

SIREN  
Publishing

*Everlasting Classic*

# MONTANA'S VAMP

LYNN HAGEN

*The*  
**ManLove**  
*Collection*



 BRAC PACK 16

## Brac Pack 16

# Montana's Vamp

Gabriele Sloane has been picked on his entire life by the coven he grew up in. They taunted him, ridiculed him, and downright hated him. When they do the unthinkable and kick him out, Gabby is forced to find a new home. Dodging the sun and low on his diabetic supplies, he wanders aimlessly until he finds himself in the arms of one bald and sexy shifter.

Montana Graton hates vampires with a passion. His best friend was killed by one. Hungry and bored, he decides to visit the diner in town. The little redhead sitting one booth over looks good enough to roll around in the back of his truck with—until the smell hits him and he discovers the redhead is his mate.

Can Montana set aside his hatred and claim the little vamp, or will he allow his festering hate to surface and turn his back on the sexy little fireball fate has given him?

*Note:* Each book in Lynn Hagen's Brac Pack collection features a different romantic couple. Each title stands alone and can be read in any order. However, we recommend reading the series in sequential order.

**Genre:** Alternative (M/M or F/F), Paranormal,  
Vampires/Werewolves

**Length:** 27,689 words

# **MONTANA'S VAMP**

*Brac Pack 16*

**Lynn Hagen**

**EVERLASTING CLASSIC  
MANLOVE**



**Siren Publishing, Inc.  
[www.SirenPublishing.com](http://www.SirenPublishing.com)**

**ABOUT THE E-BOOK YOU HAVE PURCHASED:**

Your non-refundable purchase of this e-book allows you to only ONE LEGAL copy for your own personal reading on your own personal computer or device. **You do not have resell or distribution rights without the prior written permission of both the publisher and the copyright owner of this book.** This book cannot be copied in any format, sold, or otherwise transferred from your computer to another through upload to a file sharing peer to peer program, for free or for a fee, or as a prize in any contest. Such action is illegal and in violation of the U.S. Copyright Law. Distribution of this e-book, in whole or in part, online, offline, in print or in any way or any other method currently known or yet to be invented, is forbidden. If you do not want this book anymore, you must delete it from your computer.

WARNING: The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this copyrighted work is illegal. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is investigated by the FBI and is punishable by up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000.

If you find a Siren-BookStrand e-book being sold or shared illegally, please let us know at  
**[legal@sirenbookstrand.com](mailto:legal@sirenbookstrand.com)**

**A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK**  
IMPRINT: Everlasting Classic ManLove

MONTANA'S VAMP  
Copyright © 2011 by Lynn Hagen  
E-book ISBN: 1-61034-448-0

First E-book Publication: June 2011

Cover design by Jinger Heaston  
All art and logo copyright © 2011 by Siren Publishing, Inc.

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED:** This literary work may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including electronic or photographic reproduction, in whole or in part, without express written permission.

All characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is strictly coincidental.

**PUBLISHER**  
Siren Publishing, Inc.  
[www.SirenPublishing.com](http://www.SirenPublishing.com)

## **Letter to Readers**

Dear Readers,

If you have purchased this copy of *Montana's Vamp* by Lynn Hagen from BookStrand.com or its official distributors, thank you. Also, thank you for not sharing your copy of this book.

### **Regarding E-book Piracy**

This book is copyrighted intellectual property. No other individual or group has resale rights, auction rights, membership rights, sharing rights, or any kind of rights to sell or to give away a copy of this book.

The author and the publisher work very hard to bring our paying readers high-quality reading entertainment.

This is Lynn Hagen's livelihood. It's fair and simple. Please respect Ms. Hagen's right to earn a living from her work.

Amanda Hilton, Publisher  
[www.SirenPublishing.com](http://www.SirenPublishing.com)  
[www.BookStrand.com](http://www.BookStrand.com)

# DEDICATION

For my baby sister Karen, who has fought the battle of Type One diabetes her entire life. Thanks for your help with Gabby. You know you're my Baby K.

And to my niece Déjà, who gave me the idea for the little fireball. You can talk faster and more excitedly than Gabby could ever dare dream of. I love you, Day-Day.

# **MONTANA'S VAMP**

*Brac Pack 16*

**LYNN HAGEN**

Copyright © 2011

## **Chapter One**

Gabriel Sloane pulled himself tighter into a ball under the brush as the cars on the bypass zoomed by, the sun irritating his pale flesh. He pulled his arms into his shirt, trying to protect them the best he could. But even in the shade, they tingled with pain.

Although he wouldn't burst into flames as the Hollywood movies portrayed, he would blister badly. He had sought out shelter when he could no longer walk along the long stretch of road as the sun climbed higher in the sky.

His stomach grumbled from being so empty, and he felt light-headed. He was only half vampire. His mother had been fully human, so he didn't live solely off of blood. He needed it, as did any vampire, but his thirst only struck him once every two weeks whereas a full vampire had to feed once a week.

He slammed his eyes shut as the sun rose higher, burning his pupils and drying his eyes out. Gabby rolled over, extracting the eyedrops from his front pocket. His fingers stretched the skin apart as he added a few drops to each, blinking as the liquid soothed them then ran down the sides of his face.

Part of the liquid escaping was the drops, but part of it was his tears. Being half vampire had caused him nothing but pain in his coven. The other vampires taunted him, literally pushed him around



as they sneered at him. He couldn't help it that he had to eat human food to survive. He also couldn't help it that he was a diabetic.

He nearly died twice when the vampires who taunted him hid his insulin. He wasn't tall or lean, and didn't have the trademark of flowing black hair. He wasn't even strong like them.

Gabby was short, a little pudgy, and had spiky hair that was reddish orange. They poked fun at him for having a child's voice, for being too inquisitive, and for talking too damn much, as they put it.

Gabby was raised in the coven, his mother dying giving birth to him. He had drained her in the womb when he was being carried. Not something he intentionally did, but a vampire baby needed blood. With his mother being human, she couldn't withstand the pregnancy.

The vampire doctor had cut her open to retrieve Gabby. That's what his father had told him. The guilt of what he had done ate at him for over one hundred years now. He was considered a young one, but he was an adult now.

His father being his cruel and usual self had told him this, wanted to watch the pain he suffered at the knowledge that he had killed his own mother. At the age of three, he had cried every night, wishing he had his mom to hold him. The mother he had killed. A fact his father never let him forget.

Maybe that's why they had done the unthinkable.

They had finally done it, kicked him out of his coven in broad daylight and threatened to kill him if he ever came back. Gabby had been traveling for two weeks now. The city he just passed through had a coven, but he wasn't going to go to the prince and ask for shelter.

He had had enough of coven life.

Gabby lay under the foliage, tired and hungry, lost and lonely. All he ever wanted was for someone to love him. Hug him and show him that they cared.

Wrapping his arms around his hungry belly, Gabby closed his eyes and fell asleep.

\* \* \* \*

Montana lay on the hood of his truck, which was parked in the gravel drive along with all the other shifters' vehicles. He tossed a small, blue stress ball into the air, catching it, and then tossing it back up, bored out of his damn mind.

Every warrior in that house was mated except Montana and the Santiago brothers—they didn't count because they never acted as though they were a part of the pack.

He hadn't found his mate yet and most likely wouldn't. Being in there only reminded him of what he didn't have. As badass as he was, he was still a shifter who longed to find his mate just like any other.

Rolling from the hood of his truck, Montana climbed in. The sun had set, and the air held a warm breeze as he made his way into town. He didn't have patrol duty for a while. Maybe he would stop in at the diner the warrior Cody owned along with a human business partner. Humans had no knowledge of them.

At least that used to be true.

He parked his truck in front of the diner and killed the motor. Grabbing a booth in the diner, Montana took the offered menu from the half-wolf and mate, Tangee, who worked there.

"What can I get you to drink, Montana?" Tangee asked as he handed the warrior the rolled up silverware.

"Since you don't serve beer, I'll take a coke." Montana chuckled as he opened his menu. He knew it like the back of his hand, but reading it gave him something to do.

His eyes slowly rose up from the dinner selections when a small patch of reddish-orange caught his eye. Two small jade-green eyes peeked over the back seat of the booth in front of him. The rest of this person's face was hidden by the seat, but they were the most stunning color Montana had ever seen.

The eyes slowly lowered as the person ducked down. Montana could tell the half face was adult. This was no kid peeking over his seat at him. He went back to his menu amused. If the little twink was interested, Montana would show him a good time in the back of his truck. It had been a while since he had had sex, and part of his irritated state he was constantly in stemmed from that.

Montana bit back a smile when the little puff of orange surfaced again, green eyes slowly coming up past the booth, the ascending face stopping just below the eyes. They blinked, widened, and then descended back down.

Montana held onto his menu as he pushed out of the booth he was in, walked over to the next one, and then slid in. The guy was curled up on the seat, blinking up at him in surprise.

A smile tipped the corners of the warrior's mouth at how cute the little man was. "Hi."

The little guy squeaked, covering his face with his hands. His fingers split apart as he peeked through them at Montana.

Montana grinned wider. This little fireball was very fuckable. "What's your name, pumpkin?" The color of the fireball's hair reminded Montana of a pumpkin sitting out on a front porch at Halloween.

The fingers closed back together as the man tried to scoot under the table. Montana stuck his leg out, stopping the pumpkin from escaping. *Oh no*, he was getting some of that.

The man slid back onto the seat, upright this time as his green eyes lighted a little at Montanan. "G-Gabby."

Montana draped an arm over the back of the booth, thoroughly enjoying the view from his side of the table. "Are you hungry, pumpkin?"

The sexy twink's cheek's flamed. He lowered his head, looking totally embarrassed. Montana noticed he only had a small plate of toast in front of him and a glass of water. From the look of the man's body, he was used to eating more.

Montana didn't like skinny men. He was a very large wolf, stood six foot four and was two hundred and forty-five pounds of raw muscle. He liked to eat and wanted a guy he could grab hold of in or out of bed.

He never did like feeling bones when he smoothed his hands down a body. No, he wanted flesh to grab, and this man fit his bill perfectly.

Montana's smile slowly faded when the most heavenly scent wafted past his nose. The scent of fire and cinnamon was intoxicating. A muscle quivered in his jaw as he realized the little pumpkin that he wanted to roll around in the bed of his truck was his mate.

\* \* \* \*

Gabby was terrified and mystified all at the same time.

A sweet aroma had surrounded his head while he nibbled his toast, the only thing he could afford with the few dollars he had in his pocket.

He wasn't eating properly, and his blood sugar level was rising. He had two bottles of insulin left and no vampire doctor to replenish his supply. With the lack of food lately, Gabby had been skimping on his dosage, trying to make it last. He was starting to feel anxious, so he attributed the aroma to his empty stomach.

He swallowed the full glass of water and held his hand up for another glass. The waiter with flames licking his neck walked back over to his table and refilled his glass. "Dude, that's like your fifth glass. Are you okay?"

Gabby's mouth felt like he had it stuffed with cotton balls. He couldn't quench the thirst, and what made it even worse was that he was coming up on his two weeks.

Another thirst was invading him.

Well, at least he could take care of one of his problems right now. "Excuse me." He slid from the booth, walking quickly to the bathroom.

Gabby ripped open his fanny pack as soon as he cleared the bathroom door. He sat the only syringe he had on the counter as he extracted the bottle of insulin and pushed thirty units of air into the glass bottle, pulling back thirty units of the medicine.

He pulled paper towels from the dispenser, laying the syringe on them as he placed the bottle back into his fanny pack. He couldn't take chances. With his luck, he would knock it off the counter and break the dang bottle, leaving him with only one.

Gabby moistened a towel with soap and water. He was low on alcohol pads as well, saving them to clean his needle for future use. He was taking big risks with the continued use of the same needle and the poor way he cleaned it, but he had no choice. He pinched a chunk of his love handle and cleaned the area. Once done, he tossed the towel aside as he picked the syringe up.

"What the fuck!"

Gabby's head shot sideways as he cried out. The big man from his booth grabbed his syringe and threw it across the bathroom. He raced to it, knowing he would have to use another precious low supply of alcohol pads to clean the needle again since it landed on the floor.

"You're a drug user!" the man's angry voice thundered in the small restroom. With lightning-fast motion, he grabbed Gabby around the waist as he hauled him from the bathroom.

"No! I need it. Please, let me go. I have to get to it." Gabby wiggled in the man's arm, struggling to break free. He became slightly confused and a little dazed from his high sugar. He felt nauseous as he pulled at the large stranger's arms.

"You don't need it, pumpkin." The man caressed his cheek, smiling sadly at him as Gabby cried.

"I-I do. I'm gonna die if I don't get it," Gabby's voice was filled with frustrated tears.

\* \* \* \*

Montana felt a painful knot in his chest. His mate was a drug user. The mate, Drew, who was mated to the warrior Remi, had been one years ago before his warrior found him. Remi had helped Drew through it. Maybe Drew could help his pumpkin.

“What’s going on?” Cody asked as he approached their table slowly, his brows drawing down in a questioning frown.

Montana’s head shook in dismay as he answered the wolf. “He’s my mate, Cody. I caught him trying to use drugs in the bathroom.”

“Shit, get him home. Drew can help him.” Cody stepped back as Montana heaved Gabby up into his arms and stood in one fluid motion.

“No, no, no. I’m a diabetic. I need that syringe,” Gabby shouted as he began to squirm around again. “Check my fanny pack, you’ll see.”

Montana lowered his large frame onto the booth seat, and sat sideways as he brushed Gabby’s hand away. He unzipped the pack, extracting a glass bottle. The warrior Cody snatched it from him, reading the label.

“Shit,” he cursed as he raced into the men’s room, coming back a second later with the syringe between his fingers. “He’s telling the truth.” Cody handed the needle to Montana.

“Let me do this.” Montana pulled it away from him.

“Y-You have to clean the needle.” His mate’s unsteady fingers dug into his pack, handing Montana an alcohol pad. Montana tore it open, bathing the silver prong with the moist gauze.

“How do I do this?” Montana was terrified he would hurt his pumpkin. He’d never held a needle before in his life. Didn’t he need one of those rubber band things to tie around his arm?

His mate lifted the side of his shirt, Montana growled as the creamy flesh was revealed so close to Cody. “Pinch my fat, and push the shot into what you have between your fingers.”

Montana wanted to lick that piece of exposed skin. He lay his mate across his lap as he pinched his skin, pushing the needle slowly in.

“Ow, ow, ow, ow.” Gabby’s face pulled back in pain. Montana’s hand instantly froze. He could feel sweat breaking out over his brows.

His little fireball began to giggle. “Just kidding, going fast like ripping off a bandage helps. Push the plunger in.”

Montana heaved a sigh of relief. The little shit had scared the hell out of him. He liked the laugh he heard though. It sounded sweet coming from him. His mate’s voice was childlike, innocent. Montana felt that deep-down instinct spring up, the need to protect strong. He pushed the plunger in then extracted the needle, handing it to Cody.

“Don’t throw it away,” his mate warned Cody.

Cody stared at the slim piece of plastic in his hand then back at Gabby. “You can’t use this again.”

Gabby shrugged. “It’s all I have.”

“Why?” Montana asked.

“I was kicked out of my home. My life’s belongings are in my fanny pack.”

## Chapter Two

Gabby could feel eyes boring into him. He gulped, not sure what to do. Extending his hand, he waited for the man with the multi-colored hair to give him back his syringe.

These two men didn't understand how life threatening throwing his very last needle away was. If he didn't have it back, he wouldn't be able to inject his insulin. He could die.

The man pulled his hand back, refusing to give it to Gabby. His eyes bore into Gabby's, as if trying to read him. Finally he shook his head. "We can get you more."

Gabby watched as the man walked away with his last precious needle in his hand.

His very last one.

What if they couldn't? Gabby needed that. The man couldn't just throw it away. He wanted to protest further, but his body started craving something else now. He began to scratch his throat, the other thirst inching into him a little more. Once again, his throat began to dry. He knew the signs, but what could he do about it?

"I'm going to take you home. There's a doctor there that can help you." The large man lifted Gabby into his arms, cradling him close. As much as Gabby craved the touch, he was afraid what the closeness may do to his very sanity.

Gabby tried to think of anything that would distract his mind. "What's your name?"

The man chuckled deeply. "I didn't tell you, did I? It's Montana."

Montana, Gabby liked that name. Gabby curled up into Montana's arms, feeling the effects of the insulin kick in, which only made the



other thirst more noticeable. When he was in the diner feeling disoriented and nauseous, the thirst for blood had taken a backseat, but now that it was taken care of, the pulse in Montana's neck was calling to him, which spoke volumes about his thirst for blood.

Gabby had *never* drank from the source in his life.

"Come on, pumpkin, let's get you strapped in." Gabby held his breath as Montana leaned over him to buckle the seat belt. His skin smelled delicious. He had to bite his bottom lip not to take a tiny taste. Montana kissed him on the forehead before pulling back and shutting his door. What was he going to do?

The lingering aroma swirled around his head, making his teeth ache to take one little nibble. Just one. Maybe he could accidentally fall over the seat and his teeth could accidentally hit a vein. Just accidentally of course.

Montana climbed into the truck, his aroma beckoning Gabby to sample it. The smell of the man was strong in his lungs, making him bite back a whimper.

Gabby twisted his hands in his lap as he stared out of the side window, watching the small town slip away into country scenery. It was breathtakingly beautiful. His coven had resided in a congested city where more food was readily available to the full-blooded vampires.

They would never move out here because they would starve to death. There were fewer people here as well. The vampires would be more noticeable if they fed off of a town this small.

They pulled into a forested area, a large estate looming in the distance. Gabby's eyes bugged out at the sight of the enormous house. His coven's own house wasn't this big, and there were plenty of them to crowd the place.

"Okay, pumpkin, we're here," Montana declared as he shut the truck off and got out.

Gabby unsnapped his seat belt as Montana walked around the front of the truck. He got out, his eyes glued to the house. It was dark

out now, the house sitting in shadows, but Gabby could see in the dark, could see all the cameras watching them. One by the door moved around to follow them as they made their way up the front steps.

Gabby stepped back, and the camera moved to follow him. He stepped to the side, and the camera followed him again like a little white robot head.

Montana laughed. "That would be Nero, our resident electronic geek. He likes to have a bit of fun with the cameras."

Gabby just nodded as he followed Montana into a large foyer, his eyes sweeping throughout the place. It was just as magnificent from the inside.

When someone came toward them, Gabby slid behind Montana. He may be half vampire, but the other half was definitely chicken. Growing up in a coven full of people that would rather hurt him than talk to him, it made him skittish.

"Is this him?"

Montana pulled him around, Gabby lowering his eyes to look at his feet. He wanted to get out of here, didn't like being around strangers. "This is Gabby."

The man squatted in front of him, "Hi, I'm Dr. Nicholas Sheehan." The man shook Gabby's hand. "Call me Nicholas."

Gabby stole a peek at the man, seeing just how kind his eyes really were. He relaxed a little in the man's presence. Just like he began to relax in Montana's.

Montana led Gabby up a flight of steps and down a hall, pushing a bedroom door open. Gabby stepped back, unsure of what was going on. He'd been fooled before when he followed blindly. It taught him a valuable lesson. He looked up at Montana and saw the large man smiling kindly down at him.

"No one is going to hurt you, pumpkin. Doc just needs to examine you." Gabby nodded, terrified the humans would find out who he was, or rather, what he was.

He inched into the room, looking around to make sure no one was waiting on them. When he saw they were alone, he walked in.

His hands grabbed Montana's arms as the man lifted him up and sat him on the bed. He was reluctant to let the large man go. As silly as it sounded, he was the only one Gabby trusted. They'd only met, but Gabby felt a closeness with the man already.

"Have you been a diabetic all your life?" Nicholas asked.

Gabby nodded at the doctor. He could feel his hands shaking as the doctor listened to his heart, checked his pulse, and then began to check his ears and eyes. The doctor stuck a tongue depressor in his mouth and made him say *ah*.

He heard the gasp. The intake of breath that told him what the doctor had discovered.

Looking up, he pleaded with his eyes at Nicholas.

"I need to do a more thorough examination. Could you step out, Montana?" Gabby felt relief at the doctor's words. The vampire doctor had been kind to him, making him believe all doctors cared. He hoped he wasn't wrong and that Nicholas was just as kind.

Montana glanced at Gabby and then the doctor, skepticism on his face as he asked. "Why?"

Nicholas cleared his throat, taking a step closer to Gabby. "I need to check more privately."

Gabby watched as Montana grunted and mumbled but then left them alone, closing the door behind him.

Nicholas stood there for a moment watching the door and then turned around to look down at Gabby sitting on the bed. "Does he know?"

Gabby shook his head.

"This is not good." He watched as the doctor stepped back, pulling his phone from the clip it had been attached to. He punched in a few numbers and then put it to his ear, watching Gabby the whole time with a kind smile on his face. He spun around, giving Gabby his back as he talked into the phone. "Maverick, I need you up here."

More strangers. Gabby didn't like this one bit. He wanted Montana but was afraid to ask for him. "Who's Maverick?"

The doctor turned back to him, a gentle smile on his face. "He's the Alpha."

Gabby gasped, horrified at the statement. "I'm in a house of wolf shifters!"

\* \* \* \*

Montana paced up and down the hall outside his bedroom. He could have taken his mate to the exam room, but the little fireball already looked nervous enough. His mate needed to be comfortable. The exam room, in his opinion, was too sterile in feeling. Gabby needed to feel relaxed.

What could be taking so long? His anxiety level rose when he watched Maverick walk up the stairs, open the bedroom door, and close it in Montana's face. He heard the lock engage. What the fuck was going on?

He paced some more. Had he given his mate the wrong dosage? The syringe was already filled, filled by Gabby, so it must have been right. The man had been a diabetic his whole life. Surely he knew what he was doing.

Montana ran his hands over his smooth head. Maybe they had waited too long and the medicine didn't help. He was clueless when it came to diabetics, knew nothing about it. He would go online and research it, find out all he could so he could help his mate with it.

The image of those fire red and orange spikes on his pumpkin's head made Montana smile. His mate was beautiful. His eyes were so large, they dominated his face, the size making the green more noticeable. And, he still wanted to romp around in the back of his truck. The pull was strong. Montana was going crazy waiting out in the hall.

He stopped pacing when the door opened, expecting to see Nicholas and be waved in. But Maverick came out instead. "Follow me." The Alpha didn't say a word as he stared at Montana, waiting for him to follow orders.

Had something happened? Montana reached for the bedroom door, determined to find out what was going on. That was *his* mate in there, and he probably was looking for comfort from Montana. A large hand landed on his, stopping any attempt at opening the door. "Not until we talk, Montana."

Against his better judgment, Montana followed. He glanced back at the closed door, wondering if he was making the right decision. Maverick led him to his office, waving his hand for him to take a seat.

Montana was too amped up, he didn't want to sit. He wanted to run back upstairs and check on his mate. "I'd rather stand. Now tell me what's going on with my mate," Montana bit out. He had had about enough of this secretive shit.

Maverick rested his elbows on his desk, pinching the bridge of his nose. "You just meet him?"

"Yeah, in the diner when I was having dinner. What's that have to do with his diabetes?" He was getting scared. Was the Alpha going to tell him that his pumpkin's diabetes was something life threatening? He could feel his body begin to sweat, his hands begin to shake as he rubbed them over his head.

"Nothing and everything." Maverick blew out a breath, sitting back in his chair and looking him directly in his eyes. "He's a vampire."

Montana's world tilted. His jaw dropped open as he stumbled back, his legs hitting the couch, making him fall down onto it. "No," he whispered. Not his pumpkin. How could that beautiful man upstairs who had captured his heart in every sense of the word in such a short time be a blood sucker?

Rage tore through him at how cruel fate was. His mate was a fucking blood sucker! The word echoed in his head as white-hot fury

consumed him. He stood as if an explosion had propelled him from the couch. His head fell back as a howl tore from his chest.

He spun around, his canines biting into his bottom lip as his vision blurred from pure anger at the situation. “Do what you want with him,” he snarled.

Montana stormed from the office, knocking things over as he made his way to the kitchen and out the back door. He shifted, his anger heightened when he realized that he had indeed fallen for the fireball in just a short time.

A blood sucker. *Damn it.*

His feet ate up ground as he moved through the forest, pain weighing heavy in his heart at the irony of the situation.

\* \* \* \*

Gabby stared out of the window as the doctor drew blood. There was a large wolf howling and racing toward the forest. Was that Montana? The man probably hated him for not telling him as soon as they met.

Shifters and vampires weren’t known to get along. At least not from where he came from.

He felt like a part of him had left with the wolf, leaving him feeling cold and alone. Gabby couldn’t understand the feelings jumbled inside of him, feelings that had started to affect him since laying eyes on the big bald man in the diner. He rubbed his belly, wishing Montana was holding him again. He yearned to have those strong arms wrapped around his body, cradling him in his arms again.

Nicholas squatted down in front of him, his eyes smiling kindly at Gabby. “Can I ask you a personal question?”

Gabby blinked back the tears as he nodded, looking out of the window once more, but the wolf was gone.

“How can you be a diabetic and a vampire?”

Gabby shook his head, not really wanting to talk right now, which was out of character for him. He hadn't acted like himself since meeting Montana. "I'm half vampire, half human. The blood that runs through my body is my own. Although, I do have to feed twice a month. With the vampire trait in me, the need is there. The thirst."

"Do you need to feed? I don't think my mate would like it, but if you need to..." The doctor held out his wrist and Gabby shrank back.

"No! I've never taken from a person. I've had one donor my whole life, and the doctor brings that person's blood in a bag, heats it. I-I can't bite you. I just...can't." Gabby became agitated. He needed to get out of here. The entire house was full of shifters. He wasn't sure what they would do to him, and he didn't want to stick around to find out.

"This doctor must regulate your medicine with the donor's blood in mind. I need to know what you're taking, the amount, and what type of blood you drank."

Gabby shook his head as the feeling of hopelessness washed over him. "I don't know the type. Can I leave, or am I a prisoner?"

Nicholas ran his hand through his hair, exhaling loudly. "You're not a prisoner, but I don't think you should leave. I can get you the things you will need minus the blood since I don't know what type you need. Can you wait an hour until I can get it?"

Gabby eyes him warily, wondering if this was some sort of trick. He decided to trust the man with the kind eyes. "I can go after the blood. Promise it'll be okay?"

Nicholas didn't look pleased, but he nodded. "Maverick isn't the kind of Alpha to hold you prisoner. He would never hold you here against your will." The doctor took Gabby's hands in his, as his eyes softened even more on Gabby. "What about Montana? Are you just going to leave him?"

Gabby looked back out of the window, sadness engulfing him and threatening to swallow him whole. "He left me."

Gabby scooted over as the doctor sat down next to him. "His best friend was killed by a vampire. Give him time to adjust to the idea."

His stomach rolled as his head started to pound. Reality came crashing down around him at the knowledge that Montana would never want to set eyes on him again. "So he hates me," he whispered.

"Not you per se, but he does have a chip on his shoulder." Nicholas patted Gabby's knee as he stood. "I'll be back in an hour."

Gabby curled up on the bed, feeling like his world was imploding. Montana had called him his mate. Gabby knew about mates. The vampires had them as well. Was that the aroma he smelled in the diner? Was that why he felt the need to be in the large man's arms? The tears ran silently at the loss he felt. This wasn't fair. He couldn't help who he was.

He must have dozed off because the sound of the bedroom door woke him. Nicholas came in and shut it quietly. "I have what you need."

Gabby rolled over and accepted the black pouch. His trembling hands unzipped it, and he was shocked. Inside where a ton of alcohol pads, five syringes, three more bottles of his insulin, and even a glucose meter. He had been kicked out before he could retrieve his. He looked up at the doctor. "Thank you." He zipped it back up and held it to his chest like it was the most treasured item in his life, and it was.

Nicholas smiled at him as he put his hand on Gabby's shoulder. "If you need more, come to the Medical Center on the other side of town. Ask for me, I'll make sure you get what you need. I'll have to examine you though. I would like to talk with the doctor who treated you, get your records."

Gabby knew that was impossible. Not even he knew how to contact the man. Any time he needed him, someone else summoned him.

Besides, shifters and vampires didn't get along. Even though Nicholas was human, he lived with shifters. "Thank you," was all



Gabby could offer as he walked out of the bedroom and out of the front door.

\* \* \* \*

Montana sat naked on a fallen log, staring at the house, at the window his mate was behind. He twirled the twig around in his hand as he thought of his best friend. He had hated vampires for what they had done for so long, that he wasn't sure he knew how to let it go.

Gabby didn't look like them.

Montana smiled. Not with those little orange spikes growing wild all over his head and those breathtakingly beautiful green eyes.

Was he really willing to give up his mate to let that hate fester inside of him? He thought of those green eyes peeking over the back of that booth, widening in surprise when he had been caught staring. Just that fast he had wormed his way into Montana's heart.

The news had taken him by surprise, knocked him on his ass. His pumpkin a vampire? Montana sighed, confused as hell.

"Scoot over."

He looked up to see the naked warrior, Tank, standing there. Being nude around each other didn't bother shifters. They had grown up with it, were used to it, but damn, that side of beef hanging between Tank's legs...

"Pervert, move over."

Montana scooted over, wondering how the hell Tank's mate handled that.

"You don't get a choice in who your mate is, Montana. Gabby was given to you for a reason."

Montana twirled the twig around, staring down at it as he thought of the little fireball. Could he get past the fact that his mate drank blood? His eyes glanced around as he licked his lips, watching the warm breeze dance through the leaves of the trees. It had felt good having his mate in his arms. He wouldn't deny that. His breath

hitched in a small laugh as he thought of the look on his mate's face when he knocked the needle out of his hand. *Pinch the fat*. Montana smiled. His mate was far from fat, healthy, but not fat.

"How do you let go of something you've held on to for so long?" Montana glanced back down at the twig, missing his pumpkin already. He didn't feel hate toward the little fireball, just confusion.

"Hold your mate in your arms and then repeat the question." Tank squeezed his shoulder as he stood. "Go to him, Montana. If you don't, you'll regret it."

Montana sat there wondering if Tank was right. He leaned forward and placed the twig on the ground before standing. He would talk with Gabby, see how he felt about him before making a decision.

He smiled when he saw a folded pair of jeans and a T-shirt sitting on the ground by the kitchen door. Someone didn't want to see his ugly ass strolling upstairs naked.

Montana pulled the clothes on, rubbing his hand over his bald head as he opened the kitchen door. Dawn would be here soon. He would have to cover the windows upstairs to protect his mate. No matter what his decision would be, he would never send the guy out into the sun.

He knew from what little knowledge he had about vampires that Gabby wouldn't burst into flames, but he would blister pretty badly if exposed too long. He wouldn't allow that to happen.

"Hey, I made a plate for you and your mate." George pointed to a tray on the table with his spatula. It had bread, cheese, and some roast beef on it. It looked delicious. His stomach began to rumble just looking at the tray.

"In case no one has informed you, which in this house I doubt that, my mate is a blood su...vampire." He'd have to remember not to use that insulting phrase anymore. Because no matter what happened, Montana knew he wouldn't let Gabby go.

“Well, seems no one informed you, he’s a half-breed. Eats human food and all, go figure.” George snorted, disapproval clear on his face. Montana could tell George was being a smartass.

*Wait*, did he just say his pumpkin was a half-breed? What did that mean? Well, he knew what it meant, but if he was half human, did he drink blood? A couple of the mates were half wolf. They couldn’t shift but still had the ability to extend their canines. Little canines, but still.

Montana grabbed the tray, anxious now to see his pumpkin. He hurried up the steps, balancing the tray in one hand as he opened the bedroom door, a newfound excitement racing through him.

Gabby wasn’t in the room. Maybe he was in the bathroom. Setting the tray down, he knocked on the door. When no one answered, he opened it.

The room was just as empty as the bedroom. Where the fuck was his mate?

\* \* \* \*

Gabby walked along the dark road past town. He clutched the black pouch to his chest as he watched every shadow, waiting for something to jump out at him. Kind of ironic that he was a night dweller and afraid of the dark, something else he had been picked on for.

He prayed no other shifter came by. Would they attack him? The ones in the diner hadn’t recognized him as a vampire. Maybe he would be safe. He needed to find shelter for the day.

His heart felt heavier the further away from Montana he went. “It’s not my fault,” he grumbled to himself as he kicked a rock that lay on the roadside.

Why did life have to be so dang hard? All he ever wanted was for somebody to love him and to have someone he could give all his pent-up love to. He had a lot of it to give.

Gabby's step faltered when he heard a truck coming down the empty country road. He looked around frantically, but there was nowhere to hide. Pulling the pouch tight to his chest, Gabby ran over to the field that ran alongside the road, laying flat on his belly.

His heart leapt into his chest when the truck slowed down, stopping not even ten feet from him. The headlights flooded the early morning, making it impossible for him to see who it was. He heard the truck door slam shut.

Oh no, whoever it was must have spotted him. Gabby crawled backward on his stomach, praying that he wasn't about to die.

## Chapter Three

Montana looked over the hood of his truck. His eyes scanned the area until he spotted a little tuft of orange color lying on the green grass. He smiled. His mate really was trying to hide himself. Too bad his hair prevented it.

"I spy something orange," Montana called out.

"T-Tanny? Is that really you?" came a small voice from the direction of the hair.

"No, it's the big bad wolf that is going to spank his mate for leaving the house and putting himself in danger." He smiled as a head popped around the side of the grill, jade-green eyes once again peeking at him.

"I don't understand. You didn't want me." Gabby sniffled.

He placed his hands on his hips as he looked down at his mate. "And who told you this, pumpkin?" He watched as Gabby's full body emerged from the front of his truck. He slowly walked over to Montana, his head falling back so he could look up into Montana's face.

Gabby took a step closer, his eyes wet with tears. "Nobody, but you left. Ran away." His mate wiped at his eyes. Montana could see hope in them and a little fear, correction, a lot of it.

"Get into the truck, pumpkin. Dawn's coming." Relief flooded Montana. He had gone nuts when he wasn't able to find his mate. He wanted to rip everyone's throat out for letting the little guy just walk out of the front door. What kind of crackpot operation were they running to allow a mate to walk out in the middle of the night?

Vampire be damned, it wasn't safe.

He hadn't wanted to hear Maverick's excuse of not keeping Gabby there against his will. The Alpha should have known better.

Montana had been searching every damn back road for half the night. If he had been in his wolf form, he would have been able to find him hours ago. But he feared Gabby might need the truck for quicker transportation if he was hurt.

If he hadn't found him soon, he was going to shift to locate him. Time wasn't on his side, and he was beginning to panic until he saw that little tuft of orange in the distance.

Thank goodness it wasn't necessary. His fireball was sitting in the front seat safe and sound. "Put your seat belt on, pumpkin." As Montana started to pull off of the soft shoulder, Gabby yelled out, his hands flying in front of him.

"Wait, my black pouch."

"You're what?"

"My pouch, the one Nicholas gave to me with my supplies in it. It's still in the grass." Gabby pointed desperately out the side window, his fingertips hitting the glass.

Montana looked toward the sky that was just showing signs of pink as he put the truck in park. They needed to hurry. Black pouch be damned if they ran out of time.

He sighed as he got out with his mate, helping him search for it. Damn thing would have to be black.

He heard a delighted squeal as Gabby dipped down. "Got it." Gabby beamed as he held it up for show.

"Let's go, we're cutting it close." Montana helped his mate in then climbed in on his side. If he put the pedal to the metal, they just might make it in time. He had no choice. It was his only option as the sky turned a shade lighter.

Gabby shook his head as he set the black case on his lap. "I won't go poof. I can handle some sun. My skin will blister if I'm out in it too long, but I wouldn't be crispy fried. Besides, it's only dawn, so we have no need to be alarmed yet. But if you feel the need to hurry, I

won't stop you, but just so you know I can be out in it. Unless it's noon. Then my skin starts to burn and peel and my eyes dry out, but I carry eye drops for that, so I'm prepared just in case."

Montana blinked at him.

His mate didn't even stop to take a breath. It sounded like one long run-on sentence, and Montana didn't even catch half of what the fireball said. All he could do was nod, put the truck in drive, and pull away from the soft shoulder.

Was *that* why he was called Gabby?

Montana groaned. This was going to be a long day. They made it to the house just as the sky became brighter, the sun slowly rising over the rooftop. Montana grabbed his mate and ran for the door, holding him close as he ran up the front steps. He swiped his fob to get in, and then slammed the front door closed. He hated that Nero had installed that damn lock.

"I told you I'm okay," Gabby said as he clung to Montana.

"Not taking chances, pumpkin." Montana ran up the steps, carrying Gabby into their room. "Let me put something heavy over the windows," he said as he dropped his mate onto the bed.

Gabby crawled across the bed, watching as Montana raced around looking for something to block the sun out.

"I'll order heavy drapes," Montana said as he looked around frantically. "Hang on, I'll be right back." Montana shot from the room in search of something to block the windows.

"Where's the fire?" the warrior Storm asked as he came out of his room, closing the door.

Montana skidded to a halt and spun around. "I need something to block the windows. What do you have?" He glanced at his watch and then back up at the warrior.

Storm walked into his room then came back out holding a comforter. "Best I have."

Montana grabbed it, running back down the hall to his bedroom. He jumped up onto the window seat, damn near falling back as he

tucked the blanket into the corners. He jumped down, grabbing the blanket from the bed as he covered the other one. "Let me know if it's not enough."

"Okay." Gabby pulled his legs to his chest as he lay on the bed.

"Get some rest. I'll make sure it doesn't get too bright in here." Montana frowned at the way his mate was scratching at his throat. Had he lain in poison ivy while trying to hide? Montana stepped closer, reaching down to stop his fireball from scratching his skin off. "What's wrong?"

"Hungry," Gabby whimpered.

Montana caressed his fingers, looking at his mate's reddened skin. "What do you want to eat? I'll go get it."

Gabby whimpered again. The light went on over Montana's bald head. "Blood?" he asked in revulsion. He cursed himself at the way he had said it, his mate snatching his hands away and covering his face as his shoulders shook. What should he do? "Do you need to...drink from me?"

"No!" Gabby's hands shot out as if to stop Montana from coming any closer. "I've never drank from a person. The doctor always brought it in a bag and heated it. I think the idea of biting into someone is gross, so don't go offering me your neck because I won't take it. As thirsty as I am, I would rather drink toilet water than blood from a vein. The other full-blooded vampires do it, but it makes me nauseous just thinking about it."

There he went again. Montana was waiting for his pumpkin to pass out from lack of oxygen. How the hell did he speed talk like that? "So how are you supposed to eat?" The thought worried him. If Gabby was used to having blood brought to him in a bag, what the hell was Montana supposed to do?

Gabby shrugged.

"I'll talk with Doc, see what he thinks, okay?" His mate nodded as he balled into himself and closed his eyes. Montana closed the door



quietly as he went in search of Nicholas. It was too early for him to leave for the clinic. He had to be somewhere around here.

He found him in the kitchen, eating a grapefruit half and reading the paper. Didn't he know he couldn't get fat? Something in the wolves' saliva prevented their mates from gaining extra poundage.

"Gabby's hungry." Might as well get to the point.

"I know. I have to get his medical records, find out what blood type he has been taking. With his diabetes, I don't want to chance harming him." Nicholas sat his spoon down. "Maverick is calling Prince Christian now to see if he knows the vampire doctor who took care of Gabby."

Montana growled, "So he's supposed to go hungry until then?"

Nicholas turned in his seat and look up at him, a twinkle in his eye. "You could always try and feed him yourself. You are his mate after all."

Montana ran a hand over his head as he sighed. "I offered, but he refuses to drink from me. Says it makes him nauseous just thinking about it, I think. He talked so damn fast I barely understood a word he said." Montana chuckled. He was going to have to take a speed-listening course just to communicate.

Nicholas picked up his cup, sipping at his coffee. "I'm sorry, Montana. Until I know, I won't risk harming him."

An idea formed in Montana's brain as he watched the doctor drink his coffee. Taking a glass tumbler from the cupboard, he walked back to his room.

His mate was still asleep, still rolled into a ball. Setting the glass down, Montana pulled the knife from the sheath strapped to his ankle. Hey, fighting rogues, one could never be over-prepared.

Taking a deep breath, he cut his wrist, watching as the crimson flowed down his skin and into the cup. When it was half full, he licked his wrist. A cut like that could be healed by his saliva. Anything bigger and he would have to shift to heal.

“Pumpkin, wake up.” Montana bent at the waist and lightly shook his shoulder.

\* \* \* \*

“What’s wrong?” Gabby blinked, wondering why Montana was waking him up when he could see brightness behind the blankets.

His head began to buzz as the smell slammed into him hard. His mouth started salivating as his skin felt like it was crawling with ants.

*Blood.*

His mate reached out and snagged Gabby around his waist, pulling him close to the edge of the bed. “Drink this, baby.”

Montana handed him a glass with blood in it. “How? Whose?”

“Mine, drink it before it gets cold.”

Gabby wanted to protest, but the smell was making his stomach claw away at him. With trembling hands he took the glass, turning his back on Montana as he balled up around the tumbler and drank it.

He drank it greedily as the taste hit his tongue and splashed down the back of his throat. His tongue skated around the inside looking for more. It wasn’t enough, but he wasn’t going to tell the wolf that. He appreciated the gesture even if it embarrassed him. He handed the glass back, not turning around.

He heard some movement, and then a moment later Montana spoke. “Here, pumpkin.”

Gabby stretched his arm back and swiped it around, not looking to see where Montana’s hand was. “Turn around, pumpkin.”

He shook his head vehemently. “No, please don’t make me.”

“If we’re going to spend the next seven centuries together, I have to see it sooner or later, so turn around.” He said it with a little more authority in his voice, which made Gabby slowly turn, his head hung down as he reached for the full glass. His hands shook as he sipped at it, trying to hunch over so Montana wouldn’t see him.

Montana sat down and pulled Gabby onto his lap, taking the glass from his hands. He put it to Gabby's lips. "Drink."

Gabby opened, swallowing quickly as possible so Montana wouldn't have to watch him. Why was he making him do this in front of him? He was humiliated enough that he needed it in the first place. A hand caressed down his back as he emptied the last of it, his tongue once again licking inside the tumbler.

"Need more?"

Gabby twisted his hands in his lap, not wanting to answer the question as he licked the remnants from his lips. Montana reached onto the nightstand and grabbed a knife that Gabby hadn't even seen sitting there. "You'll have to hold this." Montana handed him the glass.

"I-I can't."

"Yes, you can, pumpkin. We're both going to have to get comfortable with this." Montana sliced the thin line across his wrist again, holding it over the glass. Before Gabby could stop him, his wolf laid his wrist to Gabby's mouth.

Gabby cried out as the blood hit his tongue. What was Montana doing? "No," he sobbed, but his lips formed a tight suction around the wound, drawing deep.

This was the first time he had drunk from the source and hell if he could stop.

\* \* \* \*

"Fuck!" Montana growled as pleasure he had never before experienced rocketed through him. His cock hardened in a millisecond. The need to fuck his mate overrode all other thought as he tossed the glass onto the nightstand and threw Gabby down onto the bed. His mate drank greedily from him as Montana yanked his jeans down with one hand. "I need to fuck you."

Never in his life had he lost total control as he was doing now.

Gabby stayed locked on to his wrist as he squirmed around, trying to get his own pants to cooperate. His fireball kicked them off, pulling his legs back against his chest as he grabbed Montana's arm again and then nodded.

Montana reached behind him with his one free arm and grabbed the lube, squirting it onto Gabby then tossing it aside. He pushed the slick into his mate's ass the best he could before lining his cock up. "Gonna be rough, baby."

Gabby nodded his acknowledgement. His eyes rolled back as Montana entered him. Montana rode him fast and hard, allowing how his fireball was making him feel to crash through him, take over, and consume his very mind.

Need like he'd never felt before clawed up his spine and took hold of his being. Gabby was his. His to have and his to claim. The need to bind them together was fierce.

Montana grabbed one of Gabby's legs, tossing it back as he drove hard. Gabby's balls were already pulled tight to his body, his cock hard and erect. Pre-cum was leaking onto Gabby's shirt, making him a wondrous sight. The small cut from under the mushroomed head to the tiny slit made Montana's mouth water.

He was so lust-filled that he wasn't sure if he wanted to fuck him or suck him. His mind was in a blur as Gabby's tight ass milked his cock, holding it firmly within its grasp.

His mate licked the wound, his thirst finally quenched as he threw his head back and cried out, his cock exploding onto his shirt. Montana watched the jets of semen splash across Gabby, his heart racing at the sight. He growled and plunged deeper, unable to take his eyes off of the creamy white mess.

He shook his head, sweat breaking out over his body as he grabbed Gabby's other leg and tossed it back, giving him a fantastic display of his mate's ass. Montana watched his cock disappear and then reappear over and over again.

His canines dropped as his eyes shifted. The need to claim was on him.

“Do you accept me as your mate, Gabriel?”

“Yes, Montana,” Gabby cried out and wriggled around as Montana leaned forward and bit his shoulder.

Montana felt the ribbons of his soul unwind, tangling together with Gabby's, binding them together, their hearts synchronized, the claiming complete.

Gabby was his.

Montana was going crazy. He couldn't get enough of his fireball. His cock sawed in and out of that tight little hole as sweat trickled down his face. He licked the wound at his mate's neck closed, kissing his mate up his neck as he hammered into him. His cock was so engorged that if Gabby needed to feed again, he wouldn't have any blood to give him.

He roared as his shaft pulsed into his mate's channel, grabbing Gabby's cock quickly, pumping it a few times before Gabby mewled under him, giving up a second explosive orgasm to Montana.

They both panted as Montana rolled to his side, taking his mate with him. How? How had feeding his mate turned into the hottest sex he had ever had? He ran his hands over Gabby's stomach, pinching at his little pooch.

“You're not allowed to play with my fat after mind-blowing sex.” His mate tried to push his hand away.

Montana chuckled at his mate's words. “You're not fat, just healthy.”

“That's a polite way of saying I'm fat.”

Montana growled as he rolled his mate to his back. “Not fat.”

“I say I'm fat. You probably won't say it because I'm your mate, and you don't want to hurt my feelings, so I can...”

Montana covered his mouth, stopping the river of words before his mate got a good lungful of air and made Montana's eyes cross. He lifted his hand slowly, waiting to see if Gabby was going to pick up

where he'd left off. When he didn't, Montana leaned down and pecked him on his lips. "Not fat."

Gabby reached up and ran his hands over Montana's bald head. Montana reveled in the touch. He kissed his mate's chest, then his neck, and then his lips before pulling back.

"Do you need another shot?" Montana realized there was a lot to taking care of his mate. He would have to learn his schedule to ensure his mate was properly taken care of.

He hoped Maverick was able to obtain his pumpkin's medical records. His mate needed the best care possible. Although the thought of anyone else providing for Gabby made Montana's teeth hurt. No one was donating blood. Gabby would get all his needs from his mate.

"No, I'm okay."

Montana pulled him close, thinking of Tank's advice earlier. Could he still hate so much with his mate lying in his arms?

No, he couldn't hate his fireball.

He still held a great deal of hate for the one who had killed his best friend, but not Gabby. All he felt was warmth, a bond with the little orange-haired beauty.

\* \* \* \*

"You must be Gabby?"

Gabby fidgeted around on the couch, brushing his thighs off out of habit. Montana insisted he get to know the other mates in the house. It was kind of hard when his hours of operation were different from everyone else's. Most people were sleeping when Gabby was awake.

"Yes." Meeting new people was alien to him. Growing up in the coven, he knew everyone. No new faces popped up. He hoped he didn't ruin it with his speed talking.

"Hi, I'm Blair." The man with the long black hair stuck his hand out. Gabby shook it, looking around to see if Montana was anywhere in sight. Was Blair a shifter?

"I hear you're a vampire. Cool."

Cool wasn't exactly the word Gabby would use, more like disease. Nothing about being who he was had ever been cool. From being picked on, to being kicked out, to almost losing Montana. What was so cool about that?

"I guess." Gabby bit his tongue. The urge to tell Blair everything that was wandering through his mind was trying its best to burst out. He had to control his jabbering. That's what got him into trouble before. He didn't want to be taunted here for his inability to shut his trap.

Blair walked across the room and then came back over to where he was sitting. "Come on, let's play." Blair handed Gabby a controller.

Gabby turned it over in his hand, staring at the large device. What the heck was it? Well, he knew what it was. He'd seen it on the television before. In the coven he didn't have luxuries though. Sure, he watched television, but games weren't something he was permitted.

Should he confess this to Blair? He didn't want to seem like he wasn't cool to hang around. He wanted friends so desperately that he was willing to fake his knowledge. But he knew that starting a friendship off with a lie wasn't good.

Blair watched him stare at the controller. "Haven't you ever played before?"

Gabby shook his head. He tried to hand the device back, but Blair hit a button on the remote. Colorful graphics appeared on the large-screen television, drawing Gabby's attention immediately.

"Okay, this is how it works." Gabby listened to Blair, watched the demonstration, and then played around with the controller himself.

"Ready?"

“No.”

Blair laughed and started the game. He tried his best to figure out what the hell he was doing.

Gabby noticed he was gaining an audience. He became self-conscious. There were at least a dozen people now gathered in the den. Where was Montana?

“Kick his butt, Gabby!” Gabby snuck a quick peek over to a man with blond curls jumping up and down with his arms in the air.

Was someone really rooting for him? Gabby pulled his attention back to the game, trying even harder now that he had a fan. His fingers slipped off the toggles a few times, but he managed to get his car back on the road.

He glanced at Blair’s fingers, watching how he was maneuvering his. Gabby parroted it, zooming past Blair’s car and crossing the finish line first.

“Yeah, Gabby.” The man with the blond hair high-fived his hand. Gabby couldn’t help the grin that split across his face. No one had ever been on his side before. It felt really good.

He dropped the controller and ran as soon as he spotted Montana. “I won!”

Montana laughed and pulled him into his arms. “I see.”

Gabby blushed when his wolf kissed him in front of everyone. He never had anyone openly claim him before.

His sex experiences were behind closed doors, the partner at the time too embarrassed for anyone else to know he had slept with the outcast. This was a new experience for him and one he quickly liked.

Gabby reveled in the affection. “I wasn’t sure I could play, but once Blair showed me how I kinda got the hang of it. But when the blond man started cheering me on I was determined to give my new fan a reason to believe in me, so I hurried my car up and watched how Blair was playing and copied it, and the next thing you know, I won.” Gabby laughed with pure joy in his heart.



Montana chuckled, kissing Gabby then setting him down. Gabby backed away when the whole room was staring at him. What had he done?

“Holy, shit. Did you even take a breath?” Blair laughed.

Gabby felt his cheeks burn. He mentally chastised himself for being a motormouth again. If he didn’t stop it, soon the men here would start picking on him, too.

He reached over and slid his hand into Montana’s, needing to feel some sort of safety net. His palms were sweaty, but he didn’t care. He needed Montana’s touch, his mate’s reassurance.

“They’re not making fun of you, pumpkin.” Montana squeezed his hand and smiled down at him.

Gabby looked over at the men again. They all were wearing smiles. That must be good, right? None of them were sneering or whispering to each other as he stood there and watched them.

“Come on, let’s play another round. I have to beat you.” Blair held out the controller. He smiled from ear to ear as he took the controller, ready to race Blair once again. They liked him, really liked him.

Gabby froze in place as his mind fogged when the sweetest smell imaginable wafted past his nose, even sweeter than Montana’s.

His heart was hammering behind his ribs as he turned and hissed, baring his fangs as Montana grabbed him and pulled him off of his feet. The aroma was making him go crazy as Gabby tried his best to get at the little girl standing behind him.

## Chapter Four

“Gabby!” Montana squeezed his pumpkin tighter, wondering what in the world had come over him. He’d never seen someone fight so hard to get to another. It was downright disturbing.

His mate was fighting to get to Melonee. He thrashed and squirmed, hissing once again. Montana was having a hard time holding him. “What’s wrong?” he shouted as he almost lost his grip but caught Gabby in time before his mate hit the floor.

“Want her,” he whimpered. “Help me, Tanny. Stop me.” His fireball’s chest was expanding and contracting at a rapid rate. His heart was going crazy under Montana’s hand.

Montana tightened his hold, making his mate look at him. “Why do you want her?”

His pupils were dilated and his fangs were mashing against his bottom lip, making it bleed. “Just a taste, she smells so good.” He begged Montana, tearing at his shirt as he tried to get free. Montana wasn’t going to lie to himself. The sight scared the shit out of him.

Montana knew something was terribly wrong. The idea of feeding from anyone had repulsed Gabby. He wasn’t sure what he should do, so he did the only thing he could think of. He sunk his canines into Gabby’s neck, shoving his wrist into Gabby’s mouth.

Gabby bit into him, drinking deeply as he whimpered and clung to him. His hands shot up, holding Montana’s arm tightly to his lips.

The fight was slowly leaving his mate’s body. Too bad Montana was hard as a rock now. He wanted to fuck his mate into the wall. He took a deep breath, trying his best to still his raging hormones. Gabby came first, so figuring out what had triggered this was more important

than his own libido. He sealed the wound but allowed Gabby to take his fill. He turned his back, giving his mate as much privacy as the scenario could afford them. Gabby whimpered, smashing his eyes closed as he licked around the wound in Montana's wrist. He looked as though he was fighting to get his mind back under control.

Montana nodded at Maverick as the Alpha picked Melonee up into his arms. "Is he okay?" Maverick asked as he soothed the little girl's back. Montana felt terrible about the frightened look in Melonee's eyes. He knew Gabby hadn't scared her intentionally. His mate didn't seem the type.

Montana turned slightly, once again trying to give his mate privacy as he drank. He could feel Gabby's heart starting to return to normal. "He's calming. I don't know what just happened here." Montana kissed Gabby on his temple. Gabby finally released him then buried his face in Montana's neck. He could feel his little pumpkin shaking.

"I think I do. Her scent. That's what's making the rogues crazy. Now we know." Maverick handed her off to her brother. "Take her to your room."

Tangee nodded and carried his little sister away. Maverick approached them. "Gabby, what just happened? In detail please."

Gabby dug his nails into Montana's back as he shook his head. "I'm sorry," he whispered.

"No one is mad at you. I just need to know," Maverick reassured him.

His mate took a deep breath. Montana chuckled. He knew what was coming. He would bet, excited or scared, Gabby's true personality would come shining through.

"I was in the den and Blair wanted me to play a video game, but I've never played one before. I became really nervous when I saw that there was a crowd watching me, until the blond man cheered me on. I've never had a friend before, so if he wants to be my friend I would

be more than happy to.” Montana patted Gabby’s back, getting him back on track.

“Oh right, sorry. Anyway when the blond man cheered me on I was determined to show my new friend, that’s if he wants to be friends.” Gabby turned to look at Johnny. Johnny smiled and nodded, and then Gabby smiled as well. “I was determined to show my new friend that I could win.”

“So I beat Blair, and I hope he doesn’t hate me for it.” Again Gabby turned.

Blair laughed as he waved Gabby off. “I don’t hate you, Gabby.”

Gabby smiled then turned back to Maverick. “He wanted to play again, so I reached out to take the controller when the most delicious smell hit me. My mind went all foggy. I couldn’t control it, I swear. All I thought about was that sweet smell, and I wanted it. I swear I wasn’t going to hurt her, I think. I’m not really sure.” Gabby hid his face back into Montana’s neck.

Maverick blinked at Gabby. A smile stretched his face as he began to chuckle. “I like him.”

“Oh, no you don’t.” Cecil shot out of the den and stomped his foot in front of his mate. He stuck his hand out as he ticked off on his fingers. “You already have Johnny, Keata, Melonee, and Nero. Enough with the misfit adoptions.” He pouted crossing his arms over his chest.

Maverick pulled his mate into his arms, cupping his face in a loving gesture. “But you’re my number one misfit.”

Cecil blushed, looking around like he just noticed what a brat he must look like. “I better be.” He leaned up and kissed Maverick. The Alpha pulled Cecil closer, proving to him where he stood. Cecil began to moan and Montana knew it was time to remind everyone why they were standing here in discussion.

“People, off track here,” Montana reminded them.

Maverick looked like he didn’t want to let Cecil go but parted lips. He spun his mate around, pulling Cecil’s back to his large chest as he

wrapped his arms around his mate's shoulders. "I don't want Melonee playing outside anymore or going to the recreation center. Her aroma is apparently lingering in the air, the breeze carrying it to the rogues. Why didn't you smell her right away?" Maverick asked Gabby.

Gabby looked up at Montana. "I was more worried about losing my wolf."

Montana felt his chest tightened at the truth in Gabby's eyes. He was a rank bastard for the way he had behaved. He squeezed his mate in his arms letting Gabby know how honest he was being. "I'm not going anywhere, pumpkin." He stared into his mate's jade-green eyes, feeling like he was falling into an abyss. No, he could never hate the little fireball.

"Well, we need to find a solution because the two of you will be residing under the same roof," Maverick said.

"Really, you want me to stay? I thought Tanny was just being nice about it, but I really get to stay here? I promise not to be a nuisance. Okay, I'll try not to be on—" Montana covered his mouth. He knew if he didn't stop Gabby, his mate would go on until he was out of breath. "Okay, with that, I'm going to check on Melonee." Maverick smiled and shook his head, leading his mate away with him.

"Did I make him mad?"

"No, pumpkin, you can't make anyone here mad." Montana carried his mate upstairs. "Time to see Nicholas and have your blood sugar checked."

Gabby smiled up at him as Montana walked down to the exam room. "You really do care about me?"

Montana kissed his mate before stopping at the door. "With everything in me."

\* \* \* \*

Kyoshi tilted his head. "Was I the only one having a hard time keeping up with him?"

“Nope, I caught ‘friend’ and ‘sweet smell,’” Caden answered with a laugh.

“I understood him.” Johnny beamed. “He wants to be my friend.”

“Me, too,” Keata added.

“Figures you two would,” Kyoshi teased.

“He’s one of us now. You have to be nice to him.” Johnny crossed his arms over his chest. He liked Gabby. The man had orange hair, his favorite color. It used to be pink, but after seeing the vampire’s hair, Johnny had a new favorite color. He’d have to go find Hawk and have a coat and boots ordered in that color. It better be sparkly.

Now all they had to do was stop Gabby from trying to eat Melonee.

\* \* \* \*

“I’m okay.” Gabby wiggled around in Montana’s lap. He felt totally embarrassed at the way he had reacted to the little girl. He wanted to put it behind him and forget about it as quickly as possible. “The urge to drink from her is gone. I think feeding from you helped.”

“You better be lucky I have restraint. I almost took you in the den when you drank from me.” Montana nuzzled Gabby’s neck.

“Can we finish his exam before you two decide to go at it?” Nicholas took another tube of blood and then placed a bandage on Gabby’s arm. He blushed at the doctor’s knowing look.

“I seem to remember a mated pair that was trying to give everyone a free show. You had all the mates running around trying to catch you two in the act.” Montana laughed.

Nicholas blushed as he stepped back. “We didn’t do it on purpose. We just forgot anyone else existed.” The doctor walked over to his desk, turning his back on them. Gabby had a feeling he was trying to hide how red his face had become.

“I know what you mean.” Montana kissed Gabby’s bandage.

"Did they really do that?" Gabby whispered. He would be horrified if anyone saw his fat ass sticking out somewhere. It was bad enough Montana had to see it. Gabby shuddered at the thought of the entire house seeing him naked.

"Yep, nearly gave Tank and George friction burn." Montana chuckled.

Gabby didn't understand the joke. He guessed he had to be there. He pressed his palm into his erection. What he hadn't told the wolf was that he got just as horny when he fed. He was still feeling the effects from his last feeding.

It had been a nightmare when he was in the coven. Twice a month he had to find someone willing to engage in the act secretly. They may have picked on him, but a lot of them wanted to fuck him, too. Users.

He was so glad he had Montana now. He didn't have to be all cryptic when seeking out someone to lie with. And the fact that Montana didn't care who knew made Gabby start to fall in love with him.

"Can we go to your room?" Gabby whispered. He needed Montana in the worst way now. The feeding from downstairs was still making his blood feel like it was on fire. Gabby needed a hard cock in his ass and soon. Not any hard cock, but Montana's.

"*Our* room, and I'm thinking the same thing." Montana nipped his ear, making Gabby shiver.

Whoo-hoo, Gabby was going to get laid again. He did a mental happy dance. The urge to lick Montana's bald head had him leaning up, flicking his tongue in the space between them.

"Just a few more minutes." Montana pulled Gabby back into his lap. He could feel his mate's erection pressing into him. Yeah, Montana felt the need, too. If only he could pull his pants down and sit on that hard erection poking him in the butt. Why didn't the doctor hurry already?

“All done, you’re in the normal range. Now go tear the sheets up.” Nicholas laughed.

Gabby grabbed on to Montana when his wolf stood quickly and ran from the examination room. They flew down the hall and through open the bedroom door. Montana kicked it closed as he ran toward the bed.

He squealed when Montana tossed him on the bed. “No rushing this time.”

“Okay.” Gabby nodded as he pulled his shoes and jeans off.

“Shirt, too.”

Gabby shook his head. “I’m fat.”

Montana growled, raking his eyes over Gabby. “You’re not fat. Now get it off before I rip it off.”

Would he really? Gabby pulled his shirt off and quickly got under the sheets, pulling them to his chin.

Montana was having none of that. He yanked the sheet to the floor, his eyes growing darker. “Damn, you look good enough to eat.”

“More like a supersized meal, huh?” Gabby laughed nervously. He turned over onto his side, trying his best to cover his midsection.

Montana crawled onto the bed and tossed the bottle of lube on the bed next to them. “Not fat.”

Gabby felt his skin heat. “Okay,” he said shyly. He had been told just how fat he was by the other vampires in his coven when they snuck in to see him. They always looked repulsed when he took his clothes off. Gabby soon learned to keep his shirt on to hide how he looked.

Gabby watched as Montana moved his hands away and bent down to kiss his belly. “Tasty.” Gabby was shocked that Montana was going anywhere near it. Could he really think that Gabby wasn’t fat?

Gabby moaned when his mate went even lower. “Wait, wait, wait.” Was he crazy? Montana popped his lips off of Gabby’s cock, staring up at him as if he were. What did he want to say? Oh, yeah.



"I know a trick. Can I show you?" Gabby tried to still his beating heart. Montana had been doing a pretty good job of making him forget his own name. And considering this was his first blowjob on the receiving end, he must be nuts to stop him.

Montana rolled onto his back spreading his body wide. "Show me." He wiggled his brows as he smiled down at him.

Now was definitely not the time to become shy. Gabby bit his bottom lip as he crawled over Montana's legs and got comfortable between them. "Let me know if you don't like it." He glanced up at his mate from under his lashes.

"I'm sure I'll like it." Montana pulled his lip up in a half smile, and Gabby's brain short circuited. His mate ran his hand over Gabby's spikes, and Gabby was eating up the attention. He leaned in for a moment, soaking up all the attention Montana was giving him.

Okay, he could do this. Gabby grabbed the base of Montana's huge cock. He stared at it for a moment like it was an alien. Could he really do this? He'd never seen anyone with such a large bulbous head before. He prayed he didn't make a big fool of himself.

"Watch the teeth, pumpkin."

If he only knew. Gabby took a deep breath. He swept his tongue over the pearly drops glistening at the eye, the taste melting his insides. Montana was delicious. Gabby secured his lips over the head, swiping his tongue around, eliciting a moan from his mate.

Montana's legs pulled up, his back arched, and he rubbed Gabby's hair. Gabby looked up. The wolf had his eyes closed, hissing out air between clenched teeth. Now was a good time to show the man his trick.

Fear gripped him. What if Montana got mad at him? He did hate vampires after all. Swallowing his fear and pulling his bravado from deep within, Gabby opened his mouth and bit down on the large vein running the length of Montana's cock.

"Agh!" Montana came off of the bed, his seed shot down Gabby's throat, and he choked to swallow all of it.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck,” Montana shouted. Gabby sealed the wound, praying he was reading Montana’s reaction correctly. He suckled for a little while longer, for the pleasure and to stall. Gabby stole glances up at Montana, but his mate had his eyes closed.

“Get up here, fireball,” Montana commanded gruffly.

Gabby gulped, not sure how to read his mate. He just met him after all. “I’m sorry.” He got to his knees, fear making it impossible for him to move. Gabby worried his hands, unsure if Montana was going to thank him or hit him.

“Now, pumpkin.” Montana was breathing heavily. Gabby crossed his fingers and crawled on all fours up to the head of the bed. Once again he rested on his knees, flinching when Montana opened his eyes.

“I promise to never do that again.”

Montana rolled over, pinning Gabby beneath him. His mate’s face was too dark to read. Was that anger?

“That’s a promise you are going to break, time and time again, pumpkin.” Montana growled then kissed Gabby like he mattered, like he wasn’t just someone satisfying a need. Gabby cried out and wrapped his arms around his wolf. *Montana wanted him.*

Gabby pulled his legs to his chest, Montana sliding wetted fingers inside of him. He writhed and moaned, clenching his ass to suck up those long and thick fingers.

“Wherever you learned that trick, sign me up for the classes.” Montana chuckled. “That had to be the best blow job I’ve ever had.”

“Really, you liked it? You’re not just saying that to placate me? You really enjoyed it—” Montana smothered Gabby’s mouth with his. Gabby forgot what he was saying, his body coming alive for the first time during sex. His hands shot above his head, grabbing the headboard as Montana prepared him.

Montana broke the kiss. “I really enjoyed it.”

Gabby moaned when Montana removed his fingers. He tried to roll over, but his wolf stopped him. “Where are you going, fireball?”

“On my hands and knees, where I’m always supposed to be.” Every time he had sex, it was in this position. Why was Montana questioning it? Sure, he was on his back when he was claimed, but Montana wasn’t in his right mind then. He would be now. Nobody wanted to see his fat when they fucked him. Why would Montana be any different? He was more gorgeous than any man he had ever met, so he surely didn’t want to see Gabby on his back.

Montana laid a hand on Gabby’s chest. “Stay on your back.”

Gabby bit his lip and nodded. Montana wanted to look at him. He actually wanted to. Gabby’s fought the tears. He was not going to cry like a baby while being fucked. No, sir.

*But Montana wanted him.*

Gabby’s heart soared as Montana entered him. This was the happiest he had been in one hundred and twelve years. He wrapped his legs around his wolf, arched his back, and hissed as Montana drove into him.

“I never thought I would say this, but damn, your fangs are hot as hell.” Montana lifted Gabby’s legs, pushing them all the way back, and thrust deep. Gabby moaned, rocking his head from side to side.

“You should have seen them when I had braces,” Gabby breathed out.

Montana stilled. “Vampires wear braces?”

“No, we are not having this conversation while your dick is in my ass. Move it, Tanny.” Gabby used an assertive tone, something he never did, but Montana was driving him nuts, and he didn’t want his mate to stop.

“Pushy bottom.” Montana growled and jetted into him. Gabby lost all ability to hear, think, or speak. That last one was enough to win his heart. He was being fucked speechless.

“Come for me, pumpkin.” Montana grabbed Gabby’s cock, thrusting and pumping, taking Gabby to new heights. No one ever worried about him getting his orgasm. Gabby pulled at the headboard, arched up, and cried out, his seed spilling for his wolf.

“Hell, yeah.” Montana pounded into his ass, pushing Gabby’s legs further back, then shouted. His hips moved as fast as sound waves. At least it felt that way. Gabby was going to be walking funny for the next week.

“Oh, hell, fireball.” Montana dropped next to Gabby, a big smile on his face as he pulled Gabby into his arms. “Oh, hell.”

\* \* \* \*

Gabby peeked around the kitchen, making sure no one was watching him. When he deemed the coast clear, he filled a freezer bag full of ice and shoved it down the back of his pants. *Ahhhh*. That felt so much better. Montana was going to fuck him into oblivion if he kept it up. He walked with his legs slightly apart as he made his way back to their room.

“Are you okay?”

Gabby stilled. Crap, he’d almost gotten away with it. He pasted a smile on his face and turned around. “Yeah, sure. I’m fine, no problem. I’m just going to go to my room and read a book. Well, ice—I mean *nice* talking with you.” Gabby ran from Blair, the bag slipping down the back of his pant leg.

He almost made it to his room when that heavenly scent hit him again. *No! Fight it, Gabby*. He shook his head, trying to clear the fog that was pulling him under. Gabby whimpered. Just a small taste wouldn’t hurt.

“Hi, I’m Melonee.”

Gabby turned to see the little girl standing in the hallway, smiling at him.

Just one little taste.

\* \* \* \*

Montana woke to an empty bed. His hand skidded across the sheets, but the bed was empty. Now where was his Gabby?

When he noticed the sun, he began to panic. Tossing back the covers, he pulled a pair of pajama pants on and raced from the room. "Gabby!" he shouted as he raced down the hallway.

"What's wrong?" Johnny asked as Montana ran by him.

He skidded to a halt, glancing up and down the hallway. "Have you seen Gabby?"

Johnny shook his head but stared walking alongside Montana. "I'll help you look."

A horrific thought occurred to Montana. He raced to Melonee's room, but no one was in there. *Damn it.* Montana slapped his hands on top of his bald head. He had to think.

Her playroom!

"Come on." They both took off to the playroom on the first floor. There was a daybed in there just in case Melonee ever wanted to take a nap. Montana skidded to a halt when he spotted Melonee lying belly down on the floor. *Please, no.*

He stumbled into the room, pure terror filling him. He approached her slowly, praying with everything in him that she was okay.

"Do you want a cup of tea?"

Montana breathed out a relieved breath at her sing-song voice. She was okay, Gabby hadn't harmed her. Who was she talking to?

"Princess, who are you talking to?" Montana asked as he stepped closer, squatting down next to her.

"Gabby." She pointed under the bed.

Montana dropped down to his knees and lifted the comforter slightly. Gabby hissed. He pushed himself further back to the wall, covering his face.

Montana crawled under the bed, even though it was a very tight fit. "Not bad under here, a little dusty."

Gabby uncovered his eyes and smiled once the darkness was back in place. "Hi."

Montana watched the amusement twinkle in Gabby's eyes. His heart beat once more for him and then left him. Gabby now had it in his hands, owned it. "Come here often?"

Gabby giggled. "Once in a blue moon, you?"

"Only when a hot guy is under here, so this would be my first time."

Gabby jaw hit his chest, "You think I'm hot?" Montana watched as Gabby pinched himself. "Ow."

"Hot as the fireball on your head." Montana pushed Gabby further back, using his body to block out the rays. "Now why did you pinch yourself?"

Gabby's smile was from ear to ear. "You don't want to know."

"I'll buy you a drink, and we can talk about it." Montana was enjoying himself. Gabby was the most gorgeous creature he had ever seen, and with a sense of humor. *Talk about total package.*

"Hey, princess?"

"Yes?" Melonee answered from above them.

"Can you hand me the blanket on your bed?" Montana reached behind him and grabbed the fabric, trying his best to spread it out on the floor.

"Hop on." He patted the comforter.

Gabby scooted onto it, and Montana wrapped him like a burrito. "Okay, let's blow this Popsicle stand." He scooted from under the bed, pulling his mate along with him. When he cleared the daybed, he pulled Gabby into his arms.

"Thanks, princess."

She beamed up at him. "You're welcome."

Montana walked briskly from the playroom and up the steps. He laid his mate on their bed then made sure the blankets covering their windows was secure. "Okay, unroll yourself."

Gabby kicked until he was free.

"Explain." Before Gabby could take a breath, Melonee shimmered into their room.

## Chapter Five

“Uh, princess, would you mind telling Uncle Montana how you just did that?”

Gabby agreed. He wanted to know, too, because all he could do was sit there with his mouth hanging wide open. Had she really just shimmered into the bedroom?

“I don’t know. I was afraid Gabby would get into trouble, so I was thinking about him, and now here I am.” She looked around confused.

Gabby watched her as Montana pulled his cell phone out. “Uh, Maverick, can you come to my room? Yeah, it’s important. I don’t care if you and Cecil...just get here.”

“Am I in trouble?” Melonee asked with a shaky voice and watery eyes.

Montana knelt before her, drying her tears. “No, princess. But Maverick needs to know so...heck if I know why.”

Maverick came through the door, looked at Gabby then at Melonee, his eyes questioning. Gabby shrugged and pointed at the little girl. “Ask Houdini.”

Maverick frowned as he looked at Gabby. “What are you talking about?”

Gabby took a deep breath. “I’m not going to lie. I ran into her last night and the aroma was too much.” Maverick growled, but Gabby ignored him. “I fought it, though.” He beamed up at Montana, who smiled gently at him.

“That’s my pumpkin.” Montana cupped the side of Gabby’s face and then leaned into it, basking in the fact that this hot hunk wanted him.

Maverick huffed. "Can we finish the explanation before you two play leapfrog?"

Gabby looked back at the Alpha. "When we got to her playroom we, uh..."

"Played teatime," Melonee added cheerfully. Gabby blushed. He was busted now. Everyone was going to make fun of him. What grown man plays teatime with a little girl? He couldn't help it. She was adorable as she set the stuffed animals up and poured her imaginary tea. Who could resist something like that?

He could tell Maverick and Montana were biting back grins. He shot daggers at his mate but continued. "Anyway, I wasn't paying attention to the time, fell asleep on the carpet with Melonee, and next thing I knew the sun was burning my skin. Melonee pushed me under the bed and pulled the blanket down to cover the underside. She's my hero." Gabby gave Melonee thumbs up. "So then I was stuck under there for like hours until sleeping beastie here found me, and about time I might add. Do you know how many dust bunnies live under there? Too many, that's how many. Anyway, Montana rolled me up like a burrito and brought me up here, and then Melonee got all sparkly and then appeared."

Maverick blinked. "I like you." He smiled, and Gabby blushed. At least he knew he had one friend here, besides Melonee.

The large Alpha knelt down to Melonee, a reassuring smile on his face. "Are we taking magic carpet rides now, princess?"

Melonee's head shook back and forth as her arms spread out at her sides. "I don't know how I did it, honest."

Maverick ran his hand over her wayward brown tendrils. "I believe you. Can you tell me what you think happened?"

"I can," a dark voice said from behind all of them.

\* \* \* \*



Maverick swung around, blocking Melonee from whomever was clever enough to get past his Sentries and the security cameras. He stilled when he saw the most beautiful man he'd ever seen before. On second thought, second most beautiful. No one outranked Cecil.

But the man was elegant in form. He was slender and tall. His hair a golden color, the top half pulled back in a leather thong. Maverick could tell he was a man, barely. His body seemed delicate, dainty.

"Who the hell are you?" Maverick snarled then looked down. "Sorry, Melonee."

She nodded and then grabbed Maverick's hand. He looked back up at the intruder.

"I am Carter. Sentinel to the Wood Elven tribe, and that is not Melonee. She is Avantiana." The stranger bowed to Melonee. "We have been searching for you for a very long time, young one."

Maverick pulled Melonee further behind him, shielding her from this fairy looking guy. "Well, keep searching. *Melonee* isn't going anywhere. And what the hell kind of name is Carter for an elf?" Maverick smirked.

"Elven and I am not three feet tall," the man corrected snidely. "Her parents were murdered, and she was taken. I will return her to her rightful home."

"The hell you will. Take one step near her and I'll—" Maverick covered Melonee's ears. "Cut your balls off." He whispered the last part then released her head.

Carter threw his hands up in the air, giving a snort as he glared at Maverick. "Oh hell, enough with the diplomatic crap, how the hell did you find her?"

Maverick tilted his head sideways. Did his mate slip something into his Chai tea this morning? Cecil had to have. This was just too damn Twilight Zone-ish. "Why should I tell you?"

"Let me guess, smarty pants." Carter glanced down at Melonee and smiled. "Vampires have been attacking more and more. Her blood is sweet to the nostrils? She just shimmered for the first time,

alerting every elven creature of her whereabouts. Hmm? Am I close?" He glanced back up at Maverick, an irritating smugness crossing his face.

Maverick growled. There was no way in hell anyone was taking his princess from him. Not even an elf. "You remind me of someone I'd love to choke to death. You didn't hit the freezer first before you popped in, did you?"

Carter flipped Maverick off. Maverick lunged, and Carter shimmered out and reappeared right next to Melonee. He quirked a brow. "I was only being nice, shifter. If I really wanted to take Avantiana, it would be this simple." Carter shimmered out, Melonee with him.

"No!" Maverick shouted. His heart seized in his chest as his windpipe closed up around his throat. It became impossible to breathe. Not his Melonee. *No*.

"Relax." Carter chuckled from behind them. "I'm not that big of a jerk. You obviously care for her."

Maverick's heart began to beat again. He could feel his anger hitting the roof. If he could manage to get his hands on this fucking fairy, he was going to choke him within an inch of his life. "Do that again and I'll...Cover her ears."

Carter covered Melonee's ears.

"Kick your ass all the way back to the elf factory. Grab me some damn cookies before you shimmer your ass back here, too."

Carter threw his head back and gave a hearty laugh. "I like you."

"Taken already, now give me back my princess." Maverick held his hand out, and Melonee ran to him. Carter had let her go. Was this some sort of trick? Was he allowing Maverick a false sense of security? He didn't like this one bit. He and Cecil had pretty much adopted her. She belonged to them, damn it.

"We need to talk." Carter rubbed his chin as he stared down at Melonee then looked up at Maverick. "I think we can come to some sort of compromise."

Maverick crossed his arms over his chest, not liking this one bit indeed. "I highly doubt it. I don't want her summers only."

Carter nodded with a jerk of his head. "Not joint custody. Shifters really are stupid." He rolled his eyes as if the Alpha was really that dumb.

"My office," he snapped at Carter then turned to Melonee. "Can you take us there, princess?" Maverick smiled down at his little lady.

Melonee shrugged, scrunched her eyes closed, and the two began to shimmer out.

"Later." Carter waved at Montana and Gabby.

\* \* \* \*

Gabby pinched his arm. "Ouch."

Montana shook his head. "What the hell just happened here?" He looked down at his pumpkin and then back up to where all three had just disappeared. This was some freaky shit.

For once, Gabby was at a loss for words. He just sat there with his mouth hanging open, rubbing the area he had just pinched.

Montana turned when Ludo knocked on their open door. "Hey, I thought Maverick was in here."

Montana nodded and pointed to the empty space. "He was, and then he went—"

"Poof." Gabby splayed his fingers out and up for emphasis. "Sparkled right out of here."

Ludo bent his head as he studied Gabby, a brow slowly climbing. "Your blood sugar high?"

Montana crossed the room as he scratched his bald head. He answered Ludo as he sat on the side of the bed and pulled Gabby into his arms. "You'll see."

Now Ludo was staring strangely at both of them. "Can I speak with you a moment?"

Montana kissed Gabby on his head, looked over his shoulder to make sure the windows were blacked out, and then closed the door behind him. He stepped into the hallway. "What's up?"

"Maribel. She's escaped the catacombs. I don't know how. Maverick had silver in those shackles." Ludo growled.

"Let's go see Maverick." Montana popped his head around his bedroom door.

"I'm going downstairs. You need anything, pumpkin?"

"No, thank you anyway." Gabby had lain down and curled up on their bed. He pulled the sheet over him and closed his eyes.

Montana looked at his mate a moment longer. He was being a little too quiet. The shock of what just happened was understandable, but Gabby seemed a little...off. "I'll be right back."

He closed the door, and then the two warriors made their way downstairs. "Hey, Johnny, can you go keep Gabby company?"

"Sure." Johnny ran up the stairs.

"What the hell do you mean, use our forest?" Maverick was snarling at Carter when Ludo and Montana entered the office.

He looked around the office, but Melonee was nowhere in sight. Maverick must have asked the other warriors to guard her. The Alpha wouldn't take chances with her. After the magic trick upstairs, he wasn't sure even the Sentries could help.

"Just what I said." Carter crossed his long, elegant arms over his chest. For an ethereal creature, he sure didn't act like it. Weren't elves supposed to be meek and soft spoken? That's how they were in the movies.

"No fucking way. I'm not opening my home to a bunch of creatures who think they are above us." Maverick threw his booted feet up onto his desk, crossed his ankles, and laid his hands on his abdomen. "I don't care about a war between you and the Shadow Elves. Your business. Not mine. What the hell is a Shadow Elven anyway?"

Montana took a seat. He wanted to know this just as well.

“They live in a watery marshland. But lately, for some reason, they have been infiltrating out forests. They’ve killed off half our population. We need a refuge, and you have plenty of space,” Carter bit out as he pointed accusingly at the Alpha. “Are you that coldhearted that you would let an entire race be wiped out?”

Maverick laughed darkly, making Montana think twice about pissing the guy off. “And bring your drama here? Hell yeah.”

Montana thought *he* was hard-nosed. Hell, Maverick had him beat hands down. “Might I make a suggestion?” He normally didn’t interfere with other people’s business, but since meeting Gabby, he now had a new perspective on anyone in dire need of protection.

Maverick turned his head in Montana’s direction, a sparkle of mischief in his eyes. “By all means.”

“There is the land between Brac territory and the Eastern pack.” It was a reasonable amount of space. It all depended on how many elven creatures there were though.

“See, he knows how to compromise.” Carter pointed at Montana as he looked hopelessly at Maverick. “Why can’t you do the same?”

“Don’t put me in this shit. It was only a suggestion.” Montana put his hands up in a surrender gesture. He liked living here. Maverick wasn’t going to kick him out thinking he sided with the fudge cookie maker.

Maverick pulled his bottom lip in, chewing on it as he stared at Carter. Montana was glad he was on the Alpha’s side. He knew for a fact Maverick wasn’t anyone to play with. The shifter was the largest Timber wolf born. He may be badass, but he wasn’t suicidal. He and his mate needed a place to live.

“So basically your telling me that I can keep my princess if I give you land? That’s low.” Maverick growled. “I don’t think using her in a trade bargain is gaining any favor with me.”

Carter blew out a breath and dropped in the leather chair across from Maverick’s desk. “You would have kept her anyway. What does

she have to go back to? A war? It's not safe there for her. She has no living relatives. So no, that's not what I'm saying."

Maverick pulled on his soul patch. "Five hundred acres, not an acre more."

"Deal."

Montana had a feeling he just watched the Devil and the Demon from the primal source shake hands. He wasn't sure which one was which yet.

\* \* \* \*

Gabby stared at the cards he had in his hands. He wasn't sure what he was doing. Johnny—he found out the blond man's name—along with Keata and Nero, tried to explain the rules, but he was confused as hell.

His hand slid across the carpet, snagging a pretzel, and quickly shoved it into his mouth.

"Hey, you're supposed to bet with those, not eat them." Johnny wiggled a finger at him, reached into the bag, and tossed a few more on Gabby's pile.

"I'm hungry," Gabby whined. With everything that had been going on, he hadn't had a chance to eat. He felt sweaty, and his hands were shaking slightly.

"It's still light out. You can't go downstairs," Johnny reminded him.

Like he couldn't figure that out. Montana had placed the blackout curtains up, but Gabby could feel the sun high in the sky. It was something all vampires could do. He guessed it was nature's way of protecting them.

"Maybe we could get him one of those crinkly silver suits the firemen wear. Yeah, that would do. It would," Nero suggested.

"He can wear blanket," Keata piped in.

"Come on, let's go eat." Johnny grabbed the blanket from off of the bed, throwing it over Gabby's head.

"Hey, can I stand first? If I try to get up now, I might fall over. Although I heal pretty fast, it would still hurt. Let me toss one on your head and see how fast you can get up. It's not easy you know, especially with how hungry I am."

Johnny tilted his head and smiled. "I like you."

"We could all get under it. We could." Nero pulled the blanket up with his blue latex covered hand. "This is clean, right?"

"I guess." Gabby shrugged. He moved over as Johnny and Keata joined them.

"Ready?" Johnny asked.

"No." Gabby didn't think this was a good idea. What if they fell and the blanket came off of them? He wouldn't burst into flames, but man, would it hurt. He couldn't bring himself to point this out. He had friends, something he never had before. If they thought it would work, then he would try it.

They took the steps very slowly, huddled together as they walked down to the kitchen.

"Hi." Melonee giggled as she shimmered under the blanket. All four of them screamed. She had caught them off guard. Gabby slammed a hand over his mouth, her smell driving him wild. He didn't fall into a fog this time, but his salivary glands were working overtime with her this close to him.

He shot out from under the blanket and then screamed again, the bright afternoon lights instantly making his skin blister. Gabby ran in circles, disoriented and panicky. His hands swinging wildly around as he ran around in circles.

"Pumpkin!" Montana called out, but Gabby was hysterical by now. His arms were flying around, tears ran down his cheeks, and his skin felt as though it were peeling from his body.

A blanket was tossed over him. He felt someone pick him up, and the contact was agonizing. He cried out, but whoever had him wouldn't let him go.

The blanket was torn from his head moments later. Gabby blinked. Even his eyelids hurt, so he smashed them shut.

"Doc, he's badly burned." He heard his mate talking. All Gabby could do was sit there whimpering.

"On it, give him an infusion of blood."

Skin was pressed against Gabby's mouth. He shrank back. He may have been out of it when Montana fed him by the den, or when they mated, but the idea still repulsed him.

"Drink or I'm going to spank you."

Gabby opened his mouth, and the skin surrounding his lips pulled tight as it burned. He pressed his fangs into Montana's skin, the sweet tasting blood poured down his throat. Gabby drank greedily. He could feel the healing begin already.

When vampires were injured, a fresh supply of blood triggered the healing properties in their tissues. They could still die though. What living organism couldn't?

"He's beginning to heal already," the doctor commented in amazement.

The skin around Gabby's eyes stopped burning, so he opened them. Montana was staring at him with lust in his eyes. Gabby smiled up at him around Montana's wrist.

Montana winked at him as he chuckled. "Uh, Doc, can we have a moment?"

"You're kidding, right?" Gabby's eyes shot over to the doctor's. He was standing there with his jaw on his chest. "He has second-degree burns."

Gabby drew in a few more times then released Montana's wrist, sealing the wound with his tongue. "I'm feeling much better now." He stared up at Montana dreamily. Lust was coursing through his body, making his cock rock hard and his hole aching to be filled.



"Go now or witness. Your choice," Montana warned the doctor as he pulled Gabby's shoes off.

Gabby prayed the Doc left. He wasn't into exhibitionism. The man mumbled under his breath but left the exam room. He breathed a sigh of relief. No one was going to see his fat ass but Montana. But that was okay. Montana seemed to like his fat ass.

"Can you do this?" Montana looked as though he was barely containing his lust. Gabby nodded and scooted off of the table. He pulled his jeans down and then turned, leaning over the exam table. His cock nudged against the table, but Gabby was oblivious to anything and everything except the ache in his ass, the need to be filled. It would have been better if he had been fed and fucked at the same time, but he was still horny as all get out.

"Fuck me," he begged as he wiggled his ass around.

Montana growled, pushed his jeans to his knees, and lifted Gabby up and onto his belly. "Hell, you're almost healed."

Gabby hissed when Montana reached over to the counter and grabbed something, tore it open, and then squeezed it onto Gabby's crack. He tried to lift his right leg, but his pants prevented it. He ground his cock into the white paper that was spread out across the table, dying for some sort of release. He whimpered, wanting Montana buried deep inside of him.

"Hold still." Montana pulled his right shoe off, pulled his right pant leg off, and then pushed his right leg up onto the table. "God, that looks so fucking good."

Gabby dug his nails into the table when his hole was stretched to fullness, Montana entering him. He slung his ass in the air, wanting Montana deeper. Gabby swished his hips around, rocking up and down, fucking his wolf's cock.

Gabby pushed up, getting onto both knees. He swiveled his hips around, dropped his head, and groaned. Montana grabbed his hips, and then held still. "Fuck me, fireball. That's it, baby."

Gabby rocked back, pulled forward, feeling the cock pushing in and out of his hole. Montana filled him to where he felt every move. His prostate was caressed every time he pushed back. Gabby found a rhythm, hissing and keening, lost in the carnal lust coursing through him.

His legs spread wider, and he pushed back harder, picking up his pace. "Oh god, fuck me."

Montana took over, digging his nails into Gabby's hips, pulling him back onto his cock. Gabby cupped his forehead, rocked his head back and forth. His skin was on fire again, only this time with sensations he had never experienced before. He bit his bottom lip, raised up, and threw his head back. "Harder, Tanny. Fuck me, harder."

Montana slammed his pelvis into Gabby, the sound of skin colliding echoing throughout the room. "Yes," Gabby cried out.

"You like that, baby?" Montana snapped his hips, driving all the way in.

"Gonna come," Gabby shouted. Montana grabbed his hair and pulled back. Gabby's scalp tingling, he cried out.

"That's it, give it to me." Montana growled and then bit into Gabby's shoulder, taking his orgasm to a new level. Gabby was falling free through the raging waters of desire.

"Tanny," he whimpered.

"Let go. I'll catch you, baby." Montana blanketed Gabby's back, wrapping his arms around Gabby's chest, thrusting harder. He kissed the area he had bit, Gabby lost all ability to hold himself up, and he trusted his wolf not to let go.

"Gabby," Montana shouted, his hips pounding into Gabby. "Fuck," he grunted.

"Sleep, need sleep." Gabby closed his eyes. Montana was going to fuck him into nonexistence. He wholly believed it now.

Montana dressed him, Gabby too worn out to move. Once both of them were clothed, his mate opened the door. "You can come back in."

"Good, I think the people five states over heard you two." Nicholas waved his hand in front of his nose and soured his face. "Smells like hot, funky sex in here."

Gabby buried his face in his hands, totally mortified but completely sated.

His mate just snickered. "Then I did it right."

"Let's take this to my office while this room airs out. I swear, there's more sex under this roof than at a hooker convention."

"They have those?" Gabby asked Montana.

"Come on, pumpkin." Montana pulled him from the table and carried him into the next room.

\* \* \* \*

Johnny walked up the steps, Keata and Nero close behind. "Do you think he's okay?"

"Only one way to find out," Nero pointed out.

Johnny felt terrible. It had been his idea. Maybe not the blanket part, but he felt responsible. If anything happened to Gabby, it would be all his fault. He had to check and make sure. Being a vampire must be really hard, Johnny thought.

He wouldn't know what he would do if he couldn't go out in sunlight. They knocked on Gabby's bedroom door, Montana answering.

"Is Gabby okay?" Johnny asked Montana anxiously. He tried to peek around the warrior, but Montana filled the doorway.

Montana smiled and pulled the door wide open. "Come on in, fellas. He's fine."

Johnny ran over to the bed, pulling the sheet away from Gabby's face. "I'm sorry." He blurted out. "I didn't mean for you to get hurt. Honest.

"It wasn't your fault," Gabby mumbled and turned over. Johnny gasped.

"Why are your eyes that color?" He pointed his finger at Gabby's face.

Gabby reached up and felt his face. "What are you talking about?"

Montana walked over and cursed. "Stay with him, men. I'm going to get Nicholas."

## Chapter Six

Maverick sat back in his chair as he stared at the eight men in his office. What was going on lately? It seemed everyone was coming to him about pack land lately. "So, are you asking to live here?"

Mr. Lakeland shook his head. "No. I just want your permission to live in Brac Village. Me and my boys found a place to live. One of the old farmhouses is for sale. I want to purchase it and work the land."

"Cowboys? Interesting." Maverick pulled at his soul patch as he thought about it. It would be nice to fill up some of those empty farmhouses littering the outskirts of town.

He knew they needed to expand, breathe new life into their small town. The people who lived here deserved to have a thriving community. "And what exactly would you be raising?"

"Angus cattle, corn, and poultry. We come from a long line of farmers and ranchers so we do know what we are doing," Mr. Lakeland argued his point. "Although, one of my sons owns his own construction company." Mr. Lakeland pointed to the one sitting on the couch. "Roman likes to build instead of grow." Roman's father sounded proud of this fact.

Maverick nodded, filing that bit of information away for a later use. This was better than a community of misplaced elves. At least these men looked large and able to do long hours of labor. "I'm not going to ask you for a cut. What you grow is your own. Your profit is yours."

Mr. Lakeland's eyes rounded as he looked at his sons and then at Maverick. "Are you sure? We don't mind giving a percentage to pack."

Maverick shook his head as he sat forward. "Mr. Lakeland, I have enough money to take care of my pack for a very long time. I refuse to take it from the sweat off of a man's back. Keep it. Invest it back into the community if you want. But as far as pack dues, we don't have those here in Brac Village."

"Well hell," one of the sons said in amazement. "I like it here already. Got any fine-looking single men around here?"

"Chauncey!" Mr. Lakeland chastised his son.

Maverick chuckled. "He's fine." Maverick chuckled as he turned to the son speaking. "None that I'm aware of. Everyone in this house is taken."

"Well damn, guess I'm back to my hand." The large man sat back on the leather sofa like he was aggravated and miffed.

"Chauncey!"

The son didn't look the least bit contrite. Maverick liked them. "Then by all means, buy your house. I'm not going to tell anyone about you. I want you to have a chance to fit in and make friends. Of course my Beta and Commander will know."

"Of course." Mr. Lakeland nodded.

"I'll even give you room to run."

They shook hands with Maverick as the Lakelands stood. "Welcome to Brac Village."

He walked the family out and stood at the door as he watched them climb into their truck. He hoped he made the right decision letting bear-shifters move here.

\* \* \* \*

"We need those medical records." Nicholas stood in Maverick's office arguing. "He's getting sicker, and I don't know what to do for him. Not even the wolf physician can help. He's clueless when it comes to vampires." He dropped into the leather chair, looking helplessly at Maverick.

Maverick picked the phone up on his desk and dialed, hit speaker phone, and then laid the phone back in its cradle.

"Hello, Maverick," a smooth voice spoke.

Maverick leaned onto his desk, wondering why it seemed so crazy around here lately. "Christian, were you able to obtain Gabby's records?"

The prince of vampires sighed. "The doctor says he was strictly forbidden by Gabriel's father to release them. He won't go against his own leader's orders, but said he would treat the young one if you brought him to his office."

"No fucking way," Montana growled. "That sounds like a setup to me."

"I agree," Christian said. "It's too risky. His father is still on a rampage about him, wanted him dead, not thrown out. Why, I'm not sure."

"You're the prince, demand them," Maverick stated irritably.

"You know as well as I do that politics get in the way. I could make him come here, and you could bring the young one to my manor."

Maverick looked up at Montana.

Montana didn't like any of this, but his fireball was getting sicker and no one had a clue why. He couldn't risk losing his mate, but if anyone tried anything... "Fine, but if any harms comes to my pumpkin, I'll kill everyone, no discrimination."

"Pumpkin? I look forward to meeting the young one." Christian chuckled.

"When can you get the doctor there?" Maverick asked the prince.

"I'll have him here within the hour."

"See you then," Maverick said.

"Oh, goody, I'm looking forward to it. Is Keata coming?" Christian asked with a hint of excitement.

"Only if Cody can play with your entrails." Maverick chuckled and hung up.

“What was that about?” Montana raised a brow.

Maverick shook his head. “When the mates snuck off to a club, that’s when we discovered the vampires had moved into the city. Christian took an instant liking to Keata, wanted him for his own.”

Montana was shocked at this bit of news. He knew shifters were very protective of their mates. “I’m surprised Cody didn’t kill him.”

Maverick sighed as he sat back in his chair. “You’ve no idea.”

\* \* \* \*

Two SUVs pulled up to the manor, the Santiago brothers pulling up behind them on their motorcycles.

Montana pulled Gabby from the backseat. His mate was curled up into a ball, and his skin was paler than usual, his pupils black. Montana hated the weakened state Gabby was in. All his protective instincts wanted to hurt whatever was harming his mate, but how could he fight the unseen?

“Do we get to burn this place to the ground?” Tryck Santiago asked as he swung his leg over his bike.

“You just might,” Montana muttered.

“Only if you replace my damn Fudgesicle,” Maverick said as he walked by.

“I told you your name wasn’t on it,” Tryck argued as he followed them up the walkway, his brothers right behind him.

Montana rolled his eyes. They had been arguing over the ice cream for six months now. He would buy Maverick the damn factory if he didn’t have to hear one more word about it.

Montana carried his mate into the manor, the prince showing them downstairs and into a bedroom. “The doctor is here. I’ll send him in.”

Montana nodded and laid Gabby down onto the silken sheets. He sat with his back against the headboard, rubbing his hand over his mate’s back. Four other warriors had come with them, aside from



Maverick and the brothers. If any shit jumped off, he would get his rifle from the SUV and pick off every threat in sight.

"Oh my," the doctor said as he entered the room. "Poor, Gabby."

"I was told to ask you what blood type of blood you were giving him by our resident doctor," Maverick said to the vampire physician.

"He was on O negative his whole life. What has he been taking now?" the doctor asked as he set his medical bag on the bed and looked down at Gabby.

Maverick looked over at Montana. "I'm O negative, so why is he sick?" Montana asked as his hands skimmed over Gabby's back.

The doctor ran his hand over Gabby's hair. Montana growled at the gesture. It may have been concern, but he was still newly mated, and any other man touching Gabby was irritating at best. Nicholas examined his mate, but at least Montana knew who he was.

"Are you his mate?" the doctor asked as he pushed Montana's leg aside and began to examine Gabby.

"Yes, now answer my question," he bit out.

"It may be that he is receiving shifter blood now. The prince has informed me that he mated a were-creature."

Montana's heart sank. He had done this? Had his blood infected his fireball and made him sick? He cursed fate for being so cruel. It didn't make any sense to him. Why would he be paired with Gabby if his blood couldn't sustain his pumpkin? "It has to be something else."

"Let me finish examining him."

Montana sat there beating himself up. He ran his hand over Gabby's little orange spikes, wishing he could take his pain away. His mate whimpered as he rolled around holding his stomach. Montana felt so damn helpless. There was nothing he could do.

The doctor finally stood and cleared his throat, looking over his shoulder at the prince then back at Montana. "Was he recently burned?"

"Is that what did this?"

“I’ll take that as a yes. Did you two copulate while he was healing?”

Montana’s hairs rose on the back of his neck. Why didn’t he like the sound of that question? He nodded, looking first at the doctor then over at the prince, who stood there looking stunned.

The doctor looked back over at the prince and then grabbed his bag. He whispered extremely low. Not even Montana’s superior hearing was able to pick up what they were saying. He became agitated. “What the fuck is wrong with my mate?”

The prince held up a hand at Montana, finished talking with the doctor, and then thanked the man for coming. Montana looked over at Maverick then down at his mate. He pulled Gabby into his arms, rocking him back and forth as dread settle over him. They could deal with whatever it was, as long as he wasn’t going to die.

Christian approached the bed. “He’s my son.”

\* \* \* \*

Even in Gabby’s weakened state, he was shocked. “How?” he asked as he turned over in Montana’s arms.

“Apparently your father isn’t your father.” Christian paced the room. He stopped, looked at Gabby, and then continued pacing.

Gabby’s head was in a whirl. How could this man be his father? Images of the cruel man who had raised him swam through his mind. This couldn’t be.

Gabby looked more closely at the man. He didn’t look anything like him. Not that he had looked like his father either. He was told he had his mother’s looks. Something his father had punished him for all of his life, and now he found out the sadistic bastard wasn’t even his sperm donor?

Christian sighed, looked over to Maverick, and then down at Gabby. Hesitation and irritation clearly written on his face. “My age is a well-guarded secret, and for a good reason. If the elders found

out, I would be brought into their circle, something I have fought to stay away from." Christian began to pace again. Gabby watched how the man's raven black hair veiled his face as he walked back and forth. If this man was truly his father, he was very handsome. Why couldn't he have inherited his looks?

"I am revealing to you things that could have me killed. I trust that it will go no further than this room?" He stopped in front of the Alpha and Tryck. Gabby wondered why the warrior was in the room with them.

Maverick turned to his right, a smirk on his face. "Get out, Tryck."

Tryck snorted and shook his head. "Not on your life." He rolled his eyes and sighed. "I secretly swear not to tattle." Tryck crossed his heart and then crossed his fingers in front of everyone, a knowing smile on his face. "Cross my heart, hope to die, stick a needle in my eye."

Christian cocked his head at Tryck. "You are a strange one."

Tryck flipped him off. "Your mamma."

Maverick grinned. "I won't hold it against you if you kill him. Hell, I'll pay you."

Gabby lay in Montana's arms confused as hell. What was wrong with these men? He was the young one, yet they were acting like five-year-olds.

"I am two thousand years old." Christian paused and looked at each person in the room before continuing. "The original vampire."

"*Dayam*. Is it true you had to club women over the head to get them to sleep with you?" Tryck asked.

"Not just women." Christian grinned.

"Can we get back to what's wrong with my mate, or do I have to throw holy water on you?" Montana snapped.

"Myth," Christian informed them. He walked over to Montana, knelt down in front of them, and spoke to Gabby. "I'm sorry, I don't

remember who your mother was. Being as old as I am, and who I am, I'm sorry."

Gabby shrugged, the old wound opened again at the thought of a woman he never knew. "I killed her."

"What?" Montana pulled back, staring wide eyed at him.

"My father, or should I say, the man who claimed to be my father, said I killed her when she was pregnant with me, sucked her dry from the inside." Gabby wiped at the tears that always sprang up when speaking or even thinking of her. It seemed strange to him to miss someone he'd never met, but he did.

"The doctor confided in me once he realized I was your father. Gabby, you didn't kill her. The man who raised you did. The doctor had to do an emergency caesarian section to get you out."

Gabby's whole world turned upside down. He could handle the fact that this man was his father. He didn't like the bastard who raised him anyway. But the news about his mother was shocking.

His entire life he was told he was a murderer, and now to find out that bastard had done it? He wanted his head on a platter. Anger rolled through him, and Gabby's vision turned red. He wanted blood. He hissed through his teeth, feeling an evil veil blanketing his mind. Vengeance was all that mattered.

"Gabby." Christian snapped his fingers in front of Gabby's face, his anger quickly dissipating.

Blinking a few times, he turned to the man. "How did you do that?" Gabby asked in awe. His anger was gone. Only thoughts of his mate were now in his mind.

"Family secret." He winked.

"He told me that your mother sought shelter with the coven, and was granted the right to live there. But then your father was enraged when he found out that she planned on running with you as soon as you were delivered. He knew you were mine. She told him this much. He wanted you for his own, so he silenced her and raised you as his

own. I honestly don't know why she never came to me. I would have taken her in and cared for her."

"This still doesn't explain how the doctor knew Gabby was related to you." Montana pointed out.

Gabby looked at his newfound father for the answer to that question. He felt odd thinking of this man as his father when Christian looked no older than thirty, odd because the bastard who pretended to be his father, the one who raised him had always been the one in his mind when he used the title.

Christian laid his left hand on his hip, tapped his chin with his left index finger, and pulled the side of his mouth up in thought. "You were sun-poisoned. That's why you are so sick."

"But...I feel a 'but' rolling around somewhere," Gabby said as he spun his hands above his head.

Christian dropped his right hand and walked once again over to Gabby. "But, the family trait seems to be surfacing."

"Can we stop with the fishing for answers and just spit it out? I only have another seven centuries," Montana snapped at Christian.

Christian narrowed his eyes at Montana. "You'd be hesitant, too, if all your little secrets were coming out. Excuse the hell out of me."

Tryck chuckled. "Jerry, Jerry, Jerry." He cupped his hands by his mouth.

"Does he really need to be here?" Christian looked over at Maverick.

The Alpha slid his hands into his front pockets and leaned against the wall, a sarcastic smile on his face. "I told you, but nobody listens. Cash."

Christian turned his back on the Alpha and the instigator. He sat on the bed and smiled at Gabby.

"You're ovulating."

\* \* \* \*

Gabby jumped quickly from Montana's arms. Mr. Badass had fainted. He stared up at the man claiming to be his new father. "You said what!"

"It's something my offsprings are born with, the ability to reproduce whether they are male or female. You're asexual. The way your eyes have turned onyx is an indication that you are ovulating. It's a closely guarded secret. But there are ways to prevent conception."

"Oh, there better be. If sleeping beastly here passes out just from the news, then I can just imagine what would happen if I...oh, hell, I can't even say it. You could have passed on your black hair or your height, but no, you had to go and make me a bigger freak than I already am. Do you know how ridiculous that sounds? Check between my legs, seriously. *I have a penis*," Gabby snarled as he pointed to his groin.

He was already an orange-haired, green-eyed, diabetic, motor-mouth vampire, and now he could have children? "Anything else you want to fuck me over with?" Gabby yelled at the ceiling. "Because I'm about done with all this bullshit."

"Who's he talking to?" Tryck asked Maverick.

Maverick shrugged.

"Wake the hell up." Gabby grabbed Montana's shirt in his fists, shaking the man until his mate moaned and shook his head. "Take me home."

Gabby turned to Christian. "Thanks a lot. I grew up in a coven that hated everything about me, a father that looked at me every day as if he wished he'd drowned me at birth, and on top of all that I inherited diabetes. Talk about a loser. I finally find someone to love me despite all my quirks, and you have to go and ruin it."

Gabby wiped at the tears. He wasn't going to give this man the satisfaction. He was so angry right now, the angriest he had ever been in his life. He had friends now, people who wanted to be around him, but now they would look at him as nature's joke.

"I'm not one of nature's mistakes!" Gabby screamed at everyone in the room. He covered his mouth with his hand, fighting back the hysteria. No matter what his coven had said to him, he wasn't a mistake. He was someone special. He had to be. To hell with them all.

"And give me that damn recipe for the contraceptive. I am not having a baby," Gabby added when Montana finally stood. Gabby's anger escalated at the wide grin on Christian's face.

"You have a backbone. I like that."

"Normally I'm a big chicken, but I've finally found something worth holding on to, and your little family secret is threatening it, so yeah, I'm downright pissed. And I'm gonna stop talking right now because you are only making me angrier the longer I stand here."

"Do you want me to burn it down?" Tryck asked Gabby as he pushed off of the wall he had been leaning against.

Gabby twisted his upper body, looking over at Tryck. "Do what you want. I'm going home." He grabbed Montana's hand and pulled him up the steps. The big lug just followed along still in a stunned state. Men!

"Wait," Christian called out.

Gabby never looked back. "For what? You want to tell me something else I'm cursed with? Keep it to yourself. My fun-filled day at Chuck E. Cheese is over," he yelled out.

"The doctor left your medical records in my office."

"Who cares?" Gabby waved a hand over his shoulder as he pulled his mate out of the front door.

\* \* \* \*

"I swear, I thought being gay and engaged to a woman was bizarre. Living in the Brac pack beats that, and *everything* else I've ever experienced hands down. Now hop up on the table." Nicholas patted the exam table with the white crinkly paper pulled over it.

“What is that?” Montana asked the doctor when he saw Nicholas with a syringe. It wasn’t clear like Gabby’s insulin. This had a milky white color.

“Okay, you two, listen up. This is the contraceptive that Christian gave me. Before I inject it, I have to ask...are you sure? I don’t know what it could do to you. I’ve never dealt with this before. He tells me it lasts five years.”

Montana wouldn’t admit it to his mate, but the thought of having a child wasn’t as upsetting as when he first heard the news. He had time to think about it, to mull it over. If it did happen, he was pretty sure he would make a good father. But the choice was up to Gabby. It was his body.

“Give it to me in the ass now.” Gabby rolled over and pulled his pants down. Montana growled, pulled his fireball into his arms, shredding the table in the process as his claws shot out, his canines descended. He turned his back on Nicholas. “Mine!”

Nicholas chuckled. “Thanks for the show, but it goes in your arm.”

Gabby slapped Montana on his chest. “Will you stop that?” he snapped as he pulled his pants back up, embarrassed that he showed the doctor his fat ass when he didn’t need to.

“What’s wrong, pumpkin? You’ve been irritable since we left the manor. I can feel anxiety and nervousness about you.” Montana stared down into eyes so black they were onyx in color. He missed the rolling green eyes that resembled the hills of Ireland.

“I don’t know,” Gabby wailed as he covered his face.

“I want to give him a pregnancy test before he gets the shot. No sex until I get the results. I have no clue how all this paranormal stuff works.”

“But I have to feed,” Gabby cried as he dropped his hands, staring at Nicholas in horror.



No sex? Montana was going to fall down and throw a fit like a toddler. No sex? Did Nicholas have any idea what it was like to let his mate feed from him? Apparently not. No sex? Holy shit.

"I'm sure the both of you can find creative ways to release the stress. I just don't want any penetration."

Montana shuddered. "Do you have to make it sound so clinical?"

Nicholas stared at Montana a moment, shrugged, and then cleared his throat. "Look dude, no humping the redhead until we see if the rabbit dies." The doctor smiled. "Better?"

"No." Gabby looked from Montana to the doctor. "What does a rabbit have to do with this, and why does he have to die? Harming animals is cruel, and I'm holding my hand up in a gesture of protest against killing the poor fluffy bunny. Have you ever seen one? I have. They're cute and fuzzy. They hop along—" Montana kissed him quiet.

"Here, just go pee in this." Nicholas handed his mate a cup with a chuckle.

Montana rubbed his hand over his face. This was going to be agonizing. No sex? Ah, hell.

## Chapter Seven

Gabby walked into his bedroom, spotting his mate with a towel around his waist. This was going to be torturous. “Tanny?”

“Yeah, babe?”

Gabby wiped the drool from his chin. The wolf’s muscles flexed and bunched as he twisted around to look at Gabby. Ah man, just one bite. He blinked a few times to clear the haze of lust sucking his brain dry. “I wanted to apologize for being mean to you.”

Montana knelt down in front of him, caressing Gabby’s cheek with his knuckles. “You had a few shockers tonight. I’m surprised you weren’t acting worse than you did. It’s okay, pumpkin. Any time you need to vent, come find me.”

Gabby shook his head, twisting his hands together. “That doesn’t make it right. A—are you sorry I’m your mate?” That was his biggest worry, the thing that was keeping him on edge and grumpy. He was terrified that Montana would regret having him as a mate. He was so messed up, who would want him?

The vampires in the coven had always called him worthless, useless, and the one that hurt the most, unlovable. Did Montana love him? Gabby would settle for liking if that’s all he could get. Just as long as Montana didn’t resent or hate him, he couldn’t handle that. All he ever wanted was someone to love him, and someone he could give all his love to. Was that asking too much?

“How could I ever be sorry, pumpkin? I’ll admit, at first I was angry. Not because of *who* you are, never because of that. But because of *what* you are. I’ve come to terms with what happened to my best friend. Somewhat. Okay, I’m still working on that. But I

could never hate you, regret you, or be sorry about what fate has given to me. Understand?"

"No. All I heard was that you don't hate me. I can live with all of the rest." Gabby smiled, wrapping his arms around his big lug's neck. "Now, let's see what creative ways we can use to release our stress."

"I call it sex." Montana laughed. Gabby's heart always swelled with love whenever he heard that deep and seductive laugh. He grinned from ear to ear, happy that at least his mate liked him.

"We could suck each other off." Montana moaned out as he pulled Gabby up into his arms. "That's always a winner," his mate said as he kissed Gabby until his head went all foggy. The thought of using his trick again had him hard instantly.

"Can I bite you? You know, down there?" he asked as he buried his face in Montana's neck, feeling his cheeks flame from embarrassment. He knew his mate had said he wanted it again, but people often said things in the throes of passion that they otherwise wouldn't have said.

"I'd be disappointed if you didn't." His mate picked him up and set him on the bed. "Lay back."

Gabby did as he was told, lifting up as Montana pulled his jeans off, his hands instantly trying to cover his belly.

"Stop that. You're not fat, baby." Montana leaned forward and laid butterfly kisses from one hip to the other. Gabby began to relax, allowing his mate to see him as he was, fat and all. "You are so damn sexy, pumpkin."

Gabby blushed. Maybe he wasn't skinny like the other mates, but his Tanny didn't seem to mind. He took a deep breath and let it out. If his mate said he liked it, then Gabby would stop hiding himself.

Montana climbed onto the bed, pulling Gabby to drape over his chest. "I thought we were going to do each other?" Gabby asked.

Montana smiled, and Gabby forgot what he was thinking.

"We are. Can't I enjoy looking at heaven?"

Gabby blushed. He didn't know about that. Purgatory maybe, but not heaven. Montana was heaven. His mate reached up and ran his hand over Gabby's hair, pulling him down for a kiss.

Gabby fisted his hands against his mate's chest, opening wide for the exploration. He could feel goose bumps rise on his skin at the sensual way Montana's tongue made love to his. He didn't tell his mate, but the wolf was the first person to kiss him, and that first kiss was when he knew Montana was wedged in his heart.

"I love you, pumpkin," was whispered softly against his lips.

Gabby fell apart. He began to cry at the long-awaited words. Someone finally loved him. No, not someone, his Tanny.

"Are you okay, baby?" Montana pulled back and looked at Gabby with concern.

"No," he blubbered. "I've waited my whole life to hear that. I'm crying because I'm happy." Gabby's bottom lip shook as he let the tears fall.

"Oh, baby." Montana pulled him into his arms, holding him gently. Gabby took a deep breath to compose himself. A man wasn't supposed to cry during sex. He lay there listening to the beat of his mate's heart, the sound washing over him, soothing the pain he had felt his entire life.

"Can we have sex now?" Gabby chuckled as he wiped his eyes.

Montana ran his thumbs under Gabby's eyes, wiping away the salty tears. He then took a thumb and sucked the tears that had clung to it. "Cry any time you want, baby. You taste good."

Gabby smiled, leaned down, and took back the kiss he had interrupted with his emotional moment. "I love you, too, Tanny. I've loved you since you smiled at me in the diner."

Montana pulled him up and turned him around, Gabby quickly getting the idea. He straddled his mate's face as he took the wolf's lengthy girth down his throat. He closed his eyes and moaned at the taste on his tongue and the feeling of his cock in his mate's mouth. The double pleasure tantalized his senses.

Gabby pushed back, feeding his length to Montana as he slurped around the mushroomed head, the tip of his tongue drawing the precum out like a bear with honey. His thumb slid around the V under the crown, gently applying pressure and slowly pumping his fist, which was wrapped around the base.

Oh, god, he wanted to be fucked so badly. As if reading his mind, his mate pushed fingers into him. He could tell it was more than one. The burn was making his hips gyrate around.

Gabby fisted the cock in his hand harder, his spine tingling and buzzing. He doubled his efforts, sucking up and down the shaft, slobbering and licking, humming and moaning. His hips bucked, pushing his cock further down Montana's throat.

He was close, so very close. Gabby slid his hand down, caressing his mate's balls, letting the pads of his fingertips feel every ridge, every wrinkle. His mate's sac drew up, telling Gabby he was just as close.

Gabby opened wider, sinking his fangs into the large vein as Montana cried out around his cock, his mate's fingers fucking his ass fiercely. Gabby drank his mate's blood and seed as he rocked up and down, fucking the wolf's mouth until his balls released, his seed shooting out. He quickly sealed the wound as he cried out, his mate applying pressure around his shaft to make a tight seal as he drank his essence.

"Tanny," Gabby panted then collapsed his head onto the wolf's thigh. His heart raced out of control as the endorphins raged on through his system. He felt light, boneless.

"Come here, pumpkin." Montana reached down and grabbed Gabby under his arms, pulling him around and settling him in the V of his arm. "I still call it sex." He chuckled.

Gabby smiled, content and sated.

\* \* \* \*

“Have you thought about what Christian told you?” Montana asked as he rubbed his hand over his mate’s back.

“About having children?”

“Yeah, what do you think?”

Gabby lifted his head up and stared into Montana’s eyes. “Would you be mad at me if I said I didn’t want any?”

Montana cleared his throat. He wanted his opinion heard. This involved him, too. “I wouldn’t mind one.” He would respect Gabby’s decision, but there was a part of him that became excited at the prospect.

His mate sat up, looking back down at him, “I’m just now adjusting to having a mate, having friends, and also having a new life where I don’t have to worry every second that someone is going to taunt or ridicule me. Can I adjust to that first? It seems like so much is coming at me at once. I only want a chance to get used to all this before we talk of babies,” Gabby said softly.

Montana’s fingers were running up and down his mate’s arm as he listened. “Take all the time you need, pumpkin. I just want to know that the subject isn’t closed, that we can revisit it when you feel you’re ready to talk about it again.”

His mate nodded. “I’ll let you know.”

\* \* \* \*

Cecil paced the library. “I’m tired of being cooped up. There’s got to be a way we can have some fun without worrying about rogue this and rogue that. The vehicles have tracking devices, and the Timber wolves have added three more Sentries to their ranks. How the hell are we going to get out of here?”

Nero raised his hand. “We could dig a tunnel. I know you don’t like tunnels, but it’s a way out. It is.”

Johnny’s hand shot up. “We could have Melonee take us.”

Cecil's brows shot up. "You are so smart, J-man, but Melonee is too young. She would end up taking us to Pluto." The light came on over his head. "But there is someone else that could."

"Carter." Blair snickered.

"Yep. Now how the hell do we get a hold of him?"

"Someone call my name?"

The mates jumped, Cecil's heart beating out of his chest. "Don't do that!"

The elven chuckled. "Why not? It's fun."

"How did you know we wanted you?" Gabby asked.

"You said my name, I heard, I came. The older we Wood Elves get, the better we are at our powers. I'm not that old yet, but I know how to listen for my name." He winked at Gabby.

"We want to blow this one-horse town. Will you take us?" Cecil begged.

"Depends, will it piss Maverick off?"

"Definitely."

"Then I'm in. Where to?"

Okay, Cecil hadn't gotten that far in his plan yet. A lot of the mates weren't twenty-one yet, so a bar was out of the question. Besides, their last experience imbibing made him wince.

"I know." Gabby jumped up and down as he raised his hand.

"I'm listening." Cecil walked over to the pint-sized mate. "Go on."

"I used to sneak away from the coven to these caves. They're beautiful. Inside them, there are crystals, and bats, and even these little glowing creatures. It's like a whole other world. You can see water running down the walls. I think there's a natural spring in there somewhere, but I haven't found it yet." Gabby curled his lips in.

Cecil thought about what Walkie-Talkie suggested. He was terrified of dark tunnels. He knew that to conquer his fears he had to face them. Could he? If he became too frightened, he could have

Carter pop him back home. A smile crossed his face. "Lead the way, Gabby." He could do this.

"I can't take all of you at once. I'm not that good yet. I can take six, and then come back for the other six."

"Okay. Johnny, Gabby, Nero, Kyoshi, Keata, and Blair go first." Cecil pointed at them.

"Me, Oliver, Caden, Murphy, Tangee, and Drew will go next."

"I think some of the bigger mates should go first. The smaller ones shouldn't go all at once," Caden advised.

"Fine. Everyone buddy up with a small mate, and then the first three pairs will go. But Gabby has to go first. He knows where it's at."

Gabby nodded and took Oliver's hand. He smiled up at him.

"Hurry, go." Cecil waved his hands at Carter.

\* \* \* \*

Excitement was coursing through Gabby. He had friends, and they listened to his suggestion! No one made fun of his idea.

"Wait. What about Gabby...you know." Blair waved his hands around the area of Gabby's rounded belly.

"Right, because my mom got pregnant visiting a cave." Cecil rolled his eyes. "I don't think visiting the caves will make Gabby pregnant, dork."

Blair narrowed his eyes at Cecil. "You don't have to be a smartass. I was just trying to look out for him because he is fertile."

"I'm fine, I swear. I can go." Gabby was afraid they would change their minds or think his idea was dumb after all. He didn't want to lose the friends he had made. "Can we go? I really, really promise I'm fine."

Blair studied him for a moment and then nodded. "Okay. Let's go."



Gabby squeezed Oliver's hand tight. He wasn't sure how this worked. Johnny grabbed his other hand, the other three mates doing the same until they had a circle.

Carter laid his hand on Gabby's shoulder. "Think of the cave."

Gabby closed his eyes and thought of the sparkly crystals and glowing little bugs. A cool breeze tickled his cheeks. He opened his eyes and gasped. They were actually in the caves.

"Okay, I'm going to go back. Do not move a muscle until I return with the others."

They all nodded. Gabby, Oliver, Johnny, Drew, Keata, and Murphy had come on the first trip.

"How do you feel?" Drew asked Murphy.

Gabby wondered why he asked. The guy looked fine.

"Almost healed. I still tire when I walk too much, but at least I can walk again," Murphy replied.

"What happened?" Gabby asked before he could think better of it.

"I was shot in the back by Cindernightmare. She was a crazy woman who was out to destroy me. No one knows why still."

"Oh my god! Are you okay? I think if someone shot me in the back I would have freaked out. That must have really hurt. I think it would. Not like I want to find out for myself. Oh, god, I wasn't saying you wanted to find out either. I was just—"

"Gabby!" Johnny shouted. "Relax, stop being so nervous. We don't bite."

Gabby blushed. "But I do." His eyes grew round as he stared at Johnny. "But I wouldn't bite you, I swear. You're my friend. I wouldn't do anything to make you mad—"

Johnny put his hand over Gabby's mouth. "I know you wouldn't."

"Is it me or are the others taking too long?" Oliver asked.

"Can we go?" Keata asked as he pointed further into the cave.

"Carter said not to move," Drew reminded them.

“Obviously something’s happened. Maybe we should find a way out and call home. Although I’d rather face a pit of snakes than Micah,” Oliver joked nervously.

The six began to walk along the cavernous walls, careful of where they stepped as Gabby lead them out.

“Look.” Gabby pointed up at the water trickling down a smooth wall. “Can we try and find the spring? I just know one is here, and I bet it’s real pretty, too.”

“Okay. We’ll call Carter’s name if we get too lost.” Murphy reminded them of their magical way out.

“So, are you going to have a baby?” Johnny asked as he walked alongside Gabby.

“Nothing stays a secret in our house, does it?” Gabby liked calling it his home. The coven was just a place he was raised. Living at the estate felt more of what a home should be like. Crazy people, good times, and lots of laughter. Yeah, it was home to him.

“I don’t know. Montana wants one. I’m afraid I’ll screw it up.”

Johnny smiled. “You can’t screw it up with a kid. All ya got to do is love it.”

“Wow, you’re so smart. I never thought of it that way. But what if he or she gets diabetes?”

“You seem to do okay with it.”

“But what if he or she has my orange hair?”

“Orange is my favorite color.”

“But what if—”

Johnny held a hand up. “Stop making excuses. What’s the real reason you’re so scared?” Johnny stabbed his index finger into his palm.

Gabby bit his lip and looked away. “What if Montana loves the baby so much he forgets about me?”

Johnny grabbed Gabby by the arm and spun him around. “Are you nuts? There is no way Montana could ever forget about you. You

stick out like a sore thumb.” Johnny giggled and pointed at Gabby’s hair.

Gabby smiled and reached up, his fingers twisting one of his spikes. “You really like my hair?”

“Yep, looks cool on you.”

Wow, no one ever said his hair looked cool before. Gabby’s heart melted for the other mate. “Johnny?”

“Huh?”

Gabby cleared his throat and looked down at his shoes. “If I do, you know, will you be the godfather?”

Johnny’s eyes rounded. “No! I can’t whack anybody.”

Gabby laughed so hard he fell against the cavern wall. “No.” He giggled some more. “It means if anything ever happens to me and Montana that you will take care of him or her.” He giggled some more. Boy, the man was funny as all get out.

“Oh, I knew that.” His cheeks turned beet red. “Do you really trust me to do that for you?”

“Of course, you’re very smart, and kind, and caring. What more could a baby ask for?”

Johnny beamed. “I would love to then.”

“Thank you for being my friend.”

Johnny waved his hand at Gabby. “Being a friend is easy. Being an enemy takes too much work. Besides, I like you, but in a buddy sort of way.”

Gabby giggled. “I know what you mean.”

Gabby looked over his shoulder. The others had stayed back some, but smiles were on their faces. Oliver winked at him and chuckled softly.

Gabby smiled back at him. They wandered around exploring for what seemed like forever when they finally came across a natural spring.

“I told you it was going to be pretty.” Gabby beamed proudly.

“You were right about that.” Murphy leaned over and swished his hand through the water, the ripples reaching all the way to the other side. “This place was worth the trip.”

Gabby felt a tightening in his chest at the mates’ approval. They all rolled their pant legs up and waded around the shallow end of the pool. “This is so cool.” Drew laughed.

“It’s fun.” Keata smiled.

Yeah, it was well worth the trip, Gabby thought as he watched all of them run around laughing and enjoying themselves.

\* \* \* \*

“Secure the perimeters now!” Maverick bellowed as the house ran around in chaos. Not only were six of the mates missing, Maribel had tried to get into Melonee’s bedroom. Thank god Nero had the sensors installed. The alarm had sounded as soon as the window had opened.

Melonee had shimmered into Maverick’s office with fear in her little angel eyes. “Where the hell are the mates?” Maverick bellowed.

“In a cave.” Caden shrank back as he answered the Alpha. “We were supposed to follow right behind them, but Tank had come into the library so we all hid.”

Maverick roared, “How the hell did they get there?”

Mark grabbed Caden around his waist, narrowing his eyes at Maverick. “I’ll yell at him, not you.”

The human had balls, he would give him that. “Tell me now.” He bit out between clenched teeth.

“Carter.” Caden shrank back again as Maverick slung his arm out, the cabinet in the hallway crashing down.

“Carter!” Maverick yelled.

“You rang?” Carter asked behind him. Maverick twisted around, seething as his chest heaved. “Where did you take the mates?”

“Don’t get your panties in a bunch. They’re safe.”

Maverick lunged, ready to rip the fucker's throat out. Damn fairy popped out and then popped back in behind Mark.

"I'll just go get them now." He gulped then disappeared.

"Find that bitch. Maribel dies tonight." Maverick stormed off.

## Chapter Eight

“Maverick, it’s Zeus.”

Why did it feel like everything was crashing down at one time? Maverick rested his elbows on his desk, pissed that Carter hadn’t returned yet. “Now is not a good time.”

“Well, then I’ll make this brief. Two of my pack members are missing. I wanted you to be aware of this just in case you heard anything or came across any information.”

Maverick had a sinking feeling. They still hadn’t found the doctors that had experimented on Heaven, giving the man a makeshift womb. Could the doctor be tied into this somehow?

“I’m sorry to hear that. I’ll keep both ears open for you.”

“I would appreciate it. I’m at my wits’ end trying to find them.”

“I’ll call you if I find anything out.” Maverick hung up with the Alpha of the Eastern pack.

“Fuck, does anyone else want to join the party?” Maverick asked the ceiling as he laid his head back.

“Carter!” he yelled.

The elfish man shimmered into the office, six mates in tow. “The little buggers weren’t where I told them to stay. Took me forever to find them.”

“That wouldn’t have been a problem if you hadn’t taken them in the first place.” Maverick watched as warriors stormed into his office, each grabbing their wayward mate.

“Next time just say no,” Montana snapped at Carter.

Carter quickly shimmered away as Montana lunged for him.

Maverick rubbed his temples. His family had grown to a disproportionate size. It was becoming more and more complex in dealing with all of them, but he wouldn't change it for the world. Although he had a feeling the elven race was about to make it a lot more interesting.

\* \* \* \*

"Gabby, you can't run off like that. I was worried sick." Montana took him upstairs. "Promise me you won't do that again."

"But they *wanted* me around, really wanted me. How can I say no? They won't want to be my friends anymore if I turn them down. Do you want my new friends to hate me? I couldn't live with that." Gabby twisted his hands in his lap, biting his bottom lip while sitting on the bed.

"If they are your friends, then telling them no won't make them stop liking you." Montana hadn't realized how clueless his mate was about friendship. "The mates in this house take you as you are. Telling them no won't change their opinion of you."

"Are you sure? Because Johnny is my friend, and I don't want to lose him."

"I'm sure." Montana pulled Gabby into his arms, kissing him softly on his lips. He wanted to claim his mate, assure himself that his fireball was safe in his arms. "This no sex thing is driving me nuts. I need to go find Nicholas and see if he has the results yet."

Gabby cleared his throat. "We could have sex," he whispered as his hand ran back and forth over the comforter they were sitting on. He peeked up at Montana then looked back down.

Montana's heart beat double time behind his ribs. Was his mate saying what he thought he was saying, or was it wishful thinking? "Talk to me, pumpkin." He swallowed hard, his throat dry at the idea of becoming a father. Excitement and fear raced through his body and crashed into each other to make Montana's heart leap into overdrive.

"I'm saying the subject has been revisited, and I'm not against it."

Montana cupped Gabby's face, staring into the reflecting onyx of his mate's eyes. He could see the shocked look on his face in those dark pupils. "What made you change your mind?"

"Promise you won't get mad at me?" Gabby tried to squirm away, but Montana held him firmly.

"I promise."

Gabby's hands covered Montana's. "I thought you would forget about me, love the baby more." His mate's cheeks turned crimson as his eyes lowered.

Montana was stunned his mate could think such a thing. Hadn't he shown him how much his fireball meant to him? He tucked a knuckle under his pumpkin's chin, kissing him lightly. "How could you ever think that? You are the stars in my sky, the beat in my heart, and the balm to my soul. To forget about you would be harder than forgetting to breathe."

Gabby's jaw dropped. "Wow," he said in awe.

Montana smiled. "What? You think because I'm a warrior I don't have feelings? I feel, deeper than you think. I could never forget about you, pumpkin."

"No, I wasn't thinking that. I was thinking that you didn't rhyme."

Montana's mouth pulled back in a smile. "Hallmark, I'm not."

He laid Gabby down, pulling his jeans off, growling at his perfect cock. His mate pulled his T-shirt over his head and tossed it aside. Gabby's hands went to his belly, trying to cover it, but then moved his hands away.

He loved that his mate was becoming comfortable with his body. Nothing in this world was sexier than his pumpkin, every last inch of him. Montana wouldn't change a thing.

Montana lifted Gabby's right leg, running his fingertips over his mate's smooth and creamy skin. The pale complexion was incredible. His fingers circled his mate's ankle, holding it gently in his grasp as



he kissed the pad of Gabby's foot. His thumb caressed Gabby's ankle, his hand skating down his mate's leg. "So beautiful."

Montana lowered his leg and then disrobed, crawling over Gabby and ghosting a hand over Gabby's hairless chest. He tweaked the brown disc, gaining a gasp from his mate. Gabby's eyes locked with his, the pools of darkness begging Montana to fuck him.

Montana's stomach clenched with raw desire at the sight. He grabbed the lube, preparing his mate for what could lead to a baby. Montana withdrew his fingers and grabbed the base of his cock, pushing in, and then stilling. He closed his eyes, hoping they were doing the right thing, praying that Gabby was ready for what might come.

"I love you, pumpkin." Montana pushed deeper, dropping to his forearms, and began to move his hips. Gabby wrapped his legs around Montana's waist, his head rolling back, his fangs bared.

Montana was lost to the erotic sight under him. He pulled out slowly until only the head of his cock remained, and then pushed back in until he could go no further. He felt Gabby's entire body shudder as he rocked in and out of him gently.

"I want you to come for me," Montana crooned.

He skimmed a hand over his mate's body, relishing the feel of his skin. Montana raked his fingernails softly into Gabby's flesh, his mate moaning and writhing under him.

Montana snapped his hips, stroking deeper, harder, and faster. His abdomen tightened, and his spine tingled. He fisted his mate's cock, spreading the pre-cum around as he pumped it.

"Gabby," Montana said with desperation.

Gabby placed his hands on the back of Montana's head, pulling him down for a scorching kiss. Montana, strong and protective, able to take down the meanest of enemies, whimpered into his mate's mouth, coming unglued at his mate's touch.

Gabby cried into his mouth, his back arched as he came in Montana's hand. The smell of his mate's seed sent Montana over the

edge. He gasped against Gabby's lips, ground his cock into his mate's ass as he came with a blinding force.

His nerves were raw, exposed, as his cock became ultrasensitive. Montana pulled Gabby into his arms, holding him close. How could his mate ever think he had the slightest ability to forget about him?

\* \* \* \*

Montana blinked his eyes open. Gabby smiled at him. "Hi."

His mate's brows pulled together. "Your eyes, they're green again. How?" Montana shifted and propped himself up onto his arm. "Not that I'm complaining. I missed them."

Gabby shrugged. "I don't know. I noticed them, too, when I was in the bathroom."

"Do you think we..." Montana placed a hand on Gabby's abdomen.

"I have no clue. I don't feel any different. Of course, I'm no expert at this. I heard that women vomit all over the place and cry at the drop of a hat. I don't feel nauseous or like crying. If it didn't work we could always try again, but after a night like that, I'd be surprised if I wasn't. That was mind-blowing, earth-shattering, and downright hot. I wouldn't mind a repeat of that again."

Montana grinned at him. "I'm still amazed that you don't pass out." He chuckled.

Gabby swatted at him. "Stop making fun of me."

Montana threw his hands up and laughed. "I swear I wasn't."

Gabby growled and rolled out of the bed. "I have to go see Nicholas for my insulin."

"Damn, that's one fine-looking ass you have there."

Gabby wiggled his hips and smacked his bottom. "Want some of this, big boy?"

He giggled and ran to the bathroom when Montana flipped the blanket back and chased after him.

Gabby was happy. He had someone to give all his love to, and a man to love him regardless of all his flaws. What more could a guy ask for?

\* \* \* \*

Maverick's fists were clenched at his sides. A snarl ripped from his throat as Tryck brought a struggling Maribel into his office.

"You can't keep me. I'll get away." She stopped struggling and smirked.

"Let's cut all the bullshit out and get to the point. Why?" Maverick asked.

"Well, as far as Murphy is concerned, my dumb ass fell in love with him. He had to go and ruin it by being gay."

"Uh, last time I checked you don't try and kill the person you're in love with...twice," Maverick pointed out.

"Who said love was perfect?" She sighed dramatically. "To hell with him, I've moved on. Just so you know, I will get that little fey."

Maverick growled at her. No one was taking his princess from him. "What the hell is so important about her?"

"Collateral." She laughed, and then threw her head back and yelled. "Ahm."

Maverick couldn't believe the sight in front of him. A tall man with skin tinted blue and hair so white that it resembled snow, shimmered in and grabbed Maribel. Before he shimmered out he looked over to Maverick with the vilest of grins, winked, and then disappeared with the bitch.

"Carter!" Maverick yelled.

"I'm about tired of you calling me like I'm your pet," Carter snapped as he appeared.

"Who the hell was Papa Smurf that just took Maribel?" Maverick snapped back.

Carter's eyes widened in fear. "He was here?"

“Who is he?”

“Ahm, the meanest of the Shadow Elves. Oh hell.” Carter’s hands twisted together. “This is not good.”

“Mine!” Tryck roared from behind them.

Maverick looked from Tryck to Carter, a wide grin spread from ear to ear. “Ah hell, this is going to be a riot. Karma must really love me.” Maverick grabbed his side as he laughed, pointing between the two. “Irony is a motherfucker.”

## **THE END**

**WWW.LYNNHAGEN.COM**

**HTTP://FACEBOOK.COM/LYNNHAGEN.MANLOVE**

**HTTP://LYNNHAGEN.BLOGSPOT.COM**

**HTTP://GROUPS.YAHOO.COM/GROUP/LYNNHAGEN/**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lynn Hagen loves writing about the somewhat flawed, but lovable. She also loves a hero who can see past all the rough edges to find the shining diamond of a beautiful heart.

You can find her on any given day curled up with her laptop and a cup of hot java, letting the next set of characters tell their story.

### *Also by Lynn Hagen*

Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 1: *Maverick's Mate*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 2: *Hawk's Pretty Baby*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 3: *Sunshine's Savior*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 4: *Remi's Pup*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 5: *Stormy Eyes*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 6: *Oliver's Heart*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 7: *Keata's Promise*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 8: *George's Turn*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 9: *Loco's Love*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 10: *Lewis's Dream*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 11: *Mark's Not Gay*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 12: *Nutter Nero*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 13: *Heaven's Hell*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 14: *Nicholas's Wolf*  
Everlasting Classic ManLove: Brac Pack 15: *Murphy's Madness*

Available at  
**BOOKSTRAND.COM**



**Siren Publishing, Inc.**  
**[www.SirenPublishing.com](http://www.SirenPublishing.com)**