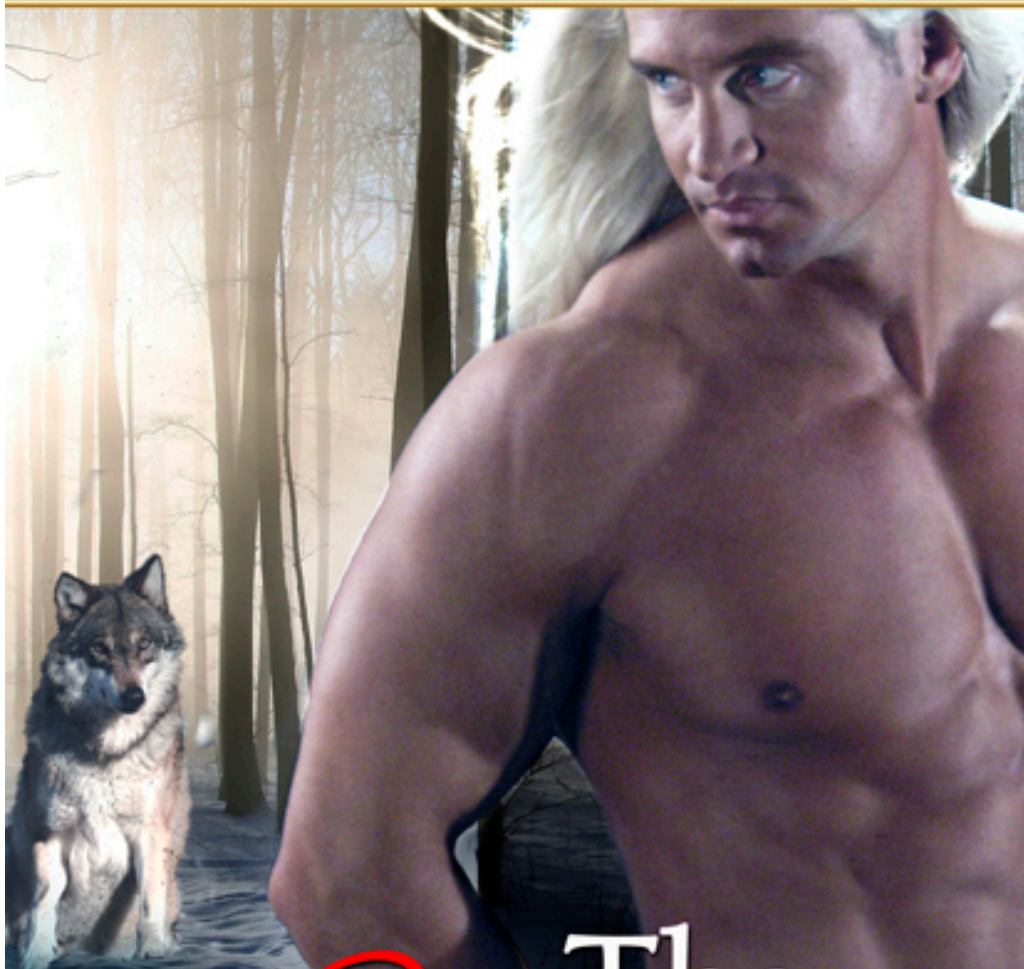


ELLORA'S CAVE TWILIGHT



The  
*Canuck*  
WEREWOLF  
MARISA  
CHENERY

## **The Canuck Werewolf**

*Marisa Chenery*

Rylee doesn't have high hopes for the Victoria Day weekend camping trip, seeing as she's been roped into taking her brother and his juvenile friends. But her mind is changed when she spots a gorgeous man on a hiking trail. She'd like to be zipped in a sleeping bag with him, no doubt about it.

Atticus came to Elora Gorge to get away from his father and his demands that his son find a mate. Like yesterday. Atticus needs time away from being groomed to be the pack leader and the endless stream of "suitable" mates thrown his way in hopes of stirring his mating urge. No luck yet. But then he spots a shy mortal who draws him like no other.

The tent heats up quickly, but before Atticus can tell Rylee what he is, he discovers a member of his pack has followed him with the intention of claiming him for her own. Not only does he have to convince Rylee she's his mate, he must also prove she can trust him.

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The Canuck Werewolf

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# ***THE CANUCK WEREWOLF***

**Marisa Chenery**

## *Dedication*

*To my fellow Canadians.*

## *Trademarks Acknowledgement*

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BMW: Bayerische Motoren Werke Aktiengesellschaft Corporation

Dodge Caravan: Chrysler Corporation

Learjet: Gates Learjet Corporation

## **Chapter One**

Gritting her teeth for the umpteenth time since she'd started this trip, Rylee looked into the review mirror of the Dodge Caravan van she drove with her nineteen-year-old brother, Luc, and his two friends. They were in the seats behind her, seeing who could top each other for grossness. The teenage male, she sometimes thought, became retarded once puberty set in.

She breathed a sigh of relief when she saw the entrance to the Elora Gorge Conservation Area up ahead—their destination. It was the Victoria Day long weekend, the celebration of Queen Victoria's birthday. And given that it was the May twenty-fourth long weekend—or May two-four as it was called by teenagers, meaning a twenty-four case of beer—it was the time people in Ontario planted their gardens, opened their cottages up north for the summer or went camping. The latter was what she'd been roped into doing. It was also the first of two holidays Canadians were allowed to set off fireworks. July first, Canada Day, was the second.

Rylee drove to the gatehouse and told the woman who stepped out to greet them that she'd already reserved a serviced campsite. After giving directions on where to find their site, the woman waved them through.

It didn't take her long to find it. She parked the van not too far from the single picnic table for their use. Rylee got out and opened the sliding door on the driver's side as her brother and his friends piled out the other side. She pulled the bags that held two tents from the very back.

She'd just carried them over to the tent pad to be set up when she heard one of Luc's friends say he wanted to check out the gorge. The others quickly jumped onboard with that idea. Like hell were they going to stick her with all the work.

Rylee put two fingers in her mouth and let out a shrill whistle, bringing the three teenage boys up short. "You guys aren't going anywhere just yet. We have to set up the campsite."

"Come on, Rylee," Luc whined. "We were cooped up in the van for the drive. We'll take a quick look at the gorge and come right back. I promise."

She put her hands on her hips, and with a stern glare, shook her head. The drive from Kitchener, where they lived, to Elora was hardly a long enough trip to have had the boys feeling cooped up. No, it was a ploy to get out of having to actually work. Luc usually managed to worm his way out of doing things with their mother, but it wasn't going to work with her. Being twenty-four to his nineteen, she'd looked after him more than a few times while Luc had been younger and she knew all his tricks.

"Nice try," she said. "Considering it only took forty-six minutes to get here, it wasn't all that long a drive. Since it wasn't my idea to come with you on this camping trip, all of you are going to set up the tent you're going to sleep in. I'm not Mom. I'm not going to put up with your lazy-ass ways."

Luc made the annoying whining sound he always made when he didn't get things his way. "I don't know why Mom insisted you had to tag along."

"I do. First, she didn't feel comfortable letting you drive her van this distance, and second, she figured the three of you would get up to no good without adult supervision."

"I wish Mom would stop treating me like a baby. I'm nineteen, not nine," Luc grumbled as he and his friends joined her at the tent pad and got to work setting up their four-man tent.

"Maybe she would if you'd stop acting like one, Mr. Whiner. The quicker you get the job done the faster you can go do whatever you want. Since we couldn't check in until two, it's already creeping up to late afternoon. Setting up a tent in the dark is not fun."

Even though spring had arrived and the nights weren't quite as long as they were in the winter, the temperature could still drop with the chance of frost once it got dark. Rylee had made sure she brought an old quilt with her just in case her sleeping bag wasn't warm enough.

She left the boys to it as she moved a short distance away to set up her own two-man tent. It didn't take long for teenage laughter to be heard as her brother and his friends set to work.

After quickly putting her tent up, Rylee went back to the van to grab her air mattress and sleeping bag. She'd leave the quilt in the van until she knew she'd need it. With both rolled-up items in her hands, she turned around to find Luc's friend, Josh, standing behind her. He gave her a big smile as his gaze looked her up and down. She resisted the urge to roll her eyes. Just what she needed—a nineteen-year-old hitting on her.

"Was there something you wanted, Josh?"

"We have our tent almost set up and I thought I would come and see if I could give you a hand."

"That's nice of you, but I can manage on my own."

"Are you sure? I'd be happy to help you put your sleeping bag inside your tent."

She just bet he would. "No, really I'm fine. If you want to make yourself useful, why don't you grab the other sleeping bags and take them to your own tent? Where you will be sleeping while I sleep in mine—alone. Got it?"

Josh gave her a smile Rylee was sure melted many a teenage girl's heart. He was good looking, she'd give him that, but way too young for her. She liked her men, well, men.

He reached around her, deliberately brushing up against her, as he picked up one of the sleeping bags. "Well, you know where I'll be if you change your mind."



This time Rylee did roll her eyes before yelling over to her brother. “Luc? Come and help lover boy over here get the rest of the sleeping bags.”

Once Luc and his other friend, Nick, joined them, her brother gave Josh a shove. “Stop hitting on my sister, perv. I told you she’d shoot you down.”

Nice. Luc could have given her fair warning about Josh’s interest in her. But of course her brother never thought that far ahead. Once the boys returned to their tent, Rylee went to hers. She unzipped the flap and ducked inside. Unrolling the air mattress, she realized she’d forgotten to bring the pump for it. Great, now she’d have to blow it up herself the hard way.

After what seemed an agonizingly long time, where Rylee had made herself a bit lightheaded, the air mattress was blown up with her sleeping bag unrolled on top of it. The joys of camping. At least having a serviced campsite—meaning there was running water and electricity available—meant she didn’t have to totally rough it. Plus there was a washroom with showers that had hot and cold running water.

Hearing three male voices just outside her tent, Rylee poked her head out the flap. “You guys get finished?”

The boys stopped and turned in her direction. Luc answered for them. “Yes. We’re going to check out the gorge.”

“Just be careful. If you fall into it and kill yourself, Mom will kill *me*.”

“We’re not that stupid. We’ll be back in a couple of hours.”

Rylee watched them walk away. This was going to be a fun weekend. Not. It wasn’t as if she liked having to be the only responsible adult on the camping trip. The gorge with its twenty-two-meter-high cliffs that the Grand River rushed through was a very real hazard. More than a few people had fallen to their deaths. Having camped here plenty of times with her family while growing up, she knew the conservation area had signs posted with warnings and barriers set up.

With nothing left to do at the moment with regard to setting up the campsite, Rylee decided she’d go for a walk and do her best to avoid meeting up with her brother and

his friends. With three kilometers of hiking trails on the conservation area that offered views of the deep gorge, it wouldn't be too hard to do.

Taking a circuitous route to the hiking trail, she walked down the road that wound through the other campsites. She appeared to not be the only one who'd recently arrived at the conservation area. At one site Rylee caught the flash of blond hair in the sunlight. Slowing her steps, she turned her head to get a better look.

She sucked in a sharp breath. The blond man she saw literally took her breath away. Rylee walked even slower as his head suddenly jerked up from the tent he'd been setting up and he looked directly at her. She knew it was rude to stare, but in his case, she couldn't stop herself. He was everything she found attractive in a man. He had to be at least six foot five. She couldn't help running her gaze over his well-muscled body. It made her pussy clench at the sight of his broad shoulders, defined chest and muscular thighs showcased inside snug-fitting blue jeans and a semi-tight black t-shirt. His hair was long, touching the top of his shoulders and so blond it appeared almost white.

The way he stared at her had Rylee all of a sudden feeling shy, along with aroused. What chance did she have with a man who looked like him? Not much. And there was no way in hell she'd go over and talk to him just in case she made a fool of herself. Finally managing to pry her gaze off him, she ducked her head and continued on her way.

Once she reached the trails, she actually enjoyed the peace and quiet of it, though it did nothing to cool her heated thoughts about the blond man. Rylee stopped at the first spot that gave her an unobstructed view of the gorge. She went to the rail and looked down, way down. It was a breathtaking sight. Looking at the river going through it, she observed that the water level seemed a little on the high side. Considering the big dumping of rain they'd had a couple of days ago, she wasn't surprised. In the warmer months people could rent inner tubes and go tubing on the Grand. In May the water would still be too cold for that.

Her thoughts wandered. A pair of wide shoulders, a gorgeous face and blond hair kept swirling inside her head. Even though she was afraid to approach him, she hoped he'd still be outside at his campsite when she walked back to hers. She'd make a point of taking the same route. She could easily see herself spending a great deal of the weekend walking by that very spot hoping for a glimpse of him. Too bad she hadn't brought her digital camera and her cell phone didn't have one, either. Rylee wouldn't mind sneaking a couple shots of him to take back to Kitchener with her. God, she was pathetic if she'd resort to that, but it was better than having nothing but the memory of him.

She closed her eyes, lifted her face to the sun and took a deep breath. The heat felt good on her skin. After the long winter months where temperatures could drop to minus thirty degrees Celsius with the wind chill, Rylee looked forward to the hot summer days. She hated winter. She'd rather be sweating her ass off than freezing any day. And considering how sunny and warm it was today, it wasn't too hard to see summer wasn't all that far off.

At a noise that sounded between a groan and a moan, Rylee opened her eyes and turned in the direction it had come from. They widened when she took in the blond man who stood a short distance away. Glacial-blue eyes stared back at her. Seeing the look of hunger in them, Rylee found herself frozen in place, unable to pull her gaze away. Holy shit, the star of her future sexual fantasies had found her. Her libido shot into high gear at the sight of him. If he so much as approached and touched her, in any way, she was liable to fall on him and kiss him like there was no tomorrow.

\* \* \* \* \*

Atticus had been more than ready to get out of Toronto, away from his family and pack for the long weekend. And especially from his father who was pack leader. Being the oldest son put Atticus next in line for whenever his father decided to step down, which wouldn't be for a very, very long time. But that didn't stop the pack leader from grooming his son, getting him ready for the position that would one day be his.

It was getting to be a bit too much, especially now that his father had decided Atticus needed to find his mate and set to work producing the next generation. He lost count of the number of times unmated females had been paraded in front of him in the hopes they would trigger his mating urge, something all male werewolves went through when they found their would-be mates. So far that hadn't happened. They'd all been supermodel pretty, as all of his kind were, but none of them had done anything for him.

Needing to get away, Atticus had picked Elora Gorge Conservation Area to spend the Victoria Day long weekend...by himself. It had enough wooded area so he could shift into his wolf form and go for a run. It was also a place his father would never come. Camping was beneath the pack leader. Atticus, on the other hand, loved to be outdoors away from the large city Toronto was. Here he could be what he was—a werewolf who wanted to smell the clean scents around him and enjoy the wind in his fur.

Planning on hitting one of the hiking trails to take in the smog-free air, Atticus wanted nothing more than to go wolf and take a long run. Since it was the middle of the afternoon with more than a few mortals around, he'd have to wait until the cover of darkness.

He hadn't been at his campsite for very long, had just started to set up his tent, when a scent came out of nowhere and slammed into him like a punch to the gut. His mating urge instantly came to life and his cock went rock-hard. Looking up, he found a woman slowly walking past his site. Drawing in great gulps of air, Atticus filtered out the many scents around him, concentrating on the one that had his body going haywire.

Hers.

The longer he stared, the harder his cock got. And when she stared back at him with marked interest, he wanted to throw back his head and howl. Before he could pull his thoughts together, she ducked her head and hurried on her way. But he wasn't prepared to let her go so easily. He finished setting up his campsite and went after her.

Following the scent trail, he walked at a brisk pace. He rounded a corner and saw her standing at a rail looking down at the gorge. Her long, light brown hair fell to the middle of her back. His gaze ran hungrily along her slim form as his cock jerked inside his jeans. This mortal was his would-be mate. Aroused, he wanted nothing more than to go to her, take her to the ground and bury his aching cock inside her. And his wolf wanted her as well.

As he slowly closed the distance between them, a small part of his brain that still functioned thought of what his father's reaction would be once he learned Atticus' mate was mortal. The pack leader wouldn't be at all pleased. He thought it was beneath a werewolf to mate with a lowly mortal. Atticus had no such feelings.

Coming within a few feet of the woman, he came to a standstill and drew in a deep breath, filling his lungs with her scent. It would now be permanently etched on his brain, never forgotten. He'd be able to find her anywhere just by following it. Another breath, and a groan close to a moan punched out of his chest before he could hold it back.

She turned, her gaze latching onto him. As she looked him up and down with the same stark interest as before showing in her dark brown eyes, he hungrily stared back, fighting the wolf's growl that threatened to break free. She was pretty in a girl-next-door kind of way. Her looks did more for him than any female werewolf's supermodel beauty ever would.

Her gaze stayed locked to his as he closed the remaining distance between them. It took everything in him not to reach out, pull her close and claim her lips. His mating urge rode him a little harder when he smelled the heady scent of her arousal in the air around them. It would continue to ride him until he claimed her as his mate the first time they made love. That would be when their souls joined, truly mating them.

"Hi," he said, his voice gruff with the pounding need throbbing through his body.

She gave him a shy smile. "Hi."

"Nice day for a walk."

"Yes, it is."

"Can I join you? This is my first time coming to the gorge."

She nodded and shifted a little farther down the rail. "Sure. Not that I could stop you since this is a public place."

He joined her at the rail and peered down the long drop to the river below. She shifted to stand beside him. Her nearness had him fighting to maintain control. If he wasn't careful, his eyes would mutedly glow, something they did whenever he became very aroused or angry.

To make small talk, he said, "Great scenery. Makes it worth the drive from Toronto." Out of the corner of his eye, Atticus saw her turn her head in his direction.

"Is that where you're from?" she asked.

Feeling as if he had himself tightly reined back, he turned away from the view to face her and nodded. "Yes. Do you live here in Elora?"

"No. I live in Kitchener."

"I've never been there, but I've heard about it."

"Let me guess," she replied with a grin, "you've heard about our Oktoberfest? Or, as I like to call it, the big drunk."

He grinned. "I do believe that came up during the conversation I had with one of my friends who has visited Kitchener."

She smiled. "I thought so. And I bet this friend of yours made his visit when Oktoberfest was on. He more than likely spent some of his time in the Concordia Club's big tent drinking beer and eating Oktoberfest sausage."

Atticus chuckled. "Yes, but he consumed more beer than sausage. By the pitcher full, to be exact."

"I don't call it the big drunk for nothing."

"Have you ever been?"

"No. It's not really my thing. Though, I once rented an apartment across the street from the Concordia Club for about a year. During Oktoberfest, the polka music they played was loud enough to be heard inside my apartment, even with all the windows closed. That's the closest I've come to going Oktoberfesting."

He stuck out his hand. "I'm Atticus, by the way."

She put hers in his and gave it a shake. "I'm Rylee."

Atticus continued to hold her hand, reluctant to give up even this small amount of contact. The feel of her touching him made him crave a taste of her. His gaze focused on her lush lips. It would be so easy to pull her closer using their joined hands, bend and kiss her. As if she'd sensed his thoughts, the tip of Rylee's tongue came out and licked her bottom lip as the scent of her arousal grew stronger.

That was enough to have him acting before he could rein himself back under the rigid control he'd been holding. With a moan that bordered on a wolf's growl, Atticus yanked her against his chest and buried his other hand in the hair at her nape. He took her lips in a heated claiming, sweeping his tongue along the crease until they parted to allow him entrance.

He twined his tongue with hers, stroking. The taste of her went straight to his head, making his libido go into overdrive. A true growl of approval pushed out of him as he released her hand and she placed it on his chest. Dropping his hands to her hips, he pulled her even closer, grinding his aching cock against her. Rylee moaned, and kissing him deeper, sucked on his tongue.

The rest of the world seemed to fall away until Rylee became the center of his universe. Her scent, the taste of her on his tongue, the feel of her against him and the small sounds of pleasure she made had his mating urge demanding he take her right then and there.

The sound of a loud wolf whistle had Atticus unthinkingly lifting his head, his upper lip snarled as a low growl rumbled out of him. Seeing three teenage boys

standing not too far away, he quickly closed his eyes and took a deep breath to calm himself. His eyes had to be glowing. He had to get himself back under control.

If Rylee had noticed what he'd done, she didn't show it when she pushed out of his arms and turned to glare at the boys. "I thought you guys would be off doing whatever."

One of the boys who had the same colored hair and eyes as Rylee said, "We're hungry and thought we'd look for something to snack on, and to see what time you would be cooking dinner. But I can see you're a little busy right now. And I have to say, seeing my sister making out, gross. I think Mom should have been more worried about what you would get up to on this camping trip than me."

Atticus now saw the family resemblance between brother and sister in their features and not just their shared coloring. He watched Rylee cross her arms over her chest and narrow her gaze at her brother.

"Don't push it, Luc," Rylee said. "And who said anything about me cooking you dinner? You know how to roast a hot dog over a fire just as well as I do. So do Josh and Nick. And if you find what I was doing gross, you can keep on walking."

Atticus bit back a smile. Rylee and Luc reminded him of what he and his twin sister used to be like while in their teenage years, which at nine hundred years old, had been a very, very long time ago. Once they'd matured, the sniping had stopped and they remained close to this day.

In an excuse to make sure he'd spend more time with Rylee, Atticus broke into the conversation. "I have something better than hot dogs. Why don't we all have dinner together? I'll bring steaks and the barbeque. I'll even cook them."

"I could go for some barbequed steak," said one of the boys.

One of the others replied, "I'm with you on that one, Josh."

"I guess that's settled then," he said. He caught Rylee's gaze. "If that is okay with you? You're the chaperone."



She nodded. "I'm fine with it."

"Good." Atticus turned to the boys. "Why don't you return to your campsite while Rylee and I go get the food and barbeque?"

The three boys nodded before heading down the trail, leaving Atticus alone once again with Rylee.

"Don't you think it would be easier just for us to come to your campsite instead?" she asked.

Yes, it would, but getting her to help him lug the barbeque back and forth—not that he really needed it—was more alone time he'd have with her. He assumed Rylee and the boys would only be here for the long weekend, same as he, which meant he didn't have much time to work on claiming her as his mate. Given the fact she was mortal with more than likely no knowledge of werewolf kind, made it that much harder.

And once he claimed her and their souls joined, they wouldn't be able to stand being apart for any length of time. A few hours away would seem as if they hadn't seen each other in a year. Their minds would play tricks on them, make them think something had happened to the other. And during that time, all they would be able to think about would be being together again. Once they did, they would end up having desperate, hot sex.

Atticus made sure some of the arousal still flowing inside him showed in his eyes when he gazed at Rylee. "It might be easier, but it gives me a chance to have you all to myself. The boys don't know where my campsite is. We can take as long as we want."

Rylee's chest rapidly rose and fell as she breathed faster. "Then let's go," she said softly.

Taking her hand, Atticus set them into motion. With each step he took toward his campsite, the hotter his blood became.

## **Chapter Two**

Rylee felt her heart thudding against her ribs as it beat madly. She was so turned-on at the prospect of being alone with Atticus she could hardly think straight. The kiss they'd shared before Luc and his friends had interrupted had been bone-melting good. With Atticus' hard cock grinding against her, she was pretty sure he'd have had her coming while he kissed her socks off.

Normally Rylee didn't paw at a guy she found attractive without getting to know him a little better, but with Atticus it was different. For some unknown reason, she felt comfortable around him. She also wanted to screw his brains out. Badly. The instant their gazes had met, she'd wanted him. Even now, holding his hand as they walked to his campsite, all she thought about was ripping his clothes off to explore his hard, muscular body with her lips and tongue.

As if he knew what she thought, Atticus turned his head and gave her a gaze so hot an ache pounded between her legs. It wasn't too hard to figure out he wanted to continue where they'd left off once they reached their destination. She was all for it. Rylee had no idea where things would go with him, but she wasn't willing to let him slip between her fingers. Considering herself only okay in the looks department, having a man who looked like Atticus—a man that could have any woman he wanted with a crook of his finger—so obviously attracted to her could be a once-in-a-lifetime chance. Suddenly the dreaded camping trip with her brother had turned out to be the best of her life.

At Atticus' campsite—far enough away from hers so the boys wouldn't be able to find it easily—Rylee allowed him to walk her over to the two-man tent. He pulled her to a stop in front of it.

"Do you trust me, Rylee?" he asked quietly.

Surprisingly, she did. There was something in his eyes that made her feel protected, cherished, as if she'd already become special to him. It might just be wishful thinking, but it didn't stop her from feeling as if he was trustworthy.

She nodded. "I do." He graced her with a sexy smile that had her pussy clenching and wetness leaking into her panties.

"Good, because all I can think about is seeing if you taste as good as you smell." He put his arms around her and pulled her close enough for her to feel the hard ridge of his erection pressing against her belly. He bent and nibbled on her earlobe before he said in a husky voice right into her ear, "I've waited a long time to find you."

Rylee shivered, needing heating her blood. She had no idea what Atticus meant about waiting to find her, but right about now, she didn't care. She just wanted him to kiss her, touch her, make her come.

He released her and unzipped the tent's flap. Knowing perfectly well what she would be getting herself into, Rylee ducked inside. Atticus followed her in, zipping the tent closed once again.

Being the large man that he was, Atticus seemed to make the tent feel very small, not that it mattered much once he took Rylee in his arms. She fell into his embrace as he sat on the sleeping bag and pulled her onto his lap so she straddled him. She moaned when their lips met and her jean-covered pussy made contact with the large bulge in his pants. She wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him with a hunger that matched his.

Atticus' large hand came up and covered her breast. He brushed his thumb across her taut nipple, making it tighten even more. His tongue pushed its way inside her mouth to meet hers, mimicking how she wanted him to take her with his cock.

Rylee rubbed herself against his erection and it twitched between her legs. He felt thick and long, big enough to give her a good ride. Unwinding her arms from around his neck, she dropped her hands to his shoulders, then down to his waist. She took hold of the bottom of his t-shirt and lifted. Her knuckles grazed a smooth, hairless chest on

the way up. Atticus pulled away, releasing her breast, and yanked his shirt off over his head.

She sucked in a breath, her gaze running over his well-defined chest and six-pack abs. He was a work of art. She'd never been with a man as muscular as Atticus, and she liked it.

He took her hands and placed them palm down on his pecs. "Touch me. I want to feel your hands running all over me."

At his husky words, Rylee did just that. She skimmed her hands up to his broad shoulders and down his arms before going back up again. At his chest, she used the tips of her fingers to circle each of his flat nipples. They beaded under her touch.

Rylee caressed her hands down his abs to the top of his jeans. Atticus stopped her before she could go any farther. She looked at him to find his eyes closed to mere slits. She could have sworn they seemed to mutedly glow for a split second before he blinked and it was gone.

"Not yet," Atticus said. "First, it's my turn to touch you."

Wanting nothing more than to feel his hands on her, she pulled her shirt off and dropped it to the bottom of the tent beside them. "Then touch me."

Lowering his head to the top of her chest, he reached around her and unhooked her bra as he made a wet trail with his lips and tongue across the tops of her breasts. He brushed the straps down her arms and off. Rylee moaned and pressed herself closer when his lips closed over one of her nipples, the tip of his tongue circling the tight bud. As he sucked, she felt a corresponding pull deep inside her pussy. She panted, sinking her fingers into his hair to hold him to her.

Atticus shifted to her other breast and gave it the same attention. Rylee couldn't stop herself from grinding against his hard cock, desperately wanting to have it buried inside her pussy. "I need more," she told him in a breathy voice.

He released her breast and slowly lowered her to her back on the sleeping bag. "I'll give you more."

Shifting to straddle her, he undid the button and zipper on her jeans. Bending to rain kisses across her stomach, Atticus pulled her pants past her hips and down her legs. Rylee kicked them off once they reached her ankles. The sound of her fast beating heart thundered in her ears as he hooked her panties with his fingers and dragged them down and off.

She forgot to breathe for a few seconds when Atticus shifted lower on her body, spreading her legs farther apart with his broad shoulders. At the first swipe of his tongue along her pussy, all the air left her lungs in a whoosh. He made a real-sounding animalistic growl as he licked her from bottom to top, circling her clit with the tip of his tongue.

He licked and sucked until she rocked against his mouth. One finger and then another pushed inside her slick opening, causing a loud moan to push past her lips. In and out he stroked, sucking on her clit at the same time. Her body coiled tighter, an orgasm edging ever nearer.

“Let go,” he said against her. “Come for me, Rylee.”

As if her body answered his commands, her climax took her over. Her inner walls clutched at the fingers inside her pussy as wave after wave of intense pleasure swept through her. She cried out, calling Atticus’ name.

He slowly made his way back up her body, kissing her skin as he went. The rasp of his zipper being pulled down sounded loud in the tent. He took her lips in a heated claiming while he pushed his jeans down far enough for his cock to spring free. Rylee reached between their bodies and wrapped her hand around his hard length. She pumped it up and down, squeezing his shaft in a tight fist. Atticus flexed his hips, pushing tighter into her hand. The same animalistic growl he’d made before rumbled out of him again.

Her arousal increasing, Rylee shifted subtly under Atticus. She kissed him deeper, sucking on his tongue as she used her grip on his cock to lead it to her pussy. Pressing

down, she only managed to get the very tip of him inside her before he placed a restraining hand on her hip.

He broke contact with her mouth and buried his face in the crook of her neck. "No," he said gruffly. "It's too soon."

She didn't think so, but Atticus didn't give her much choice. He pulled out of her and squeezed her hand around his cock harder. He pumped his hips, then with a strangled moan, he came on her stomach.

The sound of their heavy breathing filled the small confines of the tent. Slowly coming down from her sexual high, Rylee couldn't help but notice Atticus' cock was still hard in her hand. He'd come, the proof of it was on her skin, but he hadn't softened one bit.

Atticus pulled out of her grip and shifted to lie at her side. He lifted himself on one elbow and reached for his shirt. Using it, he cleaned up the mess he'd made on her stomach.

Once finished, he brushed a gentle kiss across her lips. "We should go to your campsite. The boys are waiting for us."

Rylee looked pointedly down at his erection before she met his gaze. "You're still hard."

He kissed the tip of her nose. "Don't worry about it."

"Don't you want to...you know, finish what we started?"

Atticus pushed himself into an upright position before helping her to sit up. "We will, just not now. I got my taste of you. That's enough to tide me over."

"Okay, but I'm going to be perfectly blunt here. Why? You're here for the weekend only, the same as I am. What about living for the moment?"

He wrapped his hand around her nape and bent his head slightly to stare into her eyes. "Is that what you want? A fling for the weekend and then go our separate ways?"

What if I don't want that? How would you feel if I told you I'm not willing to just let you walk away and out of my life forever?"

Rylee swallowed. Could Atticus be serious? "We just met. How can you already know you want to stay with me? Yes, we're good together when it comes to sex, what little we've done in that department, that is. But is it enough, though? Don't get me wrong, I'd love to see this go past the weekend, but look at you. With your looks, you could get a woman who is much prettier than I am."

Atticus closed the distance between their mouths and took her lips in a hard, demanding kiss. He didn't stop until he had her clutching his shoulders. He pulled away, his gaze filled with hunger and need.

"I don't want to ever hear you knock yourself like that again, understand? You're beautiful," he said, his serious tone telling her he meant every word he spoke. He took one of her hands and led it to the large bulge in his pants. "No other woman has made me as hard as you do. All I can think about doing is burying my cock inside your pussy, taking you until neither one of us can move. I want to claim you, make you mine, but it's too soon. You're not ready for that yet."

Rylee found herself speechless. No man had ever told her he wanted her that much. A part of her brain that seemed to still be functioning properly thought Atticus moved too fast. But the rest, the part that had thought she'd never end up with a man like him, wanted to hold on and never let go. She knew nothing about him except for his first name and that he lived in Toronto, but being around him just felt right.

"What's your last name?" she blurted.

He smiled. "It's Thorp. And yours?"

"Horst. What do you do for a living?"

His smile broadened. "You want to know if I'm a good financial catch?"

"No. This is my way of getting to know you a little better. If it will make you feel any better, I'll go first. I work as a cashier at The Real Canadian Superstore."

"All right. I guess you could say I'm in the family business. My father wants me to take over once he decides to step down."

"In other words, you and your family are rich."

"Well, I do drive a BMW and have a Learjet at my disposal."

"Yeah, you're rich."

Atticus chuckled. "Enough of the questions for now. We'd better get a move on before your brother and his friends come looking for us."

Rylee nodded, gathered up her clothes and dressed while Atticus took out another t-shirt from the bag that sat in the corner of the tent. Her gaze followed his movements. Sexy, gorgeous and rich, he almost seemed too good to be true. She had no idea what she'd done to end up finding him, but she could only hope her luck stayed true and he'd really want to stick around for a while.

\* \* \* \* \*

Atticus carried the portable propane gas barbeque grill while Rylee carried a plastic shopping bag with the steaks. Before they'd left his campsite, he'd seen her glance over at his black BMW X1 five-door coupe more than a few times. From the sound of things, his would-be mate didn't have as much as he did when it came to money, but once she was his, that would change.

As they walked, he kept sneaking looks at Rylee. God, how he wanted to drag her back to his tent and do all the things he wanted to her, but he wouldn't. He couldn't fully make love to her until he was ready to claim her. And he wasn't. Neither was she ready for him to do so. She needed to know what he was. Once the mating bond formed between them and their souls joined, there would be no going back. Ever. Rylee deserved to have the choice to accept him or not.

Which meant he looked forward to his mating urge riding harder, making him crazy. The hand-job Rylee had given him hadn't taken the edge off, if anything it made it worse. The only thing that would calm the urge was penetration. Everything else



would just intensify it. And it wouldn't help that when he managed to sleep he'd have erotic dreams of her.

Reaching Rylee's campsite, Atticus saw the three boys sitting at the picnic table. They already had a fire going in the fire pit. From the items strewn over the top of the table, it looked as if they had been roasting marshmallows on the ends of some metal skewers.

"Hey," Rylee said as she placed the shopping bag on a clear space on the picnic table, "those were supposed to be for later tonight." She picked up the bag of marshmallows that was now a quarter full. "Thanks for leaving some for me," she said with sarcasm.

Luc shrugged. "I told you we were hungry, and you and your friend over there seemed to be taking an awful long time."

Atticus set the portable grill on the table next to where Rylee had put the steaks. "I'll get the meat cooking. My name is Atticus. And I'm not just your sister's friend, I'm her boyfriend."

"Holy shit, you work fast," Luc said with a shake of his head.

"I guess there goes my chances with Rylee," the boy named Josh said.

Atticus eyed the teenager. Even though he knew the boy wasn't any threat, his wolf didn't like the idea of another male showing interest in his would-be mate.

Rylee groaned. "Josh, you never had a glimmer of one even before I met Atticus. Sorry, but I like the men I go out with to be closer to my age, and not teenage boys."

Josh put his hand over his heart and pretended he'd been shot. "You got me. I don't think I'll ever recover."

"Until the next pretty girl you see, that is," Rylee said with a chuckle.

"She got you there," the boy named Nick said, laughing.

It didn't take Atticus long to get the steaks on the grill. Rylee cleared the mess off the picnic table and set out some paper plates. Once the boys' and her steaks were done, he pulled them off and put his on. Being a werewolf, he liked his the rarer the better.

After a few minutes, they all sat down, helping themselves to the potato salad Rylee had taken out of the electric cooler plugged into the campsite's outlet.

She eyed his steak as he cut into it. "You'd better make sure that thing isn't still mooing before you eat it."

He grinned. "It isn't. You want to try a piece?"

Rylee grimaced. "Ah, no. That's all right. I like my steak on the rare side, but that is too much like raw meat to me."

They ate the rest of their meal in silence, the teenage boys at the table practically inhaling theirs. After they'd all gotten rid of their plates in the garbage, they sat around the fire. Darkness had already started to set in.

After a while, Josh went into the four-man tent and came out carrying three five-hundred-milliliter bottles of cola. He gave one to Luc and Nick. When the boys opened them and took a swig, Atticus' sensitive nose picked up more than the scent of pop.

Leaning in to Rylee, he said in a low voice only she could hear, "You'd better check what they're drinking. I don't think it's exactly what it appears to be."

She narrowed her eyes. "Shit. That's just what I need."

Rylee stood and walked around the fire pit until she stood in front of the boys. She held her hand out to Luc. "All right, hand it over."

"This one is mine. Didn't you bring any pop of your own?"

"Yes, but I want to taste yours." When Luc didn't hand it over right away, Rylee snatched it from him and took a swig. She then started to cough. "Holy hell, how much rum is in here?"

"Enough," her brother replied. "Now give it back. We're all nineteen, so it's not as if we're underage."

“True, but alcohol is strictly forbidden in the conservation area. If we get caught with it they’ll kick us out.” Rylee looked at each of the boys. “Now hand it over, all of you.”

With groans and comments of her wrecking their camping trip, the three boys gave her their bottles of cola. Rylee walked to the end of the campsite where the trees bordered it and dumped the contents of the bottles.

Grumbling, the teenagers left the fire pit and went into their tent. Rylee sat next to Atticus and sighed deeply. “This is going to be a fun weekend. I can already tell.”

He laughed. “How about you grab the rest of your marshmallows and we’ll cook them over a fire at my campsite. I’m sure Luc and his friends won’t get into too much trouble for a few hours.”

She turned her head and met his gaze, the look in her eyes showing she’d be more than interested in doing other things besides roasting marshmallows. “That sounds wonderful,” Rylee said in a voice that had dropped a few octaves, the sound of it wrapping around his cock, making it strain against his zipper.

He stood the same time she did. “I’ll get the grill, you get the marshmallows.”

Another bout of heavy petting would have him feeling as if he’d lost his mind, but Atticus was more than willing to suffer.

## **Chapter Three**

Even though the paved road that connected all the campsites was lit, it wasn't well lighted. Being a werewolf, Atticus had no problem seeing into the darkest shadows as if it were day. With Rylee at his side, he guided her down the road in the direction they needed to go. He had to hold himself back from setting a faster pace. Rylee's legs weren't as long as his and if he wasn't careful he'd leave her behind. As it was, she seemed to be walking at a fast clip just to match his strides.

They were just about to step into his campsite when a wolf's howl sounded in the night. Atticus came to an instant standstill, stopping Rylee by standing protectively in front of her. He knew it was no regular wolf, but another of his kind. A werewolf's howl had a different tone than a wild wolf's.

Rylee looked at him. "Was that a wolf? As far as I know, Elora doesn't have any wild wolves, and definitely not around the conservation area."

He slowly got them moving again. "No, that wasn't a wolf. People are allowed to have dogs here. Maybe it was one of them."

She gave him a look that said she didn't believe him. Atticus had been grasping at straws, but he made no further comment. Senses on alert, he searched his campsite, paying particular attention to the trees surrounding the back and one side of it. The wind shifted, blowing into his face. He cursed out loud.

"What's the matter?" Rylee asked.

Atticus put the grill down on the picnic table, gaze trained to the line of trees to the side. Before he could answer her question, a slim blonde woman stepped into the site. As a member of his pack, and sometime bed partner, he knew her quite well. Marla's presence wasn't a good thing.

Marla closed the distance between them, brushed Rylee out of the way and threw herself against him. Atticus put his arms around her to steady her or she would have knocked him off balance. She must have taken it as encouragement. She went up on tiptoe, sank her hands in his hair and kissed him. He tried to pull away, but that only caused Marla to yank harder on the strands between her fingers. With a low growl of warning, he bit her bottom lip, and with hands on her hips, pushed her away.

She smiled and licked her lips. "I always like it when you bite, especially when we're in bed."

Atticus heard Rylee take a sharp breath. He turned toward her and saw a hurt expression flicker across her face before it disappeared. "I think I'll go back to my campsite." She took a step back.

"Wait, Rylee," he said as he reached for her. She knocked his hand away. "Don't go. Marla is the one who is leaving."

The female werewolf gave a short, sexy laugh. "Come now, Atticus. I came all this way to see you. I'm not going anywhere." She put a hand on his chest and smoothed it back and forth. "I thought we'd enjoy the night in a way we've done more than a few times. It's never been in a tent before, though."

"I'm out of here," Rylee said in a strained voice. "I hope you...enjoy...the rest of your weekend, Atticus."

She spun on her heel and practically ran out of the campsite. Atticus tried to follow, but Marla pulled on his arm.

"Let her go," she said. "I'm here now, so you don't need to lower yourself to consorting with that mortal."

Atticus angrily rounded on Marla. "What the fuck are you doing here? I thought I made it perfectly clear the last time we were together I didn't want to see you anymore."

His anger didn't seem to faze her. "You were just upset. You've had time to cool down." She stepped closer to lean against his chest. "We're good together. Why would you possibly want to give that up?"

With another growl, he pushed Marla away. "I haven't changed my mind. You aren't my mate, and I'm not willing to pretend you are just because you've spread your legs for me a few times. You weren't that good of a lay."

She growled as her hand shot out to slap him, but Atticus caught her wrist before she connected. "Bastard. It's a perfect arrangement. Your father would stop trying to find you a mate and I get to be 'mated' to the pack's next leader."

He roughly shoved her hand away. "My being the son of the pack leader is the only reason why you've shown me any interest. Sorry to say, I don't need you anymore. It looks as if I already found my mate."

Marla's gaze shifted to where Rylee had disappeared before she looked back at him. "You can't be serious. That lowly mortal cannot be your mate. Your father won't stand for it."

"He's just going to have to get over it. Rylee *is* my mate. Even now my mating urge is riding me." He let thoughts of his would-be mate fill his head, knowing full well his eyes would be mutedly glowing in response.

"Don't be an idiot. There's a reason why we call them mortals. We might not be immortal, but we are extremely long-lived. You're nine hundred years old with the potential of living to three thousand. You'd bind yourself to one of them, even though you'd be lucky if she lived to be a hundred?"

Atticus ground his teeth to stop the howl of frustration that threatened to break loose. "That's no concern of yours. Now get into your car, wherever you parked it, and go back to Toronto. You're not welcome here."

"My car is in the parking lot close to the gatehouse. I went wolf to track you and followed your scent to your site. And I'm not leaving. If anything, it should be quite entertaining to see you trying to woo your mortal. I'm sure she knows nothing about

what you truly are." Marla gave him a condescending smile. "I'll be here to pick up the pieces after you've told her and she runs from you in fright."

She reached out to touch him again. Atticus backed out of range, snapped his teeth and growled deep in his chest. "Admit defeat. I hope you enjoy sleeping in the tent alone, because I have no intention of being anywhere near you for the rest of the night."

Giving her another snarl for good measure, he turned his back on Marla and walked away. She'd made a mess of things between him and Rylee. He just hoped he could fix it.

\* \* \* \* \*

*How could I be so stupid?* Rylee didn't know whether to punch something or cry. She'd fallen for Atticus' promises of wanting to be with her for longer than the weekend. She'd believed him, and the longer she'd been around him, the more she'd let how she felt about him grow. She'd believed every bullshit line he'd given her. Hearing him tell Luc he was her boyfriend had turned her insides to mush.

But it figured it was too good to be true. And seeing the blonde with the supermodel good looks at his campsite, her throwing herself at him and him not doing a whole lot to avoid her kiss, Rylee had felt as if she'd been duped. What Atticus had gotten out of playing her, she didn't know. It wasn't as if she'd fucked him, thank god. Maybe he got his jollies from picking average women, stringing them along by holding out the ultimate prize, and after they gave him what he wanted, he tossed them aside. Well, she wouldn't be another notch on his bedpost. The way the blonde had spoken, it was obvious they were intimate, very intimate, longstanding friends.

So angry, mostly with herself, Rylee stomped along the road to her campsite, mentally calling Atticus every swearword she knew. If it weren't for Luc and his friends, and that they'd paid for the site for the entire long weekend, she would have packed everything up tonight and gone back to Kitchener. Right now, she wished she'd

told her mother a big resounding no when she'd called her and asked her to go camping with her brother.

At the campsite, Rylee saw the three boys had come out of their tent and sat around the fire pit. She chuckled the bag of marshmallows at Nick who happened to be closest. "Here, you guys can finish them."

"What happened to Atticus?" Luc asked.

"Don't mention his name again," she snapped.

"I thought he was your boyfriend."

"Was being the operative word. Let's just say back at his campsite, his other girlfriend was there waiting for him."

"Damn," Josh said. "Are you sure you don't want to come and cry on my shoulder?"

Not in the mood, Rylee flipped him off. "Shut up, Josh." She looked at each of the boys. "I'm going to be in my tent, reading. If any of you do anything to piss me off, be forewarned I'll string you up by your balls. Got it?"

Each one of them nodded. As she took a step toward her tent, Luc asked, "What if Atticus comes here looking for you? Do you want me to hurt him for you?"

Despite her foul mood, she chuckled at the absurdity of that. Her brother was only two inches taller than her five foot eight. And a bodybuilder he was not. Atticus could crush him with one hand behind his back.

"I don't think so," she said. "If he does show up, which I highly doubt since his real girlfriend looks like a supermodel, just tell him to get lost."

Inside her tent, Rylee switched on the battery-operated lantern and pulled out the book she'd brought along with her. She'd figured she'd need it to keep herself entertained while Luc and his friends did their own thing.

While she read, she did her best to forget about Atticus, about the way he'd held her close, kissed her with a longing she'd thought wasn't an act. But time and time



again those thoughts kept rising to the surface. She couldn't stop thinking about him. It was ridiculous. She'd only spent a few hours with him, but it felt as if they'd been together a lot longer than that.

Rylee had only been reading for fifteen minutes when she heard the sound of Atticus' voice outside her tent talking to the boys. She clearly heard him say he wouldn't leave until he'd talked to her after Luc told him to get lost. Pissed off that he would have had the gall to show up, she angrily unzipped her tent and went to confront him.

"I don't want to talk to you, Atticus," she said as she stomped toward him.

"Just give me a chance to explain."

Rylee stopped a short distance away from him. "Explain what? That you enjoy leading on women who are taken in by your good looks? Did you and your supermodel girlfriend have a good laugh over it?"

"Marla isn't my girlfriend. And I didn't lead you on."

"Right. It didn't look as if you were fighting her off too much when she kissed you. And what was it she said? Oh yes, she liked it that you bit while you sucked face with her."

Atticus had his jaw clenched so tight Rylee saw the muscle along it jump. "I bit her as a warning to show her she'd gone too far."

"So you haven't ever slept with her?"

He ran a hand through his hair. "I'm not going to lie to you. I have slept with her, but it was nothing serious. And the last time I was with her was over a month ago. I also made it clear I was done with her. She followed me here thinking she'd be able to change my mind."

"Why should I believe you?"

"Damn it, Rylee." Atticus looked at the three teenage boys who were avidly listening to their conversation. He closed some of the distance between them. "We need to finish this in private."

She shook her head. "No, we don't. As far as I'm concerned, this conversation is over." Rylee turned to walk back to her tent, but Atticus had her by the arm, turning her toward him after one step.

"Rylee, please," he said. "Don't do this. I meant it when I said I wanted us to last longer than the weekend. What can I do to get you to give me another chance?"

She yanked her arm out of his grasp and crossed her arms over her chest. "For starters, where is Marla now? If she means nothing to you like you said, you should have had no problem sending her on her way." At Atticus' silence, Rylee shook her head. "You didn't send her away."

"I did. She refused to go. I have no intention of going back to my campsite tonight. Tomorrow morning she'll be gone, even if I have to physically put her in her car."

With a laugh that held no humor, Rylee said, "Well, don't expect me to invite you to sleep in my tent." She slowly backed away. "Leave, Atticus, and don't bother coming back."

Finished all she had to say, Rylee turned and walked to her tent. She didn't look at Atticus as she crawled inside and zipped it closed.

\* \* \* \* \*

After leaving Rylee's campsite, Atticus headed for the hiking trails and the thicker bush. He plunged into the trees and went deep enough to keep what he did from mortal eyes. Drawing on the spark of magic that lived inside him, he used it to bring on the change. He held out his hand and saw it gradually shimmer, blurring as he shapeshifted into his wolf form. His eyes would be glowing as well. Atticus willed his clothes away at the same time.

Once the change was complete, he took off in a loping run. Usually going wolf and running made any anxiety or stress he felt melt away. This time it didn't work. In this form, the mating urge was stronger. The need to go back to Rylee, claim her as his mate, was almost too much to resist. She was his, goddamn it. And it wasn't as if he could just ignore his mating urge and it would go away. It wouldn't, especially after his having had a taste of her.

Atticus ran a little faster, winding his way unerringly through the trees. Somehow he had to earn Rylee's trust again. He had to convince her Marla meant nothing to him, and never had. Rylee had willingly gone into his arms once, she'd do it again. He just had to show her a second time how good they were together. To do that, he had to get close to her, really close to her. And he knew the only way that would happen was if he didn't give her a chance to refuse him. Like sneak into her tent and wake her with his lips and tongue.

A course of action set in his mind, Atticus decided he needed to wait a little bit longer to make sure Rylee would be asleep when he arrived at her campsite. Making a wide loop back to where he'd started from, he heard the sound of a branch snapping in front of him. He stopped as the figure of another wolf moved out from behind a thick tree.

Keeping to her wolf from, Marla walked silently toward him. She'd purposely stepped on the branch to let him know she was there, since her scent was downwind of him. Like all their kind, she could move in the trees without making a sound. He snarled his upper lip when she drew even with him, rubbing her side against his. Her dark blonde fur contrasted with his white. He snapped his teeth at her, causing her to quickly jump away.

Marla circled around to his other side and attempted to brush up against him once again. Atticus knew what she tried to do. She wanted to entice his wolf, but he wanted nothing to do with her, same as the man. Rylee was now the only female for both of them.

A second attempt was more than Atticus could stand. He used his body to shove Marla away before he charged her. He clamped his jaws around her throat and took her to the ground on her back, holding on as he growled. She yelped, then whimpered, her tail coming down between her legs.

Even though Marla had submitted, he held her by the throat for a few more seconds before he released her. She jumped to her paws, her tail still tucked. After he growled and snapped his teeth once more, she spun away. To get her moving, Atticus gave her a none-too-gentle nip to her rump.

Satisfied she wouldn't try to approach him again at least for the rest of the night, he continued on his way to Rylee's campsite.

\* \* \* \* \*

Marla only went as far as it would take to make Atticus think she'd left him. She stopped and hid herself behind a wide tree and cautiously peered around it. She watched the white wolf lope away. He might have thought his display of dominance was enough to have her running back to his campsite with her tail between her legs, but he was dead wrong. Just as he was dead wrong about being able to cut her out of his life so easily. Atticus wasn't her mate, but she wanted the prestige that came with being known as the mate to the next pack leader. Some mortals married for power or to better their social status, why couldn't she?

Once she figured Atticus had put enough distance between them, she moved out from behind the tree and followed, making sure she kept downwind of him. Her hackles rose in anger when she realized he took a long route to another campsite. Marla kept way back out of sight, but with her keen eyesight, she easily saw the two tents set up. Shifting her gaze to the white wolf who hadn't left the trees, she saw his body shimmer and blur as he took on his human form. He then silently made his way into the campsite, walking a direct path to the smaller of the two tents.

Furious he would seek out the mortal when he could have her, Marla silently eased deeper into the bush. It disgusted her that Atticus would actually want to claim the woman as his mate. The mortal needed to be taken out of the equation if Marla ever stood a chance of snagging Atticus as her own.

## **Chapter Four**

On silent feet, Atticus stepped out of the trees at the back of Rylee's campsite and walked to the two-man tent. He kept his ears open for any sound coming from the other larger one, but didn't hear anything. It was late enough for Rylee and the three boys to be asleep.

He crouched in front of the small tent and slowly unzipped the flap. Atticus crept inside and did it back up again. The sound of Rylee's deep, even breaths in sleep met his ears when he turned toward her. She lay on her back, zipped up in a sleeping bag on top of an air mattress. He ran his gaze over her. Just the sight of her made him ache. Marla had been right about one thing—his father would be furious with him for binding himself to a mortal mate. Not that Atticus cared. He'd already started to fall for Rylee, hard, and he wasn't going to give her up for anyone. He just had to convince her of that first.

Atticus crawled over to Rylee. He froze in place when she shifted and quietly said his name on a breathy sigh. The smell of her arousal filled his nose, making his cock instantly rock hard. A smile played across his lips. She dreamed of him. Rylee wasn't a female werewolf, but she seemed to be affected by the mating process. Females didn't have a mating urge, but once they met their soon-to-be mates, they had erotic dreams about them just as the males did.

Taking it as a good sign, Atticus cautiously opened the sleeping bag. Rylee still wore her jeans and t-shirt. He stretched out beside her on his side, supporting himself on his bent arm. After a quick check to make sure she still slept, he used the tip of his index finger to circle a taut nipple that showed through her shirt. Rylee moaned, arching her back.

He plucked at her nipple as he bent his head and tongued the other, wetting the material of her t-shirt. Rylee moaned again, pushing her chest closer. The scent of her arousal increased in intensity. Dropping his hand as he tugged at the tight bud with his teeth, Atticus placed it on her mound. Using his fingers, he stroked her pussy through her jeans. In response, she lifted her hips.

"Atticus," she said on a whimpered moan.

He lifted his head and said loud enough to wake her, "I'm right here, Rylee."

She jerked and her eyes fluttered open. "Atticus?"

"It's me."

"What the hell do you th—"

He cut her off by turning her head his way and sealing her lips with his. They remained stiff, but eventually softened as he licked and sucked, not backing down. Angling his mouth for a tighter fit, he stroked his tongue along the seam of her lips. Much to his pleasure, Rylee opened, giving him access to fully taste her. Their tongues met, twining, tasting.

She groaned into his mouth as she kissed him back hungrily. With a hand on her hip, Atticus rolled her to her side and against him. He lifted her leg and put it over his hip as he ground his throbbing cock against her pussy. Rylee draped her arm around his shoulder, stroking his back as she matched his movements.

Releasing her mouth, he said huskily, "Give me another chance, Rylee. I meant every word I said about Marla being nothing to me. I only want you. It will always be you now that I've found you."

"I want to believe you, I really do. But how can you know that already? And you did kiss Marla."

"No, I didn't. She kissed *me*. I only held onto her to stop her from unbalancing me. And I *did* bite her to show her I thought she'd gone too far. She knew that. She only said what she said to piss you off."

"Well, it worked."

"Too well." Atticus rolled Rylee to her back and shifted so he lay half on her with a leg between hers. "Marla is just a spoiled bitch who doesn't like not getting what she wants. She's more interested in me because of what I'll be once my father steps down than me as a man."

Rylee reached up and ran her fingertips along the side of his jaw. "You don't have to worry about that with me, since I really don't know anything about what your father does, nor does it have any bearing on how I feel about you. I will say it hurt to see you with Marla. I have a hard enough time believing someone who looks like you would actually find me attractive."

He kissed her again, showing her she had nothing to worry about. Once he had her panting and clutching at his back, he lifted his head only far enough to say, "Why wouldn't I want you? You're beautiful, more so than Marla, because you're beautiful on the inside as well where she never will be. You're everything I could ask for in a mate."

"A mate?"

Atticus silently cursed himself for not watching what he said. "I meant girlfriend."

To stop Rylee from saying anything more about his slip-up, he took her mouth again. He closed his eyes to hide them from her as he kissed her the way his mating urge demanded. Carnal, hard and possessive, he fed from her lips, his tongue twining with hers.

His cock throbbing in time with his rapidly beating heart, Atticus lifted his leg to press against her pussy. Rylee moaned into his mouth while she rode his thigh. The heat of her soaked through his jeans and into the skin beneath. He needed to touch her, feel her skin pressed to his.

In two swift movements, Atticus had Rylee stripped of her shirt and bra. He took hold of the back of his t-shirt and yanked it over his head, tossing it against the side of the tent. Settling back on top of her, he reveled in the feel of her taut nipples brushing against his chest.



He made a wet trail of kisses along the side of her jaw to her ear and swirled his tongue inside it before he gently took the lobe between his teeth and tugged. Continuing downward, Atticus licked a path to where Rylee's shoulder and neck met. He nipped her there. It was a spot where he wanted to feel her sink her teeth into him and leave a mark to show he was hers. A bite there was also one of the greatest turn-ons for a male werewolf.

Shifting lower on her body, Atticus lifted one of her breasts and swirled his tongue around the taut tip. Rylee arched her back, offering him more. He opened his mouth and sucked the nipple inside. Her husky moan made his cock jerk and pre-cum leak from the tip.

He continued to suck at her breast as he brought his fingers down to the top of her jeans. He undid them and shoved his hand down the front of her panties. His fingers encountered wetness when he caressed along her pussy. The feel of her so wet for him, he wanted nothing more than to bury his cock inside her and pound into her. She'd let him, he knew she would, but not yet. Marla had almost screwed things up between him and Rylee. He didn't need to mess it up himself by claiming her before she knew what she would be getting herself into.

Atticus switched to her other breast and pushed two fingers inside her pussy, stroking in and out. Rylee's inner muscles clamped around them, making him wish it was his cock they squeezed instead.

Plunging his fingers faster, he used his thumb to flick her clit. Rylee gasped, lifting her hips to match the pace he set. Letting go of her nipple, Atticus lifted his head to look at her. Seeing she had her eyes shut, he used the opportunity to observe her. She was even more beautiful with her lips swollen from his kisses and her cheeks flushed with desire. He wanted to watch her face while she came.

Moving his fingers in a determined pace, thrusting as deep as they could go, he worked her harder. Her soft moans filled the small tent. "Come for me, Rylee."

"So close," she panted. "Just a little bit more."

To push her over the edge, he added a third finger, his thumb rubbing her clit at the same time. As she came, her face formed a mask of pleasure. A loud, whimpered moan pushed out of her. To stop the boys in the other tent from hearing her, Atticus surged up and covered her mouth with his, swallowing the rest of her cries. He didn't release her lips until she'd settled beneath him.

Hiding his eyes, he closed them and rested his forehead against hers. She caressed his back. "You're not going to fully make love to me again, are you?"

"No."

"I can't understand why you're holding off when it's what both of us want, but I won't push, since what you're doing to me instead is pretty damn good." She pushed on his shoulder until he rolled onto his back. "I'm not selfish, so it's my turn to make you feel as good as you made me."

Rylee's fingers fell to the top of his jeans and she made short work of undoing them. With a few tugs, she had them worked past his hips and down his legs. Atticus kicked them the rest of the way off. Free of its tight confines, his cock jerked as she ran a finger down its length.

"Did I ever tell you I like that you're just as big here as the rest of you is?" she asked while trailing her fingers up and down his shaft.

"No," he said in a tight voice.

"Well, I do. If you're not going to put this big cock of yours inside my pussy, I'm going to have to put it inside something else."

A growl threatened to break free when Rylee straddled his legs, bent and dragged the flat of her tongue along the same path her fingers had taken. Keeping his eyes shut, Atticus focused on her every touch.

She wrapped her hand around his cock and pumped it up and down. Unable to hold still, he lifted his hips, helping her work him. It felt good, but he didn't want to come by her hand. After a few more pumps, Rylee's fingers circled him in a firm grasp

as she licked the head of his shaft like she would an ice-cream cone. She was going to kill him.

“Rylee,” he said with a groan.

She didn’t answer. Instead, she took him inside her mouth. A low growl rumbled out of him. She sucked on his cock, taking him almost to the back of her throat. His shaft hardened even more. What she couldn’t handle, she stroked with her fist.

Lifting his head, Atticus cracked his eyes open. The sight of Rylee’s head bobbing up and down as she sucked him off was enough to have his balls drawing up close to his body. The point of no return raced up to meet him. Grinding his teeth to stop from howling, he climaxed, giving her everything he had.

Once she released him, he pulled her down on top of him with her head pillowed on his chest. He wrapped his arms around her, holding her tight. As blowjobs went, that one had been pleasurable to the extreme. Making love to Rylee would more than likely be nothing short of mind-blowing.

Their breathing back to normal, Rylee lifted her head. “You’re still hard. This is the second time I’ve made you come and you were able to keep it up. Is this something you can do all the time, or only once in a while?”

Atticus chuckled. “What would you say if I told you I can stay hard for hours, even after I’ve come more than once?” And he could. All male werewolves could keep an erection for that length of time, coming several times before going soft.

“Then my reply would be I’m one lucky girl. So when do I get to try this nifty ability of yours? Other than just with oral sex?”

“Before the end of the weekend. I promise you.” Atticus tucked some of Rylee’s hair behind her ear. “I want you to get to know me better first.”

“I thought that was what we were doing?”

"We are, but there are some things about me I'm not ready to tell you." He felt her stiffen against him. "I assure you it isn't anything bad, at least I hope you won't think it is."

"As long as it isn't another ex-girlfriend who will come to hunt you down and try to take you away from me, I guess it can't be all that bad."

He ran his hand up and down her back. "No, it isn't that."

She drew circles on his chest. "Whatever it is, Atticus, don't wait too long. Too much more of what we've been doing and it's going to frustrate the hell out of me."

"I promise I won't."

For one thing, his mating urge wouldn't allow it. Tomorrow he'd use the day wisely to try to slowly ease into the topic of him being a werewolf and her, his mate. If he did it right, she'd accept him for all that he was. If he didn't, there was the real possibility of her running from him in horror.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rylee woke to the sensation of warm heat surrounding her. She opened her eyes to see it was no longer dark inside the tent. Looking over her shoulder, she smiled. Atticus lay on his side spooned against her back. He had his arm over her waist with his hand covering one of her breasts. A muscled leg was between hers. She lowered her head and snuggled deeper into his embrace. He didn't stir.

She smiled again. He'd woken her during the early morning hours with his fingers playing her like a fine-tuned instrument. One thing was sure – Atticus gave the best oral sex she'd ever had in her life. He knew exactly how to touch her, to lick and gently nip to arouse her until all she thought about was coming.

And true to his word, even after she'd made him come, his cock had stayed hard. Like he was now. She felt the length of him pressed against her backside. Rylee knew he wanted to wait for her to get to know him better first, but she wanted all of him. The

thought of pushing him to his back, straddling his hips as she impaled herself on his thick shaft made her pussy weep with need.

Rylee pushed her bottom against his cock. It twitched in response. Atticus' hand tightened on her breast as he nuzzled her hair out of the way to kiss the back of her neck. "I have to say I like waking up with you in my arms," he said in a sleepy voice.

"And I think I could get used to having my own human furnace warming me." She rubbed against his erection again. "I could also get used to waking up to this every morning."

Atticus made a soft animalistic growl, something he'd done a few times during the night. Instead of finding it freaky sounding, Rylee found it sexy as hell. She liked the thought of driving him so wild he made noises like that.

With a hand on her hip, he pressed her tight enough against him she couldn't move. "I'd love more than anything than to indulge in what you're blatantly offering, but the boys are awake."

Rylee lifted her head and looked in the direction of the tent's entrance. "Are you sure? I don't hear anything."

As if on cue, she saw a shadow appear at the side of the tent and then move to the front. She groaned when she heard Luc call her name.

"Rylee? Are you awake? We're hungry and want some breakfast," he said in the whiny tone he used on their mother.

"I'll be out in a few minutes, but don't expect much."

"What's the hold-up? You slept in your clothes like we did. I'm coming in."

Before Luc could bend for the zippered flap, Atticus said in a loud voice, "You do, boy, and I'll throw you out by the scruff of your neck like the pup you are."

"Atticus?" Luc asked slowly.

"Yes. Go away. Your sister will come out when she's ready."

"Sorry. I didn't know you were in there with her."

Luc's shadow disappeared as he walked away. Rylee giggled. "That should keep him quiet for a while. I swear I don't know how my mother puts up with his whiny ways. Luc whines and she gives him whatever he wants. I'm glad I don't live at home anymore."

"He'll grow out of it."

"I doubt it. My mom spoils him rotten. I think she does it because she had a miscarriage between me and Luc." She rolled out of Atticus' arms and sat up. "I guess we'd better get out there. I'll whip up some bacon and eggs on the camp stove for all of us."

"I can help."

Rylee watched Atticus sit up. Her gaze ran over his hard body, landing on his erection. God, she could spend an entire twenty-fours in bed with him and would still want more.

"You're staring at me as if you'd like to have me for breakfast instead," Atticus said.

She dragged her gaze up to his. "For breakfast, lunch and dinner."

He cupped the back of her head and kissed her soundly. "After I make sure Marla has gone, we can sneak away to my campsite."

"I'm all for that."

Rylee pulled on her clothes from the day before. While Atticus went to take care of Marla, she'd hit the shower. Once he was dressed as well, she unzipped the tent's flap and ducked to step outside. Looking up at the sky, she saw dark cloud masses were moving in. It figured the weatherman had gotten the forecast wrong. But it wasn't all that surprising to see rainclouds. It wouldn't be the first time she'd gone camping on the Victoria Day long weekend and had it rain. If it didn't get too heavy she could stick it out.

She took the camp stove out of the van and brought it over to the picnic table. The three boys were already sitting there, watching her and Atticus, who had come up

behind her. "I hope you guys like bacon and scrambled eggs, because that's all I'm making."

All three boys nodded, then Luc asked, "When did he show up? I thought you were done with him."

Atticus put his arm around her waist and pulled her back so she leaned against his chest. "Your sister and I worked things out late last night after you were asleep."

"So does that means you're her boyfriend again?"

"Yes. And it also means you'll be seeing more of me from here on out."

"Great," Luc said sarcastically.

After that, Rylee got the eggs and bacon from the electric cooler and started the breakfast. Once everyone had their fill, Atticus helped her wash the dishes in the small plastic tub she'd brought for just that job. Of course the three teenage boys didn't offer to help.

Before Atticus left to go to his campsite, he pulled her aside and kissed her. Pulling away, he cupped her face in his hands. "Hopefully I won't be too long."

"Just as long as you come back."

"I will. Since I want to take a shower and change my clothes as well, I shouldn't take more than an hour. If I go over, come to my campsite and wait for me."

She nodded. "All right."

"See you in a bit then."

Rylee watched Atticus walk away. She'd give him that hour and not a minute more. If she found Marla still at his campsite, she'd toss the bitch out on her ass. Atticus was hers and she wouldn't give him up without a fight.

## **Chapter Five**

Atticus hoped when he arrived at his campsite he would find Marla had been long gone. He ended up not being so lucky. The thorn in his side sat at the picnic table drinking Tim Horton's coffee. A Timmy's bag was on the tabletop along with another cup of coffee.

He walked over to Marla and glared down at her. "I thought I told you to leave once it was morning."

Ignoring his statement, she said, "I drove into Elora and bought us breakfast."

"You should have just kept on driving until you reached Toronto. I told you I don't want you here."

"And I told you," she said as she stood, "I wasn't going to let you go. I know you spent the night with your stupid mortal—her scent is all over you—but you mustn't have claimed her as your mate yet, or you wouldn't be here by yourself. Having second thoughts?"

"None. And I already ate. Rylee made me breakfast. You can take your coffee and food and leave."

Marla's face flushed red with anger and she growled low in her throat. "I'll go straight to your father and tell him about your little mortal."

Atticus growled back, crowding close so she had to look up at him. "Go ahead. He can't stop me. Rylee is mine and I love her."

"How can you love someone who is so beneath you? Werewolves are the superior race. We always will be."

"It was easy to fall in love with Rylee. If that hadn't been a possibility, my mating urge never would have kicked in. And that's why it never did with you. You're too



bitchy for my taste.” Marla’s hand, fingers curled in a claw, went for his face. Atticus caught her wrist and squeezed until she whimpered. “Try that again and I’ll make you pay. Now are you willing to leave under your own volition, or do I have to haul you over my shoulder and take you to your car?”

She wrenched her wrist free of his grasp. “I’ll go, but I still think you’re lowering your standards by taking a mortal as your mate. I wonder what your father will do when you bring her home. No one from our pack has ever bound themselves to one before.”

“Then it’s about time we brought in some new blood. Goodbye, Marla.”

Atticus calmly stood by as Marla gathered up the rest of the breakfast she’d bought and flounced out of his campsite. Once she disappeared up the road out of sight, he waited a good ten minutes to make sure she wouldn’t come back before he collected clean clothes and the things he’d need for a shower.

There wasn’t any doubt in his mind Marla would go straight to his father as soon as she got back to Toronto. Atticus had no idea what his reaction would be. It wasn’t as if he got to choose who his mate was. Not that he’d want anyone besides Rylee. And it was true, their pack did need some new blood in it. Once he became pack leader with Rylee at his side, the superiority complex most of his kind had when it came to mortals would end. They’d either accept her or they were more than welcome to go lone wolf.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rylee managed to hit the women’s washroom at just the right time. There wasn’t anyone using the shower. She pounced on it before anyone else arrived. It didn’t take her long to wash her hair and body. By the time she shut off the water, she heard voices on the other side of the stall door. She dried herself and dressed in the clean clothes she’d brought with her before she stepped out into the washroom area. A quick pit stop at the sinks to brush her teeth, then she was on her way back to her campsite.

The three boys were where she'd left them, sitting at the picnic table. From the looks of it, none of them had changed their clothes. She put the things she carried in her tent and came back out with her comb.

Using her fingers to help untangle the knots in her damp hair, she said, "Aren't you guys going to shower?"

Josh shook his head. "We're camping, Rylee. That means you don't shower and you wear the same clothes."

"We're going to be manly men," Nick added.

She shook her head. "No, what you will be by the end of the weekend are stinky teenage boys."

"A little man stink doesn't hurt anyone," Luc said.

"I beg to differ," she said in return. "I'm telling you right now, if you three smell too bad, I'll take you down to the Grand River and dunk each of you in the freezing cold water. I'm not making the trip back to Kitchener in the van while you stink me out."

"What if it was Atticus? Would you dunk his ass in the river as well?"

She smiled. "It won't come to that. Unlike you three, he's gone to take a shower right now. I guess he doesn't think it's manly to reek like a pig."

Finished combing out her hair, Rylee returned to her tent to put the comb back in her bag. While she did that, Luc ducked inside. She gave him a questioning look when she turned to look at him.

"Did you and Atticus really work things out last night?" he asked.

"Yeah, we did."

"What about his other girlfriend? Is she gone?"

"She really wasn't his girlfriend. More like a fling who didn't want to let go. Along with showering, Atticus went to make sure she left."

"Can you trust him? You just met him, Rylee. For all you know he could be a horn dog and is playing you both."

"I trust him."

"Are you absolutely certain you can? Some guys are like that, you know? They think with their dicks and not their brains."

Rylee chuckled. "I've met a few men like that. Atticus isn't one of them."

"If it were me, I'd want to make sure. I know you think I'm a major pain in the ass sometimes, but you're still my sister and I want to watch out for you."

She gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek. "You might be, but I still love you anyway. I'm just waiting for the day you grow up and stop being that pain in the ass. And thanks for looking out for me."

"I just don't want to see you hurt." Luc hugged her back. "I guess I'll go back outside. I can't have Josh and Nick think I'm actually getting along with you or anything."

Rylee laughed. "God forbid."

After Luc left, what he'd said about trusting Atticus wouldn't leave her head. *Shit*. Now she was second-guessing herself. Luc was right, she really hadn't known Atticus long enough to judge whether he'd told the truth about booting Marla out of his campsite, or just feeding her a line of bullshit.

He'd said to give him an hour, but with the doubts she felt, Rylee wondered if it wouldn't be a good idea to surprise him, go to his campsite and see if all was as he'd said. If Atticus was there alone, she'd tell him she'd missed him and couldn't wait any longer to see him. And if he wasn't there, and in the shower like he'd said, she'd just wait until he returned.

Rylee left her tent, zipping it closed behind her, and told the boys she'd be back later as she headed for the road in front of their campsite. As she walked, she thought of

what she'd do if she *did* find Atticus with Marla. She'd probably kick him in the balls first, then slap the haughty bitch who was with him.

She hoped that wouldn't be what she found when she arrived at Atticus' campsite. She really did. Her feelings for him had grown stronger during the night. She'd never fallen for a guy so fast, or so hard, which left her wide open for him to easily hurt her. The few other boyfriends she'd had were nice while they lasted, but when they parted ways, it was amicable. Rylee was actually still friends with one of them. But with Atticus, it would be totally different. Her feelings were already too invested. If she didn't know any better, she'd say she had started to fall in love with him. Having never been in love before, what she felt for him was too new to say for sure.

Rylee found Atticus' campsite empty. No Atticus, and most importantly, no Marla in sight. Some of the worry she'd felt drained away. At least she hadn't caught them in each other's arms. Walking farther into the site, she looked at the tent, but couldn't see any shadows or hear any sounds coming from it. He had to be showering.

Prepared to wait for him to return, Rylee headed for the picnic table to sit. Glancing at the line of trees that ringed one side of the campsite, she caught sight of someone standing inside them. Changing direction, she walked over to the edge of the site. She managed to see what looked to be the back of Marla as she ran deeper into the bush.

Not taking the time to think about what she was doing, Rylee went after the other woman. If Atticus had sent her on her way, Marla had no right to be hanging around spying on them. Working up into a good anger, Rylee pushed through the thick bush intent on finding the person who'd put her in such a foul mood.

Seeing brighter light up ahead, she worked her way there in as straight a line as the trees would permit. Rylee hadn't seen a glimpse of Marla again, but she bet that was where she'd gone.

Just before she reached her destination, she heard the sound of a wolf howling very close to where she was. She quickly spun around. Her eyes widened when her gaze landed on the wolf a short distance from her. Its fur was a dark blonde color. It stared at

her and curled its upper lip in a snarl as it growled deep from its throat. Where the hell had the wolf come from?

Rylee swallowed when it took a step toward her. She backed up, trying to keep the same distance apart, but her movement only caused the wolf to break into a lope. Spinning, she took off at a run, heading for the brighter light up ahead. Branches slapped her in the face and pulled at her hair while she ran. She didn't stop for anything, and she didn't dare look behind her to see where the wolf was.

Breaking through the trees, Rylee just about slammed into the barrier that marked the edge of the gorge. Nowhere left to go but back into the bush, she turned only to be brought up short at the sight of the wolf almost directly behind her. She backed up with her hands behind her until she hit the barrier.

She couldn't hold back a shriek as the wolf bunched its back legs under it and lunged toward her.

\* \* \* \* \*

Atticus returned to his campsite a little later than he'd thought he would. He'd had to wait for the shower. Luckily there had only been one other person ahead of him. He hadn't seen Rylee at the women's, but really hadn't expected to. There was another set of washrooms where his campsite was.

He walked into the site and took a deep breath to pick up the scents around him, mostly to make sure Marla's remained old. Atticus smiled when he detected Rylee's, which was fresh. Thinking maybe she was inside his tent, since he didn't see her anywhere else, he crossed to it and unzipped the flap. His smile fell away when it turned up empty. Where could she have gone? Her scent wasn't all that old. She had to be around somewhere.

Going back out, he went in search of her scent trail. His muscles clenched when he found it leading into the trees that bordered his campsite. What reason could Rylee have had to go into the bush? None he could think of.

Not liking this one bit, Atticus followed her scent trail. Some distance into the trees, he picked up another scent. If he'd been in his wolf form, his hackles would have been rising. Marla's scent had mixed with Rylee's.

The sound of a wolf's howl coming from somewhere in front of him had Atticus shifting to wolf form as he took off at a run. More agile on four paws than two feet, he ran at a fast clip, never wavering from Rylee's scent. Marla had gone way too far this time. And he knew it was her, he recognized her howl.

A shriek ripped through the trees. Atticus ran faster. He broke through the bush just in time to see Marla lunge at Rylee in her wolf form. To escape Marla's sharp claws and teeth, his mate climbed over the barrier at the edge of the gorge. His stomach twisted at the sight of Rylee so close to it. One misstep and she'd fall to her death.

Before she could make another lunge at Rylee, Atticus slammed into Marla, forcing her back. Unlike the night before, she didn't back down. If it was a fight she wanted, then it was a fight he'd give her. He'd also show her she didn't stand a chance against him.

Using teeth and claws, they went at each other. Their growls and howls filled the air. Not risking the chance of being distracted by Rylee, and his need to make sure she was safe, he focused entirely on Marla. He didn't hold anything back. He went for blood.

The fight didn't last very long. In a matter of minutes he'd raked his claws along her side, leaving a bloody trail through her fur. Atticus took her down with his jaws around the back of her neck and bit down hard enough to go through her thick fur and into her skin. Marla yelped and whimpered. He gave her a good shake to get the message across that he could have easily snapped her neck this way, then released her. With a growl and a snap of his teeth, he sent her on her way. This time Marla would go home. She took off into the trees at a fast run, her tail tucked.

The threat to Rylee now out of the way, Atticus turned in her direction. She still stood on the other side of the barrier clutching it with both hands. As he slowly

approached, she let go and held her palms out as if to hold him off. His heart jumped into his throat when she took a step back, putting her even closer to the edge of the steep drop.

He smelled the acidic scent of her fear. This was not good. Her fear of him as a wolf could make her do something rash. That only left one option—he'd have to shift in front of her to talk her back over the barrier. He only hoped she wouldn't fear him more afterward.

Standing still, his gaze meeting hers and holding it, he called on the magic inside him and shifted. Her eyes widened and she breathed at too fast a rate, but her gaze never left his while he made the change from wolf to man, willing his clothes back on at the same time.

Atticus held out his hand. "Rylee, it's all right. Marla's gone. Come back over the barrier."

Her mouth opened and closed a few times before she managed to speak. "The other wolf was Marla? What the fuck are you?"

She still hadn't moved from the edge. "I'm a werewolf." He motioned her with his hand. "Come away from the gorge and I'll explain everything."

Rylee shook her head. "I don't think so. Stay away from me."

He saw her take another step back, her foot partly hanging over the edge. No longer able to stand there and do nothing, he jumped the barrier faster than any mortal could and pulled her into his arms. He spun and leapt over to the other side.

Rylee punched and slapped him. "Let go of me, freak!" she screamed.

Atticus grabbed her by the wrists and forced them behind her back. "Stop it, Rylee. I'm not going to hurt you." Once she settled, breathing heavily, fear a real thing in her eyes, he said, "I'm no different than I was before you knew what I am. Now that it's out in the open, I can finally tell you what you are to me."

She shook her head. "This changes everything. Let me go."

"No. Not until you hear me out. You're my mate, Rylee. I knew it the instant I smelled your scent and my mating urge kicked in. You're the woman who is meant for me. I've been alive for nine hundred years and have waited a long time to find you. I don't want to lose you."

"I don't want to be a mate to a fucking werewolf, especially an immortal one at that."

"I'm not immortal, just long-lived."

"No difference. I don't want it. I don't want you."

The last thing Rylee said had Atticus letting her go. It hurt to hear her say she didn't want him because of who he was. It was obvious he wasn't going to be able to get through to her. Her fear of him was too great.

"Can't you at least try to give us a chance?" he asked in a low voice.

"I can't," she said as she slowly sidestepped around him. "I just can't. What you are freaks me out too much. Marla was going to rip me to shreds. Who is to say you won't do the same to me one day."

"Forget about Marla. She only went after you because you're mortal and she wants me as her own. But you're my mate, the woman I want to have at my side, always. And being what you are to me, I could never hurt you. The mating bond that would form between us once I claimed you would never allow it. Our souls join, become one."

Rylee shook her head again. "You're asking too much of me. I can't." She took a step back from him. "I'm going to walk away now. Please don't come after me."

Atticus then did the hardest thing he'd ever done—he let his mate walk away and out of his life.



## **Chapter Six**

It was Tuesday and Rylee was back to work. After Atticus had revealed what he was to her, she'd raced back to her campsite, bullied the three teenage boys into quickly taking down the tents and then had them on the road back to Kitchener in a matter of an hour. They hadn't been happy with her, but she'd ignored their protests.

After getting the boys home, and talking her way around why they'd returned so early when her parents had asked, she'd gone straight to her apartment. There she stayed for the rest of the weekend, not even bothering to join her family when they'd gone to the Centennial Stadium to watch the fireworks on Monday night.

She'd also spent much of that time thinking about Atticus. Now over her initial fear of him, she found herself coming to grips with what he was. If she hadn't seen him shift from wolf to man, she'd never have believed werewolves existed. When she really thought about it, he didn't appear all that scary in his wolf form. Marla had been the one who'd scared her more than anything. Atticus had defended her, fought Marla off.

Then there was the whole thing about her being his mate. Did she want to be the mate of a werewolf? She didn't know, mostly because she really didn't know all that much about his kind. Not that she'd stuck around long enough for him to teach her.

Even now she couldn't stop thinking about him. If she was honest with herself, she missed him, a lot. It almost felt as if there was a part of her missing. She felt on edge, unable to settle. And she didn't like it. If being with Atticus again was the cure, there really wasn't much she could do about it. Yeah, she knew he lived in Toronto, but she had no idea where. And in a moment of weakness, she'd tried to look him up on the internet and found nothing. Being rich, his phone number was more than likely unlisted.

At the end of her shift, she heard her name being paged over the loudspeakers, telling her to go to customer service. Wondering what was up, she logged out of her till while the girl who was to take over waited for her to leave.

Hoping it wasn't a pissed-off customer, Rylee headed for the customer service desk. What she saw there when she arrived had her coming to a standstill. Atticus stood there smiling at her. He'd found her.

He crossed the distance between them. "Hi, Rylee."

"What...what are you doing here? How did you find me?"

"Well, there is only one Real Canadian Superstore in Kitchener. I figured I would take the chance and see if you were working today."

"You came from Toronto to see me?"

"No, just from Elora. I stayed until today. When I found out you were working today, I waited until your shift ended to come." He gave her a pleading look and said in a quiet voice, "We need to talk, Rylee. Please don't push me away. I missed you. I can't stop thinking about you."

Rylee closed her eyes for a second and swallowed. Being around Atticus again stirred up all the memories of how good it had felt to be in his arms. How badly she'd wanted him to make love to her, and how she still wanted him. Right now, all she saw was the man she'd fallen for, and she had. And the way he looked at her, with love showing in his eyes, she found herself unable to refuse him.

She nodded. "All right, we can talk. My apartment isn't too far from here, just down on Highland Road. You'll have to drive since I decided to walk to work today."

"Thank you, Rylee."

Once they were outside in the parking lot, Atticus guided her to his BMW. The drive to her apartment only took all of two minutes. She directed him to the visitor parking and then she let them into the building. Taking the stairs to her second floor apartment, Atticus followed behind her.

Inside, she closed the door and locked it. She leaned against it and stared at Atticus. God, she'd missed him. He wore blue jeans and a dark gray t-shirt that molded his powerful upper body to perfection. She felt drawn to him, as if the edginess she'd been going through would disappear as soon as he held her once again.

She pushed away from the door and motioned for him to follow her into the living room. They sat on the couch facing each other. Rylee looked into his eyes and saw they mutedly glowed. "Your eyes are glowing. They did that just before you shifted from a wolf."

"I'm not going to shift. It's because I'm aroused. I can't help it. You're my mate, I want you. My mating urge has been riding me hard for days, and not being with you has made it worse."

"Don't you have any control over it?"

"No. All male werewolves go through this when they first meet their mates. And it won't go away until he has claimed her. Made her his so no other male can take her away from him."

"Until the mating bond forms. How does that happen exactly?"

"Making love, our souls will join. Once in place, we won't be able to stand to be apart. You'd be mine for the rest of our lives."

"You mean the rest of my life. I'm what you called a mortal, remember?"

Atticus shifted closer and wrapped his hand around her nape. "No, our lives. I don't think I could live another two thousand years without you."

"Are you saying what I think you're saying?" Rylee asked hesitantly. "You would give up the rest of your long life when I..."

"Yes. Life wouldn't be worth living without you in it."

"Oh god. I'm starting to feel a little bit freaked again."

"Just breathe, Rylee."

"This is all so much. You being a werewolf, living for so long. Us being mates." She let out a shaky sigh. "I want you, but I don't know if I can handle everything that comes with you."

Atticus lowered his head to meet her gaze. "This will work, Rylee. We will work. I need you to believe in that. Without you, I'll feel as if a part of me is missing, never to be whole again."

She closed her eyes for a second before opening them again. "Then help me to understand."

"Know this, once mated, I can never leave you, never cheat on you, will be there for you always."

Hearing him say those words made her heart pound in her chest. The prospect of having him forever was a temptation she couldn't ignore. To never have to worry he'd stray, that them being mates literally meant it was for life, wasn't something she could ever get out of another man. Only with Atticus would she get that kind of guarantee.

"What of your family? Will they be willing to accept me?"

He sighed. "I'm not going to lie to you. My father, who is leader of my pack, won't be thrilled with you being mortal. But I don't care. You're mine. If he won't accept you, I'll go lone wolf if I have to. Give up everything."

"Lone wolf?"

"That's what a werewolf is called when they are no longer a member of a pack. An outsider."

"You'd do that for me?"

"No question."

She gave him a tremulous smile. "Then how could I possibly refuse you if you'd do all that just to be with me?"

Before she said anything more, Atticus leaned in and kissed her. She sighed, feeling as if everything was right in her world once again. This was what she'd been missing,

this was what she'd been longing for. Just him and her and the passion that flared to life between them.

Knowing she wanted him with every fiber in her being, Rylee kissed him with all the pent-up emotions that had ridden her when they'd been apart. She wanted him, wanted to be his mate. And being his would be the only thing that would make her feel whole again.

She put her hands up his shirt and ran them across his wide chest and down his defined abs. Landing on the top of his jeans, she undid them and shoved her hand inside to wrap around his hard cock.

Atticus jerked away, meeting her gaze. "Are you sure this is what you want? Once it's done there is no going back. That's why I didn't make love to you before. I wanted you to have the choice. You have to be able to accept what I am."

She squeezed his shaft, eliciting a groan from him. "I want this. I want you. In Elora, I was scared. I've had a few days to think about it, about what you are. Just take your time easing me into your world."

"I can do that." He claimed her lips again and kissed her until they were both panting with need. "I love you, Rylee, my mate."

"I love you too, Atticus. Make me yours."

Holding her close, he stood, and with his mouth sealed to hers, he carried her down the short hallway to her bedroom. He crawled onto her bed and slowly lowered her to the center of it. The feel of him coming down on top of her, his hips settling between her legs made her libido skyrocket. An ache built in her pussy as wetness pooled, her body readying itself to take his.

Rylee yanked at his shirt and said against his mouth, "Off. Take it off. Take it all off."

Clothes went flying as both of them undressed. Rylee sighed, arching against him as they came together skin-to-skin. Her heart thundering against her ribs, she buried her hands in his white-blond hair and kissed him with all the need and longing

building up inside her. He growled, feasting from her mouth. The sound kicked her libido up another notch.

Atticus took her hand and led it to his cock. She wrapped her fingers around it and pumped up and down. He rocked his hips into her. Wetness leaked between her legs. She wanted him inside her, now. She was more than ready for him.

Holding him, she led him to her slick entrance, rubbing the head of his cock against her until he was bathed in her wetness. As she pressed down on him, taking the tip inside her pussy, he didn't stop her. With a loud groan, he seated himself to the hilt with one stroke.

Squeezing her inner muscles around him as he moved in and out, Rylee put her legs around his waist, taking him even deeper. Their moans filled the room as they strained against each other.

An orgasm built. Just before she fell over the edge, Rylee felt a part of Atticus reach out to her. A part of her reached for him in return. They both sucked in a breath as the two parts joined and became one. Atticus rode her harder, sending her flying into a climax. Whimpering his name, her inner walls clutching his shaft, she rode out the waves of pleasure that bombarded her.

After the last wave hit, Atticus lifted her head and led her mouth to where his shoulder and neck met. "Bite me, Rylee. Hard. Leave your mark on me."

He shuddered when she licked him there, his muscles tightening. Doing as he asked, she bit him. He moaned, thrust into her one last time, his cock pulsing deep inside her, filling her with his cum.

Atticus collapsed on top of her. Rylee held him close as she caught her breath. "I felt it," she said.

"So did I. The mate bond formed. You're mine now."

"And you're mine." Rylee shifted under him and felt his cock filling her up. "You're still hard."

He grinned and kissed the tip of her nose. "Something all male werewolves can do. It allows us to take our mates over and over again for hours."

She moaned. "You'll wear me out."

"One more time, my mate. The way my wolf wants you, then you can rest."

He pulled out of her and urged her onto her stomach. With hands on her hips, Atticus got her up on her hands and knees. He licked the indent of her spine up to her neck as he shifted to kneel between her spread thighs. The head of his cock brushed her clit when he nipped the top of her shoulder.

Aroused again, she pushed back against him, wanting him inside her pussy. With his hands on her hips to hold her in place, Atticus surged forward, giving her his full length. He took her in fast thrusts, his balls slapping against her as he rode her. Rylee pushed back to meet his strokes, feeling another orgasm quickly building.

Atticus thrust faster, his cock growing even harder. In and out he moved. Reaching around her, his fingers found her clit. All it took was a couple of strokes and she came. He howled, coming with her.

Out of breath and still buried deeply within her, he rolled them to their sides and held her close. Rylee closed her eyes. Happy to stay just where she was, she snuggled deeper into his embrace. Content as she hadn't been in days, she let herself drift off to sleep knowing her werewolf mate would always be there to hold her close.

\* \* \* \* \*

Spending the rest of the day and night in bed, Atticus and she had managed to do a lot of talking in between bouts of lovemaking. She'd also agreed to return to Toronto with him to meet his father the next day. Now that they were mated, Rylee figured it was best to get it over and done with as soon as possible. Atticus had explained how Marla would have more than likely left Elora and gone straight to the pack leader. And the longer they waited to confront Atticus' father, the more lies Marla would have the chance to tell.

The over an hour drive it took to reach Toronto had Rylee's stomach twisting with nerves the closer they got. The sensation increased when Atticus drove them to York's King Township where the mansion he lived in with his parents was located.

Atticus reached across the seat and squeezed her leg. "Relax. You'll do fine."

"Right. As if I can relax when I know you're risking the ties with your family because of me."

"It's a risk I'm more than willing to take. You're my world now."

Nothing like putting a ton of pressure on her or anything. As Atticus slowed and turned into a long drive of a mansion, Rylee blew out a breath to calm her nerves. It didn't work. Once he parked his BMW, she got out and walked around the back of it to stand beside Atticus. He linked their hands together and guided her to the front door.

He opened it and allowed her to walk inside ahead of him. The foyer was a display in rich elegance with its gleaming hardwood floors and high cathedral ceiling. Atticus led her through and into a spacious living room. The two people in the room, a man and a woman who sat on the large, black leather couch, looked in their direction once they stepped inside.

Rylee easily recognized the man as Atticus' father. He was a very slight older version of his son. The woman, who she presumed was her mate's mother, didn't look much older than Atticus. Both were extremely good looking.

Atticus' father wore a scowl as they walked toward them. "So," he said, "Marla was right. You did take a mortal for your mate." He said the word "mortal" as if it left a bitter taste on his tongue.

"Yes, I did. This is Rylee, my mate."

"You know how I feel about mortals, and still you bound yourself to one. As the next pack leader, you need to be an example to the rest of the pack."

Rylee felt Atticus stiffen beside her. "I've made my choice, Father. If you think that makes me less of a man because I've chosen to follow my heart, then so be it. And if you



find you can't accept Rylee for what she is to me, I have no qualms about going lone wolf."

"You'd give up your status in the pack for a mor —"

"Grant!" Atticus' mother shouted, cutting his father off. "I usually don't interfere with pack business, but this is our son. I for one am not willing to just let him walk out of our lives because you can't get over your uncalled for dislike of mortals."

"You can't exp —"

She cut him off again. "Yes, I do. Unlike you, I have no problem with my son taking a mortal mate. All that matters is his happiness." His mother stood and walked over to Rylee. She kissed her cheek. "Welcome to the family, dear. I'm Krystal."

"Thanks."

Krystal turned back to Grant. "I suggest you get a quick attitude adjustment, or I'll go visit my sister for a day — without you."

Rylee had to bite the inside of her cheek to keep from laughing as Grant's face paled. Atticus had explained what happened when mated couples were separated. It was a threat not to be taken lightly.

Obviously his father didn't want to go through any of it. He cleared his throat, stood and came to stand at his mate's side. "I welcome you to our family, Rylee. I look forward to getting to know you better."

Krystal linked her arm through his. "See, that wasn't so bad, after all." She looked at Atticus. "Why don't you show Rylee the rest of the house?"

Atticus kissed his mother on the cheek. "I'll do that."

Rylee allowed Atticus to pull her out of the room. He took her to the upper level and into what she presumed was his bedroom. Once safely behind the closed door, he yanked her into his arms and kissed her until her knees gave out on her.

He pulled away and smiled. "That went better than I thought it would."

"I think you have your mother to thank for that."

"She rarely stands up to my father, so when she does, she usually ends up winning." He wrapped her tighter in his embrace and walked her backward toward the king-sized bed. "It seems to me it has been far too long since I had you last."

Rylee smiled. "Then we should do something about it."

"Oh, we will."

As Atticus pushed her down on the bed, Rylee knew there wasn't anywhere else she wanted to be.

*The End*

## About the Author

Marisa Chenery was always a lover of books, but after reading her first historical romance novel she found herself hooked. Having inherited a love for the written word, she soon started writing her own novels.

After trying her hand at writing historicals, she now writes paranormals.

Marisa lives in Ontario, Canada, with her husband and four children. She would love to hear from you, so drop her an email.

Marisa welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her [author bio page](#) at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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