eyes—she was tired of the petty sniping between them. “It will give you time to get to know each other. Have fun.”

With a wave of her fingers, she strolled up the stairs, leaving Brennan alone with his nemesis.

Rebel sighed. “We’d better get going then.”

“You aren’t serious.” Brennan stared at him.

“I’ve known Kalen a hell of a lot longer than you have. We talked ourselves into this neat little trap, and if we don’t go through with it, neither of us will ever hear the end of it.” Rebel grimaced. “You plan to be married to her for, what? The next fifty years?”

“At least.”

“Do you want to hear about it every day?”

“I’ll grab some food.”

“I’ll get dressed.”

Chapter Four

Rebel stared at the car and shook his head.

"You can't be serious."

"What?" Brennan snapped.

"You expect me to ride in this?" *This* being a sporty little car that he'd need a wedge to pry himself out of. It looked brand-new, but even being out of touch for fifteen years, Rebel knew this wasn't a fresh-off-the-lot model. It looked like some kind of car from the sixties, back when Roger Moore played James Bond. Fully restored and refurbished down to the smooth cloth top.

"What's wrong with my car?"

"It's a chick car."

Brennan's eyes tightened at the edges but he didn't rise to the bait. "And you're a sexist idiot. Any other objections?" He reached for the door handle as if he expected Rebel to just give in. Rebel felt his teeth grow and fought the urge to snarl. Somehow he didn't think Kalen had told her boyfriend that her family sprouted fur and fangs once a month.

"I don't want to spend the next two hours bent over like a paperclip."

"You'll be fine."

Rebel was only a few inches taller than Brennan but a few inches would mean a lot in a car like this.

"I'll drive," Rebel offered, reaching into his pocket only to realize he'd left his keys inside the house.

Brennan looked at the late-model wreck Rebel was driving and shook his head. "I'm not riding in that code violation you call a truck."

"Well, I'm not going to end up with a permanent twitch from being crammed into a tin can with you."

"Just get—"

A curtain in the upstairs window twitched. The movement caught Rebel's eye and he looked up. Kalen. Watching. Probably laughing or worse, getting upset. She was protective of her human.

He sighed.

"Fuck it. It's fine. Let's go." He stomped around to the far side of the car and opened the door. Taking a breath, he swung his leg in and dropped into the seat. His knee brushed by his chin. "Oh, this isn't going to work."

Brennan laughed and reached for him.

"What the fuck are you doing?" Rebel demanded. He recognized the tone of his voice. Fifteen years in prison had honed it to perfection.

Brennan heard it too and pulled his hand back. "Just trying to help. There's a lever that will move the seat back."

Rebel nodded and reached down. He pushed his feet into the floorboard and slid back. He would have sighed but that would have been conceding that it wasn't as uncomfortable as he'd expected. His head brushed the top of the cloth roof but he wasn't crushed.

Brennan eased the car onto the road and glanced at Rebel.

"Where am I going?"

Rebel gave him the basic directions then sat back and stared out the window. The brick houses and cars clashed in his brain. He'd spent too many hours seeing nothing but concrete. Too much information. He forced his mind to blank, blocking out the sights that threatened to overwhelm his senses.

"So, where have you been for the past fifteen years?"

Brennan's voice jolted him out his silence.

"Huh?"

"Kalen said she hadn't seen you in fifteen years but she didn't seem that surprised to find you crashed on her couch. Where have you been? The military?"

"Prison."

"Ah."

Rebel waited for the next question but Brennan remained silent. He just stared at the road, turning the wheel and speeding up to get them on the highway out of town. Finally Rebel couldn't take it anymore. He wanted to face the cool condescension now.

"That's it? No questions about what I was accused of or if I did it?"

"I've never met a con who didn't declare their innocence."

Rebel chuffed out a laugh. "Don't worry. You won't hear that from me." Brennan glanced at him and Rebel couldn't resist a wicked smile. "I did what they said I did."

After an hour Brennan had grown used to the silence. It wasn't comfortable and gave him too much time to think about the man sitting next to him, but it was better than sniping at the guy.

He almost sighed with relief when Rebel directed him to turn off. He slowed the car and inched along the dirt road, not wanting the gravel to ding his paint.

If I'd known I would be off-roading it, I would have let him drive.

Except no, he wouldn't. It was a pride thing.

"Here."

Brennan pulled his car off the gravel road into the shallow turnout Rebel indicated and stopped.

"Here?" he asked, looking at the encroaching wilderness hugging the road. He didn't see anything that looked like a cabin or hell, even an outhouse.

"This'll do. Hang here. I'll be back in a bit."

"Wait." He grabbed Rebel's arm, stopping him from escaping without a better explanation. Rebel looked at Brennan's fingers gripping his sleeve. It took him a moment to remember Rebel didn't like to be touched. He eased his hand away. "I'm sitting here while you do what?"

"I'm going up there." He pointed up the hill visible only because the tree line rose. "It's about three miles in to the cabin. Wait here. I'll be back in twenty minutes."

Rebel didn't give him a chance to respond. He popped open the door and jumped out, an envelope clutched in his right hand. Without a look back, he slipped into a narrow space that Brennan might have conceded was a path and started to climb. Four long strides and he was through the brush and into the trees.

Within seconds he'd disappeared. Brennan sat for a moment, watching the space between two trees where he'd last seen Rebel. He didn't much care for the man and sure as hell didn't trust him, but letting him walk into the woods alone seemed callous.

But Rebel acted like he knew what he was doing. Knew what he wanted. He'd practically ordered Brennan to stay in the car.

He tapped on the steering wheel. Twenty minutes. That's what Rebel had said.

Twenty minutes and six miles round trip. That was impossible. The fastest runners in the world barely ran a mile under four minutes and they sure as hell weren't climbing mountains.

He turned off the car and got out. The movement helped his stress. He paced back and forth beside the driver's door. He didn't have to worry about traffic. He'd seen one other car on this road since Rebel had indicated the turnoff about two miles back.

He leaned against the trunk, folded his arms across his chest and shook his head. What the hell was he doing here? He should be back in town. At the office. The mayor had given his support for Brennan's mayoral run but that was still a year and a half off. He had a lot of work to do before then. A lot of criminals to put behind bars.

Instead he was standing by the side of the road helping an ex-con deliver a ransom. That wasn't how Rebel had described it but that's what it was.

He thought about the tattoos on Rebel's shoulders. Kill marks? He tapped his fingers on his arm. When he got back to town he was going to do a little checking on Rebel, if that was his real name. But who the hell would name their child Rebel? He'd ask Kalen but somehow he didn't think she'd appreciate him investigating her friend. She obviously knew that Rebel had been in prison. *Why is Kalen friends with a guy like this?*

He knew the answer even as he asked himself the question. History. Loyalty. They'd grown up together and Kalen wouldn't be able to let that go. Rebel obviously wasn't above using that connection to get what he wanted.

And until Brennan figured out what that was, he was going to stay close.

He glanced at his watch. Not even ten minutes had passed.

He looked up the trail. *Stay close.*

That's what he was going to do. Checking to make sure his car was locked, he stepped onto the path.

It was more of an animal trail for the first hundred yards but as he slipped into the shadow of the trees, it widened out. Still overgrown and unwelcoming, there was a definite path to follow.

Figuring at the worst he was going to meet Rebel as he was coming back down, he picked up his pace and started to hike. Uphill. He pushed, wanting to see how fast he could make it. He was in shape, worked out religiously, watched what he ate, but twenty minutes later he was sweating and breathing hard. The hike had turned into a climb, the trees giving way to rocks and gravel. And no sign of Rebel.

Damn, I hope he didn't come down a second path.

He pushed forward. He'd stayed on the path and he had to be close this cabin. The path narrowed, leaving the only way over a boulder. Scratches marred the rock's smooth surface like an animal had been struggling to grip and climb.

Brennan looked over his shoulder. He hadn't even considered the wildlife.

"If I get mauled by something, I'm coming after you, asshole," he vowed, directing his irritation toward the missing Rebel.

He planted one hand on the boulder and the other on the rock wall beside him and pushed himself up and over. Jagged edges scraped his forearm, leaving bits of skin on the rock and thin stripes of blood across his arm.

"This day's just getting better and better," he said, moving forward. The path turned, heading back into the trees. The branches blocked the sun and the temperature dropped, sending a shiver across his skin. He sighed.

"I should have stayed in the car." He realized he was still talking to himself when the trees opened up into flat grassy area. A tiny cabin, couldn't be more than one room, sat in the middle of the clearing. Long, overgrown grass grew up around the wooden steps.

Brennan put his hands on his hips and looked around, scanning the area around the building. Sweat dripped down the middle of his back. The grass had been trampled, like a crowd had walked through. Well, Rebel did say his stepbrother was living up here. Hiding out, more like.

Birds tweeted in the sky and wind rustled the leaves at the tops of the trees, but beyond that, it was silent. Kind of a creepy silent. Like something was waiting inside the cabin, listening. The little hairs at the back of his neck stood up. He rolled his shoulders back and tried to shake off the horror-movie feeling about the whole thing.

He glanced to his right, still feeling like he wasn't alone, and climbed up the two steps. The front door was open about four inches. A low thump and a moan preceded his entrance.

What the hell?

Pushing aside the strange uneasiness, he smacked open the door and walked in.

The tableau froze in front of him. Already on alert, his mind quickly processed the scene. One body on the floor. Rebel, cornered, on his feet but swaying. Blood dripped from his mouth. His knuckles glowed with new bruises. Sweat and blood stained the front of his shirt.

Two guys with what looked like cricket bats crouched on Rebel's left and right. A third man stood back, deep scratches bleeding on his chest and neck, like he'd been mauled by a wild animal. A baseball bat hung limp in his hand.

"Who the fuck are you?" Cricket Bat One asked, his body shifting, his focus turning to Brennan.

"What the hell is going on?" he said, demanding answers of his own.

"This doesn't concern —"

A low snarl, like a dog protecting its dinner, rumbled from the corner of the room. Brennan knew it came from Rebel. He didn't understand how he could make such a sound but it was just enough of a distraction. For one moment all three attackers looked at Rebel.

Brennan lunged forward, punching the guy with the claw marks, his fist connecting with the man's jaw. The guy's head thumped into the wall behind him. His eyes rolled up and back and he sagged to the floor. One down.

The rush of air gave him just enough warning to tense before a bat slammed into his side. His gasp seemed to set everyone into motion. He could practically feel the ribs breaking but adrenaline removed the pain. He grabbed the fallen man's bat and whipped it around, connecting with the guy's shoulder. The wood vibrated in his hand.

The guy grunted and swung back around, the heavy bat aimed at Brennan's leg. Pain radiated from his knee to his spine. His right leg gave out beneath him and he went down hard, collapsing onto the knee. The impact threw his attacker off balance. *These guys are amateurs.* Brennan stumbled to his feet, fury giving him strength. He reached out and snatched the bat out of the guy's grip. The loss of weight seemed to confuse him and he fell, tripping over the legs of the first man.

Brennan felt a brief moment of regret at hitting a man when he was down but then thought "screw it". He swung the bat, cracking the guy across the ribs and taking another swing at his head. He pulled back—he didn't want to kill the him, just incapacitate him for a while—and tapped the back of his head with just enough force to make him see stars.

Leaving the dazed man on the floor, Brennan spun around, ready for the next attack.

There was none.

Rebel stood over the fallen body, his muscles strained and stretched, almost pulling against his skin, like there was a creature inside him fighting to get free. The animal snarl had turned to a growl, and in the light it looked like his hands had claws instead of fingers.

Brennan shook his head—from horror movies to sci-fi.

The man cowering on the floor tried to shuffle back. Rebel growled and stepped forward, towering over the guy.

Sympathy welled in his chest.

"Rebel, man, back off."

Rebel swung around, his hair whipping around with him. He snarled at Brennan. For a moment it looked like he had big teeth and glowing red eyes. That smack of the bat must have jarred him more than he thought.

Brennan blinked, hoping to clear the image. It worked. He looked again and Rebel appeared normal. Pissed off but normal.

"What the hell was this all about?"

"I don't know." Rebel looked over his shoulder, out the window. "We'd better go. I think there are more of them."

"More?" He asked the question and started moving for the door. His knee gave out on him and he grabbed the wall.

"You okay?"

"I'm fine," he said through gritted teeth. "Now tell me about this 'more' you think is coming here."

Rebel shrugged but there was nothing casual about the movement. "They were talking to someone on a radio saying they were on their way."

"Fuck." He didn't often swear, had enough control not to, but this required a good curse.

"Exactly."

They reached the door and Rebel stepped in front, almost like he was protecting Brennan. When Rebel didn't move forward, Brennan took a moment to ask another question.

"Who are these guys?"

"No idea."

"Some random guys just grab you and beat the shit out of you for no reason?" He didn't bother to hide his sarcasm.

"They were waiting for me." He stepped onto the front porch and peered around the corner, looking in the direction they'd come.

"Won't they be coming that direction?"

Rebel shook his head. "Don't think so. There's another path. An easier one that way." He pointed uphill kitty-corner to the first trail.

"Then why didn't we come that way?"

"Didn't need easy," he muttered. "Needed fast. Besides, you can see someone coming from that direction."

"Yes, but—" If Rebel had been trying to sneak up from the other side and they'd still grabbed him...somehow that seemed important but the sharp jab in his side every time he took a breath consumed his attention.

"Shut up." Rebel's barked command startled Brennan. He hadn't been told to shut up since high school.

His spine snapped straight and the movement rocked what he was convinced was at least one broken rib. He grunted and grabbed his side.

Rebel glared in his direction, the bruising across his cheek giving the stare an even more sinister look.

"I'm trying to listen."

"For what?"

Rebel squinted his eyes and stared at the second "easier" trail. He paused and Brennan tipped his head, trying to hear what Rebel heard.

A faint rustle of leaves. The wind? A squirrel? Nothing?

The corners of his mouth bent down. "That. We've got to go."

Rebel took off toward the trail. Brennan tested his leg. It held but pain shot up his thighbone with each step.

"You going to make it?" There was none of the mockery or arrogance in his tone that Brennan had come to expect from their short acquaintance. It was more of a distracted concern.

Brennan nodded. His side ached and he could feel the burn of a bruise. He was going to be purple before the day was over. He took a step and braced for the pain. His grunt was almost overshadowed by a groan behind them. The guys in the cabin were waking up and more were coming. Rebel was right. They had to go.

Rebel watched for a second then reached back and grabbed Brennan under his right arm. Brennan considered brushing him off but there was no way he would make it down the mountain without help. Not with his knee.

Though what Rebel was doing could hardly be called "help". It was more of a grab and drag, lifting Brennan—one handed—every time his knee wobbled.

They hit the tree line and heard the shout behind them. More voices joined.

"Fuck, let's go."

They started down the path, Rebel leading. Brennan tried to keep up but every step jarred his thigh and almost sent him to the ground. The pain he could bear but the knee just wouldn't hold him. Something had been torn or broken when that bat hit him.

Rebel led him uphill, away from the car. Brennan didn't understand it but he followed, believing, trusting that Rebel wanted to keep them both alive and reasonably unharmed.

They crested the hill and started down, the sounds of a river rushing up to meet them. Rebel slowed but he didn't stop. He did reach back and offer Brennan a hand as they moved down the steep slope.

He felt like such a girl accepting the assistance, like Rebel was the big strong man escorting a lady down the steps, but damn, the way his knee shook with each step, it was probably best. He'd tumble forward and take out Rebel as he went past.

Brennan put his palm into Rebel's and felt himself being lifted. The strength in the guy's arm amazed him. He had the strange thought that Rebel could practically carry him with one hand. He leaned heavy on the outstretched arm. He didn't know how long they'd been running. Brennan was out of breath. Part of it was fighting with his knee every step. The other part was the ache in his side. Rebel seemed barely winded, which almost seemed impossible after the beating he'd received.

They worked their way down, the cool air of the river reaching up to them.

They hit the river bank and Rebel held on just a moment to make sure Brennan was steady. He nodded and Rebel backed off.

Rebel looked behind them. Whoever these guys were, they didn't seem to be giving up. He was always about thirty seconds behind Rebel on hearing the guys chasing them, but it wasn't the other man's imagination. These bastards did not want them escaping.

Brennan was going to get some answers from Rebel...as soon as he caught his breath. He inhaled, hoping a long deep breath would slow his heart. The pain stopped him and he coughed. Spit dribbled out of his mouth and he wiped his fingers across his lower lip. The sun was low on the horizon but it was light enough for him to see the red coating his fingers.

Coughing blood. Never good.

Rebel walked ahead into the river, the bottoms of his jeans instantly soaked to his knees.

Brennan followed. Cold gripped his legs as he stepped into the water, the current stronger than he'd expected. Masculine pride warred with survival.

"Rebel, I—"

Rebel whipped around, his eyes going over Brennan's shoulder, up the mountainside, then back to Brennan. He seemed to take it all in.

"Fuck. You're hurt."

"I think I—" He never got a chance to explain. A crack rattled the air. His mind briefly acknowledged the sound of a gunshot a heartbeat before pressure slammed into his back and sent him forward. The cold covered his body seconds before it all went black.

Rebel watched Brennan fall. Water splashed up. Red bloomed across Brennan's back.

Rebel froze—that one instant needed for his mind to process that Brennan had been shot, bleeding. Then the world snapped back. He knew it was no more than a heartbeat but he still cursed the lost time. He snatched Brennan up, hooking his hand under the limp arm and dragging the heavy body toward the shore. Another shot rang out. The bullet burned by him and split the water.

The wolf had been riding just below the surface of his skin. He let it come forward, needing the animal's strength and senses. The world shifted to black and white but everything became crisp. More light filtered in. His teeth grew to fill his mouth but he ignored the sensation. Dragging and carrying Brennan, he ran for the trees, mentally clicking through his childhood. They'd played up here. He knew this area. Knew there was a cave nearby. Only he wasn't quite sure where they were. He'd taken off, his senses focused on the guys chasing them and the stumbling way Brennan had been running.

But Brennan had kept going. Rebel grunted his admiration. He might look like a typical city lawyer but the guy had kept it together. Jumping into the fight, taking a beating and still running miles across unfamiliar land.

Rebel stopped, lifted his head and sniffed the air. He had a few minutes. The guys chasing them still needed to find their way down the hill but they seemed to know the area fairly well. He hadn't lost them in his mad dash.

He needed to slow down and think. He looked around. The big rock at the edge of the path was familiar. Good. He knew where he was. He hefted Brennan up, draping him over his shoulder in a fireman's carry that couldn't be good for a gunshot wound but was the fastest way to get him hidden. He could drop Brennan's body and then run for help. There was no way he was going to make it back to the car carrying Brennan's dead weight.

He moved into the trees and took a moment. Running headlong into the bad guys wasn't going to help him. He settled and let the wolf listen and sniff, capturing the world around them. No foreign scents. The humans were still far enough away and downwind that he couldn't smell them.

If he was where he thought he was, there was a cave off to his right. Wasn't far. It would be a good place to stash Brennan.

He zigzagged back toward the trail, hoping his memory was accurate. The wolf's vision cleared the way for him, showing him shadows his human eyes couldn't see. Sweat broke out on his forehead as he lugged Brennan up the hill. Between the added weight, the damage to his body from being hit with a cricket bat a dozen times and the need to stay off the main trail, every step dragged him down. He groaned when he spotted the overgrown entrance.

Noises coming from above sent him forward without inspecting the cave.

God, I hope a bear isn't hibernating here, he thought as he shoved the branches to the side. He hunched down, ducked his head and swung to the side, hoping to avoid smacking Brennan's skull against the stone.

The tiny space was empty of wildlife but the stone floor was covered in leaves and twigs. He dropped to his knees and tried as gently as possible to set Brennan on the ground. Dust and dried vegetation poofed into the air beneath his body.

Brennan didn't make a sound. *Fuck, that's bad.*

Noises crashed outside the cave. Whoever these guys were, they weren't going for stealth. *Fuck, they'd shot Brennan.*

Rebel held his breath and waited for them to pass. They were close but unless they knew the cave was there, they wouldn't see them. The guys who'd been beating the shit out of him had been human—but that didn't mean a werewolf couldn't be pulling their leashes.

"This is the only path," one of them called.

"Let's go."

"Trent, man, it's getting dark. We're not going to be able to see here in a few minutes."

"We're not reporting that we lost him. We shot the other one. They shouldn't be moving too fast. Let's move it."

Their feet trampled the ground, passing within a few yards of the cave. Brennan's eyes fluttered and he groaned.

Rebel slapped his hand over Brennan's mouth and threw his body over him, hoping to muffle the sound. He listened but "Trent" and his buddies made so much noise they didn't hear. Under normal circumstances, when his own ribs weren't broken and he wasn't sore from taking a beating, he could probably handle the guys chasing them. But they had guns as well as bats and he wasn't going to take the chance.

Not with Brennan unconscious.

A muffled protest came from under his chest.

Mostly unconscious.

Rebel rolled off the other man and stretched out beside him. The cave didn't allow for him to sit up comfortably anyway.

"Rebel?" The name came out thready and weak.

"I'm here." He pushed up on one arm. Blood pulsed from Brennan's wound, soaking the front and back of his shirt. He pulled back the edge of Brennan's shirt.

"What happened?"

"You got shot."

A noise that crossed between a chuckle and a moan bubbled from his chest. More blood trickled from his mouth.

"I knew you would be trouble."

Though his lips bent into a weak smile when he said it, Rebel felt each of Brennan's words as truth, stabbing him in the chest. He'd brought this on Brennan and Kalen. Fuck, Kalen. He was going to have to explain how Brennan had been shot.

"Let me take a look at this." Blood coated Rebel's hand as he looked at the wound. He'd seen enough stabbings to know the wound was in a dangerous place. Too close to the heart. Might have even nicked it. Rebel struggled with the tight space and pulled off his own shirt. He wadded the material up and pressed it hard into the wound.

Brennan's cry echoed off the rock walls. His body tensed, fighting the pain but then relaxed, and Rebel realized he'd passed out. Probably a good thing. Brennan didn't need to know the truth.

He was dying.

Chapter Five

Rebel held his breath and listened. Brennan's heartbeat was fading. The pulse was weak and erratic. Blood soaked his shirt and leaked onto the ground beneath Brennan. His skin turned the color of death.

Rebel crawled the entrance of the cave and peeked out. Whoever was chasing them had moved on. Hopefully they were hell and gone from the cave. It was probably safe for them to leave but Rebel didn't think it would help. He was at least an hour from the car and another hour to a hospital. Brennan didn't have that long.

He looked at the dying man beside him.

Kalen had been right. He was a good-looking guy. For a human.

Fuck, her eyes twinkled when she talked about him. And despite Rebel's jealousy, it had been pretty damn obvious that Brennan loved her to.

And now he was going to die. Because he'd helped Rebel.

How was he supposed to tell Kalen he'd gotten her fiancé killed?

He closed his eyes, the lower lids burning. If he cried—which he didn't—he would have thought those were tears forming.

Fuck it. He couldn't do it. He couldn't let Brennan die. It would kill Kalen. And he'd hurt her enough.

He lay back down beside Brennan. He'd never done this before. Didn't know if it would work, but dammit he had to try.

He rolled Brennan to his side and pressed up behind him, his front to Brennan's back. A conversion needed intense emotion—passion, pain, anger—and he didn't know if there was enough life left in Brennan to survive.

Clinging to the man in front of him and the thought of Kalen, Rebel pushed aside the wet shirt collar and pressed his lips against Brennan's skin, right at the place where the neck and shoulder met. He kissed the damp skin, almost apologizing for getting him into the mess and for what was to come.

He wrapped his arm around Brennan's waist and pulled him close. His ass pressed into Rebel's groin. Rebel's cock gave a little twitch, indicating it wasn't dead. *Perfect. I'm getting hard for a dying man.* Not that he didn't have reason. Brennan was hot and in good shape and could obviously fuck like a freight train—if Kalen's moans and cries were any indication.

And he's not going to die. You're going to do something right and save him. Bite him.

Rebel closed his eyes and breathed in Brennan's scent, letting it fill him. The masculine smell sent another spark of hunger into his dick. The damn thing was

actually getting hard. The sudden jolt of need lit up the rest of his nerves and he felt his gums ache. Instead of fighting the sensation, he went with it, letting his teeth break through.

The rest of his senses came alive as the wolf clawed to the forefront of his mind. He nuzzled his nose into Brennan's neck, loving the hot scent, wanting more. The human side of him recognized it as the ultimate in tacky and kind of creepy but his wolf needed more contact. He pressed his hips forward, nudging his hardening cock against Brennan's ass. There was a little heat left in the man's body.

Brennan made a noise, the sound more gasp than moan. Like his body was giving up.

"Stay with me, babe, hold on." The words came out muffled around his canines but hell, it didn't matter anyway. Brennan couldn't hear him. Still, he did seem to quiet.

Rebel inhaled long and deep through his nose, bracing himself. He'd never even considered converting a human. Now he was going to do it to an unconscious man.

Knowing he was running out of time, he placed another kiss on Brennan's shoulder, his tongue popping out to lick the cooling skin, learning the man's taste.

He closed his eyes and remembered the sounds echoing through Kalen's house last night—Kalen and Brennan fucking. He'd lain on the couch, stroking his cock, not coming, his mind inserting himself into the scene upstairs. Even now his heartbeat picked up, blood pounded in his veins. He needed to fuck. He imagined Brennan healed, Rebel's dick in his tight ass.

Oh fuck.

His teeth extended to their full length. He opened his mouth and bit down. Power ripped through him like he'd been electrified. His cock jerked into full hardness and he pressed against Brennan's ass, the need to fuck almost overpowering his sensibilities.

The venom—or whatever it was that made the change—seemed to erupt from his teeth, a sensation so close to an orgasm that he shuddered. And bit down just a little deeper, wanting to leave his mark. His wolf roared to life. This was more than a conversion. He wanted to claim the male.

Brennan moaned and shifted, his body instinctively struggling to escape the pain. Rebel recognized the internal battle but he didn't have the power to make his wolf retreat. The animal held on, growling as Rebel forced him to release his hold. His teeth slipped out. Rebel tightened his grip around Brennan's waist and licked the four wounds, loving the marks on Brennan's pale skin.

He bent forward, almost curling around Brennan, holding the cold body close to him, partially to share his warmth and partially because he liked the feel of Brennan's ass pressed against his groin. He didn't know how long he lay there listening to Brennan's heart, waiting, waiting for some sign. The change was subtle, so soft that Rebel almost didn't hear it. The slow, weak pulse grew louder, stronger, the beat regular. Rebel took a long deep breath, drawing in Brennan's scent. The death smell that

had surrounded him still hovered over his body but it was weaker, invaded by the fresh scent of blood moving through veins.

It would take a bit. The bullet wound and the blood loss wouldn't heal automatically but sharp progress had already been made.

He continued to lie there, pressing his lips to Brennan's neck, whispering what he hoped were healing words, reminding him what he had to come back to, that Kalen loved him and Rebel wanted him.

"I've got you, babe. I won't let you go." He kissed the spot centered by the four wounds, his claiming mark.

He wasn't sure when the change came...when he realized he was moving, pressing his hips forward, pumping his cock against Brennan's ass. He sniffed the air and realized the death scent was gone and life and blood filled Brennan. Fuck, even with the sweat and blood, he smelled great. Rebel couldn't resist. He lapped at Brennan's skin. The taste slipped across his tongue like hot spices.

Sure that he was going to go to hell for molesting an unconscious man, he gripped Brennan's hip, holding him in place as he rubbed against him. Just a little, that's all he needed. Then he'd back off.

For a moment Brennan just lay there. Then Rebel felt a subtle shift, a slow pulse back. It wasn't intentional. Brennan was completely out of it, the werewolf venom surging through his veins.

Though his conscience screamed that this was beyond tacky, Rebel couldn't help but enjoy it. He was pretty damn sure he'd never get another chance to put his hands on Brennan.

Brennan moaned. At least it sounded like a moan. Rebel had never watched a guy come back from the brink of death before, so maybe these sounds were normal. Still it sounded sexual. He tightened his hand on Brennan's hip, fighting to hold his hand in place, to not let go. But another pulse of Brennan's ass against his dick and a tiny grunt made his willpower evaporate.

Hoping to hell that Brennan didn't wake up—because how the fuck would he explain this?—Rebel slid his hand forward, over Brennan's hip, between his legs. *Fuck he's hard.* His hand curled around the erection pushing inside Brennan's torn pants. Heat radiated through the thin fabric and it was Rebel's turn to groan. He could understand Kalen's smile this morning. The guy wasn't huge but he was big enough. *God*, he thought, imagining Brennan in his mouth, that hard, thick flesh sliding between his lips. What he was sure was a wicked smile curved his lips as he imagined it. He loved to suck cock and he'd blow Brennan's mind.

Unable to resist just another touch, he squeezed Brennan's cock. Brennan rocked into the caress, pressing into Rebel's hand and moving back to rub his ass against Rebel's dick. It felt good—the spicy taste on his tongue, the scent of new wolf surging through Brennan's veins—but he had to stop. He had enough to explain when Brennan finally woke up.

He took a breath and forced his fingers to uncurl from around Brennan's cock. Brennan grabbed his hand and held it in place.

"Don't stop," he moaned.

Rebel peered over Brennan's shoulder. His eyes were closed and dried blood clung to the edge of his mouth. His breath rushed between open lips even as he arched his hips, pressing his cock into Rebel's palm. His fingers closed reflexively, tightening once again.

It was wrong. Every societal norm screamed that this had gone way beyond acceptable. But fuck it felt good. The wolf pushed to the foreground and Rebel let the animal lead. He'd spent too many years relying on the wolf's instincts to ignore its desires now. He bent his head again and tasted the line where shoulder and neck met. He was warm, the death chill was gone. Brennan tipped his head away, giving Rebel access.

He placed a kiss on the heated skin, letting his tongue linger, absorbing the fire of the newly created wolf. He wrapped himself around Brennan, holding their bodies together, continuing the slow steady thrusts against his ass, timing the pulses of his hand to match. Brennan fell into the rhythm and soon they were moving together.

Rebel closed his eyes and lost himself in the smells of arousal and lust. *Fuck, I can imagine what it would feel like if Brennan was awake.* The thought was enough of a blow to his conscience that his hand slowed.

"Don't stop," Brennan said again.

"Not stopping," Rebel assured him. "Want to feel you come, babe." As if his words were enough, Brennan's body convulsed and heat burned through the thin material of Brennan's pants. The scent of his coming blended with the smell of the earth. Rebel couldn't stop from rubbing his cock against that tight ass one more time. He muffled his shout, pressing his open mouth to Brennan's shoulder.

"Rebel?" The confused voice drove him to lift his head. Brennan blinked up at him but it did nothing to clear the haze from his eyes. "What's going on?"

"Nothing. You're hurt. You need rest."

Brennan nodded and closed his eyes, turning his face into Rebel's chest, nuzzling the bare skin. He looked like a puppy snuggling into whatever warmth he could find.

Rebel supposed that was good. They were pack mates now.

* * * * *

He came awake slowly, aware only of the warmth pressed against his side and the delicious smells surrounding the warm body. He knew it wasn't Kalen. She didn't smell earthy and masculine. She smelled hot and sweet.

He let his eyes drift open, not allowing the rest of his body to move until he'd figured out what was going on.

The heat beside him shifted, almost pulling back. His body tensed, feeling the loss in his core.

"Brennan."

He recognized the voice...Rebel. That's right. He'd gone up that trail, chasing after Rebel. They'd been beating him and then –

He didn't remember beyond that. Flashes of running, pain in his leg, and heat.

"Brennan," Rebel said again, his voice low. The sound sparked a memory, a voice, calling him, urging him on. He blinked and stared into the darkness. "Listen, man, if you're feeling better, we should get moving."

Rebel sat up. And Brennan realized how much he'd relied on the other man's heat.

Rebel crab-crawled toward the cave entrance and Brennan realized he was shirtless. Again. *Does he have something against shirts?*

Rebel slipped out of the little cave but Brennan didn't follow. He needed a moment. Something was different about his body. It felt strange. Invaded somehow.

Probably because you've never been beaten with a cricket bat before.

He shook his head. It was more than that. He stared at the open space where Rebel had just gone. The memories were fuzzy and confusing. But fuck, he could almost remember coming – *almost*. Having Rebel's hand on his cock. And him encouraging it. Asking him not to stop. He looked down at his crotch. There was a mark but between the blood and dirt. It was hard to tell what caused it. All his clothes felt dry and crusty.

And where the fuck did all the blood come from?

He rubbed his hand over his torn shirt and across his chest, looking for the wound. There had to be a wound.

"Brennan, man, let's go."

He stared in the direction of the opening but didn't move. How did he broach the subject? *Did you make me come while I was unconscious? Why the hell did you have your hand on my dick in the first place?*

"Kalen's probably getting worried," Rebel called again.

That got Brennan rolling to his knees and crawling out of the cave. He had no idea what time it was, didn't know how long he'd been out, but it was full-on dark outside and they'd told Kalen they'd be home hours ago.

Rebel waited a few feet beyond the cave, standing on a steep slope that Brennan had no recollection of climbing. The moon was a thin sliver in the sky but it seemed to give off enough light for Brennan to see. Or maybe his eyes had adjusted to the darkness.

"Ready?" Rebel held out his hand, offering to help Brennan down the hill. He brushed off the assistance and started to follow. Then remembered his knee. He braced for the pain and waited for the weakened joint to collapse.

It held. No pain and it held steady. He dug his heels in and shuffled down the embankment, landing next to Rebel on the riverbank.

"Okay?" Rebel asked, his eyes tightening down at the edges, staring at Brennan as if he was looking for something.

"Fine."

"Good. We're hell and gone from the car, but if we push it we can get back in about an hour." He looked down the river. "I think."

"You *think*?"

"I *think* I know where we are in relation to the car so yes, I *think* it will take us about an hour."

Brennan followed Rebel's stare down river. It was dark but it still had a dusk feel to it, enough light for them to see. That made it about seven thirty. "We should go before it gets any darker."

Rebel's eyebrows popped up and he made a little coughing, chuckle noise. "Right. It's gonna get dark."

With that strange comment, he took off. There was none of the concern or assistance from their run from their attackers. Rebel kept up a steady pace, pushing it, as he said. Every time Brennan caught up with him, he'd go harder, driving Brennan faster.

He kept waiting for the exhaustion to hit him. Or at least for him to start sweating or his knee to ache, but there was nothing. He rolled his shoulders back and caught up with Rebel. They were jogging now, swerving around the roots and branches that crowded the trail. Brennan watched. Rebel's movements were fluid and strong, his muscles standing out in the weak light. He followed, putting his feet where Rebel stepped, keeping up. Energy surged through his veins, driving him on. He had the insane urge to tip his head back and shout at the sky.

Faint traces of warning rubbed at the edge of his conscious thought but he ignored them. This was fun and he'd never felt so powerful. He picked up his speed, moving to catch Rebel. The other man went faster, keeping just out of reach.

Brennan grinned in the night. He wasn't following Rebel any longer. He was chasing him. His eyes sharpened and the already dark world seemed to shift to black and white. The lines of tree branches became distinct against the dark blur of the forest.

A familiar scent floated on the air and he realized it was Rebel. A male scent tainted by excitement and a hint of challenge. The assessment slowed his steps for a moment—that he could get that much information from a smell. And how the hell could he smell Rebel from fifteen feet away? He took another breath, hoping to clear his mind, but all it did was draw in more of the compelling scent. He licked his lips, wanting to taste that same flavor on his tongue.

Rebel turned right, disappearing down another thin trail, and a low snarl rumbled in the base of Brennan's throat. Rebel was taunting him, daring him to follow.

He did. He made the same turn, ignoring the wider, clearer trail to the left. Rebel hadn't led him wrong yet.

Except for the whole bad guys beating the crap out of him.

The thought gave him added speed. He'd ask about that once he ran down Rebel's ass.

The trail broke up and Brennan burst through, his shoes skidding across leaves and stopping dead on dry pavement. The sudden stop jerked him upright and grabbed his focus. They were back at the road but where was the car? He looked left.

Rebel stood about twenty feet away, bare chest rising and falling in long heavy breaths. Satisfaction shot through Brennan's core. He hadn't beat Rebel but he'd made him work for the victory.

In the distance, what had to be three-hundred yards away, sat his car. He shook his head, amazed that he could see car in the darkness. It seemed to have gotten brighter as they'd run.

The moon was high in the sky telling him it was much later than the seven thirty he'd originally thought.

His gaze shifted back to Rebel. A pinprick of bright red appeared in his eyes. Something shifted inside Brennan, reacting to the light. It was like a tug, pulling him forward. Almost commanding him to go to Rebel. The sensation built in his chest and spread into his groin, curling around his dick like a fist. The pressure grew, urging him to walk those thirty feet to Rebel's side. To drop to his knees.

The thought jarred him and he took a step back. With his retreat, the compulsion evaporated, disappearing as quickly as the red light in Rebel's eyes.

Brennan shook his head, hoping to realign his thoughts.

He'd started the day meeting with the mayor, discussing his own political future. And ended up running through the woods with a man with glowing red eyes.

The thought almost made Brennan chuckle. *Eyes don't glow*, he reminded himself. It was some kind of illusion. He clung to that idea even though he wasn't sure he believed it himself.

Rebel tipped his head to the side and seemed to be waiting for Brennan to do something.

The competition, tension, whatever they wanted to call it, faded. Brennan walked forward. Without speaking they started toward the car. They started slow, both of them catching their breath.

About half the distance, Brennan looked over at Rebel just as Rebel glanced at him, challenge alight in his eyes. Brennan grinned and got a wicked smile in return. Without conscious command they took off.

Brennan pumped his legs, pushing hard. The sounds of their shoes hitting the pavement rattled like a machine gun. It was impossible. There was no way they were

running as fast as it appeared, but seconds after they started, they arrived, Rebel reaching the car a heartbeat before Brennan.

Rebel pushed away from the car and laughed, the sound pure joy, no mockery. Even as Brennan recognized emotion, he vowed a rematch. He didn't like to lose.

Rebel flipped his hair back and looked at Brennan, his eyes shining, this time with a natural light. And the sight drew Brennan closer, more powerful than that strange compulsion moments ago. The strong lines of his throat seemed etched by the shadows. Brennan ran his tongue across his teeth, wondering how it would feel to bite that hard flesh, feel his teeth sink beneath the skin and penetrate the muscle.

An image filled his brain—him kneeling behind Rebel, fucking him, his dick in Rebel's ass, bending down to bite. Both of them wanting it, craving it. The need to taste Rebel's blood on his tongue driving through his chest.

A slow flip of his stomach made bile rush into this throat even as his cock got hard. He stepped back, fighting the nausea. What the hell was he thinking? *Biting Rebel? Fucking him?*

"We should go," Rebel announced, taking the lead again.

Brennan nodded and went around to the driver's side of the car. He dug into this pocket for the key. His fingers closed over lint and some mud.

"Fuck." He was a bit surprised to hear the word come out of his mouth. Swearing was a bad habit for a public official. The fact that it had popped out was an indication of the day. "The keys are gone." He sighed. "Must have fallen out." He looked at Rebel. He flipped through the possible scenarios. His phone had disappeared along with his keys and it wouldn't have made a difference since there was no cell service out here.

"We can walk to the highway, hitch a ride." He glanced down at his bloody and torn clothes. "But we look like we've been in a war. The only people who might pick us up, we probably shouldn't get in a car with."

Rebel nodded. "Good point."

Brennan held back his own smile. He was a little too freaked out for any more weird male bonding. At least until he'd had some time and distance to figure out what was going on. Being back at the car reminded him of why they were there and what had happened at the cabin. Rebel had a lot to answer for.

Brennan tried to think of another option. There might be a phone up at the cabin but even if there was it didn't seem smart to go back to the bad guys' hangout.

Rebel sighed and walked to the driver's side. "Will an alarm go off when I break the window?"

"What window?"

Before he got an answer, Rebel bent his elbow and punched it back and down, driving it through the window, shattering the glass and slicing a dozen thin cuts up his arm.

"Holy shit!" Brennan leapt forward, grabbed Rebel's arm and pulled him away from the car, like it was going to retaliate. "Why the hell did you do that?" Brennan peeled off the torn remains of his shirt. It wasn't much, and much of it was stained with blood. He found a clean section and draped it over the slices on Rebel's skin.

"I'm fine," he said, taking the cloth and holding it in place.

"You're bleeding."

"I'll heal."

"You're an asshole."

"That I probably won't recover from." With another swipe to his arm, he handed Brennan back his shirt and reached through the broken window and popped the lock. He brushed the broken glass off the leather and climbed into the driver's seat. Without speaking, he reached under the front panel and started pulling out wires. He selected two wires and dug his fingernails into the top inch, stripping off the shielding before he twisted them together. He moved quickly like he was used to doing this in a rush.

"Is this what you went to prison for?" Brennan asked as Rebel reached for another wire.

"Naw. This I learned in prison." He tapped a new bare wire to the tips of the twisted ones and the engine purred to life. Rebel slid out of the car, crowding into Brennan when he refused to back up. They stood inches from each other, Rebel just that much taller than him that he could have felt intimidated. But he'd spent most of his life staring down guys who thought they should win just because they were bigger. "I went to prison because I killed a man."

He said it bluntly and with no remorse.

"And you didn't even claim to be innocent."

"Well, the sheriff found me standing over the body, his blood still on my hands." Again, there was no regret in his voice. He tipped his head toward the car. "I'll let you drive."

Rebel walked around to the far side and climbed into the car, trying to ignore the scent of the male next to him. The run had left them both a little sweaty, heated. The memory of Brennan's ass pressed against him only made it worse. His cock had been hard since the cave. The tiny orgasm from humping Brennan hadn't weakened the need at all. It made it worse because he wanted more. Wanted to feel the male skin to skin, cock against cock.

He glanced to his left. It didn't matter that there was no light. His wolf senses took over. The black-and-white vision created crisp and tight lines. His gaze dipped down to Brennan's groin. The bulge of that impressive erection remained. Satisfaction flickered in his chest. He wasn't the only one affected by the run, the bite.

But only he knew why.

Brennan started the car and pulled out onto the gravel road. The broken window sent a breeze through the car that succeeded in carrying Brennan's scent to Rebel. His

teeth ached and swelled, threatening to punch through his jaw. He groaned and closed his eyes. The wolf pushed at his limits. The creature had spent fifteen years hidden away. It didn't like being shuttled into the background.

The car pulled onto the highway and Rebel opened his eyes, staring into the darkness.

"Your lights aren't on," Rebel said.

"What?" Brennan shook his head as if he wasn't really paying attention.

"You're driving without your lights on," Rebel repeated.

Brennan blinked and stared at dashboard then peered at the road in front of them.

"It seemed bright enough," he muttered as he flipped the switch. The headlights came on, flooding the highway. The dashboard lit up the inside of the car. Brennan flinched. His fingers curled around the steering wheel, tension drawing white to his knuckles. Again he shook his head.

Damn, the wolf was coming alive, hitting Brennan hard and fast. The guy had almost been able to keep up with Rebel in a dead run and his wolf was only hours old.

This is going to be one powerful wolf.

They rode back in silence though it held a different kind of tension from their earlier drive. Three times Brennan glanced toward Rebel like he was going to ask him a question but each time he whipped his gaze back to the road when Rebel met his eyes.

Rebel could only imagine what questions Brennan wanted to ask—*Did you really bite me? Did I imagine your dick rubbing against my ass?*

Brennan might not remember precisely what happened back in that cave but something seemed to be triggering his memory.

Oh, goody. Something else to explain.

But first he had to explain it to Kalen.

As if him thinking her name caused Brennan to do the same.

"Kalen's probably worried sick," Brennan said.

"Yeah."

"Can you call her?"

"I don't have a cell phone."

Brennan just gave him a quick look. The relief that they had something normal to discuss, something inane, was visible on his face.

"Did you drop yours too?"

"I don't have one."

The corners of Brennan's eyes crinkled up. "You don't own a cell phone?" He sounded almost offended.

"No."

"How can you live without a cell phone?"

Rebel sighed. He hated having to explain this. So he didn't.

"I just don't have one. Don't need it."

What was he supposed to say? *"When I went to prison, most people didn't have them?"*

Brennan looked at him again, a little longer this time, awareness highlighting his stare.

Rebel felt his jaw tighten. He didn't need anyone's sympathy, particularly some lawyer. He turned his head and looked out the window. His stomach roiled, anger and embarrassment flooding his core.

Brennan focused on the road and Rebel kept his attention outside the window.

When they pulled into Kalen's driveway, the lights were still on. Brennan was right. Kalen was probably frantic.

Their appearance wasn't going to soothe her fears at all. He was filthy. Brennan was shirtless, and dried blood and mud covered his chest. Though the wounds were healing, there was still a visible hole from the bullet.

And Rebel's bite on Brennan's shoulder had left four distinct marks. The wounds were healed over—like a normal human would look after a week—but the blood lingered around the puncture. He licked his lips, remembering the spicy taste of Brennan's skin.

Brennan shut off the car but didn't get out. They sat there, both staring forward. By all rights they should both be exhausted, but energy crackled in the small space.

"We should go in."

Rebel nodded but didn't reach for the door handle. Kalen was probably up, pacing. And now he had to confess. He really didn't want to face her.

But they didn't have a choice.

As if by silent agreement—that they could no longer hide out in the car—they both opened their doors and climbed out. Rebel lingered by the car, debating whether to let Brennan take the lead.

Bravery wasn't what drove him in front. He didn't want Kalen to see Brennan first. Rebel was a mess but he wasn't covered in blood. He reached the front door and wrapped his fingers around the knob. The door flew open, the metal knob flying from his grip.

"Where have you been?" Kalen demanded. She glanced down at his chest and her anger seemed to evaporate. "Are you—"

She never got a chance to ask the question. She looked past him and saw Brennan.

"Oh my God. What happened?" She pushed past Rebel to get to Brennan. She reached out but he backed away.

"I'm a mess."

"Are you okay?" She pulled her hands back, as if sensing that Brennan didn't want to be touched. "What happened?" She turned to look at Rebel, her eyes accusing.

"We ran into some trouble."

"What kind of trouble?"

Brennan shook his head and moved forward, closer to Rebel. Rebel recognized the motion. Brennan wanted to protect his pack mate. Even if he didn't understand the instinct.

"Some guys came after us." Kalen opened her mouth but Brennan held up his hand to stop her questions. She squished her lips together, thin patience on her face. "Can we talk about it in little bit?" He rubbed his palm across his chest, where the bullet had exited. "I'm sore and I'm filthy. I just want a shower."

The three of them stood in silence until Kalen nodded, the movement brisk. Relief seemed to weigh Brennan down.

"Thanks, baby. I'm going to go clean up and then we'll tell you the whole thing." He looked at Rebel. "I've still got some questions I want answered."

No doubt. And more to come.

But Rebel kept those words to himself. He needed Brennan out of the way. He nodded and Brennan started inside. He slapped Rebel on the shoulder, a guy-to-guy thank-you.

He disappeared up the stairs and Rebel turned back to face Kalen. She wore a pair of shorts and a tank top. Her pale skin practically glowed in weak moonlight. Every muscle in her body seemed contracted, her fingers had curled into fists, her breathing was harsh and shallow.

"What happened?" she demanded, the worried tone from earlier replaced by rage.

"Some guys attacked us and —"

"No. Why is my fiancé turning into a werewolf?"

Chapter Six

Kalen stared at the bedroom door and took a deep breath, hoping to calm the riot inside her. Rebel had done it. He'd turned Brennan into a werewolf. Once the bite was made, there was no turning back. Not without dying. Her stomach did a little flip-flop when she thought of it. Rebel had described it all—the beating, the gunshot, the bite—clinically, almost casually, but she couldn't think on it without feeling the pain. No matter what he was becoming, he'd been, *was*, the man she loved.

There was no way to tell who—or what—he might turn into now.

She pushed open the door. The shower was still running. Brennan didn't usually take long showers—he was much too efficient for that—but he had been covered in dirt. And blood.

Kalen sank down onto the bed, letting the weakness of her knees finally take hold.

A werewolf.

Brennan had become her worst fear.

* * * * *

He let the spray hit him. The tiny drops stung his skin like spikes but he savored the bits of pain. Something to distract him. It gave him something to focus on besides the strange sounds in his head.

It wasn't exactly a voice. A presence. Another being.

He dipped his head forward and rinsed away the shampoo. He looked down. Red turned pink as it blended with the water. Blood. Memory blurred with dreams until he couldn't tell which was reality. Pain and pleasure, pain becoming pleasure.

He grabbed the soap and a washcloth and began to scrub. The dirt and blood faded but he kept up the pressure, working until his skin tingled, burned. He dropped the rag, tipped his face up and let the water cover him.

His fingers brushed his cock and he groaned. Fuck, he'd been hard since...well, since he'd woken up in that cave. The vague memory of Rebel pressing against him, a hot hand on his dick, teased him.

And he had to talk to Kalen. Had to explain.

Explain what? The memory of what had happened didn't make any sense. He remembered pain and cold. Beyond that, he needed Rebel to fill in the blanks.

But he couldn't face her like this.

He closed his eyes and wrapped his fingers around his cock. The heat from the shower seemed to pool in his core and the shaft grew longer, fuck, even harder. He started to pull and push, feeling the skin slide easily against his fingers.

Images flickered through his head, like a movie montage. He tried to grab on to one—the sexy picture of Kalen flat on her back, legs spread, her fingers sliding in and out of her cunt—but they passed too quickly, shifting and changing, always sexual. Kalen. Rebel. The two bodies merged and separated. Kalen’s mouth on his cock, Rebel, hot behind him, his erection rubbing against Brennan’s ass. His hand replacing Kalen’s mouth on his cock. Rebel’s voice. “Not stopping. Want to feel you come, babe.”

Brennan squeezed his cock and thrust into the tight grip. Rebel’s voice rang through his head, blended with the delicious memories of Kalen, the sexual groans and the way she fucked him, her pussy clutching his dick as he filled her. The two memories combined in his brain until he couldn’t distinguish one from the next.

His balls drew up and he knew he was seconds away from coming. He slapped his hand to the wall and shot, letting it flow through his body, pour out of his cock.

The palm against the wall held him up when his knees would have collapsed.

He took a breath and realized the water had cooled over him. Good, he needed it. His cock, though he’d just come, was still hard. Didn’t make sense. He wasn’t a teenager. He stood under the heavy spray, letting the cool water turn to cold, encouraging the chilled drops to fall on his body.

Cold showers. It worked in the movies. In books.

Unfortunately his body didn’t get the message. With a growl—the foreign sound bouncing off the shower walls—he slapped off the water and stood there for a moment.

Nothing changed. Heat from somewhere in his chest seemed to flood each corner of his body. His fingertips burned, swelled by the same fire that throbbed in his core.

Almost afraid that he would burn himself, he reached down and gripped his cock. The shaft twitched in his fingers, hard, needy. He didn’t know how long he’d been in the shower but Kalen was going to wonder what the hell was going on.

Kalen. His dick hardened even more in his hand. Unable to stop himself, he pumped his fist up the length and slid it back down. Once more. He’d jack off one more time and then go face Kalen.

And Rebel because he really wanted to know what had happened.

Even that didn’t seem to wilt his cock at all. He began to stroke in earnest. His brain zipped around like he was on speed—Kalen, Rebel, fucking, getting fucked. It should have been distracting as hell but it didn’t matter. He closed his eyes and let the images pound him, stroking harder and faster. His balls drew up and he came, spilling into the toilet.

Heart pummeling the inside of his chest, he struggled to catch his breath. He quickly cleaned up, reached for a towel, skimming it across his body. His skin sang with the soft brush of cotton, like a thousand butterfly wings fluttering against him. The little

shivers moved beneath his skin, sinking down into his groin. Fuck, he was hard. Again. Still.

Echoes of erectile dysfunction TV ads rang in his head. *"If you experience an erection lasting more than four hours..."*

Well, it hadn't been four hours—yet—and he hadn't taken one of those blue pills. At least not that he remembered.

He chuckled. *Right, maybe Rebel knocked me out and gave me Viagra.*

He finished wiping down and dropped the towel in the hamper. The room had cleared of steam and he could see himself clearly in the mirror. He looked the same. Except for the wounds on his neck and chest. The bruises he expected weren't there.

Even the "wounds" were healing over, as if they'd occurred a week ago instead of hours.

Doesn't make sense. None of this makes sense.

He needed to talk to Rebel, find out what happened inside that cave.

He looked around for something to wear. His trousers and briefs were a crusty mess, covered in mud and dirt and dried river water. No way was he putting those back on. He had a pair of jeans in one of Kalen's drawers. He'd pull those on and go find Rebel.

He grabbed another towel and hooked it around his waist. Not that Kalen hadn't seen him naked hundreds of times, but still, if he ran into her, he didn't want to be naked, sporting a hard-on that he would have to explain. He couldn't do anything about the hard-on but he didn't have to wave it at her either.

He opened the bathroom door and froze. Kalen sat on the bed, waiting, her hands folded demurely in her lap. Light glinted off her hair, surrounding her with an angelic glow. The edge of his mouth kicked up in a smile. Kalen was no angel and that was one of the many reasons why he loved her.

She lifted her head, her eyes wide, her lips trembling just a little. Almost as if she was afraid. Of him? Never. Why?

"Baby, are you all right?" He inhaled. A delicious scent flooded his brain, short circuiting his next question, blocking out her answer. His cock pushed against the towel, getting impossibly harder.

"I'm fine..." A strange red haze crowded his vision and blocked the rest of her words. He blinked and tried to focus. Her lips moved but he couldn't process the sound. "We need to talk..." She stopped speaking and stared at him, waiting. Feeling compelled to make some response, he nodded. "You won't believe this but..." Her pretty pink lips were moving again, making him think of all the times he'd kissed that soft mouth or had his cock between her lips. Her words turned fuzzy and the red fog washed over his eyes. It actually seemed to make the details in the room clearer. The purple floral pattern of the bedspread glowed. Her voice whispered into his brain,

murmuring nonsense words that didn't matter as long as he could hear her speak. The sound flowed into his chest and wrapped around his heart.

He stared into her eyes. The green depths glittered back at him. She blinked and her words stuttered, halting little jolts before she snapped her gaze away and looked at the floor.

Again she spoke. None of the words made sense but no alerts went up. His brain didn't protest the confusion. This was Kalen. He was safe with her. She belonged to him.

The delicate perfume of her pussy highlighted his other senses, pulling him closer. He needed to taste that scent, have it on his skin, sinking into his pores. Arousal flooded her cunt. His gaze dropped to her lap. He didn't know how he knew, how he could know, but everything in his being told him her pussy was slick and wet, ready to be fucked.

A sound rattled through his brain, like a chuckle, but it didn't belong to him.

Kalen's knees bounced up and down. The motion allowed more of her perfume to fill the air. He watched her legs. Though he wasn't sure he could have spoken the words, he recognized that she was wearing shorty pajamas, leaving her legs bare.

Perfect. I can run my tongue up the inside line of her leg, from ankle to pussy, tasting all that delicious skin.

"Rebel...wolf..."

Wolf? His mind latched on to that word. He didn't remember seeing any wildlife.

Kalen stood up and made the two steps forward to reach him. She put her hands on his shoulders.

"Brennan."

His name jolted him back to awareness but the heat from her palms burned into his skin, pulling his attention away.

"Do you understand?"

Need to fuck you. Taste you. Have you.

He couldn't make his mouth form the words. His gums ached and his teeth felt too big.

Knowing it was wrong, *something* was wrong, but unable to stop it, he reached for her, wrapping his arms around her back and pulling her hard against his chest. She gasped as she fell against him. The warmth of her breasts against his chest just made it more necessary.

He bent down and covered her mouth with his, driving his tongue into her mouth, needing her taste. His hand dropped down and grabbed her ass, probably too hard, and lifted her up, pulling her close, settling his cock between her legs.

His mind had a moment of crystal-clear awareness. She wasn't fighting him. After a heartbeat of hesitation, she kissed him back, moving into him. As if she felt the same frantic need.

He hooked his hand around her other thigh and lifted, picking her up, opening that hot space between her legs. Fuck, yes, that's what he needed. An animal's howl echoed inside his head. The sound just made the hunger worse. Kalen wrapped her legs around his back and sucked on his tongue, then yanked her head back, putting inches—too fucking far—between them.

"Brennan, we should slow down. We—"

Heat from her pussy radiated through the thick towel he still wore. He ground his cock against her clit, drawing a gasp from her lips. And a flood of moisture to her cunt. The hot, sweet scent of her pussy exploded between them.

"We—we...need to talk."

He might have believed her more if she hadn't punctuated her words with a slow roll of her hips, pushing his dick harder against her.

"Later," he said, the sound more of a growl than a word. "We'll talk later."

He staggered forward, carrying them both to the bed and falling forward. Kalen landed on her back. Her arms fell back against the mattress but her legs didn't unhook. Instead she pulled him closer, her heels digging into his low back.

He stared down at the beautiful woman beneath him. Her eyes glittered and her breath came in fast shallow pants. He reached up to cup her breast. The thin material of her nightshirt got in his way. He tugged the irritating cloth out the way and heard it rip, shredding in his hands.

"Fuck, baby." He curled his palms around her breasts, the silk of her skin burning his palms. She moaned and arched up into this touch. He bent forward and took her nipple in his mouth. Finesse was gone, vanished in the need to taste her, to make her come. The heat flooding her cunt called him and he ground against her, wanting more. He sucked the tight peak hard. Her cry bounced against the walls. A smug grunt rattled his throat but he didn't stop his attention. She was with him the whole way, moving her pussy, rocking and rubbing against his cock.

Kalen tried to hold still but her body wouldn't listen to the practical instructions from her mind. She wanted, needed. She grabbed his head and plowed her fingers into his hair, holding on as he sucked and licked.

He kissed one nipple, a silent promise to return, and turned to the other, drawing it deep in his mouth. The strong pull of his mouth zipped a wicked tingle from her breast to her pussy.

Kalen groaned and twisted in his embrace. This was a bad idea. She should stop him. She'd come up here to talk to him—and she'd tried—but she didn't think he'd heard her when she'd told him a werewolf bit him. And she wasn't sure what had happened after that.

He'd just smelled so seductive, and the hot heavy, way he'd stared at her, like he'd wanted to lick her from head to toe—well, there was no way she could resist. Something in her responded to the animal in him.

He ground his cock against her and gently bit down on her nipple. The twin caresses shot through her and seemed to meet in the middle in a lovely explosion. She arched up and cried out, her body shuddering as the delicious ripples contracted her pussy.

Brennan went wild. His eyes blazed red. He reared back, breaking the grip of her legs, and grabbed her pajama bottoms. The soft cotton fell apart in his hands. A cold rush of air tripped over her naked skin, making it tingle. The towel dropped from his hips, baring his cock, hard and long.

The human veneer thinned as he stared down at her pussy. His tongue lashed across his lips, as if he imagined the taste of her. His eyes glowed red. She wasn't sure he knew he was staring. He seemed torn between wanting to lick her and wanting to fuck her.

"Please, Brennan." She reached for him, dragging him down. "I want to feel your mouth." She couldn't believe the words tumbling from her lips. She guided him down, urging him toward her pussy.

Her body flowed with the rough sensuality of his movements and she slid down, curling her hips up and baring her pussy.

Brennan looked down, her naked cunt open before him. For a moment she thought she'd gone too far. He lifted his gaze. Heat drilled through her chest and flooded her body.

"Pretty. Mine." That seemed like all he was capable of. He dipped down and stroked his tongue up the full length of her slit, one long lick. His eyes drooped shut and a low humming noise, almost a purr, vibrated his throat. He opened his eyes. The gray irises were pale, surrounding the bright red pinpoint.

A spike of fear ran through her chest but it disappeared as fast as it came. This was Brennan, her fiancé, her lover. Before she could even process the thought, she was dragged back into the maelstrom of his lovemaking. Energy radiated from Brennan's core and flooded her body. She gasped. Every nerve tingled and vibrated. It was as if he fucked her without touching her. She grabbed the bedspread beneath her and held on, needing something stable in her world.

Brennan grinned and pushed her legs a little wider, giving him full access, then spread her pussy lips and sank his tongue deep into her, feeling the slick walls of her cunt tighten around his penetration. The flavor of her pussy swelled in his head. He's always loved her taste but there was something special tonight, a different spice lingering on his tongue. Her thighs quivered but she didn't move. Liquid heat poured across his tongue and he groaned, wanting more, wanting her melting and coming for him. He swirled the tip of his tongue around her clit before sucking lightly on the tight bud. Her body arched and she ground her pussy into his face, pulsing that sweet flesh against his tongue. A sound—like a wolf's howl—rang through his skull, shaking his brain and driving him on.

He sucked harder, feeling her body strain, reaching for her orgasm. His usual control, usual command during lovemaking was gone. He wanted her to come. Needed her to come against his mouth. He lashed his tongue across her clit and sensed the vibrations start. Needing to feel every ripple, he plunged his tongue into her cunt, feeling her squeeze him as she came. Sweet liquid flooded his tongue. The taste surrounded him and made his cock harder.

"Brennan!" His head snapped back as she screamed his name. He drew back, licking his lips, drinking her pussy juices clinging to his mouth. His body didn't seem to belong to him, moving without his control. He leapt up on the bed, straddling her, staring down. She lay beneath him, her legs spread, slick liquid glittering on her thighs.

He growled, reached between her legs and gripped his shaft, placing the thick head of his cock against her opening. She tried to relax but the predatory glaze in his eyes made her muscles clench. He nudged forward, just slipping the head inside. He hesitated just a moment then drove forward, plunging his cock hard and deep inside her.

A cry ripped from her throat, the shock too much to keep inside. Damn, he felt huge. Brennan froze, his cock buried in her pussy. He tipped his head to the side and stared at her.

She ran her hands up his arms, soothing him even as his hips rocked slowly, the visceral need of the animal too much to stop. His eyes met hers, a hint of red burning deep. He blinked and it was gone.

"Kalen?" Confusion and panic filled that one word. He started to pull out.

"No. Don't stop." The need to comfort her lover stripped away all other thoughts. "Fuck me." She stretched up, wrapping her arms around his neck and pulling him down. "Come inside me." She whispered her demand against his lips. The red flared in his eyes and he kissed her, driving his tongue into her mouth even as he plunged his cock into her pussy, filling her hard and deep. She moaned, sharing the sound with Brennan.

He rose up. Power surged through him. Power and the need to fuck, to claim his woman. He eyes locked on her neck. Images flooded his brain—him, sinking his teeth into that smooth skin. He shook his head to clear the pictures. His mind cleared and he realized he was fucking her hard. He watched the lush form beneath him. Her eyes were closed, a deep red flushed across her skin, her mouth open as she gasped for breath.

The world shifted and the red fog returned, clouding his senses and heightening them at the same time. He pounded into her, driving deep, the sweet walls of her cunt gripping him each time he filled her.

He rode her hard, losing himself in her pussy. She came but he didn't stop. He'd jerked off twice in the bathroom—he could take his time with her. He draped her legs over his arms, locking her body in place. Leaning forward he took her with her,

pinning her to the bed, her ass in the air, his strength holding her place. He pumped his cock into her. She couldn't move. She could only take what he gave her.

Triumph swelled inside him. Her eyes were passion glazed, her skin was pink and flushed. She looked drunk. Her pretty lips hung open. Fuck, he wanted to come in her mouth but couldn't resist the slick grip of her pussy. He bent forward, driving his cock deeper and covering her mouth with his. She groaned and accepted his tongue, sucking on it. Her fingernails dug into his skin. The pain teased the edges of his senses, tiny little bites into his flesh.

He pulled back from her lips and placed a kiss on her neck. It wasn't enough. He opened his mouth and placed his teeth on her throat, fighting the urge to bite down. Strange images filled his brain, foreign enough to draw him back.

His hips continued to work his cock in and out. He couldn't make them stop but he blinked, clearing that strange fog from his brain. What the fuck was he doing? He pounded into her hard. The violence of the movement startled him, but when he tried to ease back, Kalen's grip held him in place, her nails digging deeper, marking him.

"Please." Her soft plea was completely opposite to the strength she used to pull him close. "Brennan." God, he loved his name on her lips. "More."

A howl rang through his head and he slammed into her. She cried out and her cunt squeezed his cock. She was close and this time he wouldn't be able to hold back. Needing to feel her come, he reached between their bodies and slid his finger between her pussy lips, teasing her clit. Her cunt contracted, tiny ripples that massaged his dick. He roared and thrust into her once more, his cum pouring from his body in rhythmic pulses.

The smooth curve of her neck tempted him. He ran his tongue over his teeth, feeling the sharp points, wanting to know how they would feel sinking into her skin.

The red covering his vision deepened and he felt himself moving forward, needing—

Kalen squirmed, groaning softly. The sound knocked him back. He shook his head and stared down at his lover. She twisted on the bed, her breasts flushed red, the tips tight and hard. He ground his hips against her, nudging his cock a little deeper. She moaned and opened her eyes. Satisfaction and lust glowed back at him.

His cock, never soft, rocked back to full hardness. Her lips bent upward in a soft smile.

Fuck, he needed her again. He pulled out, grabbed her hips and flipped her over, turning her facedown on the mattress, her round ass presented to him.

"Aaahhh!" She screamed but the sound held no fear. It was pleasure, pure wicked pleasure.

"Not done with you yet."

She looked over her shoulder, her smile expanding into her eyes. She wiggled her hips. "You sure?"

"Oh yes." Damn he loved her. He grabbed his cock and put it to the slick opening of her pussy. "Need you again."

"Yes."

He pushed forward, sliding back into her cunt. Her gasp filled the air but she pushed her hips back, sending him deeper, wanting him inside her. No, he wasn't done with her yet and she wasn't done with him.

Chapter Seven

Brennan closed to the door behind him, not letting the lock click. Not that he had to worry. Kalen was dead to the world.

After you fucked her stupid, what did you expect?

The mocking, reprimanding voice made him wince. He'd had her three times and had stopped because he was afraid he'd hurt her. She'd collapsed, asleep even as he'd pulled out of her, moaning softly as his cock slid from her pussy. Even then he couldn't leave her. He'd stretched out on top of her, licking and tasting her breasts, lightly sucking on her nipples. She'd barely reacted, awakening long enough to flutter her eyes open, cup the back of his head and slide her fingers through his hair. She made no effort to pull him away so he'd lapped another soft stroke across the tight peak.

He couldn't seem to stop touching her, and the urge to fuck her again kept his dick rock-hard. Knowing he would lose the fight if he stayed, he'd climbed out of bed, taken another shower, jacked off *again* and slipped into some jeans.

The short distance across the bedroom, from the bathroom to the door, had almost been too much for him. He'd looked at Kalen, sprawled out, his cum still marking her thighs, the scent of her cunt enticing him, and had to force his feet to walk away.

He stopped at the top of the stairs. His body was seriously fucked up. At least his cock wasn't rock-hard. That last time in the shower seemed to do the trick. Well, that and getting away from Kalen. As long as he didn't think of her or sex, he might be able to find Rebel and ask him what the hell had happened. And did any of what happened explain why he was an instant porn star?

He started down the stairs but the smell made him pause. It floated up from the kitchen, wicked, dangerous.

Sausage.

His stomach growled and he heard himself repeat the sound. Without actually directing his body, he loped down the stairs, following the enticing smell. It was almost as delicious as Kalen but in a totally different way. He licked his lips, tasting the air.

He pushed open the kitchen door. Rebel stood at the stove. A package of sausage open, half-empty, sat on the counter. Grease popped and splattered.

His stomach rumbled again, loud enough that Rebel seemed to hear it.

He tipped his head to the side and raised his eyebrows. "Hungry?"

The mocking tone Brennan had become familiar with in the past few hours gave him the jolt he needed. He straightened and shook his head. "I don't eat...that."

He didn't. It was full of fat and nitrates and all sorts of bad things for the body. His metabolism still kept up with him but he was heading toward forty and didn't have any intention of going to flab.

The edge of Rebel's mouth kicked up and he stabbed one of the sausages with a fork, dropping it on a paper-towel-covered plate beside him.

"You sure?" He tossed another piece of meat on the plate followed by another. "Just a taste." Brennan watched as the pile of sausages grew. He looked down. The plate was right there. Somehow he'd crossed the kitchen and didn't remember. "I know you're hungry."

He flashed back to Sunday school. This had to be the voice of the serpent in the garden. Tempting, teasing him. Offering him just a taste.

He took a breath and tried to fight the need but the scent covered him, sinking into his pores. Gulping, he grabbed one—just one, then he'd go find some nice healthy bran cereal and yogurt—and carried it to his mouth.

Confidence returned as he watched the grease glide down the sausage casing. One bite and he'd remember why he didn't eat this stuff. But he couldn't resist one taste.

A bright sizzle burst from the pan and he looked over. Rebel dumped the rest of the sausage in the pan. The grease jumped like little firecrackers.

Brennan glanced at the plate already mounded with meat. *He thinks we need more sausage? I'm only going to eat this one.*

Rebel looked at him. "Go on. Eat it."

It was stupid to resist but he fought it for just a minute longer. Maybe it was the teasing in Rebel's eyes. Like he knew something Brennan didn't.

Brennan pushed his shoulders back and shoved the sausage into his mouth.

"There," he said around the meat. "Happy?" He spun away and headed to the pantry, going to get his cereal. He bit down and groaned. The flavor exploded on his tongue, spices and meat and...*fuck, that's good.* Juices dribbled down his chin. Knowing Rebel couldn't see him, he captured the lead drop on his finger and pushed it up into his mouth.

His stomach rumbled, demanding more. He forced himself to reach for the cereal but when he turned around, Rebel was waiting for him, leaning against the counter, holding the plate, one crispy sausage in his fingers. He took a bite and licked his lips.

Brennan stumbled forward like he was being pulled from inside. He slammed the cereal box on the counter and used it to physically hold himself in place, to not reach for another.

"Come on, babe, I know you want it."

The teasing had disappeared from Rebel's voice, replaced by seduction. Brennan tried to shake his head but the tone sounded so familiar. Rebel whispering to him, calling to him. *Want to feel you come, babe.*

When? How?

He stared at the granite countertop, his fingers turning white as he gripped the smooth surface. It was a stupid thing, really. It was just some fucking sausage, but damn it, it was the control. Why couldn't he control himself? Why did he want to bury his face in that platter?

"Brennan." Rebel's voice changed again, dropping low, past seduction to command – undeniable command. Brennan's lips twitched and he blinked, clearing his eyes of the red vapor that encroached again. "Eat," Rebel said. "You need it."

His stomach roared its agreement and he couldn't fight the double assault. He reached out and grabbed, his fingers wrapping around three sausages. He scooped them up and shoved them in his mouth, biting and letting the delicious flavors cover his tongue. He groaned, the sound almost a whimper. Embarrassed, he wiped his hand across his mouth and glanced at Rebel, but the other man wasn't looking. He was flipping sausage in the pan. The motion sent another spate of grease into the air.

A few drops splattered on his hand and Brennan yelped, snatching his arm away but reaching for more meat. He couldn't stop himself. He shoveled sausage after sausage into his mouth. His body came alive as he fed it, gave it what it needed.

Rebel plucked a sausage off the plate. Brennan's lips pulled back in a snarl.

"Careful, puppy." The warning was clear and resonated deep in Brennan's chest. "You have to learn to share." He flinched at the reprimand and crushed his response. "Now you may have more."

It tore at Brennan's psyche to gain permission but something in his body reacted to the bigger man's power. He moved, a little more cautious, but soon the hunger overwhelmed his fear and he ate, vaguely aware of Rebel adding hot meat to the platter. The spicy meat burned his tongue, but he couldn't stop.

"That's it, babe. Take what you need." Seductive Rebel was back. There was something compelling in his voice, tempting Brennan...with what he wasn't sure. Whatever Rebel was offering had to be dangerous. It had to be or his innate self-protection wouldn't have screamed warning after warning that something was wrong.

But still he couldn't move away. Not even when Rebel slid around behind him, crowding him toward the counter. Rebel leaned in, his mouth close to Brennan's cheek. It would be so easy to turn, to meet his lips.

That wicked red fog deepened across his brain until he felt pulled out of his own body. He felt his body reacting. His cock got hard, pushing against the fly of his jeans. Warmth covered his back as Rebel moved closer, his hands resting on Brennan's hips. Something hard pressed against his ass. It took him a moment to realize what it was – Rebel's cock.

That self-preservation gene came to life, telling him to move away, but the instinct to stay, to settle into the heat Rebel offered, overwhelmed the warnings. Fire built in his groin. Rebel slid one hand forward, his palm cupping Brennan's dick through the denim.

He must have made a sound of protest.

"It's okay, babe. I know what you need."

Yes. A noise he didn't recognize rattled his throat, the urge to tip his head back and scream. Reactions and need he didn't understand bloomed in his brain. He pumped his hips forward, rubbing his cock into Rebel's hand. Rebel squeezed his hip, holding him in place as he pressed forward. The hard cock digging into his ass cheek should have freaked him out but the hand massaging his dick distracted him from any panic.

The wonderful heat vanished from his cock, for just a moment. He whipped his head around, meeting those wicked amber eyes. Laughter flashed in the yellow depths. Brennan's teeth throbbed, almost as hard as his dick.

"I've got you, babe. Just let me..."

He didn't finish his sentence. He didn't have to. Rebel snapped the top button of Brennan's jeans like a pro, tugged down the zipper just a bit and slid his hand inside, skin against skin. Fire surrounded his dick so hot it almost burned. The heat jarred his system. He slammed his hands on the counter and locked his elbows, holding himself up, letting his hips move. He pushed forward, fucking the tight grip of Rebel's fist, the heat between them making their skin slick.

Energy pounded through his veins—the strength of the male behind him, the hot, powerful fingers wrapped around his cock. The world contracted to his groin, the need to come overriding every other instinct.

A low animal growl rumbled from Rebel's chest, vibrating into Brennan's.

Rebel dipped his head down and lashed his tongue across Brennan's shoulder, where the four puncture wounds had been. A shock slammed into his cock, like electricity shooting from his neck and settling just behind his dick.

"Oh fuck, that's it. Come on. Let me—"

The kitchen door popped open and cut off the rest of Rebel's words. Kalen, sleepy and disheveled, filled the doorway. Her mouth dropped open. Her lips moved but no sound came out.

He watched her eyes zip up and down his body, her mind processing what she was seeing—two half-naked men jacking off.

"Uh, I'm sorry." She blinked and took a step back. "Didn't mean to disturb you."

The door swung shut and the world snapped into focus.

Holy shit! The scene that Kalen witnessed exploded in his brain. Rebel, his hand in Brennan's jeans, his mouth on his neck.

And he'd let it happen. Wanted it to happen.

"What the fuck?" He yanked Rebel's hand out of his pants and twisted away. He yanked the fly closed over his quickly softening dick and ran after her.

"Kalen, baby, wait." He punched the swinging door with his fist. "Let me explain." Only he couldn't explain. He couldn't explain any of what had happened in the past twelve hours.

Kalen stopped in the living room, her fingers trembling as she held up her hand, stopping him from getting any closer. "It's okay. I understand."

"What? How can you understand? I don't fucking understand," Brennan said, his confusion turning to anger.

The door popped open again and Rebel walked in.

"I do," Rebel announced with a calm arrogance that made Brennan want to punch him.

Brennan turned and glared at Rebel, his lips pulling back in a snarl.

Rebel clenched his teeth and reined in his wolf's natural response—to attack the threat.

The wolf was growing in Brennan fast and strong. Dangerous when the human didn't know how to control the animal.

It had been a long night that had lasted until almost noon. After Rebel had showered, he'd waited, listening as Brennan claimed Kalen.

His own transition had occurred during his teens and it had been hard to distinguish between the wolf's growing sexuality and the raging hormones of a teenager.

But Brennan? The guy had to be confused as hell. He'd gone from a normal human male in his mid-thirties with an average sex drive to a sex fiend.

"How the fuck can you understand this? What happened out there?"

Rebel took a breath and looked at Kalen. She'd wanted to be the one to tell Brennan what had happened but Rebel was pretty sure the two of them hadn't done much talking upstairs.

She nodded her permission and stepped back, crossing her arms, her shoulders hunching forward as if her body prepared to take a heavy weight.

"You were shot."

Brennan's hand went to his chest, to the healing mark on his skin.

"But how...?"

"Those guys were chasing us and you got shot. I managed to drag you into that cave and wait them out." That was all true. He looked at Kalen again to see if she wanted to jump in and explain. She stared down, her toes twitching on the rug. Guess he couldn't really blame her. It was his fault, after all. "Fine. When it looked like you were going to die, I bit you and turned you into a werewolf."

He said the words in a rush because honestly there was no easy way to tell someone. Not that he'd tried before. He'd never bitten anyone before. And wasn't likely to again. So far, the experience sucked. Well, except for the actual biting part and the shared orgasms afterward. That had been fun, but this...this sucked.

Brennan stared at him. "What?"

Rebel sighed and answered, speaking slowly and enunciating each word. "You were dying. I bit you and turned you into a werewolf."

The edges around Brennan's eyes crinkled up. He shook his head and turned to Kalen.

"Is he completely insane or is this some weird joke that I don't get?"

She lifted her gaze from the floor and Rebel felt the pain in her eyes. "He's telling you the truth." She nodded toward Brennan's neck. "Those are the bite marks. He's a werewolf and when he bit you, he started the process to turn you into one too."

Brennan took a step back, his stare bouncing between the two of them. "What's going on?"

Kalen looked at Rebel. "You're going to have to show him." She pushed her shoulders back and faced Brennan. "My family are all werewolves. I'm not, not really. I mean technically I am but I can't turn into a wolf."

Brennan reached for her, the sympathy in his eyes barely covering the concern that she was insane. "Kalen, we need to talk—" A loud snap ripped through the air. Kalen flinched. She was familiar with the noises—bones breaking, muscles snapping and stretching—but she'd never gotten used to it.

Brennan turned and stared. His mouth dropped open as Rebel's face punched forward and the human visage stretched into the wolf's mouth. Fur sprouted, turning his tan skin dark gray and black.

He fell forward, his hands reaching out and turning into paws before he hit the ground.

The sounds ended. Rebel was a wolf.

Brennan leapt back, his eyes huge as he stared at the animal. Rebel's tail wagged and he came over to Kalen. She hadn't seen him in his wolf form in fifteen years and couldn't resist bending down and petting him. She dug her fingers into his ruff and scratched him through thick fur. His tongue lolled out and he rubbed against her.

The strangled gasp from Brennan drew her back to the situation. She straightened and looked at Brennan. He blinked like he was trying to make the picture before him disappear.

"Brennan—"

"What the fuck is that?"

Rebel either didn't like the question or the tone and he growled, pulling back his lips to bare his teeth.

"That's Rebel," Kalen said, keeping her voice calm, soothing. Really they didn't want a pissed-off wolf in the house. "He's a werewolf."

"A werewolf." He said the word like he was learning a foreign language and wanted to get the accent right.

"Yes."

"And he bit me and turned me into one of those...that."

Another growl from Rebel.

"Yes."

"When?"

"What?"

"When am I going to become that thing?"

"It's a wolf," she said, offended on behalf of her family. "And your first change will happen at the next full moon after that..."

"No." He shook his head but she could see the horror growing in his eyes.

"Yes, maybe we should..." She reached out for Brennan.

"No." He shrugged off her touch. "I've got to get out of here."

He spun around and headed for the door.

"Brennan, wait." She hurried after him but he acted like he didn't hear her. Without stopping he grabbed his coat off the hook and disappeared out the front door. "Brennan!" she called again. He didn't even look up. He opened his car door and within seconds peeled out of her driveway. "Damn."

She looked around. Where was her phone? She needed to call him, explain. Something.

"He'll be okay," Rebel said, pulling on his jeans.

Kalen shook her head and met his grim stare.

"We just told the guy who wanted to be governor some day that he was going to turn furry and howl at the moon. I don't know how you recover from that."

Chapter Eight

Rebel rolled his shoulders back and stared at the elevator door. The wolf rippled beneath his skin, sending every nerve on high alert. Logically he knew he wasn't in danger. The two lawyers in the car with him were unlikely to attack, but his wolf sensed his unease. He didn't like the city, didn't like government buildings and sure as hell didn't like lawyers.

The way they flashed furtive glances toward him warned, they liked him just as much.

The thought actually relaxed him. He let his teeth grow long, just to give the wolf something to do. He briefly considered flashing his canines at the lawyers but fuck, he didn't need that kind of trouble. He'd managed enough on his own.

The door opened at his floor and he started to get off. The female lawyer flipped her head over her shoulder glared at him, relegating him to wait as they exited.

Should have known they were prosecutors, he thought, stepping out of the elevator. Defense lawyers have to be polite to the criminal element.

He looked at the wall plaque and followed the room numbers down the hall and to the right.

An understated sign marked the door. *District Attorney Brennan Hall.*

He figured he had a thirty-seventy chance that Brennan either wasn't there or was going to have his ass kicked to the curb, but he'd always liked rotten odds.

He opened the door and walked in. He didn't bother to offer the secretary a smile. He'd been told he looked predatory when he tried to smile.

And she wasn't the type to respond to flirtation—blonde hair pulled back in a tight bun, probably straining her brain.

"May I help you?" Disdain dripped from her words.

"Doubt it. I need to see Brennan."

"I'm sorry. *Mr. Hall* is not taking meetings this morning." She nodded to a note pad on the far side of the desk. "If you'd leave your name and number..."

I'll make sure it gets thrown in the trash, Rebel silently added, finishing her sentence.

"Yeah, I never learned how to write and can't count above six." He leaned on the desk. "You know, the number of bullets in a six shooter."

She barely moved—the muscles in her throat contracting in a dry gulp. Her fingers inched toward the phone.

Rebel huffed out his breath and stood up. It was no fun when they frightened that easily. She slid toward the left. *Probably has a panic button under the desk.* All he needed was security bursting in with guns. His wolf really didn't like to be threatened.

"Listen, I'm a...friend of Brennan's. Just tell him Rebel's here." The command seemed to renew the starch in her spine and she sat up, her lips pressing together. No doubt her knees were squeezed together as well. "Don't fuck with me, lady." He let the wolf roar to the surface and felt his eyes burn. "I've had a bad day."

A strangled whimper escaped her throat but she pushed her chair away and walked, legs stiff, toward Brennan's door.

"Mr. Hall, there's a man here. Says his name is Rebel. He insists on seeing you."

Rebel smiled. He hadn't *insisted* but that was going to be his next step, right before he kicked down the door. It didn't appear that it would come to that.

If Brennan let him in.

There was silence in the office. Then a sigh. "Fine, have him come in."

The secretary backed out. She lifted her nose, her nostrils contracting.

"You may go in."

Rebel thought of several appropriate answers, including "fuck you very much", but he kept them to himself, relying instead on the predatory grin as he walked by. The fun of terrifying Brennan's staff lasted until the door shut behind him and he was closed inside the office.

Hardwoods covered the floors and fine grain patterns lined the walls. Expensive stuff. Since getting out, he'd been doing some work for a remodeling contractor and he was starting to recognize quality when he saw it.

Ignoring the anger and fear emanating off the other male, he glanced around the room. Without being told, he knew Kalen had done the decorating. It had the arrogance of Brennan but the warm heart of Kalen. It would somehow make a person feel comfortable and intimidated at the same time.

"What do you want? I'm busy."

The abrupt question grabbed his attention but he didn't look toward Brennan, didn't want to give him the satisfaction. Instead he finished his inspection of the office, checked out the bookshelves, lined with law books, and the elegant lamp that filled the corner. Another Kalen touch, he was sure. Finally he allowed his gaze to land on Brennan.

The man looked fucking gorgeous. Humans might not be able to quantify the difference yet but Rebel could see it. The wolf shimmered just beneath the surface. Young but strong, hungry.

The wolf inside him leapt forward, trying to reach its creation. Rebel mentally grabbed the animal by its ruff and pulled it back. Since he'd been released, he didn't often fight his wolf when it wanted something. But this was one situation where his human side needed full control.

"What do you want, Rebel?" Brennan asked again.

"Came by to see if you're still pouting like a schoolgirl who didn't get prom queen."

"*What?*" His shout rattled the windows and Rebel was damn glad the door was shut. The noise seemed to startle Brennan and he pulled back, clamping down on his emotions. Rebel wanted to tell him to relax a little, that the wolf wouldn't fight him if he didn't fight it, but he didn't really feel like giving Brennan advice. Brennan leaned over his desk, planting his fists on the leather blotter that cushioned the top. "You turned me into this thing and I'm supposed to just behave like nothing happened? Like my life hasn't been completely fucked up?"

"You're alive. Think about that."

"I'm alive but *my life* is over."

"It doesn't have to be." Rebel leaned in, matching Brennan's pose.

"Funny." Brennan tipped his head to the side, the edges of his mouth tight. "I don't think they let you be mayor if you howl at the moon and turn furry once a month."

"Then you'd better learn the control so that doesn't happen. That wolf is growing in you, fast. You need to learn to deal with it or you put us all at risk."

"Fuck you. I didn't choose this."

"No, but it's your reality now. Put on your big-boy pants and deal with it."

A growl rumbled in Brennan's throat. "Get the fuck out of my office."

Rebel pushed himself upright and nodded. "Fine." He walked to the door. "And you might want to call your fiancée. When I left her house, she was trying really hard to keep it together. You might think about her for a minute."

"Get out."

The door slammed behind Rebel, leaving Brennan alone.

Well, not really alone. He had this thing inside him. Maybe it was his imagination, too many late-night horror movies as a child, but he could feel the creature inside him. Moving around. Taking over.

Not sleeping last night didn't help, but every time he'd closed his eyes, the image of Rebel changing into a wolf filled his dreams. The sounds stayed with him, bones snapping, flesh creaking as it stretched. His stomach rolled. He closed his lips and took a long deep breath, hoping to keep what little food he'd eaten in his body.

Ignoring the cravings, he'd forced himself to eat a healthy breakfast—fruit, yogurt and cereal. He'd gagged with every bite but he wasn't giving in to this thing.

He rubbed the center of his chest, his palm landing right over the exit wound. He couldn't actually feel it. The scar was pink and healing, as if months had passed.

He paced behind his desk. He couldn't sit and work. His mind wouldn't focus, thoughts zipped around, though if he cut himself a break, he had to admit getting bitten by a werewolf was a good enough reason to be distracted.

He had to get out. He grabbed his suit jacket off the post by the door and left.

"Mr. Hall?" Bernadette, his secretary, looked up, the expectation that he would explain Rebel's presence and where Brennan was going on her face.

There was no way to explain Rebel.

"I'm going out." He reached for the doorknob.

"Is there anything I should warn security about?"

"What?" He turned around.

"Well, with that...gentleman coming in. The loud voices. And you seem a bit tense this morning. If there is a situation, we should get security involved."

Brennan couldn't help but smile. "No, Bernadette. Everything's fine. Rebel is a friend of Kalen's. He just stopped by to..." He couldn't come up with a decent lie. "There's nothing to worry about."

Bernadette sniffed and didn't look like she believed him.

Oh, good. She's going to have security checking my mail and monitoring my activities. He went into the hall and turned away from the elevator, heading toward the stairs.

His only consolation was the full moon was three weeks away. Fuck, was he really going to turn into a wolf? He'd tried for a while last night to convince himself it was just a joke but there was no way he could have imagined Rebel turning into that...that thing. His mind wasn't inventive enough to have created something like that.

He ran down the steps. The need to be outside, even if it was just to breathe the air, pushed him faster. The stairs opened into the lobby. He nodded the guards working the front door and metal detector. The courtrooms were on the floors below him so no one got in without going through security.

He stepped outside and walked, his head down, his legs burning up the distance. With no real destination in mind, he was surprised when he looked up and discovered he'd gone a couple of miles and ended up at the medical examiner's office.

That will work, he thought. He went in and jogged down the stairs. It always seemed like the medical examiner was in the basement. He slowed his steps to look more official. The front desk let him through, back to Jim's office. The chief medical examiner sat behind stacks of books, an inbox full of paper and a computer that looked shiny and new.

"Jim," Brennan said when he didn't look up. The man flinched and pushed away.

"Jesus, Brennan, scare a guy, why don't you?"

"You're just not used to anything moving around."

"I like my bodies dead."

"Don't go creepy on me."

Jim laughed. "What's up? How's Kalen?"

"Uh, good." *Found out she's a werewolf. So am I.* Wasn't something he was going to share with the doctor. They were friends and all but Jim would either have him committed or want to dissect him. Neither fit into Brennan's plans for the day.

"Have you set a date?"

"What? Uh, no. No. We're just..." He waved off the question. He didn't know what they were doing. "Listen, have a hypothetical question for you."

"Shoot."

"If a man got shot in the back, through and through, would he die?"

Jim twisted his lips. "Depends on where he got shot. How big of a bullet?"

"Probably a rifle. Bullet came in about here." He turned around and pointed to a place just below his shoulder blade. "Came out about here." He faced Jim and put his fingertips on the scar.

"This for some case?"

"Just curiosity."

"Without actually seeing the body, I'm saying the guy would die. Maybe not immediately. He'd probably spend some time bleeding to death." He stood up and put his hand over the area on Brennan's chest. "If your bullet went through here, it probably hit the heart or at least nicked it. Something. You might live for a few hours but you'd need to get to a hospital soon."

Brennan nodded. So the bastard probably had saved his life.

Guess that made it better.

"Thanks."

"That's it? I hope you're not using that as a diagnosis."

Brennan chuckled, needing to keep things casual. "No, just curious." He waved and walked out. Jim probably thought that was strange as hell but Brennan didn't care. He had bigger problems.

He was going to turn into a wolf.

And he had to face Kalen.

* * * * *

Kalen gripped her purse and squeezed her knees together, fighting the urge to fidget. Brennan's secretary lifted her head and gave Kalen a precise nod. The way the woman's lips were pursed, she didn't seem to like having someone sit in her waiting area. But when Kalen had suggested she wait for Brennan in his office, Bernadette had gotten flustered and shook her head so hard Kalen thought it might rattle off.

Kalen looked at the door to Brennan's office. Either he had state secrets in there or an array of sex toys that Kalen wasn't supposed to see.

The thought made her smile.

Bernadette hadn't known when Brennan would be returning and had wanted Kalen to leave a message, but she wasn't leaving until she'd seen him. He'd ignored her phone calls all day yesterday but he couldn't ignore her sitting outside his door.

As if her thoughts conjured him, the door from the main hallway popped open and Brennan stormed in. His jacket clutched in his right hand, he stopped when he saw her.

"Kalen."

She stood up. "Hi."

His upper body tensed like he wanted to reach for her but wouldn't let himself. He glanced at Bernadette. The muscles along his jaw clenched and his lips were tightly closed. She didn't think his wolf teeth would be coming in yet but she hadn't ever met someone who'd been turned into a werewolf. All the wolves she knew had been born that way and made their first change during puberty.

He inhaled through his nose and she thought she heard a low growl rumble from his chest.

"Let's go into my office." He waved his arm toward the door. "I'm not in, Bernadette. To anyone."

Kalen forced her lungs to take a breath then walked in front of him. Head held high, she led the way into his office and took a step to the side, giving him space. Which he took, moving past her and behind his desk. She ignored the stab of pain in her chest. He was angry. She understood that. He had every right.

The door closed with a subtle click and they were alone.

Brennan folded his arms and looked at her. She kept her spine straight and stared back. They stood there, eyes locked together, neither willing to break the silence.

"When were you going to tell me?" he finally asked, accusation dripping from his voice.

Kalen shrugged. "Hopefully never."

"What? You weren't planning to tell me that you're a werewolf? That might have been something helpful for me to know *before* we got married."

"I was hoping I wouldn't *have* to tell you. Yes, my parents and brothers and sister are werewolves but I'm not. I can't turn into a wolf. I don't have any of the special senses or needs..." Though she did share a family fondness for pork sausage. She tossed her purse onto the couch and folded her arms over her chest. "I'm just a human woman who has a weird family."

"What about when we have kids? Are they going to be werewolves? Does this thing, virus or whatever it is, pass through the genes?"

Kalen lifted her chin and forced her teeth to unclench enough so that she could speak.

"Yes, it's passed down through the genes but I was assuming that since my werewolf tendencies were so latent that my children would be human too. And if they weren't, we would deal with it then."

Brennan opened his mouth like he had another protest but nothing came out. He growled and shook his head.

Kalen sighed. "I don't know what to say to you. I'm sorry this happened but Rebel thought he was saving you."

"He did." Brennan looked at her. "He did save me. The gunshot would have killed me if he hadn't bitten me."

"Oh. Wow. Okay." The knot that had been living in her stomach for the past twelve hours relaxed a bit. It didn't disappear but she had some hope that this might work out. "And I'm sorry I didn't tell you before." The line of Brennan's jaw tightened again. "I've left that world behind. I rarely go home. I love my family but I don't fit in with them."

He nodded. She didn't think he'd forgiven her but he wasn't shouting anymore and he seemed to be listening.

"What happens now?" he asked. Kalen wasn't sure if he meant in their relationship or with the world in general. She decided to avoid the relationship question.

"If I understand it correctly, you'll start noticing the wolf's presence in your brain."

"Great, because a DA who hears voices is so trustworthy." There was just enough teasing in his voice to give Kalen hope.

"I don't think it's really a voice. More like another personality."

"Oh, so much better."

She smiled took a step closer to the desk and took it as a good sign that Brennan didn't back away. "I don't really understand it all. It's not something I ever experienced." She trailed her fingers along the top of the desk as she walked around the corner. Brennan stood in the same spot. He wasn't retreating but he wasn't meeting her halfway. She stopped, giving him more time. "I talked to my dad this morning and he said—"

"Your dad? He knows?"

"We had to tell him. He's the pack Alpha."

"And that means he's the boss?"

"Pretty much. He said that you need to get together with a full-fledged, experienced werewolf to get you trained up a bit before the full moon when you..." She let her words trail away, not sure Brennan was ready to hear again what would happen to him that night.

Brennan didn't finish her sentence. "And did he tell you where I'm supposed to find a werewolf trainer? Because I'm pretty sure that isn't something I'm going to find in the phone book."

Kalen took a deep breath and slowly let it out before she answered. "He matched you up with Rebel."

"What?"

"He assigned Rebel to be your trainer."

"No way. That bastard bit me."

"He did it to save your life."

"He doesn't like me."

"And you don't like him," she pointed out. "I think my father assigned Rebel so he would have take responsibility for what he'd done."

"Great. Training me is punishment."

Kalen laughed and completed her journey around to the back of the desk. She placed her hands on the desktop and pressed up, hitching her hips onto the wood surface.

Brennan stared down at her bare legs. And released a little growl.

She gasped. She was used to growling. Hell, everyone in her family growled, but she'd never heard that specific sound come out of Brennan's mouth. Part of her pulled back—this was the world she'd tried to escape—but the other side, the feminine side, reveled in the noise.

She eased her knees apart, just a little, just to tease him. She didn't have to worry. They were safe. Brennan would never risk having sex in his office, especially not with his sharp-eared secretary just on the other side of the door.

He placed his hand on her knee, his fingers sliding beneath the skirt. Heat poured into her skin. Kalen tipped her head back to look at him as he moved closer, his hips wedging between her knees and easing her legs apart. The skirt slid up, stretching tight across her thighs until she couldn't move anymore.

The solid, reliable prosecutor faded into the background and something wild, almost feral, seemed to take command of his body. He wasn't looking at her face. He stared at the shadow between her thighs. Both hands reached for her, pushing up under her skirt, shoving the material out of the way. He cupped her ass and pulled her forward.

"Brennan—" She gasped as her legs opened and he pressed against her pussy. He ground his cock against her. She tried to stop herself from reacting but the heat and the hunger in his stare made it impossible. Still, she had to protest. "We can't."

His lips pulled back from his teeth and he nodded. But he didn't pull back. He bent down and sniffed her neck.

"You smell delicious." His lips whispered across her throat, his tongue flicking out and tasting even as he pressed against her pussy. "I want to taste you, slide my tongue into your pretty cunt." Shivers raced across her skin and wet heat welled in her pussy. He grunted as if he sensed what was happening in her body. "That's it, baby. Are you sure I can't have you now?"

She knew there was a really good reason why he couldn't fuck her on his desk, but with his cock rubbing slow circles against her clit, easy movements that sent more liquid to her pussy, it was difficult to remember what it was.

"I—"

"Fuck, baby, I can smell you. You're wet, aren't you?"

He bit down on her neck, sending another flicker into her pussy. He hummed as if pleased with her reaction.

"Mr. Hall?" A light rap of knuckles on the door followed the quiet call.

Brennan stared at the door and snarled. Red glowed in his eyes. Every muscle in his body contracted as if ready to defend his prey against another predator.

Kalen nudged his hip, hoping to get his attention, gently draw him back. He growled again.

"Brennan." Her sharp tone seemed to reach him and he blinked. The red in his stare vanished and the tension fell from his body.

"Just a moment, Bernadette," he called. There was the slightest hesitation in his voice. He took a deep breath and looked down. Their bodies were intimately pressed together, his cock hard and nestled against her pussy. His fingers tightened on her hips, one squeeze before he released her, stepping back.

The movement startled Kalen and she froze, sitting on Brennan's desk, her legs spread, her pussy juices soaking her panties. Brennan inhaled, his eyes locked on her pussy, as if he could see through the bright pink undies she'd put on that morning.

"Damn," he sighed, shaking his head and looking away.

"It's the wolf."

"What?"

"This..." She waved her hand between them. "This need. It's the wolf. That's what is happening."

Brennan tipped his head to the side, pressed his lips together and stared at her.

"Baby, I wanted you long before Rebel bit me."

She laughed and another bit of the tension she'd been carrying around disappeared.

"I know that." She snapped her legs shut and hopped off the desk. She leaned into him, pleased that he didn't pull back. "But you've never almost fucked me in your office," she whispered.

"I've thought about it."

"Really?" She smiled and resisted the urge to press up against him. Bernadette waited outside the door and Kalen wasn't sure how far she could push the wolf. "Well, maybe we'll try it sometime when your secretary isn't listening at the door."

Brennan nodded.

"So, anything else I need to know about with this wolf thing?" he asked. He sounded normal, almost casual.

"Just be careful. My dad says your moods will be volatile and you'll crave red meat."

"Great. It's the male version of PMS."

"Pretty much. Listen —"

Another knock on the door interrupted them.

"Mr. Hall, the mayor would like to see you."

Kalen smiled and stepped back. "You'd better go." She popped up on her tiptoes and kissed him. "I'll see you later."

He clamped his arm around her back, holding her to him. She let him take some of her weight. "I'll come by tonight. We'll get dinner."

She shook her head. "You better go see Rebel." She put her hands on his chest and pushed away, breaking his hold.

"Tonight?"

"It's best." Her eyes stung and she blinked, trying to clear the sensation. "You guys have stuff to talk about."

"I'll come by afterward."

"Sure, if you want." Her heart did a little flip. "If it's not too late," she said, giving him an out.

"It won't be too late," he assured her.

Bernadette tapped on the door again.

"I'd better go." She waved and slipped into the outer office. Despite what Brennan said, she didn't expect to see him later. He didn't understand yet but he would. Soon he was going to realize that she didn't fit with him anymore. He was part of the pack and she was just a human.

Chapter Nine

Brennan turned his car down the gravel road. Kalen's instructions had been perfect, guiding him through a winding pattern of roads, deeper and deeper into the woods – an hour out of town in the opposite direction from their ill-fated ransom delivery. An old cabin sat at the end of the single-lane road. The wood was faded and it looked abandoned. The only thing that warned him he wasn't alone was Rebel's truck, parked almost to the back of the house. Brennan pulled in behind it. He sat in the car and took a breath.

He wasn't sure he was ready for this but damn, he had to do something. The afternoon had been a mixture of terror and amusement. He'd actually growled at one of the assistants. Not snapped. *Growled*. And all because she'd bumped into him in the hall. It had scared both of them and been enough for him to decide that meeting with Rebel and learning how to control this thing would be a good idea.

He sighed long and hard. Knowing he couldn't put it off any longer, he got out of the car. He went to the front door and tapped on the frame. No answer. He rapped again, a little louder and waited.

No response.

Damn it, tell me I didn't drive all the way out here...

He let the thought trail away, a sudden tingling on his neck grabbing his attention. Instincts he'd never had before went on alert and held his body still. He was being watched.

Slowly he turned his head, looking to his left. Rebel stood about thirty feet away. His stance radiated aggression but Brennan didn't feel any threat. He kept turning, scanning the forest edge. Was it possible something else was out here?

Brennan shoved off the sensation and stepped off the porch, heading toward Rebel. He still wasn't sure how he felt about the other man, didn't like the way he looked at Kalen, but damn, he had saved Brennan's life. Of course he'd turned him into a Double Feature Creature in the process but maybe that was something he could learn to live with. Rebel seemed normal. Well, as normal as an ex-con could be.

He walked until he was about five feet away from Rebel. The strange tightness in his neck had disappeared. If anyone – thing – had been watching him, it was gone now.

Rebel stared at him. His face revealed nothing about his emotions except maybe a little irritation. Of course, he'd seen that look on Rebel's face before so he assumed it was a permanent fixture.

"Let's do this." With that announcement, Rebel spun around and stalked off, walking behind his truck and heading into the trees.

"Do what?" Brennan asked. His nature told him to stand firm. He wasn't some puppy to go chasing after Rebel. But Rebel was supposed to be his teacher in this new, effed-up world he was living in.

Years of being the one others followed rankled as he followed the path Rebel had taken.

Rebel wasn't moving too fast and Brennan was sure he was slowing his steps to allow Brennan a chance to catch him. He did and Rebel picked up his speed. Brennan kept pace. The last time he'd been in the woods he'd been shot, so comfortable wasn't first on his list.

He thought about asking where they were going but kept his mouth shut.

Maybe Rebel was taking him to some secret werewolf bathing pool where all his questions would be answered.

He chuckled. Rebel glanced over his shoulder but didn't slow his steps. And Brennan didn't feel like sharing. Rebel wasn't the kind of guy he wanted to bond with.

Still, he didn't understand what they were doing. They'd been barnstorming through the forest for a while now. Rebel hadn't said a word. And fuck, hadn't they been down this trail already? Of course, he didn't know. Rebel could be running him in a circle. Everything looked the same.

How was this going to help him be a better werewolf? Not that he wanted to be a better werewolf, or a werewolf at all for that matter, but he needed to keep the thing under control. Rebel was supposed to teach him that.

But if he was supposed to be gaining some sort of werewolf life lesson by stomping through the woods, he was missing the message.

Brennan stopped. He didn't have time for this.

"What the hell are we doing?" he demanded. Rebel pulled to a stop and looked back over his shoulder.

"We're walking," he said again.

"Yes. Why?"

"Because your wolf needs it."

"No," Brennan scoffed. "I need to be home in bed. I've got work tomorrow."

"Early to bed, early to rise and all that?" Rebel mocked. "You'll live."

Rebel moved farther down the path and Brennan considered turning around, but they'd been walking for over an hour down zigzagging trails. He didn't know where the fuck the cabin—and his car—was.

With a sigh, Brennan pushed the anger aside and just walked. If Rebel was doing this to piss off Brennan, he wasn't going to give him the satisfaction. He took a breath, hoping to smooth his irritation, and let his eyes scan the forest. The different shades of green caught the evening light. A weird peace settled in his chest.

His gaze tripped along the trail, returning to Rebel, the long strides, tight jeans hugging his butt. He had the strangest urge to reach out and grab that ass, to see how it felt in his hand.

The thought jolted him out of his mellow mood. *So not going there. Not staring at another guy's ass. Not doing it.* He let the panic turn to annoyance.

"So, do you think this is what Kalen's father meant when he said you're supposed to teach me how to be a werewolf?" Brennan called after Rebel. His words seemed to have no effect on Rebel's stride.

"Rike didn't give me any instructions. Just make sure you didn't die."

"That's comforting."

Rebel glanced over his shoulder. "You're my punishment."

"What?"

That stopped Rebel. He turned around. "Rike is punishing me for biting you. That's why I have to watch your ass through this first transition. After that, I'm gone."

"Fine by me." His heart gave a little flutter but he ignored it. He didn't want some tattooed ex-con to teach him anyway.

This time when Rebel started down the barely there path, he picked up the pace, forcing Brennan to work to keep up with him. Brennan wanted to stay quiet. He wasn't used to asking for anything but dammit, he needed answers.

"So Rike, Kalen said he's like the boss of this..." He wasn't really sure what to call it.

"Pack. He's your new Alpha."

"What's that mean exactly?"

Another look back from Rebel. "If he tells you to do something, you do it."

"What if I don't agree with it?" Brennan stopped. He wasn't becoming some sort of slave to a man he'd never met just because Rebel couldn't keep control of his teeth.

Rebel turned around.

"Your work boss ever tell you to do something you didn't like?"

"Yes."

"And you did it, right?"

"Mostly."

"It's the same thing." He shrugged. "Only if you don't do what Rike says? He'll rip your throat out."

No humor glittered in Rebel's stare. Not even a smile.

Damn, the man is serious.

"I don't follow anyone blindly. I'll have to meet him first."

"Yeah, well, let's give him a few days to calm down. He's pretty pissed right now."

"At who?"

"Me. Kalen. You."

"Me?"

The corner of Rebel's mouth kicked up in a smirk. "He seemed to indicate an honorable man would have asked permission before you got engaged to his daughter, so yeah, he's pissed at you."

Rebel fluttered his eyelashes at Brennan and turned and moved down the path.

Great. A pissed-off "Alpha wolf" – whatever that meant – and his future father-in-law. Not the best way to be introduced to the family. He rolled his shoulders back and took off, following Rebel.

Talking to Rebel hadn't helped so he settled back and walked, letting the sounds of the forest sink into his soul. The weird calm returned, his senses sparkling. The world changed. His skin tingled. The smell of the earth filled his head. Wind brushed his cheek.

A tree branch snapping grabbed his attention. He looked up. Rebel tossed the broken branch back into the underbrush and kept moving.

Brennan watched for a moment, his eyes locked on that back, the strong muscles visible through the t-shirt and the tight jeans, Rebel's ass high and tight. A picture filled his brain – Rebel bent over, Brennan's cock in his ass. His heart started to pound. *What the fuck?*

His vision shifted, making his head spin for a minute. Everything turned a strange black and white. The vibration in his senses became a burn, his skin hurting where his clothes touched. His gums throbbed. The cacophony of birds clashed in his brain.

"Rebel?"

Rebel heard the confusion in Brennan's voice and stopped. *Good. The wolf has come to visit.* He watched as Brennan froze, as if he was afraid to move. His eyes stretched at the corners and turned a burnt gold color. *God, the wolf was strong in Brennan, rising fast.*

He'd asked Rike what he could expect, how long before Brennan's wolf started making an appearance. Should have been a week or more. Not hours.

The wolf's presence vibrated in the air. The human and animal struggled as they learned to live with each other.

"Take a deep breath and focus on color," Rebel instructed.

Brennan blinked but the amber color didn't fade and the tension in his body didn't change.

"Fuck, how do I explain this? Think about..." He thought back to how he'd kept his wolf contained for fifteen years. "Red. Think red."

"Red? What the fuck...?"

"Don't fight me, asshole. Just think about red. Try to remember what red looks like."

"How?"

"Spaghetti sauce. Blood. Apples."

One of those triggered a connection for Brennan. His irises returned to the gray shadow color.

"Better?"

Brennan nodded. "What the hell happened?"

"That's your wolf wanting to come out."

"But why?"

Rebel shrugged. "The wolf reacts to your emotions. All sorts of things will bring it out...anger, fear, hunger." Or that's what triggered his wolf's appearance. "What were you thinking about before it happened?"

Brennan hesitated then shook his head. "I don't remember."

Rebel couldn't resist a half smile. "For a lawyer, you're a lousy liar." And now Rebel was curious. What had brought out Brennan's wolf? Something he didn't want to talk about. Maybe something to do with that hard-on that pressed against Brennan's fly. Rebel felt his own cock twitch. He'd been fighting his arousal since Brennan appeared on his porch but at least he understood the source.

"Well, that's probably enough for tonight," Rebel announced. He started back toward his cabin. He needed to dump Brennan and spend some time alone.

"What? We haven't done anything."

"Your wolf came to the surface and you calmed the animal down." He tried to keep the smug sound out of his voice but it was hard. He was pretty damn sure that Brennan wasn't often the student. "Remember that tomorrow when you get irritated and want to rip someone's throat out."

Brennan blushed.

"That already happen?" Rebel asked.

"Sort of."

"You might consider taking some time off. You're going to be volatile for the next few weeks."

"Weeks? I have a trial starting."

"Wow, hope you win."

He turned on his heel and started back toward the house.

"Why?" Brennan called after him. "What's going to happen if I don't win?"

Rebel shrugged. "I don't know," he said, doing his best to keep his voice low and cautious. "Could be dangerous, though. You lose and the wolf won't like it." He shook his head. "No, no, he won't like it at all."

A garbled grunt emitted from Brennan's throat. "What...?"

Rebel turned around. "Just be careful, huh? Can you imagine the headlines? Jury killed by rabid wolf. Judge's life hanging by a thread. You'd definitely make the front page."

Something in his voice must have caught Brennan's attention.

"You bastard."

Rebel released the laughter that had been clogging his chest. "You should have seen your face." He felt sort of bad for teasing the baby werewolf but then Brennan took a swing at him.

Rebel jumped back, easily dodging Brennan's fist. His hands came up, ready to block the next punch. Fuck he hadn't had a good fight in ages. Not that Brennan was much of an opponent. The wolf was still too young in him. Rebel shook his head and straightened. No, it wouldn't be fair to—

A truck hit him, slamming into chest, sending him to the ground. His shoulder drove into Rebel's gut, knocking the air out of his lungs. Fuck, for a nascent wolf, Brennan was strong. He didn't stay down. Brennan jumped up and danced back.

Rebel looked up. Brennan lifted his chin and started off down the trail. Long strides carried him away, the set of his shoulders radiating confidence and irritation. And an overall sense of being pissed off. *He's just going to have to get over that*, Rebel thought. And Rebel would be pleased to help.

He was up and on his feet, running toward Brennan. The other male was relying on his human faculties, because he didn't sense Rebel's approach. He went in low, jamming his shoulder into Brennan's hip.

They hit the ground. Brennan's shoulder crashed into the earth. Rebel hit a second later. For a moment they both lay breathless. A low growl started deep in Brennan's chest. He jabbed his elbow back, connecting with Rebel's gut. Another huff of air burst from Rebel's chest. Had to admire the guy. He didn't fight like a lawyer.

Rebel wrapped his arms around Brennan and rolled, tangling their bodies together. Brennan struggled, fighting to break the hold.

Brennan wasn't bad but Rebel had years of experience in dirty fighting. *Guess prison was good for something*. Plus, he knew a sure-fire way to distract Brennan's wolf.

Freeing one hand, he reached forward and cupped the thick erection pressed against the fly of Brennan's jeans. He squeezed and watched the sensation move through Brennan's body. Brennan tensed for a heartbeat then groaned, pushing his cock deeper into Rebel's palm. Rewarding the need, Rebel squeezed again, not too hard. Another delicious ripple ran through Brennan's body.

Rebel's teeth pushed on his gums and he fought the urge to sink his teeth into that strong shoulder, reinforce the bite that had turned Brennan, making the connection permanent. *No. Kalen. Think of Kalen*. He ground his teeth together and kept his head lifted and back, watching his hand on Brennan's dick. Focusing on the heat beneath his palm so that he didn't bite the other male or kiss him. He figured that would freak Brennan out worse than a bite.

But Rebel wasn't quite ready to let go. He knew Brennan was reacting to the bite. Brennan's wolf wanted its pack mate. Once the first moon had passed, he would go

back to being Mr. Uptight Lawyer. But that didn't mean Rebel couldn't enjoy it while it lasted.

He dipped his fingers between Brennan's legs and teased his balls.

"Fuck!" The shout rang through the forest. The smell of Brennan's hunger rose between them and Rebel pressed his hips forward, rubbing his cock against Brennan's thigh, needing just that little bit of friction.

"That's it, babe. Feel it."

Brennan froze, then his hips started to move again, rocking his dick into Rebel's hand. Fuck, it would be easy. Make Brennan come. Rub off against Brennan's leg. But he knew enough about straight guys to know that wouldn't help his situation.

Shoving aside the wolf and the animal's desire to reclaim the creature it had made, Rebel took a breath and eased his hand away, sliding up across Brennan's stomach, holding him. They lay there. Neither male moving.

Rike had warned him about this, warned him that whatever emotion he'd tapped during the bite would likely be transferred into Brennan. They'd seen it before. He hadn't felt the need to tell Rike that he'd been lusting after Kalen's fiancé before he'd bitten him.

It appeared the lust had transferred.

Brennan was going to be thrilled.

Rebel tracked the time, knowing it would only be moments before Brennan realized he was on the ground with Rebel's cock digging into his butt cheek. He kept up the soft strokes, letting his fingers enjoy the tight muscles of Brennan's abs for as long as they could before...

Tension zipped up the centerline of Brennan's body. He pulled forward like he was trying to escape. Rebel held him in place.

"Let me go."

"Stop fighting."

"Let me go."

"No. You need to get used to it."

"Get used to what?" Brennan asked, practically daring Rebel to bring up the fact that moments ago he'd had his hand on Brennan's dick. Rebel did more than bring it up. He reached down and grabbed Brennan's cock. This time there were no soft squeezes. He gripped, using the threat of more to hold the man in place.

Brennan hissed but beyond that didn't react. *Pretty brave when a guy's got a hand on your dick.*

The man is tough, Rebel thought. *He's going to make a freakin' good werewolf.*

"This. You're hard..."

"That has nothing—"

Rebel kept going like Brennan hadn't even spoken. "You're hard for me."

"Fuck you."

"Not unless you're a good boy," Rebel said, unable to resist. Brennan snarled and squirmed within his hold. Rebel tightened his arms but loosened the brutal hold on Brennan's cock. He didn't want to break the guy. "Lie still and listen." It took a few minutes for the words to penetrate but finally Brennan calmed.

"You're reacting to the bite. Your wolf recognizes me as the one who made him. Whether you like it or not, your wolf wants to be close to me." He gave Brennan's cock a squeeze. "Very close."

"Get your hand off my dick."

"You sure that's what you want, babe?"

"Yes," Brennan snarled.

Letting a chuckle free, he pulled his hand back and let Brennan roll away. He just dropped back onto the forest floor and stared up at the stars. The urge to close his eyes and sleep here tempted him but he had to talk to Brennan. Had to explain. He rolled over and got his knees under him.

"Fuck, I forgot how much that shit hurt." Rebel felt like he was creaking as he stood up.

Brennan followed Rebel to standing and pushed his shoulder back, rubbing the front of it with his fingertips. He stared at the ground. "Wish you'd remembered before you hit me," he grouched.

"Lesson one...don't run from a predator."

Chapter Ten

Brennan turned the car down the familiar gravel road. He'd driven this path more than a dozen times in the past three weeks. All leading up to tonight—his first full moon.

Though Brennan didn't know how prepared he was. All they'd done was walk. They'd talked a bit—you could only have so much silence—but mostly they'd walked back and forth across pack lands.

They'd done a few other things as well...things Brennan really didn't want to think about.

That strange attraction that had tormented him the first night hadn't gone away. It had grown...stronger each night. No matter how he tried to fight it, by the end of the evening, he'd ended up touching Rebel. Nothing sexual, exactly. Just needing to be near the other male. Rebel had assured him it was normal and would disappear after his first change. It was his body reacting to the werewolf bite. That it was because they were pack mates.

Brennan wasn't sure he believed it. Not when thoughts of licking Rebel, kissing him, *fucking him*, had invaded Brennan's dreams. Those didn't feel like familial sensations to him.

As a mental defense, he'd drawn Kalen into his fantasies, hoping to push Rebel out. Only Rebel didn't leave. He just slid over and made space for her. Now Brennan couldn't think about sex without both of them appearing. Fuck, he'd thought about it so often he almost knew how it felt to suck Rebel off while the other male had his face buried in Kalen's pussy.

He'd managed to keep it contained. Until two nights ago...

The almost full moon shone through the trees. Not that Brennan needed the light. His eyes adjusted to the darkness now automatically. But something about the light tonight. It was more than illumination. It was power, energy...and it flowed through him.

They followed their customary trail, Brennan taking the lead tonight. His muscles craved movement, needed to release some of the light inside him. Every nerve sparked as he walked, his strides becoming longer, faster. He heard Rebel keeping pace behind him, picking up speed until the walk turned to a jog to a full-out run. The wolf's energy seemed to latch on to the moon's power and carried him through the trees. A grace he'd never known before filled his limbs. He skipped over tree roots and rocks, dancing past obstacles.

He wasn't sure when the run turned in a chase. Rebel—still in human form but the wolf lurking near the surface—challenged him, charging down the path. Brennan laughed and put extra power into his steps, dodging Rebel, turning and sending them back toward the house.

Triumph surged through his chest, the need to win driving both man and wolf. His feet hit the soft grass of the tiny lawn surrounding the cabin. He was going to – A body hit his, sending him to the ground, his shoulder hitting the hard soil. He barely noticed the pain. He growled and snapped his teeth at the intruder.

Rebel flipped him over onto his back and threw himself on top, his ankles hooking around Brennan's, his hands locking around Brennan's wrists and holding them to the ground. He held his body up, barely an inch between them. Didn't matter. Brennan could feel the heat radiating in the thin space between their bodies.

Harsh breath rattled his lungs.

Bright red eyes stared back at him and the familiar red haze nudged at Brennan's mind. He recognized it, almost accepted it. It appeared whenever he fucked Kalen, when he was pissed. And when Rebel was near.

The energy between them shifted, a subtle change from aggression to sex. The wolf in his head howled its approval, wanting the connection.

Brennan couldn't tell who moved first. Rebel lowering down or Brennan arching up. Their hips met, erection against erection. Brennan groaned and pushed harder, grinding against Rebel. Rebel's lips twitched and he stared down. Fuck. Rebel was going to kiss him. He knew it. He could stop it. He could flip Rebel over. He had the strength. He couldn't move, didn't want to.

Rebel bent forward, open lips hovering over Brennan's.

Do it. The need to taste almost too much to resist, Brennan pushed up, slamming his mouth against Rebel's. The kiss started out hard and toothy, each male fighting for dominance. He concentrated on taking command of the kiss and wasn't prepared for a hard hot hand to cover his dick, squeezing. He groaned, opening his lips. Rebel's tongue slipped into his mouth. Fuck. The rage at losing control was muffled by Rebel's taste – spicy, earthy and male. He wanted more, wanted to surround himself in the smells and tastes of Rebel.

Sweet friction pressed against his cock, their hips falling into the right rhythm. Rebel grabbed his ass and held him close, pulling their bodies even closer together. Pressure, friction and heat combined, sending Brennan over the edge. He ripped his mouth from Rebel's and shouted. He came, his cock pulsing in his jeans.

"Fuck," Rebel whispered, bending down and placing a hot kiss on Brennan's shoulder. His hips continued to rock, striving for his climax.

Brennan wrapped his hand around Rebel's neck and pulled him up to another kiss. He drove his tongue into Rebel's mouth, absorbing that spicy flavor. He growled, almost smelling Rebel's need. He pulled back just enough.

"Come for me," he commanded. He sank his teeth into Rebel's lower lip. Rebel growled and ground his cock hard against Brennan. Time froze for one second. Rebel dropped his head forward, resting against Brennan's shoulder, and came, the scent of his cum filling the air.

Strength drained from their bodies and they collapsed, falling away from each other. Brennan let his mind spin. He'd come in his jeans. He hadn't done that since he was a teenager. Breath powered through his lungs, straining to keep up with his pounding heart. Energy rushed through his limbs. He rolled over and sat up. Rebel lay on the ground, his face resting in his elbow.

"Fuck, why does this keep happening?" Well not that specifically. That had been a first, but this weird attraction. He shook his head and looked at the man lying next to him, fighting the urge to reach for Rebel, strip off his clothes and lick him from head to toe. The image bounced around his brain, making his cock hard.

"I told you it's the bite."

"A werewolf bite turned me gay?" The question came out louder and harsher than he'd expected.

Rebel lifted his head and flipped his hair back away from his face. "No. It's sexual because of the way the bite was done." Brennan heard the words but was really focused on the fact that Rebel was fighting to catch his breath as well. He wasn't the only one involved. Fuck, he knew that Rebel had come too. Could smell it. Almost taste it. Wanted to taste it.

"Explain that," he said trying to keep up with the conversation.

"It takes energy as well as the bite to change someone."

"Energy?"

"Yeah, some kind of emotion. Anger, lust, fear. Whatever it is, it gets transferred with the bite."

Lust. So Rebel had been feeling lusty when he'd bitten Brennan?

Brennan felt his lips pull up in a half smile. "And you couldn't have chosen anger?"

Rebel turned those hot eyes on him, making the hard cock in his pants jump like he hadn't come moments before. "You had that tight ass pressed up against me." He shrugged but hunger ran through his voice. "Wasn't feeling angry at the time."

Even now Brennan felt the beginnings of a blush thinking about those words. Damn. He knew it was pure biology—a twisted, horror-show kind of biology but biology nonetheless. Didn't seem to matter. His body wanted. Wanted Rebel. Wanted Kalen. Wanted them both. He'd returned home that night and fucked her into the mattress.

Not that she'd minded. He could still hear her screams as she came, the sweet grip of her pussy holding him. He groaned.

"Brennan."

He flinched at the gentle call. Kalen stared at him with worried eyes.

"Are you okay?"

I'm about to turn into a wolf and I'm dreaming about fucking a guy. Nope. Not okay.

But he nodded.

She'd been quietly supportive through all this. *Except when she's screaming your name as you fuck her. Imagine how it will be when you and Rebel have her together. Rebel in her pussy, you fucking that round ass.*

He swallowed, hoping to break the band that squeezed his throat. The dream was so familiar it didn't surprise him. It just made him hard. What worried him was the certainty of his subconscious. Not if he and Rebel had her...but when.

Rebel appeared from behind the cabin and looked at them, his eyes quiet and serious. None of the annoying mockery that Brennan had come to expect.

Kalen sighed as if bracing herself for the night ahead.

"We should go," Kalen said, silently urging him out of the car. He popped the door open and took a breath of fresh air hoping to relax his dick. The car had been filled with Kalen scent and he couldn't be around her without getting hard.

The mile-long walk would help.

Or it might have if Kalen and Rebel hadn't led the way—Rebel's ass encased in tight, hug-your-backside jeans. Kalen wore a skirt. It reached just to her knees and swung back and forth with each step. Oh, yeah. Seconds. All it would take would be seconds for him to flip up that skirt, bend her over and—

Damn, he needed—

Kalen and Rebel stopped. Even from the back, Brennan could see they weren't happy. Tension radiated up their spines and they straightened in mirror images. Brennan looked around. Whatever they were seeing, he didn't get.

They were at the pack house. Rebel had brought him by several times over last three weeks. Usually a few cars littered the gravel lot. Tonight it was full. Every available space, some three or four deep, was filled.

Kalen's shoulders drooped.

"Damn."

"What?"

"Oh fuck." Rebel sighed and glared at Kalen. "Did you know?" he asked.

"No," she groused. "I wouldn't be here if I did."

That seemed to satisfy Rebel but confused the hell out of Brennan.

"Someone want to tell me what the problem is?" Because he *really* needed to add more stress to his evening.

Kalen sighed again. "It isn't just my father's pack tonight. There are too many cars."

"Which means...?"

"Which *means* Rike invited the other nearby packs to join in the run. Fuck." Rebel snapped out the words like this explained everything and Brennan was an idiot for not figuring it out.

Kalen's lips twisted into a grimace and she nodded.

"Neither one of you is helping." His tension sang through his voice. "Why is this a big deal?"

"It's not." Kalen wrapped her arms around her waist, her body language belying her words. She lifted her chin as if daring fate to challenge her on that statement. "It just means there are a lot more people here tonight."

He looked at Rebel, hoping for another explanation. Rebel kept his mouth shut but his eyes burned.

"Let's go," Kalen said, taking the lead. Strain rippled through those two words. She walked past the first line of cars and onto the soft grass of the lawn. As they got closer, voices rang through the air. They walked around to the back of the pack house. The entire rear wall was windows. Brennan glanced inside. The room was filled with bodies, people talking, laughing. Who knew there were that many werewolves in the area?

Kalen pushed her shoulders back as if bracing herself for attack and started forward. The crowd had expanded into the backyard. Several small groups, three and four people each, stood on the stone deck, drinks in hand.

Their approach garnered interested glances. Conversations stopped and eyes widened but no one called out a greeting to Kalen or Rebel.

Kalen led them across the lawn toward a set of open French doors.

"I'll go see where Dad is," she said, talking more to Rebel than Brennan. "Just hang here."

"Got it." Rebel grabbed his arm and pulled him back, a little away from the crowd, a little out of the light.

Brennan felt a strange energy vibrate out of Rebel. Whatever was going on tonight, Rebel didn't feel safe.

Kalen moved through the crowd, smiling at the familiar faces, nodding to the strangers. And there were a lot of them. It had been years since she'd been to a full-moon run. Not even when her brothers had been here for Mikhel's wedding. Her mother had asked her to attend, saying it would be a family night, but Kalen had declined. She didn't fit in with her family. She loved them and knew they loved her but she didn't fit in. Particularly during a full moon.

The only reason she was here tonight was to support Brennan.

Clinging to that thought, she worked her way toward the kitchen knowing that was where her mother would be.

Her father was much more social. He liked to be out among his pack. Pausing, she looked around the room. Her father stood in the corner talking to a wolf she didn't recognize. Byron stood just behind Rike's left shoulder.

Her father turned his head to say something to Byron. The other man leaned forward to hear better. Rike's lips almost brushed Byron's ear. Byron laughed. The connection between them was so intimate it made her heart ache. Since her parents had "come out" with their announcement that they were actually a threesome, she'd noticed differences. Noticed how close Byron stood to her father and her mother, the subtle touches.

It boggled her mind that her mother had a husband and a lover. It was inconceivable

Ha! Her subconscious mocked. *It's conceivable enough when you think about Brennan and Rebel.* She grimaced and tried to slap down the thought. True, she'd fantasized about fucking Rebel and Brennan, but that was different. It was just a dream. Women had them all the time—fantasies of two men making love to her. It was different than actually taking two lovers.

Byron glanced up and she waved. He smiled and looked behind her, clearly searching for Brennan. She tipped her head toward the back door. He nodded and bent down, whispering in Rike's ear. Her father raised his eyes and met her gaze. Though he smiled, she could tell he still wasn't pleased. He wasn't going to be pleased until he'd met and approved Brennan. Even then she was going to be in a bit of trouble for not telling the family about him *before* they'd gotten engaged.

She indicated she'd meet them in the kitchen but first she had to grab Brennan. Her father nodded and started to move, abandoning his conversation. The stern set of his jaw made Kalen wince. This was so not how she wanted Brennan and her dad to meet—*full moon and he's irritated.*

She whipped around and headed back the way she came, her path much more direct. Keeping her father waiting would only make it worse. She found Brennan and Rebel on the back deck talking to Bridget and Zach...which meant Mikhel was here.

Great. The whole freakin' family. Not that she didn't love her sister and brother but they were just added personalities to deal with.

Bridget wore the outfit of the night—t-shirt and shorts—and Kalen tried not to growl. She was standing a little too close to Brennan.

Zach smiled as Kalen approached and pulled her into a hug. She grunted at the tight squeeze but didn't respond.

"Bridget, I didn't know you were going to be here." She couldn't quite keep the challenge out of her voice.

Bridget laughed and shook her head. "I couldn't miss this. Welcoming a new wolf and he's your fiancé?" She gave a shrug with one shoulder, the movement casual and sophisticated at the same time. It also pulled up the hem of her t-shirt and bared another few inches of skin. All three males, whether they wanted to or not, turned and stared at the Bridget's tight abs. Kalen forced back a sigh. It was the full moon and Bridget didn't even seem to notice.

"Besides," Bridget continued, "I'm going to be going through this one of these days. I kind of want to see how Dad reacts."

Kalen tried not to smile. A smile might turn to laughter, which would turn to hysteria. She pushed her shoulders back and braced herself. She another obstacle to face. She spun and faced Zach.

"Where is he?" she asked without preamble.

Zach's eyes glittered with laughter. He'd been like another brother growing up. Now he was her brother's mate.

And Brennan thinks being a werewolf is weird. Wait until he meets the rest of the family.

"Where is he?" she asked again.

Zach winced. "I think he's lurking near Rike so he doesn't miss anything."

"Just perfect."

"What's wrong?" Brennan took her hand and turned her so she faced him.

"My brother is here."

"That's a problem?"

"No. Just another freakin' Alpha wolf thrown into the mix." She glared at Zach. "Like we need more testosterone. Where's Taylor?" Maybe Mik's wife would be able to control him.

"She's with your mom."

"That's something at least." She took a breath and looked Brennan. "You ready?"

"For?"

"Meeting the family."

He might have been comforted if Kalen hadn't sighed the words like she was being sent to the principal's office.

The muscles at the back of his neck twisted into knots.

He looked at Rebel then to Zach. Both men stared at him with a knowing male sympathy.

"Let's get this over with."

Zach turned and started inside.

"Wait—" Kalen said. "You're going?"

Zach chuckled. "Like I'm going to miss this?"

"It isn't a show." She punched his shoulder.

"I know." He sounded reprimanded, but the smile lingered in his eyes. "But look at it this way, between Taylor and me, we might be able to keep Mik out of it."

There was something about the way he said it, almost intimate. Zach had been introduced as Mikhel's "Beta", which Brennan understood as the second in command.

"Fine," she sighed.

Zach rubbed her arm, a friendly caress, but Brennan felt a growl start in his throat. Red covered his eyes. His gum line ached. His fingers turned into fists.

"Breathe, babe," Rebel murmured, his hand massaging Brennan's low back. The touch, the words, the endearment, caught the attention of his wolf, and the animal whined. It was all Brennan could do not to turn and curl into Rebel's embrace. "You're doing fine." Rebel's voice was low as they started behind Kalen, Bridget and Zach. "The wolf's just feeling the full moon."

Brennan nodded but was glad Rebel stayed close. His wolf just behaved better when Rebel or Kalen was near.

They walked through the crowd, following Kalen across the room and toward a swinging door that obviously led into the kitchen. Brennan stopped at the door and took a breath. His wolf caught his tension and paced inside his head like he was looking for a way out of his cage. It wasn't a comforting image.

"Going to stand here all night?" Rebel asked. His voice hummed with mockery.

"Fuck you," Brennan replied, a little surprised at how easily the curse came out of his mouth now.

"Maybe, but I don't bottom for just anyone." Rebel reached down and squeezed Brennan's ass.

A garbled gasp bound up Brennan's throat. In that moment of inattention, Rebel slapped the door open and shoved Brennan through.

His right foot tripped over his left and he stumbled across the linoleum, catching himself on the center island. He grabbed the wood-trimmed edge and pushed himself upright.

Eight faces stared at him, a mixture of humor, concern and irritation. He flipped his head around and glared at Rebel. The bastard blinked innocently and slid into a corner as if no one was going to notice the huge werewolf.

But based on the other males in the room...well, Rebel blended right in.

Brennan pulled himself up to his full height and called on every year of law school training he had – the worst professors, the questions designed to humiliate – and raised his chin, ready to face it all.

Two males stood to the right, tall, arms folded across their chests, matching grim looks on their faces. One was about his age, the other a little older. Kalen's father and her brother. Even though they were in human form, he sensed their wolves. Knew they were strong, powerful. Dangerous. The wolf that had taken up residence in Brennan's brain growled and Brennan had to fight the urge to bare his teeth.

"Dad." Kalen reached out and wrapped her fingers around Brennan's wrist. "This my fiancé, Brennan." She waved her other hand out toward the older male. "Brennan, this is my father, Rike."

* * * * *

Brennan wove through the crowd behind Rebel, his mind still reeling from meeting Kalen's dad. And mom. And their lover.

And her brother Mikhel, his wife and *their* lover.

What the hell?

No one else seemed to find this unusual. Of course, they'd all known about it *before* they'd walked into the kitchen. It had just been another surprise for him.

He was pretty freakin' done with surprises tonight. *Oh wait. I still have to turn into a werewolf for the first time.*

Numb from the stress, he just let his body lead.

People crowded the back lawn, mostly males with a few females sprinkled in, all in minimal states of dress, all getting ready for the change. Rike was somewhere up ahead. From the brief conversation in the kitchen, Brennan had learned that three packs were gathered tonight. They would all run separately but return to the pack house afterward for food and "whatever". He was pretty sure the "whatever" meant sex. Mikhel's small pack would start the run with Rike's but might take off by themselves.

Brennan had a plan of his own—stay close to Rebel and hope he survived. The wolf wasn't helping.

The animal seemed to recognize that its first taste of freedom was near. It bounced against Brennan's consciousness like it was trying to break through. Brennan held on to Rebel's guidance, restraining the animal until it was time. He put up a mental shield, locking the wolf out. He'd tried petting the wolf, calming the wolf, but the thing bounding around inside his head wasn't the type to retreat with a few kind words. Unless those words were from Kalen.

Or Rebel.

A brief "You okay?" from Rebel was enough to center himself. He nodded and focused on Rebel. His cock twitched inside the thin shorts he wore. But Brennan ignored it. He'd grown used to the sensation and he noticed other erections pressing against shorts and jeans. Everyone was feeling the power of the full moon.

Rebel walked forward, that tight ass looking fucking hot in his jeans. The idea should have shocked Brennan's human side but nothing could penetrate the lust and hunger. The wolf growled its approval. He could practically feel the animal licking its lips.

The world around him grew crisp and sharp. Not quite black and white but he could feel the shift beginning. Rebel spoke but Brennan couldn't process the words. The movement of his mouth, the hint of his tongue between his lips distracted Brennan to the point of blocking out all sound. He stared at Rebel's mouth, imagining their kiss, sinking his tongue between those hot lips.

The wolf barreling around in his head and the struggle to control the human panic took all his efforts. The sexual thoughts ran unfettered.

He licked his lips. The faint taste of Kalen's kiss lingered on his mouth. How would they taste combined together?

Rebel stood beside him, concern dampening the glow in his eyes.

"I'm losing you, man."

"No, I'm good." *Just thinking about kissing you.* He kept that little tidbit to himself. Not that Rebel would object—or he didn't think so—but he didn't need the temptation right now. He just wanted to get this done. A quick change, a run, and when he came back, he'd be himself again.

Well, himself with a wolf inside him but he wouldn't, *shouldn't* have the urge to wrap his lips around Rebel's cock and suck until his knees gave out. At least that's what Rebel had said, and Brennan believed him. He needed to believe him.

Rebel hesitated for a moment, obviously waiting for some sign that he was functional. Brennan pushed his shoulders back and lifted his chin, daring Rebel to ask him again if he was okay. He was fine. He would handle this. He was a freakin' District Attorney. He faced judges, criminals and the public on a daily basis. Surely he could handle turning into a wolf.

* * * * *

Kalen wandered to the window as the crowd spilled onto the back lawn. Very few females could actually change into wolves so the group was mostly male. The females who could change were prized as Lunas.

Kalen scanned the crowd and found Brennan amid the bodies. Rebel walked just in front of him. *Good. Rebel will keep him safe.*

A body moved up beside her. Without looking, Kalen assumed it was her mom and turned with a smile. The corners of her mouth bent downward when she saw the sleek blonde.

"Hi, Jezra." She didn't attempt to put any kindness in her greeting.

"Kiki, I was so surprised to see you here." Jezra widened her eyes as if to indicate her shock. "I haven't seen you at one of these in years."

Kalen nodded. "Well, it's a special night," she said, forcing the words through clenched teeth. Jezra had been the bane of Kalen's existence from the sixth grade through high school. When Kalen's wolf hadn't developed, she'd become the perfect target.

"Oh, so I heard. That's a yummy new wolf you've brought us." Jezra's eyes flashed red. She sank down onto one hip, drawing the perfect line of her perfect body – tall, thin, big breasts, straight and smooth hair. She belonged on the cover of a hot-rod magazine. The quintessential female werewolf. "I heard he was your fiancé."

"He is, yes."

"And it doesn't bother you to be here tonight?"

"Of course not. I'm here to support him."

Jezra shrugged and pushed her full lips into a pout.

"I'm just not sure I could watch *my lover* fuck another female."

"What?" Even knowing Jezra was baiting her, Kalen couldn't keep the snap out of her voice.

"Oh, you haven't been around enough to know. After his first run, a new wolf needs to fuck. He won't be able to stop himself. And I mean, *maybe* you can handle him. I just know that the last new werewolf we had went through three females before he

was satisfied." She closed her eyes and placed her hand on her lower stomach as if savoring the memory. "Hmm. I could barely walk for a week."

"Brennan isn't like that."

Jezra laughed. "All males are like that. I'm sure the rest of us will be happy to welcome him back after his first run." She blinked, false innocence clashing with a vicious laughter in the bright blue depths.

"Gee, Jez, isn't it time for you to go lift your tail?" Bridget's cool question saved Kalen from having to respond. Bridget sidled up beside her sister, placing her forearm on Kalen's shoulder, supporting and protecting Kalen in that one movement.

At times like these, Kalen recognized how powerful her sister was. Jez didn't flinch but she leaned back, as if her wolf instinctively wanted to retreat. The uncertainty in Jez's gaze didn't last long. She flipped her hair back and smirked at Bridget.

"Bridget can tell you all about how wild things get during the full moon. How you just can't control yourself. Isn't that right, Bridget?"

Kalen felt the tension zip through her sister's body and heard a low subsonic growl. Jezra chuckled and wiggled her fingers in farewell, her ass flipping back and forth as she strolled toward the back door.

"I hate that bitch," Bridget muttered.

"I'm with you on that. But what did she mean when...?"

Bridget shook her head. "Just a bad decision on my part during a full moon. Don't worry. Karma has repaid me in full." Bridget lifted her head and seemed to shake off the anger. "And I heard what she was saying. Don't worry. I'm sure Brennan will be fine. Rebel's with him."

"How is that going to help?" It wasn't as if Rebel would be able to stop Brennan from fucking random women if his wolf demanded it.

"Brennan's wolf is young. Rebel will be able to keep him in control even if Brennan can't. And don't listen to Jez. Not all men come back ready to mount anything that moves. Brennan loves you. He was willing to face down our fath—" Bridget gasped and rocked forward, grabbing the window to brace herself. A howl rippled through the air. Bridget's hand curled around the wood frame, tiny claws breaking through the tips of her fingers.

"Are you okay?"

Bridget nodded and took a breath as if she fought for control and won. "It's been a while since I changed." She forced a smile. "I'd better go. Don't worry about Brennan. Rebel will take good care of him."

Kalen nodded and watched as her sister went into the backyard. She joined their father's pack.

The males moved in close, practically sniffing her butt. Bridget quelled their attention with a cool look but they didn't retreat. They surrounded her like she was the prize. Kalen looked deeper into the crowd.

Brennan stood off to the right, close to Rebel. He seemed nervous, scanning the bodies surrounding him. He looked across the opening and stilled.

Kalen tracked his gaze. Jezra. She flashed him a hungry, confident smile.

Kalen's stomach roiled.

"Brennan's not like that. You don't have to worry. Brennan wouldn't do that to you."

"All males are like that."

Brennan followed Rebel into a corner of the yard, next to the line of trees. It was the only space available. Bodies surged around them and Brennan struggled to control his wolf. It was all he could do not to press up against Rebel, wanting the comfort of the familiar body.

Instead he stood beside him and stared at the crowd. Across the small opening, a blonde with a big chest and lips that looked like they could suck chrome off a bumper stared back at him. Her gaze locked on his, intent blazing across the narrow clearing. She wanted to fuck him. Intended to fuck him.

His breath caught in his throat. She was, quite simply, stunning. Tall, with stick-straight blonde hair, smooth, hanging to about chin length. A cropped tank top clung to large, firm breasts, the peaks of her nipples pressing against the fabric. She wore a short skirt that covered about a third of her thighs, leaving the rest of her long legs bare.

The wolf seemed mildly interested but the human couldn't quite look away.

She flashed him an arrogant smile, as if she sensed his reaction to her. Those bright blue eyes glittered with a predatory intensity. The little hairs at the back of his neck stood up. This was someone he had to watch.

Brennan lowered his voice. "Who's the blonde over there?"

Rebel looked up, scanning the crowd. It was pretty obvious who Brennan was asking about.

"Oh. That's Jezra. Daughter of one of the other Alphas."

Jezra seemed to sense that Brennan was talking about her. Her gaze flicked to Rebel and pure hatred roared from her eyes. Even at a distance, Brennan felt the backlash from her stare.

"Ouch. She doesn't much like you."

"Yeah, well, I killed her brother fifteen years ago." He looked at Brennan. "That might have something to do with it."

Before Brennan could ask "What the hell?" Rike moved into the center along with two other men. No one spoke, but bodies started to move, strip and change.

A wave of energy flowed through the crowd. Brennan felt it pass from Rebel into him. Bright and clear, as if the moonlight had invaded his body. Panic slammed into his chest.

"It's going to be okay," Rebel assured him. "Just let it happen." Even as he spoke, his face began to change. Brennan had seen this before but he'd been a little too stunned to pay attention. Bones cracked and skin stretched as Rebel's jaw punched forward.

The noises grabbed Brennan in the gut. Bile rose in his throat. Another bone broke, this one close to him. Pain lanced his jaw and he watched his nose elongate. He cried out. The muscles in his abdomen contracted and pulled him forward. The bones in his thighs burned and cracked, dragging him down. Sharp, stabbing pains crippled his arms but he fought through and reached forward to catch himself as he fell. The ground rushed to meet him and he couldn't do anything to stop it.

He rolled and landed on his shoulder, a minor ache compared to the tearing and rebuilding of each muscle.

He collapsed, silently begging for it to end. A cry he couldn't contain escaped from his lips. The sound came out as a whine. The foreign noise snapped his eyes open and he realized he was lying on the ground, the pain subsiding.

Something nudged his belly and he tipped his head down to look. A wolf stood beside him, punching his nose into Brennan's fur-covered abdomen. The realization that it had worked, that he was a wolf, hit him moments before the crisp, clear thoughts of his human mind faded. He felt his body move and rolled to his feet, his paws settling on the ground.

The wolf beside him nuzzled his neck.

His animal tensed, feeling invaded until he sniffed the air. He knew the scent. Rebel. He turned his head and returned the caress. Other wolves passed by him, none threatening but none so familiar. Rebel seemed to sense his unease and rubbed against him, fur teasing fur, the contact exciting and comforting at the same time.

The clearing emptied, the wolves breaking up into three different groups. The packs. He watched the bodies depart, not sure which way to go, how to even move.

Let's run.

He didn't know how he heard Rebel's voice, or more to the point how he understood it. It wasn't words. It was just a sense, a presence in his brain that translated the sensations and gave him words.

Glancing back at the house, he saw Kalen standing in the window, watching. He wanted to greet her in some way, let her know he was okay, but Rebel bumped him with his hip and took off, following the group that ran to the north.

Brennan hesitated, the human side coming alive to protest, but instinct was too strong. His pack called to him to run. He followed, the strange rhythmic steps awkward at first, growing stronger as he padded down the path, trailing Rebel.

The light from the full moon filtering through the trees provided enough illumination to see clearly, though Brennan knew part of it was the wolf's night vision. Rebel stayed with him even when they lost sight of the rest of the pack.

His muscles adapted to the new form and he ran faster. Rebel seemed to sense Brennan's growing confidence and sped up, leading him through the woods, chasing after their pack.

The physical change done, now he made the mental transition, letting the wolf lead.

The animal took over and Brennan went along for the ride. The world glittered with strange sensations, foreign tastes and smells, sights and touches that grabbed the animal's attention. But Rebel's presence stopped him from getting too distracted. The desire to be near the other wolf kept him moving.

They encountered another small group of wolves. Rebel moved out in front, bristling, baring his teeth. The newcomers seemed to consider the wisdom of approaching, but after a moment they lifted their tails and ran, leaving Rebel and Brennan alone.

A quiet relief settled in his chest. Something inside him knew that he was safe and strong with Rebel beside him.

Rebel picked up the pace. Brennan followed, losing himself in the sheer joy of the run.

New voices filled his head and he realized other wolves ran beside them, all heading the same direction.

Rebel didn't try to scare these away. He eased himself into the back of the pack. Brennan opened his senses to the other wolves.

It was amazing. The power of the pack enveloped him, urging him on. A small corner of his mind remained human, acknowledging the changes around him, but the rest was pure wolf, moving with the pack, becoming part of it. The other wolves welcomed him, playing, nipping, inviting him into their world. A community like he'd never expected carried him forward, pulling him deeper.

He ran, letting the pack consume him. He was part, a member. He belonged. For a moment, a heartbeat, he sank into the group, but something pulled him back, luring him away. The pack slowed, wolves searching the soil, looking for that special scent.

He lifted his head and inhaled the earthy perfume of the forest. Warmth and comfort filled him but that spice was missing.

He slipped to the edge of the pack and let his nose trail across the ground, searching for —

He raised his head and scanned the forest. A wolf stood alone, just away from the pack. *Rebel.*

The Alpha tipped his head back, a howl filling the air, penetrating deep into the flesh of every wolf. Brennan felt the pull, but a stronger need called him away. The pack rose as one and took off, turning left, deeper into pack territory. A corner of Brennan's mind told him the pack was running west but his lure, his attention tugged him east. The wolf's instincts were too strong for him to ignore and he followed, padding down the trail to the right, toward his pack mate.

Rebel waited. The bigger wolf sat, expression blank, but somehow Brennan felt the laughter from the other animal. Rebel pushed up onto all fours, tapping his nose against Brennan's as if he wanted to get the wolf's attention, then turned and headed off down the path. Brennan waited for a heartbeat but desire and need gripped the inside of his chest and pulled him forward, guiding him down the trail.

Howls and barks filled the night but the sounds faded as they distanced themselves from the others.

He lost track of how long they ran or even where they were. Just that he was with Rebel, the light, the power of the moon giving him energy. Joy bubbled up in his chest, the pure pleasure of running, using his muscles the way they were meant to be used.

Rebel ran beside him, dropping back, just enough to turn his head and nip at Brennan's hindquarters. The pain jerked Brennan to a stop. He spun around, growling and snapping at Rebel. Rebel danced out of the way and took off down a narrow rabbit trail.

The wolf rose in Brennan and he chased, needing to take down, to return the insult. Fire poured through his veins. The forest became familiar. He flew over the tree roots and the holes in the path, knowing every step. He'd been here each night, walked this trail.

The weak light surrounding the front porch of Rebel's cabin drew him forward. He slowed as his paws hit the gravel pad. The human scents—sweat, leather and oil—teased his awareness, reminding him of his first nature.

Familiar smells drew his nose to the ground. Male. Powerful. Rebel. The moon's light surged through him and he growled, wanting. Unable to resist the temptation, he tracked the scent around the back of the house.

A human waited. Only not. He cocked his head to the side and tried to make the image fit the soul.

The human, Rebel, walked forward, standing over him.

"Change," he commanded. Brennan's wolf rebelled, not wanting to lose control, but Rebel said again, "Change," and this time the wolf obeyed.

Chapter Eleven

Pain tore through his body as the shift began, the wolf retreating just enough to allow the human form to return but not leaving his mind completely. Muscles and bones stretched and contracted, pulling him upright, his jaw changing last. He put his hand to his face. It seemed normal but his teeth felt huge inside his mouth.

A low growl, familiar now, compelled him to look up. Rebel stood before him, human. Barely. His eyes glowed red. The heat from that stare penetrated Brennan's body. His cock, hard when he came out of the wolf form, throbbed.

Rebel moved fast, pushing Brennan's chest, sending him backward. His shoulders hit the wall of the house and his head snapped back.

He stared at Rebel. The moonlight was so bright it created shadows on his face, hiding his eyes, making the red glow even brighter.

Brennan tried to straighten but Rebel was there against him, caging him in place. Their bodies touched at random points, setting off sparks across his skin. Hard, harsh breaths bounced between them. Rebel bent his head and scraped his teeth across the tight muscles of Brennan's throat, a warning and a promise. Fire ripped through his skin, slamming into his groin and making his cock ache.

"Fuck!" he shouted.

"Yes," Rebel said.

Brennan didn't have time to process what Rebel meant. Rebel turned his head and covered Brennan's mouth with his own. Dangerous flavors exploded in his mouth, addicting him to the taste, drawing him deeper. Even the human protest was silenced, allowing Brennan to exult in the heat.

Rebel drew back just enough to meet Brennan's eyes. Intent glowed through the amber depths. Without a word spoken, Brennan knew what Rebel wanted. He pushed away from the wall, fighting total submission completely. Rebel shoved him back.

"Not done with you yet, puppy."

The low words locked his muscles in place. Rebel placed a kiss on Brennan's jaw and cheek, moving until his lips were against Brennan's ear. His fingers curled around Brennan's cock and he stoked one smooth line down the shaft. Brennan groaned and arched his hips forward, punching his cock into Rebel's grip.

"Oh yeah. Gonna fuck you. Hard. Make you feel me for a week." The promise should have sent him running. Instead a shiver ran up his spine, anticipation holding his muscles in place. His wolf snarled, wanting more, wanting to be beneath the other powerful wolf.

Fire lanced his throat as Rebel bit him, not breaking the skin but dragging those sharp teeth across his flesh. The pain was enough to help him to focus. He could leave. He could push Rebel away but he didn't. He didn't know if it was moon lust or just regular need, but his body demanded that he stay.

"Very good, puppy." Rebel whispered his approval before leaving another sharp nip on Brennan's ear. The bright jolt sent a shock through his body, making his cock impossibly harder.

A wicked grin spread across Rebel's lips a second before he dropped to his knees. Moonlight glinted off his dark hair as he leaned forward and lapped at the shallow ridges of Brennan's abs. Brennan fought to breathe. Every nerve tingled even as his mind struggled to process what was happening.

Rebel nipped his skin, leaving a bright mark on his abs. Pain flashed through his skin but heat followed—the slow lick of Rebel's tongue. Rebel looked up. The red glow was tempered by laughter, almost enough to make Brennan pull away, but Rebel wrapped his hand around the base of Brennan's cock and stroked. It was like fire streaking up his dick. He bit down on a scream and fought not to come. *From one touch? What the fuck?*

"Welcome to the full moon, babe."

Brennan didn't have a chance to respond. Rebel put the tip of Brennan's cock to his lips and sucked him down. Wet heat enveloped his dick, Rebel taking him deep, letting the head press against the back of his throat. Brennan slammed his hands into the boards behind him. Fuck, what was happening to him?

Rebel tightened his lips and slowly pulled back. Red covered Brennan's brain but somehow he could see clearly, could watch as Rebel sucked in his cock, the visual almost as hot as the mouth wrapped around his dick.

Rebel pushed forward and closed his eyes. Fuck, he looked like he was in heaven. Rebel wanted this. He worked Brennan's cock, taking him deeper each time, his head bobbing as he stroked the shaft faster.

Brennan grabbed the wall behind him and fought the urge to thrust. Fuck it was good. Heat enveloped his cock as Rebel took him almost to the root.

The round head tapped the back of Rebel's mouth. Rebel hesitated just a moment then pressed forward, sending Brennan's cock into his throat.

He roared into the night. Pressure built, the tight squeeze making his eyes pop out. His hips rocked, his cock surging forward. Rebel's hands grabbed his hips and held him in place, pushing Brennan's ass against the wall as he pulled back.

There was no more teasing. Rebel was clearly fucking Brennan with his mouth. He moved, faster and faster, sucking each time he pulled back, the pressure wrapping around Brennan's balls.

"Fuck!" he shouted. Rebel didn't stop. If anything, Brennan's cry made him go harder.

Brennan held on. The expert mouth worked his cock. Sparks flared in his brain, dragging all thoughts out of his head. He pumped forward, easing his cock farther into Rebel's mouth.

There was no way to stop it. He pulled one hand away from the wall and grabbed the back of Rebel's head, holding him in place so he could fuck that mouth. The shift in power was subtle but his wolf howled. Shallow strokes, tapping the back of Rebel's throat, urging him to take more. He did. His lips tightened, sucking harder as he drew back. The pressure was too much.

Brennan tipped his head back and came. His shout rang through the trees and echoed back to him as he spilled his cum into Rebel's mouth. Rebel took it all, swallowing and sucking, drawing out every last bit of his orgasm.

Brennan sagged against the wall, his knees weak but his cock still hard. The moon's energy powered through his veins.

Rebel stood up slammed his mouth on Brennan's. Brennan met him, opening his lips, needing the connection. The taste of his own cum mixed with Rebel's unique flavor made him groan. He lashed his tongue around Rebel's and sucked, drawing their combined tastes into his mouth, feeling them blend in his soul. He groaned. The taste made him want more. The human portion of his mind shut down. Pure animal instinct filled his being.

The wolf recognized Rebel's power.

Rebel pulled back, putting inches between them. He barely looked human. His teeth were extended. His eyes glowed. He didn't speak. He grabbed Brennan's shoulder and flipped him, turning him to face the wall. Brennan's hands reflexively reached out to catch himself. The wolf growled at the rough treatment but the noise was silenced almost instantly as Rebel covered him.

The thick line of Rebel's cock slid along Brennan's ass. The sensation reached deep inside him, grabbing the human, pulling him up, almost enough to make him fling Rebel aside.

But the wolf, so hungry, needed its mate, needed to be fucked. The animal rose up and subdued the human side.

Rebel's teeth connected with his shoulder in the same place of the original bite. The sensitive skin burned as Rebel's jaw clamped down, holding him in place.

Brennan felt himself tilt his head, giving Rebel access, sinking deeper into the sensation, losing himself in the wolf's desires.

Rebel's fingernails bit into his skin—pain and pleasure—holding him as he rocked his dick against Brennan's ass. Brennan twisted—not sure if he was trying to get away or get closer.

"Be still." The command filtered through the silent air, followed by a swift smack to his ass. He snapped his head to the right and growled, the sound coming from the wolf. "Oh, babe, did that hurt?" The laughter in Rebel's voice was countered by the slow

brush of hot fingers along his ass, his hips, dipping between his legs and teasing his balls. The wolf reacted like it was being petted and melted, the defiance leaving him.

Brennan bent his head down, his forehead touching the wall, and pressed his ass back, completely baring himself. Fuck, offering himself. He spread his legs. The movements seemed so foreign but he couldn't stop them.

He needed to feel Rebel on top of him, inside him.

The warm hands continued to touch, drawing closer, sliding down the crevice of his ass. Unable to stop, his hips pressed back, pushing into the caress.

"Oh fuck, babe, that's it."

A cool, slick finger circled his tight hole and dipped inside. The action was both gentle and deliberate. Vaguely he wondered where Rebel had gotten the lube but the finger in his ass pulled his thoughts back to the present. Brennan opened his eyes and stared at the wall, his mind racing, the truth breaking through.

He was going to let Rebel fuck him. Wanted Rebel to fuck him.

Pressure built in his ass. His first instinct was to fight it but a harsh, heavy snarl snapped at his ears. He took a breath and tried to relax, to let Rebel push another finger into him. *Mate. My mate.* The words appeared unannounced in his brain. His mate needed to fuck him, needed to feel the heat inside him. He could take it.

Rebel seemed to sense the surrender. He eased a second finger inside, pressing deep, the slow gentle movements giving way to a firmer touch. He fucked him with two fingers, the pressure easing as his body adapted.

Rebel's fingers slipped away. Brennan gripped the wall, bracing himself for what was coming. He took a breath then felt it. The thick head of Rebel's cock tapped his hole, a warning, a tease, and then he eased forward, his cock head pushing in.

Burning, pain. He gripped the wall in front of him. A vague corner of his mind recognized that his fingers were claws, digging into the wood siding. He held on, letting Rebel slowly fill his ass.

"Fuck you're tight." The words were barely audible, low and rumbly. The sexual sound made Brennan forget the pain for a moment, enough for Rebel to go a little deeper, still not all the way.

The slick cock inside him retreated. Ripples tore up his spine and Brennan cried out, his back arching, the sweet dick easing from inside him.

"Feel good, babe?" Rebel asked. The laughter penetrated despite the filter of lust and need. Brennan didn't get a chance to respond. Rebel pushed back in, the burn a little less this time, the need a little more. He dug his front paws—hands, he had hands now—into the wall and braced himself, grunting as he pushed back to meet Rebel's thrust.

Rebel groaned and his groin pressed against Brennan's ass.

"Oh fuck. Go easy," Rebel commanded. "Don't want to hurt you." Brennan heard the change in Rebel's tone. The teasing disappeared, replaced by need and lust. And

maybe just a hint of concern. "Brennan?" With just his name, Rebel asked, seeking permission to fuck harder, to take him.

He looked over his shoulder. Rebel looked wild in the moonlight, long black hair hanging down around his shoulders, yellow eyes glowing. Not the weird red light but bright and hungry. His broad chest strained as he gripped Brennan's hips, holding his dick inside him.

"Do it," Brennan commanded. "Fuck me."

Rebel withdrew, almost pulling his cock from inside Brennan's ass. Shivers ran up his spine. His fingers splayed out on the wall, his shoulders tensing, ready to take the hard pound of Rebel's cock.

But when he pushed back in, it was again slow and steady. Brennan snarled, the sound bouncing off the cabin. Rebel chuckled. "You are a puppy. Patience, babe. Patience." While he talked, he fucked, pulling back and sinking in, his hips tilting a little, easing his cock forward. The burning faded, leaving behind wicked pleasure with each stroke.

He closed his eyes and lost himself in the slow, rhythmic fucking. He didn't know how long they fucked, the movements slow and easy, but his mind recognized a subtle change, the need for more.

Rebel arched his hips and thrust forward. The shaft hit a point deep inside Brennan and sent a lightning strike up his spine.

He growled and rocked back, sending Rebel a little deeper, a little harder.

"Oh fuck, more."

Rebel growled and pushed forward, slamming into Brennan's ass.

The slow, easy fuck was gone. This was hard and deep and never going to end.

Rebel growled as he fucked, his cock sliding in and out, the steady, solid pulses sending sparks through Brennan's limbs. Fire streaked across his shoulder, Rebel's teeth scoring his skin. Brennan tipped his head back and shouted. The surface pain burned, creating a delicious ache in his cock, but he wanted more, wanted to feel the hard bite. Feel Rebel's teeth sink into him.

Bite me. His mouth couldn't form the words but he screamed them inside his head.

"I can't, babe," Rebel answered. "Not tonight. Just take this." He drove forward. "Feel this."

And he did. Every inch plowing into his ass, the steady taps to his gland sending shocks up his spine. His dick leaked, aching.

"Please." He wasn't sure what he was begging for—Rebel's bite, a harder fuck or...Rebel's fingers wrapped around his cock.

Yes! The pounding in his ass didn't slow but the fist around his dick tightened. He thrust back, matching Rebel's rhythm. He was caught, between the need to come and wanting the solid thrusts to continue.

He shoved his cock into Rebel's fist, letting the pressure the pleasure swell inside him. Finally it became too much. He came, shooting his cum into Rebel's hand. Rebel roared and rocked into him one more time. The fingers on his hip tightened almost painfully as Rebel came inside him.

* * * * *

Neither moved. They stood, hearts pounded, lungs straining.

Then he felt it. The tension—human reality—invaded Brennan's body.

Rebel closed his eyes, knowing it was done, and eased back, pulling his still hard cock from Brennan's ass. He hesitated then pulled away, giving Brennan the space he needed.

He took it, turning away, his eyes trained on the ground. He didn't look at Rebel.

"Is there some place I could rinse off?" Brennan asked.

Rebel tipped his head to the makeshift shower he'd jerry-rigged. The cabin had a tub but not a shower so Rebel hadn't felt the need to install one inside. He'd split the piping and drawn it outside.

Brennan went around the corner of the house. Moments later the splash of water hitting the rocks almost drowned out the gasp as Brennan stepped under the spray.

"Oh yeah. I didn't bring the hot water out here," Rebel called. He knew a vicious little smile probably sat on his lips but what was he supposed to feel? He'd just fucked the guy, stroked him off and he walked away without a word. A weird pain surrounded his heart and Rebel snarled. "I'm turning into a girl, that's all there is to it."

He rolled his shoulders, making sure the muscles were loose...and giving Brennan some time alone. Really, how long could a cold shower take? Deciding he'd given Brennan long enough, he walked around the corner.

Brennan's head was tipped back, water pelting his chest, pouring down his abs and dripping off his cock. His hard cock. Rebel groaned and almost closed his eyes but hell, it was his house and how many chances was he going to get to see this again?

Brennan looked over, his eyes flashing with hunger and anger. It was a fucking sexy blend and it was all Rebel could do not to pounce. Again.

"A little privacy?"

"It's my shower and really, I've see it all." Then just to be an ass because he was in that sort of mood, he strolled forward. "Licked it all, sucked it all, fucked it all."

"Asshole." Brennan spun around and let the water hit his back. The last traces of Rebel's cum flowed down the drain and he tried not to regret that. He liked the idea of his scent on his mate.

He pulled up short at the word. *No. Not mate. Pack. Lover. Fuck buddy.* Any of those would work but not mate. He wasn't going to let his wolf pick a mate who was already taken and straight.

The shower was probably a good idea. It would be best if they didn't return to the pack house with the scent of each other's cum on them. It would still be obvious they'd been close—their scents were too embedded to be washed away with one splash of water—but no need to advertise.

Brennan reached for the faucet. Rebel stopped him. He silently nodded Brennan out of the way and stepped under the chilly spray. Most of the time he didn't mind it, but tonight the heat in his veins was thick and every drop felt like an ice cube flaying his skin.

Unfortunately, like Brennan's, his cock didn't go soft, but then he hadn't expected it to. This was the first full moon in fifteen years he'd been allowed to make the change. His body swelled with hunger and power. The moon's energy flooded his body and settled into his cock. He looked at Brennan and felt his teeth extend. Fuck, the wolf wasn't done with him yet.

* * * * *

Kalen waited as long as she could, until the muscles in her neck were bound into tight knots. She couldn't settle. Taylor and Rebecca were in the kitchen with Kalen's mother but she hadn't been able to sit and visit. Her body felt strange, wired, like she'd downed two twenty-ounce lattes. It was the stress. Brennan turning into a wolf for the first time and becoming a part of the pack. Her stomach did slow, uncomfortable roll at the thought. He was becoming one of them.

Jezra's words circled through her head. She knew the bitch was trying to fuck with her head but stories she'd heard growing up—of orgies and day-long fucks—replayed in her brain.

She looked over at the other females laughing, talking, luxuriating in the power of the full moon. They all wore skimpy clothes, loose tops that clung to their breasts, highlighting the tight peaks of their nipples.

They were aroused, waiting for the males to return. Waiting for the fucking to begin.

I wonder which one he'll pick.

Breath caught in her throat and Kalen spun on her heel.

She couldn't do it, couldn't take it. Couldn't be here to watch Brennan and Rebel return. If she wasn't here, she could pretend it didn't happen.

She stalked toward the kitchen. Taylor, Mik's mate, and Rebecca, the other female in his pack, sat at the table nibbling on cold deli meats.

"Mom, I'm going to head out."

Her mom's head popped up from the tray of sizzling sausages.

"Are they back already?" A spark flashed in her mother's eyes...hunger for her lovers. Kalen felt her cheeks turn red. She accepted, mostly, that her mother and father had a male lover but wasn't quite ready to see that scenario in action.

"Uh, no. Not yet. But I think I'm just going to go." Her mother would understand. She was the one who always seemed to understand that Kalen didn't fit in.

"What about Brennan?"

"Rebel's here. He'll be fine. I just, uh..." *Don't want to be here to watch him fuck another woman.* "It's late and, uhm, I've got...stuff going on tomorrow." She never was much of a liar, not to her mom, anyway.

That knowing look stared back at her.

"I like your young man," she said.

"Thanks, so do I."

"He'll make a nice addition to the pack," she added.

That's what I'm afraid of.

Kalen blinked, feeling the corners of her eyes burning.

"Well, I'm going to walk back to the cabin."

"You sure you don't want to stay?" A hint of teasing rippled beneath her mother's question. "The boys come back and they need a...release." Taylor and Rebecca nodded their agreement.

Kalen rolled her eyes and couldn't stop her grin. "So not something I need to know about my parents."

"I'm just saying..."

Kalen waved her hand in front of her eyes, hoping to erase any possible images of her parents—and Byron—having sex. Her mother's laughter sparkled across the room but Kalen avoided meeting her mother's gaze. She did not want to see lust in her mother's stare.

"Anyway, I'm going to head home. I'm sure Rebel will give him a ride."

Not wanting her mother to come up with any maternal guilt that might induce her to stay, Kalen backed out of the kitchen and headed for the side door. She stepped outside and took a long deep breath, letting the calming air flow through her body. It was too early for the males to return and the females were inside. That left Kalen alone.

She wasn't a "female" in the werewolf version of the term. She was a human. Female in the technical sense but still human.

The lights of the pack house marked the trail for a few feet deep but then darkness settled.

Kalen paused and let her eyes adjust. She didn't have the wolf vision but the full moon provided enough light for her to find her way. The path was familiar. She'd walked it hundreds of times in her youth. Back before she understood that the wolf hadn't found a home inside her.

She stared down at the ground, gathering herself and noting the tree roots sticking out. It might not be comfortable but she would make it back to the hunting cabin.

She headed deeper into the forest. The moon's rays shone bright but the trees filtered the light, giving her a weak path to follow.

A howl echoed in the distance, somewhere off to her left. The sound rippled through her core and settled in her memory. As a teen she'd heard the noises, the growls and howls of the wolves. The call didn't reverberate inside her. She heard it, but her soul didn't respond, except for a quiet human fear.

The tension in her shoulders spread down her back and settled in her core. The muscles clenched, squeezing and making it difficult to breathe.

She shook off the sensation. Or tried to shake it off. She wasn't actually afraid of any of the wolves. She was the daughter of the Alpha. If anything happened to her, her father would eviscerate the wolf who did it. All the wolves knew, even those in the visiting packs, that she was protected. They wouldn't actually harm her.

But that didn't stop her human instincts from reacting.

Despite the low light, she started walking faster, wanting to reach the safety of the car. She kept her eyes on the ground, focused on the trail, on putting one foot in front of the other.

A noise whispered just off to her right. She stopped and looked in the direction of the sound, waiting for the animal to appear. A running wolf would likely lope past, acknowledging her presence but showing no real interest before rejoining the other wolves.

Nothing came out of the dense stand of trees. She waited for a moment, giving the wolf time to recognize her scent and catalog it. Still nothing.

Maybe it was a rabbit.

She smiled and shook her head. She could only imagine a rabbit's terror on a night like this, with sixty-plus wolves appearing in a relatively quiet forest area.

Deciding it had to be a rabbit, she continued down the trail. But the sense of something watching, following didn't go away. The movement was silent, so silent she couldn't prove anything was there, but the hairs on the back of her neck stood up and her skin tingled. Something watched from the forest.

She forced air into tight lungs and kept walking. Maybe it was one of the young wolves practicing its hunting skills.

Then a sound came from her left. This one more distinct, more deliberate. A growl. A warning.

A shiver tripped down her spine. She refused to let her feet stop. Splitting her focus between not stumbling and the noises, she told herself she was being silly. No wolf in the area would harm her.

Another snarl echoed from her left, the sound drawing a response from the wolf on her right. They were working together.

She knew better than to run from a predator but no way she could stop her feet from moving faster. She was more than halfway to the hunting cabin. Breath fighting

her lungs, she listened and walked, picking up speed. Roots grabbed at her ankles, tipping her forward. She stumbled but stayed on her feet.

Stop! Calm down. Breathe.

The internal instructions did little to slow her heart. She dragged her feet to a stop and squared her shoulders. Her chin rose and she scanned the woods, silently telling the wolves she wasn't afraid. *Liar*. She gripped her purse and dug into her pocket for her keys, clutching them in her fist, and started forward. Every step brought her closer to safety but the wolves weren't done with her. Her momentary display of courage only seemed to piss them off. Growls and snarls rang through the night air, herding her down the path.

Her legs connected with the panic and the urge to run overwhelmed her. She glanced back. Deep gray flashed out of the corner of her vision.

The instinctive fear tore through her chest. These wolves weren't playing. They were hunting. Her.

Chapter Twelve

Rebel strolled away from the shower. He flipped his wet hair back and tried to ignore the wolf's hunger. But that only allowed the other voice in his head to begin screaming "What the fuck did you do?"

Fucked Brennan, he answered the voice that attempted to serve as his conscience. *Hard and deep*. The edge of his mouth pulled up in a smile. Brennan was going to feel him for days.

He closed his eyes, remembering the sensation of being buried in that tight ass. He could have been gentler, but by the end it was impossible – Brennan throwing his ass back against him, the low groans each time Rebel nailed his gland. Rebel hadn't been able to keep control, to stop. He'd fucked a few guys in prison – other prisoners and one guard – but this was the first time since he'd been out. The first time he'd let the wolf hover near the surface while he'd fucked. And damn. He reached down and curled his hand around his still-hard cock. It had been sweet. Tight and strong.

Brennan was probably freaking out, but what was Rebel supposed to say? *Sorry, man, but you've got a sweet ass and I couldn't resist. It's the wolf, it's the full moon. Things get wild*. He'd tried to tell Brennan. He probably hadn't expected them to get *this* wild, but fuck, after three weeks of rubbing up against each other, touching, fuck, even kissing, his wolf wasn't going to let the chance go.

He'd blame it on the moon. That would work. He didn't *have* to tell Brennan that given a flicker of a chance Rebel would do it again. And again. He tipped his head back. Brennan's cock had been tasty, long and just thick enough.

His cock twitched. From the moment he'd put his lips around Brennan's dick, he'd been hard. And it was going to take something more than his hand to make it go away. He sighed. Maybe there was someone back at the pack house who might be interested. Not that most of them swung the same way he did, but there had to be someone, some guy moon-drunk enough that he'd let Rebel suck him, maybe fuck him.

It wouldn't be as sweet but it would take the edge off.

He inhaled long and deep, needing to calm his mind before he made the change.

And you should probably wait for Brennan, the snotty voice in his head pointed out.

Damn. He couldn't leave Brennan here to fend for himself. He'd only made the change once, and the second time was often the hardest, when the wolf's compulsion didn't take over and the human mind actually had to relax enough to let the animal through.

Waiting for Brennan meant facing Brennan.

Another sigh that almost turned into a whimper. Fuck he hated this shit. One of the many reasons why he didn't often fuck women—besides the fact that he loved having a dick in his mouth—was he didn't like the emotional, questioning crap after the sex. They'd fucked. That was it.

Or it should have been, but he'd seen the wild look in Brennan's eyes.

Well, what did you expect? You fucked a straight guy. Worse, you fucked Kalen's fiancé. How's he going to explain that one to her? And he would, Rebel knew. Brennan was too much of a choirboy not to confess.

Fuck, fuck, fuck. Prison was easier than this shit.

He opened his eyes and took another deep breath, ready to call out to Brennan, get his ass moving. He'd figure out something to say, adding in a subtle suggestion to not say anything to Ka—

A foreign scent flooded the space around him, one that didn't belong.

He sniffed the air, welcoming the wolf into his senses. The animal picked up the scent... Kalen. He'd been thinking about her and she appeared.

But there was something wrong with the smell. It was strong but tangy. Like she was frightened.

His body moved with the wolf's instinct, loping around the building. The smell grew stronger, caught on the wind. Not frightened. Terrified.

The wolf came alive inside him and burst through, his body making the change as he ran. He fell to four legs and tore across the driveway, rage blinding his vision, his only thought to protect Kalen.

The scent built, growing as he plunged deeper into the forest.

A human raced toward him. The wolf's instincts took over and he stopped, digging his paws into the soil, bracing his back and baring his teeth, warning anyone who came near.

She skidded to a halt, her scream crushed to a yelp. The familiar feminine perfume was almost masked by the scent of fear but Rebel's memories reached out and grabbed what he needed.

Kalen stared down at him, panting, her eyes wide.

A gray wolf filled the path behind Kalen. The animal was smaller, female, but powerful. Without seeing them, he knew there were others nearby. He crept forward. Kalen froze as he drew near. Fear dripped off her like sweat. The scent made his nose burn and spiked the rage in his gut. He stepped past her, putting his body between her and the wolf on the path.

Kalen's heartbeat sped up but she came closer, as if she recognized him or at least recognized that he was trying to protect her.

He bared his teeth and sent out a low growl, warning the other wolf that he wouldn't back down. Kalen belonged to him.

The wolf at the far end of the trail stopped but didn't retreat. The female tipped her head to the side and stared. He released another growl. She stared at him and fuck, if she'd been human she would have been smirking. Moments later she flipped around and padded off down the trail. The movement hummed with the arrogance of an Alpha wolf. As if to say "Fine, you can have her, I didn't want her that badly anyway".

Rebel held himself still, waiting until the female and her minions had truly departed.

He sniffed the air. The foreign smells were gone and the danger that had teased his senses disappeared.

But that still left the fury. Who the hell would be chasing Kalen?

A soft sob broke behind him and Rebel spun around.

The wolf in his brain retreated, allowing Rebel to return. Pain ripped through his abs, tearing through his muscles as the change came over him, drawing him upright, pulling his body into human form.

"Rebel?" Kalen's gasp completed his transformation, hiding the wolf in the back of his brain. Never gone but he could function, give comfort. He wrapped his arms around her and pulled her against him.

"I've got you, honey."

She nodded but didn't speak. She gripped his back, holding him, her cheek pressed against his chest. Her breath fought with her lungs. She didn't appear hurt but they'd scared the shit out of her.

"Who was it?" Rebel asked, his voice quiet. She shook her head in response. The movement sent her hair streaming over his arm, teasing his sensitized skin. Her breath washed across his nipple. He closed his eyes and fought the urge to whimper. His cock was so hard it almost hurt—hard from the moon, from fucking Brennan and from having Kalen in his arms—but she was terrified.

He didn't know how long they stood there. His body was too busy tracking sensation to notice the passage of time. It made no sense. He'd fucked a few women but mostly it had been guys. That was his preference, but something about Kalen...

She squirmed in his embrace and he forced his muscles to relax, to release her. Only she just moved in closer, somehow finding a way to conform her body to his, to snug his cock up against her stomach.

"Come on, honey. Let's get you to the house."

She looked up and blinked, staring at him with wide eyes that didn't really see him.

"To the cabin." She still didn't move, and while he could easily pick her up, that wasn't a good idea. The urge to carry her to the nearest flat surface and fuck her senseless might take over. "Brennan's there. He'll want to see you."

Her mind cleared at the sound of Brennan's name. Brennan was near. Brennan and Rebel. The two names swirled through her brain and instantly calmed the panic. They would protect her.

"Are you okay?" Rebel asked. She nodded and tried to smile. The strange twitching in her nerves seemed to have faded. Or changed. *Being pressed up against a beautiful hard male chest will do that to you.* Her pussy clenched and heat rushed down between her legs.

"Kalen?"

"What?" She shook her head. "I'm fine," she said, trying to remember why Rebel was asking. *Oh, right. Wolves chasing me. Rebel finding me. Holding me.*

"Let's go." He tapped his palm on her butt to get her moving. Reluctant to lose the warmth and comfort of his body, she eased back. She knew he was naked. She'd felt all that warmth and muscle but it was different when seeing it. Her eyes dropped to the—wow, long and thick—erection, and damn if she could make herself look away. She swallowed. She'd seen Rebel naked before. By accident when they were in high school, but he'd changed a lot since high school and nothing would have prepared her for full-on naked, aroused Rebel.

The tight muscles of his stomach dipped down into a smooth line, curving toward his groin. He was shaved, naked around his cock. The sight made her mouth water. Knowing how sensitive she was after a waxing, she wanted taste him, wanted to run her tongue along the smooth skin at the base of his shaft.

"Uh—"

"We should go."

The cool tone caught her attention. *What did you expect? You're staring at his cock.* She gulped and forced her eyes to meet his. Instead of laughter or mocking, his amber stare glittered with heat, hunger. For her. The very core of her body responded. Her nipples tightened and the ache in her pussy swelled.

A weird red fog tinged the corners of her vision. She took a deep breath and tried to clear her eyes. The long inhale gathered the most delicious scents. Her mind couldn't quite catalogue them but she wanted more. She leaned closer to Rebel and sniffed. She giggled. *How very wolflike.*

"You okay, honey?"

She nodded, feeling a little drunk on the lovely smells. The scent captivated her. It reminded her of Brennan but not. Like Rebel but more. A fascinating combination that teased her senses and made her crave more. The strange red fog drifted over her vision, clouding her eyes but heightening the other faculties. She licked her lips and moved closer, the tips of her breasts skimming his chest. The lace of her bra did nothing to mute the sensation. She gasped and pressed a little harder. The deepest corner of her mind tried to point out that moments ago she'd been terrified, but the thought barely made a dent in her conscious.

Air brushed across her skin, moving the soft material of her skirt. The trickling caress skipped across her knees, lifting the hem and sending a whisper of air along her thighs. It was as if the night was teasing her. She closed her eyes and felt the world shift. Rebel's hands grabbed her, strong and solid at her ribs.

"Kalen?" Concern wove through his question but her body reacted to the desire shimmering beneath her name. She pressed closer, putting her nose into his throat. Her tongue flicked out and caught a taste of his skin. His hands slid around her back, holding her in place. "You're not thinking clearly."

She smiled, sensing the irony in the situation—that the one who was most in tune with the moon was warning *her* about thinking clearly. She pressed closer, feeling safe and protected.

"Please." She wasn't sure what she was asking for, but she needed.

She shifted, easing his thigh between her legs, adding sweet pressure to her clit. She rolled her hips forward, wanting to feel him move against her. Rebel groaned. The sound vibrated his throat and tickled her lips. She opened her mouth and stroked her tongue across his neck, capturing that subtle flavor, imagining the feel of his cock in her mouth, sliding across her tongue. Her hips rocked again and a lovely shimmer slid into her pussy.

His hand slid down her back and gripped her ass, holding her in place, guiding her against his leg. She tested his skin with her teeth. The earthy flavor flooded her tongue. More.

She slid her hand up his torso, letting her fingers glide across the tight skin, tripping across the flat nipple. He hissed and pulled back.

"Honey, it's not a good idea—"

"Dreamed of this," she murmured, her lips brushing against his collarbone as she spoke.

"Me too but—"

"What the hell is going on?"

Brennan's voice penetrated the fog and she jumped back. Rebel caught her, stopping her from stumbling, and holding her upright. She blinked and stared at the two men—both naked, both hard. *Oh my*. Pictures flooded her brain, overwhelming her—Brennan and Rebel both, fucking her, their bodies moving in hers. The red fog deepened, drawing her into the images. It would be good, so good.

She knew Brennan wanted an answer. She licked her lips and tried to think of a response but all she could see was the two males standing near her. And what they could be doing. Fucking. Her. Hard.

Another heated rush surged through her pussy. She squeezed her legs together but it didn't help. The lace bra teased her nipples with each breath drawing the delicious ache into her pussy.

"Kalen was frightened by some wolves chasing her," Rebel explained. Kalen heard the words but that lovely red fog creeping over her brain made it difficult to concentrate.

"Why were they chasing her?" The low rumble of Brennan's voice set off delicious tremors in her cunt. He came forward, putting his hand out, silently calling her close.

Her body moved without instruction. A sound trickled from her throat, almost like a purr. She walked three steps then pushed into Brennan's embrace. The familiar seemed new, wild. Reacting solely to the desire in her body, she pushed up on tiptoes and pressed her mouth to his. He wrapped his arm around her back and snugged her up tight against his body. All that delicious, hot flesh available to her.

He dipped his tongue into her mouth, needing a taste, but his human mind was becoming more vocal. *Why the hell was she pressed up against a naked Rebel?*

Why were you? the condemning voice of his conscience asked.

He pulled back from the kiss but kept Kalen hard against him. The past three weeks had given him time to adapt to his new senses. He could smell her arousal and the sweet scent was like a spike in his brain, silencing the logical voice of the human. He swallowed and fought the urge to flip her on the ground and fuck her in front of Rebel.

Of course, the sight of her pressed up against Rebel, rubbing that sweet cunt against his leg had enraged him. And aroused him. He shook off the thought and looked at Rebel, wondering if he'd answer Brennan's question.

Rebel shrugged. "They could have been playing. Maybe they didn't recognize her."

He slid his hand farther down her back, pulling her closer until she was pressed full against him.

"Bastards."

"I'm sure it was nothing," she murmured against his skin. "God you smell good." He smelled like Rebel's soap. She stroked her tongue up his neck. "Hmm."

"Kalen, are you okay?"

"Perfect." She wrapped her arm farther around his neck and shifted so her pussy pressed against his hip.

"I think she's feeling the effects of the full moon."

She giggled and shook her head, lifting up enough to look at Brennan. "The moon doesn't affect me." It was kind of like someone who'd had too much to drink claiming they weren't drunk. She pressed up on her tiptoes and put her lips to his ear. "Fuck me."

She whispered it but he could tell Rebel heard the command as well. The little tease put her head on Brennan's shoulder but looked back at Rebel. Pure wicked hunger flared in his eyes. She licked her lips and pushed her ass into Brennan's hand.

The moon lust and, fuck, having Rebel there, called the wolf to the surface. Brennan grabbed her ass and yanked her against him, grinding her pussy against his hip as he bent down and kissed her, driving his tongue into her mouth.

He fell into the kiss, letting it swell in his brain. The wolf howled its pleasure and Brennan shifted, easing Kalen around front so his cock lined up with her pussy. She groaned and moved closer, opening her legs, the soft material of her skirt draping around his erection.

A low growl rumbled through the air and Brennan opened his eyes. He stared at Rebel. Yellow eyes had turned red once again. His gaze was locked on Brennan's hand on Kalen's ass. Kalen turned her attention to Brennan's throat, kissing and biting. Pain tore across Rebel's face. The sight pulled Brennan back from the edge.

"Baby, we should go." He pushed Kalen back, forcing inches of space between them even as his body rejected the idea. Her dazed eyes blinked up at him, confused, a little irritated. Blocking out Rebel, Brennan focused on getting Kalen back to the car. "We have to go."

He glanced at Rebel but the guy was gone. Vanished into the trees. But he hadn't gone far. He was near, watching.

Brennan put his arm around Kalen and guided her back toward the cabin.

They weren't far but it took longer than it should have. Kalen kept finding excuses to touch or kiss, her lips wandering across his chin, his neck. Every touch, every caress scratched at his control. His muscles strained as he fought the urge to throw her to the ground and fuck her right there.

As if she read his mind, she lifted her head and looked at him. A reflection of the red in his eyes glowed in hers.

"Fuck me."

The wolf screamed inside his head and Brennan knew they weren't making it home.

They kissed and stumbled the last few steps, bypassing the car and going straight for the house.

The red blanketed his sight, blinding his control. Material tore. Hot flesh filled his hands as he spun her, almost throwing her against the house. Her palms slapped the rough wood and she cried out. The sound grabbed the human inside him. He wouldn't hurt her, couldn't.

"Kalen?"

She looked over her shoulder, and fuck, it looked as if her eyes were glazed with red.

"Fuck me," she commanded. She flipped her skirt up, baring her pretty ass. Her skin glowed in the moonlight. The vague memory that he'd shredded her panties only made his cock harder.

A low rumble started in his chest, rising through his throat.

Unable to slow himself, he placed the head of his cock to her entrance and pushed in, fast and deep. She gasped as the slick walls of her pussy squeezed him, taking him and holding him.

"Fuck." He said the word around thick teeth. Kalen arched her back and shoved her hips back. He bared his teeth and growled, feeling her cunt grip him. The wolf howled in his brain, demanding that he take her. He drew back and slammed into her. He

didn't worry about hurting her. She took everything he gave her and begged for more, thrusting her ass at him, meeting every stroke.

A low noise triggered his senses—so low he wasn't sure he heard it. He snapped his head to the right, his lips peeling back from his teeth, but he didn't follow through with the growl.

Rebel stood just beyond the clearing, his eyes bright, watching. Every time he thrust forward he felt the ache in his ass, reminding him that Rebel had been inside him moments ago. Brennan's gaze locked on Rebel's as he fucked Kalen, sharing this with him.

A strange calm so foreign to the possessive human nature encompassed him. It was like Rebel was beside him, with him.

He looked down at the pale skin of Kalen's ass, the soft flesh a sweet cushion each time he filled her cunt.

"Fuck, baby, that's sweet."

Without looking, he sensed Rebel's response, felt his need rise.

"That's it," he whispered, knowing the other male listened, watched. "Take me into this tight little cunt. So sweet, baby. Slick and hot. Fuck, you feel good." He leaned closer, putting his lips to her ear. "I love being inside you. Want to come inside you."

The words were nothing more than the truth. Shivers ran through her body. Her pussy tightened around him and she cried out, her fingers digging into the wood.

The delicate contractions along his cock sent him over the edge and he drove into her one more time, flooding her with his cum, the scent blending with her pussy, binding them.

Brennan put one hand on the wall. His other arm wrapped around her waist, keeping her in place, his cock inside her. He was still hard but he didn't feel the need to fuck. He just wanted to stay buried in her for a while longer. She didn't seem to mind. She rocked her ass back against him. Her cheek pressed against the house as if the only things holding her upright was the wall and Brennan's strength.

He slid his free hand under her skirt, cupping her pussy, feeling where they were joined. She moaned and squirmed into the caress. He smiled into her hair. Such a sensual little thing. He skimmed his hand up her body, sliding beneath her shirt to cup her breasts, his fingers tripping over tight nipples. Another sweet groan sounded from her throat and Brennan couldn't resist nudging his cock deeper.

She moaned and ground her ass against his hips, rocking his cock inside her pussy.

They stood locked together. Brennan felt the moon move through him. He had to have her again. He couldn't resist pumping his cock in and out, shallow strokes. She chuckled.

"We should go," she whispered, glancing over her shoulder, her eyes shielded by the long curls. Knowing she was right, he groaned and pulled out, letting her skirt

tumble down to cover her pretty ass. She pushed herself up and turned around, leaning against the cabin. Her blouse was open, her bra hanging in tatters. Four scratch marks marred her perfect skin.

"Baby, I'm sorry –"

She shook her head and smiled, leaning in for a kiss. "I'm fine and I love the fact that you couldn't wait to get your hands on me." She bit down on his lower lip. "Let's go home." *And fuck.* She didn't say it. She didn't have to. Her eyes said it all.

"I'm naked," he pointed out.

She chuckled. "I bet Rebel has something you can wear." She spun out of his grip and led the way toward the door. He considered telling her that Rebel didn't actually live in the house but in a campsite behind the cabin, but he got distracted by watching her ass walk away.

When she reappeared moments later with a pair of jeans and t-shirt, he blinked. The moon's influence urged him on but he had enough control to pull on the clothes.

Kalen pulled the keys out of her purse and started walking toward the car. She climbed into the driver's side and Brennan's wolf growled. Perfect. Now his hands would be free for long ride home.

* * * * *

Rebel stood in the shadow of a large oak, watching. Wanting. Brennan and Kalen climbed into the car. The engine purred as it started up.

Brennan turned his head and stared into the shadows. Rebel was almost sure he couldn't be seen but moved deeper into the darkness. Watching Brennan make love to Kalen had been too much. He wasn't going to stand there and watch them leave like a lovesick puppy.

But once the car started to move, he couldn't resist. He watched, staring as the taillights disappeared down the long drive.

The ache in his chest swelled.

"Fuck this," he grumbled to the silent universe. He headed back toward the cabin, considering his options for the rest of the night. He could go the pack house, but fuck, he didn't want to be around other wolves tonight. Not now.

Or he could go to town. There had to be someone he could fuck.

He walked past the front door, toward his camp. He'd already showered. He just needed clothes and he could...

The phone inside the cabin rang. Rebel sighed. It was probably Kalen calling to check on him.

He didn't know if she'd seen him watching. Brennan had. Fuck, Brennan had practically invited him to join.

Wouldn't that be a scream? he thought. *Brennan, Kalen and me.*

The phone chirped again and Rebel let the sound pull him into the house. He wasn't going to answer it but he'd listen to the message.

The machine clicked on. There was a pause and then a masculine, "Hey Rebel." Chas. Not Kalen. "Don't know if you're —"

Rebel grabbed the handset and picked it up.

"I'm here."

"How's it going?"

"What's going on?" He'd heard from Chas a couple of times since that day at the cabin but either he'd been busy or Chas was just running out. Wasn't a huge deal. They'd never been close, but if someone was trying to kill Chas, and from the size of the cricket bats they were, Rebel felt a familial compulsion to protect his stepbrother.

"Listen, I know it's the full moon and everything, but I was thinking if you weren't hanging out with the pack you might want to meet me for a drink. I guess I kind of owe you an explanation about that thing that happened."

Yes, you do.

"Sure. Sounds good."

They made plans to meet in about thirty minutes in town. If Rebel remembered correctly, there were a couple of bars in that same area. After he was done he could find someone who might want to spend the rest of the night bent over with Rebel's cock shoved up his ass.

His dick gave a weak show of interest.

"Oh no," he said to the suddenly reluctant organ. "You don't get to choose." He stomped around the back of the house, dragged on jeans and a t-shirt.

He scraped his fingers through his hair and considered it good. Energy pumped through his veins. He had a plan for the night.

Meet Chas and find some hot young thing who would wipe out the memory of Kalen and Brennan.

* * * * *

Kalen grabbed Rebel's clean clothes off the front seat and climbed out of the car. Nerves rumbled through her stomach. She shouldn't be nervous — this was Rebel, for God's sake. He'd been her best friend forever.

And last night you rubbed up against him like a cat in heat. And he watched you have sex.

Her tummy flipped over. Yep, that was the cause of her stress.

Brennan hadn't said anything — she wasn't sure he'd noticed — but she'd seen Rebel. Standing in the forest, watching them. She didn't know why she didn't say anything then. Maybe she was a latent exhibitionist.

Or maybe she'd just wanted Rebel to be a part of it. She'd certainly dreamed about it that night. But after the fucking Brennan had given her, how could she not? It was like

he'd read her mind, knowing she'd been thinking about him and Rebel at the same time.

They'd returned to her house and fucked again. And again. The last time Brennan had brought up Rebel, asking her how it would feel to have them both, two hard cocks inside her, fucking her. The picture he painted had put her over the edge and she'd come, screaming, begging.

Brennan had gone wild, pounding into her, coming hard and then collapsing down beside her. Neither had been capable of speech afterward and they'd drifted to sleep, but the memory, the idea, had stayed with her.

She stared at the front door of the cabin. It had been almost empty last night. It was obvious Rebel wasn't actually living here.

She walked around the back of the house and saw the campsite—little more than a bed roll and small table that held two books and a bottle of water.

But no Rebel. She went to the front door and knocked. For a minute she thought he wasn't home, or if he was, he was going to ignore her, but just as she was about to give up, the door swung open and Rebel filled the space, shirtless, jeans hanging low on his hips. She licked her lips and remembered the sight of his naked cock. Dragging her gaze up, she forced a smile.

"Hey, I— Oh my God, what happened to you?"

Purple, green and yellow bruises rippled beneath his skin, covering the left side of his chest and abdomen. Thin streaks across his skin matched the bruising, like someone had hit him.

She shifted the clothes to one hand and reached out with the other. "What?"

Rebel jumped back.

"It's nothing. I'm fine."

"You're not fine." She looked at his face—pale yellow and faded purple lined one eye and down his cheek. Werewolves healed fast but the body went through all the stages. If it had been a normal human, these would have been week-old injuries. But she's seen Rebel last night and he hadn't been hurt then. "What happened?"

He pressed his lips together and met her stare. But she didn't back down. She crossed her arms and waited.

"I went into town last night to burn off a little steam and some guys jumped me. It was nothing."

"Why did they jump you?"

"I don't know." He sighed. "Maybe they just lost a baseball game."

Baseball bat. Yes. That would cause those bruises. Defiance rolled off him as he stared at her. She wasn't going to get anywhere pushing.

She shook her head and let some of the anger bleed off. "Are you okay?"

He shrugged then winced. "Basically." He patted his side. "Broke a couple of ribs but I've had worse."

He backed up and let her walk inside. She lifted up the folded jeans and t-shirt.

"We borrowed these last night for Brennan."

Rebel nodded and didn't look at all surprised. So he had stuck around. She felt her cheeks heat but pushed it aside.

She looked around the room but nothing was as interesting as Rebel.

She lifted her chin toward the clothes piles. "You haven't really unpacked."

"I'm not staying."

She nodded. She'd wondered about that.

"I just needed a place to get settled, get some cash, and then I'm going to head out."

Again she nodded. She'd grown used to not having him in her life. She'd adapted. Grown up. But now, having him appear for just a short time, knowing that he was free in the world and still locked away from her made her heart ache.

It only took her a moment to recognize the selfish nature to her thoughts. Imagine what Rebel had to be going through. Fifteen years in prison to return to the world where everyone knew everyone. And everyone knew what he had done. She no longer thought of it as her fault, but still there were things she wished she could change from that night.

She'd been young, drunk and defiant, trying to prove to her father, brothers and Rebel that she didn't need their protection. And she'd made a really stupid choice. Hanging out with wolves from a neighboring pack, teasing herself with the idea that she could handle a young, strong wolf. Rebel had found her stumbling out of the woods, crying, her clothes torn. She'd made him promise not to tell her father. He'd promised. She'd gone home determined to forget what had happened. Of course, she hadn't.

She'd left for Europe the next morning and hadn't returned home for six months. That was when she'd found out what Rebel had done and the consequences.

They'd never talked about it. Even the one time she'd visited him in prison, before he'd told her never to come back and had refused to see her when she did. But they wouldn't be able to move forward until they did.

"Why did you plead guilty?"

He didn't meet her stare but the edges of his eyes tightened.

"I killed him, Kalen."

She nodded. "But it was within Pack Law. Justifiable. You should have had a Pack Tribunal, not a human courtroom."

He met her stare. "I didn't kill him as a werewolf. I killed him as a man, and man's laws say that I had to go to prison." He shrugged and Kalen held her silence, hoping the

echo would encourage him to say more. "It was no more than I deserved for failing you that night."

"What? No—" She reached out. He stepped back, avoiding her touch.

"I didn't protect you. I knew what could happen. I knew what he was like but I let you go with him."

"No." He didn't seem to hear her so she got right in front of him, forcing him to face her. "No. I did some stupid things that night but the only person to blame for what happened is Jason. He raped me." It had taken her years and hours of counseling to be able to say those words. "That wasn't your fault or mine. He was an ass who thought he could take what he wanted." Righteous energy flowed through her. "But I'm sorry you killed him."

Rebel snorted. "I didn't think you were a bleeding heart."

She pursed her lips. "No, I figure he got off easy. If he'd lived, you could have beaten the hell out of him every day of his life."

Rebel's eyes got wide but there was just a hint of laughter in those amber eyes. "Vicious. I approve."

"I thought you might." She smiled. "It took me a long time to get there but I did."

Rebel nodded and didn't say anything. But even with the silence, Kalen felt some of the barriers fall away. And there really wasn't anything else to say about it. At least not now.

She sighed loud and clapped her hands. The sound seemed to indicate a change of scene and she took it.

"What have you got planned for the day?" She was caught up on her work. The plans for the weekend events were done. She could take a few hours.

"Uhm, nothing." He nodded toward a box in the corner. "Rike sent that over. I'm not sure what it is."

She peered into the corner then straightened. "It's a TV. Flat screen." Fifty-five inch, according to the box. Dang, her dad had gone all out. She looked at the box next to it. "And a DVR."

"DVR?"

"Think of it like a VHS. Without the tape."

Rebel nodded but she could tell he wasn't getting it.

"Didn't you have a TV in prison?"

He winced. "I spent most of my time in solitary. They don't let you have much."

"Why were you in solitary?" After she blurted out the question she realized it was probably rude to ask, but it was already out there.

"The other prisoners seemed to think I was dangerous." He shrugged but there was a hint of a smile.

She could only imagine what he'd been like – the wolf protective and stressed at not being able to change. Just from her experience with her brothers she knew it had to be torture. But they'd done enough serious talking already today so she wasn't going to press it.

"Well, you missed a lot of technology in fifteen years," she said, adding a little cheer to her voice. She nodded toward the boxes. "We'll start with those."

It was nearly eleven o'clock when Kalen pulled into her driveway. After the TV and DVR hookup, they'd cleaned the cabin, cooked lunch, went for a walk. Just friend stuff, but something settled inside Kalen, soothed now that Rebel was near. Things weren't perfect between them but the day had made huge inroads into restoring their relationship. She'd told him she was going to call him in a day or so and have him come to dinner and he was damn well going to accept. He'd feigned reluctance but she could tell he was thrilled to be asked.

Brennan's car was parked on the street.

She'd called earlier to let him know she would be late but her cell hadn't worked out at the cabin.

She opened the door and called out softly. There was no way Brennan was asleep. Not before eleven.

"I'm back."

"I'm in here," he answered from the living room.

She dropped her purse on the front table and couldn't stop her smile. The day had flown by and her body buzzed as if the moon's energy still controlled her. She blushed when she thought of the previous night. She'd never felt anything like that – the overwhelming need to fuck. It gave her some insight into why full-moon runs got to be so wild. Who could resist all that sexual energy?

A luscious sensuality melted her muscles as she strolled down the hall and into the living room. Fantasies of Brennan and Rebel flooded her brain. She couldn't have both but she could have Brennan.

He sat on the couch, one arm draped over the back, remote in his hand, his feet kicked up on the coffee table. She wandered around to the front and didn't stop. She moved right in, climbing over him and straddling his thighs and sitting on his lap.

He met her stare, his face impassive but his eyes sparkling.

"You're blocking the TV."

"Good." Her smile got wider as she leaned forward to kiss him. Brennan was in the mood to play as well.

"You're awfully late." His hand slid up her leg and cupped her ass, bringing her higher up his legs.

"I know. I tried to call but couldn't get a signal." Another kiss. "We lost track of time." She traced kisses across his jaw, heading for that spot beneath his ear that drove

him crazy when she nipped it. She detoured to give his earlobe a quick bite then moved in.

"Uh, no." He twisted, pulling back and lifting her off his lap in one full movement. For a moment she thought he was going to take charge, toss her onto the couch and fuck her, but he set her down on the cushions and pulled his hands back. In fact, he moved a little farther away. He swallowed, the muscles convulsing in his neck. "How was Rebel?" The question was tight, like he didn't really want to ask but needed a change of subject. Okay, so he didn't want to make love. She could accept that. Sure. It was just he'd been wild for sex since the bite.

"Good. Well, not really." She shook her head. "Some guys beat him up."

"What? When?"

"Last night after we left. He said they had bats. They got him pretty good."

"Bats?" Brennan pushed up out of the couch and started to pace. She'd seen him do this when he thought through cases, preparing for a criminal prosecution. "On the night of a full moon."

"I don't understand."

"The guys who attacked him up at the cabin used cricket bats."

"I think he said these were baseball bats." He hadn't actually said it but the implication had been there.

"It's still odd, don't you think, that one man gets attacked by two groups of guys with bats in less than a month. Doesn't seem like a coincidence to me."

"You're right." She snagged her lower lip between her teeth. "We should tell my dad."

Brennan stared at her for a moment, no doubt wondering why.

"If someone's threatening Rebel, Dad's going to want to know."

Brennan nodded and pulled his phone out of his pocket. He swiped a finger across the bottom of the screen, tapped a few times and held it up to his ear.

"Rike, hey, it's Brennan. Sorry to call so late. Listen, Kalen just came back from visiting Rebel..."

She tuned out while Brennan explained what happened. Her mind focused on the casual way he called her dad.

He said goodbye and hung up. "Rike thinks we should meet with Rebel, find out what's going on."

"Why do you have my dad's phone number in your phone? *How* do you have my dad's phone number?"

"He called me today. Just checking in, I guess."

"Oh." She could handle that. Maybe. It shouldn't be a big deal but it was a little strange to have her dad and Brennan just chatting when she wasn't around. Brennan

reached down and clicked off the TV. "Ready for bed?" she asked, thinking she might be able to seduce Brennan when they got upstairs. It had worked before.

"Uhm, yeah, actually, I'm going head home. I've got an early meeting. I don't want to wake you."

Before she could protest that his leaving early never woke her, he'd kissed her on the forehead and was gone.

"Good night," she called, the click of the door closing punctuating her sentence.

Chapter Thirteen

Brennan turned down the long drive toward Rebel's place. The meeting with Rike was at the pack house but Brennan needed a few minutes alone with the werewolf. He thumped the heels of his hands on the steering wheel, hoping either the movement would get rid of some of his aggression or the pain. Neither worked. Four days since he'd turned into a wolf for the first time and it wasn't going well. His office staff was starting to flinch when he walked into the room. Four days of not fucking had only made it worse. He couldn't even see Kalen, because if he got near her, he would have her bent over and his cock inside her before she could say hi.

His stomach rolled over. Fuck, he hadn't been this nervous the night he'd turned into a wolf for the first time.

Yeah, but then you didn't know you were going to get fucked in the ass by another guy. Or that you'd like it.

As he pulled up to the cabin, the nerves turned to anger then fury, the wolf amplifying his emotions.

Aggression shot him out of the car and he started toward the front of the house, ready to pound on the door. He stopped and listened. The sound of water trickled from the back of the house. The wolf—so alive for the past four nights—was almost uncontrollable. It recognized the scents and sights. The animal wanted its pack mate. The human translated the sensation into rage, but for the wolf it was hunger.

Brennan took a deep breath and willed the wolf to retreat or at least calm enough that he could function. He walked around the back of the house to the far side. Rebel stood under the shower. The other man didn't acknowledge him and for a moment Brennan thought he hadn't noticed him standing there, but no...

One thing Brennan knew from their long walks through the forest was that Rebel was hyper aware of the world around him. He knew Brennan was there, watching.

Brennan crossed his arms over his chest, hoping for a casual pose, and defiantly watched Rebel finish his shower.

A smirk curled Rebel's lips as he soaped up his chest, his abs and reached down, running the washcloth around his cock. The revelation came slowly. Rebel had no hair around his dick. The sight of the bare skin shocked him. Brennan had obviously been too distracted or panicked the other night to notice. Rebel didn't linger. He swiped the cloth around his dick and balls then stepped under the spray. Water streamed down his chest, washing away the soap, briefly blocking Brennan's sight.

Not that he wanted to see, he told himself, but damn, he couldn't look away.

Rebel's cock started to swell. It wasn't fully hard. Brennan's throat tightened. He couldn't believe he'd had that inside him. He was a little thicker than Rebel but Rebel's dick was big. *No wonder I was sore the next day.*

He sighed and forced the thought away, letting his gaze drop. Rebel had assured him his interest in fucking Rebel would disappear after the first change. He just hoped that was true. So far the desire hadn't abated.

The sound of the water shutting off drew his attention.

Rebel grabbed a towel off a hook on the wall and faced Brennan, wrapping the towel around his hair to squeeze out the water. He rubbed another towel down his body, flicking away the random water drops. Brennan stared, knowing the guy was being so blatant just to taunt him. Well, he wasn't going to retreat. He willed himself not to get hard, and fuck, why was it even an issue? He'd seen guys naked before, hundreds of times in the gym. He'd never been tempted to sneak a peek. Hadn't been curious, but fuck, it was all he could do not to lick his lips and wonder what it would feel like to run his tongue around the base of Rebel's cock. Instead of freaking him out, it made his cock ache. And his mouth water.

Rebel turned, tossed the towel toward the bedroll and faced Brennan, full-on naked, his cock half-erect. Brennan knew it was there but determinedly kept his eyes on Rebel's face.

"I thought we were meeting at the pack house," Rebel said with just enough aggression to make Brennan's hackles rise. Rebel had gotten what he wanted and now he didn't want Brennan around. *Fuck, he never wanted me around but I'm not leaving until I get some answers.*

"I wanted to talk to you first."

That smirk returned. "What's wrong, babe? Afraid you've turned gay?"

Brennan tried not to react, tried not to let Rebel see how close to the truth he was.

Rebel rolled his eyes and turned away, grabbing a pair of jeans and dragging them on. He glanced back. "I told you. The attraction was caused by the bite. Now that you've been through your first full moon, you won't feel it anymore. You can go back to being an uptight straight guy."

Brennan snapped his teeth together, fighting the urge to correct Rebel, because damn, he didn't feel any different. If anything it was worse. The past few nights he'd dreamed of fucking—Kalen and Rebel. Together, separately. Sinking his cock into Rebel's ass. Sucking Rebel's dick. Watching Kalen and Rebel together.

Rebel pulled on a black t-shirt and flicked his hair back, dragging his fingers through the straight black length. Brennan realized he hadn't said anything. He'd been lost in his thoughts and watching Rebel dress.

Rebel met his stare.

"You're not gay. You don't have to worry."

"I'm not, but do I have to worry about anything else?"

"What?"

"Do I have to worry about anything?" he said.

Rebel drew himself up to his full height. "Like what?"

"You—" *Fucked me without a condom. No. Too submissive.* "We had unprotected sex." A little more neutral. "Do I need to go get tested for anything?" That night he'd been too caught up in the moon lust to think about it, but the next day he'd remembered. No way he was going to risk Kalen. Again.

The smirk shifted, turning into more of a smile, a bit sympathetic but at least honest.

"You're fine."

Brennan raised his eyebrows, challenging Rebel's assurance.

"The werewolf venom, or whatever you call it, changes your body. Biologically you're more wolf than human and you're immune to many human diseases, including STDs."

The tension he'd been holding in his chest eased. It must have been visible, because Rebel winked.

"But you do have to watch out for mange."

"Bite me."

"I did. And look how well that turned out."

Brennan laughed. He couldn't help it. "You are such a prick."

"Never claimed to be otherwise."

He couldn't argue with that.

Rebel scraped his fingers through his hair again, walked by and slapped his hand on Brennan's shoulder. "Let's go."

They started toward the familiar path. Brennan considered offering to drive but he wanted this time. It had only been a few days since he'd seen Rebel but he'd missed him. Even though he'd been pissed and confused, he'd missed just being with the other man.

They fell into step, not speaking, but the strain Brennan had been feeling faded and the companionable atmosphere from the days before his change flowed through his muscles. Habit now, he let his wolf rise to the surface, using the animal's senses to test the world.

Almost in unison their strides got longer and they sped up. Not running, just moving through the forest, confident of being the baddest creatures around. Brennan followed Rebel, the wind carrying the male's scent to him. Brennan licked his lips, remembering the taste, the sensations—Rebel's mouth on his, tongues touching.

Damn. His cock, hard for the past four days, pressed forward.

Great. When is this sensation supposed to ease?

As if the thought of fucking Rebel wasn't enough, he'd teased Kalen about fucking them both. The idea had made her hot, made her come. Brennan couldn't get it out of his mind.

He didn't really want to share Kalen—he didn't—just as he was sure if he offered her the chance of a three-way with her childhood best friend she would reject it, but that didn't stop the visions, the images from slipping into his brain given the slightest moment of inattention. So he'd kept himself busy, diving into work, not fucking Kalen.

But he could have her tonight. Now that he knew there was no risk. Oh yeah, he was going to have her.

The thought gave his step a little push and he leapt forward, moving in front of Rebel. Naturally the other wolf saw it as a challenge. They took off. That familiar sense of joy at letting his wolf rise, letting his body free, came to the surface. But so did his competitive streak.

The pack house came into view with Brennan in the lead. He jumped over the gravel parking lot and hit the backyard fast. He glanced over his shoulder. Rebel was ten feet behind him. No way he was going to catch him. He would— Bam. A hard heavy body slammed into his side, taking him down.

Brennan spun, landing on his back, the grass not much of a cushion. He grunted and let his teeth come down. He caught a breath and came up swinging. But his attacker rolled out of the way and started to laugh. The sound slapped Brennan out of his revenge, at least long enough to look.

Rike. A human Rike, sitting on his heels, breathing hard and looking pretty damn smug.

"What the fuck was that?" Brennan demanded.

"Training."

Rebel scoffed but a glare from Rike silenced him.

Rike stood up. "You've got to keep your senses alert all around you. Not just the one you know is chasing you." He reached out his hand to Brennan. "Wolves are pack hunters. There's always more than one."

That's when Brennan noticed Byron standing just off to the left.

"We've been running a parallel path for the last three minutes." He looked at Rebel. "Why didn't you notice? You know better."

The reprimand was accompanied with a swat to Rebel's ass as Rike walked by. Rebel jumped.

Rike and Byron crossed the back lawn toward the pack house. Brennan watched them walk. The sexual relationship between them was obvious as they moved, the subtle touches of their hands, the close proximity to each other.

"He's pretty fast for a guy his age," Brennan said, leaning in and keeping his comment just for Rebel, werewolf hearing and all.

"And he's got a hand like a paddle."

"Looked like it hurt."

They stood close, their bodies touching, sharing breath, the subconscious connection between them moving them together. Rebel lifted his head a bit.

"Want to kiss it and make it better?" His eyes twinkled and Brennan couldn't help but laugh.

"You're an asshole."

Rebel stepped back and swung his arm out. For a second Brennan thought Rebel was going to take his hand, then he saw Rebel was just letting him lead. Brennan walked forward and toward the house.

It was quieter tonight though a few people sat on the deck, drinking beer. Brennan got a few chins lifted in greeting. Wolves from the other night he supposed, but he wasn't going to attempt names. So much of that evening turned blurry by the later events.

They walked in the back door and looked around. Rike and Byron weren't in the main room. Rebel cocked his head to the left. Brennan walked around the corner and entered the study.

Rike nodded as they walked in. Rebel pulled the door shut behind them and they moved into a small seating area. It was like being invited into the Bat Cave.

Brennan looked around the room. Nice leather furniture. Books lined the walls. He was pretty sure the walls were soundproofed.

Rebel sat down in the corner of the leather love seat. Despite the fact that there were other chairs, Brennan moved to sit next to him. He just felt better, more stable with Rebel near. Rike sat in a large wingback chair. Byron, it appeared, preferred to hover. He got Rike a drink and then stood off to the side.

It took Brennan only a moment to realize that Byron was keeping watch.

"So," Rike started, his eyes on Rebel. "Tell me what happened."

Rebel pushed his shoulders back. The movement shifted his body so his knee brushed against Brennan's. Brennan didn't move away.

Rebel looked at Rike and tried not to cringe. He hated that he was causing problems. He needed to get the hell out of town but he needed to pay off Rike for his truck and save a bit of money before he did it. Just enough to last him a few days no matter where he ended up.

"Some guys grabbed me and beat the hell out of me."

Brennan turned his head and glared at Rebel. "Maybe you could give us a few more details?"

Right. Brennan was a prosecutor. He interrogated people for a living.

"Fine. I went to town last week."

"After the full-moon run?" Rike asked. Rebel nodded. "I didn't see either of you back at the pack house afterward."

Rebel looked at Brennan. Brennan pressed his knee into Rebel's but kept his face to Rike. "We ended up at the cabin. Then Kalen showed up and she and I just drove home."

Rike nodded. "And that's when you went to town?"

"Yeah." The cocky smile returned. "Somehow I didn't think anyone here was going to provide what I was looking for." He glanced at Brennan and resisted the urge to wink. "When I went inside the cabin, Chas called."

"Chas?" This time Brennan sat back, turning and staring at Rebel. "The one who you were supposed to be meeting the last time you got the shit kicked out of you."

The hairs on the back of Rebel's neck stood up. "I didn't exactly get the shit kicked out of me. It was five guys with cricket bats. I thought I was doing okay."

"Whatever, you didn't think it was odd that he asked you to come to town? Or think after it happened that maybe he had something to do with it?" Power flowed through Brennan and Rebel felt the strangest urge to lower his head. He resisted. The only male he'd ever lowered his head to was Rike as Alpha.

"No," Rebel said. "Chas is just Chas. He's this little twit who gets himself into trouble."

"And every time you've gone to meet him lately you've ended up with guys with bats on your ass." Aggression poured off Brennan.

"Twice. And why the fuck would Chas send guys after me?" Rebel shifted in his seat to face him. "He's a pissant little shit but all I've ever done is protect him."

"There's got to be a connection. There's—"

A throat being cleared grabbed both their attentions. They looked over at Byron—the source of the grumbly throat—and found him standing beside Rike. The two men were staring at Brennan and Rebel.

"This is interesting." Somehow the way Rike said it Rebel didn't think he meant the discussion. Rebel realized he and Brennan had moved closer to each other, sharing the small space. "I think we should check on Chas."

Brennan gave one sharp nod, as if he'd been vindicated.

"And we need to check on people who might be pissed that Rebel has returned," Brennan added.

Rebel held his breath. He didn't know how to answer that.

Rike nodded. "It's possible. I'll talk to Broham's pack. Jason was his son." The neutral tone of Rike's voice surprised Rebel. There was no reprimand to Rebel for killing him. Or anger at Jason for what he'd done to Kalen. He didn't know if it was real or just the Alpha's control.

"I can talk to Chas," Rebel offered.

"No." Brennan slashed his hand to the side. "You're too close. Byron, can you talk to him?"

Rebel squeezed his lips together. It was interesting to see Brennan work. He'd subtly taken command of the meeting. And Rike had let him. Rebel never claimed to be the most perceptive wolf alive but he understood power structure. And Brennan was one of the big dogs.

Brennan, Rike and Byron discussed their plans, with Brennan giving advice on questions, how to approach Broham. Rebel let them talk for a few minutes, deciding how to protect him. Brennan had volunteered to shadow Rebel when he left his cabin.

No way was he going to let that happen. First, because he didn't need a babysitter, and second, because he couldn't be around Brennan. Not now. Not when his wolf wanted him so badly, wanted to claim him as a mate. Brennan's urges might have disappeared with the passing of the first full moon but Rebel's hadn't. His weren't based on the emotion of a bite. His were based on lust, and fuck, he liked the guy.

But spending time with him would be a bad idea.

"There's a simple way to solve this," Rebel said, interrupting the conversation. Brennan merely turned his head and drilled Rebel with his steel eyes. "I could just leave." Not wanting to see Brennan's reaction—either relief or rejection—Rebel looked at Rike. Rike was his Alpha and it would be his decision what happened to him. "This was never meant to be permanent. I don't have much stuff. I can be out of here tonight."

Rike opened his mouth to respond but Brennan beat him to it.

"No." Brennan shook his head to emphasize his point. He glanced at Rebel then turned his stare to Rike. Rike raised his eyebrows, silently giving Brennan permission to continue. "It does us no good for Rebel to disappear. The guys up at that shack weren't trying to scare you away. They were trying to kill you." Again Rebel felt the weight of Brennan's stare. "And we can't just have some group of guys going around beating our pack mates, uh, members with bats."

"Were they the same guys each time?" Byron asked.

Rebel shrugged. "I wasn't really paying attention. The first time I was surprised and the second time I just wanted to get away. The moon was too strong and I was too close to changing and going all werewolf on their asses."

He got a smile from Brennan but it didn't last long. "We've got to assume it was the same group of guys."

"They were definitely human," Rebel added.

"Sort of takes out the likelihood of Broham's pack, doesn't it?" Byron asked. "Wouldn't he just use a few of his wolves?"

"Not if he wanted to divert suspicion. Hire some guys."

Neither Rike nor Byron seemed too impressed with Brennan's suggestion.

"It happens. Check out Broham anyway," Brennan ordered.

That seemed to end the meeting. Rike stood up. Brennan and Rebel followed suit. They all shook hands. Brennan led the way out of the room. He didn't seem inclined to

stay around and chat, which was fine with Rebel. He wanted to have a few words with the arrogant werewolf.

Brennan scanned the living room before he left the study. Rebel could see Brennan assessing any potential threats. He'd adapted so quickly to his wolf senses.

A hot blonde lingered near the open French doors, ostensibly watching the night, but Rebel knew she wanted to catch a glimpse of the new werewolf...and let him catch a glimpse of her. Her shoulder pressed against the doorframe, she pushed her ass out. The curves of her butt cheeks peeked out from beneath her shorts.

Brennan walked by like she was invisible, his eyes trained on the ground in intense thought.

Brennan took a deep breath, letting the night air fill his lungs. The air in that little room had gotten stuffy fast. Well, not stuffy, just overwhelming. Sitting beside Rebel, he could smell him, and it had been all he could do not to rip off the guy's clothes and lick him from top to bottom. Fuck, he needed to get home. Get away from Rebel.

His cock punched against the fly of his jeans. *So why did you tell him that he couldn't leave?* Brennan asked himself. Rebel had offered. But the wolf had reared up inside Brennan and he couldn't even consider the idea. At least not yet. He needed to get a better handle on the animal inside him. Then Rebel could leave. Had to leave.

He just had to stay away from Rebel.

Brennan looked up and realized they'd returned to the cabin. In silence. A moment of panic assailed him until he realized Rebel was there. He turned, preparing some cool, casual farewell. Rebel grabbed the bottom of his t-shirt and whipped it up and off his head.

"What are you doing?" Brennan asked as his eyes fell to stare at the broad back and slim hips. A familiar sensation rose up in him—the wolf seizing control, the human retreating. He licked his lips and stared at the narrow dip at the base of Rebel's spine and imagined running his tongue along that patch of skin.

Unaware that he'd moved, he walked forward, his gaze locked on that one spot. When he got close, Rebel spun around, his eyes glowing.

The shock reached that shallow human voice and dragged it to the surface.

"Are you okay?" Brennan asked.

"I need to change." The light flared in Rebel's eyes and Brennan felt the heat.

"Are you sure that's a good idea? You seem a bit on edge." *Me too.*

His wolf danced through his thoughts, wanting free. Wanting to run, to fuck its mate. Brennan clamped down on the animal and focused on Rebel's words. And the tension underlying them.

"I just need to run."

"What if it is Broham's pack that wants to kill you? They could attack in wolf form."

Rebel shook his head. "They would have grabbed me the night of the full moon. Plus they wouldn't dare come onto Rike's land without his invitation."

Brennan crossed his arms on his chest and stared, feeling like the wall that was holding back the flood.

Rebel sighed. "It's either change or fuck." He stepped close, bending down to sniff Brennan's neck. "How about it?" His tongue flicked out, lapping at the taunt muscles of Brennan's throat. "I could suck you off then bend you over the hood of your car and slide back into that tight little ass."

The memories from the other night ricocheted around his brain. His cock gave another twitch. The damn thing wanted free, wanted Rebel. Brennan bit back a groan. He could do it. It would be so easy. Feel so good. The wolf growled in his head and the red haze teased the edges of his vision.

He turned his head, so close, his mouth inches from Rebel's.

Kalen.

Her name appeared in his thoughts and it was enough. He stepped back. "No thanks. I've got other plans."

The smug curl of Rebel's lips made Brennan want to scream.

"I'll bet you do." He turned and stripped off his jeans, flinging them to the side. The denim hadn't even landed before Rebel started his change. The bones cracking and muscles tearing still made Brennan a little queasy but it passed. Within seconds Rebel stood in wolf form. The animal looked at Brennan then tipped his head back and howled. The sound rang with emotions that Brennan's body translated as pain and loneliness.

"Rebel." Brennan started forward but the wolf bared its teeth and snarled as if rejecting the sympathy offered. Brennan straightened and pulled his hand back.

The wolf huffed then spun around and took off, disappearing into the forest.

Brennan watched, standing there long past the point of logical. It felt wrong to leave with Rebel running wild.

He's done this before. He'll be perfectly fine.

Unless one of Broham's men is waiting for him.

He shook off the thought. *Rebel is a strong, capable wolf. He'll be fine.*

But Brennan couldn't quite make himself leave. He parked at the end of the long gravel drive and waited. Hours passed and finally a gray wolf padded up to the house. Brennan didn't wait for Rebel to change. He threw the car into drive. Gravel sprayed from his wheels as he took off, fury filling his chest.

Bastard.

Sexy bastard.

He groaned and tried to block the thoughts but the scent of Rebel still lingered in his mind. Fuck, what was he supposed to do? This was all supposed to have disappeared now.

He drove back to Kalen's. He'd told her he would come by after the meeting but he hadn't expected it to go so late, and fuck, he didn't know how long he'd sat outside Rebel's cabin.

He pulled into Kalen's driveway. The house was mostly dark but she'd left a few lights on for him.

Brennan slipped the key in the lock. It slid in smooth and the lock turned with barely a click. Rebel. Kalen had said he'd fixed the lock. She had invited him for dinner Tuesday night and he'd spent the evening fixing things around the house. Brennan had been a coward and hadn't shown up, pleading too much work.

Images of the other man poured into his brain—stripping off his clothes, that thick cock bare, just waiting for Brennan's mouth. He pushed the door shut as the fantasy flipped through his head—sucking Rebel's dick then turning him over and fucking that tight ass. His knees weakened and he put his hand on the railing, fighting the sudden drop of blood to his cock.

He closed his eyes, taking in long deep breaths.

"Brennan? Is that you?"

Kalen's voice called from upstairs. He stared up into the darkness. The wolf instantly took control, delineating steps and railing, zeroing in on the delicious scents emanating from Kalen's room—sex and her and him, their bodies blended together.

"It's me," he called out. His voice scratched across the air.

As if that drew the animal forward, he lunged up the stairs, his body awkward, out of his control. His foot caught the top stair and he tripped, falling forward.

"Are you okay?" Concern blended with Kalen's normally mellow tones.

"I'm fine." He stopped at the top of the stairs and held on to the railing, determined to make his words the truth. He breathed and guided the air through his body, relaxing the muscles that fought him. He stared at the thin light that shone from inside Kalen's room.

He could do this. *No matter how strong your wolf is, you're still a man. You make your choices.* His own voice echoed through his brain.

Right, I make the choices but does that involve me getting fucked by another man? And liking it? Wanting more?

He wolf expanded the sensation until Brennan could feel it. Hard cocks rubbing together, the spicy taste of Rebel's mouth, his tongue fighting for control of the kiss.

The door popped open and Kalen appeared, bathed in light.

"Brennan? Is something wrong?"

He swallowed and shook his head, fighting the memory.

"How was the meeting? You're later than I expected."

I had to make sure Rebel was safe.

"It was good. We've got some plans."

"Was it just the four of you?"

"Four of us? Yes, well, there were some people at the pack house but they weren't in the meeting."

A hot little blonde flashed her ass at me but I was too distracted by the thought of fucking Rebel. He silenced those words but the guilt swelled inside his chest.

He hadn't actually fucked Rebel but he'd thought about it. Often.

Kalen's head tipped to the side. "Are you okay?"

"What? Yes, I'm fine." He gathered the strength in his muscles and walked forward, forcing a smile onto his face. "I'm fine," he said again. He bent down and placed a fast, hard kiss on her lips. "I'm going to take a shower." He nodded toward the bathroom as if she didn't know where the shower was.

She watched him with a confused look on her face and he felt his cheeks heat. She couldn't know, could she?

He stepped into the bathroom, closed the door and let all the air rush out of his lungs. His cock was hard, but fuck, he didn't know why. Was it for Kalen? Or Rebel? Or was the wolf just so damn horny that it wanted anything on two legs?

He climbed in the shower and put the temperature on lukewarm. It wouldn't kill his hard-on but it would last long enough for Kalen to fall asleep. The urge to fuck her pummeled his insides but he couldn't. The wolf was too close to the surface and God knew what the thing might do.

* * * * *

Kalen tried to concentrate on the seating layout in front of her. One hundred tables crammed into a ballroom designed for ninety. And she still had to keep the prominent donors to the front. She stared at the computer screen. If she compressed the dance floor a bit, she could crowd a couple of tables in at the edges. People would just have to dance cheek to cheek.

She smiled, thinking about the last time she'd danced with Brennan. It had been at one of the benefits and the dance floor had been crunched to accommodate more tables. They'd barely been able to move but it had given them an excuse to press up against each other.

She slumped back in her seat. *Unlike last night.* She'd been almost asleep when he'd crawled into bed and hadn't reached for her. Not that he *always* made love to her when he stayed over, but from the night he'd been bitten until the full moon, he hadn't missed a night. Since then...nothing. *I thought new wolves were supposed to be oversexed.*

So why hadn't he reached for her last night?

The guilt on his face when she'd asked him how the meeting had gone rebounded in her memory. Something had happened that he hadn't wanted to tell her.

Maybe his urges got satisfied at the pack house. Any number of the females would be willing, eager to take on Brennan, make sure his wolf didn't go without.

"No, Brennan wouldn't do that." She spoke the words aloud, clinging to them. She knew Brennan. She loved Brennan and Brennan loved her. He wouldn't cheat on her.

But he might be tempted...and to a man like him, that would be almost as bad.

The wolf inside him was powerful—even she could sense that—and the wolf had needs the human wouldn't understand.

The center of her stomach sank, a familiar feeling heavy in her chest. The wolf would need a strong mate, an animal to match him, complement him.

Tears pricked her eyes.

The doorbell chimed and jolted her out of her thoughts. She glanced at the clock. Four thirty. Too early for Brennan to be home. Plus he had a key.

She pushed away from her desk and went to the front door, peering around the window to see a man standing on her porch. It took her a moment to recognize him. Chas. Rebel's stepbrother.

It had been years since she'd seen him and he'd grown a bit more rounded.

Realizing she'd just left him standing on the front step, she undid the lock and opened the door.

"Chas, what are you doing here?"

"Hey, Kalen." His eyes did a slow scan down her body, pausing at her chest then dropping to her bare legs. She'd just been working out of the house today and had pulled on shorts and sweatshirt while she worked. The edges of his eyes squinted down. She didn't know if the look was admiration or disgust, but either way she shifted, trying to draw his attention back up.

He looked at her and the bruise on his jaw and around his eye. Looked like he'd used makeup to cover it up.

"What happened?"

"What? Oh, nothing. Just had an accident." He flashed her what she guessed was supposed to be a teasing smile. "Is Rebel here?"

"Rebel? No. I assume he's working."

"Oh, right. *Working.*"

The way he said it made her nerves twitch, as if he was implying that Rebel wasn't working. She knew he'd gotten a job. Her father had said something about him working for a house remodeler.

"I haven't talked to him in several days."

Chas rolled his eyes. "I know. Who doesn't have a cell phone these days, right?"

Someone who spent the last fifteen years in prison.

"Well, not everyone wants to be tethered to a phone."

"I was just trying to find him. Find out how the meeting had gone last night." He leaned a little closer and dropped his voice to a conspirator's tone. "You know about the meeting, right?"

"Yes."

"Have you heard anything?"

"About what?"

"Me?"

Kalen stared at Chas. "Why would they be discussing you?"

"Because I was supposed to meet Rebel there. And then the second time. I figured they were going to blame me somehow."

"Why would they blame you?"

"Because I'm not one of them. I thought if anyone could understand that, it would be you."

Kalen ignored the stabbing pain to her chest but forced herself to smile. He didn't mean to be cruel.

"Think about it. You get a group of werewolves in a room and who are they going to blame? Not one of them. They're going to look for a human. Someone who can't fight back."

She shook her head. "They wouldn't do that. My father wouldn't let them."

"Your dad's a good guy, but I'm not a wolf. I figured if anyone would understand that it would be you."

Kalen winced the second time he said it. Yes, she understood. She wasn't one of them.

"Why don't you come in? I can make some coffee."

Chas's face lit up and Kalen crushed her own irritation. At a time like this, Chas needed someone to understand what it was like to be an outsider in that world.

And if anyone could relate, it was her.

Chapter Fourteen

"Where is that yummy fiancé of yours?"

Kalen tried not to cringe. Instead she forced her lips into a smile and remembered Bethany was a client. An influential client.

"He'll be here at little later. He had a late meeting." At the pack house. Again.

Brennan had adapted to pack life easily. He spoke to her dad more than she did. It wasn't that she was jealous. It was more she'd spent the past decade creating a nice, comfortable distance between her and her well-intentioned family. She loved them. She did. She just didn't fit into that world.

The corners of her mouth flattened out as she thought about it.

It wasn't just her family's world anymore. It was Brennan's as well. The conversation with Chas last week weighed on her mind. He'd voiced all her own insecurities and they'd stayed in her mind.

"Well, when he shows up, I'd love to say hi," Bethany oozed.

I'll bet you would. "I'll make sure that he finds you. Now, if you'll excuse me, I really have to go check the next round of hors d'oeuvres."

She didn't. The hotel's catering staff was brilliant—well trained, organized and meticulous—but it gave her a reason to escape the conversation. Her normally cheerful persona frayed at the edges. It would be better once she saw Brennan. Her imagination of what might be happening at the pack house tormented her. If she let herself think about it, the image of an all-out orgy with Brennan as the centerpiece ran through her brain, rewinding and replaying.

Logically she knew it wasn't true. Knew that even if Brennan was interested in another woman he wouldn't be part of an orgy. He'd just take her into a dark corner and fuck her into insensibility. The way he did Kalen. Or used to do to Kalen before he'd changed.

She didn't understand. Before his first change, he'd been all over her, hungry, lusty, dominant. Since that night when he'd fucked her at the cabin then taken her home and fucked her again, he hadn't touched her. He hadn't stayed at her place since the night of the first meeting. They'd talked and had dinner together but he'd barely touched her—a few kisses, a pat on her ass, nothing more.

She blinked away the tears that threatened. It was just a brief glitch. Nothing more. Brennan loved her. She believed that, and he wouldn't cheat on her.

She clung to that idea as she walked into the kitchen. The room bustled with activity. She found the head chef, confirmed that everything was in order then headed back to the ballroom. It was a charity event destined to raise tens of thousands for

homeless children. She loved the cause but winced at how much her clients had insisted she spend on food and decorations. She knew the theory—the more you spend, the more people will donate—but it seemed a bit extravagant. More and more she liked working for smaller organizations, where creativity was more important than cash.

She entered the ballroom through the servers' door, slipping in, blending. She scanned the room, keeping watch for Brennan's arrival and keeping track of the party. The next course came out and she slowed her steps as she moved through the crowd, savoring the oohs and ahhs from the patrons. She'd have to pass the compliments on to the chef.

The evening sped by. The perfectly arranged auction items had sold at high bids and now people were milling about, finding their coats, discussing who was going to drive home. To all the world, it was a perfect event. Bethany declared it to be true, promising to bring Kalen back next year.

"Will you still be working?" Bethany asked.

Kalen looked up from gathering the clipboards that had held the final silent auction sheets. "Why wouldn't I?"

"Well, I didn't know if you would continue to work after you got married."

"I don't see any reason why I won't still be planning the perfect party at this time next year."

"So you haven't set a date?" The question came out innocently enough but Kalen knew what was behind it. Until Brennan actually married her, he was still fair game. Hell, he was probably fair game after they got married, knowing some of these barracudas. "Be careful of too long an engagement," Bethany warned. "You might lose his interest."

"Impossible."

Bethany flinched at the smug masculine announcement. Kalen managed to keep her surprise hidden. At least she hoped she did.

Brennan stepped between the two women and wrapped his arm around Kalen's back. With one smooth movement, he pulled her up, hard against his body.

"Kalen's far too intriguing to ever lose my interest. It's me who has to make sure she doesn't get bored."

He bent down, holding her in place with that strong arm, and kissed her. Her gasp almost had time to turn to a giggle before he covered her mouth with his. She fell into the kiss. It had been days since he'd kissed her like this—with passion and hunger. Need.

For a moment she forgot their audience. Brennan's tongue teased her lips and she opened, her body trained and craving his dominance.

Brennan pulled his mouth away, leaving just a breath between them. Kalen slowly drifted to the surface and blinked, staring up at her powerful lover. His eyes glowed

red. She glanced to her right to see if Bethany was still watching, but at some point the other woman had drifted away.

"The wicked witch didn't stay for the rest of the show?" Brennan drawled.

Kalen pressed closer, pushing up on her tiptoes to kiss his cheek. "What's the rest of the show entail?" The ballroom was almost empty now so she didn't worry about anyone watching.

He glanced around the room as if considering the possibilities.

"We need a flat surface..." he said. Kalen laughed and pushed against his chest, easing out of his hold. For a moment he fought her then released her.

"We didn't the last time," she pointed out.

His eyes flared again. "Now, baby, you shouldn't say things like that unless you want to find yourself against the nearest wall and that pretty silk dress thrown up around your shoulders."

The threat came with a wicked grin that reached into Kalen's core. He looked serious. Her stomach dropped and a delicious ache started in her pussy.

His jaw tightened, clenching then relaxing then clenching again. He shook his head as if clearing the thought from his brain. Even as he did, a look washed over his face. Regret? Guilt?

He pushed his shoulders back, and the teasing dominant lover who'd held her so close disappeared and the cool lawyer returned.

"Sorry I'm late," Brennan said. "I meant to be here two hours ago."

"Was there a problem?" she asked, pleased that her tone was neutral, curious and not spiked with jealousy.

"No. Just too many people involved."

Brennan took the clipboards from her hands and they started toward the boxes along the wall.

"Who was there besides you, Byron and my dad?"

The muscles along Brennan's jaw tightened again.

"You know, Rebel and some others." He glanced around the room, clearly avoiding her stare. "Rike invited some of Broham's pack."

"Ahh...and how is Jezra?" This time Kalen didn't try to hide her disgust. She didn't like or trust her and it had nothing to do with what her brother had done to Kalen. It was years of childhood torment that hadn't abated. Every time they met, Jezra treated Kalen like a second-class citizen. She treated her like a *human*, which in Jezra's world was the deepest insult.

The edge of Brennan's mouth kicked up in a slight smile. "As far as I can tell, she's fine."

Kalen nodded and pushed the topic from her mind.

"Why did Dad invite Broham's people? I thought they were possible bad guys."

"Rike decided it might be a good idea to keep them close. He's not sure they're involved. I guess the thought is they'd just take Rebel out as a pack if they wanted him."

Brennan walked with her around the room as she checked in with her staff and made sure everything was wrapped up. It felt good. Normal.

After getting confirmation from her assistant that everything was fine, Kalen turned to Brennan. Normally she would have just kissed him and told him she would see him at home, either hers or his, but with the distance between them, she wasn't so sure.

"So, what's your plan now?" She leaned in and put her hand on his chest. He stared down, the light glowing in his eyes. She pressed a little closer, her body picking up the tension in his.

Brennan wrapped his hand around her back, holding her near, a few inches of space between their bodies. For a moment she thought he might reach down and squeeze her ass but then realized he was too aware. Even though most of the people had left, there were still hotel staff and her employees around. And everyone had cameras on their phones these days. He didn't need to end up on the internet with a picture of his hand groping her ass.

Knowing she was destined for a life of muted displays of public affection, Kalen did her best not to rub up against him. She took a breath. He smelled good. Woodsy and hot. Like he'd been rolling around in pine needles.

She tipped her head to the side and waited for his answer. He patted her back and stepped away. "I've got to head home." He looked away, suddenly finding the coat rack fascinating.

Kalen nodded. There was no invitation in his words or even the tone to suggest he wanted her to join him. She pushed her shoulders back. "Early meeting?"

"Yes. With the mayor."

"Oh, okay. Well, you go on. I've got a few things to do here."

"I'll hang around. Walk to your car."

She shook her head. "That's not necessary. I'll have one of the other guys walk me out. You need to get some sleep."

Part of her regretted the bite in her words—that she couldn't be the cool, sophisticated woman who could accept that her lover no longer found her attractive enough to want to fuck—but after a week of it, she'd had enough. He couldn't be more blatant that he didn't want to be near her. In a sexual way at least.

Pain washed across his face but she ignored it, spun away on her heel and headed back to the kitchen. She made a mental list of things still needing to be done. She had work to do. And that would keep her sane until she got home.

* * * * *

Brennan watched Kalen walk away. He should chase after her and tell her...what?

That the reason you were late was because you were dry humping Rebel? That you're afraid that if you get too close, she'll smell the male on you? Or that if you make love to her, you might think about Rebel?

He turned and stalked out of the ballroom. She didn't want him to wait with her. That was fine but he was going to make damn sure she made it to her car safely. He'd parked near her so he found the closest exit and waited.

It wasn't long. About twenty minutes later, she walked out, accompanied by one of the servers. A young kid with a big smile and looking too fucking interested in Kalen's cleavage.

Brennan pushed away from the door and followed them down the aisle. It took the kid almost half the distance to notice there was someone else there. *Oh yeah, he's going to be a big help.* Brennan felt his gums ache and almost gave in to the urge to snarl at the pup.

The guy looked over his shoulder and started walking faster. Kalen looked back and sighed.

"Night, Mark. Thanks for walking me out."

His eyes bounced toward Brennan. The fear rolling off the young man tickled Brennan's nose and teased the wolf. *My mate. Mine.* His eyes warmed and he was pretty sure they were glowing.

The kid flinched but held firm. "Uh, I should make sure you get to your car okay."

Kalen shook her head. "It's okay. He's a friend."

I'm fucking more than a friend.

"Have a good night. And thanks for all your hard work." She flashed a smile—a real smile—to Mark. Mark blushed and Brennan felt his lips twitch. He could have the kid running with one growl.

"If you're sure..." he said but he was already backing away.

"I'm sure." This time the smile was forced. She waited until Mark had almost run to the end of the parking structure then turned and faced Brennan. "I thought you had an early meeting."

"I do but I'm going to make sure you get home safely." The wolf demanded that she be protected.

"Great. Just what I need." She sighed and shook her head. "Another freakin' Alpha wolf looking out for me. I'm perfectly capable of getting myself home."

"Yeah, I saw who you chose as your protector. He looked ready to pee his pants." Brennan didn't even try to hide the triumph in his voice.

"Only because you tried to intimidate him. Against a normal *human* attacker, he would have been fine."

"But you're not human."

"No. *You're* not human. I am." She spun away and stalked the last few feet to her car. She glanced over her shoulder. "I'll be perfectly fine going home *by myself*." The words rang with silent meaning—he was no longer invited to come over. She yanked open her car door. "Tell the mayor I said hi." She plopped herself down in the driver's seat and slammed the door shut before he could respond.

Brennan stood there as she backed up and drove away. Part of him realized she was right. A month ago, hell, two weeks ago, he wouldn't have worried if she'd had one of the waitstaff walk her to her car. He'd have been happy that she'd had someone with her.

But that was before.

Before he'd been bitten. Before the wolf had taken up residence in his brain, guiding him. He should be in that car, going home with Kalen, but he couldn't. The memory of earlier in the evening plagued his thoughts.

Nothing happened. He and Rebel hadn't fucked or even made each other come but they'd gotten damn close.

They'd kissed and rubbed against each other. His wolf hadn't liked pulling away. The creature didn't seem to understand loyalty. It just wanted to fuck.

No it didn't just want to fuck. It wanted to fuck Rebel.

And Kalen.

Both. Alone. together.

He started car and pulled out of the parking space, telling himself he would not follow Kalen home. He didn't need to add stalking to his crime.

Fighting the wolf's instinct, he forced himself to drive to his condo. He'd spent more nights here in the past two weeks than he had in the previous six months.

And he didn't like sleeping without Kalen beside him, but until he figured out how to get rid of this attraction to Rebel, he had to stay away from her.

* * * * *

Kalen kicked back on her couch and listened to her mom talk. They were planning another big run for the full moon and she wanted Kalen to come.

"Probably not. Brennan's a big boy. He can go by himself."

"But I think he would appreciate you being there. Particularly when it's over." The singsong teasing tone of her mother's voice drew a groan from Kalen.

"Mom—"

"It's a fact of werewolf life. And it's fun."

"Mother."

"I'm just saying...the boys need an outlet during the full moon. When your dad and Byron—"

"Okay, just stop there. I do not want to hear it." No child liked to think of their parents having sex, and then to throw in an additional lover... A shiver skittered down her spine. But even as the tremor stopped she knew it wasn't just because of her parents. It was Brennan and how he would find his "outlet" during the next full moon when she wasn't there. "I'll think about the full moon night." *Like hell.* "Let's talk about something else. Did Dad say anything after the meeting last night or were you already in bed?"

"Oh no. He got home about eight thirty. He thinks..."

The rest of her words blurred together. Eight thirty. Even with the hour drive back, Brennan should have been home by nine thirty, ten at the latest. Not almost midnight. And he hadn't gone home to change. He'd been wearing dark pants and sweater. Not formal attire like the rest of the room.

Where had he been for over two hours?

She sat up and brushed a curl off her face. Her fingers trembled as she slipped the strand behind her ears.

"Kalen?"

"What? Oh. Yeah, I'm here."

"Are you okay?"

"I'm fine. I'm... Listen, Mom, I suddenly realized I've got to go do something. I'll talk to you later, okay?" She hung up before her mother could answer.

She stared at the beige carpet, trying to keep her lungs from seizing up. "He wouldn't. He wouldn't. I know Brennan." The words bounced off without penetrating.

She jumped to her feet and started to pace. *Brennan wouldn't cheat on you. He wouldn't.*

This time the words settled a bit deeper. He wouldn't hurt her but something had happened last night. Something that made him lie to her.

You don't know he's lying. He could have stayed to talk to people. Ask him.

It sounded logical and sane but she couldn't do it. It would seem like she'd been checking up on him.

But you weren't. Your mother offered the information. Ask him.

Right. Kalen clenched her teeth. They were supposed to be able to talk about anything, right? She could ask him. They were going to have dinner together. Brennan had sent her an email earlier asking her out. It was sweet and kind of romantic. He seemed to be making an apology for last night.

The phone vibrated in her hand and she flipped it over. Brennan's name appeared on the screen.

"Speak of the devil," she murmured before she tapped the screen and answered.

"Hey, babe." She flinched a bit at the greeting. When Brennan was feeling sexy and romantic, she was "baby", never "babe".

"Hey."

"Listen about tonight..."

She closed her eyes and tipped her head back, hoping to hold back the tears. "Let me guess. You can't make dinner. Something came up at the pack house."

"Yes. They got some solid information about who is going after Rebel. It shouldn't take long. I'll come by to see you afterward."

She shifted the pain to anger.

"Don't bother. I don't want to be anyone's second date of the evening."

"Kalen..."

"Sorry, did that sound bitchy? Good."

"Let's have dinner tomorrow night and I will be there."

"Sure. Fine. Have a good night." She hung up the phone and turned it off. She'd check it later for client calls but she wasn't going to talk about it anymore. She needed to think.

You don't need to think. The truth wouldn't be silent. She knew what was happening and knew there was no way to stop it. Knew that she probably shouldn't even try. Brennan was a werewolf now.

She didn't fit into his world. Not anymore.

* * * * *

Kalen waited for Brennan to enter the dining room. She'd done a lot of thinking in the past twenty-four hours. Her decision weighed on her heart but it was the right thing to do. For both of them.

Brennan walked down the hall and saw her seated at the table. "What's up? I thought we were going out to dinner."

Kalen shook her head. "I don't really feel like it. Can we talk for a minute?" She forced herself to breathe, fighting the tension around her chest, forcing air into her lungs.

"What's wrong?" Brennan put his keys on the table and came over, sitting in the chair beside her. "Baby, I know it's been strained the last few weeks. I'm dealing with some stuff that I need to talk to you about but I'm not quite there yet."

"I can probably help you along with that."

Confusion flitted across his face, then that flash of guilt.

"There's something that I need to tell you," she said, knowing she couldn't put it off. It was the whole bandage principle. Rip it off fast. Get it over with.

"You're worrying me." He grabbed her left hand, taking it in his, his fingers stroking her palm.

She tried to nod but couldn't make her body move.

"Listen..."

He tensed and turned her hand over. "Where's your ring?"

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about."

"Did you lose it?" Relief seemed to weaken his muscles and he leaned against the table. "Baby, don't worry about that. It's insured. We can—"

"No, I didn't lose the ring. I have it." She dragged her hand away from his. This was hard enough. She reached into her pocket and pulled out the sparkling diamond. She put it on the table and slid it toward him. "I can't marry you."

Silence crushed the room. She waited, making herself look at him, meet his eyes.

There was no explosion but she didn't expect one. Not from Brennan.

"What? Why?"

She bit her lips, hesitating a minute too long.

"Damn it, Kalen, I deserve some sort of explanation."

"I can't marry you," she said again then shrugged helplessly. "I don't fit into your world."

"What? What world? We live in the same world."

"Not anymore. I'm not a werewolf." That seemed to stop him but Kalen kept talking. Now that she'd begun she needed to get it out. "You are. I know it's not something you asked for but it's your new reality. You belong there. I don't have any werewolf senses but even I recognize that your wolf is strong, dominant. You're the kind of wolf that others admire and turn to."

"But that doesn't change—"

"I grew up around males like you. I know what you need in a mate. I've seen the females my father and brothers have chosen."

"They're normal women."

"No, Brennan, they aren't. They're strong female werewolves. Matches to the strong male. You need a strong female. And I'm not."

"I don't need a female werewolf. I need you."

"You think that now, but as your wolf gets stronger, I won't fit him anymore. I've seen it happen with less powerful wolves than yours." She wrapped her arms around her waist. "I spent years breaking away from the pack life. I don't fit into that world. I never have and I don't want to. I want to live a nice human life."

"I thought that's what we had."

"Before, yes. I can see it happening, Brennan. You're spending more and more time at the pack house—"

"We've had three meetings."

"And you like it." He didn't deny it. She didn't expect him to. "It's okay. I understand. I really do. You're a werewolf and these people are just like you. They

understand you. It's normal for you to find someone in that world, to find a mate for your wolf."

That was the crux of it.

Brennan shook his head. His knuckles had long turned white and she was pretty sure he was fighting his transition, fighting the animal inside him.

"You think I've found someone else?"

She swallowed her answer and just stared at him.

"Fuck! Kalen, I'm not sleeping with any of the females."

"I know." Her answer was quiet but stopped him.

"Then why...?"

"I'm not strong enough to be a match for your wolf, so whether you want it or not, you're looking at other women, the stronger females in the pack. Your wolf is naturally looking for a mate that complements him. I can't be that woman. And I don't want a man to stay with me out of loyalty and honor. I want him to stay with me because he loves me and I'm the one he wants."

"Kalen, I do love you, and you know I want you."

"But you haven't touched me in almost two weeks," she said. No reason not to put it all out there. "You haven't touched me since the night of the full moon, since you started going to these 'meetings' at the pack house. You won't even sleep beside me."

"That has nothing to do with you. I just—"

She couldn't hear it. Couldn't hear him say he wanted to fuck another female. Or that his wolf didn't find her attractive.

"Don't. I've seen it in your eyes when you come back from the pack house." She couldn't stop the tears welling up. "You're pretty good at hiding it but I recognize the guilt on your face."

He blanched. "I'm not sleeping with one of the females," he said again but she noticed he didn't deny the emotion or the desire.

"I believe that but you obviously want one or more of the other women in the pack. They call to the animal in you. It's best if we break this now."

"Kalen—"

She shook her head and stood, spinning away and leaving the ring on the table.

Brennan didn't follow her out of the room. She didn't really expect him to. He hadn't denied it. There was someone else he wanted.

She waited upstairs until she heard the front door close. She knew it wasn't over. Knew that he would be back to talk about it. She just needed to be strong. This was what was best, what was right for both of them. He needed a strong female wolf and she needed a human. She couldn't compete with the females in the pack.

And she wasn't going to spend the rest of her life on the outside. She'd done that for twenty-two years until she'd finished college and moved away. She'd made a good life here, separate from the pack, but now she was being dragged back into it.

She wandered around her bedroom. The memories of Brennan and his lovemaking assaulted her. She wasn't going to be able to stay here. She might have to move. Not just houses but out of the city, away from the pack. Her father wouldn't be happy but her mother would understand.

The doorbell chimed and Kalen sighed. She didn't want to talk to anyone and it wasn't like friends just dropped by. They called first.

The doorbell rang again.

Her curiosity wouldn't let her hide upstairs. She crept down the stairs, doing her best to move silently. It wouldn't fool a werewolf but a human wouldn't know she was there. And werewolves didn't come to her house. Except for Rebel and he would just break in through the back door.

The thought made her smile and she put her eye to the peephole. And felt her stomach drop. Not Rebel. Rebel's brother. He paced the tiny front step, practically twitching.

Damn, she didn't want to talk to him but he looked so lonely. And it was something to think about besides Brennan. With a sigh and a weak smile she opened the door.

"Chas, what's going on?"

"Kalen, good, I'm so glad you're here." He looked over his shoulder. "Can I come in?"

"Uh, I guess." She stepped out of the way. She started to close the door behind him but he took it out of her hand.

"I'll get that."

She backed up and headed down the hall to her kitchen. Might as well make some coffee. It looked like it could be a long conversation.

* * * * *

Brennan stared at the road, blind, barely aware of the passing cars, thankful he was on a long stretch of almost empty highway. No need to stop, no traffic.

His fingers curled around the steering wheel, turning white even as the corners of his vision sparkled with red. She'd left him. Ended it. A foreign pain, an ache like he'd never felt before, ripped through his chest, burning and making the edges rough, grinding down until everything felt raw.

His tires ran over the bumps aligned along the edges of the road and he jolted, looking up, his eyes focusing for the first time in hours. It took a moment to realize where was...where he was heading. Rebel's. Even as he told himself not to do it, he turned on his blinker and made the exit.

The car seemed to drive itself. He'd driven it enough times. Just last night. The meeting had been a waste of time. He and Rebel had arrived to find Jezra had just invited *him*. She'd wanted to "talk". Her blatant attempt at seduction had just pissed him off and he and Rebel had left. They'd returned to the cabin and damn if it hadn't happened again. They'd ended up in an embrace, one they'd barely pulled back from.

Brennan remembered standing there. Shaking his head. His hands vibrating with need.

"We can't keep doing this," Brennan said, his chest rising and falling in long hard breaths.

"Yeah."

He looked at Rebel. Every muscle on the guy was tight and strained. He was fighting the same desire Brennan was.

"We need to separate our wolves," Rebel said.

Our wolves. Brennan clung to that idea – that their wolves were the driving forces.

"It's going to be hard not to see each other when we're still looking for the guys trying to kill you."

Rebel shook his head. "I'm going to leave. That solves a whole bunch of problems." He shrugged. "I just need to get paid for this job I'm doing and I'm gone."

The wolf battered the inside of Brennan's head, howling its protest, but Brennan pushed it back. Rebel was right. They had to put some distance between them or they were going to end up doing something they both regretted. They were going to end up hurting Kalen.

So they'd agreed. They wouldn't see each other again. At all if they could help it. Definitely not alone.

Brennan turned his car down the long gravel drive to Rebel's cabin.

Fuck, this was a bad idea.

Chapter Fifteen

"What the fuck are you doing here?" Rebel demanded before Brennan had even shut his car door. He'd been behind the cabin in his little camp and must have heard Brennan drive up. "We talked about this."

"Kalen broke up with me."

"What?"

"She broke up with me," he said again, enunciating each word. "Gave me my ring back."

"Fuck." Rebel sighed and looked up at the sky. "Just fuck." He turned and walked into the cabin. Brennan followed. His cock gave a weak nudge of interest, but for the first time in weeks he hadn't sprouted an instant hard-on around Rebel. That had to be a good sign, right? Getting your heart broken was a cure for being oversexed.

Rebel opened a cupboard and pulled out a half-full whiskey bottle. He poured doubles into two glasses and handed one to Brennan. He tossed it back in one shot. When he lowered the glass, Rebel offered him the other one. He took it but only took a sip. The urge to pound the bottle tempted him. Getting plastered seemed like a good idea right now.

Rebel poured a shot into Brennan's first glass and leaned against the kitchen counter, sipping the amber liquid.

"What did you do?" Rebel asked.

"Me?"

"Why'd she break up with you? You had to have done something. She loves you."

"Great. That makes it so much better."

"Well?" Rebel asked.

"I didn't do anything, as you can attest."

Rebel shook his head and raised his eyebrows. "Help me out here."

"She broke up with me because she thinks I'm fucking one of the women at the pack house." He took another gulp of whiskey. "No. She doesn't think I'm fucking them. She just thinks I want to. Says I've been looking *guilty* when I come home from these meetings."

"Have you?"

"Fuck you." Brennan waited for Rebel's snotty "I have" but it didn't appear. A testament to the seriousness of the situation.

"Did you tell her the truth?"

Brennan felt his jaw drop open and he stared at Rebel.

"The truth?"

"Yes."

"What am I supposed to tell her?" The aggression surging through his body insisted on a physical outlet. He stepped forward, pushing Rebel's shoulders, the heels of his hands thumping against the hard chest, sending the other man back two steps.

The wolf growled inside his brain and Brennan recognized the sound. It wasn't a threat or challenge—just hunger. The sight of his mate—the word ringing through his head like a chime—backing away, almost wanting to be chased, sent him forward. He pushed again. Rebel's shoulders hit the cabinets. "Should I tell her that it's not the women I want to fuck but you? That really what I want is to bend you over and drive my dick into your ass? Or drop down on my knees and suck your cock because your dick is invading my dreams? You think I should tell her that?"

He pressed forward, wanting more than anything to rub his cock against Rebel's groin, to see if he was hard, to feel that thick shaft pulsing against his. Memories of that one night assailed him and he felt his ass clench, remembering Rebel behind him, hard inside him. Fuck. His teeth ached, wanting to bite down, sink into Rebel's shoulder.

"Yes."

It took him a heartbeat to realize what Rebel was responding to.

"How is that going to be better than her thinking I want to fuck the females in the pack?" Brennan shook his head. Really, what was worse? Thinking your fiancé wanted other women or knowing he wanted to fuck another guy? He wasn't a woman so had no idea which option she'd choose.

"She'll understand."

"How d'you figure?"

"One, have you met her family? It's nothing but freakin' three-ways. And two..." Rebel seemed to take a bracing breath. Brennan paused and watched the strange restraint. Rebel was an aggressive male wolf. He didn't hesitate. "It's just a residual effect."

"What?"

"What you're feeling. The desire. The hunger. It's a residual effect from the bite. Just tell her that. Fuck, I can explain it to her."

It was an easy excuse and part of him wanted to grab it and hold on but he couldn't. Couldn't lie to himself or Rebel.

"You keep saying that." He grabbed Rebel's hand and pulled it down, slamming his open palm to Brennan's cock. "Does that feel 'residual' to you?"

Rebel gulped, his fingers curving, cupping Brennan's dick. For a moment, just a moment, they both stood there, nothing more than Rebel's hand, Brennan's cock.

"It's...it's..." He couldn't seem to find the words.

"It's bullshit. If it were residual effects from the bite, the need to fuck you wouldn't be worse every time I see you." The wolf howled triumphantly in his head, vibrating

the inner lining of his ears. Before he could think better of it—hell, before he could think—he wrapped his hand around Rebel’s neck and pulled him forward, mashing their mouths together. Violence ripped through his veins and didn’t allow him to linger. He drove his tongue into Rebel’s mouth, taking control, absorbing the spicy flavor of his mate.

His hands worked without his command, tearing at the buttons holding Rebel’s jeans closed, shoving the material down until that hot hard cock pushed into his palm. Without thinking, without analyzing, he wrapped his fingers around the thick shaft and began to pump. The scent of arousal flooded the air and momentarily blinded Brennan’s senses.

He pulled back from the kiss. The taste and power of it made his head spin. He bit at Rebel’s lips, biting down almost too hard before diving back in for another commanding kiss. Rebel came alive. He growled into Brennan’s mouth and grabbed the back of his head, holding him in place, fighting Brennan for domination.

Power and lust sang through his veins. This was what he wanted. His mate, fucking, taking what he needed, giving what he needed.

Brennan pushed back from the kiss, shoving Rebel hard back against the counter. Brennan dropped to his knees. He’d never done this before, never really considered it until recently, but now he needed to taste. The smell of soap and Rebel infused his skin and Brennan wanted to lick it off. He flicked his tongue out, catching the pearly drop that leaked from the tip. Expecting it to be bitter, he was surprised to discover it hovered just on sweetness. Rebel had warned him that werewolf cum tasted different. He licked his lips, wanting more.

The hunger that ripped through his core didn’t allow for his virginity in this area. He just opened his mouth and pushed onto Rebel’s cock, taking too much, almost choking himself as the thick head filled his mouth.

“Easy,” Rebel whispered with a gentle stroke to Brennan’s hair.

Fuck easy, he thought. He wanted this dick. Wanted to feel Rebel come. Then he would flip him over and fuck that tight ass. The wolf was great at visualization and the pictures and sensations flooded his brain. He tightened his lips around Rebel’s cock and pulled back, sucking then returning, stopping just short of the gagging point. This time when he retreated, he took a moment to taste, tease. He rubbed his tongue across the underside, trailing the thick vein with the tip. The hand in his hair tightened. So he did it again.

The sensation of having a man’s dick in his mouth wasn’t strange at all, maybe because he’d been thinking about it for weeks. He closed his eyes and let his other senses take over. He slid his hands up Rebel’s legs. The muscles pulled tight beneath his palms and Brennan growled, hating the thin layer of material that still covered Rebel’s thighs. He wanted naked but the wolf brain couldn’t figure out how to make that happen and the need to touch was too strong.

He pushed his hand between Rebel's legs and cupped the heavy balls. The cock in his mouth twitched and Rebel pushed forward, fucking Brennan's mouth for the first time. Brennan moved with instinct, sucking and squeezing the balls, sliding his other hand around and teasing the tight opening to Rebel's ass. Rebel groaned and Brennan felt the sound in his own cock. He pressed his finger deeper, not enough to hurt but enough to test the tightness of the hole.

Rebel tensed for a moment. Brennan snapped his head back, letting Rebel's cock pop from his mouth.

"Relax, babe. It won't hurt if you relax." He allowed himself a half smile before he opened his lips and sucked Rebel's cock back into his mouth. The rhythm found itself this time and he bobbed his head. Tension built in Rebel's muscles, but the tight ring of his ass eased and Brennan pushed his finger forward just a bit, feeling that heat. Knowing it belonged to him.

He tapped just inside the hole and Rebel cried out, his hips punching forward, his dick almost choking Brennan as he came.

The sweet taste flooded Brennan's mouth and sent the wolf inside him wild. He growled and sucked, wanting more, needing it. He worked Rebel's cock until it went soft. With one more lash of his tongue, he pulled back. Rebel leaned against the counter, his chest rising and falling in heavy pants, his eyes glowing bright red. Brennan could feel his own eyes heat up and the world turned black and white.

But he held the wolf back. He didn't want to make the change now. He wanted to fuck.

He surged to his feet and grabbed Rebel's neck, yanking him close and covering his mouth in a kiss meant to dominate. Rebel groaned and opened for him. The wolf screamed his triumph even as the human knew this was a temporary submission.

Still, he was going to take it.

He jerked back and spun Rebel around, putting him facedown on the kitchen table.

"What the fuck?" Rebel pushed up on his arms but Brennan was ready for him. He drove the heels of his hands into Rebel's shoulder blades and held him down.

Brennan's body had changed in the past month. He was stronger now, his muscles had bulked out. And he knew how to use the wolf's strength.

"Hold still." He pushed forward, grinding his cock against Rebel's ass. "Your ass has been driving me crazy for a month, *babe*." That first night, his first change, he'd tried to keep his eyes off Rebel's ass, but fuck, he wasn't staying off it tonight. Rebel froze. His muscles rippled with tension but he didn't move.

"You sure you want to do this?"

"Fuck yes." He looked around for something he could use as lube.

"Think again, asshole."

That was the only warning he got before Rebel reared up, pushed the table away and rolled, spinning out of Brennan's hold. He landed on his feet. His jeans still hung

around his knees restricting his movements but he took care of that with one shove, pushing the material to the ground.

His cock rebounded, curving up.

"I'm not just going to roll over and take it," Rebel announced.

Brennan looked at his hard cock then flashed a taunting grin. "You sure? Because that looks like you want it awful bad."

"Maybe I want to fuck you."

Brennan shook his head. "Not this time, honey. My turn to ride that tight ass."

Rebel's eyes gleamed with hunger. "Only if you can catch me."

For a moment he thought Rebel would change but he took off, staying human, running for the living room. *Got to love a man who wants to be caught*, he thought as he chased after his lover. Only Rebel wasn't running toward he bedroom. He headed for the door.

Brennan knew that if Rebel got outside he'd change and Brennan would never catch him. Rebel knew these woods too well. Rebel laughed as he ran but Brennan wasn't going to be beat. He leapt, flying over the couch and landing on Rebel's back. They twisted in the air but momentum carried them hard to the ground, shoulders bouncing on the wood floor. Twin groans clashed in the air.

"Oh fuck."

"Damn, that hurt."

"Your fault."

"You're the asshole who ran."

Neither moved. They lay there making sure their lungs still functioned. Then his wolf seemed to notice Rebel was naked.

He nudged Rebel forward and rolled on top, hips rocking, pumping his cock against Rebel's bare ass. The rough cloth of his jeans probably hurt so he didn't press too hard. Rebel tensed, his fingers spreading out on the wood floor. Brennan watched, waiting to see if Rebel was going to make another run for it.

But Rebel stayed in place, pressing his ass back, adding delicious friction to Brennan's dick.

"Damn, babe, that's it." He ground his hips forward a little harder. Fuck, he could come just from this.

"No." Rebel's hair fell across his face, shielding him. Though his wolf fought him, Brennan stopped his movements. He wasn't going to force Rebel, even if he was just rubbing off. Rebel's head tipped forward as his ass pushed back. "Fuck me." The command was whispered almost too soft for Brennan to hear, but he could feel the pressure from Rebel's butt. Brennan groaned and leaned forward, draping his body across Rebel's, placing a kiss on his shoulder.

"Where do I find the stuff?"

Rebel's fingers curled again like he was ready to take off but this time Brennan didn't worry.

"Where's it at, babe?"

"Side-table drawer," Rebel said, tipping his head toward the end of the couch.

"Nice." Unable to resist, unable to leave that skin unmarked, Brennan let his teeth expand just a little and bit down, grabbing the tight muscle of Rebel's upper back. Not sinking in, just biting, holding. Rebel pushed up on his hands, arching his back. Brennan tightened his jaw, his teeth millimeters from breaking the skin. He drew back and yanked himself way, hopping to his feet. He stared down at the bare ass before him, round and hard.

He looked for a moment, fully conscious of what he was doing. The wolf zigzagged through his brain but the animal wasn't controlling him. He wouldn't be able to blame this on moon lust or the wolf. The animal inside him wanted Rebel, wanted to *fuck* Rebel, but the human was fully in control.

Brennan turned and walked to the small table at the end of the couch. He tugged open the drawer. A bottle of lube tumbled to the front. Brennan's mouth pulled up in a half smile. So Rebel wasn't spending all his nights outside. Brennan glanced at the big screen. Porn had to be amazing on that thing.

He glanced at the couch. The cushions looked worn and thin. Fuck no. They were going to need a new couch.

His mind barely registered the future plans as he turned around and saw Rebel's ass tipped up, a shallow dip in his back, just enough to offer up that ass. Fuck yeah. He gripped the lube, shaking the bottle, making sure there was plenty for what he had planned.

He flicked the lube open with his thumb as he dropped down, his knees landing between Rebel's.

Rebel pushed up on his hands and knees, spreading his thighs wide. Then he dropped his head down. The position was almost submissive except for the energy humming through Rebel's muscles. He was letting himself be fucked. Brennan had won their little battle and Rebel's ass was his prize.

And he was going to take full advantage.

He squeezed the lube onto his fingers and let one finger slide around Rebel's hole, teasing before he pressed inside. Rebel tensed for a heartbeat, then Brennan could feel the conscious effort to relax, to let Brennan inside.

He'd never done this before, not even with a woman, but since that night when Rebel had fucked him, Brennan had read up a bit, wanting to know why he'd enjoyed it so much. He knew the physiology now, knew enough not to hurt Rebel, or so he hoped.

When Rebel seemed relaxed, he put another finger inside him and eased them forward, feeling the tight grip around his fingers. Fuck, he was going to come as soon as

he put his cock inside. He pumped his fingers in and out, going slow, feeling Rebel's body adapt to the shallow penetration.

The ache in his teeth hadn't subsided but he knew he couldn't bite. Not the way he wanted to. Instead he leaned forward and nipped at the taut buttocks. Rebel grunted and a dark pink spot bloomed on his ass. Perfect. Brennan stared at the mark, knowing he wanted to sink his teeth deep into the strong muscle. Someday.

He pumped his fingers in one more time, savoring the tight grip. Stretching deep, as far as he could reach, he bent his fingers looking for —

"Aaahhh!"

Brennan grinned and nudged that space again. Rebel pushed back, driving Brennan's fingers deeper into his ass.

"Like that, babe?" He didn't really give Rebel a chance to answer. He pulled his fingers out and grabbed the lube, smearing it over his cock.

"Fuck you," Rebel growled at him.

"This time it's your turn." He placed one hand on Rebel's back and used the other to guide his dick to the tight hole. He put the head of his cock against Rebel's ass and waited, hoping for some sign that he could move forward, take what he needed.

Rebel pressed back, nudging the tip of Brennan's cock into his hole. That was all he needed. He kept it slow, remembering the steady, strong penetration when Rebel fucked him. He closed his eyes and held his breath. The tight squeeze as he pushed in made his cock want to explode but he fought it, wanting more. Part of him tried to connect with what Rebel had to be feeling but the wicked grip on his cock took all his attention. He eased forward until his groin pressed against Rebel's ass.

They hung there, neither moving, both breathing.

Brennan finally grabbed enough oxygen to speak. "You okay?"

"Yes, just do it."

The deep, forceful growl almost made Brennan pull back—not from fear but just sheer orneriness. Instead he pressed just a bit deeper.

"What's wrong, baby? You need to be fucked? Hungry for some cock up your ass?" He punctuated the question with a nudge, angling his hips down.

"Oh damn, just —"

Even as Rebel swore, Brennan pulled out, a slow retreat until just the head stayed inside. He stared at the tiny hole stretched around his cock.

"Damn, babe," he whispered reverently as he pushed back in.

He didn't want to come too soon, wanted to enjoy this. He continued the controlled thrusts, keeping it slow even when Rebel pushed back, trying to send him deeper. He learned Rebel's body, his reactions, finding that place inside that Brennan knew from experience would send a shock up Rebel's spine.

Fuck, he had a gorgeous back. Brennan ran his hand across the strong muscles, loving the power beneath him as he continued to fuck.

In the distance the phone rang, but neither of them stopped. Brennan pushed forward, driving his cock in deeper, claiming Rebel's ass. His body took control, thrusting a little harder, a little deeper.

Rebel groaned and let the intoxicating sensations fill his body. He pressed the heels of his hands into the rough wood floor and held himself still, fighting the urge to push back against Brennan's slow penetration.

"Fuck, more," Rebel commanded. He was close. It had been fifteen years since he'd let anyone fuck him, even more since he'd wanted it, but damn he wanted this. Sweat beaded across his forehead as he alternately reached for his climax and fought not to come. Fuck, now he could understand the appeal of having someone's dick in his ass. Brennan thrust forward and hit that one spot, sending another wicked jolt through his core, blinding him.

"Damn it, come." Brennan growled, filling Rebel again. The strain in Brennan's voice almost made him smile. Almost. He ignored Brennan's command, wanting Brennan to lose control.

Brennan growled and reached around Rebel's hip, grabbing his cock and squeezing. The slow, steady thrusts lost some of their control, Brennan fucking him harder. Brennan tightened his hand and drove Rebel's cock through his fist.

Rebel roared and he pushed his hips back as Brennan thrust forward. They slammed together, one shocking the other.

They both groaned and the control broke for both of them. Brennan pumped forward harder. Rebel dropped his head to the ground and let his ass get fucked, hard and deep, loving every stroke. He held off as long as he could, but between the hand holding his cock and Brennan's dick pounding his ass, he couldn't win. His balls pulled up and he shouted, coming, hot streams pulsing over Brennan's fingers.

Brennan drove into him one more time, grunting as he came, pouring himself into Rebel's ass.

* * * * *

Kalen fiddled with her coffee cup and tried to think of a way to get Chas moving. So far he hadn't said much. Just kept checking his phone like he was waiting for a call.

And she was a bit too raw to talk right now. What she wanted was to go upstairs and have a good cry. So maybe having Chas here was a good thing. At least she couldn't break down. Not yet.

She sighed. Chas looked up and she forced herself to smile.

No. She couldn't do it. She needed time alone.

"Listen, Chas, this is really not a good time for me." She stood up. "I hate to kick you out but I really have some things I need to do."

"Wait. I want to... There's something you need to know."

"Chas, I'm sorry but I—"

His phone rang and he groaned.

"I'm sorry." The regret in his voice seemed out of proportion for just an apology for rudeness. "I have to get this." He stood up and walked out of the dining room, headed to the entryway.

Perfect, because he can just keep walking. She gathered up the two coffee mugs and set them in the kitchen sink. She gave him a few minutes for his call. His voice dropped to low, intense murmurs. Whatever it was, it couldn't be good. She tried to find some sympathy but really she needed time alone.

Another voice joined Chas'. Kalen stopped. She couldn't have heard that over the phone.

She walked into the hallway. "Chas?"

Chas wasn't alone. A large man with a bushy red beard and mean eyes stood beside him.

"What's going on? Who is this?"

She didn't have the wolf's senses but she didn't need them to know this was a dangerous man. She took a step back, mentally calculating where she'd left her phone.

"I'm sorry, Kalen. It wasn't supposed to be like this. You weren't ever supposed to be involved."

"Involved with what?" Keep them talking. She needed a bit of room to run. Get to her phone. One button and help would be on the way. She just had to—

The guy with the red beard pushed past Chas and started toward Kalen. She wasn't going to make it but she wasn't going down without a fight. She spun and ran, punching open the kitchen door.

She got one foot on the stone floor and a heavy hand landed on her collar, yanking her back.

She screamed.

"Don't hurt her!" Chas shouted.

"Shut up, bitch." Red Beard's other hand covered her mouth, a fuzzy cloth slipping between her lips. At first she thought it was a gag. Then she took a breath and realized no, it was something— The world went black.

* * * * *

Brennan rolled off Rebel, thinking he needed to get up and clean up, but he couldn't move. Not yet.

He'd finally done it. He'd fucked Rebel. His wolf growled, igniting the memories of being inside his mate.

The human mind pushed through the thoughts, back to Kalen. Yes, he'd finally done it. He'd cheated on her. Technically he hadn't. She'd given him his ring back but he still felt engaged.

Then why did you fuck another guy?

He sighed. He hated it when his conscience got sarcastic.

The phone rang again. He opened his eyes. Rebel didn't react. Brennan realized he'd been hearing that ringing for a long time.

"Are you going to get that?"

"No."

"It's kind of irritating."

"Then you answer it."

"I'm not answering your phone." He nudged Rebel's hip with his knee but the man didn't get up. The annoying rings stopped and they both sighed. Neither moved. Brennan couldn't even imagine what was going on in Rebel's head. Probably nothing. Brennan closed his eyes and tried to do the same.

The setting sun barely shone through the windows and Brennan started to drift off, his body relaxed, his mind forcefully blank.

The sharp ring jolted his body out of the lovely daze.

"Fuck," Rebel growled, pushing him up to his hands and knees. The position drew a growl from Brennan's chest. "Don't even think about it."

Brennan laughed, his mind instantly making the leap, wondering what it would take to get Rebel beneath him again.

Rebel stood up and though Brennan had never looked at another man sexually until recently, he couldn't help but enjoy the strong lines of Rebel's legs and ass. Rebel walked to the corner and picked up the phone.

"What?"

Brennan chuckled, thinking whoever was on the other end must be peeing his pants.

"What? Chas, slow down. You're babbling and I can't understand you." He looked at Brennan and rolled his eyes. "Try again."

All humor, all light, drained out of Rebel's body as he listened. Tension radiated out of him, catching Brennan in its web. Brennan came to his feet, moving closer. He didn't know what was going on—the tinny voice through the phone line was too weak for him to understand—but he needed to be near Rebel. He came close but didn't touch. The energy vibrating out of Rebel was like an electric fence—tempting but dangerous.

Brennan tipped his head, close enough now to hear Chas' voice.

"I'm sorry, I just—"

"Thanks for the call. Now get your shit and get out of town because if I ever see you again, I'm going rip your head off your shoulders." He slammed the phone down and

looked up at Brennan. The red in his eyes was like nothing he'd ever seen before. "They grabbed Kalen."

Chapter Sixteen

Kalen looked down at the floor and tried to breathe calmly through her nose. A thick band of duct tape covered her mouth from ear to ear. A little of the initial fear had subsided. They didn't seem to want to hurt her but she couldn't figure out what they wanted.

They were waiting on something. Or someone.

She grunted through the duct tape and pulled against the strips that bound her arms. The guy who seemed to be the leader glanced over at her. "Just be quiet and don't move. You won't get hurt." She could barely see his lips move through the thick red beard. "You got nothing we want." He looked over her head, raising his chin to the guy standing behind her. "That thing working?"

She couldn't twist in the chair but she could turn enough to look over her shoulder. A young man—had to be in early twenties—was setting up a video camera on top of a tripod. He nodded then looked in the viewfinder and pointed the lens toward the opposite wall.

Kalen had spent the last ten minutes looking at that same wall and knew there was nothing interesting about it. It was the chains hanging from the ceiling that worried her. A hook hung at the end of the chains. Like a butcher might use to hang up a piece of meat he wanted to bleed out.

They just needed the animal to hang from that hook.

Her stomach turned and she closed her eyes, fighting to stay calm.

They didn't want her. They wanted Rebel.

She was the bait.

* * * * *

Rebel pulled his truck onto the empty street. Strange, when Rebel had told him the address, Brennan had expected abandoned buildings, maybe the meatpacking district. This was a brand-new development. Quiet. Not quite finished. A new office complex. The sign indicated it was set to open in about a month so they had to be finishing the final touches.

"Great, we can spill blood on brand-new carpets," he muttered as Rebel killed the engine. It was late in the day, almost dark and just enough out of town so there was no one else around. That suited Brennan, because if this was going to get bloody—and being as they'd taken Kalen he didn't see how it wouldn't—there would be no witnesses.

Brennan tapped his finger on his phone, reconsidering the decision not to call for help.

"It's your call, man," Rebel said. Brennan nodded. His first *human* response had been to call the police. But the wolf overrode that idea. This was his mate, his woman. He was going after the guys who dared to touch her.

After a few minutes of raging, Brennan had called Chas back and asked more questions. Chas, the little prick, had been barely coherent—Rebel's threat taken seriously—but he'd said something about being promised a position in a pack if he took care of Rebel, got rid of him.

Pain had flashed over Rebel's eyes when Chas had said it. Chas was willing to sacrifice his stepbrother to become a werewolf.

That meant someone from one of the packs was involved.

But Chas had babbled about it going too far. That the guys he'd hired to go after Rebel weren't listening to him anymore. At that point, he'd started to whine about how things never went right for him and Brennan had hung up.

According to Chas, these guys wanted Rebel. They wanted to swap Kalen for Rebel and had no intention of hurting her.

"Let's do this," Brennan said. "We go in. Make the trade. Get Kalen out."

"And then we tear these guys apart."

Brennan nodded and let his wolf rise to the surface.

They got out of the car, both sniffing the air, and headed toward the building. They saw the first guy just about the same time he saw them. He was just a kid, early twenties at the latest. He didn't look like a hardened kidnapper. Or a werewolf. He gulped and raised a gun and pointed it at them. The pistol shook in his grip. That more than anything worried Brennan.

"Stay back," the guy commanded.

"Your buddies told us to come," Rebel growled, still walking forward. The kid backed up, the gun wavering between them.

"Careful," Brennan warned. "Don't make the kid twitch." Nervous fingers on triggers were never a good thing.

Rebel sighed but stopped. "You wanted us. You got us."

"There's only supposed to be one of you."

"There was a sale."

The kid flinched and Brennan almost felt sorry for him. But not quite.

"Where are we supposed to go?"

The kid tipped his head toward the front door. "In there. Upstairs."

Rebel didn't wait to be prodded by the gun. He stalked off. Brennan followed. The kid didn't. His throat moved in a convulsive swallow and he just watched them. Definitely human.

"You know, maybe we should think about what we're going to do when we get inside," Brennan said in a low voice as Rebel bounded up the stairs.

"I'm not really in a planning mode."

They turned at the top of the stairs. Four guys waited in the hall. One had a gun, two of them held what looked like tasers and the other hefted a bat.

"Same guys," Brennan murmured, recognizing the big guy with the beard from the first attack.

Rebel nodded and started forward. Even without changing he seemed to swell, his power transforming his physical presence. Two of the guys backed up. The guy with the beard stood still, pointing his gun at Rebel's chest.

"You were supposed to come alone."

"I didn't get that part of the message. Maybe because of all the sobbing and whimpering Chas was doing at the time."

Brennan watched. No one reacted to that announcement. They weren't Chas' friends. Just guns who took control from their employer.

"Where's Kalen?" Brennan said, stepping up beside Rebel.

"She's here. She's fine."

"Let's see her."

The bearded guy's fingers fluttered along the butt of the gun. "You don't make demands." He lifted his chin toward Rebel. "Take him inside."

"No way," Brennan said, moving forward. He wasn't letting them get split up.

"It's okay." Rebel held out a hand holding Brennan back. "You just make sure Kalen gets out."

One of the guys with the tasers waved it toward the open door behind them, indicating Rebel should walk that way.

Rebel glanced at Brennan then followed the silent instruction. They stepped into the room, two of them moving with him. They disappeared through the doorway.

"Kalen, are you — Ahhh!"

Rebel's shout sent Brennan forward.

"Stop." The leader trained the gun on Brennan. Brennan stopped. As a werewolf he'd recover quickly but he doubted he could survive a gunshot to the chest.

"What are going to do with him, Trent?" the guy with the bat asked.

Trent's lips bent into a smirk.

"I think we might get two for the price of one. I'll watch him. There's more of that chain down by the backhoe."

Brennan took it in. "Trent" obviously knew the building. Probably one of the workers getting it ready to open. Brennan made a mental note. If they made it out of here alive, he wanted to be able to find these guys again. Maybe he'd hand them over to the police. Maybe he'd just hunt them down on his own.

The guy with the bat ran off down the hall, loping down the back stairs. Brennan stared at Trent, memorizing his face. "What do we do now?"

"We wait and you keep your mouth shut. Do this right and no one has to get hurt."

"If you've hurt Kalen..."

"I didn't touch the bitch."

Brennan's wolf snarled and Brennan echoed the sound. His lips twitched around his lips and his gum line throbbed with a familiar ache.

"Oh yeah. You're one too, aren't you?" Trent licked his lips. "I knew it. Billy, get up here with that chain. I got me a werewolf to tie up."

Brennan tried not to flinch at the word. He was going for deniability as long as possible.

"Don't know what you're talking about."

"Right. We saw it. Your friend in there. Chas hired us to take him out. Should have been easy but somehow he fought off four of us."

"He's a strong guy."

"Yeah but I saw it. I saw his face. Got pissed. His teeth got big and those eyes turned red."

"You were seeing things."

Trent shook his head. "Nope. I talked to Chas. We had an enlightening conversation about werewolves and how being angry or hurt makes them change."

The center of Brennan's stomach dropped away. Before he had a chance to say anything, Billy jogged up with a length of chain.

"How you doing in there with that one?" Trent called over his shoulder. If he'd just given Brennan a split second, he would have attacked, but Trent never looked away. And Brennan hoped he would be more valuable alive than dead.

"He's done."

"Okay, one of you be ready. I'm bringing the other one in." He waved the gun toward the door. "Go on."

Brennan sighed and walked the same path that Rebel had taken. He was prepared to see Kalen. Not prepared for the sight of Rebel hanging from his arms, his wrists handcuffed together and looped over a hook stuck out of the ceiling. The leads from the taser were imbedded in his chest. The guy with the gun stood about ten feet back.

"What the fuck—" He never got his question out. Electricity pulsed through him and his muscles seized up. The world went blank as he dropped to the ground.

Kalen watched Brennan fall and cried out. The sound turned to a moan behind the duct tape stretched across her mouth.

They followed the same procedure they had with Rebel, dragging Brennan off the floor, stripping off his shirt and cuffing his hands together. They didn't have a second hook so they threw the end of the chain up over a pipe in the open ceiling.

Rebel lifted his head and glared at the men. He was just coming out of being tasered.

"Leave him alone."

"Shut up, freak." The guy with the taser pulled the trigger again.

Rebel roared. His muscles convulsed but he didn't pass out this time.

Brennan came out of his daze as they finished hanging him by his wrists. They stepped back as he shook head and swung his body.

"Don't get too close," Red Beard commanded. The four men stepped back. "Are those things rolling?" Two of the guys moved to the video cameras set up in the room. One of them changed his focus from Rebel to Brennan.

Red Beard stepped close the door and grabbed a coil out of a box. Her stomach flipped over when she realized it was a whip. The end was split into multiple strands.

"Now, we can do this the easy way or the hard way."

Brennan rolled his eyes as if irritated by the overly dramatic announcement. Rebel blinked, his eyes glowing red for a moment before the light disappeared. He pulled on the chains but Kalen could tell there was no way he could get enough leverage to break them.

"All we want is for one of you to change."

"Into what?" Brennan sneered.

"You know what." He swung the whip over his shoulder and brought it down on Brennan's shoulder. There was no finesse with the weapon but there didn't need to be.

Red slashes appeared across Brennan's skin as the straps wrapped around his back and crossed over his chest. His cry rattled the windows but he bit down and silence echoed. Kalen screamed behind the duct tape. Her heart pounded against her ribs until she felt bruised from the inside. She pulled at the tape binding her wrists, needing to get free, to help her mates.

Red Beard recoiled the whip and swung it at Rebel. He jerked as the bit into his skin.

Kalen yanked against the chair but they'd forgotten about her. They were focused on Brennan and Rebel. Red Beard took another swing at Brennan. Five more stripes appeared on his chest. Red Beard pulled the whip back and swung again, at Brennan.

He kept at them both until their skin glowed and blood dripped from narrow slashes across chest and stomach.

Sweat poured down Red Beard's face as he pulled back the whip. He swung it forward, hard. The five wet strands bit into Brennan's chest and left five definite slices. He cried out, the first sound he'd made since they'd begun.

Tears poured down Kalen's cheeks. Her screams tore up her throat.

"Leave him alone," Rebel said. Sweat dripped from his forehead. The muscles strained in his arms, holding him up. "Let him go and I'll do what you want." He took a breath. "I'll do what you want."

"Don't you fucking dare." Brennan lifted his head. His eyes glowed red. "I don't care if they kill me but you don't let these bastards win."

"Shut up!" Red Beard commanded. He swung the whip at Brennan's back, leaving five more vicious bloody stripes across his skin. Rebel went crazy. He roared and fought. The other guard triggered the taser. The shock rippled through his body but didn't stop his struggles. They hit him again. This time Rebel screamed at the pain.

Kalen gasped. His teeth, long and canine, glowed white.

"Fuck, it's working. Oh my God, it's true. Hit him again." When the taser jolted Rebel, Kalen felt the shock as if it went through her. Brennan shouted as well, fighting to get to Rebel. Red Beard punched him and blood splattered from his nose.

They shocked Rebel again and Kalen screamed. The sound vibrated behind the duct tape.

Rage surged through her veins. Her mates. She needed to protect her mates. The base instinct pounded through her chest and she couldn't stop it.

Red covered her vision. She heard a howl inside her head and the world turned black.

Rebel closed his eyes and fought the change. His wolf didn't understand. The creature wanted free, wanted to run, to attack. Pain ripped through his side again.

"Fuck, it's working."

"Look at his teeth."

"Are you rolling? Get this."

He clamped his lips shut, trying to center himself. *Don't let them win.* He clung to Brennan's words.

These guys didn't know what they were doing. If he changed, it wouldn't be into this wolf—the animal that understood pain and fear. It would be the *were*—that other form that knew only rage. Red painted the edges of his eyes. He fought to breathe, concentrate.

"Fuck, the other one's turning too. Shoot this."

The sound of a fist connecting with hard flesh made him open his eyes. Blood poured from Brennan's nose. The sight hurt worse than the electric shock. He growled, the sound pure wolf.

They hit him with the taser again and the growl turned to a scream. Pain fired through his body, tearing his muscles, and left him weak. He sagged within the chains. It was too much. He couldn't—

Energy exploded in the room and Rebel lifted his head. A howl filled the air, long and painful. He blinked, unable to believe what he was seeing.

Kalen screamed again and jerked her arms. The sound of tape shredding blended with the crack of bones breaking, stretching. Her face punched forward, her jaw elongated and her teeth broke free. Her clothes stretched then ripped as she grew. She had to be almost six feet. Her shirt hung from her shoulders in tatters, her pants clinging loose at her waist. The final change was her skin, fading from a rosy pink to a dusty gray.

The total transformation only took seconds and Kalen stood before them in her full *were* form.

She tipped her head back and released a howl. The sound pummeled the room like a fist and their captors flinched.

“Holy shit.”

Rebel couldn’t distinguish any more words because that’s when the screams began. Kalen reached out. Her long fingers grabbed the guy with the taser and yanked him close. The tips of her claws scraped across his chest, tearing his shirt and leaving bloody streaks. She opened her mouth and roared, screaming her fury at him. The guy whimpered and a dark wet stain drenched his crotch. As if disgusted by his weakness, she grunted and pitched him forward, tossing him into the wall. He hit with a hard thump and crumpled to the ground.

The sound sent a jolt through the rest of their captors and they moved—one ran for the door, the other reached for a bat, the third lunged at Kiki. He came forward, swinging the whip like he’d seen too many Indiana Jones movies. The wet strands snapped across her shoulder but she barely seemed to notice. She wrapped her arm around the taut strands and jerked the whip out of his hand. She tossed the whip to the side and jumped on the guy who’d swung it. He crumpled to the ground, crying out as his back hit the floor and Kalen landed on his chest.

She crouched over him, her fingers stretched long into claws. She swiped her nails across his chest and left five deep scratches. The guy screamed. The noise only seemed to inspire Kiki.

With the attention off him, Rebel let his *were* have a little more freedom, stretching his fingers long enough to reach the chain above the hook. He pulled himself up, lifting his full body weight with just the tips of his fingers. His muscles screaming, he worked that last quarter of an inch free and dropped to the floor.

Brennan turned his stunned stare away from Kiki’s attack. Rebel snapped the chain that held his wrists together and moved toward Brennan.

“Stop him,” Brennan shouted. Rebel turned in time to see the third man raise the cricket bat and swing full-on at Kiki’s head. Not even a werewolf would survive a blow like that. Rebel jumped, putting his body in the path of bat. The force slammed into his chest, breaking several ribs and knocking the air out of his lungs.

Fuck this, he thought. He let his control go and the *were* burst free. His transition took seconds. He felt his hands reach out and grab the guy. His teeth ached, wanting to plunge into the guy's throat and taste his blood. Rebel shook off the urge and eased his human mind back in control. He picked the guy up and flung him toward the window. Glass shattered and the guy's arm and forehead went through.

The blip of sympathy that tried to make itself heard was ignored. The bastard had been torturing him for the sake of tabloid video. He could bleed a little. Rebel looked at the streaks of red on the wall. Okay, a lot.

He blinked and realized he could see the red, which meant his eyes were human again. He looked down. So was the rest of him. He'd practiced the transition over and over and barely noticed it now.

The sounds of flesh being ripped pulled his attention back to Kiki and her victim.

"She's going to kill him," Brennan grunted, still fighting to free himself from the hook.

"So?" After what the bastard had done to them, he was just as happy to see him die.

"Don't let her."

"Why not?"

"Because it's wrong. Because she'll hate herself and because it will be too fucking hard to explain."

Rebel sighed. Brennan had a point. Kalen arched her back and stretched her mouth open. Her teeth glittered bright white under the fluorescent bulbs. She was going in for the kill.

"Kiki? Honey?" Rebel considered grabbing her but she wasn't going to recognize him and might turn those wicked sharp teeth on him. He'd survive but it would hurt like hell. Her head whipped toward him and the *were* growled, more of a warning not to interfere than any real threat.

At least that's what Rebel hoped it meant. His own *were* made a weak attempt to resurface but he pushed it back. That would just make the situation worse.

"Kiki?" he asked again, trying to reach the woman inside. "You need to let him go."

The *were* seemed to understand. She looked down at the bleeding, unconscious guy beneath her then back at Rebel...then slowly swung her head back and forth.

"Yes, you need to let him go."

The *were* roared. The sound rattled the chains he'd hung from, making them clink together.

"It's okay. You can let him go. Brennan is going to be fine."

Limping a little and trying not to breathe too deeply—he was going to pay hard for that blow the ribs—he walked toward Brennan.

"Look cheerful," he muttered out of the corner of his mouth.

Still hanging by his wrists, his face, chest and stomach covered in blood, Brennan lifted his head. "What?"

"Look cheerful," Rebel said again, not looking away from Kalen, needing to draw the *were's* attention back to its mate. "See, honey, he's fine." The *were* followed him, her gaze locking on to Brennan's wounded body.

Rebel glanced at him. The guy was giving it a good effort. He actually tried to smile.

"Tell her you're okay."

"I'm bleeding at a dozen places," Brennan replied, though his lips didn't move around the smile.

"I don't care. If you want to save the bastard she's ready to kill, tell her you're fine."

"I'm fine, baby. I really am."

The *were* tipped her head to the side and her eyes tightened at the edges. Almost as if the *were* knew Brennan was lying. Rebel knew that couldn't be true. A *were* form wasn't capable of complicated thought. It understood feelings—pain, rage, lust—but there was no way it comprehended deception.

The creature pushed up to her feet, the wounded man seemingly forgotten, and came toward them in awkward lunging steps. Wolf feet really weren't designed to walk upright.

He heard Brennan inhale through his smiling teeth.

Blood coated her claws and splatters marked her chest.

"Kalen, you need to come back," Rebel said as she drew close. "Pull the *were* back inside you, honey." That was the image that helped him control the beast.

"You can do it, baby," Brennan added. "We're fine. You can come back."

His words seemed to reach her. The *were* stopped. Its lips flinched, pulling back from its teeth for just a moment, then her face changed, shrinking. The transition was slower this time and somehow more painful to watch. And hear. The bones breaking and contracting, returning to their original shapes.

It ended with a gasp.

Kalen opened her eyes and looked at Brennan then Rebel. She lifted her hands, blood dripping from her fingertips.

"Wha—"

The word never finished. She crumpled. Her body gave out and she hit the ground.

"Is she okay?"

Rebel crouched beside her. Her pulse beat fast but strong. Her breathing was long and steady.

"I think she's okay." He looked up. Specks of blood decorated the room. So did bodies. And the guys waiting outside might come in to help. Or they might have run off

with the first guy and were bringing back reinforcements. Either way, they needed to be gone.

"We have to get out of here," Brennan announced as if he read Rebel's mind.

"Yeah. I'll get Kiki. You grab those cameras." He scooped her up in her his arms and started for the door.

"Uh, Rebel?"

He looked back. Brennan still hung from the ceiling.

"A little help?"

Despite the gravity of the situation, he couldn't help but smile.

Chapter Seventeen

Red pooled at her feet, turning pink as blood blended with water and swirled down the drain. Bile rose in her throat but she forced it down, gulping in a breath. She could feel it on her skin, beneath her nails.

They said she hadn't killed anyone, that the blood on her hands and arms was from Red Beard. She tried to think that he deserved whatever she'd done to him...only she couldn't remember what she'd done.

Fire burned down the center of her chest. Flickers of rage, screams and triumph flashed through her brain.

"Kalen, honey? You okay in there."

She stared at the door, wanting Brennan to come in, terrified that he would.

Was he completely disgusted by what she'd become? She'd never heard of a female turning into the *were* form.

The doorknob started to turn.

"I-I'm fine," she called out, taking the coward's way. She needed a few more minutes alone. Knowing that a few minutes was all she was going to be allowed, she grabbed the soap and net scrunchie and scrubbed her skin. The scent of the blood and the males slid down the drain but the tension in her muscles didn't ease. Her body seemed to fight against her, the thing inside her struggling to be free.

She released a half-laugh-turned sob. Since her childhood she'd wanted to be like everyone else in her family, to have the wolf inside her. Now she just wanted to go back to the way it was.

She tipped her head back and rinsed the last of the conditioner out of her hair just as the door popped open. This time Brennan wasn't taking the chance that she would shout through the door. She peeked around the shower curtain, strangely shy considering the number of times he'd seen her naked.

"You okay?" he asked in that deep practical voice that told her she could say no and he'd be there to help, or say yes and he'd know she was lying but give her some space. God, she loved him.

She turned the water off. "I will be," she said, answering as honestly as she could. She would be okay. It just took a little getting used to. She'd turned into a *were* and from the looks of it had bloodied up at least one of the bad guys pretty good. It wasn't that she regretted hurting the men who had been hurting Rebel and Brennan. It was the thought in general. She'd almost killed someone and didn't remember it.

She swallowed, trying to clear the lump out of her throat.

Brennan stood there, not talking, waiting for some sign from her. She reached out and grabbed the towel. "You need any help?" His voice and eyes contained just enough lechery that she smiled.

"No. I'll be right out."

He gave her another nod and backed out of the bathroom, leaving her alone.

She toweled off her hair and ran a comb through it. The mirrors were too fogged up for her see into them but that was okay. She wasn't ready to look at herself just yet. Wasn't ready to see if she looked different.

How could she not? Most of her memory was blank but the sensation of her jaw breaking, her teeth driving through her gums... She grabbed the vanity counter and propped herself up, forcing air into her lungs. Her stomach flipped over and if she'd had anything in it she was sure she'd have vomited.

She stared at the fuzzy form in the mirror.

She could do this. She was a freakin' werewolf after all. Her brothers and sister had been doing this for years.

It was just that she never expected to. Not after her teenage years passed and she realized her wolf wasn't going to appear. She'd adapted. She'd become human.

Until today.

She flipped her wet hair back and lifted her chest, pushing her shoulders down and back. Even though she couldn't see through the fogged mirror, she knew she looked more confident. And she just hoped some of that faked confidence became a reality.

She was the same person she always had been...*just with a ravening beast inside me.*

"No problem," she said aloud.

Another breath and she turned and faced the door. There was no way to put it off any longer. Brennan and probably Rebel waited on the other side. They were concerned and it was her job to convince them that she was okay. The thought of them hovering and monitoring her mental state turned her stomach worse than the memory of her jaw breaking.

She lifted her chin and reached for the door handle, almost positive that they would be lingering near the door.

She was wrong.

They stood together by the bed, their bodies close, the intimate distance reserved for lovers, their heads bent in low conversation that stopped when she entered the room. Both males looked up. Gray and yellow eyes watched her, a mixture of concern and lust bursting through their stares.

They'd obviously cleaned up in the other bathroom. The blood was gone but bruises and cuts remained. Brennan wore jeans and a fresh button-down, clothes he'd left here. Rebel wore a pair of shorts and a too-tight t-shirt. Some of Brennan's clothes.

Kalen watched them for a moment, her sluggish mind slow to process what was different in the men before her. Brennan was still Brennan, only more. Power radiated

from him, marking him as the dominant animal. The presence of his wolf shimmered invisibly nearby.

She could see, or sense really, the wolf in him.

Her gaze drifted to Rebel. And it was as if she was seeing him for the first time. His wolf surrounded him. Not a separate creature like Brennan's but woven through his soul. She didn't know if that was because he'd been a wolf longer or all those years in prison when his wolf had been trapped inside him.

The new creature inside her responded.

Kalen's stomach dropped but it had nothing to do with fear or anger. Need filled the open space inside her. Red heat pressed at the edges of her vision.

She licked her lips, wanting to taste the males. *Mine. My mates.* The words filled her brain and she couldn't fight the truth. Warmth drenched her pussy. Kalen started forward, her fingers moving to the tie that held her robe closed. The urge to strip it off, knowing it would cool her skin, almost overwhelmed her.

Every nerve burned on high alert. The heat in her core pushed through her body. The terrycloth tickled her skin—sensual and irritating at the same time. Her fingers twitched again. One easy move and she could be naked.

Her mind leapt ahead. Beyond naked to fucking. Brennan and Rebel. Together. Inside her. The wolf growled in her head.

The human mind panicked just a little and she looked to her anchor. Brennan stared back, his eyes filled with concern and love. She tried to smile but the emotions surging through her body made it difficult.

She couldn't do it. How could she explain to Brennan that her wolf had chosen them both, that Rebel was her mate too? That the thought of losing either of them made her heart stop.

A band squeezed her lungs and she fought to breathe.

"Kalen, honey, are you okay?"

No. I want to fuck you both.

Those words cannot come out of your mouth.

Be normal. Be human.

"I think so," she said. Her voice trembled, matching the wobbling in her knees. She'd dreamed about fucking both of them but never really expected it to happen. She was a nice, normal woman.

Not anymore.

As if the thought awoke the animal, the wolf swelled inside her, clouding the edges of her vision with a deep red. The need to be with her mates drove her forward.

She fought the creature, pushing the wolf to the side, but she couldn't stop the forward momentum.

The scent grew stronger as she got closer, the delicious combination of Brennan and Rebel. Spicy and earthy. She licked her lips, imagining them both on her tongue.

She blinked and tried to find her voice. The wolf was too strong. She was going to take over and Kalen had to tell them what was happening, had to explain.

"We need to talk," she said.

We need to fuck.

Brennan crushed the response, fighting the throbbing in his groin, fighting the animal inside him that demanded he grab that thick terrycloth and rip it to little shreds so she never hid her body inside it again.

He pressed his lips together and took a long, slow inhale through his nose, focusing on his breath. Unfortunately it drew in the delicious perfume of Kalen's pussy and the heady scent of Rebel's tension.

Fuck, it would have been hard if it was just one of them, but having both of them so close... His gums ached. And the wolf howled its need.

Only his concern for Kalen kept him in control. And that was a narrow ledge.

The wolf snarled, his mind returning time and again to the sight of Rebel being beaten and Kalen's rage. The way she'd exploded, become that other creature. The beast had been strong and powerful.

He growled, the sound unconscious but necessary. Rebel and Kalen looked at him. Wide eyes — amber and green — stared at him. The wolf rose in him.

His mates. His lovers.

He fought it. Kalen had to be freaked out and he should try to be a sensitive, modern male, but fuck, she smelled good. He licked his lips. The sweet scent of her pussy filled the air and teased his taste buds.

Fuck, she's aroused. His gaze dropped to her pussy, as if he could see through the thick terrycloth robe. Didn't matter. The sexual perfume filled the air.

Male-to-male bonding made him glance at Rebel. He stared at Kalen as well, his eyes glowing, hungry.

He wants to fuck her.

Brennan's wolf growled but it wasn't a warning to back off... It was interest. The red he'd become so familiar with in the past month covered his vision, making everything crisp and clear, brightening his senses and blurring the human focus.

Heat and sex enveloped the three of them.

Kalen closed her eyes and took a breath as if she was trying to gather her control. The wolf inside her was probably going insane. Brennan pushed aside his hunger, wanting to be there if Kalen needed him. That wolf-man-were-form thing worried him. She'd been ready to kill those guys. Rebel wasn't worried. He'd said the only reason she'd turned into the *were* form had been because her mate had been threatened.

"Kalen, are you okay?" Fuck, he'd asked her that question a lot in the past two hours.

She opened her eyes. Red flared in the green depths then disappeared. For a moment he thought she was going to nod, to give him the reassurance that he needed. But then she moved, her fingers tugging on the tie around her waist, loosening it. The bulky material fell open, baring the centerline of her body, revealing the inner curves of her breasts, the sleek folds of her pussy.

She lifted her gaze. Her eyes were blurry, almost drunk.

"Kalen?"

The fire burned inside her until her robe hung too heavy on her skin.

The human side of her recognized what was happening but she couldn't stop it, didn't want to. The need multiplied inside her. She stripped off one shoulder and let the material tumble to the ground.

The males froze, their gazes locked on her body. Delicious power surged through her core. They belonged to her and she was going to have them. They watched as she slid her hand forward, down between her legs. Slick liquid teased her fingertips. The temptation to touch herself, to show her mates how much she needed them, flared inside her but she dismissed it. It wasn't her hand she wanted between her legs.

She took a deep breath and realized she could smell her mates—hot male flesh, arousal. Brennan's scent spicy while Rebel smelled like the forest. The combination made her head swirl. She licked her lips, tasting them on the air.

Her males shifted, turning to face her, their full attention on her body. She arched her back, showing off her breasts. Her hair started to dry in the air, curls bouncing against her skin, teasing her nipples.

She looked at her mates. Clothes hid their skin but a few quick slashes with her claws and she could have them naked. All that luscious flesh beneath her hands. A low sound rumbled through her throat—a strange mix of a purr and a growl.

Heat flared in her lovers' eyes. She stepped closer, stopping between them. The tips of her breasts brushed against their arms, the overwhelming scents and potential tastes confusing her mind for a moment. She didn't know what, who to taste first.

"Kalen?"

The delicious growl of Brennan's voice penetrated her brain but the question evaporated into the ether. Her eyes drifted over him, capturing the human and the wolf in one beautiful form. Power surrounded him, enveloped him. He was perfect. Strong enough to challenge her, control her. Strong enough to let her take the lead.

A spicy scent teased her nose and she turned to the other male. Familiar yet distant. She leaned forward and drew in a long breath, capturing the memories and the present and blending them into one being.

Unable to wait any longer, she reached out, grabbing both males. She dragged Brennan close, pressing up on tiptoes and pulling his mouth to hers.

The kiss was hard and deep, her tongue driving into his mouth. He tensed then took control, wrapping his tongue around hers, subduing her in a sensual battle. The wolf inside her head whimpered from need and submission.

She pulled back from the kiss and let her gaze track to the other male—Rebel, strong and dangerous. The pulse beat loud at the base of his neck. Her gums ached. It would only take one bite and he'd be bound to her. Marked as her mate.

Still pressed against Brennan, she pulled on the worn cotton that covered Rebel's chest. A heady growl filled the air and she wasn't sure if the sound came from her or from Brennan. Didn't matter. The noise urged her on. She yanked Rebel forward, material tearing beneath her claws. She didn't care. Only that she had him, could taste him.

Fire erupted inside her as Rebel met her, his lips covering hers, his hands clutching her waist. Pain bit into her hips but she ignored it, focused on the pleasure that slipped through.

She opened her mouth and accepted the powerful, wicked penetration of his tongue.

"More," she whispered to the universe even as Rebel took her mouth again. Heat pulsed against her pussy, the thick, hard ridge of Rebel's cock rocking against her cunt. The animal inside her brain howled, wanting more. She ground against him, feeling the tiny thumps against her clit. Fire streaked across her shoulder as Brennan's teeth scraped her skin, hard, hot, almost to the point of pain.

She dragged her mouth back from Rebel, not wanting to lose his taste but needing more. Needing both. She turned her head and captured Brennan's mouth with her own. But Rebel couldn't escape. She dug her fingers into his scalp and pulled him forward, holding him to her. His lips opened on her neck, wicked teeth biting down on her collarbone. The pain zipped through her body as pleasure and she cried out.

Strength and need burbled inside her. She growled and pushed her hands out, sending her lovers back, the shock on their faces almost enough to make her smile. But that was a human emotion and she was beyond that.

Brennan stumbled over the footstool but caught himself before he hit the floor. Rebel tripped and fell against the doorframe.

They righted themselves and both dropped into fighting stances—shoulders back, hands held out to the sides, fingers almost stretching into claws. The flash of the wolf illuminated their eyes and in the crisp clear black and white of her vision she could see the glistening white of teeth. The barely sane, barely human portion of her mind recognized that *they* weren't human anymore. She was facing two wolves. Hungry wolves.

As if they recognized their strength in unity, they moved together, standing almost shoulder-to-shoulder as they faced her. Neither acknowledged the presence of the other. It didn't seem necessary.

Their human clothes stretched as they expanded—not quite making the transition to full wolf or full *were* but no longer human. Muscles rippled beneath taut material.

Rebel grabbed the torn cotton of his t-shirt and pulled it off. She looked down. The erection she'd felt pressed against her pussy strained the seams of his shorts. Her mouth watered. The wolf conjured up the memories of the full moon, seeing him naked and aroused. Images of her kneeling before him, his cock in her mouth, Brennan behind her, fucking her, flowed through her brain, blurring dreams and reality.

For a moment the red fog cleared and she glanced at Brennan. He watched, his body tight and ready, his eyes glowing. She wanted to see all of him. Wanted to feel her teeth test his strong chest muscles. Swaying, tempted by the possibility, she took one halting step forward.

Brennan shook his head.

"Get on the bed, baby."

The command snapped her head up. It hummed with power. Dominance. The wolf inside her screamed her defiance even as she wanted to roll over and bare her belly to him.

Defiance won.

She lifted her chin and stared at him, her eyes flashing.

Brennan felt a growl start deep in his throat. He was used the presence of the wolf now but this was different. Like the night of the full moon, the night he'd let Rebel fuck him, the need to fuck, *to take*, overwhelmed him.

He stared at his mate and saw that she hadn't followed his order.

"Careful, baby, you don't want to defy me. Not tonight." He stepped forward. Rebel moved with him, his pack mate and lover. They brushed against each other, stalking toward the pretty female. "Get on the bed, baby," he said again. "You're going to get fucked."

She gasped and took a step back. The movement was cautious and sent the wolf on high alert. *Don't run*, he silently warned. The human's control was too tenuous. The wolf would react as a predator if she ran.

Instead she reached behind her and put her fingers on the high mattress.

She leaned back and for a moment, one breathless moment, he thought she would demurely slide her hips on to the bed, knees squeezed tight. Instead she turned, placed her hands in the center of the mattress and crawled onto the bed. Her hips tilted back, tipping her ass in the air, offering that tight little hole. She spread her legs, giving them a full view of her slick cunt.

Brennan growled. So did Rebel.

Brennan glanced at the male beside him. The wolf rippled near the surface, dangerous and hungry.

Are you going to let him fuck your woman?

That snarky voice prodded the human to protest but Brennan waited, listening to the animal's instincts. The wolf's desire rumbled low in his chest—it wanted Rebel to fuck Kalen. Wanted to watch his cock slide in and out of her pussy. Brennan blinked and shook his head but the image was locked in.

Hell, if he was honest, he'd been thinking about it for days. Since the night of the full moon. He'd imagined, dreamed of Kalen and Rebel in his bed. His to fuck.

Before she had a chance to roll over, he was there. Brennan grabbed her hips and dragged her back to the edge of the bed, his denim-covered erection finding a home between the soft cheeks of her ass.

Kalen gasped and froze—for one second. Then she started to move, rubbing her ass gently back.

Brennan reached forward and pulled on her hair, tipping her head back, drawing her up until she knelt on the bed, her back to his front.

"You know what's going to happen don't you, baby? We're going to fuck you. Both of us." From the corner of his eye he saw Rebel walk around to the side of the bed. He stood there. Naked. His cock hard and long. Brennan licked his lips, remembering the feel of Rebel in his mouth. But that was for later. Now they needed to claim their female.

He slid his hand down her hip, between her legs. Liquid heat drenched his fingers.

"Yeah you want it." He let one finger slip between her pussy lips. "She's soaking wet. Just needs to be fucked. See that, baby? He wants to fuck you. Wants to slide that pretty cock into your wet pussy."

A part of her mind latched on to the fact that he'd called Rebel's cock "pretty" but she couldn't focus enough to process the thought. The wolf grabbed the scrambled images in her brain—Rebel and Brennan and her fucking—and refined them, almost making them real. The animal was hungry, wanted to feel both males inside her.

She squirmed within Brennan's hold, wanting more, wanting what he described but unable to speak the words. The predators came alive in her males. Rebel's eyes turned red as he moved, the mattress sinking under his weight. He crawled across the bed and knelt before her.

Surrounded. Scents and sensations clouded her brain. Heat rushed into her pussy and she arched her hips back, pushing her ass against Brennan's groin.

Brennan slid his hand down her stomach and petted her pussy, a casual stroke, teasing her. A bright tingle zipped through her clit. She groaned and pushed up, wanting more.

"That's it, baby." He scraped his teeth across her shoulder, a stinging bite that shimmered through her body. She lifted her eyes and stared into Rebel's gaze. The dangerous red still glowed but the amber eyes she'd loved since she was a child shone with equal brightness.

With Brennan hot and strong behind her, she pressed up high, wrapping her arms around Rebel's shoulders and drawing him down, needing his mouth on hers. He hesitated for just a moment then bent to her, covering her lips with his. Earth and fire flowed through his kiss, pure animal need.

She clutched Rebel, wanting him closer.

Hot kisses pressed against her neck. Brennan's heat covering her from behind. She spread her legs, shifting to feel them both, their cocks pressing against her. Rebel's shaft slid between her legs, teasing her pussy lips. She cried out and pushed forward, needing more. Needing them both.

"Is that what you want, baby? Do you want to take us both?"

She reacted with instinct. "Yes."

Brennan slid his finger into her pussy, pumping in and out a few times before pulling back.

Rebel's mouth consumed her attention until Brennan's slick finger teased her rear opening.

"You know what's going to happen. Rebel's going to fuck your pussy. And I'll take your sweet ass." She arched into the delicate caress and turned her head. Brennan met her, his mouth covering hers, tongue sliding into her mouth. Hot hands covered her breasts. Rebel's rough palms highlighted her skin. Delicious pressure swelled in her pussy.

She pulled back from Brennan's kiss. The sensations were too much. They'd barely touched her and she was almost ready to come.

"Fuck me," she commanded, her voice almost a snarl. She reared back and shoved hard on Rebel's shoulders. Startled, he tipped over and landed on his back. His cock was long and hard and arcing toward his stomach. She stared at the powerful male body of her mate.

Her gums throbbed. The wolf wanted to mark him, sink her teeth into that strong muscle and claim him, but the most distant portion of her human brain held back. The wolf didn't understand. It only knew what it wanted but Kalen knew Rebel wasn't ready.

For now, she would take what she could get. Pulling away from Brennan's heat, she stared at the beautiful body before her—Rebel's body. Years of fantasy came rushing back to her. She was finally going to know how it felt to have Rebel inside her. Her knees dug into the mattress as she knelt, straddling his thighs, the cool air teasing her wet pussy. She gasped at the delicious sensation but didn't let it distract her.

The thick shaft drew her. She bent over him and lapped at the base, breathing in the clean male scent of her mate. A low moan escaped her throat as she trailed her tongue up the full length.

She placed her hands on his thighs, testing the strength of his muscles. She dipped her head down again, intent on sucking the head into her mouth, wanting to feel him

fuck her mouth. The muscles beneath her fingers contracted, pulling tight, and Rebel growled. The warning was clear without a word.

She lifted her head. Rebel's eyes had lost the amber tone. He was pure wolf.

"I don't think he has the control to fuck your mouth, baby."

She heard the truth in Brennan's words and it sent a rush of liquid through her pussy – that this male would have to fight so hard to control himself.

Brennan tapped her ass. "Get up there, baby. Put that sweet cock inside you."

His words were hypnotic, guiding her forward. The sensations splintered through her body but left her mind deliciously blank. Moving only with need, she straddled Rebel's hips and lifted the thick cock in her hands. She cupped it between her palms and touched him, losing herself in the heat and smooth steel.

She stroked him, catching a drop of pre-cum on her finger and carrying it to her mouth. The sweet-salty taste surprised her. She'd always heard the werewolf cum tasted different – sweeter, designed to lure human females to the flavor. She licked her lips and thought again about sucking him off.

But she needed his cock in her pussy too much.

She pressed up on her knees and guided the round head toward her opening. She lifted her eyes and met Rebel's stare. Hunger and fear struggled in his gaze. She hesitated. She looked left to Brennan. He nodded.

"Do it, baby." Taking a breath, she pushed the first inch in. "Oh fuck, that's hot. His cock sliding into you."

Again the wicked seduction of Brennan's voice urged her on. She spread her thighs and sank down, driving Rebel's cock into her cunt. The thick shaft stretched her tight walls but she was slick and wet and took him all the way.

She pushed down until she was full. She bit her lower lip and let her eyes drift open, wanting to see the man who was buried so far into her body.

Every muscle in his body strained. Claws had burst from the tips of his fingers and dug into the fitted sheet covering her bed. Ten little tears formed in the cotton as he held himself perfectly still.

His eyes blazed and he stared at her.

Wanting to reward him for such control, she put her hands on his abs and pushed up, sliding her palms across all those delicious, hard muscles. She leaned forward, easing his cock almost out of her, stopping when just the head was still inside. She placed a kiss on his pec muscle then lapped at the flat nipple.

"Kalen..." Her name trailed off in a warning.

"Want me to fuck you?" she whispered, ending the question with a sharp bite. He flinched and she heard the cotton sheets tear.

"Do it." The order was spoken through clenched teeth.

She smiled and pressed back, easing his cock into her. He released his grip on the sheets with one hand and wrapped his palm around her hip and pushed her down, arching his hips to meet her stroke. The heavy penetration sent shocks through her clit. She needed more. She pressed up and started to ride him, sliding his cock in and out, lost in the luscious sensation of being fucked.

Tension expanded in her pussy as she rode him. She was close. Rebel grabbed her hips in both hands and took control, pulling her down, slamming his cock harder and deeper. He shifted the angle just a bit, just enough to slide hard against her clit as he filled her. The wicked double shot sent her over.

She cried out and grabbed the only solid thing in her world, Rebel, her fingernails biting into his chest. He roared and shoved his cock into her one more time. The hot rhythmic pulses of his cum flooding her pussy sent another delicious wave through her core.

Forcing strength through her muscles, she held herself still, letting the pleasure wash through her.

Just when her strength gave out, heat covered her back, Brennan's erection nudging the base of her spine. She tipped her head back onto his shoulder as his hands wrapped around her waist.

"You look so beautiful when you come," he murmured, placing a kiss beneath her ear. "Stay where you are, pretty. Let me get you ready."

She nodded, her mind not tracking, just knowing she was supposed to stay here, with Rebel still hard inside her.

At Brennan's urging she leaned forward, arching her spine and pushing her ass out. No human insecurities troubled her mind. She was a goddess being worshipped by her supplicants.

A slick, cool finger teased her rear end and she tensed, but murmured words—from Brennan or Rebel, she didn't know—eased her and she relaxed, letting Brennan guide a finger into her ass. The human part of her woke up, sluggishly processing what was happening, that Brennan was preparing her, getting her ready to take his cock.

He pulled back and then returned, the penetration thicker and more solid. She gasped and tried to relax. Her ass adapted quickly and the pleasure returned, wicked and slow as he finger-fucked her.

He retreated and returned.

The burn in her ass increased and her mind came awake. What was she doing? She couldn't...

She looked down at the male beneath her. Rebel.

"It's okay, baby. Just relax. Let him in." His hands rubbed her arms and shoulders as he spoke. "Fuck, it feels so good when he slides inside." Her mind tripped on his words but the heat where Brennan filled her pulled her thoughts away.

"You okay, baby?"

She knew, *knew*, that if she said no or gave any indication that it was too much, he would pull back. But she wanted him. Wanted them *both* inside her.

She dropped her head and looked back, barely able to see him over her shoulder.

"Please."

"Please, what? I need to hear you say it."

"Fuck me. Fuck my ass." The words were soft but they seemed to echo around the room, reverberating back to her. The thick head of Brennan's cock pushed against her opening, stretching, filling her. The pressure built and she dug her fingers into pillows beside Rebel's head.

Rebel cupped her head in his hands and pulled her down, pushing up to meld their lips together. She groaned and turned her head, opening her mouth, welcoming his tongue inside her. The distraction worked. She focused on the kiss, letting her body relax, letting Brennan inside.

Large, hot hands covered her breasts, squeezing, pinching her nipples. Wicked pleasure shot into her pussy and she cried out. Brennan pushed in, seating himself deep in her ass. The burning turned bright, almost too much. He rocked forward, pushing her onto Rebel's cock. The pleasure countered the pain.

They froze. All three of them.

Kalen blinked and stared down at Rebel. Shock ran through her body. It hurt just a bit too much to be fun, but that was fading. She tried to slow her breathing, realizing she was panting.

"Baby?" Brennan asked. Tension pulled his muscles tight and she knew he was preparing to pull out.

She shook her head. Not ready to find words yet.

"She's okay," Rebel said, his fingers floating across her skin. "Aren't you, honey?"

She nodded and realized she wasn't lying. The pain faded and the sensation of being full finally made it to her brain. Her mates were inside her. Both their cocks stuffed inside her. She took another breath and let the wolf surface. Power and hunger flooded her core, making the lingering pain and fear evaporate. She was filled and about to be fucked by her mates.

The need to move rippled through her body and she squirmed. Their cocks shifted inside her just a little, teasing her lit-up nerves.

"Fuck," Brennan groaned, his faced dropping down into her hair. "Careful, baby. I'm on the edge."

"Please." Her brain functioned enough for her to speak. "Fuck me." She stared down at the gorgeous male below her. The firm set of his lips tightened even more. She knew he was struggling for control. He looked over her shoulder to Brennan.

"You ready?" Brennan asked.

Rebel nodded.

"Slow. Let's do this slow."

She gripped the sheet and tried not to scream. She didn't want slow. She wanted to be fucked.

But she couldn't move. Not without them. Brennan made a slow retreat and nerves she didn't know she had sparkled. She gasped and blinked, staring down at Rebel.

"Feel good?"

She nodded then held her breath as Brennan pushed back in. It still burned a bit but Rebel lifted her up, sliding her almost off his cock. The delicious brush as he eased by her clit converted the pain, turning it to pleasure.

"That's it. Again." This time it was Rebel giving the commands. They moved together, push and retreat, perfectly timed so one cock always filled her.

She became a creature of pure sensation, every nerve ending alive and tingling. She struggled against the slow, methodical rhythm, needing her lovers to claim her.

Kalen pushed her ass back, not sure which she needed more—Rebel fucking her pussy or Brennan in her ass. Brennan growled and rocked forward, a little deeper, less controlled. That seemed to spark Rebel. He grabbed her hips and thrust up, driving his cock into her.

Sensation overwhelmed her. The pounding, hard and deep in her cunt, slow and careful in her ass. Didn't matter. They fucked her.

As if perfectly timed, they both filled her, cocks drilling her. She screamed, the hard and heavy penetrations setting off sparks inside her. Her claws popped out and she pulled down, tearing streaks into her sheets. Long wicked contractions worked through her core and seemed to spread to her lovers. She squeezed around the cock inside her pussy, knowing Brennan had to feel it as well.

Both males shouted, driving into her again, filling her. Setting off new tremors as they spilled inside her.

Chapter Eighteen

Kalen came awake to the rhythmic chime of her alarm. She reached out to slap the annoying box. A groaned rumbled from her lips as she rolled over. Her body ached. Muscles stretched and worked. The lingering pain in her ass. She'd been fucked. Long and hard. The last time she'd fallen asleep the sun had been peeking through the window.

Fucking her together seemed to inspire both men. They'd been ravenous, taking her individually, together, in the shower, her mouth, her pussy, her ass.

Memories bombarded her and she forced her lungs to breathe.

Knowing she was alone, she sat up and looked at the empty spaces in the bed beside her.

Brennan and Rebel. She'd fucked them both. Let them fuck her. Begged them to fuck her.

She bent her knees and dropped her head into her hands trying to block out the memories. Didn't work. The scents and textures reminded her too much of last night.

With a sigh, she dropped back onto the bed and rolled over, intent on staring at the wall for a few hours, hoping her mind would come with a reasonable explanation for her behavior. *Oh wait...don't you remember? You're a werewolf now.*

She grimaced and glared at the empty space in front of her. It wasn't that she'd forgotten. It just didn't seem real. The wolf seemed to have disappeared from her brain. She didn't feel any different this morning.

Well, except for the fact that she'd indulged in wild and outrageous sex for huge portions of the night and her body wasn't quite recovered. She sighed. She couldn't avoid the world forever.

She lifted her head to look at the clock. The red numbers glowed at her but she didn't see them. The diamond blocked her view. Her diamond engagement ring.

Breath caught in her throat.

She knew what it meant. He was giving it back to her. Hers to take or not.

She swung her legs over the side and picked up the ring. The diamond sparkled. She loved this ring. Brennan had asked her to marry him but he hadn't given her the ring. He wanted her there to help pick it out because it was going to be on her finger forever.

She turned the ring over in her hand. She wanted it and wanted all that it entailed. It would mean becoming Brennan's wife, the wife of a powerful werewolf.

* * * * *

Brennan waited downstairs. He knew she was awake. He'd heard her moving around and then the shower come on.

His stomach flip-flopped. He'd left the ring for her, not sure he could take another rejection if he offered it to her and she said no.

Well, what are you going to do if she comes downstairs and isn't wearing it?

He'd deal with that when it happened. If it happened.

Once the shower shut off, he knew he wouldn't have long to wait. Kalen liked to wander around in her robe, letting her hair air-dry.

Moments later she walked into the kitchen and actually blushed when she saw him. Her hair hung in long ringlets down her back. The thick terrycloth robe once again hid her shape but that didn't matter. He knew her body. Every inch. He didn't need to be teased to want to fuck.

"Morning."

"Morning." He didn't have the courage to look at her hand.

"You're not at work."

"I took the morning off." He handed her the coffee cup. "Thought this was more important."

She reached for it...with her left hand. The diamond they'd picked out together glittered on her finger.

Tension broke inside him and his knees wobbled.

"Thank God."

She came forward, her eyes glittering with love and just a hint of laughter. He wrapped his arms around her back and pulled her close, bending and kissing her. It wasn't the dominant, commanding kisses from last night. Slow and loving. Reconnecting them.

"I love you," he whispered against her lips.

"I love you."

"How are you?" he asked, not letting her pull away. "Physically." He felt his own cheeks heat up. "We worked you pretty hard last night."

All the pent-up lust he'd had from not touching her in the past week had come out. He was a little surprised that she could walk.

She nodded and felt her cheeks heat up. "A little sore."

He chuckled softly. "I'll bet." He tipped his head to the side and waited for her to speak.

"I don't know how...or what..." She sighed. "I don't know what to say." Her brow furrowed. "I don't know how my mother does this."

The edge of Brennan's mouth kicked up in a smile. "She's had a lot more practice." The smile didn't last long. His lips flattened out.

"Listen, last night—"

Brennan shook his head. "Before we talk about last night, I want to clear one thing up." He picked her hand and carried her fingers to his mouth, kissing the back of her hand right beside the ring. "We need to talk about what you said yesterday. I think you were right to some extent. It was pretty seductive to be involved in the pack. It's the one place where for the last month I didn't feel like I needed to be on my guard.

"Even with you...I was afraid my wolf might take over and I wouldn't be able to control it. But you have to believe me. I never looked at another female out there." He took a breath. He had to tell her about Rebel. Had to come clean about what had happened. "The truth is—"

Kalen shook her head. "It's okay. I understand." She winced. "I was letting the past influence me. I've always been the runt of the litter." She grimaced. "That's what Jez always called me."

"I hate that bitch."

Kalen's eyes lit up and Brennan was pretty sure he couldn't have said anything to make her happier.

"Me too. But I let her get to me. I started to believe that I wasn't, couldn't be strong enough for you. I guess that's not really an issue now."

He chuckled. "No. And baby, you have to believe me. I don't want any other woman. But—"

"No. Let's just leave it at that for now." She stepped back and picked up her coffee cup. "I'm a little fragile right now." He snorted, remembering the beast she'd turned into. She punched him in the arm. "Emotionally. I need to get my mind wrapped around what happened. Then we can do true confessions, huh?"

He shouldn't agree. He knew he shouldn't but he didn't really want to confess any more than she wanted to hear so he took the coward's way out and kept his mouth shut.

But soon he was going to have to tell her about Rebel.

* * * * *

Rebel ran the sandpaper down the banister one more time. It was almost perfect. Almost. Just a couple of more passes and he'd be done and he could be gone. For good.

He rolled his shoulders back, tension gripping his neck. He'd spent most of the last three days ignoring his phone and running through the woods, trying to keep the wolf under control. The wolf wasn't taking it well. It had been bad before. Now that he'd fucked both of them, the need was debilitating. The damn animal wanted Kalen and Brennan, and no matter how many times Rebel told the stupid animal that it couldn't have them, the wolf didn't understand.

He scoffed. No. The beast understood. It just didn't agree. It didn't seem to grasp what a bad idea it would be to see Kalen or Brennan right now. How he had to break the mating connection between them. Thankfully no one had brought out their teeth that night. That would have made it worse.

The only way to fix it was to get the hell out of town. He could do that. Now that they knew Chas was behind the attempts on his life. Rebel had taken a few minutes to go by Chas' place and make sure the little prick had skipped town. He had. It looked like he'd packed in a hurry, Rebel thought with a smirk.

And Rebel planned to do the same. Not that he had much to pack. It would fit into the back of his truck.

And that was the reason he was still here. He needed the money from this job so he could pay off Kalen's dad, buy the truck outright. Then he could disappear.

He wanted to tell himself it would only be for six months or so but he knew the truth. Once he left, he wasn't coming back. He *couldn't* watch Kalen and Brennan together. It was time to get on with the rest of his life. He didn't need a pack, not like some wolves. He'd been on his own long enough.

Though it had been kind of nice being able to turn into his wolf form at will. He was going to have to find a secluded place to settle. Somewhere another wolf wouldn't be noticed. Alaska maybe.

He looked up the thirty-foot staircase. One more pass and he should be done.

"Hey, Branson."

Rebel lifted his head but didn't answer. Troy the electrician walked up and leaned on the banister. It took all of Rebel's control not to tell him to back off.

"Surprised to see you here."

"I work here." Rebel had made no attempts to be friendly with any of the other guys on the crew. He just did his work, got his money and went home. Most of the guys had gotten the message fast and left him alone. So why was Troy talking to him now?

"I thought you'd be out howling at the full moon."

"What?" Rebel snapped. The smirk on Troy's face sent a jolt through Rebel's chest.

Troy backed up, his hands going up in front of him. "Chill out, man, don't want you to go all werewolf on me." He chuckled as he said it. A couple of the other workers had stopped to listen and laughed as well.

"What are you talking about?"

"Dude, it's all over the internet." He dropped his voice. "You're a werewolf. Oooh." He wiggled his fingers at Rebel.

He tried to hide his shock. Troy obviously didn't believe it, but the internet? How the hell...? He didn't even let the words finish in his mind. Fuck, they hadn't destroyed all the tapes. Something had survived.

"So, are you like, shooting movie or something?" Troy asked, dropping his voice so the others couldn't hear. "Are there chicks involved?"

"No, no chicks involved." He grabbed his jacket off the ground. "Where's Rich?"

"Out back. Why? You got to get home?" Troy yelled at his back. "Is it getting to close to the full moon?" The other guys laughed.

Rebel brushed off the questions and went to the backyard. He found the guy who'd hired him and pulled him to the side. Rich was obviously used to guys flaking out on him. He grimaced, paid Rebel for half the day and let him go.

Rebel climbed into his truck and started the engine.

Somehow they'd missed a tape and now it was on the internet. For one second he considered going to Kalen's to see it on her computer, but that wouldn't solve anything. He had to get out of town. Now.

* * * * *

Kalen sat down at her computer, her body a mixture of satisfaction and need. The satisfaction because Brennan had joined her in the shower, fucking her hard against the wall, making her scream. She placed her hand on her stomach, feeling the delicious ache caused by the memory. Physically, she couldn't have been more satisfied but emotionally, she needed.

She needed Rebel. He hadn't answered her calls. He'd left a message on her phone saying he was fine but busy. She knew what he meant. He didn't want to see her. Kalen's wolf snarled in her head.

She loved Brennan. The wolf wanted, *craved* Brennan. But she needed her other mate as well. She needed Rebel.

And soon Brennan was going to notice. How did she explain it? They'd barely gotten themselves back on track and she didn't think it was smart to tell him that she had more of her parents in her than she'd thought—she had two mates. But one of the things that seemed to make her parents' relationship—and her brothers and their lovers'—work was that the males became lovers. It was a true three-way. While she didn't doubt that Rebel would be willing, she couldn't imagine Brennan accepting a male lover.

With a sigh she clicked on the internet and scanned the news page. She skimmed the serious headlines before turning to the gossip news. She was an intelligent woman and cared about the world's tragedies and the economy, but sometimes she really just wanted to read about the scandals. Who was caught with whom and who got arrested for what.

Her eyes tripped down the page, jerking to a stop on one word...werewolf.

Recent movies had made it an easily recognizable term but it was usually associated with a star's name...not "reality".

"Werewolf caught on tape." Kalen moved her mouse before she even thought to click the link.

* * * * *

Brennan stormed into the room. In the distance the front door slammed shut, rattling the window.

"Have you talked to him?" He tossed his coat over the back of the couch and came to her side, pulling her close for a quick kiss and hug.

"No. He's not answering his phone."

"And he doesn't have a fucking cell."

Kalen shook her head. Rebel hadn't quite caught up with the world. Fifteen years was a long time to be away from technology.

"Have you seen it?"

"Yes, I watched it at the office." He swung away and started to pace, the wolf rising in him, not taking control, but he wasn't totally human right now.

The video started with "Trent" on a local public-access station saying he'd learned werewolves were real and he had proof—Rebel beginning his transition. It wouldn't be long before it went viral. "I thought we got all the tapes. It never occurred to me that they had a third camera stashed somewhere. Fuck."

From the angle of the shot, it had obviously been positioned high in a corner, maybe in a vent. None of them had seen it. The camera had been focused on Rebel with neither Kalen nor Brennan even appearing in the shot.

"You were a little busy dealing with a crazed female werewolf at the time," she pointed out.

He stopped his carpet-wearing steps, looked up and smiled. "I remember." He sighed. "But damn...this isn't just about Rebel."

"The whole community is at risk."

Brennan nodded. Six weeks ago he hadn't known werewolves existed now he was their staunch defender. And this could blow up and take them all down. Another factor that had to be running through Brennan's mind was that *he* could be outed as a werewolf. They'd talked and he still hoped to run for mayor in a few years. She grabbed the bottom of her t-shirt and tugged on the hem. "My dad called. The press has discovered Rebel's living at the cabin. It's private land and Dad's ordered them back to the road but he doesn't want to make a big deal of it."

"Damn."

"Dad and Byron are coming into town to meet with you." Again Brennan nodded and Kalen realized she'd been expecting a different reaction. Surprise, curiosity. Brennan seemed to accept it as normal.

"I'll go change. I called Mik. I think he can help." He started out the room.

"I'll try Rebel again," she called after him.

"Yes. Keep calling until he's so annoyed he has to pick up the phone."

"Too bad he doesn't have caller ID," she muttered as she hit redial on the handset. It rang and rang and rang. It clicked over to voicemail but the message announced that the mailbox was full. With a sigh she hung up and returned to her pacing.

She wrapped her arms around her chest and thought about getting a sweater. Somehow she'd thought that since the werewolf had appeared in her brain, in her body, she'd be warmer. Brennan sure as heck was. And sleeping next to Rebel was like cuddling up to a fire.

The wolf inside her head howled at the thought of Rebel. The animal wanted its other mate. The wolf didn't feel complete, not quite safe without both of her mates.

Added to the fact that Rebel was probably scared and furious and she wanted to be with him...she was surprised she could function. This was her first crisis since the wolf's appearance in her life and she was amazed that her family had lived with this all their lives. The damn thing kept bouncing around her brain, like it wanted out, though what the animal thought it could do if she allowed it to be free...

Of course the wolf wasn't thinking. It was reacting to the threat.

Brennan walked back in, worn jeans clinging to his hips. The crisp blue business shirt exchanged for a soft cotton button-down. The wolf, so close to the surface, growled. The scent of her mate filled her brain and she moved without thinking, needing to touch.

As if his wolf felt the same need, he met her in the middle. He caught her, pulling her against him, the heat from his body blending with hers, making their bodies burn. He bent down and kissed her. She moaned and pressed against him, loving the feel of his cock against her belly. His hands slid down her back and cupped her ass. With easy strength he lifted her onto her tiptoes, sliding her against his erection. She growled and bit his lower lip, needing.

"How soon until your dad gets here?" He spoke the words against her mouth.

She knew they didn't have time, that there was a crisis occurring, but that didn't stop her body, her wolf, from wanting its mate. Her pussy clenched and she pulsed her hips forward, massaging her clit against his erection.

"Fuck, baby, I'm going to get started and Rike will—" The doorbell rang. "Will show up," Brennan finished.

He sighed and put his hands on her hips, easing her back. She looked down. The thick bulge of his cock was obvious in his jeans. He tugged out the tails of his shirt and let them hang forward.

"Better?"

"Better," she agreed. "He'll still know but this won't make it so blatant."

"Great. What father doesn't like to know he's interrupted his daughter about to have sex?"

Kalen giggled. "I'm sure he'll take it well."

"And I'm sure he'll try to rip my head off." He turned and walked to the door.

Kalen hung back and waited. She folded her arms across her chest and realized her nipples were hard and pressed through her t-shirt. No. Her dad didn't need to see that. She grabbed her sweater and pulled it on. It would work to keep her warm until she could cuddle up against Brennan.

She heard voices. Lots of voices.

And footsteps. She peeked around the corner and saw almost a dozen people in her hallway. Her father and Byron stood with the Alphas from two other packs. She knew that her dad worked with these packs. Strength in numbers and it made for better breeding stock.

The people filtered in, congregating in Kalen's living room. She knew most of them and liked them well enough.

Except for Jezra. Kalen had to crush a growl when that woman walked in. She didn't like her, never would. The wolf picked up her feelings toward the other female and the image of Kalen turning into her *were* form and taking Jezra down flickered through her mind like a movie. It was violent and a little bloody but she couldn't help thinking she'd like to see it again.

"I'll make more coffee," Kalen announced to the group, forcing a smile and heading toward the kitchen.

"Such a good little wife," Jezra whispered as Kalen walked by.

She stopped and fluttered her eyelashes at Jezra. "Brennan thinks so." *Bitch.*

She kept the last word to herself because really, she wasn't worried. Brennan wasn't going to leave her. He loved her as a human and his wolf had claimed her as a mate. They were bound to each other.

Kalen made coffee and after a few minutes gathered around the computer to watch the video and check the local news stations—all reporting the werewolf lived in their county—the group sat down at Kalen's table. The leaders of the three packs positioned themselves on opposite sides. Kalen knew it wasn't an aggression thing. It just helped delineate the lines of power.

She found it interesting that Byron sat at her father's left hand. Brennan took up the place at his right. Since her wolf had come alive, she had a better sense of the power that surrounded each werewolf. The strength of the wolf emanated into the human personality.

And Brennan was strong. Almost as strong as her father.

More of an observer, Kalen stood back and leaned her shoulder against the wall. She noticed that Jezra sat down next to her father, taking the place of his Beta.

Rike started the conversation with a blanket statement. "I'm open to ideas. What do we do?"

The discussion continued bouncing from sneaking Rebel out of the county to just ignoring the whole thing. Each idea was brought up and rejected or tabled.

"He needs to be put down." Jezra's announcement sent a silent wave through the room. Heads turned and eyes stared. Jezra didn't seem to mind. She leaned back in her chair and let her fingers toy with her coffee cup. "I'm just saying what most of us are thinking. He needs to be put down."

"He's not a dog." Kalen had stayed out the discussion but this was too much. She stepped to the side of the table and looked over the heads of the people seated around it.

"Close enough." Jezra stood as well. "He killed one of our pack members. He would have been destroyed then if the human police hadn't gotten involved." She glanced at Rike as if to claim that was his fault. Her father hadn't used his influence to free Rebel. "He was barely sane then. Fifteen years in a human prison hasn't helped. And now because he couldn't control himself, we're all in danger."

"This wasn't his fault," Kalen protested.

"Really."

"He was being beaten."

"And if he had more control of his wolf, it wouldn't have been an issue." She addressed the crowd at the table. "He spends most of his time in wolf form, sleeping outside, feeding off rabbits."

"How do you know...?"

Kalen's question was ignored.

"We all know what that does to the human mind." Jez's voice rose, captivating her audience.

Feral. Kalen waited for Jezra to say it. Wolves had been known to change into their wolf forms and never return to human.

Jezra lifted her chin. "He's gone feral. More animal than human and we can't allow that to threaten our existence." Heads nodded, the movement flowing around the table like a wave, as first one then the next fell into her twisted logic.

"Wait." Brennan held up his hands and silenced the room. All eyes turned to him and stopped the steady path of agreement. "Are you suggesting we *kill* Rebel?" His eyes flickered red. A surge of pride rushed through Kalen's veins. He was *her* mate.

Jezra sighed. "I don't like the idea any more than you do..."

"Bullshit." Kalen's whispered comment drew a few smiles and a glare from Jezra.

"But sometimes we have to do what is best for the packs. This situation is dangerous. To all of us, to our children. Even Rebel. Imagine what will happen if they decide it's true and the human scientists get a hold of him. If we put him down, the situation will go away." It sounded almost logical when she said it. Sacrifice one so that many could live. Kalen's stomach burned. They were planning to kill Rebel. It couldn't happen.

"You can't do this." She looked to her father. "Dad."

"I agree." He stood up, putting him in line with Brennan. The two were a wall of power. "Rebel's a member of my pack and I'm not going to allow you to kill him."

"Rike—" Bronham, Jezra's dad, stood. The two packs were facing off. This wasn't good. "I know it's hard but she's got a point. He's one man. We get rid of him—"

"Make it look like a suicide," Jezra interjected. Kalen's eyes tightened at the corners. She'd been planning this.

Bronham nodded. "And this all goes away. It's an internet hoax."

"No." Kalen stepped forward, jumping back into the conversation. "You're not touching him."

"Kalen, please stay out of this." Jezra's voice was calm and assured, and damn she was sounding logical again. Kalen fought the wolf that demanded she sink her teeth into the bitch's throat and shake. "You remember him as a child so you don't see what he's become. He's an animal that's out of control."

"He's not out of control."

"You've seen that video. He turned into his wolf form in front of strangers, in front of video cameras." Jezra's tone rose, moving out of calm and assured and becoming more shrill. "If his wolf hadn't been so close to the surface, he would have been able to resist."

"That's not fair," Brennan interjected. "He was being shocked by a taser and whipped. I don't think any of us could fight that for too long. I was barely managing."

"But you did." She turned her full attention to him. Kalen stood beside her mate and felt the hunger in Jezra's stare. "You, a nascent wolf, managed to keep your human form. Even you can control it."

She was practically purring as she spoke. Kalen's teeth ached.

"There just isn't any video evidence of my almost shifting," Brennan said.

"I think Jezra has a point." Jezra's father took his place beside his daughter. "Even if he couldn't control the shift because of the pain, he should have been aware enough, knew the risks to take the evidence with him."

"We grabbed what we could," Brennan said. His voice rang hard through the open dining room. "We thought we had it all."

"We don't blame you," Jezra said. "This is all new to you. You couldn't have understood the necessity of grabbing the third camera. Now we're all at risk. It's his face on the internet. Can we please get back to the fundamental point? Rebel has put our existence in danger and he needs to be put down. I'm sorry Rike, but if you won't do it, we will."

Heads around table started to nod but Kalen's mind flipped through what Jezra had just said. Third camera? How could she...?

She looked up, met Brennan's stare. He tipped his head in question. He was thinking the same thing.

"Wait!" Kalen held up her hand.

Jezra sighed. "Stay out of this, Kalen. It's decided."

"How did you know there were three cameras?"

"What?"

Brennan moved around the end of the table to stand next to Kalen. "She's right. How did you know there were three cameras?"

Jezra shrugged and gave an irritated shake of her head. "I don't know. I heard one of you talk about it."

"I haven't talked about it." He looked at Kalen. "Have you talked about it?"

"No. I've only discussed that day with one person. My dad."

"And he told mine. There. That's how I knew."

"No," Rike said. "I didn't know how many cameras there were. Just that they thought they'd gotten all the tapes or disks or whatever it was recorded on." Byron stood up, taking his place at Rike's right side. "I think you should answer the question. How did you know there were three cameras?"

"I guessed. I don't know."

Kalen scoffed. "You guessed. Just picked that number out of the air?"

Brennan shook his head. "I don't think so." Disgust dripped from his voice. "You set it all up, didn't you?"

Kalen couldn't keep her mouth closed. "You hired Chas. Why? Why would you want to expose the community like this?"

A dozen pairs of eyes stared at Jezra.

"I didn't. Chas was supposed to kill the bastard." She lifted her chin as if she was proud of that fact. "It was those idiots he hired who made the tapes. The second time they went after him, they saw Rebel start to change and Chas told them everything." She shook her head. "Sniveling little human."

"Why?" Brennan demanded. "Why go after Rebel?"

Her eyes glowed.

"He killed my brother," she snapped then turned her focus to Rike. Hatred poured off Jez, her body practically vibrating. "He spends fifteen measly years in a human prison and when he returns you welcome him like the prodigal son."

"Rebel was young and hotheaded and he wanted revenge on Jason for attacking my daughter." Power flowed through his words—the strength of the Alpha wolf. "Rebel paid his debt and I'm not going to disregard loyalty like that."

Kalen felt the air seize her lungs.

"You knew?"

"Yes." Her father's eyes glittered with sadness. "Though why you never trusted me enough to tell me yourself..." He shook it off. "How I found out doesn't matter. I would have killed him myself if I'd gotten to him first."

Jezra's eyes squinted down into slashes. "What's happened in the past doesn't matter. Like a real pack, we've got to stop protecting the weak and we've got to cut out those who mean us harm. Rebel has to be killed."

Emotions slammed through Kalen's body and her wolf reared up in her brain. She felt her lips pull back from her teeth—teeth that were too large for her mouth. Her snarl echoed through the room, silencing the irritating voices. The bitch had dared threaten her mate. She growled again.

Jezra tossed her head back and sneered. "Well, it appears that the human has finally tapped her inner wolf." She squared her shoulders to Kalen. "Do you really want to take me on?"

Kalen's wolf immediately catalogued the strike pattern to tear through her enemy's throat. She licked her lips, almost tasting the blood. Tension bound her shoulders and she straightened, preparing for the change.

"Baby, as much as I'd love see you rip her throat out..." Brennan's breath heated her neck. "The blood would be hell to get out of the carpet."

Jezra yanked her shoulders back and down and it looked like she was actually planning to change, to challenge Kalen. Kalen's wolf responded and she felt her teeth lengthen.

"Jezra!" Bronham grabbed her arm and gave her a shake, pulling her back from her transition.

Kalen felt Brennan's fingers on her hip. He wasn't holding her back, just touching, soothing. It calmed the wolf enough that the red haze faded from her stare.

Jezra ripped her arm away from her father's hold. She glanced around the room and seemed to sense that the tide had turned against her. She stared at Kalen, the sneer firmly set on your lips.

"If I were you I wouldn't be so hot to save him...not when he's *fucking* your boyfriend." Kalen knew her mouth dropped open and breath caught in the back of her throat. Jezra shifted her glare past Kalen to Brennan. "For a strong wolf, he takes it up the ass like a girl."

Brennan tensed beside her. "Get out of my house," he snapped.

Rike and Byron moved around Brennan and Kalen. The wolf alive in her, she now sensed what others had. She knew without question that she was surrounded by the three strongest wolves in the room. Brennan was still young but his wolf was powerful. The two other Alphas in the room stared at the barricade of male flesh and seemed to decide strategic retreat was a good idea.

"Let's go."

"No one touches Rebel." Brennan's announcement stopped the small crowd from heading toward the door. His voice was a mixture of District Attorney and Alpha wolf. The combination was effective and scary at the same time. "We'll take care of this ourselves."

Rike nodded, approving not only Brennan's suggestion but his placement high in the pack. No one would be allowed to speak for the Alpha unless he was a Beta.

The two visiting Alphas looked at each other—as if questioning whether they wanted to take on this fight—then each gave a brisk nod of agreement.

Voices surrounded her as Brennan, Byron and Rike discussed what they would do. She heard Mik's name mentioned and his computer skills.

She tried to focus on what they were saying but Jezra's accusation flipped through her brain like a crazed picture book. *Brennan and Rebel? Lovers?* She tried to think if she'd missed some sign but her mind wouldn't focus. Images of the two of them together—strong, hard male bodies pressed against each other, lips and tongues. The fantasy changed and she was right in the middle of it. The three of them fucking. Not like the other night, where they'd both been making love to her, but the three of them together.

Her father came over and gave her a kiss on the cheek. Byron followed with a supportive hug.

Kalen watched as Brennan walked her father to the door. They shook hands and an unspoken message passed between them. Even from the distance, Kalen recognized the intensity in her father's stare. He was giving Brennan permission to do what he had to do to solve the Rebel problem.

The door snapped shut and Brennan turned around, walking back to her, his steps slow.

"Is it true?" she asked. She didn't quite believe it.

He opened his mouth but nothing came out.

She raised her eyebrows. It was rare that Brennan was silenced. He was a politician. Answering tough questions was part of his job. Obviously Jezra's announcement was at least close to the truth.

Kalen crossed her arms over her chest and waited. Part of her felt betrayed, part of her was just irritated that he hadn't told her. She'd been struggling with her own feelings for Rebel and he was fucking him?

Brennan's chest expanded in a tight breath.

"The night of the full moon, right before he found you..." He swallowed, his throat convulsing as if he couldn't force the words to come out. "He fucked me."

"Just that once?" Because after the last full moon she had some glimpse of how strong the power of the moon could be. She'd rubbed up against Rebel and let Brennan fuck her—hard—against the cabin wall while Rebel watched. She understood the moon's power. Maybe it was just...

Brennan shook his head. "One other time. After you returned my ring. I was insane. I went to Rebel's and it happened again. Though not quite the same way..." He blushed and waved his hand as if explaining that he wasn't going to give her details. "Baby, I am so sorry. Neither of us wanted to hurt you but ever since he bit me, I can't seem to

stay away from him. This attraction has just exploded. Rebel keeps telling me I'll get over it but he said I'd get over it after the full moon and that hasn't happened."

He walked across the room and took her hands. "I love you. I never wanted to hurt you. I just..." He shook his head as if he couldn't find the words.

"Sometimes you need to fuck Rebel," she said baldly.

"Yes."

Though her mind reeled with the thought that Brennan and Rebel were lovers, she could almost understand. After the past week, she knew the power of the wolf and how hard it was to fight the animal's desires. And they'd been together twice, once under the power of the full moon and once when she wasn't officially engaged to Brennan. She could hardly fault him for those.

Besides, she had her own secret to share.

"Kalen?"

She offered a weak smile. "Well, it actually makes what I have to say a little easier."

Chapter Nineteen

Brennan shook his head and took his eyes off the road long enough to glance at Kalen.

"Stop doing that."

"What?"

"Looking at me like I've grown another head."

"I'm just having a hard time turning it over in my brain. You and Rebel are mates."

"And this is more surprising than you fucking Rebel?"

He winced. She hadn't brought it up since his confession. And she was right. But still...

"Besides, you're my mate as well. My wolf has claimed you. There's no escaping that." She rubbed his knee. The thin lines of warmth from her fingertips seeped through his jeans, tiny comforting strokes. She shrugged. "I guess it really does run in my family."

They turned the final corner down Rebel's drive. Half a dozen reporters took video and stills as they made the corner.

Brennan stared at the road, his lawyer mind looking at the possibilities and challenges to this situation. The possibilities were great sex between the three of them and there would be someone else to watch over Kalen. He felt his own reluctant smile. It was interesting how his thoughts had changed since he'd been bitten and even more since his first transition. The wolf had distinct priorities and one of them was protecting Kalen. Didn't matter that she was fully capable of protecting herself – that *were* creature she'd turned into had been vicious and strong – that was his job.

The challenge was going to be watching Kalen touch Rebel. It had happened that one night but that was different. The energy had been high for all three of them. It had just happened. And Rebel had left before morning.

But could they share Kalen? They'd end up killing each other.

Brennan parked the car and they got out. He glanced at the front door but couldn't imagine Rebel was inside. If he was upset, his wolf would want to be outside.

He lifted his face and sniffed the air. A strong scent of wolf and stress came from behind the cabin.

Brennan tipped his head toward the back of the house and started walking that direction. He turned the corner and all but knocked Rebel down. The other man jerked back, almost a flinch. The wild light in his eyes made Brennan's heart squeeze in sympathy.

"What the fuck are you doing here?" Rebel challenged. The sympathy faded a bit.

"You wouldn't answer your phone."

"You could have taken that as a sign that I didn't want to talk to anyone." He tossed his duffel bag into the back of his truck. He stopped when he saw Kalen. The tension in his jaw eased for a moment before it snapped back into place.

"I figured you just didn't understand how to use the phone."

"Bite me."

"Okay."

"Now, boys..." Kalen said, pushing forward. She ignored the silent warnings that surrounded Rebel and put her hand on his bare arm. "How are you doing?"

Brennan watched for a moment, allowing his wolf to come to the surface, extending his senses. The change was subtle, so small he wasn't sure Rebel would even recognize it, but Rebel turned, allowing Kalen behind the angry wall he'd built.

Her fingers slid across Rebel's skin, light touches that reminded Brennan of her hands on him. The sight intrigued him. The night the three of them spent together he hadn't actually been thinking much. Hadn't watched much. He'd been too busy doing. But yeah...his cock came to life watching Kalen stroke Rebel's arm.

Maybe this *would* work out.

Rebel nodded in response to her question. "I'm fine." He looked over at Brennan. "And neither of you should be here." His words seem to renew the starch in his spine and he stepped away from Kalen.

"We're not just going to abandon you," Kalen said.

"You two really don't understand pack life, do you? You cull the weakest from the pack. I'm the weakness. I'm the threat."

"No one's going to hurt you," Brennan announced.

The light in Rebel's eyes flared for moment, his wolf reacting to the possible threat.

"Fine. Cool. Now leave."

"Rebel, no, we—"

"Yes. I'm going to throw the rest of my shit in my truck and drive away." He stormed off to where his bedroll was spread out, grabbed the pad and rolled it up. The movements stretched his jeans across his ass and fuck if Brennan could look away. The memory of having Rebel beneath him, being inside him, made his jeans tight.

A catch in Kalen's throat grabbed his attention and he looked over. She stared at him, her eyebrows raised, laughter sparkling in her eyes. She'd caught him. His cheeks warmed up.

Rebel walked between them.

"This is going to screw up both of your lives." He grabbed his bedroll and tossed it in the back of the truck. He spun around and looked at Brennan. "You're going to run for mayor here in a few years. You don't need any scandals."

"If we do it right, no one's going to remember some stupid werewolf story by then."

"If you do it right. And what about the fucking? If I stay around here, the three of us are going to end up in bed together. Again."

We can only hope, Brennan thought. His cock was hard just watching Rebel move around and suddenly the thought of Kalen and Rebel as lovers seemed fascinating. Sexy.

"You're going to be the fucking mayor," Rebel said. "The nice voters of this city aren't going to elect you if you have a wife and male lover."

"No one will know."

Rebel snorted a laugh but the sound was more mocking than joyful. "Even I read the newspaper in prison. They always find out."

The truth of Rebel's words hit him. How many politicians in the past few years had ended up standing in front of the press, confessing infidelities, their wives standing loyally by their sides?

"And you..." Rebel lifted his chin toward Kalen. "Think your business is going to survive that kind of news?"

"I'm a party planner. Avant garde is fashionable." She shrugged. "If word came out that you two were my lovers? People would hire me just to see what was so special."

Brennan heard their conversation but his mind was locked on his future.

He was right. If Rebel disappeared, Brennan could continue on the path he'd planned. Run for mayor in two years, governor in six.

If Rebel stayed around, would they be able to resist getting together? Fucking? He'd managed to stay away for the past week but even that had been a struggle. God forbid they meet accidentally, when he wasn't prepared. He'd have Rebel up against the wall and his tongue down his throat before either of them could blink. Yeah, Rebel had a point. If he stayed around, they were going to fuck again.

And he had no illusions that the press wouldn't learn the truth. He understood the seduction of power. The downfall of that seduction.

But Rebel would leave. All Brennan had to do was say it was the right thing. Kalen would never send him away. Brennan would have to be the one to do it. He had the most to lose.

Rebel turned away and headed toward his camp.

Brennan jumped in front of him and didn't move.

"Get the fuck out of my way."

"No."

"Brennan—"

The warning actually made Brennan's cock hard. He liked it when Rebel was pissed, just pissed enough, just powerful enough to take him down, fuck him. He liked it even better when he could fuck Rebel. Take that tight little ass.

The wolf rumbled its agreement. It had been days since he'd had Rebel beneath him. Too long.

"Don't," Rebel warned but his nostrils flared like he was inhaling Brennan's scent, could smell his arousal.

"Don't what?" he asked innocently, even though he knew.

"Bastard." Rebel's voice was low.

Brennan started to respond but a low ringing chimed from the house. Rebel glanced at the back wall but didn't respond. He hadn't answered the phone all day.

"You should get that."

"Why?"

"Because I left this number for Mik and I don't like answering other people's phones."

"Fuck," Rebel said, making it more of a sigh than a curse. He swung past Brennan and stomped around to the side of the house.

"Why is Mikhel calling here?" Kalen asked as they followed Rebel.

"Cell coverage sucks out here." She glared at him but he didn't fill in the blanks. The stress he'd felt on the drive out here evaporated from his body. He didn't know if it was being close to the forest or seeing Kalen and Rebel interact but a strange sense of calm came over him.

They entered the dark living room. Brennan's eyes adjusted quickly and he found Rebel talking on the phone. He looked up when they walked in.

"It's Mik." He held out the handset. "For you."

Brennan walked across the room. "You don't even have a cordless phone? We're so working your tech."

The conversation with Mikhel was brief but productive. The new video was up on the internet. Now Brennan just had to get people to see it. And there was only one way to do that.

He hung up, turned around and found Kalen and Rebel staring at him, their eyes screaming questions.

"What?"

"What was that all about?" Kalen asked.

"Your brother. He's a computer guy." Kalen nodded. "And this is a computer issue. We're just going to give the public a few more werewolves."

Rebel shook his head. "I so don't get this shit."

Brennan walked by, patted Rebel's shoulder. "We'll get you a cell phone and soon you'll be texting and tweeting with the best of them." He headed toward the door,

knowing Kalen was on his heels. They stepped outside. He sensed Rebel hovering near the door but werewolf pride wouldn't let him step outside.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

"Bare my soul," he said. The enigmatic answer would drive her crazy.

"Brennan!" She chased after him, drawing her farther from the house. "What's going on?"

"I'm going to talk to the press." He stopped and turned to her. "Do you love me?"

"Of course."

"Do you love Rebel?" She hesitated but he refused to look away. "Give me an honest answer."

She lifted her chin, almost defiant in her answer. "Yes."

"And it really wouldn't bother you if the world knows that you love us both?"

She thought about it for a moment and Brennan wanted to howl in triumph. She didn't just blindly move with her emotions. She thought about her future and the world and still she shook her head.

"No."

He bent down and kissed her. "I hope you mean that. Now go take care of Rebel. Keep him calm. Keep him inside." Brennan kissed her again and started walking down the driveway.

"How am I supposed to do that?" she called after him.

Brennan turned around and looked at her. Lust and laughter flickered through his stare, giving her explicit instructions without words. She blushed. Brennan winked. Kalen could do it. If anyone could keep that surly werewolf calm, it would be her.

He looked at his phone. One bar. That was enough. He had one call he needed to make in private.

Kalen watched Brennan walk down the long drive toward where the press gathered. She took a breath and spun around. It would only take moments before Rebel realized Brennan was gone and somehow she didn't think that was such a fine idea.

She hurried back up the front step, meeting Rebel as he walked through the door. She slapped her hand on his chest, nudging him backward, into the house. In truth she had no strength to beat a werewolf like him, but he responded to both the feminine power and the surprise of seeing her there.

"Where's he going?" Rebel asked. He made a move as if to follow Brennan but Kalen jumped into his path.

"To talk to the press."

"About what?"

Kalen's human personality cringed at the growl in his voice but her newly awakened wolf bristled.

"I don't know."

"Fuck. I'm going with him." He started off toward the door.

"No!" She grabbed his shirt and spun him back around. "He's a politician. He knows how to talk to the press." Rebel's eyebrows popped up in the perfect "what do you think you're doing?" visual question. She took a breath, inhaling the masculine scent of Rebel—fresh sweat on top of clean male. The smell made her mouth water. And Brennan *had* told her to keep Rebel inside, so she might as well have a little taste.

She used the grip on his shirt to pull herself closer, pressing up on her tiptoes, letting her lips brush across his.

"Kalen, what are you doing?"

She whispered another caress to his mouth, not a kiss, just letting their lips touch. His breath deepened.

"Kalen, honey..." He put his hands on hers. "You're Brennan's mate. We shouldn't—"

The wolf snarled inside her head. She didn't want to hear Rebel's protests and she certainly didn't want to hear any logic. She pushed her mouth against his, silencing his words and gathering the spicy taste that made her head spin. She flicked her tongue across his lips, teasing him, tempting him to open his mouth. He did.

A soft groan flowed into her mouth as he melded their lips together, wrapping his tongue around hers and sucking on it. She eased the grip on his shirt and wrapped her arms around his neck, cuddling her pussy up against his thigh. Liquid flooded her cunt as his hand slid down her back and cupped her ass, pulling her closer.

He lifted his mouth away, barely enough to break the connection.

"We shouldn't be doing this."

Kalen ignored Rebel's weak protest. There was no power in it. She kissed him again then pushed, sending him backward onto the couch. He flopped onto the cushions, his shirt pulling up to reveal ripped abs. She followed him down, eager to run her tongue along those lovely ridges. She straddled him and her knees sank into the soft cushions.

"Really, Kalen, Brennan's going to back in a few—" She lifted her hips enough to get her hands between them, her fingers reaching for the buttons of his fly. Rebel gulped but he didn't physically stop her. She popped the first two, feeling his hard-on push against the denim. "He's, uh, he's going to be back—"

She giggled. "You said that already." She slid her palm beneath the material, easing her fingers around his hard cock.

"He's not going to like this," Rebel tried again.

She used her free fingers to open the remaining buttons. His cock practically jumped into her hand. She curled her palm around the thick shaft.

"I don't know. I understand he likes this quite a lot."

Rebel's head snapped back.

"You know?" She nodded. The edges of his eyes tightened down. "So, what is this? He's fucked me, so now you get to?"

She shook her head, her hair tumbling forward. "Would that matter?"

He chuffed. "Hell, no. If you want a little revenge sex to get back at him, I'm all for it."

His words and tone matched perfectly – arrogant, cold – but the hunger in his eyes didn't change. She reached between her breasts and undid the buttons of her blouse. Rebel's breath grew tight as she unclipped the front clasp of her bra.

The night they'd been together, the three of them, Rebel had seemed fascinated with her breasts.

She lingered, barely pulling back the edges. The lace cups clung to her skin, teasing her already tight nipples. Rebel didn't seem inclined to wait. He slid his hands up her waist, along her ribs, and pushed the lace out of the way, his large, rough palms cupping her breasts. She thought he might stop there but he reared up and latched on to her breast. Delicious shivers ran from her nipple into her core. He sucked and licked, lavishing perfect attention to her breast before gliding over and sucking the other one.

Kalen moaned and rocked within his grasp. The wolf filled her soul, demanding that she fuck Rebel.

She pushed back and jumped out Rebel's hold, standing up, needing to be naked now.

She yanked down her jeans and underwear, tossing them to the side, and stripped off her shirt and bra. The light in his eyes crushed any shyness she might have had. He reached out for her, drawing her back down. In one strong move, he flipped her onto her back and drilled his cock into her pussy.

Her cry filled the cabin as she clutched at his back, curling her legs around him to pull him deeper.

"Fuck, honey, it's going to be fast."

"Good." She kissed him, biting his lower lip. "Fuck me."

He growled and reared up, leveraging his hips back and slamming into her. The harsh, almost violent penetration should have shocked her but she wanted it. Her wolf wanted it.

She dropped her head back, spread her legs and let him fuck her. He bent over and wrapped his lips around her nipple, sucking, timed perfectly to the hard heavy thrusts between her legs. Delicious jolts raced through her pussy with every stroke and she squeezed her heels around his hips, pulling him harder.

"Fuck! Kalen!" he shouted, and slammed into her one more time. It was enough. As if her body was tuned to his, she came, taking his cum inside her.

Letting the languid weakness of her muscles take over, she sank down onto the cushions. He was still hard inside her but neither moved. She closed her eyes and let the satisfaction lull her.

Moments, hours later, another presence teased her senses and she opened her eyes. Brennan stood beside the couch, watching them. His eyes shone with the werewolf red but it was the hard line of his erection pressing against his jeans that drew her attention.

It took Rebel another minute to notice that Brennan was there. He pushed up, sliding his cock out of Kalen and turning. Aggression built in his muscles as he propped himself up on one arm, as if waiting for an attack.

Brennan stared at his lovers. The sexual satisfaction of Kalen and the challenge of Rebel. It wasn't going to be easy but they would find a way to make it work. It would tear Kalen apart to have to choose between them.

But his mouthy conscience raised its head. *You're not doing this only for Kalen*, the snotty voice pointed out. *You want Rebel. You don't want to give up either of your lovers.*

He sighed, letting the truth settle in his soul. Didn't matter either way. It was done.

Kalen shifted, a dreamy smile on her face as she stroked Rebel's hair.

The scent of their sex filled the air—Rebel's cum, Kalen's pussy juices blended together. It was an intoxicating combination.

Brennan's cock twitched as if to remind him he hadn't gotten off. He'd stood in the doorway, watching them fuck—the beautiful strain in Kalen's body, the strength of Rebel's thrusts—but that moment was between them. Besides, he thought with a smile, if that one night they'd all spent together was any indication, Kalen was going to want to be fucked again. And again. He'd have her then. And maybe Rebel as well.

Kalen's eyes drooped shut and he swore she was going to fall asleep right there, no awareness that Rebel looked ready to jump out of his skin.

He looked over at Rebel. The other male still watched him, obviously waiting for his reaction.

Brennan couldn't resist messing with the guy. He walked to the end of the couch and sat down, shifting Kalen so her head rested on his thigh, Rebel still trapped against the back of the couch.

Rebel watched him for a long moment then must have decided to deal with it later. He closed his eyes and relaxed down, putting his head on Kalen's shoulder.

Brennan knew it was just to hide but he could understand. He wasn't going to push Rebel. At least not too hard.

Rebel might have started off just trying to avoid a conversation but he drifted off. So did Kalen, leaving Brennan awake to watch them. He dragged an ugly afghan off the back of the couch and draped it over the three of them. He wasn't sleepy. He was too keyed up to be tired. Not just from the sights and scents of his mates—damn, it was amazing how easily he fell into thinking of Rebel as one of his mates—but because of what would happen soon.

Never one to second-guess a decision, he let his head fall back onto the cushions and tipped it to the side so he could look at his lovers. It had been inevitable since the

night Rebel had bitten him. He let his mind drift, thinking about the future until his watch beeped five o'clock.

Brennan pushed up on one arm and reached over the two bodies crushed beside him. His fingers snagged the remote control off the coffee table and he pointed it at the flat screen mounted on the wall. The brightness was enough to drag one of his lovers out of sleep.

Kalen rolled over and cuddled deeper into his warmth. Very little woke her. Rebel blinked and looked irritated at being woken up. Or maybe he was just stiff from sleeping twisted on the couch.

"What are we watching?" Rebel asked shoving his hair out of his face.

"I want to see the evening news."

All sleepiness disappeared and Rebel sat up. "Do you think you're on it?" His movement pulled the afghan off Kalen. She reached behind her, slapping at the cold space at her back.

Brennan watched for a second. If anything was going to wake Kalen it would be the chill in the room.

Redo the heating. Brennan added it to his list of items that needed to be upgraded on the cabin. Rebel didn't seem to mind but after fifteen years in prison, just being able to walk out your own door had to be a luxury.

The news open played and Brennan sat up, easing Kalen's head off his thigh. Already half awake, she opened her eyes and glared up at him.

"Sorry, baby, I just want to see the screen a little better."

The lead story was a multiple-vehicle accident on the highway followed by a story on the city budget. They moved through the top stories and went to commercial.

"That's good."

"What's good?" Rebel asked.

"We didn't make the 'A' block. That means we're not that big of a story."

Rebel nodded but Brennan could see he didn't quite believe that.

But as the next segment started, Brennan's picture appeared over the news anchor's left shoulder.

"And in a strange twist to a strange story...District Attorney Brennan Hall became a part of the werewolf watch. Shelly Myers has more."

A perky blonde woman appeared on the screen. "Good evening, Mitchell. About two hours ago, while we were here, waiting for a glimpse of this so-called werewolf, we got a surprise."

The picture changed and it was video of Brennan arriving at the end of the driveway. Kalen sat up, grabbing the blanket and pulled it up to her chest. Brennan glanced at his lovers. They both stared at the TV, eyes wide, muscles tight.

He shifted, moving behind Kalen, giving her something to lean on. She leaned back but didn't relax.

The video showed him greeting the crowd.

"District Attorney Hall," a reporter cried out. "Are you a werewolf too?"

Brennan chuckled. "I'm a lawyer. People usually compare us to vampires or other bloodsucking fiends."

The crowd laughed. The reporter's voice rang out of the video.

In a strange twist to an already strange story, District Attorney Brennan Hall came out of the cabin we'd all been watching. He laughed off the questions about the werewolf, assuring everyone that Francis Branson..."

"Francis? Your name is Francis?" Brennan asked, looking around Kalen.

"Hush, I'm listening," Kalen commanded. Rebel flipped him off.

The reporter continued.

"Is not a werewolf and that it appeared to be some kind of publicity stunt by a software designer. In the midst of it all, he did have one other announcement that shocked us all."

The video shifted to him taking a deep breath.

Even now Brennan could feel the same tightening in his chest. It had been one of the hardest things he'd ever had to do but it was right. Once he'd said the words, his stomach had unknotted.

"Today I gave my resignation to the mayor. Effective immediately I am no longer the District Attorney. That position has been temporarily filled by ADA Mark Wilson. There have been rumors that I was planning to run for mayor. I'd like to make it clear, that I will not."

A flurry of questions followed, more intense. They sensed a story. A real story.

Tension ripped through Kalen's body. She sat up and turned to look at him. Rebel stared too, his mouth open.

"Why did you...?"

Brennan nodded to the TV, pushing their attention back to it.

"My reasons for leaving are personal and have nothing to do with the fine work that the prosecutor's office does."

The video cut back to the blonde reporter standing in front of the cabin. The sky was almost dark and only the light shining through the window gave the building any definition.

"Hall wouldn't answer any questions. He said he would be available in the next few days."

The anchor and reporter appeared on the TV in a split-screen.

"Interesting, Shelley. You go out there to find a werewolf and find something entirely different."

She laughed. "Well, I think we all knew the werewolf wasn't real."

The anchor chuckled. "Bloodsucking fiends. I like that. In other news, the Assembly has delayed voting again on..."

Brennan clicked off the TV. He didn't care about the rest of the news. He reached into his pocket and killed his cell phone as well. The coverage sucked out at the cabin but he didn't want a random call to get through.

He sat back and waited.

Kalen spun around on the couch.

"Wha – Why?"

"What the fuck?" Rebel asked, seemingly voicing Kalen's question as well.

Brennan shrugged and leaned back. "They needed a story to distract them from you being a werewolf. I gave it to them."

Chapter Twenty

The stunned silence was actually comforting.

"But you love being a lawyer." Kalen had found her voice though the tone was soft and stunned.

"I'll still be a lawyer. I'll just have to find some new clients." He brushed the backs of his fingers across her cheek. "Rebel's right. If I tried to run for mayor, they were going to find out."

"Not if you stayed away from me," Rebel said, getting up, dragging his jeans over his hips and walking away. His tight ass clenched as he stood and Brennan couldn't help watching it. He looked at Kalen. She was staring as well.

"And we've seen how well that works."

Rebel sighed and jammed his fingers into his hair. "I'll leave. They'll forget."

"And what? Go off and live like a lone wolf?" Brennan asked, momentarily forgetting to look at Rebel's ass. He stood up, the wolf driving him forward, following his mate.

"I'll be fine."

"You'll go insane. And what about Kalen? You're just going to leave her? It's pretty damn obvious her wolf has claimed you." He'd learned enough over the past four weeks to know that when a wolf chose a mate, the decision was final.

He turned his eyes away from her. "Her wolf doesn't really want me. She wants you."

"She wants us both."

"She'll get over it." Rebel said. He faced Brennan. The hard, stubborn set of his jaw made Brennan want to scream. The bastard was going to fight him on this.

"No." Kalen's voice interrupted their sniping. They both looked down at her. She clutched the blanket and pulled it up to her chin. Yes, she'd been naked around these men before but this was not a naked time. She really wanted to be clothed for this discussion. "I won't get over it."

"Her wolf has picked you," Brennan said. She noticed that he didn't mention anything about *his* wolf's choice. He hadn't said it specifically but then he might not understand what his wolf's insistence meant.

"That's a tie that can be broken if we just stay away from each other."

Kalen ignored the stab of pain in her heart. She believed, had to believe, that he felt something for her. The way he'd fucked her, she knew he desired her.

Rebel took a breath that barely moved his chest and finally met her eyes. "Kiki, you know it's best if I leave."

"Best for whom? Not me."

"You have the life you want." He moved like he wanted to come to her, hold her, but he pulled back. "I came in and screwed it up. I'll leave and you can go back, or mostly go back..." He glared at Brennan. "To the way it was."

"I don't want that." Kalen pushed up onto her knees but she wasn't begging. She knew what she wanted. The clarity of her future gave her a calm she hadn't felt in years. "I love Brennan and my wolf has claimed him. My wolf has claimed you too." Rebel opened his mouth but Kalen cut him off. "The wolf may have claimed you but I love you. I've always loved you." She looked at Brennan to see how he would react. His jaw tightened for a heartbeat but then it eased. She waited until he met her eyes. "I love you. I never would have acted on it or even let myself feel it if it hadn't been for my wolf claiming him, but now that it's happened I can't forget it."

He nodded.

"But you loving both of us isn't enough," Rebel interrupted. "In fact, it will make it worse. We'll end up killing each other over you."

Kalen shook her head. "I don't think so. I think the love between the two of you will stop that."

Both men blanched.

"Love? I don't think so." Brennan's cheeks turned pink.

"He doesn't love me," Rebel said. She noticed he didn't say anything about *his* feelings for Brennan.

"I think you're wrong." Kalen stood up and let the afghan drop. If nothing else it caught the attention of her men. She strolled forward until she stood between them. "I think right now, you want to fuck each other's brains out." Both men turned their heads and stared at opposite walls. "But it's more than that." She reached up, sliding one hand up Brennan's chest and one around Rebel's back, pulling them close. "You guys like each other. You tease and challenge but you enjoy each other. And if it's not love, it's a start."

Rebel's cheeks actually turned red.

The emotions were too tense, too tight for a real decision to be made, but she just had to make sure that Rebel didn't walk out now. She had to have time to convince him. She took a step back and smiled. "Can I watch?"

"Watch what?" Brennan asked, his mouth open in shock.

"The two of you. Together." Neither male reacted. Her smile grew bigger. "Fucking."

"What?"

"No way. Why?"

"I want to watch. See my beautiful mates together."

For a moment they froze and she thought they were going to laugh it off. Then they began to fidget like boxers waiting to get in the ring. Brennan rolled his shoulder back. Rebel lifted his chin, meeting his stare. Pure daring, like they were getting ready to fight instead of fuck. She opened her mouth, ready to call it to a halt, but before a sound could escape, they moved. Both coming forward, a hand around each neck.

Their lips met in a hard kiss. The sight shocked Kalen. Somehow she hadn't thought of them kissing. It started off more of a battle than a kiss, but after a few growls and grunts the touch softened. Their heads turned, their bodies came closer, mouths opened.

Heat rushed into her pussy — her body reacted like *she* was being caressed.

She dragged her gaze away from their mouths, down their bodies. Rebel was shirtless but Brennan was fully dressed.

Brennan reached down and palmed Rebel's ass. The movement wasn't slow and gentle. He grabbed and pulled, grinding their hips together, rubbing their erections together. Both men groaned, the sounds rumbling from their chests. Their bodies moved, hips pumping.

Brennan dragged his head back from the kiss. "Don't."

Rebel froze. Tension slammed into his muscles. The strain radiated out and Kalen found it hard to breathe.

Brennan shook his head then leaned in, placing a hard kiss on Rebel's mouth. "I want to be inside you when I come." The hunger in those words sank into Kalen's pussy and drained the starch from Rebel's body. She squeezed her knees together. Her pussy clenched. She'd never seen anything quite so sexual. They didn't touch with slow sensual strokes. They attacked each other. Fingers strong, lips and teeth turning the kisses into competition.

Her stare locked on the frantic tear of Brennan's hands dragging down Rebel's jeans, wrapping his fingers around Rebel's cock. She stumbled backward, almost tripping over the heavy coffee table, and fell onto the couch. Brennan dug into the pocket of his jeans and pulled out a plastic bottle.

Rebel's eyebrows popped up.

"You just happen to have lube in your pocket?"

Brennan shook his head. "No, but when I came in and saw you two together, I knew I was going to end up fucking someone's ass." He smacked Rebel's right butt cheek. "Looks like it's yours. Bend over."

"Fuck you." Rebel took a step back and crossed his arms on his chest. His lower lip pushed out in just the slightest pout. "Why is it me who's getting fucked?"

"Because you want it. And because you know I can take you down."

"You prick. You think —"

Kalen giggled and both men looked at her. She grabbed the afghan and draped it over her legs.

"What?" Brennan demanded. His mouth curled into an irritated frown.

She smiled. "Is your foreplay always this aggressive?"

"No."

"Yes."

Rebel looked at Brennan. "What? We don't have foreplay. This is just the —"

"Screw it." Brennan grabbed Rebel's shoulder and flipped him around, shoving him to the floor and strangling the words out of Rebel's mouth. He followed Rebel to the ground, covering his back. Rebel's ass fit perfectly into the bend of Brennan's body. "Just be a good boy and take it and I'll let you suck me off."

Rebel reared back and tried to throw Brennan off but Brennan held on, widening his stance and curling his ankles around Rebel's, clamping his hands down on Rebel's wrists. Rebel grunted and pushed back with his ass.

"Oh fuck, that's not going to make me want it any less." The tone changed. Not fighting, almost pleading. Brennan released one of Rebel's hands and grabbed his hip, holding him in place as Brennan pressed his jean-covered erection against Rebel's ass. Rebel tensed for a moment then seemed to fall into the rhythm.

"Do it," Rebel commanded, flipping a glare over his shoulder.

"Well, babe, since you asked so nicely."

Kalen watched, waiting for a flash of jealousy, but none appeared. Their bodies were beautiful, strong. She could tell they'd done this before but not enough for it to be familiar. Brennan poured the lube onto his fingers and slid one down between Rebel's ass cheeks.

She watched as he prepared Rebel, pumping his fingers into him and finally lining up his cock. The slow, steady penetration made her squirm, remembering how it felt to have him inside her. The stunned look of ecstasy on Rebel's face as Brennan sank fully into him sent a shock to her pussy.

Needing relief, she slid her hand down between her legs. She was slippery with her pussy juices and Rebel's cum. Her fingers glided in easily and she moaned. The shallow penetration was good but it was the scene before her that made her almost come.

Brennan eased his hips back. A slow withdrawal that squeezed his dick. Fuck, he'd missed this. After little more than a week, he needed this. Rebel cried out. Claws popped out of his fingertips and dug into the rough wood floor. Muscles tight, he braced himself as Brennan pushed back in.

Brennan closed his eyes and fought the urge to pound himself into Rebel's ass. He knew he couldn't. Knew he had to go slow. He needed to make it good for Rebel. So Rebel would stay.

He pulled back and pushed forward, angling his hips to hit that place that made Rebel gasp. He stroked a couple of times before finding it then hit it time and again, watching the pleasure shoot through Rebel's spine.

He knew the moment Rebel felt it, the moment he gave himself over to Brennan's fucking. The tension in his shoulders eased and Rebel began to push back, take him deeper.

So good. They rocked together, falling into the rhythm. He thrust a little harder, wanting to go deeper. "Fuck!"

Rebel grunted in return.

But it wasn't that sound that caught his attention. He heard a gasp, soft and low. He snapped his head to the right.

Kalen sat on the couch, legs spread, fingers pumping into her pussy in frantic thrusts. Her eyes locked on their bodies.

"Damn, babe, look at that," Brennan whispered, slowing his thrusts just enough. Rebel lifted his head.

She blinked and met his gaze, eyes blazing. Rebel's stare fell to her pussy.

Rebel rocked back against him, still working Brennan's cock in his ass, but he didn't look away from Kalen.

She arched her back, displaying her breasts, keeping her back supported with one hand while she dipped the other between her legs, pussy juice drenching her thighs.

Rebel snarled. Energy zinged through his body as he stared, his eyes locked on her hand stroking her pretty wet cunt. Brennan kept his eyes on Rebel. The hunger on his face stabbed Brennan in the chest. The wolf shimmered through him, burning his eyes. In that moment Rebel was pure predator.

"You look hungry," Brennan murmured, keeping his voice low so Kalen wouldn't hear.

Rebel flinched and dropped his gaze, looking down and away from Kalen.

Brennan didn't stop. "Like you want to put your mouth on that pretty cunt." Rebel's head snapped around. He didn't speak. His chest rose and fell in tight breaths. "Lick all that sweet pussy juice. Make her scream."

"Fuck."

He grabbed a thick hank of Rebel's hair and pulled, probably just a bit too hard to be pleasurable, dragging his head back.

"Come on, babe...do you want to lick her cunt? Have her come against your mouth?"

"Fuck yes." Rebel shook his head and broke Brennan's hold. "Now, finish me off so we can have her."

Brennan grinned. Rebel had moments of being submissive but they were few and far between. He gripped Rebel's hips and pounded into him hard and deep. Kalen moaned as if she could feel it in her cunt.

Their bodies worked, straining to come. Brennan's hand curled around Rebel's cock and began to stroke in time to the fierce thrusts. Kalen moved with them. Her fingers plunged deeper, her hips rocking to the frantic rhythm they set.

Brennan bent forward, stretching over Rebel's back, sinking his teeth into the taut shoulder muscle. Rebel arched into the bite, screamed and came. Tiny vibrations fluttered through Kalen's clit, responding to her mate's orgasm. She brushed her thumb across the tight bundle of nerves.

"Oh fuck, come," Rebel demanded, slamming his ass back, driving Brennan deeper.

Brennan grunted and thrust forward, sinking into Rebel's ass one more time. He cried out, holding his cock deep, spilling his cum inside Rebel.

The wolf inside his head growled and Brennan repeated the sound. He'd marked his mate. He hadn't bit him, hadn't actually plunged his teeth into his skin but it didn't matter. Rebel belonged to him.

Rebel squirmed. Brennan lifted his head, disgruntled at being dislodged from the tight ass that held his cock so well. He grabbed Rebel's thigh and held him in place.

"Let me go, man. She's going to come without us."

The reminder that Kalen was there, watching, fucking herself with her fingers shocked Brennan enough that he let Rebel go. Rebel eased forward and Brennan's cock slipped out. Both groaned and Brennan promised himself he'd be back fucking that tight hole before the day was out. Or maybe he'd let Rebel fuck him.

But only after Kalen had been fucked senseless.

He watched as Rebel crawled across the living room floor, headed straight for Kalen's pussy.

Brennan held back, watching.

Rebel tipped his head to the side and looked between the strands of his hair, giving Brennan one final chance.

Brennan nodded, giving his permission, and Rebel leaned forward, stretching between her legs, his hips sliding between her spread thighs. She looked up at him, her mouth hung open, her eyes dazed. Rebel bent down and covered her mouth in a hot, deep kiss. She groaned. Her body arched up, hungry for the taste of him. But her fingers stayed between her legs.

Brennan drifted to the end of the couch, wanting a better view. He stared at their mouths, lips pressed against each other, tongues entwined. Both lost in the kiss. An ache rose in Brennan's chest, not jealousy – hunger.

Rebel pulled back from the kiss. He reached between their bodies and tugged on her wrist. He carried her hand to his mouth. Her pussy juices clung to those first two fingers. Brennan's cock rebounded at the delicious sight. He couldn't take his eyes away. The picture of his lovers was too beautiful. Rebel moaned as he slipped her fingers between his lips, sucking both digits full into his mouth.

"Fuck she tastes good," Rebel murmured, his gaze flicking over to Brennan.

Brennan's cock rose in response. "Lick her," he commanded, the wolf's need to control the situation returning. "Make her come."

The red in Rebel's eyes flared and he dropped his head, backing up and crouching between Kalen's spread thighs. The tight lines of Rebel's ass and back as he bent over caught Brennan's eyes. He grabbed his shirt and wiped off his cock, stroking slow and easy, remembering how it felt to be inside that tight ass... Fuck, he was still hard.

The need to fuck pounded through him but he wanted Kalen *and* Rebel. He wanted them both in his bed, beneath him. It was almost impossible to comprehend – that he could love a woman so much and still want to share her with another male.

But the wolf wouldn't let his human delve too deeply. The thing was too basic. It wanted to fuck, needed its mates.

Rebel bent his head, moving his mouth a breath away from Kalen's pussy. He flashed one more glance to Brennan almost as if to assure himself he still watched, then gave a long, slow lick up her slit.

She gasped and her body convulsed, tensing as he swirled his tongue around her clit. Her back arched, pressing her breasts forward, the pretty tips begging for Brennan's mouth.

Her eyes fluttered and she stared up at him. He'd seen that look in her eyes before when he'd fucked her.

He looked at his lovers. And sank deep into the wolf mind where lines blurred.

Kalen crushed a scream as Rebel dipped the tip of his tongue into her passage. Her mind went deliciously blank as he fucked her with shallow, slick penetrations.

Pressure built and her pussy clenched, needing more. When she squirmed, Rebel's hands clamped down on her hips, holding her in place. It was just too much. Rebel's mouth on her pussy, Brennan standing beside them, watching, stroking his own cock.

She tipped her head back so she could see Brennan's face.

He met her gaze. The heat in his eyes shocked her. Love and lust poured through his gray stare.

He came forward, two easy steps, and he was at her side. He leaned forward and ran his hand over her hair, scraping the random curls away from her face.

"Fuck, you look beautiful. Those sexy legs spread wide. Rebel's mouth on your pretty cunt. Want to see you come, baby." He kissed her. Once. Hard and hungry.

Her body shimmered at his command. She moaned and dropped back, her limbs heavy, hot thick blood pounding through her veins. The wicked licks to her pussy consumed her attention. Her fingers slipped into Rebel's hair, the silky strands draping over the backs of her hands.

He kissed her clit as if thanking her for the touch, then spread her cunt open with his fingers and drove his tongue inside, sinking deep and hard this time.

"Rebel!"

He growled and plunged his tongue into her again.

She tried to just lie back and enjoy it but her body wanted too much. Restless, she twisted in his grasp, trying to guide him where she needed, but he smoothly slid away, gliding his tongue along the edges of her pussy lips, licking and sucking, returning time and again to tease and stroke her clit.

Tension spread through her core, filtering into her limbs.

Kalen knew she had to be babbling, pleading. Sounds tumbled from her mouth but she didn't recognize them. Occasionally familiar words would appear—"Rebel" and "Brennan" and "fuck me"—but they seemed to have no effect on the man between her legs. He teased and tormented until she wanted to scream. Until she did scream.

"Oh fuck, let her come."

She opened her dazed eyes and saw Brennan, his hand pumping up and down on his own shaft. His eyes glowed. He stared at the space between her legs and Rebel's mouth on her cunt.

Kalen felt Rebel's smile. He gave another lazy lick then slicked his tongue up her slit and swirled around her clit. A tiny jolt flickered through her core. More. She needed more. She tightened her grip on his head and pressed her hips up, silently begging for what she needed. Rebel groaned. The delicate vibrations shot through her pussy and she gasped.

"Rebel!"

He wrapped his lips over her clit and sucked, light, delicate pulses that sent jolts into her core. Her hips rocked in time with one frantic rhythm he set. This time he didn't retreat. He rubbed his tongue along the side of her clit. Wicked tension burst from her center and flooded her body, draining the strength from her limbs. He didn't stop licking and sucking, driving her through the orgasm.

Finally he kissed her pussy and sat back. The smug look on his face might have irritated her if she hadn't been so sated. He turned and flashed an arrogant smile at Brennan.

Brennan growled and stalked forward, standing over them. Rebel stayed crouched between her legs, his shoulders pulling up near his ears.

Brennan drew his lips back, baring his teeth, and growled. The animalistic challenge sent a delicious shock through Kalen. Rebel didn't retreat as Brennan came closer. For a moment she thought they would fight, maybe kiss. She held her breath and watched. They were barely human. And the wolves in them called to the animal in her. She squirmed, the ache in her pussy resurging at the sight of her mates.

Her movements seemed to capture their attention. Rebel leaned down like he was going to return to worshipping her pussy.

Brennan grabbed Rebel's shoulder and spun him away, tossing him to the side. Rebel shouted and she heard a thump as he landed but when she sat up to check on him, Brennan pushed her down. She stared up at him—the dominant wolf.

Part of her wanted to fight but the other, more practical side realized that this was what she wanted...to be fucked. His fingers slid from her ankle up—to her calf, her knee, the lower part of her thigh. Red blazed in his eyes.

He tipped his head back and roared, a warning to every male in the area.

Brennan planted his hands beside her shoulders and took her mouth in a kiss. The command of his lips wiped every coherent thought from her brain. Even as she realized it was happening, she didn't care. She needed this male.

Heat teased her pussy lips as the broad head of Brennan's cock pushed into her pussy, stretching, driving into her almost to the point of pain.

A red veil covered her vision but through the fog she could see the glow of his teeth—long, canine. Definitely not human. He was almost in transition, barely containing the *were*. At any other time, she might be frightened, but her body, the animal inside her, needed the hard fuck, wanted the male just on the edge of control. She tilted her hips up, easing him deeper, tightening her pussy around him. He growled and pushed forward, plunging into her. She cried out, the shock melting into pleasure as he pressed forward, leaning down on his hands, bracing himself on the worn cushions, over her, hard inside her.

He pulled his lips back from his teeth even as he thrust his cock deeper, filling her, pressing against her clit with each pulse. This would be no lingering fuck. It would be hard and fast.

Rebel put his hand on the arm of the couch and stood, watching them fuck.

Brennan probably didn't realized how close they were to full transition. But Rebel knew, and the only thing keeping them human was Kalen.

She arched her back, the beautiful rise and fall of her breasts as he drove his cock into her. Time and again.

His mates.

Strange that the words didn't panic him. He didn't know if it could work but he also didn't know if he had the strength to leave. Every emotion he'd ever suppressed for Kalen bubbled beneath the surface. He'd never let himself love her. Knew that he wasn't the male she needed. But fuck, he was the male she wanted. Or one of them. And leaving meant leaving Brennan. He wasn't ready to say he loved Brennan but he would miss their fights. And the fucking.

He smiled and walked closer. Brennan had a real future sucking cock. Rebel should stick around to let him practice.

Just thinking about Brennan sucking him off made him wrap his fist around his cock and stroke. He needed relief, but fuck, he wasn't going to get it with his own hand.

He looked at Brennan's ass and considered it, but the male was pounding Kalen pretty good. He didn't have the patience for an ass fucking. He looked at Kalen. Her back arched against the couch, her mouth hanging open, her eyes glazed and glowing.

Fuck she was beautiful, her body straining to come, taking Brennan's dick over and over. Rebel groaned. He'd felt the same cock inside him. Knew how thick, how hard he was.

He tracked the path of her stare and realized she was watching his hand on his cock. Hungry.

Reacting to the lust in her eyes, he climbed onto the couch and knelt beside her. Her breasts shimmied as Brennan drove into her. Rebel couldn't resist. He cupped one firm large mound in his hand. The nipple teased his palm as he circled his hand around. She pushed into the caress.

Rebel bent down, covering her mouth in a kiss, sinking his tongue into her heat.

"You're staring at my cock like you want to taste." He bit down on her lower lip. "You want to suck me, honey?"

She groaned and flicked her tongue out, licking his upper lip. "Yes. Come in my mouth."

Brennan pressed his hips forward, stopping with his dick buried deep inside her. Chest rising and falling in harsh breaths, he looked at Rebel and raised his eyebrows as if to ask "What the hell are you waiting for?"

Kalen watched, and the weird tension between Rebel and Brennan barely blipped on her brain. All she could feel was desire, the deep abiding need to be fucked by these two men...to have them both inside her. Every sense sparkled. She could practically taste Rebel's need on her tongue.

She arched her back, pushing her hips down, sliding Brennan's cock deeper into her pussy, maintaining that delicious connection even as she reached for Rebel.

"Please," she groaned.

Rebel hesitated, just a breath, a heartbeat, then rose up, guiding his cock to her mouth. Brennan rocked inside her, his cock deep in her pussy, waiting as she opened her lips and reached for the thick head of Rebel's cock.

"That's it, baby. Suck that pretty cock."

It made so much sense now that he thought Rebel's cock was pretty. She wondered if he'd sucked it. She'd ask later. Her mouth was too busy.

She flicked her tongue out, just a quick taste. A drop of pre-cum tempted her and she lapped at it, gathering the sweet and salty liquid on her tongue.

A groan slid from her throat and Rebel grunted in response, pressing forward and pushing the tip of his cock against her lips. It was awkward as hell and she didn't know how much she could take into her mouth but she couldn't move. The weight and presence of her mates locked her in place. The familiar red fog covered her mind and she opened her mouth, taking just the head in and sucking. Rebel tipped his head back and shouted.

Brennan growled and rocked forward, not fucking her hard, just slow, steady strokes that teased her pussy. He slipped his hand across her hip and dipped one finger

into her slit, rubbing across her clit. The wicked little jolt flashed through her body and she gasped.

"Suck him. Make him come in your mouth and then I'm going to fuck you. Hard and deep, just how you like it."

She wiggled her hips, wanting that hard fucking.

Brennan smacked his palm across her ass. "Don't try to tempt me, baby. Your job is sucking his cock. Then you'll get fucked."

She closed her eyes and concentrated on the thick shaft in her mouth. She loved to feel the hot male flesh sliding in and out, loved the way his thighs tensed when she tightened her lips and pulled back, flicking her tongue across the head before swallowing him again.

She couldn't see his face—their bodies were too twisted—but she felt every reaction, knew she had him. She slid one hand along his thigh, letting her nails bite into his skin. He grunt and thrust hard, driving his cock to the back of her throat.

"Sorry, oh fuck, sorry honey."

Her mouth was full of cock and she couldn't speak. She shook her head, humming her approval. She relaxed her throat and tried to take him deeper. Tension hardened his thighs.

"Oh fuck, baby, that's it." Brennan's cock pulled back and then he pushed forward, still slow, steady but enough that she felt him. The two males fell into a rhythm, filling her pussy and her mouth, slow, solid thrusts to her cunt, shallow pushes into her mouth. Pleasure overwhelmed her, battering her senses. She drowned in the sensations, savoring each flavor on her tongue, the hard penetration to her pussy, the groans and growls of her males.

Every stroke of Brennan's cock drove her closer to coming but so did the sweet taste of Rebel's cock. She dug her fingernails into the strong thigh muscles and drew back, sucking hard as she retreated.

Rebel's shout echoed through the room. He drove his hips down, sending his cock deep into her mouth as he came.

His cum spilled across her tongue, sweet, addictive.

Hands pulled on her hips and she jerked back, drops of Rebel's seed falling on her lips. Brennan's roar shook the walls seconds behind Rebel's yell. He pulled back, freeing her body. Brennan grabbed her waist and held her in place as he fucked her, pounding his cock into her. The sweet taste in her mouth lingered as Brennan rode her, every penetration sending a jolt into her core.

Kalen clung to the only solid thing in her world—Rebel. She knew she had to be hurting him, that her nails were drawing blood, but she couldn't let go.

"Damn, honey." He didn't sound in pain. "Fuck, honey, come."

Tension grew in her pussy, every nerve in her clit tingling. The lightest touch would send her over the edge.

"Good, baby, let me feel this pretty little cunt squeeze me."

"Please." She wasn't sure if her plea was heard... She needed one touch, just one.

"Do it," Brennan commanded, not stopping the hard thrusts she needed, craved.

Sensations surrounded her. She threw her hips up, meeting Brennan's downward stroke. Fuck, she needed.

"Please! Fuck! Brennan!" The words didn't make sense in her brain. Tears streamed down her face. Heat slid between her legs, connecting to the hot cock filling her. A light touch, a simple stroke to her clit. The ripple scattered through her core, sinking into her pussy. Hot hard contractions bound her body.

Brennan roared as if he felt every pull of her cunt.

Rebel groaned and cum spilled across her chest.

All strength left her muscles and she sagged onto the mattress. Strong hands ran over her body, teasing and soothing as Brennan's cock slipped out of her pussy.

"We got you, honey," Rebel whispered.

"Don't worry, baby. You're fine," Brennan said.

She nodded, hearing their voices, her mind still lost in the delicious fog, her body singing with repeated orgasms.

She took a breath. The smell of the males and sex filled her head and made her pussy clench. No way. She couldn't want, didn't want...

Hot lips pressed against her neck. Heat covered her front as Brennan collapsed down on her. His heart pounded against her chest, giving her some satisfaction that she hadn't been the only one overwhelmed. He fell to the side, pressing against her.

She opened her eyes and looked up. Rebel still knelt beside her, his cum splattered on her stomach. The longing in his gaze made her ache and she pulled on his arm, drawing him down beside her. He curled next to her. He was still hard, his cock pressing into her hip.

She sighed and was tempted to close her eyes but she couldn't stop looking at her males — Brennan's deep gray eyes, Rebel's fallen-angel looks. Her males. Her mates.

* * * * *

"Fuck."

The curse was soft and low but vibrated with an energy that dragged Kalen out of her sleep. The sun sliced through the windows, creating daggers across the old blanket draped over her. She was alone in the bed.

She hadn't been alone when they'd finally showered, fucked, put sheets on the bed, fucked and fell asleep. She rolled over, groaning as her muscles rebelled against the overuse.

Why, if I'm a werewolf and I can recover from cuts and wounds, do I still ache from fucking too much?

She didn't have an answer and didn't really have the focus to think about it. Brennan moved about the main room of the cabin. Even though she couldn't see him, she could hear his footsteps back and forth. Pacing was never good for Brennan. She got up, grabbed a t-shirt—it had to be Rebel's the way it fell almost to her knees—and followed the sound of irritated feet.

She stepped into the combined living-room-kitchen area. Brennan had stopped and stood at the window, staring out. He wore his jeans but no shirt.

She didn't have to say anything. She knew when he sensed she was there. He turned and looked at her.

"He's gone."

"What?"

"He's gone. His truck and all the stuff he had in the back."

Maybe he's coming back.

Kalen didn't voice the hopeful statement. Didn't need to. They both knew it wasn't true. Her heart slowed. She looked at Brennan's face. Beneath the pissed was pain.

"You love him, don't you?"

Brennan shrugged. "I don't know but I can't believe he'd just—"

The sound of a vehicle pulling up in the drive stopped his words. Brennan stalked to the door and flung it open just as Rebel climbed out of his truck.

"What? Did you realize you'd forgotten something?" Brennan demanded.

Kalen held back. Brennan didn't like to be hurt and he was obviously channeling all his emotions through his wolf this morning.

"No," Rebel said, reaching into the cab. He pulled out a pink box and a coffee carrier. "Unless you don't drink coffee—which means you should probably get the hell out now—I think I got everything." He walked around the truck, past Brennan and into the cabin. He handed Kalen the box. The scent of sugar wafted from inside. "Morning, Kiki." He kissed her. "You look hot in my shirt."

Brennan's shadow appeared in the open door.

"What's his problem?" Rebel said, not looking at Brennan.

"He thought you'd left." She dropped her voice. "Be nice."

"But he doesn't like me nice." He winked then straightened and fluttered his eyelashes at Brennan. "He likes me to be an asshole. Right, babe?"

"Fuck you."

"No, it's your turn."

"The hell it is."

"What? Are you trying to tell me you didn't like it?" Rebel pushed away from the counter and met Brennan halfway across the kitchen. "You came awful hard, squeezing my dick."

"You—"

"Donut, anyone?" Kalen shoved the open box between them. They stopped and looked at her then at the sugar-coated treats. Both men sighed and reached into the box.

"Oh fuck no, you don't get the only apple fritter."

"Fuck yes. I bought them."

Kalen shoved the box at Brennan and covered her face with her hands, not sure if she wanted to laugh or cry. She chose laughter. After a moment she looked up at her mates.

"You okay, honey?"

"Kalen?" The concern blasting from their eyes made her feel a little guilty but not much.

She nodded and let the laughter turn into a smile. She pressed up on her toes and kissed Brennan before turning to Rebel and giving him a little buss as well.

They might drive her insane but they would never let her go.

For the first time in her life, she belonged.

To them.

About the Author

Tielle (pronounced “teal”) St. Clare has had a life-long love of romance novels. She began reading romances in the 7th grade when she discovered Victoria Holt novels and began writing romances at the age of sixteen (during Trigonometry, if the truth be told). During her senior year in high school, the class dressed up as what they would be in twenty years—Tielle dressed as a romance writer. When not writing romances, Tielle has worked in public relations and video production for the past twenty years. She moved to Alaska when she was seven years old in 1972 when her father was transferred with the military. Tielle believes romances should be hot and sexy with a great story and fun characters.

Tielle welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her [author bio page](#) at www.ellorascave.com.

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