

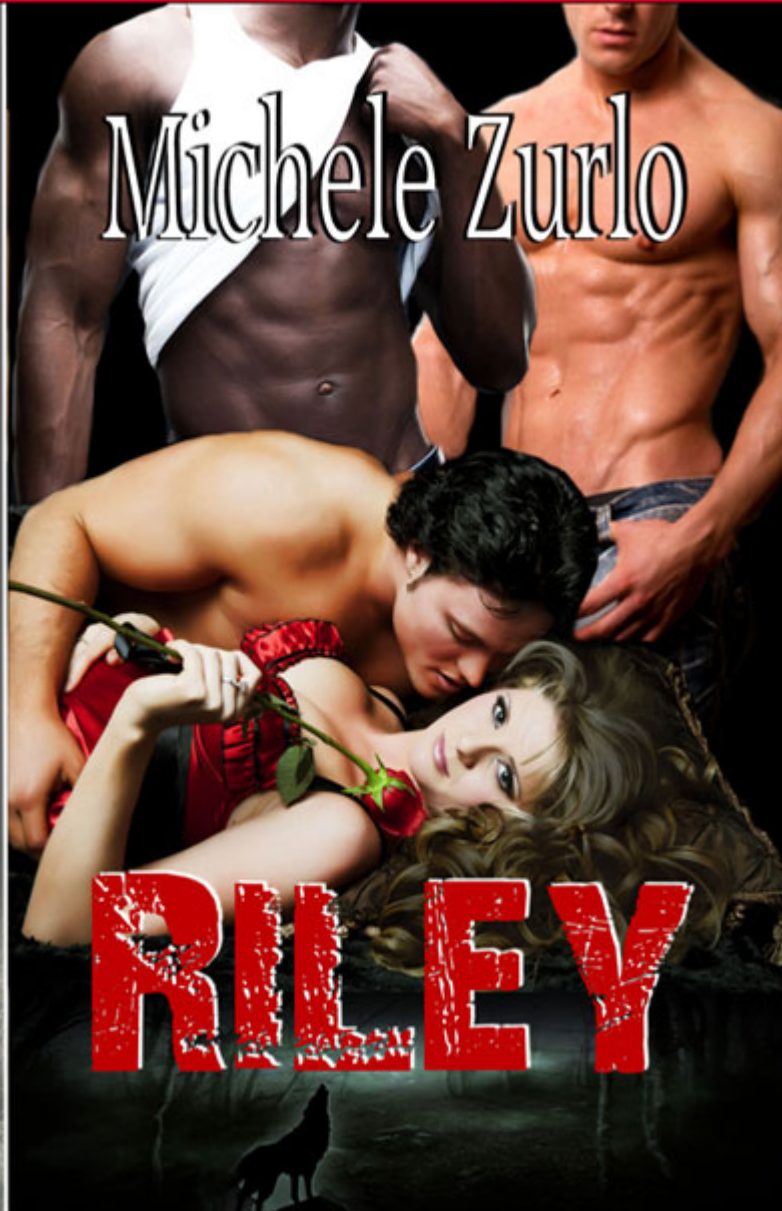
Siren Publishing

Ménage Amour

DAUGHTERS
OF
CIRCLE

Michele Zurlo

RILEY



Daughters of Circe 3

Riley

Soren wants Riley. He's left behind all the power he once wielded in order to be with her. Once he finds her, their union triggers events three thousand years in the making. Hidden beneath a human exterior and eons of forgotten memories, Circe is finally revealed.

Relegated to life as the Shadow Man, Teigh diligently watched over the werewolves, searching for the wolf who carried the soul of one of the men he loved. At long last, he finds Soren and Circe. Though neither of them fully remembers who they are, they both remember their love for him.

For three thousand years, Caiden has watched over his daughters as they cycled through life after life. Now Circe has been awakened. As a spirit being, he can only contact her when she's asleep.

When Soren's demons return, the four of them must renew their bond to fight against the evil that tore them apart in the first place.

Genre: Contemporary, Paranormal, Vampires/Werewolves

Length: 49,180 words

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RILEY

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DEDICATION

For every woman who has been misunderstood or misrepresented.

RILEY

Daughters of Circe 3

MICHELE ZURLO

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Chapter 1

Riley flexed the fingers of her left hand. Tendons created hills and valleys along the smooth top of her hand. Her fingers were strong, far stronger than they'd been ten years ago. Living the life of a massage therapist new to The Middle of Nowhere had toughened up the muscles in her hands, arms, shoulders, and back. Lots of days, she wished she could afford to pay someone to relax her the way she relaxed her clients.

The time had come for a change in professions. Before being exiled from her life as an administrative assistant, she had enjoyed staying with one job. Then a freaking werewolf had kidnapped her and tried to sacrifice her sister, changing everything. She had been forced to flee, to leave her life behind. Since her mother had passed away, and her father had done some heartless things that didn't endear him to Riley, she didn't miss anyone except her sister. At least she did get to occasionally visit Torrey.

If she wanted, she could move in with Torrey. Both her sister and her brother-in-law, Shade, would welcome her with arms wide open. However, Torrey lived deep in the forest, her home completely inaccessible by any vehicle. The idea of moving to the real "middle of nowhere" held less appeal for Riley than going home to her father. At

least this small suburb of Phoenix had other people. Riley hadn't given up hope of finding true love and settling down, but that would be impossible if she moved in with Torrey and Shade. Besides the two of them and their three kids, Desiree, a friend of Torrey's, had moved in with her three husbands and four children.

Riley would most certainly be the odd person out there.

Still, getting a job as an assistant, even entry-level, with absolutely no references had proven difficult. Complicating the job problem, whenever she moved towns, she completely changed her identity to make sure a certain somebody couldn't track her down. Her brother-in-law was really good about making sure her bank account never lacked for funds, but she hated relying on his guilt money.

He had done nothing for which he needed to feel guilty. His brother had been the one who committed the felonies, not him. Shade was a good man. Being a werewolf, he had a wildness about him, but he had a good heart, and he would never hurt anyone who didn't have it coming.

She couldn't say the same thing about Soren, Shade's brother. The bastard had ruined her life and nearly sacrificed her sister in a bloody, ancient ritual.

Perhaps the time had come to go back to school. She'd blown off two years of college, finally getting kicked out when academic probation failed to have any effect on her behavior. Things were much different now, and not only because the age of thirty-four stared her in the eyes. She wanted a better life than this. Heck, she wanted any life that wasn't this shadow existence. For starters, she'd take a date. He didn't have to be particularly attractive or wealthy. Lately, her requirements had diminished to breathing and possessing the ability to speak.

She tossed the bag she'd carried over her shoulder to the trunk and slammed the lid shut. Each client needed a fresh sheet. The chiropractor under whose roof she worked handled appointments and

billing. Riley had to see to the laundry. It wasn't a bad deal, though the doctor did take a cut from her hourly rate.

Light from the setting sun peeked out from between the office buildings across the street, fingers poking blinding streaks in her direction. Riley lifted her hand to shield her eyes. She blinked rapidly, trying to banish the black dots and shadows burned into her retinas. Before she could focus well enough to open her car door, something slammed into her from behind. Her cheek smashed into the edge where the door curved into the roof, and suddenly the sun became the least of her concerns.

A hand held her flat against the door and a body pressed all its weight to keep her still. "One wrong move and I'll slice your throat."

The blade in his hand barely made it to her neck before the man was knocked away. Riley whirled to see the man on the ground. A large, snow-white, shaggy-haired canine stood with its paws on the man's shoulders, its teeth bared as a menacing growl issued from its depths.

Tremors of terror ran rampant up and down Riley's spine. That was no dog. No dog could be that impossibly large. Whenever she visited her sister, a lone wolf would greet her at the side of the highway and lead her to the house. Usually, Torrey came. Sometimes she sent Shade or Desiree or one of Desiree's husbands to retrieve Riley. Any fear of wolves had long ago vanished. That didn't mean she was stupid enough to think wolves in general were harmless.

Riley knew without a doubt that thing pinning her attacker to the ground wasn't just any werewolf.

"Soren."

At the sound of her voice, the wolf backed up, moving off the man. He assumed a defensive stance between them.

A thousand emotions roiled through Riley. The brief attack had left her stunned. Adrenaline pumped through her veins, and her heart felt like it beat from her throat. Added to that, seeing the werewolf responsible for ruining her life made her feel strangled from within.

One more growl issued from Soren's throat and followed the attacker as he ran in the opposite direction. Relief didn't have time to take hold inside Riley. The doctor had left a half hour ago, and the receptionist had gone with him. This wasn't the first time Riley locked up alone, but it would definitely be the last.

The wolf turned, lifting his head to meet her gaze. Those silver eyes were rimmed with teal, and Riley shrank against the hard plastic of her car. One hand went to her throat while the other fumbled behind her for the handle of the door. She didn't fear for her life as much as she feared for her sister and her nieces. She would die before she would give up their location. She hadn't spent a decade on the run just to have it all blow up in one horrible moment.

He threw his head back and howled, a singular, lonely noise that tore at her heart even as she struggled with fear.

In the distance, a car backfired. Soren's howl cut short, and he wheeled around, snarling viciously. He bounded off toward the direction her attacker had taken. Riley had a second to wonder whether he planned to kill the man, and then she saw the trail of blood.

That hadn't been a car backfiring. Someone had shot Soren, and now he was gone. Part of her felt relief that he couldn't follow her home. A deeper part of her ached at the thought he might be lying somewhere, bleeding to death on the side of the road. Finding the strength and coordination to open her door almost proved too challenging. Her fingertips felt ten sizes larger as she fumbled with the door and fell inside. The familiar scent of leather and stale fries did little to jolt her back to reality, but she managed to close the door and start the car.

* * * *

By the time she arrived home, the events of the night had taken their toll. Her hands shook so badly that she dropped her keys when

she tried to open her car door. The safety of her house taunted her from a few feet away. She felt around on the floor between the door and the seat until she found them, hating every second of this evening. As someone who prided herself on being strong when she needed to be strong, this wasn't how she wanted to react.

She always promised herself that if the time came, she would deal with Soren the way he needed to be dealt with. Maybe Torrey couldn't bring herself to kill him, and maybe Shade couldn't either, but that wouldn't stop Riley. She could deal the death blow if it came to that.

Then why did the idea of him being hurt—shot—bring such pain?

Her door jerked open, which had a ripple effect on her reverie. Riley looked up to find her neighbor standing there. Tall, handsome, with brown hair going grey around his temples, Calvin Atchison was the kind of middle-aged man Riley always pictured when she thought of herself as a similar-aged woman. Maybe in ten or fifteen years. She wasn't yet forty, so she had time.

He cocked his head to the side. "You okay, kiddo?"

Technically, Cal was her landlord. He lived next door and owned both houses. Usually, he left her alone. Every once in a while, he checked on her. Riley didn't mind. He treated her like a kid sister, and she missed having an older sibling around.

"Yeah—I—yeah," she stammered, uncertain what to say. She still didn't know whether being attacked in the parking lot at work or saved by a wolf that had caused her so much heartache was worse. She pasted on her best smile and hoped with all her might for him to accept her assurance without question. It usually worked. Shade had said more than once that Riley had some magic, though neither she nor Torrey could sense anything extraordinary.

He smiled and backed away. "Okay. I'm home all weekend. You call if you need anything."

She nodded and fled into her house. She locked and checked every single door and window. The single-story ranch didn't stand a

chance against Soren if he wanted to get inside, but it was all the protection she had right then.

The rational part of her brain urged her to call the police to make a report. After all, she'd nearly been mugged. Or raped. She wasn't sure what the bad man had wanted. Nothing he pressed against her body had been hard in a sexually-excited kind of way.

Three hours later, an exhausted Riley let two police officers out of her home. They'd wanted her to go down to the station to file her report, but she was too afraid to leave the house. In the back of her mind, she kept thinking that the inside of the house represented the only safe space. Even the parking lot at work, which wasn't in a bad area, no longer seemed like someplace she could go by herself.

She hated this fearful, cautious person she'd become.

And she hated even more that she had repeated and erotic dreams about the man responsible. What sane person imagined the feel of her captor's lips and the way his muscles moved beneath her questing fingers moments before he'd set her away from him and tell her he wasn't ready to take the relationship to that level?

His eyes and the bulge in his pants had said differently, but she hadn't argued. She hadn't been allowed to argue. The charm he'd placed on her to make her think she was in love with him also kept her agreeable. The real Riley would have had him naked and writhing on the bed in no time.

Thank goodness for Soren's warped sense of morality.

Riley snuggled on the sofa under a light blanket. This was, strategically, the best place for her to both sit and sleep as she watched for attackers. Also, the coolness of the handgun nestled in her palm provided a reassurance she desperately needed. The safety remained on, and the gun hid under the blanket, but she was ready to use it. She'd spent a lot of time at the firing range over the past ten years, and she could hit any target, moving or not, from a variety of positions.

A thudding sound woke her from a dead sleep. Riley popped up, her nerves on high alert before her brain was quite awake. She pointed the gun toward the bathroom, the source of the noise. Creeping quietly, she crossed the room and entered the hall.

A light glowed softly under the door. For some reason, the light switch in there had a dimmer. A wave of cold fear chilled Riley to the bone, but sympathy wasn't far behind. He'd been shot after saving her from a mugger. Though she'd locked the doors and windows, she knew he had enough magic to allow him to overcome those safety measures.

Too bad he wasn't a vampire who needed to be invited inside.

Riley pushed open the door and nearly dropped her gun. Soren stood at her sink, his naked ass pointed toward the mirror as he tried to maneuver a pair of tweezers over a small, bleeding wound.

The rest of him lacked clothing as well. Broad shoulders topped a chest corded with solid muscle. Just below his navel, a trail of blond hair curled downward, thickening to swirl around his incredibly large cock. Riley gasped at the size of the thing at rest. She couldn't imagine how big it would be once aroused.

When he had kidnapped her, he had cast a charm to make her think she loved him. Though she had offered him many opportunities to take advantage of the circumstances, he hadn't done more than let her kiss him every now and again. While she remembered the handsome features of his face in vivid detail, she hadn't seen him without clothes, and so her fantasies were highly speculative.

He grinned at her, and her face flamed. After the events of the night, she should be a little more terrified at finding a large, formidable predator in her bathroom. She shouldn't gawk at him and try to imagine fitting his hard cock inside her wet pussy.

And it was wet.

No doubt he could smell her arousal. Fucking wolf.

“If you’re not going to shoot me with that thing, can you put it down and help me? I can’t quite reach where the bullet went in and I don’t want to heal around it. I’d only have to cut it out later.”

His rich baritone reverberated through her senses. Shade had told her several times that Soren’s charm wouldn’t have worked if she hadn’t already found him attractive. Time didn’t seem to have dimmed her body’s response to his animal magnetism.

It would help if he wasn’t naked. She looked around the small room. “Where are your clothes?”

He chuckled, and the memory of sitting in front of a warm fire, drinking cocoa and chatting companionably came to mind. “Probably where I left them. My jeans don’t exactly fit when I’m in wolf form.” His grin grew and his teal eyes glowed with a predatory light. “What’s wrong, Riley? Are you afraid you can’t control yourself around a naked man? I’m willing, sweetheart, but I’d like to have the bullet out first.”

Reaching out, she slid the dimmer upward, and the soft, sexy glow turned harsh and real, just like life. She couldn’t say she owed him assistance just because he saved her from the mugger. That one good deed wasn’t enough to erase his list of sins, but she couldn’t stand to see anyone suffer.

She motioned with her hand. “Turn around and put your hands on the counter. If you move, I’ll shoot you.”

Soren grunted, but he did as she asked. “You know, a bullet won’t kill me. You could empty that entire clip into me and it wouldn’t do more than piss me off.”

“I have silver bullets.” She tucked the gun under her arm and bathed the tweezers in rubbing alcohol. “Made for just this occasion.”

“Silver doesn’t do anything extra to a wolf, Riley. That’s a myth.”

She knelt behind him. The gun made it awkward, so she set it on the floor next to her knees. “It’s a figure of speech. I coated each bullet with wolfsbane. We both know how deadly that can be.”

Soren flinched, and she knew she'd hit a nerve. He had used wolfsbane in an attempt to incapacitate his brother, Shade. At the time, Shade had been protecting Torrey from Soren, who wanted to sacrifice her and harvest her powers. The dose had nearly killed Shade.

Though Torrey didn't harbor any ill will toward Soren, Riley had a difficult time forgiving the man who kidnapped her and tried to murder her sister. And she absolutely hated that her body heated just from being this close to him.

"Riley, I couldn't help it. A compulsion isn't something I can control. It controls me." He looked over his shoulder, an appeal in his eyes she found difficult to ignore.

She dug the tweezers into the wound, which already had begun to close. Perhaps she could have been a little gentler, but she didn't feel he deserved a light touch. Her aggressive search for the bullet put an end the words coming from Soren's mouth.

"That's just an excuse. Only a weak man lets a compulsion control him." She dug at him as much as she dug for the bullet. It didn't take long to find, but it did require a fair amount of tugging before it finally slid out.

Blood seeped from the wound. Riley grabbed a tissue to dab it away. Soren ripped it from her hand and whirled around. "Don't touch it."

She raised a brow. "I just pulled a bullet out of your ass. I've already touched your blood." To prove her point, she held up her hands. Smears of his blood coated her fingertips. He hadn't bled much, but she couldn't very well access the little chunk of metal without touching him, and she didn't have latex gloves lying around.

Besides, werewolves didn't carry disease. She wasn't worried about contracting anything from Soren.

Color leached from his face. He grabbed her by the wrists and shoved her hands under the faucet. Turning on only the hot water, he fumbled for the soap.

Riley watched his face as he scrubbed her hands clean. During the time of her captivity, which he made seem more like a vacation, she had seen flickers of fear and uncertainty in his eyes from time to time. However, they always disappeared quickly. This time, it stayed put.

“Soren? Are you okay?” This couldn’t have been the first time he’d been injured. A glance at his torso showed several old scars, and he hadn’t exactly been writhing in pain when she’d walked in on him trying to remove the bullet.

“Ten years.” He snarled the words. “I’ve spent ten years searching for you. The very week I finally find you, I put you in danger.”

Riley extracted her hands from beneath the flow of water. She had to pull hard because Soren ignored her subtle tugs. She dried them on a towel and reached for the hand cream. He’d scrubbed her skin a little too vigorously. “The mugger was after you?”

It didn’t make sense. Why would a man who was after Soren attack her? Plus, the man who pushed her against the car wasn’t nearly as large as Soren. Riley had always considered herself a tall woman, but next to Soren’s six-ten frame, her five-nine height seemed tiny and petite. Her attacker hadn’t been much taller, perhaps six feet even. Baiting someone as large and formidable as Soren was akin to a death wish.

Soren shook his head, the ends of his shaggy mane skating across his shoulders. “He didn’t see me. I cast a charm to make people’s eyes pass over me. You’ve looked directly at me several times in the past few days and you haven’t seen me.”

A sharp pang thumped on Riley’s chest, but she couldn’t tell if it was fear or sadness. Soren evoked so many complicated emotions in her. She shook her head and left the bathroom.

In the kitchen, she filled the coffeemaker and set it to percolate. Soren’s hands landed on her shoulders. She didn’t start. It seemed she had already slipped back into the reality of what it was like to share a space with him. His stealthy movements and sudden appearances in a room used to startle her. Now they failed to garner a reaction.

That was a lie. She did react to Soren. She always reacted to Soren. Before she could stop herself, she had relaxed against his sturdy body. His arms closed around her waist, and she felt safe and comfortable in the way only Soren had ever been able to make her feel.

“You kidnapped me.” Her accusation came out softly as exhaustion claimed dominance now that the adrenaline of fear disappeared.

“I’m sorry,” he said, and she knew he meant it. He buried his face in her neck. “I wish things had happened differently, Riley. I’ve done a lot of bad things and I’ve lost everything in my life that ever had meaning.”

She lifted a hand to hold his head close. “You left Lyton.”

He nodded without lifting his head. “I couldn’t stay there. Torrey killed the demons that controlled me, but there are more, and they knew where I was. Plus, you weren’t there.”

She didn’t know how to respond. Logically, she shouldn’t want him. She shouldn’t feel sorry for him and affection shouldn’t be tugging at her heartstrings. “It’s late. I have to go to work in the morning.”

He turned her in his arms, holding her close so that her body brushed his. Acutely aware of his nudity, Riley did her best to keep her eyes pointed upward. His lips, full and sensual, parted and his nostrils flared. He inhaled her scent, marking her with the untamed predatory gleam in his teal eyes.

His cock, a feature she had once tried so hard to get out of his pants, branded its heat into her stomach. She had thought him large before, when his member lay soft and flaccid between his legs. He would fit snugly inside her, though it would take some time their first time together for her to grow used to him.

“I wish to claim you, Riley. I resisted you before because you couldn’t make the decision of your own free will.” His lips hovered

an inch away. Warmth from his breath fanned over her lips and chin, and his thumb followed in a smooth caress.

Faced with the possibility of her longtime illicit fantasy coming true, Riley trembled in his arms. The feel of his arms and the heat from his body combined to make her feel like she had finally found home. “And now I have a choice?”

Soren nodded. “The only charm I used was the one masking my presence, which was shattered when I discouraged your attacker. The only magic between us is the magic we make when we’re together.”

“Wow,” she said. She needed something to diffuse the effect he had on her. “That was some smooth line. How long did you work on it?”

He brushed his lips against hers. She opened to him automatically, seeking to fill a need she resented herself for having. He didn’t take the bait.

“You make me feel things I thought I’d never feel. Let me show you, Riley. Let me show you what you do to me.” He whispered, but she heard his need and felt it in the insistent throbbing of the artery on his neck where her hand rested.

A moan mixed with a whimper escaped from deep inside. Feelings and memories crashed in her head and heart. Leaving him, even knowing how he had used and betrayed her, had broken her heart. In the past decade, she had dated enough to know she would never recover. Every man fell short when compared to Soren.

“Take me to the bedroom,” she said. There was no need to sleep on the sofa with a gun if he was going to be next to her.

He lifted her, guiding her legs around his waist. His massive erection prodded at her pussy. The thin sweats between them did little to dampen the sensations. She wanted to feel his kiss, but he held himself just out of reach. His eyeteeth had elongated, and she knew his control could snap at any provocation. Never for one second did she fear him. In everything that happened, he had taken precautions to

keep her safe from himself and from his pack. However, she knew better than to push him right then.

The darkness of her bedroom closed around them. Only the streetlight filtering through the blinds lent light. Riley knew Soren could see just fine, but for her, shadows enshrouded everything. He loosened the hold her legs had around his waist and let her slide to the ground. Two tugs had her shirt and sweats in a heap on the floor.

Soren knelt in front of her.

“Wait,” she said, placing a hand on his shoulder. He peered up at her. She didn’t need to see his expression to know he lacked patience. “I want to see you, Soren.”

His thumb swirled a pattern over the panties covering her mound, coaxing more cream from her pussy. “Are you sure about that, Riley? You might not like what you see.”

She nodded quickly, almost frantic in her need for a visual. “I know what I’ll see. I know how your eyes will change. Your teeth are already different.”

Fragile light cast a small, soft glow over Soren. He knelt at her feet as if he hadn’t moved, but Riley knew differently. His movements had been too fast for her to see. The faint stirring of a breeze danced across her bare legs, the only clue to betray him. He had turned on her desk lamp.

He peered up at her, his eyes already ringed with silver. She held his gaze for as long as it took for him to be satisfied with her acceptance.

Her panties disappeared altogether much too slowly. Soren hooked two fingers under the material covering her hips and planted a hot kiss on her mound. The panties remained in place while his kisses moved down. When he reached the damp parts, he inhaled the scent of her arousal. A possessive, satisfied growl sounded low in his throat, vibrating through his lips and the cotton to her swollen clit.

She gasped and her hips surged forward, but he held her still. This entire night would happen on his terms. Riley whimpered and panted, but she didn't protest.

His mouth opened, and he sucked the damp fabric into his mouth, soaking it through. She adjusted her stance, widening her legs to entice him closer. It worked. His tongue plunged between her lips. The wet fabric acted abrasively, rubbing her just right. In seconds, she went over the edge. Cream gushed from her pussy as she cried out and braced her weight on his shoulders.

Soren sat back on his heels and eased the panties over her hips. With excruciating lassitude, he spread his palms wide to caress her legs as he rid her of that small barrier. His mouth followed, brushing and licking a trail from her inner thighs to her instep.

Liquid and malleable, Riley held on to his shoulders, the only eye in the storm he created. He eased her backward until her bottom hit the mattress, and then he lifted her, pushing her back until she lay with her legs dangling down. Only then did he finish removing her panties.

Riley knew being with him this way would change her life, but she never understood how completely worshipped he would make her feel. He kissed his way back up her legs, finding every inch of her skin worthy of attention. By the time he returned to her pussy, another orgasm loomed close. His hot tongue slid through her juices. He lapped faster and faster, swirling around her hole to suck her clit into his mouth. She came again, and he added his fingers.

"Soren." His name croaked from between parched lips. She needed to feel him inside her, stretching her tender tissues while her legs wrapped around his hips. "Please."

"Soon." He breathed the promise against the sensitized folds of her pussy. "I want you to be ready for when I take you, honey, because once I start, stopping isn't an easy option. I've waited too long for this."

He scissored his fingers, stretching her. Delicious sensations shot through her body, and she thrust against his face. When he pumped a third finger into her, Riley's hips lifted from the bed. She felt filled and possessed, and she knew this was only the beginning. Part of her anger with Soren stemmed from the fact she felt such a strong connection with him. Even before he kidnapped her and put a charm on her to make her forget she wasn't with him of her own free will, she had wanted this with him.

His fingers slipped from her dripping vagina. Tiny whimpers protested the loss. Riley hoped he would move up her body and finally lay claim to her. Instead, she felt his cream-coated fingers circling her back entrance. Before she could decide whether or not she welcomed this kind of intrusion, Soren plunged his lubricated fingers through the tight ring of muscles.

The burning sensation had her hips shooting from the bed. She wriggled, not to escape, but to ease the intensity of this new kind of fire. The slight edge of pain receded. Surprised, Riley realized she wanted more. "Don't stop," she panted. "Oh, Soren, please don't stop."

He latched onto her clit, scraping his teeth across her swollen tissues, and added another finger. Rotating and spreading them apart, he stretched the virgin territory. Riley didn't quite know how to thrust with this kind of dual stimulation, so she relaxed and let Soren control everything. She came again. This orgasm was smaller, but she needed smaller right then. A larger orgasm would have caused her to pass out, and she didn't want to miss something for which she'd waited so long.

The heat from his body faded as he backed away. Riley lifted her head to study him. He'd been naked the entire time he'd been in her house, but this was the first time she allowed herself to look at him the way she wanted.

Long, powerful legs, sprinkled with light hair, led to hips, a flat stomach, and a broad chest crossed with cords of muscle. Scars

marred his skin at random intervals, each one a souvenir from a different altercation. Chunks of blond hair brushed his strong shoulders. Beautiful and harsh, his face had to have once belonged to an angel. Prominent cheekbones underlined teal eyes that held hints of danger.

And love.

He loved her. The emotion floored Riley, but she refused to admit loving him, even to herself. Instead, she concentrated on the erection jutting from a nest of pale curls. She reached out and tried to encircle it, but her hand didn't quite close around it.

Soren closed his eyes. A low hiss issued from between his lips, and he allowed Riley to guide him closer. She explored his soft skin leisurely, the effects of three orgasms lending a languor to her movements. A thick bead of moisture leaked from the tip. She spread it over the thick head with her fingertip.

Taking her face between his large palms, he leaned down and kissed her. The musk of her scent lingered on his lips and on his breath, an erotic flavor he thrust into her mouth. One hand drifted down to slide under her bottom. He lifted her, repositioning her diagonally across the bed.

Riley let her legs fall open, an invitation to her wolf-man. Soren settled between them and held his weight on one elbow. Reaching down, he set the tip of his cock at her entrance.

"I claim you, Riley Quinn."

She opened her mouth to protest the primitive finality of his tone, but he plunged into her, silencing anything she might have said.

As she expected, being filled by Soren redefined sex. All other experiences fell away, insignificant and inconsequential. For one moment, she was new and untried. Her eyes widened, and she stared at him.

Soren met her questing gaze with a steady determination, and she knew he understood what she felt. "Mine," he growled. He withdrew and buried himself in her again. "Mine."

Riley drew her knees up as high as she could, allowing him complete access, and hung on to his shoulders. She rocked her hips to meet his thrusts. The tension coiling deep inside imploded when faced with the inferno he generated. Shock waves rolled through her body, a precursor to a kind of orgasm she'd never before experienced. In the past, the little waves of pleasure had always lapped at her afterward, not before.

High-pitched squeaks ripped from her throat. She didn't worry about what she must look like with her wild hair and wild behavior. These things could only appeal to the wolf in him, and she wanted to seduce the wolf as much as the man. Maybe he did claim her, but Riley was no shrinking violet. She claimed him as well.

The fingers she dug into Soren moved, searching for a more secure grip. They flew over him frantically, unable to find what she needed. At last, he captured her hands. Wrapping one hand around her wrists, he held her hands high above her head. This new position stretched her body and forced her to surrender even more to him.

She hooked her heels behind his knees and rolled her hips to make sure each thrust pounded against the tight bundles of nerves around her clit. Her body spasmed and shuddered, turning to liquid. Cream gushed from her pussy fast and hard, and she lost the ability to move.

Soren withdrew from her pussy. It pulsed and pounded harder, seeking the return of his cock. She felt empty without that connection.

The world turned upside down. Riley protested the altered position. She lacked the strength to raise her head from the mattress. Soren turned her face so that she could breathe. He lifted her hips and bent her knees to raise her ass in the air. If he hadn't continued to hold her up, she would have flopped to the side.

"Soren, can we rest for a bit?"

"No. I need you relaxed like this so I can finish claiming you." His voice came out in a ragged growl that sent a fresh surge of juices to drip from a pussy she knew he didn't plan to use.

A whimper of anticipation and need mixed with fear. She knew the next way he would claim her, and she wanted it badly. “You’ll go slow, right? I’ve never done it like this before.”

His fingers dug into her hip and she knew he fought for control. “I’ll be as gentle as I can, Riley.”

* * * *

Taking care of his female had been ingrained in his psyche since before he was born. Instinct made him want to claim, love, and cherish this woman. For his entire life, he had considered fornicating with humans one of the dirtiest forms of sex in existence. Then he met Riley, and he knew she represented the highest ideal he could ever attain. Within five seconds of meeting her, he knew petty things like species didn’t matter. She was meant to be his.

He hated the compulsion that led him to kidnap and hold her hostage. Seeing her hurt and angry had led him to place a charm on her to make her think she wanted to be there with him. He couldn’t stand to see her upset. If she was any other human, he would have just locked her in the dungeon, completely dismissing any distressed emotions she might display.

He had gained very small solace from his deception of her. All along, he’d known it would end. Killing her sister would set her against him forever. Thank goodness Torrey had killed the demons controlling him. She’d saved his sanity and his soul.

The smooth, rounded ass in front of him represented his whole world. He’d left his village and the only home he’d known to search for Riley, and he had no intention of returning. His priorities had inexorably shifted. Now that he had found his mate, he would devote the rest of his life to building a family and a home with her.

He ran one palm over her cheek. The musk of her arousal filled his senses and inflamed his desire. Hooking his fingers around her hips, he parted her ass with his thumbs. His cock bobbed and jerked,

demanding to breach the puckered rosette nestled between those perfect half-moons. Though he had come in her pussy, his cock hadn't softened. Soren took pride in his ability to stay hard for hours.

She whimpered again, making one of the sweetest sounds ever to reach Soren's ears. Thick cream from her pussy coated his cock, the best lubricant on the planet. He positioned the swollen tip of his cock at her anus and pressed forward. She clenched, blocking his access.

He petted her lower back. "Breathe out and relax, honey."

"It's going to hurt."

Bending over her body, he peppered kisses along her back and shoulders. "A little. Once we get going, you'll forget all about this tiny pinch."

She breathed in and out, but her body didn't relax. Her muscles trembled and her body shook. He knew exhaustion and orgasm caused her reaction, not fear.

He moved his hands over her body, reaching underneath to pluck at her nipples.

Her body jerked, and a low moan hissed from between her lips. "Soren, do you have to do it this way?"

"No," he said even though he wanted to say *yes*. Yes, this was necessary. His wolf demanded to know her this way.

She laughed. "Liar."

"Yes," he said. His hands never stopped moving in their attempt to soothe and arouse her. "But I won't force you, honey. I need to dominate you right now. I need to make you mine, but I would never force you."

"If I ask you to stop, will you?"

He growled, the wolf inside growing impatient. "I can stop now or I can stop when I've finished with you. I can't guarantee I can stop in the middle, honey, so make your choice now."

His cock twitched against her tissues and her entire body shuddered. "No, don't stop. I want you this way."

She pressed back against him with such ferocity that his head disappeared through the tight ring. Her little virgin hole squeezed him. She cried out with a mixture of pain and pleasure. Using all his willpower, he refrained from moving.

Her back arched and her body bucked, driving him deeper into her heat. "Soren, I need more. Don't stop. Please don't stop."

Sweat beaded his brow and ran down his spine. "I don't want to hurt you."

She reared up, pressing her back to his chest and wrapping her arms around his neck. "It pinches and burns a bit, but it doesn't hurt. It feels fucking wonderful and I think I'm going to come really fast. Please don't stop."

Soren rolled his hips, driving his shaft into her completely. She arched, pressing her ass closer to beg for more. He ran his hands up the front of her body. "I'm all in, honey."

Her hard nipples poked into his palms. He moved so that they grazed his wrists and arms. The little pebbled peaks created hot paths along his skin and soothed the beast inside that demanded he ride her ass fast and hard.

While he amused himself with her breasts, her hand slipped down to play with her clit. Soren groaned and wished for a mirror so he could watch her masturbate while he pumped his cock into her sweet, tender ass. He pushed her forward until her upper body rested against the sheet. One hand stayed on her clit.

"That's it, Riley, keep doing that."

He withdrew until his mushroom tip pressed outward against her sphincter. Hesitating only a second, he plunged his full length into her. Between her legs, her hand worked faster. Finally, he surrendered to the instinct that drove him to claim this woman. He pounded into her. Each thrust elicited a high-pitched shriek of pleasure, a sound he found strangely addictive.

She came hard. The muscles of her vagina contracted, pulsing through her rectum, ass, and thighs. Unable to survive such an

onslaught, Soren came. His balls drew up and hot semen shot from his tip. Though he wanted to keep pumping into her, the need to mark her triumphed. He withdrew midway through his orgasm to spray his ejaculate over the delicate skin of her back.

Her legs gave out, and he pulled her knees down so that she wouldn't injure herself from landing in an awkward position. Now she belonged completely to him. He would care for her in all ways.

* * * *

Riley had never felt so thoroughly used and sated in her life. Her sister had commented on a werewolf's stamina several times, but until this moment, Riley hadn't understood exactly what that meant. Now she understood the dark circles that often appeared under her sister's eyes. If this intense lovemaking were to happen regularly, Riley doubted she would ever have the energy to get out of bed.

The mattress dipped as Soren shifted and rolled from bed. She closed her eyes, too tired to care that his semen coated her back and dripped from her ass and pussy. A nap, she promised herself. First, a nap. Then she'd shower away all the body fluids.

A warm cloth roused her a bit. Soren wiped away evidence of his orgasm from her back. He left and returned several times. Each time, the cloth was a bit cooler. He rolled her over and spread her legs to clean her there. She had been about to protest the temperature of the cloth, but she found her swollen and hot tissues appreciated the coolness.

"You don't have to do that." Her voice came out soft and slurred. Enunciating wasn't going to happen any time soon.

Soren pierced her with that teal gaze of his. "You're mine, Riley. Mine to love. Mine to care for. The scent of my claiming will be evident to any wolf who thinks to make you his. It warns him that I will kill him for touching you. Leaving the fluids there is unnecessary and uncomfortable for you."

Riley had no plans to sleep with any other wolf, so this possessive claim didn't alarm her. She took in his long, naked body seated on the bed next to her. "Will you stay the night?"

He chuckled. "Dawn is nearly here. I've already stayed the night."

She opened her mouth to argue with him, but he pressed a fingertip to her lips. She inhaled the soft scent of her hand soap.

"I'm not leaving, Riley. Not ever."

The alarm bells that should have sounded were curiously silent. She dug her elbows into the mattress and pushed into sitting position. "Soren, I'm not asking you for forever. I probably shouldn't have slept with you at all, but I couldn't help it and I can't bring myself to regret it. But you kidnapped me."

His lips pressed together. "You require a daily apology? Fine. I can do that. I'm sorry, Riley. I'm not that man anymore. If you let me, I'll spend the rest of my life proving that to you."

She ran a hand through her hair. Exhaustion chased away the tumult in her thoughts. At her core, she didn't want him to leave, and that was all she could think about. She tugged at his hand to pull him closer. "Let's get some sleep."

Chapter 2

The hiss and crackling pop identified bacon moments before the scent drifted into her bedroom. Riley turned and planted a palm on the mattress. Every muscle screamed in protest, but she forced herself to ignore the soreness. She had to go to work soon and make her clients feel the way she wished someone would make her feel, especially after a night with Soren.

Once inside the bathroom, she raised her arms above her head to stretch the kinks from her back and shoulders. Bending down, she applied the same therapy to her lower back, ass, and thighs. Soren had given her quite a workout, something she hadn't done in any way, shape, or form in several months.

The warm spray of water eased her tension a bit. As she lathered soap over her breasts and stomach, the bathroom door opened and closed.

"I made bacon and eggs, honey. They're warming in the stove for when you get out of here."

Riley shook her head at the tone in his voice that belied his domestic act. He wanted an invitation into the shower.

Before she could decide on a way to answer him, or even whether she wanted to invite him into the shower, the curtain drew back and he stepped over the rim of the tub. His arms closed around her middle, and he buried his face in her neck. The heat from his body made the hot water seem cool.

She leaned her head against his shoulder. "I have to go to work."

He nodded. Having been the person in charge of a large pack for so long, he understood the burden of responsibility. When she had

stayed with him, his responsibilities had taken him from her side on many occasions. “You won’t have to worry about that guy who attacked you. I took care of that.”

Her heart beat faster, but she couldn’t tell if she felt more horrified or safe. “You killed him?”

Soren’s senses made him aware of every change in her body’s chemistry or rhythms. It had always been difficult to hide any emotion from him. He chuckled. “No. I figured you wouldn’t want me to do that, though I will kill him if you change your mind. Tracking him won’t be a problem. I chased him down and scared the shit out of him. Literally.”

The image he evoked made a giggle erupt from her, though she knew nothing about the situation was funny. She turned in his arms and pressed her breasts to his chest. He grinned down at her, very aware that she’d found his statement amusing. “Thank you for not killing him. I wouldn’t mind seeing him arrested, but I don’t want anyone to die.”

“I haven’t forgotten what a big-hearted fool you are.” He tucked a wet strand of hair behind her ear. “It’s one of the things I love about you.”

Riley’s heart sank at his soft declaration. She slid her hands between them and pushed at his chest, hoping he’d allow some space between them. He didn’t ease his hold on her one bit. “Soren, I’m not sure about this thing between us.”

He shook his head. “It’s too late for that, Riley. I’ve claimed you. You’re my mate, and when a wolf takes a mate, he takes her for life. Until death do us part, my love. I’m yours and you’re mine.”

Her gaze slid to the teeth just beginning to change shape. With the tip of her tongue, she explored her own eyeteeth. Though the teeth felt exactly like they always had, something didn’t seem right, but she couldn’t pinpoint what it was. The feel of his arms around her and his hard cock pressing into her soft belly certainly felt right. She couldn’t imagine ever not having him in her bed and her shower.

She looked up at him. “Just like that? No ceremony, no promises?”

Soren shook his head. The spray of water didn’t reach his hair, though droplets reflected from his shoulders to dot drops of dew on the lower curls. “Not just like that. You make what we shared seem trivial.”

“I’m not the first person you’ve shared that with.” She merely pointed out the obvious, but his face darkened anyway.

“I’ve fucked others, but so have you. In your heart and soul, you know last night was different. I claimed you. I made it clear from the beginning what I wanted. I made love to you. And you made love to me.”

Riley shook her head, uncertain about the implications of their action. “You make it seem simple, Soren. This isn’t simple. After the things you’ve done to me and to my sister, I can’t just decide to spend the rest of my life with you.”

The ferocity glittering from his eyes didn’t dim. “You can’t keep throwing that at me, Riley. I made mistakes. I admit to committing some pretty horrible and violent acts in the name of my compulsion. However, I’ve removed myself from that situation. I left Lyton. I left my position as leader of my pack. The demons are attracted to power. I have none, and I never will again.”

The fear welling inside Riley had everything to do with the fact she didn’t want to fall in love with someone who could break her heart so callously. She didn’t want to fall in love with a man who would crush her with a whispered word from an invisible demon. She stared at his chest because she didn’t want to see the pain and pleading she knew she’d find in his eyes.

“Honey, look at me.”

With her fingertip, she traced a drop of water as it followed a path down his pectoral muscle. “Soren, I don’t know if what I feel for you is real. How can it be real when the only time I’ve spent with you, I was under a charm that made me think I was in love with you?”

A snort issued from his nose. Combined with his growl, she knew he was exasperated. “The charm simply made you forget you had anywhere else to be. The fact that you wanted to be with me, that you found me attractive, that you tried repeatedly to seduce me—all that was you, honey. I didn’t tamper with your feelings except to make you forget to be worried or afraid. I couldn’t stand to see you that way.”

She sighed. He wasn’t going to leave. He’d said as much. “Why now? Why, after all this time, did you try to find me again?”

He smoothed back her wet hair and tipped her chin up so that her gaze met his. “It took me a few months to get my shit together, but once I decided what I wanted most in this world, I lit out of there. I’ve been looking for you for a very long time.”

The shade of teal in his eyes darkened to nearly green. They drew her in, mesmerizing her until she couldn’t look away. She saw truth there. Beneath that, she saw his misery and loneliness. She saw his sorrow and his determination. He wanted a life with her.

“No lies.” The demand escaped on a strangled breath. Nothing seemed real. Their consciousnesses, linked, floated free from their bodies. “No charms. You will not use magic on me ever again.”

Never breaking her gaze, he nodded. “Okay, Riley, but you need to stop using your magic on me, too.”

She blinked, breaking the weird spell. “What do you mean? I’m not a witch.”

Soren smiled a small, sad smile. “No, you’re not, but you are magical. I don’t know how you do it. I can’t smell your power, but I can sense it. I don’t know how much you have, and I don’t want to know. I prefer thinking you have less than me. The magic you used just now had no odor. When a witch uses her powers, wolves can smell it.”

Riley frowned. She had no idea what he meant, yet she knew something out of the ordinary happened when she looked into his eyes. “I don’t know what I did.”

“I don’t know what you did, either. I just know that you were pulling me out of my body. I don’t know where you were taking me. Since you obviously don’t know either, I think we should stay put.” He grinned and kissed the tip of her nose.

The idea of floating free from her body scared Riley. How could she know where to go or how to get back? And she had been taking Soren with her? With a quick jerk of her chin, she agreed with him.

None of the things he had revealed about her kidnapping and imprisonment surprised Riley. Deep down, she knew he hadn’t forced her to feel attraction and tenderness toward him. She remembered the first time she’d kissed him. The bright sunlight pouring through the huge windows had roused her at the crack of dawn. She hadn’t known where she was, but a profound sense of peace kept her calm. For the first time in months, she had felt like everything was as it should be.

She’d found Soren in the kitchen. A very tall, very large woman seared a thick slab of ham in a cast iron skillet. Soren had paused in the middle of sipping his coffee to smile at her. That had been all she needed to fall in love with him.

The fact that the smell of cooking meat didn’t bother her should have tipped her off that something was horribly wrong with the situation, but she had ignored it and focused on Soren. He spoke to her, drawing her in with his low voice, and he looked at her, keeping her close with his piercing teal gaze.

At that exact moment, she had known this man would always belong to her.

Warm water cascaded over her back, but the heat from his hands scorched her ass as he cupped and kneaded her cheeks.

“Are you sore, honey?”

Riley nodded slowly, ashamed to admit her weakness. She wanted him again, and evidence of his desire pressed into her stomach.

Soren dropped to his knees. He kissed her breasts, taking time to swirl his tongue around the pink areolas before he sucked and nipped at her nipples. One arm wrapped around her waist to provide support,

and his other hand moved down her abdomen to rest on the short curls of her mound.

Her moan of approval came out as a whimper. In her whole life, she'd never felt this level of need for a single person. Now she understood why her sister and Shade were always sneaking off into the woods when she visited and kept the kids busy. The soreness between her legs ceased to matter. She wanted him to shove her against the wall and impale her with one glorious thrust. She wanted him to mark her as his own.

She threaded her fingers through his hair and held on as he worked his way lower. His hot tongue dipped into her navel. At the same time, the hand on her mound pivoted, and his fingers parted her labia. He massaged her gently, sliding his fingers through her cream to find the most responsive places.

She wanted to feel them slip into her wanton pussy. She thrust against his hand, but he resisted her efforts to guide him inside. Tingles of desire and pleasure shot up and down her spine. She whimpered, begging for more.

“Soren.”

He kissed a trail along her pubic bone, just above the line of her neatly trimmed hair. “I love the way you say my name, Riley. I’ve missed the sound of your voice so much. Keep talking, honey. Tell me what you want.”

“I want to wrap my legs around you and hang onto your shoulders.”

He chuckled low. “Your wish, my lady.”

Before she could figure out what he intended, he planted each hand under her thighs and lifted her into the air. He draped her legs over his shoulders and adjusted his grip to hold her wide open in front of his mouth. Riley looked down in time to realize he purposely misunderstood her request. The wolfish grin he didn’t bother to hide disappeared, and his tongue darted out to lick away the evidence of her arousal.

He tasted her, flicking the tip of his tongue over her clit in short strokes and pressing it flat against her as he took long swipes.

This wasn't what she had in mind, but the skill of his foray did nothing to make her want to advocate for her original request. She was certain he could only hold out for so long anyway. Eventually, his carnal nature would come to the fore, and he would have to lay claim to her again.

"Soren." She whispered his name and thrust in time to the tongue penetrating her entrance. Heat rushed through her body, coiling low and exploding in slow waves.

He unhooked her legs and lowered her so that she sat on his knees. Between them, his impressive erection throbbed, begging for release. She wrapped her hand around it as she lifted her body to bring her pussy closer. He stopped her with a light pressure on her hip.

"No, honey. You're sore. I won't always be able to be give you time like this to recover. Let me have this."

Riley wanted to laugh at the way he phrased his request as a command. His eyes didn't plead his case. The strong, steady gaze underlined his resolve. One thing she never admitted to her sister was that she completely melted under Soren's commanding presence. Cream rushed back into her pussy, and her vaginal walls throbbed anew.

Still, she knew better than to let him have his way completely. She slid her hand down his shaft, her fingers holding firmly. "Then let me make you feel good this way."

Soren gritted his teeth and thrust against her palm. His hips moved, already consenting. Finally, he nodded. "Just use your hand, honey."

Riley had no problem following that mandate. She wasn't sure he'd fit into her mouth, and she wanted to watch his face while she saw to his pleasure. Cupping his balls with her free hand, she rolled

them carefully. Soren hissed, but the way his eyelids grew heavy and half closed encouraged her to continue her dual assault.

His canines elongated, and he bit his lip, not bothering to hide his true self from her questing gaze. She increased her pace, and he thrust faster. His hands flew from her hips to crash into the blue tile behind her. He moaned, and it turned into a howl as his orgasm began. Hot semen shot out, landing on her chest and stomach. Some made it as far as her face. Her rhythm didn't falter. She wanted to wring every last drop from him.

He growled. The hands gripping the wall behind her changed position. One gripped her ass hard and the other cradled the back of her head. His savage kiss ground against her lips, and Riley knew better than to fight it. She softened in his arms, molding her body to his. Only when he sensed her complete surrender did the kiss morph into something tender.

When his breathing normalized, he helped Riley to her feet. The water had cooled significantly, but she didn't mind. He washed her from neck to feet before tending to himself.

She emerged from the shower by herself, stepping over the rim of the tub on unsteady legs. He clamped a hand around her upper arm, the reaction so quick and accurate she gasped.

Hidden behind the curtain, he wasn't even facing in her direction. At her gasp, he poked his head out. "Stay where you are. I'll be finished in a minute." He smacked a wet kiss on her cheek and disappeared back behind the curtain.

By the time he emerged, she had dried herself. He patted himself dry and rubbed the towel over his head, rustling his blond hair into ringlets. She hadn't known his hair would curl that much when wet. It gave him a boyish charm absent when he was dry. Giving in to impulse, she reached up and wound a strand around her finger.

He used the close proximity to lean in and lick the shell of her ear. His breath panted short and hot against her ear and neck. "You keep

that up, and I'm not going to be able to keep things under control. Riley, you can only push me so far."

She studied the lock of hair wrapped around her finger and watched as it loosened and fell away. "Touching your hair turns you on?"

"Pressing your naked breasts against my chest and looking like you want to eat me up turns me on. The hair is just bait." He grinned and nipped at her earlobe before pushing her away.

Tugging her shirt over her head obscured her view of him for a moment. The boyishness disappeared as he slid jeans up those long legs and brushed his curls away. She marveled at how much her opinion of him had changed in one night. No, she shook her head. It hadn't changed at all. She had finally admitted that she'd been in love with him this whole time, only she had been profoundly pissed at him. That emotion hadn't completely disappeared. She wondered if it would end up destroying the love between them.

The hairbrush lay on the counter next to the sink. She snatched it up and attacked her hair.

He shook out his folded shirt and paused, eyeing her speculatively. "Riley? What's wrong?" When she didn't immediately answer, he closed his hand around the fist holding the brush's handle. "Talk to me, Riley."

She lifted her gaze to meet his in a clear spot on the steam-covered mirror. "This isn't going to be easy, Soren. I'm still mad at you, and I don't know how to not be mad at you. I've spent so much time hating and resenting you, and now we're sleeping together."

The hand holding hers dropped, and he wrapped his arms around her waist. "No," he said. "This isn't going to be easy. I can't even guarantee that some demon isn't going to latch onto me and start whispering commands in my ear again. We can never have children."

The idea of children had long ago fallen off her list of things that the future would bring, but Torrey had once told her that wolves

instinctually wanted children. Perhaps Riley had begun to have hopes again. That hope deflated.

“It’s probably best we don’t have kids.” She swallowed past the lump in her throat. “People who don’t want kids shouldn’t have them.”

He buried his face in her neck. “Oh, honey, I want children, lots of them. I just don’t want to chance a fucking demon forcing me to...” He broke off. “I couldn’t live knowing I hurt you or them. It’s hard enough living knowing how I hurt Shaden and Torrey.”

She reached up, but her hand hovered inches from his head. She didn’t want to arouse him by touching his hair, but she did want to comfort him. At last, she settled for gripping his shoulder. “But you’re okay being with me, even though you could hurt me at any time?”

His iron arms tightened, but he didn’t squeeze harder. “I can’t hurt you, Riley. The demons wanted me to hurt you before, and I resisted them. If it came down to it, I would take my own life first.” He shook his head, brushing his face along her neck and shoulder. “I can’t stay away from you. Maybe you’re not a Daughter of Circe with all that predestination and souls mating forever crap, but it sure feels like I was meant to be with you. And now I’ve claimed you, honey. You’re mine.”

She didn’t want to pick apart the paradox in his declaration. The idea of being without him caused her chest to ache. She selected a neutral topic. “Where did you get clothes?”

He chuckled and raised his head from her shoulder. “They were where I left them. I got my truck, too, while you were sleeping.”

She followed him to the kitchen, where the odor of well-cooked bacon filled the tiny room.

Soren pulled a plate heaped with bacon and eggs from the oven. He set it on the table and motioned for Riley to sit. “I already ate.”

Her nose wrinkled in distaste despite her attempt to keep her expression neutral. “Soren, you know I’m a vegetarian.”

Parking his hands on his hips, he mirrored her expression. “Riley, you can’t be a wolf and a vegetarian. It won’t work. A wolf needs fresh meat regularly.”

She worked to keep her jaw from hitting the floor. “I don’t want to be a wolf.”

“You’ll only live a hundred years as a human, Riley. That’s unacceptable. I can’t live more than half my life without you.” His lips clamped together, all color leaving under the pressure. Then he waved his hand. “Never mind. We’ll discuss this later, when you’re more amenable to listening to common sense. You need to eat, honey.”

He turned to the stove. In no time, he’d created a vegetable-laden omelet. She didn’t have the heart to tell him she disliked eggs. At least he’d used enough cheese to cover up the taste of egg. Mostly.

* * * *

“I’m coming to work with you.”

Riley’s face tightened. Her jaw clenched and her lips thinned. Then she shook her head. “That’s not a good idea. You can stay here.”

Soren rose, grabbing the plate of bacon and eggs he’d finished despite telling her that he wasn’t hungry. His fast metabolism meant he could eat many large meals every day. He rinsed the plate and loaded it into the dishwasher. Then he grabbed Riley’s empty plate and did the same.

He’d made a mental note that she didn’t like eggs. He’d seen through her valiant effort to disguise her dislike of the omelet, but he hadn’t wanted to call attention to it. He wondered if she would eat one every morning just because he made it. She would have to learn to tolerate less from him. If his demons returned, he needed her to run to Torrey so her sister could kill them again. She couldn’t go around

making allowances for things she didn't like, but his dominant nature didn't allow him to come right out and tell her that.

Besides, why would a woman who didn't like eggs have an entire carton in her refrigerator? The bacon and other meat in her freezer were items he'd purchased after he'd picked up his truck and clothes. He had remembered her vegetarian status, but he hoped time had changed that particular habit.

He followed her into the basement and watched as she emptied the contents of her dryer into a laundry basket before she threw clothes from the washer into the dryer. The low ceiling meant he had to slouch. He watched her round little ass strain against her jeans as she twisted and bent. "Riley, are you seeing anyone?"

She paused mid-throw to level a disbelieving eyebrow lift at him. "You're asking now?"

Wringing his hands was a distinctly unmanly gesture, but he felt like doing it just then. He compromised by massaging the palm of one hand with the thumb of the other. She had deflected his question instead of answering. Now the faint traces of masculine scent fluttering around the house took on new meaning.

He worked to relax his jaw so that his words didn't come out on a growl. "It doesn't matter, anyway. You're mine now."

The dryer door slammed and the clothes churned within. She hoisted the basket of unfolded clothes and headed up the stairs. At least she hadn't challenged or negated his claim. If she did that, the claim would cease to be valid.

In the living room, she set the basket on the sofa and lifted out a sheet to fold. Soren lent her a hand. The load appeared to contain only sheets.

"I'm coming to work with you," he said again. "I've followed you for several days, and now that you've been attacked, there's no way I'm leaving you unprotected. Consider me your personal bodyguard."

She looked at the sheet in his hands and then shook her head. "Soren, do you know what I do?"

An unpleasant thought occurred to him, but he refused to acknowledge it. “You’re a receptionist for a chiropractor and you do the company laundry at home. They really need to invest in a washer-dryer set.”

She gently wrestled the sheet from his hands. “I’m a massage therapist. You can’t come to work with me because you’d scare away all of my clients. Besides, people don’t want to be naked in front of their massage therapist and her boyfriend.”

The elation he felt over her label of his role in her life was overshadowed by the mention of her clients being naked. “Naked? What the hell kind of massages do you give?”

He regretted the question seconds before it left his mouth. Lifting his hands in a gesture of denial, he tried to call it back and block the blast of anger she had every right to feel. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said that. I just prefer you weren’t alone in a room with naked men.”

She snorted and finished folding the sheet. “I massage women, too. And wouldn’t you be more leery of me being the naked one in the room?” She shook out another sheet, stretching to her toes so it wouldn’t hit the ground. Elongating her body like that made her breasts press tantalizingly against her shirt. “Besides, they’re always at least half covered by a sheet.”

“You don’t have to defend yourself,” he said. The image of her leaning over him while he lay on a table, naked, covered only with one of these white sheets, caused his jeans to become uncomfortably tight. “I know you aren’t that kind of woman.”

The last sheet folded, she put the stack back into the empty basket and stepped closer. Her hand closed over his semi-hard cock, caressing him through the tough denim layer. She wore a wicked grin on her face. “Yet the idea of getting a sensual massage has you ready to spill in your pants.”

The heel of her hand pressed into him. The pressure brought heat and the edge of pain. His instinct spiked, and a low growl rumbled in his chest even though he found the sensation highly pleasurable. He

caught her hand before she moved it away. “You’re not angry with me.”

She shook her head. The sunlight glinting through the front window shimmered gold from strands of her wheat hair. Sparkly things had never before held Soren in thrall, and now he couldn’t tear his gaze from the tresses spilling halfway down her back.

“I like your hair long like this. I want to make love to you outside in the moonlight, watch it reflect from your skin while I suck on that little nub between your legs until you scream my name.”

He lifted her hand to his lips and sucked on one fingertip after another. Her breathing came faster and heavier. She shifted her legs restlessly, and he smelled her arousal. With her free hand, she flicked open the top button on her shirt. He tongued her fingers while he watched the gap in her shirt grow longer.

At last, she finished. The shirt hung together, not revealing what he wanted to see. She peeled back one side. The lace of her bra hugged the curve of her breast, hiding nothing. He wanted to reach out and touch it, but she got there first. With the tip of her finger, she brushed her pebbled nipple. Her body jerked and a small moan sounded low in her throat.

He crushed her against him, ravaging her mouth with his tongue. All thoughts of being gentle or taking this slow fled from his mind. He forgot about her soreness. In seconds, he’d stripped her naked. He kissed her breasts, drawing her nipples and areolas deep into his mouth. She whimpered at the pain, but the scent of her arousal spiked. She didn’t push him away, and he didn’t stop. He couldn’t stop. He’d never have enough of her.

She tugged at the metal button holding his jeans closed, and then she shoved the material to his thighs. Wasting no time, he lifted her, parting her legs to guide them around his waist. She settled around him as if she’d always been there. Her moist, warm pussy stretched to welcome him home. She writhed and arched, using the leverage her legs offered to thrust and rub her clit against his base.

If she hadn't aroused his protective instincts, he might have been able to let her have her way in this, but she had, and he couldn't. The smallness of the ranch house meant a close bedroom. He sprinted the distance and fell to the bed. Closing his hands around her wrists, he lifted her arms above her head and held them there as he thrust into her furiously.

Her eyes widened as she studied him. He knew the exact moment she realized he wasn't going to let her control anything. Her legs dropped from around his waist, falling open to let him deeper. The animal in him seized this gift of her submission and held the coveted prize close to his heart. He tried to gentle his thrusts, but he couldn't seem to get enough of the tight, velvety walls clinging to his hardness.

All of a sudden, her eyes unfocused and her body stiffened. Wetness gushed around his cock, and those precious walls pulsed around him. Her mouth opened in a silent scream, and then she said his name. Over and over, she whispered his name. This was so much better than a scream. With one final thrust, he climaxed. The waves of her orgasm grew stronger, feeding his.

He collapsed, remembering to roll to the side an inch before he crushed her with his weight. The way her chest rose and fell with her breaths drew his attention there. If he didn't stop looking, they wouldn't be leaving the bed any time soon.

Riley shifted and groaned her way into a sitting position. "Damn you're good at that. You know exactly where to touch me and how fast to go."

The ridge of her spine called to him. He traced the bony protrusions with a lazy hand. She shivered and turned, careful to not dislodge his caress. Her gaze sought his. She stared into his eyes. He had no idea what she saw there, but he made no attempt to hide his love and desire. He'd waited too long to find this woman and to accept her in his life the way they were meant to be together.

At last, he smiled. "I'm glad you liked it. Give me a minute and I'll do it again."

She tried unsuccessfully to hide her grimace with a grin. “As much as I’d like to spend all day in here with you, I have to go to work.”

He sat up and bit back the urge to tell her she never had to work again. He knew Riley well enough to know she wouldn’t appreciate the offer. His woman had an independent streak he loved even though he knew it was going to cause problems when it clashed with his alpha-male instincts.

“I’m coming with you.”

She laughed. “No, you’re not.”

“I’ll shift. You can introduce me as your dog.” He winced as he voiced the abhorrent idea.

This time, peals of laughter rolled from her. She collapsed back onto the pillow and pressed her hands to her chest. “Sure,” she said as she regained the ability to speak. “You can be my huge dog who comes up to my shoulders when he sits and who looks just like a wolf. That won’t scare my clients any more than a gorgeous, overprotective man sitting in the corner watching my every move.”

She slid from the bed and pulled fresh panties from her drawer. “Soren, you can hang out here until I get home this evening. It would be great to come home to a nice, vegetarian dinner that someone else made.”

Wordlessly, he watched her dress. When all was said and done, he spent the day as he had spent the previous two—watching her from the bushes with only a simple charm cast over him to prevent her from noticing.

Chapter 3

Caiden closed his eyes and meditated. At times like this, he felt as if he had an actual, physical body. The shell he showed to his daughters contained his essence, but if they were to concentrate, they would both be able to see past the illusion. He was nothing more than a spirit, a ghost who couldn't even manifest in the human world.

When he had first agreed to this kind of existence, he hadn't known he was sentencing himself to three thousand years of a mostly solitary existence. Teigh could visit, but they couldn't touch, not really, and his lover could never stay for more than a few minutes. Existing in any plane proved to be too much of a drain on his energy.

At least Teigh existed in the real world. Caiden existed only in the hearts and minds of his daughters. He'd given up hoping long ago, but recent events put a new twist on things. Now that both Torrey and Desiree had found their soul mates, there was a chance everything could come together.

But they had come this far before and failed.

"Moping. I should have known."

That deep baritone represented the sweetest sound he'd heard in far too long. Caiden's eyes flew open, and his ready smile manifested. He took in the towering figure's broad shoulders and fine physique. It might be an illusion, but since it represented the real thing, Caiden didn't mind the trickery. "Teigh."

Teigh's hood shaded his face, just as his sleeves extended well past his wrists to hide his hands. The ability to manifest in the real world came at a price. Teigh's body wasn't quite there. If Caiden, or

anyone else, tried to see Teigh's features, they would fail. Human logic superimposed the necessary features, but they weren't really there. If Teigh concentrated, he could touch and manipulate things, but he couldn't sustain the effort for very long.

Dropping to the ground next to Caiden, Teigh crossed his legs to match Caiden's meditative pose. Muscles rippled through the dark fabric covering his body. Caiden resisted the urge to reach out and run his hands over his lover's body. Though he was able to fool their daughters with the illusion of touch, the gesture would only cause Teigh to sadden.

"Torrey's children are ten and Desiree's are eight. Both of our girls have taught the kids the necessary rituals."

This should have made hope soar in Caiden's chest. It did not. "We still need to find Circe and Soren. Or rather, Soren needs to find Circe to activate her powers. That's if she's even been born."

Caiden didn't need to see Teigh to know the man grimaced. While one of Caiden's duties required him to implant the souls of their daughters into the appropriate bodies, he had no control over Circe's cycle of rebirth. It would have been wrong anyway. Circe was their wife, their lover, the mother of their children. Casting her in the role of even a symbolic offspring would have tainted the relationship.

Teigh sighed and shifted. He had never been able to sit still for very long. "Torrey's husband has a brother named Soren."

This brought a snort in response from Caiden. "Soren is one of the most common names among werewolves there is. You can go into any settlement and find ten men with that name."

"Demons speak to him. It can't be a coincidence." Teigh rose and lifted his face to the stars. "We've waited too long."

"He tried to kill Torrey." Even as Caiden pointed out the flaw in Teigh's reasoning, a thought occurred to him. "Do you think the souls of those who killed us found Soren before we did?"

As he watched, Teigh faded, vanishing before his eyes. Profound loneliness swept through Caiden. Just when he ceded to the urge, he

felt his consciousness swept away. Not only were his daughters strong enough to summon him like this, now his grandchildren had mastered the skill. He had no way of knowing who called him or what they wanted until he landed next to them.

The kitchen in which he found himself wasn't at all familiar. Short rows of cabinets sat on two walls. At a sink overlooking a window, he spied a woman. Moonlight spilled through the lace curtains, barely illuminating the darkened room enough for him to see her outline. A large shirt or a short gown fell around her body, the extra fabric folding in waves to hide her form. Somewhere around her thighs, it fell into shadow, leaving him uncertain where the garment ended.

Water whooshed from the tap, captured in a glass she eventually raised to her lips. The water disappeared as she greedily gulped it down.

Caiden wanted to say something, but he had no idea who she was or how she had called him. To his knowledge, he only had the souls of two daughters wandering the Earth. The rest of them had asked to be released from their obligation, the pieces of their souls scattered in the universe, which he had done. If they didn't find Circe this time, he had no plans to ask Torrey and Desiree to try again.

She turned, and the glass slid from her grip to shatter on the floor. No scream issued from her, but the color did drain from her face until she glowed eerily in the pale light of the moon. One hand rose, and she reached for him, her hand hovering tentatively as if she couldn't believe he was actually there.

"Caiden."

The whispered word drew his attention to her lips, dark against her white skin. Light flooded the room, but Caiden didn't look to see who had joined them. The incandescent bulb's yellow glow showed healthy color returning to her face.

She was tall, easily the same height as his daughters. She would be able to rest her head against his shoulder if he could hold her in his

arms. Golden strands threaded through light brown hair, evidence of time spent in the sun. Her light brown eyes lit from within, and her body shimmered with suppressed energy.

The enormity of the moment swamped Caiden's consciousness. He held his hand out to her, wanting and needing a physical contact he knew wasn't possible. Her name escaped his lips. "Circe."

Everything faded, and Caiden found himself back in the nothingness that made up his home.

* * * *

"Riley? Honey, are you okay?"

Riley stepped forward, but Soren's hand shot out and clamped onto her shoulder. She turned her head to peer up at him. The vague, unreal quality that had permeated the room only seconds before had vanished, leaving a confused mess swirling through her head.

He dipped his head closer to her. "Are you sleepwalking?"

"I kinda feel like it, but no, I'm awake." Only now did she remember dropping the glass. She looked down at where she had come close to stepping on one of the shards. "At least it broke into big pieces."

He bent down and gathered the pieces, placing each into the bottom half of the glass, which had remained intact. Riley backed away from the mess and headed to the pantry for a paper bag.

When she returned, she held it open as Soren placed the pieces inside. "I'll put this into the recycling bin. You get a broom and sweep for smaller pieces."

By the time he returned, she had finished. The small kitchen made it a small job. He lifted her into his arms. "I knew I should have gone with you. See? You need protection even if you're only going down the hall."

She snorted even as she relaxed into his embrace. Ever since she had arrived home to find him making grilled cheese and home fries,

he had harped on her about her adamant refusal to let him accompany her to work. “Just because I’m tired and klutzy doesn’t mean I need a bodyguard. It means I need sleep.”

In his strong arms, she felt light and small, two things she wasn’t all that used to feeling. She rested her cheek against his chest and let her hand rest just below the pulse ticking on his neck. Breathing deeply, she inhaled his scent. It filled her senses, and she sighed contentedly.

He kissed the top of her head and tossed her onto sheets that still held heat from their earlier activities. “I guess I should leave you alone so you could you get some sleep.” Instead of rounding the bed to climb in from the other side, he rolled to hover just above her body. Heat smoked his eyes, darkening their color. His lips teased close to hers, sending her pulse racing, but he didn’t deliver. “Or I could make you so exhausted you can’t stay awake.”

Amused and sleepy, she smiled an invitation anyway. “I’m already so tired I hallucinated a man in the kitchen.”

Every one of Soren’s muscles tensed. He raised his body, lifting his head to better use his wolf senses. “I neither smell nor hear anyone.”

This time, she laughed and ran a hand up his thigh. Cords of muscle rippled beneath her fingers. “I said I hallucinated him. I even knew his name. It was Caiden.” She wrinkled her nose as the memory slowly focused in her head. “He didn’t know my name, though. He called me ‘Circe.’ You’d think my own hallucination would know my name.”

He sat back on his heels, kneeling on either side of her legs, and frowned at her. “Why are you so sure it was a hallucination?”

She reached up and tugged at the waistband of his boxers. “I just knew he wasn’t really there. I wasn’t afraid of him. It was like I knew him, but I don’t. Weird. Now, I’ve decided for option two, so get to work before nature takes over and I pass out.”

Soren frowned, and deep thoughts creased a line between his eyes.

“Oh, Soren, don’t overanalyze it.” Riley sat up to get a better angle with her hand. She slid it into his boxers, but he stopped her with one powerful hand on her wrist.

“Something isn’t right. You’re dismissing this too quickly. What did his eyes look like?”

Reluctantly, Riley gave up her attempt at seduction and flopped back onto her pillows. Soren abandoned his prime position between her legs to slide under the covers next to her. His penetrating gaze never left her face, no matter how much she wished he might penetrate her elsewhere.

With a resigned sigh, she closed her eyes to focus the image of the man in her kitchen. “Blue. They were clear, crystal blue. He had black hair. It was shorter than yours, but still kinda long. It went almost to his shoulders.” The image of him in her head included a backdrop of a sandy beach and a bright, sunny day. She opened her eyes and frowned. “It’s weird to know all of that stuff when it was dark in there and I could barely see him.”

He squeezed her hand, and for the first time, Riley felt the weight of his worry. “Did he scare you?”

“No, he didn’t.” She lifted his arm and wiggled closer. Resting her head on his shoulder and snuggling her body against his, she tried to reassure him with her touch. “He seemed as surprised to be there as I was to see him there. He’d never hurt me. He loves me.”

As the words fell from her lips, she knew they were the truth. That didn’t negate the shock running through her system. She shivered and burrowed even closer to Soren, seeking comfort from him as much as she sought to comfort him.

“How in the world could I know that?”

He stroked her hair and kissed her forehead. “I don’t know, honey. I just hope this doesn’t mean demons are close to finding me. Now that I’ve found you again, I couldn’t bear to leave you.”

Pain stabbed at her heart. She didn’t want him to have to leave, either. “Soren, this man isn’t a demon, and he isn’t after you or me.

He's a good person. He likes seafood, and he's really good with plants. He's kind and sensitive, and he's the person our daughters go to when they need a shoulder to cry on."

Panicked, she pushed away from Soren and sat up. The reading lamp he had turned on when he followed her into the kitchen cast the room with long shadows that seemed to jump out at her. She pressed the heels of her hands to her temples. Soren's arms held her tight, keeping the shivers wracking her body to a minimum.

"What the hell was that? What's happening to me?"

"I don't know, Riley. I should be jealous that you're talking about another man loving you, but I'm not. Maybe I should bite you, turn you into a wolf. It'll give you extra senses to protect you against whatever this is."

Riley shook her head. As much as the idea might appeal to some, she had no desire to become a shape-shifter. She clung to the thick arms banding her body. "I wasn't meant to take your power like that."

He held her for the longest time, rocking her back and forth in a soothing motion that eventually lulled her to sleep.

* * * *

Caiden waited in his favorite grotto. The sheer cliff walls rose on three sides, casting much of the space into shadow even during the brightest parts of the day. The sun was one thing for which he'd always been grateful. Circe might have damned him to this existence, but she had left him in a virtual replica of the paradise they had shared for so long. Sometimes loneliness overwhelmed him, but walking among the dwellings and trees where his family had once flourished helped him to keep them fresh in his memories. It brought him immeasurable relief to be here.

The waxing moon hung low in the sky, appearing much larger and brighter than normal. It seemed close enough so that if he reached out,

he could run his fingers along the rocky surface. He loved the harvest moon for this reason alone.

Waves lapped the shore, drawing him into the open. He stared at the moonlight reflecting from the calm surface and wondered at the vision he'd encountered earlier. As if he'd conjured her, she appeared next to him.

Her bare toes wiggled in the sand, and the cold ocean water shocked a gasp from between her lips.

"Shouldn't this be warmer?" She didn't move away from the water. "Aren't we in the topics?"

Caiden shrugged, struggling to hide the excitement urging him to throw his arms around her and kiss her senseless. "Not when the water is cold, my darling. This world you've created is always moving. It's safer that way."

She looked at him. He felt her eyes boring into the side of his face, demanding his undivided attention. Unable to deny her anything, he turned his head and met her gaze. She searched his eyes, her hazel irises glowing with an inner light missing when she assumed her human form.

Reaching out, he lifted her chin to angle her face into the moon's light. The physical features he'd always loved had changed so much, and yet he saw no difference at all. Her kind eyes held a vast well of inner strength. She didn't flinch away from the sparks of urgency and expectation wrought by their physical contact. He recognized her struggle to make sense of it all.

"I'm dreaming."

Caiden shook his head. "No, my love. This is quite real. Your body can't travel here, but your spirit can be denied nothing."

She lifted a hand to caress his cheek. Caiden closed his eyes to focus the sensation. "I've caused you pain," she said, her voice just above a whisper. "I'm sorry."

His eyes flew open. "No, beloved, you did what had to be done to save us all."

“How do I know your name, and why do I feel such love for you?” Her hand explored his cheeks and the slight dip on the tip of his nose before moving to caress his lips. “I don’t feel disloyal to Soren at all.”

Relief almost crippled Caiden. “You found Soren? That makes sense. He would have activated your powers. Oh, Circe, this is wonderful. The four of us will soon be reunited.”

Unable to contain himself one moment longer, he feathered his lips over hers, worshipping with his gentle touch and asking for admittance. She stepped into his arms and tilted her face for a better angle. Her lips parted, and her tongue darted out to lick at the tip of his, inviting him inside.

Heat exploded, and she melted against him. He tightened his grip, holding her firmly against his body. Her breasts pressed into his chest. His shirt, which he hadn’t bothered to button, flapped open, but she still wore the same cotton nightshirt she had been wearing earlier. The thin barrier was too much, yet he knew to rip it away would be too much, too fast. He’d waited three thousand years. Surely, he could take his time. After all, she didn’t quite remember him.

She broke the kiss, throwing her head back to gulp air. Her fragile body quivered, and her fingers dug into his arms. “Caiden, please tell me what’s going on. Why do I have such profound feelings for you when tonight is the first time I ever met you?”

He trailed kisses across her jaw and down her throat. “Circe, darling, we’ve been together since before man learned to sail the seas.”

A tiny moan escaped when he found a sensitive place near the hollow of her throat. This new body had different erogenous zones, and he planned to enjoy finding every single one of them. Her hands moved, and her fingers tangled in his hair.

“Make love to me. Help me remember.”

She ground her moist heat against the linen covering his thigh, and he realized she wore nothing beneath this gown. He lifted it

slowly, watching as the moonlight revealed her smooth skin one inch at a time. He had once thought her the most beautiful woman in existence. Though her body was taller and her coloring was different, her breasts lighter and her hips not as curvy, he once again fell in love with the physical perfection of her flesh.

With the pad of one thumb, he grazed her nipple. It puckered into a hard peak his mouth watered to taste. He dipped his head and drew the pebbled point between his teeth. She hissed and moaned, pressing his head closer. The delightful perfume of her arousal drifted to his nose, aided by the breeze.

“You smell like the heavens, my love. Let me taste you.”

He didn’t wait for permission. His woman didn’t feel the need to command where sex was concerned. She might rule them all with an iron fist with regard to all other matters, but she left the bedroom decisions up to them.

As he expected, Circe widened her stance. Her woman’s dew already coated the unnaturally short hairs that barely covered her lips. Caiden frowned briefly, and then he dismissed whatever fad caused her to trim her pubic hair. He found it attractive and functional. His tongue darted out, licking away the first drops of her desire.

Musky and sweet, she tasted heavenly. He parted her lips roughly with his thumbs and licked with abandon. She moaned and thrust her hips against his face.

He lifted her, halting her actions, and laid her onto a soft blanket. She started and looked around, trying to orient herself to the changes.

“This world exists in my head,” he said. “If I want something, all I have to do is imagine it, and it becomes real.”

She glanced around again. Waves lapped nearby. “Can you imagine a whole bunch of white candles of all different sizes and shapes? I always thought that would be very romantic.”

Caiden blinked, and her wish manifested. His gaze swept the scene and agreed with her assumption. Candlelight mixed with

moonlight, and the velvety darkness of the vast night sky blanketed everything. Very romantic, indeed.

She stared up at him, and her eyes misted over. She reached a trembling hand to touch his cheek. "You do love me."

He nodded. "More than life itself."

She gripped him hard, jerking his head down to crash his lips against hers. He hadn't expected such an aggressive move from his sweet little Circe. Fire raged between them. He allowed her to control the kiss for a bit, and then he evened things out, giving as much as he received. She gentled, melding her body to his, lifting her hips to grind her sweet pussy against his erection.

Her hands explored his chest, tantalizing him with a touch that alternated light and rough. At last, she slid one hand between them and gripped his cock, stroking it through the thin linen of his pants. Caiden nearly exploded in her hand.

Wrenching her hand away, he pinned her wrists to the ground. He leaned all of his weight on them, understanding the battle of wills that would ultimately win in this plane of existence.

He peered down and read the surprise in her eyes. She didn't struggle against his hold. Relenting a bit, he eased some of his weight away.

"I want to touch you."

Caiden grunted. "Not yet."

"You sound like Soren. Am I really so beautiful that you can't control yourself when I touch you?"

"Beautiful, desirable, incendiary. Yes, Circe, you are all of those things and more. If we're not careful, you'll consume me whole." Caiden kissed her hard to stop the flow of words. Soon, she would remember everything and discussions like this would become redundant.

* * * *

Riley felt as if flames licked the edges of her soul. Caiden's kiss consumed her, mastered her will. She felt herself yielding to him, all the while knowing the submission was temporary. While it felt real, she knew it wasn't. Only minutes ago, she had fallen asleep in Soren's arms.

He kissed her cheeks and eyelids before trailing a path of fire from one earlobe to the other. She thrust her pelvis against him, trying to sate some of the need smoldering between her legs.

Caiden shifted his weight, moving her arms so that he could hold both wrists with one hand. His free shoulder dropped, and he caught her leg under her knee. With practiced ease, he shifted until he held her down by pinning her knees against her chest. This position bared her pussy to his gaze. He licked and sucked a path down her torso, pausing at intervals to nip and kiss her inner thighs.

Memories, indistinct except for the pulsing hedonism and the tender impressions of love, flooded back to Riley. This wasn't her first time with Caiden. Like Soren, he preferred the dominant position. She knew he wasn't going to let her do anything he didn't want her to do. No matter how much she yearned to touch him, he would never surrender that control.

Not to her, anyway.

He would, however, surrender it to Soren. He would kneel at Soren's feet and welcome Soren's hard cock inside his mouth, swallowing the complete length until nothing remained.

Riley now had not one, but two men to dominate her in bed. And yet, she knew neither would hesitate to fulfill her slightest wish.

Caiden pushed her wrists down, the sand beneath the blanket moving easily to cradle them. Then he let go, and she understood she wasn't to move her hands. Riley needed to hold something, so she grabbed for the blanket, squishing it in her fists.

He paused in nibbling just outside of her labia. "Good girl, Circe. Keep those hands exactly where I put them."

With that, he clamped his mouth onto her pussy, sucking hard at much more flesh than she thought possible. The inferno of his mouth combined with the sharp pinch of the suction, stimulating her too fast to allow her to become used to it. She cried out, instinctively arching her back to dilute the sensation. Caiden paused his actions and pushed her back down, a warning with which she instantly complied.

His mouth never left her pussy. He sucked harder, grinding his tongue on the flesh surrounding her hole. The roughness and the slight pain reminded her of the way it felt to be stretched wide as Soren pounded into her. The exquisiteness of the feelings he generated bloomed, and her pussy no longer wanted to retreat. She thrust, pressing closer.

Caiden lifted his head. "That's it, darling. I knew you'd like that. Give me your hands."

Slowly, she lowered her hands, expecting the muscles in her shoulders to ache and protest. Since this was a dream, they did not. Caiden placed each of her hands under their respective knees. Now she held herself completely open to him. He sat back on his heels and raked his gaze over her offering.

"Beautiful, Circe. Simply gorgeous. See how your pussy weeps for me? It begs to be licked and sucked and fucked. You want that, darling, don't you?"

Riley wished he would touch her. She wished he would at least caress her folds as he spoke. He did caress her folds, but he used only his eyes, and it didn't count for much except to make her want him more.

She realized he waited for her answer. Hastily, she nodded. "Yes, Caiden, please. I wish you would call me Riley."

He shook his head. The small movement conveyed a wealth of meaning. "That name is temporary. Circe is timeless. You, my love, are timeless. Soon, you will remember, and none of this nonsense will matter."

Riley didn't think her name constituted nonsense, but she didn't want him to stop. An intuition tugged at the back of her mind, warning her to keep quiet. She wanted this from Caiden. She needed it. If he stopped now, a piece of her soul would tear away, and she might never know why she felt such love for this man.

Sensing her acceptance, he traced her folds with one finger. One became two, and he plunged them both into her waiting opening. Riley moaned and basked in the fullness of this preliminary penetration. He worked her this way until her breaths came in gasps and pleas.

She wanted so badly to move. She wanted to push him onto his back and ride him until she came, which wouldn't be all that long. He had yet to remove his pants, but his erection strained at the soft fabric, hard evidence of how much he wanted her.

Then, in the blink of an eye, his clothes vanished. He removed her hands from where she obediently held her knees, and he pushed them to the side. She held her arms out, craving the feel of his chest against hers, and he lowered himself into her welcoming embrace.

He didn't protest when her greedy mouth found his and demanded kissing. With one thrust, his tongue and his cock staked claims in her body. She wrapped her legs around his waist, clinging to him without seeking to control the pace.

There was no need for him to hold his weight from crushing her. In this dream world, the only things possible were the ones he allowed. One of his hands sought her breast. He squeezed and kneaded in time to his thrusts, spiking tendrils of heat through her body to clash with the ones radiating from her pussy. His other hand reached behind her, and his fingers, coated in her juices, breached the tight muscle guarding her anus. Riley didn't flinch one bit. Soren had already prepared her this way.

A thrill ran through her as she fought to control too many points of pleasure.

"Come for me, Circe. Come, my darling."

Riley's body obeyed instantly. The spikes and pulses merged, and she exploded with one long, loud cry.

* * * *

She opened her eyes to find Soren grinning down at her. He had propped himself up on one elbow. His free hand tweaked a nipple through the thin cotton of the shirt she had thrown on the night before to get water. If she didn't watch closely, their activities were going to cause her to dehydrate.

"Why do you look so damn cocky?" The voice emerging from her throat cracked and croaked. She put a hand to her throat and swallowed. Then she frowned at the sandpapery feel.

"You had a wet dream, and I got to watch."

Realization dawned quickly. Though she wasn't naked, Riley jerked the covers up to shield her body. Shame washed through her body, coating her insides with bitter fear. How would Soren react if he knew the content of her dream?

His confident grin turned to a puzzled frown. "Honey? What's wrong? You're okay with me watching you climax when you're awake, but you don't like me watching when you're asleep? I like watching you come." He took her hand and set it down over his erection, also shielded by the covers. "I want to make you come again."

Of their own accord, her fingers wrapped around his erection and stroked it up and down. She forced herself to stop after a few moments.

Soren snatched away the blanket, refusing to let her hide. He slid one hand under her ass and turned her until she lay on her side, her chest pressed to his. "My sense of smell is very developed, honey. I know you're wet and ready."

She fingered a strand of his shaggy blond hair. It felt so much like Caiden's silky locks. The entire dream felt too real to not have

happened. At last, she met his gaze. "Soren, I wasn't dreaming about you. I'm sorry."

He stroked a hand down her spine, and a thoughtful frown creased his brow. After several passes, he nodded. "Honey, I don't expect to occupy your every thought. It's okay if you dream about other men, but I do prefer you don't tell me about it."

The guilt she hadn't felt the night before finally made an appearance. She hadn't meant to hurt him. This was the kind of conversation she needed to have with Torrey. Her sister might understand that she wanted to know why it seemed so real. Riley's hand had come up to rest against his chest when he rolled her. She used it now to put some distance between them.

Soren grunted, but he didn't allow her to move away. "I'm not mad at you, Riley. I'm not even jealous."

"You shouldn't be," she said. "I didn't intend to make you jealous." She recalled thinking he might have liked to participate.

Understanding glinted from his teal eyes. "It was the man you saw in the kitchen last night, wasn't it? Caiden?"

"He was real." She whispered, knowing he would point out the obvious. He had watched her dream the sex. "He knew you. He seemed very pleased I had found you."

He smoothed her hair away from her temple. "I know being with me is hard for you. It's going to take you some time to fully accept your feelings for me. I'm not going anywhere, no matter how many men you dream about fucking."

Riley dropped her gaze. She studied the smooth planes of his chest, amazed that such a hairy beast could shift into someone who didn't even have a light sprinkling of hair until just below his navel. In her dream, Caiden had made love to her. He had been dominating and demanding, but love permeated his every move and blazed from his eyes.

With the curve of his finger, he lifted her chin, forcing her to look into his eyes. "You're mine, Riley. Deep down, you know that."

There's nothing you can say that will tear me from your side, but this insistence of having other lovers, even dream lovers, needs to be something you keep to yourself."

He lifted her leg, draping it over his hip. The tip of his morning erection poked at her folds. The wetness there grew, and her pussy clenched in anticipation. From the satisfied smile lifting the corners of his mouth, she knew he scented exactly how much she wanted him.

Defiant, she glared at him. "He's your lover, too. Just wait, because the next time you fall asleep, he'll come to you. Then you can tell me just how real it is to feel him sucking on your cock or fucking your ass."

All humor fled from Soren's face. He growled and rolled them both, pinning her to the mattress with his body and his hands. "If I were to have sex with a man, I would be the one fucking his ass."

The image of Soren thrusting into Caiden, both of their faces twisted with pleasure and love, nearly sent Riley over the edge. She moistened her lips and tried not to think about the thick erection pressed along the length of her thigh. If he let her move, she could spread her legs and take him inside her.

Just thinking about it made her want to have the two of them together. Caiden and Soren were both skilled lovers. Together, their combined skills would keep her in a constant state of longing and bliss.

Soren shoved a knee between her legs, and she parted for him willingly, welcoming the way he filled her with one thrust. He rocked into her twice, and she couldn't hold off the orgasm that crashed through her body. Her pussy pulsed, spasming around him, yet she was unable to milk a climax from him.

He lifted one of her legs high. Before she could protest the way he stretched her muscles, he had turned her so that she lay on her stomach. The maneuver allowed his cock to stay encased in her silky softness.

There was no way she could take his weight, and she desperately needed to feel his flesh against hers. Grasping her hips, he pulled her back. She thought he might position her on all fours and fuck her ass, something she absolutely loved, but he didn't. He kept pulling until she sat on his lap, connected by the erection filling her pussy.

Her legs fell to the outside of his, leaving no way for her to find enough leverage to take over making the in-and-out motion she craved. He pinched her nipple, and she squeaked out a moan, unable to do much more because she had yet to recover her breath from the last orgasm.

While one hand played with her breast, the other slid up her thigh. He tugged at her labia, spreading her wider so that when he peered over her shoulder, the place where they came together was completely revealed.

"You're going to play with me." The guess carried a note of protest. Soren could keep her on edge for hours. If Caiden were here, they would take turns holding her down and teasing her to the point just before orgasm. *How in the world did she know that?*

"You need to know who is master of your body, Riley. You need to understand in the deepest levels of your soul that you are mine."

A deep, unfamiliar voice chimed in. "And mine."

Chapter 4

Riley had rested her head against Soren's shoulder at his pronouncement. She jerked it up to stare at the man invading her bedroom.

A little taller than Caiden, his height would still only come to Soren's shoulder. Shapeless garments covered his body, and a hood covered his face, making all of his features indistinguishable. Still, she could make out his muscular frame and broad shoulders. She had a weakness for broad shoulders, and she felt an instant attraction to and affection for this man whose features she couldn't even see. What the hell was going on?

Soren snagged the sheet and covered her nakedness. "What are you doing here?"

The man snatched the sheet away. "You would shield our wife from my eyes?"

She expected Soren to push her away and leap at this man, but he said nothing. His heart beat strong and steady against her back. Soren didn't fear this man, and he wasn't pissed to find him standing next to the bed while they had sex. Curiously, she didn't feel exposed by the way his eyes roamed her body, seeking the curves of her breasts, and running the flat of her stomach until it came to rest on the glistening folds of her pussy. She didn't even feel disturbed by the fact she knew his eyes roamed her body even though she couldn't see his face.

Finally, Riley broke the silence. She meant to ask for an explanation, but that wasn't what came out. "Teigh?"

He smiled. She didn't know how she knew the sensuous way his lips widened, given that she couldn't see his features, but she did. "Caiden said you didn't quite remember, baby."

Her hand lifted, seeking to touch him of its own volition. He closed the distance between them, lifting one knee to the bed. His weight dipped them closer, and she pushed back his hood to caress his cheek. It fell away, revealing nothing concrete.

As she touched him, the wavering and indistinct lines of his features came into focus. Strong, high cheekbones underlined deep brown eyes. The big, round shape of his eyes echoed in the curve of his cheek. The sharp bones beneath his dark chocolate skin made a paradox of the softness he projected, giving him the same dangerous, predatory air that radiated from Soren.

She traced a path over the flat bridge his nose, forcing more of him to come into focus. Only, when she moved, the parts she no longer touched wavered and became indistinct. When she at last gathered the courage to touch his lips, she found them to be as lush and sensuous as she imagined. His lips parted, and he took her finger into his mouth, sucking and licking in a rhythm that kept her completely mesmerized.

"The Shadow Man is supposed to help wolves find their mates, not steal them." Soren growled the warning, and the hardness inside her softened a bit.

Teigh released her finger and raised his gaze to nail Soren with a blazing tenderness. "All this time, you were right there in front of me. I even warned your brother about your compulsion." He reached behind Riley to cup the back of Soren's head with his large palm. "Even if I knew it was you, I couldn't have interfered. I couldn't reveal myself to you until you found Circe."

Riley rolled her eyes at the name. She knew he meant her, but that wasn't her name. For goodness sake, she *liked* her name. The correction died on the tip of her tongue when Teigh locked his lips to Soren's.

She angled her face so that she could witness the full extent of the first time she'd ever seen two men kissing. This also didn't cause her to feel anything unpleasant. Instead of the jealousy she expected, seeing Teigh's lips and tongue duel with Soren's as they fought for dominance just felt right. Soren's light coloring contrasted sharply with Teigh's mocha skin and the black dreadlocks that fell to the middle of his back. Though they had always been there, she hadn't yet touched his hair, so the dreads hadn't been in focus.

The kiss was hot, and much more brutal than the way Soren had kissed her. Soren's hand tightened on her thigh, and his other hand wrapped around Teigh's neck to hold him close. The softening erection in her pussy lengthened, hardening once again.

Teigh's hand caressed her inner thigh, the rough fabric of his covering scraping her tender skin. Riley reached toward his neck, instinctively knowing where to find the string that would drop his cloak. One tug, and it fell away.

The clothes Teigh wore beneath his cloak didn't fit what she pictured him wearing. She thought to find him dressed similarly to Caiden, wearing silk or fine linen. The black denim jeans and matching T-shirt didn't quite fit her expectation, though they did accentuate his body nicely.

Without breaking his kiss with Soren, Teigh found her wet folds. He caressed her lightly. Her clit twitched and she shivered. Somewhere deep inside her, she remembered Teigh. She loved him the same way she loved Caiden and Soren. In the past six hours, she'd made love with a ghost, a werewolf, and now she was about to sleep with a Shadow Man. She knew he was the man who told Torrey how to find Shade, but nothing more. Soren seemed to have a history with him.

Teigh's caresses grew bolder. He stroked her harder and faster. She wiggled the best she could, trying to thrust against Soren's cock, but the seated position in which he held her didn't let her move much. Soren planted both hands on her hips and lifted her a few inches. He

slammed her back down on him. It wasn't much movement, but it was enough for now.

The rhythm faltered far too quickly, and Teigh's caress disappeared. Looking down, she saw that Teigh's hand had moved down to caress the base of Soren's shaft. She wasn't alone for long. Teigh broke his kiss with Soren. He trailed kisses across Soren's jaw and down his neck. When he came to Riley's shoulder, he changed trajectory to pepper her shoulder and neck with warm, firm kisses.

He had strong lips, not that Soren's lacked in any way, just that Teigh's were something to behold. He made his way to her lips. By the time he devoured her, whimpers and moans already spilled from deep in her throat. She opened to him, but he didn't take the bait.

Teigh had his own agenda. He feathered his full lips over hers, demanding with his mouth the way Soren demanded with his hands and Caiden demanded with his eyes. Riley melted under the onslaught. Her dream of being loved by two men was about to come true. With a start, she realized that soon, she would know what it was like to be loved by three men. Oh, but she was never going to walk again. She desperately hoped there weren't more. At least they loved one another, too. Satisfying three men on a regular basis would be a lot of work for one woman.

Hands kneaded her breasts, but she wasn't sure to whom they belonged. She didn't care as long as it didn't stop. Soren reached over Teigh to pull the shirt off their new lover, and one hand stayed on her breasts, so she surmised the other belonged to Teigh.

Her lips moved under his, responding to his direction and begging for his tongue. At last, he swept it into her mouth, mastering her with one stroke. Fingers plucked at her clit and Soren thrust into her pussy. Hands kneaded her breasts and pinched sharply at her nipples. She came hard and fast, the small orgasm pummeling her unexpectedly and leaving her wanting more.

Teigh broke the kiss. "So responsive, baby. I've missed you." He lifted his warm eyes to include Soren. "I've missed you both so

much.” Then his eyes dropped, and Riley held her breath as he looked at her pussy. Soren’s cock impaled her still, a hard and ready sword.

His head followed his gaze, and he dropped to kneel on the floor next to the bed. With the flex of his powerful arms, he slid Soren closer. Riley gasped at the sleeping power in his muscles, but then she reasoned that, like Soren, Teigh was a supernatural being. It stood to reason he would be strong as well as magical.

What did three powerful men, each possessing the ability to work magic, want with her?

She shelved that thought when the flat of Teigh’s tongue pressed against her pussy. Behind her, Soren gasped as well, and she knew Teigh licked Soren’s cock with every pass of his tongue. This was one thing Soren had not allowed her to do. He maintained that his cock was too big for her mouth. However, it would fit nicely into Teigh’s or Caiden’s. Tremors of desire spiked through Riley at the image.

“You taste like heaven, both of you.” Teigh’s voice vibrated against Riley’s sensitive tissues. “Lie down, Soren.”

Soren did as Teigh commanded. Part of Riley was amazed that Soren followed Teigh’s orders. Perhaps this all had the same surreal air for Soren that it did for her. After all, how many women found themselves between two handsome lovers just because they wanted it to happen?

When he lay back, Soren took her with him. She rested her weight on Soren’s chest, luxuriating in the solid feel of him against her back. Teigh pushed her up, and Soren’s cock slid from her with a soft pop. She whimpered at the loss, but Soren’s fingers found her folds. One hand rubbed against her clit while fingers from the other hand found her G-spot. She bucked, and Soren moaned.

Lifting her head, she realized the cause of Soren’s enjoyment. Teigh’s amazing tongue licked Soren’s length, greedily lapping up her juices. Then he opened his mouth and slid Soren’s entire cock inside. Riley’s brows rose. Though she knew Teigh’s mouth could fit around Soren’s girth, she honestly didn’t think he’d be able to

swallow the entire thing. If Soren didn't have such a firm hold on her, she would have foregone the promised orgasm to scramble off him so she could watch from the sidelines. She consoled herself the loss by promising there would be time for voyeurism later.

As Soren neared climax, his hips rose, thrusting into Teigh's mouth and carrying Riley's hips upward in the same motion. The erotic distraction kept her own orgasm at bay, but not for long. Tension coiled tighter, and she submitted to it, welcoming the coming release. She and Soren shouted at the same time.

Teigh didn't give Riley a chance to catch her breath. Rising to his feet, he grabbed for Soren's fingers, still lodged inside Riley's pussy. He brought them to his mouth and licked them clean. Riley watched, fascinated, as one lover cleaned evidence of her orgasm from another lover's fingers. Teigh treated Soren's other hand the same way, and then he leaned over their splayed bodies, inhaling the aroma of passion.

"You both smell so good. It's been too long since I've tasted you, baby. Too long since I've been able to drink your sweet nectar." His hot tongue laved her swollen tissues, lapping gently until he'd cleaned away most of her juices.

Riley quivered and shook as he prolonged the aftershocks of her orgasm.

Then he lifted her from Soren's body, his grip almost reverent. She felt weightless and safe in his arms. He set her down next to Soren and pushed her legs apart. In one swift motion, he both changed his position and entered her body. He hovered over her, motionless, his face painted with rapture.

"Oh, baby, you fit me so well."

Struck speechless, Riley couldn't put together a coherent thought. She had expected him to make love to her, but she hadn't expected him to sheath his cock without a kiss or a warning. He did fit nicely, stretching and filling her deliciously. The desire so recently slaked by Soren roared to life. She lifted her hips to encourage him to move.

He held her down with one hand on her pelvic bone. His chocolate gaze penetrated the haze of her desire. "Wait, baby. I haven't had you in three thousand years. If you don't give me a minute, this isn't going to take very long." The corners of his lips lifted in a positively salacious smile. "And I know how much you like it to take a long, long time."

Marathon sex was a completely new concept to Riley. Some of her lovers had taken their time, but nothing ever lasted more than a half hour. Soren liked to repeat his performance, driving her to a minimum of three orgasms each time. Adding Teigh to the mix definitely tested the limits of her stamina.

She tried to return his smile. The rising need he created demanded to be sated, so she didn't know whether or not it came off as desperate. "I have to go to work soon."

Teigh chuckled, the sound vibrating deep in his chest. "Babe, when we're finished here, Soren and I are going to pack you up and take you to see our girls so they can undo this curse and the four of us can finally be together again. You're finished with your job. No woman of mine is going to work for someone else. You're the one who holds us all together. That's enough of a job."

Riley didn't care for the way he seemed to think he got a say in her life, not that she loved her job or necessarily wanted to continue doing it. Before she could protest, he withdrew and thrust back into her. The quick, sharp motion sent liquid heat traveling through every capillary in her body. Her protest came out as a moan. She grabbed his shoulders, holding on for dear life.

He thrust several more times, playing her body as if they'd been making love for years. He knew just how to angle his thrusts and just how much force to use. Riley rocked with him, too weak to wrap her legs around his waist the way she wanted.

The effects of her last orgasm had yet to fade, and Riley wasn't all that close to coming again. Teigh pried her fingers loose from his

bicep and kissed them. Then he moved her hand down to wrap her fist around Soren's cock.

"Make him hard, baby. Get him ready while I take care of you."

Soren's silky skin caressed her palm as she teased him. He rolled toward her so that she could adjust her grip, and he kissed her hard on the mouth. Teigh lowered his head to kiss her breasts, his soft lips grazing the undersides before paying attention to the pebbled peaks. Together, they swept her away in the rising tide. If she listened hard enough, she could hear the distant sounds of Caiden's beach.

Riley's task was easily accomplished. Soren's cock throbbed in her hand. Gently, he extricated himself from her grip and rolled away. She heard the sound of the drawer where she kept her vibrator opening and closing. When Soren knelt behind Teigh, she realized he had found the lube.

Teigh froze, and she didn't protest. Peering over his shoulder, she watched Soren squirt the gel onto his palm. He massaged it into his cock, and then he squeezed more onto his fingers. They disappeared from view, but she knew from Teigh's moan that Soren's lubricated fingers explored the tight ring of Teigh's ass. Jealousy flared briefly. She wanted both of them inside her.

But then she tamped it down. Soren loved this strange man as much as she did. It stood to reason he wanted to make love with Teigh as much as she did. She relaxed her neck and let her head drop back to the mattress. Teigh's gaze locked to hers, sharing the wondrous sensations Soren evoked as he sank into their lover's warmth.

Soren set the pace. His thrusts into Teigh dictated Teigh's thrusts into her. Together, they rocked, bucking and moaning, building sweet tension. As one, they cried out, welcoming the climaxes crashing over them.

Riley fought to stay awake, but the delicious languor claimed her consciousness.

* * * *

Hot coffee burned a path down Soren's parched throat. Weak streams of light played over the surfaces in the kitchen as the sun played hide-and-seek behind the clouds. He couldn't remember the last time he'd engaged in so much sexual play.

Never in his life did he imagine finding himself attracted to another man, much less the Shadow Man. The stuff of legends, the Shadow Man had been around in one form or another for his entire life. He was a shaman, a bringer of fate. Whenever he visited a wolf, things happened. Sometimes good, sometimes not, but that wolf's life changed.

Soren's life had irrevocably changed. Hours before, he had been hell-bent on proving to Riley that her dream lover could never own her body and soul the way he did. He had wanted to prove that he was the only lover she'd ever need.

Then Teigh had entered their lives. Soren didn't doubt that very few people were privy to the Shadow Man's real name, yet Riley had known it. She hadn't hesitated in naming him, though he didn't quite think she knew the legend behind the man, and she hadn't tempered her attraction to him.

How could he love a man he'd never truly met? Over a hundred years before, the Shadow Man had appeared to his brother, Shaden, to warn him about Soren's compulsion. Had he known even then that Soren was destined to become his lover?

This turn of events brought forth the question of whether Riley's dream lover would enter the fray as well. In the deepest part of his heart, he knew he already loved this Caiden. Closed eyes brought forth the image of a handsome man with blue eyes and black hair. His light skin would redden in the sun, and then the color would fade, never quite leaving behind a tan.

They had both called her by the wrong name. He had felt her bafflement both times. No doubt she felt the same profound feelings he felt. If she could know their names, why didn't they know hers?

More questions paraded through Soren's head. His heart and his instincts had never steered him wrong before. He wasn't about to question his feelings, but the many uncertainties brought lingering doubts.

Riley had some kind of power wholly different from a witch, but he couldn't see her using it for nefarious purposes.

This is her revenge for kidnapping her and almost killing her sister.

Soren's head jerked up and his heart raced. His eyes darted around, searching for the source of that little voice. He knew the search was doomed to failure. That voice tickled his dormant compulsion. He fought against it, knowing he could not win. The little bastards had found him after all. Giving up his home and his alpha position among his pack hadn't mattered. Slowly, his thinking shifted.

What better way to exact revenge than by making him, an alpha wolf, fall in love with her and then share her with two other men? Oh, but the brilliance of her plan only illuminated the depth of her cunning.

Two rooms away, she lay asleep in Teigh's arms, unaware her plan had been discovered. Still, doubt lingered in the back of his mind. The sweet woman he loved couldn't betray him. Or could she?

Circe carries so much more power than one of her daughters. With it, we will be all-powerful. We want it. We need it.

Urgency flooded Soren's system. He wanted that power. He needed that power.

Kill her before the Daughters unleash her power.

Soren started at that. Pain seared his chest at the image of Riley's lifeless body spread before him on a stone altar. "No. There has to be another way."

Kill her.

Dread churned in his gut, but it was no match for the need pulsing in his veins. His heart broke into a million pieces, burning a hole in his chest. He couldn't do this. He could fight the compulsion.

Chapter 5

Riley woke with the certainty that the warm body entangled with hers didn't belong to Soren. She opened her eyes slowly. The chest pressed against her cheek was a bit smaller than Soren's, though not small by any means, and much darker.

Teigh.

She eased away, putting a bit of distance between them so she could see his face. The indistinct features had settled into the sharp planes of an elegantly handsome man. They remained even when she didn't touch him. It looked like he was there to stay.

The surreal quality of the entire morning washed over Riley. While she didn't doubt Teigh's place in her life and in her heart, she did question the speed with which she had accepted three lovers. Though two had been present that morning, Caiden waited just beyond her reach.

Her aching muscles protested movement as Riley rolled from bed and limped to the shower. Fifteen minutes in there restored most of her mobility, but soreness lingered. She hoped time would help her body adjust to having three demanding men in her life.

She threw on a pair of sweats and a light shirt, and she headed to the kitchen.

"I called your work and told them you wouldn't be in today."

The fragrant aroma of fresh coffee filled the room. Soren sat at the table sipping from a flower-patterned mug she had acquired at a garage sale. His sky blue shirt molded to his shoulders, and the short sleeves only accented the tight lines of muscles that defined his strength. He didn't look at her once while she poured herself a cup.

“Thanks. I should feel bad about missing work, but I don’t.”

He sipped and shrugged. “You don’t need to work. I have plenty of money to support us all.” He cocked his head to the side, listening. Riley wondered what sounds his wolf hearing picked up. Frowning, he rose and headed to the coffee pot. “I thought Teigh would have vanished by now.”

Riley frowned, both because she didn’t understand why he thought Teigh would vanish and because he seemed to be continuing a conversation where she’d missed the first part.

“Why would Teigh vanish?” Nobody simply walked away after sharing what they’d shared. “You don’t walk away from people you love for no reason.”

Soren refilled his mug and watched curlicues of steam rise from the surface. “The Shadow Man isn’t known for sticking around for very long. He appears when he has something to say, and then he disappears after he says it.”

Riley formed a guess as to what bothered Soren. She stepped closer, closing the distance between them. Tentatively, she touched his shoulder. He tensed, and she backed off.

“Are you upset about what happened this morning?”

Again, his head cocked to the side. Though he didn’t look at her, his gaze didn’t focus on anything else. Finally, he shook his head. “Relationships such as these are not uncommon among wolves, though I can’t say I’ve ever felt an attraction to another man before.” He shook his head. “Doesn’t matter. Somehow, he’s part of me. Of us.”

When he didn’t continue, Riley sighed and set her cup down on the counter. Something bothered him. Since he didn’t seem inclined to talk about it, she knew she must be part of the problem. “Soren, please tell me what’s wrong. This is all new to me, too. I’ve never done anything like this before, and I’m not sure how I feel about it.”

Soren perked up. He parked his hands on the edges of the counter behind Riley, effectively caging her with his massive body. “Not sure

how you feel? Riley, you accepted the love of a man who kidnapped you and tried to sacrifice your sister. Then you had a dream encounter with a man I'm pretty sure I love, too, but haven't met. When you woke up this morning, a third man claimed you. They both seem to think you're this mystical witch-goddess person they've loved for thousands of years. I'm confused as all hell, but I know what I feel. How can you not be the same?"

His eyes bore into her with a fierce wildness she hadn't seen since the night he locked Torrey in his dungeon prison. At the time, she hadn't known of his actions, and the look had scared her until he switched gears, returning to the calm, steady man she thought she loved. The remembrance startled her. She gave herself a mental shake. Torrey had killed Soren's demons. Perhaps he wasn't as accepting of loving another man as he led her to believe. She resolved to be patient and understanding, two qualities she had in abundance.

Slowly, as if in a dream, she lifted her hand and caressed his cheek. "These past few days have seen me make some of the most impulsive, reckless decisions ever. I don't doubt my feelings for you or Teigh or Caiden. However, as you pointed out, you don't have a history of being trustworthy, and I really don't know Teigh or Caiden. They both called me by a name that isn't mine. I feel love for each of you, but I'm also very confused and unsure. Under the circumstances, I think that's okay."

Soren lowered his head, stopping with his lips inches from hers. Heavy breaths ravaged his chest and the counter creaked behind her. She hoped he didn't squeeze it until it broke. He closed his eyes, but she saw the wealth of pain he tried to hide.

"Sharing us isn't going to be easy for you." Somehow, she had to break through to find out what ate at him like this. She traced his jaw, trying to ease the tension there.

His eyes popped open. "Sharing you is surprisingly easy, Riley. I love all of you and it just seems right for each of you to love the other. It enhances our relationship. I'm more than okay with this."

“Then what’s wrong?”

He pushed away and turned his back on her. “Nothing’s wrong. I just need some time to adjust, some time to get this all straight in my head.”

“Your memories will return once our daughters perform the ceremony to restore us to the men we used to be.”

Riley peeked past Soren. Teigh filled the doorway. Though he was both thinner and shorter than Soren, Teigh had a substantial body and an incredibly sexy build. He radiated confidence and security, and the strength in his eyes warmed her heart. She ached to feel his arms around her, offering what Soren withheld.

She didn’t bother to hide the longing that gripped her soul. “What about me?”

He studied Soren, looking the man up and down before tearing his gaze away. It wandered around the room before landing on Riley. His expression gentled. “Once your powers are restored, you’ll become Circe, daughter of the sun, once again. Having watched our daughters struggle with this for millennia, I think not knowing who you are or who you used to be is better than knowing. Knowledge brings pain. I would rather you not suffer.”

Soren cocked his head to the side, an affectation Riley was realizing she did not miss. Then he straightened and regarded Teigh. “What powers does she have? Why aren’t they inside her now? The Daughters of Circe always reek of power, yet Riley doesn’t. I can smell something, but it isn’t the same. It’s less like power and more like pheromones.”

A soft chuckle escaped from Teigh. “You haven’t changed a bit, Soren. Always ready for sex. I think that’s why she made you a werewolf. That way you could interact with humans, and there would be no need to deny yourself. She knew you couldn’t go very long without sex. Three thousand years of abstinence might have made you insane. It’s also why she made you forget. You would have been loyal

to us no matter what, and we needed you to create a wolf population to perpetuate the passing of this power along the bloodlines.”

Riley gaped at Teigh’s pronouncement. She understood the reasoning behind having Soren father the world’s werewolf population, though she didn’t necessarily care for the idea of him having other lovers. Still, it was water under the bridge. She hadn’t exactly been celibate. “You haven’t had sex in three thousand years? What about Caiden? What about me? Am I reincarnated like Torrey and Desiree, or is this my first go-round?”

A shadow passed over Teigh’s face, and his eyes darkened. He plopped down on a chair that suddenly seemed too small and dainty to hold the men in her life. “Soren, how about some breakfast? I haven’t had a meal in so long I’ve forgotten what food tastes like. Having a growling stomach is new for me.” He lifted his eyes and met Riley’s gaze. “Circe, how about you pour some of that delicious-smelling coffee and come sit by me? We can check out Soren’s ass while he cooks.”

Soren moved to do Teigh’s bidding, which surprised Riley. While she knew he didn’t mind cooking or helping out with domestic chores, she also knew he didn’t take kindly to orders, even ones phrased nicely like Teigh’s. The underlying authority and irreverence in his voice would activate Soren’s need to be the alpha, and he would resist fulfilling any request. Or at least he used to be that way.

Something still wasn’t right, but Riley knew there was no way Soren would continue their talk in front of Teigh. She poured another mug of coffee and set it on the table in front of Teigh.

He leaned in and inhaled the steam, his nostrils flexing for maximum aroma enjoyment. His thick dreadlocks brushed the table and obscured his face. “I remember the first time I smelled this stuff. I wished so badly to taste it. This is a dream come true.”

Riley watched him sip. His dreamy, expectant expression soured. She bit her lip to keep from laughing. “How about some sugar?”

Teigh nodded. “It’s bitter. Do you use sugar?”

“Yes. Soren likes it black, but I can’t drink it that way.” She handed him the sugar bowl and a spoon. “Teigh, I’d like an answer to my question. How is it you and Caiden can remember Soren and me, yet we can’t remember you?”

The sour expression returned. “You only had so much magic to go around. You gave enough for our daughters to be reincarnated two at a time. Their souls stayed with Caiden in between lifetimes. Soren got a big chunk. That’s how he shape-shifts, and it’s why he can absorb a witch’s power. Caiden got the smallest amount. He can only exist as a soul. Once in a while, he can possess a human. He’s the one who helps the girls as they grow into young women and search out their mates. He also helps keep their spirits up while they wait to be reincarnated. I exist in both worlds, but I can’t materialize in either for very long.”

As he spoke, he spooned sugar into his mug. Four teaspoons later, he seemed satisfied with the flavor. Riley exhaled impatiently. “What about me?”

He shrugged. “You only said we would find each other eventually. You had a limited ability to know the future. You gave us assurances that it would all work out, and that was enough for us all. If you walked the Earth before this lifetime, then I did not know it. I know you didn’t find Soren before now because your union triggered your renewed connections to Caiden and myself.”

Soren threw a stack of pancakes on the table between them. He returned a moment later with plates, forks, and syrup. “You and Caiden have been together all this time?”

Teigh contemplated Soren for a minute, that mysterious expression returning once again. Then he dropped his gaze to the stack of food. “I could appear in his spirit world, but we couldn’t do more than talk to one another. Neither of us wanted to lead an existence where we had to be unfaithful to you or Circe. You shoulder the lion’s share of the burden, Soren. That’s why you have the lion’s share of the power.”

Connections formed for Riley. She began to understand the structure of their holding pattern, but she had no idea why it was necessary. “Can you still appear to Caiden?”

Teigh shook his head. “My power has faded too much. We have until the next full moon to complete the ritual, or we’ll all be stuck this way. We’ll grow old and die, and we’ll never be reborn again. Nothing will hold our daughters’ souls together. Your powers will return to the sun, and we will all cease to exist.”

Riley glanced at Soren who had yet to join them at the table. “And Soren will never meet Caiden.”

He still didn’t look directly at her. His avoidance dropped a pebble of dread in her stomach. “Who is Desiree?”

The question had been directed at Riley, but she didn’t answer. She watched Teigh’s face soften, and his eyes glazed over with love and pride. “Desiree is one of our two remaining daughters.”

Soren turned a chair backward and straddled it. He stared at Teigh. Riley wanted to smack him for the way he seemed to have dismissed her existence. He had ceased looking directly at her, and she hated the wall he was forging between them.

“Remaining? How many were there originally?”

“Sixteen. Circe’s power is refueled by the sun. We don’t have access to the sun. As we ran out of power, their souls stopped returning to Caiden. Their life energy scattered to the four winds.” His voice dropped to nearly a whisper. Sorrow laced his words, but hope was there, too.

Soren blinked, clearly shocked by Teigh’s news. Riley felt a distant sadness, but it wasn’t personal. She hadn’t known these daughters, and she hadn’t processed the whole idea that she was the reincarnated soul of Circe. The concept that Torrey was a Daughter of Circe still gave Riley pause. If she hadn’t seen Torrey use magic or shift into a wolf, then she wouldn’t have believed a word of it.

“Wow. Sixteen kids. Ouch.” Riley’s attempt to break the tension elicited a smile from Teigh.

“Over a period of several hundred years, babe. Every time one of them grew up, one of us would bring up the idea of having another.” He closed his hand over the fist in her lap she hadn’t realized she had formed.

Across the table, Soren scowled and cleared his throat. “What happens now?”

Riley wanted to stand up and yell at him. Maybe she’d throw the steaming stack of pancakes in his face. He had no call to behave this way.

Teigh distributed the breakfast food and poured the syrup. “Now that we have our thirteen, we head up to see the girls, they do their thing, and everything goes back to being like it was.”

Now Soren looked at her, and she desperately wished he would stop. The depth of his hostility radiated outward and scorched her heart. “So, she gets all the power and we have nothing? Will I still be a wolf?”

The way he threw the word “she” at Riley instead of using her name snapped her temper. She shot to her feet so fast her chair banged to the floor. “Damn it, Soren. What the hell is wrong with you?”

Teigh wrapped an arm around her shoulders, effectively pinning her arms to her sides. She glared up at him, but he merely flashed a reassuring smile. “It’s not ours, Soren. Think of it like a battery that’s almost out of juice. Once that’s gone, we all die. She’s the only one who can recharge it.”

Soren’s lips pressed together. His muscles clenched so tight he looked like he might break. Finally, he turned and stalked from the room. A truck engine roared to life, and tires squealed as they left the driveway. Riley turned to Teigh and buried her face in his shirt. She wasn’t sure whether she was more hurt or angry, but she didn’t like either feeling.

“He’s going to try to take it back.” Teigh’s hand soothed a path down her spine, but she wasn’t fooled into thinking he was unaffected.

“Take what back?” Even as she asked the question, the answer presented itself. He wanted her power, a power she didn’t yet possess. She closed her eyes against the truth. “Crap. His demons are back. How is that possible? Torrey killed them.”

A short, humorless laugh hissed from Teigh’s mouth. “There are hundreds of them. They overwhelmed us, Circe. It was a sneak attack. You woke screaming, having had a vision in your sleep. They killed our girls before we even knew they were on the island.”

The image of fire and people running in terror caused Riley to close her eyes. That wasn’t how it happened. It had been quiet. She had slept while her daughters and their lovers were murdered. Were there grandchildren? Horror washed through her body, and she shivered. That question would remain unasked.

“Where was this island? Why did I make Caiden a spirit and Soren a wolf and you...I don’t know what you are.” Riley shivered, and his arms tightened around her. She breathed in his reassuring masculine scent.

“You did the best you could, baby. It was night and you only had so much power to use. You had to corral our daughters’ souls and tie them to Caiden. Soren went out to watch over their lovers after you disguised them as shape-shifters. You wanted me to be able to liaise between them, to keep everyone together.”

But he had lost Soren. Too many reincarnations and too much time had passed. Riley didn’t question how her mind was able to fill in these blanks. “All these years, and you never lost faith.”

He eased her face away from his chest and wiped the wetness from her cheeks. His somber eyes easily penetrated her soul. “Never.”

Though she expected the kiss, she couldn’t have predicted the way the sweetness would explode into hungry passion. She needed this affirmation of their love even though she didn’t completely remember

their relationship. It seemed like she knew more now than she did a few hours ago.

“It’s the sex.”

Riley opened her eyes and blinked at Teigh. His lips lingered an inch from hers and she wanted them back. “What?”

“Your memories are beginning to return. So are your powers.” He grinned as she rose to her tiptoes to try to achieve her mission.

“Why? I thought we had to wait for the ritual.”

Teigh shook his head. “The transfer began the moment you first made love with Soren. Each time he’s with you, more and more shifts to you. I gave you most of what I have already. Caiden has also transferred a bit to you.”

“Then why is this ceremony-ritual thingy so important?” Riley was more than willing to use the rhythm method. Her men were damn good lovers.

“You’ll need back what the girls have in order to bring Caiden home and defeat those demons.” He gripped her shoulders. “Circe, those are the souls of the men who attacked us. You cursed them and damned them to this existence. Only the most powerful beings can hear them. Soren came by more power than you gave him when he stole it from some of our witch descendants. It was self-defense, but he wasn’t meant to be this powerful. That’s how he can hear them.”

She nodded solemnly. “We can’t let them destroy our family twice.”

He sealed his forehead to hers. The thick locks of hair springing from his head blocked the existence of the rest of the world. “No, baby. We can’t.”

Chapter 6

Riley prowled the rooms in her two-bedroom ranch rental taking stock of exactly what she would leave behind. She harbored no illusions she would have the chance to return to this little house.

It had come furnished, which meant a lot. It meant she didn't have to sleep in a sleeping bag until she could purchase a sofa-sleeper. When she had run from her life the first time, she had packed everything into a compact car and hauled a trailer that held her big things. The trailer had been stolen the first night she splurged on a hotel.

Calling her father for money was out of the question. After the way he'd treated Torrey, she could no longer stand to look at him. Shade had offered money time and again, but she insisted on making her own way.

Every time she saw or spoke to Torrey, her sister asked Riley to come live with them. She would be with family, and she would be able to see her nieces any time she wanted. Shade even built a guest house with the expectation that Riley would live there.

Pack mentality had taken over her sister's way of thinking. Riley understood Torrey's instinctual need to keep her family and loved ones close. She couldn't protect Riley from several thousand miles away.

For her part, Riley loved her sister. She loved visiting and talking on the phone. However, being around wolves for too long gave her the creeps. For almost two weeks, she had lived in the midst of a huge pack. Every time Soren had taken her out of the house, even for a

simple walk, hostile stares had penetrated the layers of fall clothing and left her chilled.

Shade had explained that wolves had a distinct dislike of humans and witches. Then Soren, the one man she trusted, the one man she thought she loved, had tried to sacrifice her sister.

And now he was gone. He'd left two days ago at breakfast, and he hadn't returned. She worried that he'd done something drastic to stop the demons that tormented him so mercilessly. She worried that he wouldn't come back. She worried that he would.

They needed him for this ritual. His energy would help fuel the transformation. But more than that, Riley felt a piece of her heart shriveling to nothing. The pain of his absence hurt. She stared out the front window, not really seeing the neat row of houses across the street or the way her neighbor, Cal, tugged at his dog's leash to keep him out of a flower bed.

"He'll be back." Teigh's strong hands engulfed her shoulders and moved down her back. He had expert massage technique, and she didn't want to stop him.

"Or he'll stay away until it's too late, just to keep me safe." Riley didn't doubt her place at the top of Soren's priority list. He loved Teigh, and he would love Caiden, but their relationship centered on Riley. She held them together. "Caiden will fade, and there will be nothing we can do about it."

He slid his arms around her waist and pulled her back against his chest. "The demons won't let him stay away. They'll make him want your power. They'll drive him to madness if necessary."

She hadn't considered that possibility. "We've lost him either way."

Teigh shook his head. "Even if he is insane, we can heal him afterward. When he accepted this role, Soren knew he wouldn't have an easy time of it. Circe, we all knew this wasn't going to be easy. The alternative was to permanently lose our daughters."

He shuddered. Riley turned in his arms, seeking to console him. While they hadn't talked about it too much, she knew he had seen the carnage up close and personal. All these years later, the wounds remained fresh. Losing fourteen of his daughters over the last three thousand years weighed heavily on his soul.

"It's not your fault, Teigh. You said the island was magical, that humans only found it after huge storms when they'd been shipwrecked. There was no reason to have elaborate defenses."

Some memories had returned to her. Lazy afternoons spent lounging naked on the beach with her three lovers. Visits to her father, the sun, that often ended badly because she refused to give up her human lovers to return home. Holding a daughter afloat as she learned to swim in the calm pool that formed at high tide. Thankfully, the massacre remained a distant nightmare.

Teigh had been working with her as some of her powers returned. His were completely gone. He had given them all up soon after he made love to her. Being part spirit, he could do that. Soren couldn't release everything at once. Teigh had advised her to take every opportunity to seduce him. That way, he wouldn't notice the slow and steady transfer of power.

And she had remembered her name. It didn't change much. She still thought of herself as Riley, but she didn't start when Teigh called her Circe.

His lips slanted over hers, seeking comfort. Riley welcomed the tongue that swept through her mouth, tasting her flavor and teasing her senses. She knew it wouldn't stop there. Physical sensation had been denied Teigh for too long. The man was ravenous, and his other lovers weren't available.

Too hungry to wait, Teigh tugged open her jeans and shoved them down. Her panties went with them. Riley didn't mind the rush, but the window behind her lacked a curtain. She mumbled a warning against his kiss. "Teigh, the bedroom."

With a groan, he hooked her knees under his arm and lifted her while resuming the heated kiss. His cock pressed against her thigh, hard evidence of his impatience. Though he had a firm hold on her, she clung to him anyway. He provided the solace and the balm for the uncharacteristic neediness that gripped her since Soren had vanished.

He lowered her to the bed, following her down and easing the fabric of his shirt from her fist. His tender gaze met and held hers as he lifted her hand to his mouth and brushed kisses over each finger. She could see the promise in his eyes floating behind all the assurances he knew wouldn't lessen her worry.

Then something in her snapped. Need raged through her system. She kicked the jeans from where they stuck around her knees, shimmying them down her body and out of the way. At the same time, she opened Teigh's jeans and used her hands to shove his down.

Teigh responded to her urgency. He lifted his hips to allow her to move his clothes out of the way, and he ravaged her mouth. By the time his luscious lips made it down her neck and to her collarbone, she had his cock positioned at her entrance.

"Now. Please don't wait." She needed to feel him inside, to experience that fleeting peace being with him could bring. Only when she had them all together and safe would this anxious feeling leave.

He plunged into her slick channel and set a brisk pace. Riley let her legs fall open. Wrapping her legs around his waist would only slow him down, and she didn't want that. She didn't want the fabric of their shirts between them, either, but she wasn't willing to release Teigh long enough to lose them. He planted his hands on either side of her shoulders and increased his pace.

The bedroom dissolved, and Riley barely noticed. In the back of her mind, she knew she was safe. Teigh's attention didn't waver from the inferno he was building so near her empty womb. So close to climax, she writhed beneath him, flexing her hips and clutching at his muscles and shirt.

Hands caught her wrists and pinned them above her head. She looked away from Teigh and into Caiden's clear blue eyes. He smiled in greeting and leaned between them to claim her lips.

Riley had come to know Soren as a dominating lover. Even if she was positioned on top, she only controlled the actions he approved. Teigh liked everything. He liked to pound her fast and hard, and he liked to lie back and let her do as she pleased. Caiden had held her down last time, too. Riley didn't have much experience with this kind of lover, but she couldn't deny the thrill racing through her body as she struggled futilely against his hold.

"Don't come, Circe."

She pinched her brows together, confused. Teigh slowed his thrusts, and she made a sound of protest.

Caiden drew a thumb between her brows, smoothing away her question. "My bed, my rules. Just because you don't remember the rules doesn't mean they've changed. Infractions will earn punishments, my sweet, for you and for Teigh."

Just like that, Teigh's pace increased. Riley fought against the climax, but it washed over her, a jerky, violent reaction she couldn't control. She cried out, and her pussy clenched Teigh's cock, forcing a cry from him as well. He came hard, his semen jetting against her cervix almost as hard as his cock had pounded there moments ago.

Her body trembled, and spasms caused the muscles in her thighs and ass to clench to the rhythm of her waning orgasm.

Silk whispered across her wrists, still imprisoned above her head. She glanced up to find Caiden binding her wrists together. The long, rose-colored silk rope caressed her skin, but when she pulled, she found it to be a secure tie.

Caiden looped the other end of the rope around something out of her line of sight. From nowhere, he produced more ropes. Teigh watched from the side of the bed, which seemed to be no more than a mattress on a pedestal, his expression expectant.

Silk slid across her skin. He wrapped the rope around her body, forming knots at strategic locations. By the time he finished, her limbs had been secured to unyielding hooks hidden below the level of the soft mattress. Dozens of knots pressed against points in her body that Riley now recognized as erogenous zones. Some of them she knew about. Others came as a complete surprise. Any time she made the tiniest movement, several knots moved pleasantly against points that made her want to feel Caiden or Teigh or both of them fucking her.

Hands on hips, Caiden stepped back and checked his handiwork, openly admiring the view.

“Is there a safe word?” Riley had never really tried this before. While she wasn’t sure as to the exact nature of Caiden’s kink, she wanted to know the ground rules.

Caiden shook his head, but then he stopped and thought. “We’ve never needed anything like that, but of course, you’ve always had magic at your disposal to stop or undo anything you didn’t want.”

“No pain,” Teigh said. He stared down at Riley, his gaze flickering to the different knots in the rope. “She doesn’t like pain.”

“No, she doesn’t.” Caiden threw a wicked grin at Teigh. “That’s what you love.”

Riley released a breath she hadn’t known she was holding. It explained the ache in her chest. She definitely didn’t want things to escalate that far. “Then is being tied up punishment for coming after you told me not to? In my defense, Teigh made me do it.”

Teigh laughed. “Circe, baby, that doesn’t matter except that it also earns a punishment for me. Your job was to refrain from having an orgasm.”

She shifted, ready to argue her case, but a knot dug into her clit and another stimulated a point just below her rib cage. Instead of words, she only managed a gasp.

Caiden smoothed her hair away from her brow and pressed a kiss to her temple. “This is your punishment for coming. If I merely wanted to restrain you, I would have done so. With the way the knots

are placed, every move you make will resonate through you like a lover's stroke, but none of it will bring you to the point of completion. While you're enduring this, you'll watch Teigh take his punishment. Even if you were inclined to lie perfectly still, this diversion is guaranteed to make you wiggle and squirm. You do love to watch, my darling. I would never deprive you of the sight of Teigh struggling to not come as I whip him."

The columns lining the little patio shifted, moving a little closer together. More silk rope appeared in Caiden's hands. He crooked his finger at Teigh, who smiled and moved into position. He held his wrists toward Caiden, and he waited patiently while Caiden secured the rope to them. Before too long, Teigh held his arms out to the side. Caiden tied the other ends of the ropes to loops on the columns, revealing their true purpose.

The speed with which Caiden secured Teigh amazed Riley, though given how quickly he had tied her up, she shouldn't have been surprised.

Without warning, the proportions of the patio shifted, and Teigh moved closer. Riley didn't have to crane her neck to see him. She could relax while she watched. Admittedly, she had no idea as to the extent Caiden would take things. She hadn't grown up in a vacuum. She knew there were different degrees of bondage and that each masochist had a unique preference for pain. However, she had never seen it done.

In the back of her mind, she knew she had witnessed this spectacle before. When her powers were returned to her, the memories would be right there, too. Even in her ignorance, the sight of Teigh bound so tightly, his substantial muscles straining against the ropes that stretched his arms and legs to the point where he couldn't move at all, made her pussy weep in anticipation.

A feral gleam lit Teigh's brown eyes. Candles appeared all around them, casting shadows that jumped and twitched over his dark skin. He looked even larger.

The first sharp smack echoed through the blackness of the night. Riley had no idea where they were or what was around them. The world had shrunk to include only the mattress, the ropes, the columns, and her lovers.

Teigh's expression didn't change. Behind him, Caiden swung again. The blow landed on his thigh. Riley hadn't seen the first one to know where it hit. Once again, Teigh didn't react.

She did, though. With each resounding crack, she flinched. The knots from the elaborate latticework binding caressed her skin and dug into those strategic and erotic places Caiden had pinpointed. Moans and little pleas squeaked from between her lips.

Caiden swung again and again, rounding Teigh's body so that he blocked Riley's view. The instrument in Caiden's hand turned out to be a leather paddle. Caiden worked his way down Teigh's chest to his legs. When he stepped away, the flickering candlelight showed a ruddy undertone to Teigh's mocha skin.

Anticipation marked the lines of Teigh's body, and his cock had thickened, hardening to half-mast. "More," he said. "Use the crop."

With a flick of Caiden's wrist, the paddle changed to a riding crop. He tested the handle in his hand, adjusting his grip until he found one that seemed to please him. A little leather square flapped from the end of the long rod.

Riley wondered whether the smaller surface area would hurt more or less. Teigh had already taken much more than she would have been able to endure. Where she would have been sobbing for mercy, he only demanded more. The fact he requested a specific instrument didn't escape her notice. If Caiden was in charge, why was Teigh allowed to call the shots?

She didn't have too much time to wonder. Caiden tapped the leather square against Teigh's pectoral muscles. Teigh's lips pressed together. While he had yet to lose his temper with Riley, she recognized the signs of frustration turning to anger. The ropes wrapped around her body hadn't driven her that far yet, but she didn't

have the benefit of experience to know where this was heading. Teigh did.

Caiden openly reveled in not giving Teigh exactly what he wanted, and Riley realized this was part of the punishment. Caiden knew exactly what Teigh wanted, and he refused to deliver.

As he had with the paddle, Caiden peppered Teigh's body with taps. Finally, Caiden flicked the crop extra hard, and a crack shot through the air. Teigh moaned loudly, and Riley jumped, jerking against the ropes. A fresh gush of cream rushed to her pussy. She whimpered for more, knowing full well Caiden had no intention of delivering additional stimulation until he decided to do so.

Caiden rounded to the back of Teigh, once again revealing the long muscles cording his entire body. His erection, large and thick, bobbed and strained, seeking the caress Caiden denied.

The staccato rhythm of the crop continued. Riley watched Caiden's arm rise and fall. Teigh relaxed into the beating as if he was being massaged. Suddenly, the crop sang through the air, cutting it with practiced precision. Teigh's body jerked, and he cried out.

The style of the assault changed. Each new blow whistled, and Teigh cried out loudly, not bothering to temper his volume or control his reaction. Riley's body flinched and moved, but soon she wiggled and writhed to both prolong and flee the unique torture of the knots she couldn't escape. Ragged breaths ravaged her throat. The bindings didn't stimulate enough to push her over the edge. If Soren was here, he would...

Riley pinched her eyes closed against the sadness that washed through her body and soul. Soren wasn't here. While they played around, he fought demons only he could see. As if she willed it, the rope binding her slackened and fell away. She wiggled free and sat up.

Caiden's questioning gaze penetrated deep. Riley couldn't meet it for long. From the corner of her eye, she saw him release Teigh. The two of them settled on each side of her.

Angry marks crossed Teigh's back, and most of his skin retained a deep flush from Caiden's rough treatment. With a tentative hand, Riley touched his skin. He smiled encouragingly, and a shiver ran through him when her finger crossed a light welt.

"The marks will fade in a few hours." He captured her hand in his and brought it to his lips. "We should make the most of them before they disappear."

She rushed to assure him that she understood. "I know this brings you pleasure. I didn't mean to interrupt." Her mouth opened and closed as she searched for the right words. She didn't want to chastise them for what they were doing, but her soul cried out for Soren to join them. While she had no problem engaging in this kind of play with just the three of them, Soren's absence didn't sit well with her.

Caiden must have sensed her problem. "If Soren was here, he would have alternated sitting on the edge of the bed teasing you and standing in front of Teigh, teasing him. He doesn't care to dish out the punishments, as I like to do, but he doesn't hesitate to take advantage of the situation."

Tears pricked her eyes and spilled down her cheeks. "Those demons have him, Caiden. He's alone and miserable, and I don't know how to help him."

Caiden slid his arms around her and pulled her close. She rested her cheek against his chest, and he kissed the top of her head. "I wish I could offer some words of wisdom, my darling, or some reassurance that it'll all turn out for the best. I have a deep and abiding faith. It has carried me through the millennia without you, and it only grows now that I hold you in my arms. It's all I have to offer, and I give it freely."

Hands caressed up and down her back, but it wasn't until lips kissed a line along her shoulder that she realized Teigh had added his caresses to Caiden's. Ever since Soren left, she had sought this kind of physical comfort from Teigh. In his arms, she could forget for a little while. Perhaps having both of them would work twice as well.

“Make love to me.” She lifted her head and locked gazes with Caiden. “I know this isn’t what you planned, but it’s what I need from the both of you right now.”

He nodded, and one hand slid up her back, stopping when he cupped the back of her head. A million feelings pinged through her body, but something in his demeanor commanded the bulk of her attention. She didn’t feel bad, or like she neglected Teigh, because she knew Teigh felt the same pull. With Caiden there, they both automatically ceded control to him. She knew their submission would only be deeper if Soren joined them.

Of course, she didn’t know whether Soren would top Caiden or the other way around. It seemed to her that neither of them would countenance another dominant personality for long.

At her core, Riley knew she called the shots. All three men would fall over themselves to see to her needs. She had only to ask. She used that now because she needed them both to hold her, to love her as only they could.

Caiden kissed her. His tongue teased the seam of her lips, ignoring the way she parted them in invitation for the longest time. She might be able to call the shots, but she recognized the content of her request fulfillment wasn’t up to her. If he wanted, he would kiss her for hours. He would leave her lips swollen and throbbing, and then he would move his mouth lower to torture her body with love.

Desire and urgency had the same grip on him as it had on her. His cock strained at the white linen of his garment. He stoked the fire inside her for only a few minutes before he lifted his head away. The silk bindings had done their job well, and Teigh only added to the flames with his talented hands that roamed her body. Need pulsed through her veins. She didn’t require a lot of additional foreplay.

Caiden peered over her shoulder. “Lay back, Teigh. You’ll take our weight pressing into you. We’ll make the most of those welts before they fade.”

Teigh scooted back and lay down, his legs parted far enough for Caiden to kneel between them. Most of the redness on his chest had already faded, but he hissed as his weight pressed his back into the sheet. A tremor ran through his entire body, and a low moan vibrated free from his throat. His thick cock, already full size, seemed to swell before her eyes.

Caiden squeezed her ass. "Climb on him, Circe. We're both going to have you."

Riley scrambled to obey. Teigh lifted his cock, holding it as she positioned her dripping entrance over it. She didn't wait for Caiden to give another order. He'd told her to climb on, and she would be damned if she was going to wait any longer. Being bound wasn't something she ever thought she would enjoy, yet Caiden's mastery of the ropes had excited her just as much as any of them did with their kisses and caresses.

As soon as she sheathed him, Teigh pulled her down onto his chest. Riley took a deep breath.

"Are you okay, babe?" Teigh's chest vibrated against her as he voiced his concern. He stroked a hand down her back. "You want this, right?"

"Oh, yes. I want this. I want to lose myself sandwiched between the two of you."

Caiden's fingers massaged lubricant into her anus. She had no idea if he would be gentle or not. Teigh had been gentle. Soren had not. She liked it both ways.

The mushroom head of his cock pressed against her. He pushed steadily into her, neither slowing nor stopping until he was completely buried. Everyone held still. Breath sounds created the only noise as she took a moment to become accustomed to the feel of two cocks filling her. Her tissues stretched, but she felt no discomfort or pain, only a fullness she desperately needed. She opened her eyes and nodded to Teigh's unasked question.

Teigh lifted his hips, forcing her to thrust against Caiden. The two of them set a steady pace that Riley couldn't resist. She ground her pussy against Teigh and pushed back against Caiden, undulating to the rhythm of their love.

Heat built, and soon the inferno lapped at every nerve in her body. She exploded, but they didn't come with her. Caiden increased his pace. He and Teigh worked together, pistoning in and out faster and faster. Riley lost all feeling in her limbs. She floated free of her moorings, the heat driving her higher and higher.

Adrift and safe in the arms of her two lovers, she came apart again. Bliss washed over every cell in her body. The feel of Caiden's weight pinning her to Teigh was the last thing she remembered before drifting into nothingness.

Chapter 7

The steady whirr of speeding tires woke Riley. Leather stuck to her cheek. As she fully awakened, she became aware that she was no longer in a bed. Though she hadn't ridden in it before, she knew she was inside Soren's truck. The interior smelled like fried food. She pushed into a sitting position and cried out. Fire rushed through the muscles and tendons of her neck. Testing it revealed it wouldn't move in certain directions.

Soren's large hand wrapped around her neck and squeezed lightly. Nausea rolled through her stomach, but it didn't travel any further.

"Where the hell are we?"

"Northern Idaho. Almost to Montana. You've been asleep for about twelve hours." Soren's answer held a note of amusement. "That must have been some dream. Did Caiden whisk you away to Never Never Land for a sex-fest?"

Riley tried to turn her head to face Soren, but her neck refused to cooperate. "I don't suppose you have anything for a headache?"

He stared straight ahead, but his nostrils flared and she felt magic wash through the cab of the truck. The tension in her neck eased.

She turned to face him. Dark shadows stained the thin skin below his eyes. His shaggy blond hair hadn't been combed with anything but his fingers, yet he still managed to look sexy. He wore the same clothes he had been wearing the morning he walked out of the house and didn't come back. Disheveled suited him, but it unnerved her. It didn't fit his personality at all.

"You look like hell, Soren. It's almost dinner time. Why don't you pull over at the next rest stop and we can get something to eat." She

had no idea what time it was, but her stomach growled, so it seemed to be a good guess.

He glanced over at her. His gaze flickered to her stomach and back to look at the winding road. "We'll stop once we get to Shade's house. He'll have food. You might have to eat meat."

She snorted. "I'm not—" Stabbing pain robbed her of breath. She touched a hand to her neck to find a bandage just below her left ear. "What happened to me?"

"I bit you."

Riley gaped at him. Caiden couldn't contact wolves. And now that Teigh had given up his power, he couldn't do the things he did as the Shadow Man. Soren had effectively cut her off from their other lovers. "Soren, I didn't want you to bite me."

He didn't answer, but his head cocked to the side. Riley concentrated hard, and she saw the glimmer of an outline. At least one demon rode in the truck with them. She had no chance of reasoning with him while they were around. Her transformation into a wolf would be complete the next night when the moon reached fullness, but that didn't help her right now.

Tears stung her eyes as the wild gleam clouding his eyes only brightened. With all her heart, she wished she could wave her hand and make it all go away. "Soren, I love you."

"Don't," he said. "Don't play that game. I know you can see them. We decided you needed to see them. You need to see the little demons you created. You need to see them as they destroy you and I take all of your power."

His words chilled her, but she couldn't peel her gaze from the way his hands worked the leather covering the steering wheel. He was trying to fight his compulsion. She hoped he had enough strength to beat it. The compulsion was an accident, a cruel trick of fate. Her father always warned her of the unintended consequences of using vast amounts of power.

She moistened her lips. "I still love you. I'll always love you. Teigh and Caiden, too. None of us will abandon you, Soren. Ever."

"Shut up, Riley. Tell me where Shade and Torrey live. If the time is truly upon us, then Marius, Demetrius, and Flynn are there with their witch-wolf. They would have had the children already." He scratched at his forehead, his wolf nails leaving a trail of bloody tracks. The wounds beaded and disappeared, leaving thin droplets of blood streaked across his forehead.

"We need Teigh and Caiden for the ritual. We need thirteen or it won't work."

Soren shook his head. "Two wolves can replace them. Teigh has no power to add to the ceremony. He's just a regular human now. Caiden is a ghost. He would be relying on us to pull him to this side of reality. That's why you can only fuck him while you're sleeping. It was good of him to exhaust you and Teigh for me."

That answered the question of how he got her out of the house without Teigh resisting. She closed her eyes. Teigh being asleep had been a blessing. Now that he was human, Soren could have easily killed him. Though, knowing Soren, he had placed a charm on Teigh to keep him from waking. He likely had done the same thing to her. She elected to not mention that she and Teigh had been awake the last time they'd visited Caiden. "Soren, you don't want to do this."

"Yes, I do. I want this more than I've ever wanted anything. I want your power and you're going to give it to me. You're all going to give it to me."

Riley didn't believe that. She couldn't believe that. He had fled the house rather than hurt her. The demon whispering in his ear looked frighteningly familiar. Soren said she created the demon. If she had, those memories hadn't yet returned.

Then something Caiden had said resurfaced. These demons were the souls of the humans who had attacked and killed them in the first place. The conflict had followed them through time and multiple incarnations.

Rather than argue with Soren, a pointless endeavor, she settled back against the seat and let her neck rest. The place where he had bit her itched and throbbed. When she moved it, sharp pain shot through her. From watching Torrey, she knew the full transformation was close. Hopefully, the bite wasn't infected. That infection had certainly done a number on Torrey.

"Fine." She strove for a crisp edge to her tone. "At least stop and get me some food. I'm starving, Soren. I know you aren't that much of a monster."

He flinched, proving her point. The lights of a little diner shone a mile or so up the road. Just when his foot pressed the brake, the demon went into overdrive, jumping and working its lips feverishly. Its little mouth spewed words Riley couldn't hear, but they made Soren change his mind. "Sorry. You'll have to wait."

She stared out the window and watched the light fade from the sky. As they passed the big sign welcoming them to Big Sky Country, she sighed. Torrey's home wasn't too far away, but it was hell to find. Riley had never shown up unexpected. Not only was it dangerous to wander around wolf country unescorted, she could never find the homestead without a guide.

"Riley, tell me where they live and I'll go much easier on you."

She made a dismissive noise and waved his request away. "You're going to go easy on me anyway. You might crave a power I don't yet possess, but you still love me. You loved me from the moment you saw me."

He glanced over at her. "It didn't stop me from kidnapping you."

Sympathy gripped her insides. She knew he aimed to trigger the anger and uncertainty she had displayed only four days before, but all hesitation had disappeared from her heart. Anger over the kidnapping had vanished.

The truck slowed to a stop as he pulled to the shoulder of the road. Riley didn't make a move. Not only were they in the middle of nowhere, but she couldn't hope to outrun Soren.

Soren stared at her for the longest time. Finally, he broke the silence. "You're right, Riley. I do love you. I don't want to hurt you. But don't make the mistake of thinking that will stop me from taking everything from you, and I have to kill you to do it."

She turned her head slowly, uncertain which emotion shone from her eyes. He was seriously beginning to creep her out, but he was also starting to piss her off. "I love you, too, Soren. Caiden and Teigh do, too. Don't make the mistake of thinking anything you do can stop us from loving you."

"Take me to Shade's house."

There really wasn't a way out of this. She knew that from the moment she woke up with that horrible crick in her neck. Still, she let him stew for a little while longer. "Fine, but you have to promise me one thing. I can take the power from everyone there into myself. Let me do that, Soren. That way you'll get it all and you won't have to hurt our daughters or our grandchildren."

Calling her beautiful little nieces "grandchildren" almost made Riley laugh in the middle of her request. However, she needed to make his connection to their loved ones very clear. She knew he wouldn't be able to live if he hurt any of them. She knew if she couldn't save him, then they were all doomed to die. Their souls would be doomed to an eternity apart. So many people depended on her.

He nodded. "No games, Riley. You take all the power and then I'll harvest it from you."

She jerked on the handle to open the door and kicked it open with her foot. "I could give it to you, Soren. Has it ever occurred to you to just ask for it?"

He lunged for her. Riley skidded across the rocky strip next to the road, and Soren landed heavily on top of her. "You're not leaving me."

With a grunt, she pushed against him, digging her elbow into his rocklike ribcage. He didn't budge. "I wasn't running away, Soren."

First, I would never leave you. Second, I have no illusion that I can outrun you. Now get off me.”

He hopped up gracefully and pulled her to standing. “Where are you going?”

Riley parked her hands on her hips. “This is the first time you’ve stopped since early this morning. I thought I’d head into the brush and pee. Then I thought you’d shift into your lupine form and sniff out Torrey and Shade. I don’t know exactly where they live. This is about where I meet them when I visit.”

“You really don’t know where they live?” He faltered a bit, and his head cocked to the side.

Riley wanted to smack the demon. Okay, she wanted to kill him, but she knew she didn’t have enough power to do any real damage yet. Truth be told, she wanted to smack Soren, too. Teigh and Caiden both had much more sympathy for what he was going through, but a big part of Riley just wanted him to man up and fight for their love. “Teigh and Caiden both know where they live. Too bad you didn’t bring Teigh with us.”

He listened to his demon for a minute longer. Then he focused his attention on Riley. “You can find Caiden. Go now and ask him for the location of the cabin.”

The only times she had been able to contact Caiden had been while she was asleep or having sex. She wasn’t about to fall asleep close to Soren. She might love him, but she no longer trusted him.

“Okay, but you have to lick my pussy. I need an orgasm to find him.”

* * * *

Soren wanted to die. Riley didn’t seem to comprehend how much danger she was in. Not once had she tried to escape him. She put far too much faith in their ancient bond. It was no match for his

compulsion. He wanted her to stop him. Even if it meant his death, he needed her to stop him.

And now she had made this outrageous demand. Women, especially strong women like Riley, didn't demand sex from their kidnappers. He stared at her in the bright light of the nearly-full moon and blinked hard. "What?"

She rolled those beautiful brown eyes, fisted his hair in both hands, and jerked his lips to hers. The soft, sweet scent of her rose, invading his senses until he couldn't think anymore. He didn't want to think anymore. The demon he couldn't see, but he could sure as hell hear, protested. Soren shoved it aside. It might make him crave her power, but it couldn't stop him from wanting something, and he wanted Riley.

He lifted her against him without breaking the kiss and carried her back to the truck. Their tumble had left the door wide open. The wolf blood inside her had already healed the few scratches she had sustained. Light from the cab competed with the darkness for a few feet, but it lost the battle in the vastness of the valley. He set her on the seat and fumbled with the button on her jeans. She helped remove them the rest of the way, and then she leaned forward, capturing his lips again.

Her kiss sucked at his soul, urging it to the fore of his consciousness. He knew without a doubt he could never hurt her. She had mentioned giving him the power. Did she love him enough to turn everything over to him? What the hell would he do with all of that power? Circe was the daughter of the sun. She knew what it meant to wield it. She knew what it meant to contain it. Soren had no clue. Perhaps it would consume him, and he could escape this hellish existence.

But she didn't really let him think. She broke the kiss. Her lips moved to nibble at his jaw and sear a path down his neck. Her touch never failed to drive him out of his mind. He pushed her back so that she lay down across the seats. He let his hands roam her body as he

savored her with kisses. This was likely the last time he would get to make love to her. The demon had faded away for now. Who knew what would happen the next time? Who knew whether the damn thing would linger nearby, demanding he end her life with his hands? It seemed to take delight in causing him pain.

He could taste pieces of the sun on her flesh, a power that hadn't been there before. Particles of energy zinged through his body, staving off the worst of his cravings. He parted her thighs and ran his fingertip through her glistening wetness. After all he'd done to her, after everything she knew he planned to do, she held nothing back. Her body quivered and shook.

Love gripped him hard, coiling spiky tendrils that burned with bittersweet pain, and visions of her growing round with his children danced before his eyes. He swallowed the lump in his throat and bent his head. She jumped as he blew short bursts of air across her clit.

"Soren, don't tease. I've missed you too damn much to have patience for teasing." She shifted against the seat and pushed her pussy toward his face. "You owe me anyway, for putting another charm on me when you promised you'd never do that again."

He licked a long swipe along her weeping slit. While he hadn't admitted to placing a charm on her or Teigh, it was the only logical way he could have removed Riley from the house without Teigh putting up a fight. There was no way Teigh wouldn't have fought. Soren would have been forced to hurt or kill him, and that thought turned his stomach. He shoved aside his complex emotional turmoil and concentrated on Riley's sweetness.

She might not want him to play, but he refused to rush. He wanted to savor every drop of cream. She whimpered as he loved her with his tongue. Instead of grabbing his head to hold him close, she reached above her head and dug her nails into the seat. He recognized the subtle signs of Caiden's influence, and pangs of regret hammered his insides. The visage of his lover would never again fill his eyes.

Riley moaned, thrusting her hips to the rhythm his tongue set, and he groaned. This wasn't working. He couldn't forget all the things he stood to lose. With one hand, he loosened the fly on his jeans. His cock seemed to always be at the ready around Riley. This time presented no exception.

He wrapped one hand around his thickness and stroked it hard. He buried the fingers of his other hand inside her hole. She screamed and bucked.

"Don't stop. Oh, god, Soren. Please don't stop."

He mumbled assurances against her wetness, but she couldn't have deciphered anything. The vibrations caused her to cry out. Sensing she was close, he pumped his fingers faster. She fell over the cliff screaming out her climax.

Waiting to bring her down gently was not an option. He ripped his mouth away and sucked his fingers clean. She made a short sound of protest, but she broke off when he lifted her body and impaled her on his cock.

She gazed up at him, her eyes wide and unfocused. He shoved her against the side of the seat and pounded into her, his speed blurry to even his own eyes. She hooked her ankles behind him and held on for dear life. The waning pulsations of her orgasm flared to life as she came fast and hard. Another scream ripped from her depths. Her pussy clenched around him, tight to the point of pain, but he didn't stop or slow down. He couldn't. Suddenly, nothing was more important than coming inside her.

He wanted to say her name, but his change was too close. Feral growls, long and loud, resonated in his chest and echoed through the valley. Riley clawed at him, scratching long gashes on his arms and shoulders. She bit into his thick pectoral muscle, stopping just short of drawing blood.

By chance, he met her gaze, and he saw that the light brown of her eyes had transformed to silver. Her hips, once passively accepting how he battered her with his thrusts, pistoned to the same rhythm. He

hadn't thought the transformation would be this fast. He had bitten her to make her strong enough to survive after he took her power. If she were merely a witch or a human, such a thing would kill her. His heart soared, and his orgasm blindsided him, slamming against his body like the waves of a monsoon.

Riley screamed again, and he fell to his knees. Gravel from the side of the road ground into his skin, and he managed to catch Riley before he dropped her on her ass. She buried her face in the pieces of his shirt she hadn't shredded to ribbons. Sweat soaked her skin and the perfume of her body had subtly changed to something that called every lupine instinct of his to the surface.

"No one would ever accuse you of having finesse, Soren, but you are one fucking hot stud in the sack."

He hadn't expected her to say something like that. Caught by surprise, he laughed. Such a light feeling seemed wholly foreign to him. He let it run its course, and then he smoothed back her hair and kissed her forehead. "I take it I didn't hurt you."

She laughed weakly. "No, you didn't hurt me, but I did lose count of how many orgasms you gave me. I've missed you so much."

"Didn't Teigh take care of you?"

Slowly, she peeled herself away from him and stood up, her muscles obviously sore. "He isn't you. And you aren't him. I miss him, Soren. I miss him and I miss Caiden. I can't stand being away from any of you. It tears a hole in my heart that you can't fill by yourself."

He closed his eyes against the pain. Not only did he hate hurting her, he hated the blow he was about to deal to Teigh and Caiden. "Riley, I can't help the way things are. In a perfect world, we would all be together. But this isn't a perfect world, and I am far from a perfect person. I'm closer to a monster than anyone you know."

One warm, trembling hand caressed his cheek. "You aren't a monster, Soren. If you were a monster, you wouldn't care about what

your demons are forcing you to do. I can see how it hurts you, and it kills me that I can't do anything to help you."

Pressing his lips to her palm, he kissed it and used it to smother anything he might have said in response.

* * * *

Riley had no idea how to contact Caiden. Every time she had been transported to his magical world, the journey hadn't been planned. Sex seemed to play into it, but so did sleep. No matter, she would have Soren as many times as she could seduce him. According to Teigh, it would transfer a bit of his power to her each time she milked an orgasm from him.

He lumbered to his feet and straightened his jeans. With a tug, he ripped his shirt from his frame and tossed it behind the passenger side of the seat. "I guess that's done for."

She snagged it and held it up. The pale yellow glow of the dome light showed rips and tears in the heavy flannel. Riley felt heat creep up her neck. She hadn't realized she'd been so rough. "Sorry. I don't know what came over me."

A small, predatory smile turned up the corners of his mouth. "I came over you."

She took heart from the return of his inherent cockiness. Little particles of energy zinged through her body, heating her from within. It wasn't the kind of heat that made her want to throw him to the ground and ride him hard. She knew she had absorbed Teigh's power. She knew she siphoned a bit of Caiden's with every visit. And now she had enough power to take some of Soren's.

The little demon who held him in its thrall only an hour before now danced and hopped with anger. Its lips moved and its face contorted with rage. She could see the outline now without having to concentrate. Soren seemed to ignore it for the longest time. Finally, he cocked his head, listening to the damn thing.

The thing spoke rapidly. Riley caught a few words. She didn't recognize the language, and so it made no sense to her.

After it finally calmed down, Soren focused his attention back on her. "Where are they, Riley? You have to take me there."

She gestured to the woods that began a half acre from the road. "I'm pretty sure we go that way. But, Soren, I'm starving. Don't you have any food? On a good day, it's a three-hour walk. Sometimes it's taken five or six hours to get there."

Shade or Torrey usually changed into a wolf and let her ride on their backs, shortening the trip to about an hour. Riley didn't volunteer that information.

Soren lifted his gaze and stared at the waxing moon for the longest time. At last, he nodded. "We'll start the journey now. I'll hunt for you later when I sense something you can eat."

That wasn't quite what Riley meant. Given the stale odor of fried foods, she really wondered if he had any leftover fast food available. Cold fries would get her excited right about now. She might even sink to stripping the meat off a cheeseburger and eating the remains. Raw meat didn't appeal to her in the slightest.

"Soren, I'm a vegetarian." He *knew* she was a vegetarian. She would have said more, but his lips pressed together, and she knew better than to push her luck.

"Riley, I'm a wolf. I can bring down large or small game and cook them over a fire for you, but I have no fucking clue how to find edible leaves and shit like that. You'll eat meat or you'll starve."

She looked him up and down, striving to throw the most contempt she could muster into that look, and then she stalked off toward the trees. With every step, she took stock of the situation. No flashlight, no hiking boots, no jacket, and only a vague sense of the direction she had to take.

She lifted her hand to finger the bandage on her neck. Too bad he hadn't bitten her all those years ago. Turning into a wolf right now would improve her vision immeasurably and heal the gash on her

neck. It throbbed with the promise of transformation. All this time, she had wondered how Torrey knew her change was imminent. Now she knew the power of instinct yielded that knowledge. Perhaps she could use her emerging powers to find Torrey faster. The moment any of them scented Soren, they would come out guns blazing, so to speak.

She paused at the tree line. "I don't suppose you have a flashlight."

Although she couldn't hear him due to his graceful, lupine movements, she knew Soren had caught up with her. She could sense his power and his presence. That was new.

He handed her a jacket, a canteen, and a flashlight. "I came prepared."

Narrowing her eyes at him, she bit back a retort about not bringing food. Low blood sugar could make her a bitch in the best of circumstances, which this was not. She snatched the jacket from his hands and jammed her arms into the sleeves. Being hers, it fit perfectly. He could raid her hall closet, but not her pantry?

She snatched the flashlight and canteen, also from her hall closet, and pointed the flashlight at his face. He winced and pushed it down, but she did have time to notice he had put on a fresh shirt. "Are you going to shift? Do you want me to hold your clothes?"

"Not yet." He looked over her head, but she read his face in the ambient light.

"I'm okay with you shifting. I trust you."

His jaw tightened and the vein at his temple ticked. "Your trust is misplaced."

She slipped her hand into his and pointed the beam of light into the woods. It didn't go very far, but she reasoned that Soren would smell or hear anything dangerous. She just had to watch her footing. He didn't resist when she dragged him along.

They walked in silence. Riley had no idea how much time had passed. Her stomach interrupted the quiet with a loud groan. Soren

glanced down at her and sighed. Without another word, he stripped naked, throwing his clothes into her arms as he took them off. She watched as he unceremoniously revealed his bulges and sinews, and her pussy throbbed in appreciation. He threw her a frustrated look and shifted into that beautiful white wolf that saved her from a mugger. That incident seemed to have happened so long ago, but only a few days had passed.

She waited, alone with only a flashlight for company. The thick cover of trees blocked out the moon's pale light. She supposed the fact that she could make out the top branches meant the werewolf blood running in her veins was gaining potency. She shone the flashlight around to illuminate the area in which they'd halted. A tree had fallen nearby. She took a chance and sat on it.

Time passed. She shifted in her seat, hoping and praying that Soren could find her again. She was seriously screwed if he couldn't. She had no idea where she was or what might be nearby. Beating back her nerves, she took a defiant sip from the canteen. Maybe she would stumble upon a stream before she died of dehydration or exposure.

Waiting patiently wasn't working out for her. Restless, she gathered twigs and made a pile. Maybe she could choke down some meat if it was cooked. There was no way in hell she was going to eat raw meat. The man was insane for even bringing up the idea.

She knelt down and braced the flashlight between two of the larger sticks so that it cast a pool of light on her pile. Picking up two likely candidates, she rubbed them together the way she'd seen people do on television. The outer layers of bark cracked and crumbled and fell away. She kept at it.

Soon, the one she held vertical broke into two pieces. Disgusted, she threw them back into the pile.

Awareness prickled at the hairs on the back of her neck. A chuckle drew her attention to the area just outside of the dim light.

She aimed her best glare in that direction. “All right, let’s see you light a fire without matches.”

Soren stepped closer, but he avoided the pathetic ray from her flashlight. She could barely see his outline. He held something out to her. “Hold this. Don’t set it on the ground.”

She took it from him, completely forgetting to consider what it might be. Soft fur brushed her palm. She screamed and let it fall.

He caught it. “Riley, if you set it down, then bugs and things will crawl in and eat the meat before you can get to it.”

“What is it?” She crossed her arms over her chest and unsuccessfully suppressed a shiver.

“Rabbit. Either hang on to it so I can start the fire or eat it raw.” He leaned closer, and the sweet, musky scent of him invaded her senses.

Normally, she would hold her nose and tell him to hit the shower. When she had stayed with him before, she hadn’t liked the way he smelled sometimes. Now the odor permeating from him after his shift drew her closer. Her panties became uncomfortably damp, and she knew he scented her arousal.

A growl sounded low in his throat, and she reluctantly grasped the rabbit’s foot in her hand. His other hand came up, and he presented her with three more. Oh, the things she did for love.

Soren knelt where she had just been. He gathered some dry leaves from nearby and perused the selection of sticks. After careful consideration, he chose two. With quick, efficient movements, he coaxed smoke and then a flame. In no time, a small fire burned.

“Ideally, you’d dig a pit or at least line it with rocks to prevent it from spreading. But we’re not sleeping here, so it doesn’t matter so much.”

After sleeping all day, she wasn’t too tired. Riley said nothing, but when he held out his hand, she gave him the rabbits. They didn’t turn her stomach as badly as she thought they would.

He held them over the flames.

“Don’t you have to skin them first?” She might not be a meat-eater, but that didn’t make her completely ignorant as far as food preparation went.

“No knife.” He didn’t look away from the rabbit. Flames reached up and licked the paws of the poor things. “And this way, they marinate in their own juices.”

Nausea coiled in her stomach and bashed about. Riley couldn’t quite tell if the cause came mostly from hunger or disgust. The scent wafting from the fire interested her almost as much as Soren’s post-shift scent. It didn’t help that he hadn’t dressed. He knelt before the fire in all his naked glory.

The nausea turned to desire. She stumbled back, tripped over something, and landed on her ass in the underbrush. In the glow of the fire, she saw Soren look in her direction. His gaze shifted back to the rabbit, but the smile he tried to squelch sneaked through.

“It’s not funny,” she said. Need made her voice sound strange to her own ears. “You could help me up.”

“You don’t need help. Given the scent rolling from you, you’re going into heat. You need to get laid.” He followed up with a short chuckle.

Should she be offended by his assessment? She didn’t know, but she wasn’t. Though she was outside the reach of the fire, she felt as if it scorched her. She wondered how he could stay so close to it. Somehow, it seemed alive, almost like a third member to their group. The thing nearly licked his skin. Surely the heat must be unbearable.

She closed her eyes as she remembered. “Fire is your element. That’s how you could start a blaze so easily. That’s why you can stand to be so close to it.”

“It’s this or tear your clothes off and put you on your hands and knees. I’m trying to be a gentleman, Riley. It would help if you shut up. Every time you speak, I can hear your desire. Combined with the scent of your heat, it’s difficult to resist, and I know you have to be sore from the last time. I was exceptionally rough.”

Riley crept closer to the fire, not entirely sure if she needed the warmth or if she just liked how it seemed to assuage the worst of her need. As Soren had requested, she said nothing.

After a while, he took the rabbits away from the fire. He threw one onto her lap and moved to the other side of the fire with the other three. She stared at the blackened corpse, uncertain as to how she wanted to proceed. Could she actually eat it? God, she was ravenous.

She picked it up and looked at it. Her stomach growled, threatening to jump up her esophagus and tear it from her hands. “How am I supposed to eat it?”

“Rip it with your nails or tear it with your teeth.”

A quick glance showed that he had already devoured one of his rabbits. Partially shifting, he used one of his razor-sharp claws to rip open a second kill.

“I don’t have claws, Soren.”

“You ripped the hell out of my shirt and my back. You have claws.”

He didn’t sound upset about it, but heat flooded her face anyway. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know.”

His shrug nearly drew her attention away from the satisfied, cocky amusement on his face. “Eat, Riley. When I finish here, I’m going to kill the fire and we’re heading out.”

Reluctantly, she dug her nails into the poor creature’s flesh. She murmured an ancient prayer of sorrow and thanks. The words were in a language she didn’t understand, but both the words and the meaning were perfectly clear to her. Her nails changed into claws, and she watched in fascinated wonder.

Juices seeped from the flesh as she tore the skin away. The pink muscles gleamed in the firelight, and a hunger she’d never before experienced seized her. When she emerged from her frenzy, she had the vague sense of having eaten like a ravenous animal. The carcass in her lap wasn’t much more than skin and bones. She scrambled to her

feet and tossed it in the fire, desperately wishing for the flames to purge her soul.

She hadn't realized how close she came to following the remains into the fire when steel bands closed around her body. Soren whispered sweet, soothing words into her ear. She couldn't make sense of them, but the tone of his voice and the solid feel of his chest against her back calmed the panic a little.

"What the hell happened?" Her question came out louder and angrier than she intended.

"You had dinner. It's okay, Riley. You need to eat. The transformation needs fuel."

She thrashed in his arms, fighting him with every bit of her strength. Unfortunately, he was the stronger person. "You wouldn't stop and get food, you ass! You did this on purpose. You wanted me to be so hungry I would completely lose my grip on reality and eat meat."

Soren sighed and buried his face in her neck. He held her until she ceased struggling. "No, Riley. My demon wouldn't let me stop to feed you. He seems to have changed his mind. At least, if he's pissed about this, he hasn't said anything."

The little demon had been hopping around the campfire ever since Soren had returned. It yelled and waved its arms now, but Soren didn't seem to notice it. Now that she wasn't about to collapse from hunger, she could see the damn thing even more clearly, and she could understand some of the words. It was pissed, yet Soren didn't react.

Joy surged through Riley as she realized Teigh's plan was working. Sex with Soren had siphoned off enough of his energy to diminish the demon's influence. Unfortunately, that meant Riley could see it all the better. On the plus side, she had no desire to do as it commanded.

She relaxed into Soren's embrace. The musky scent of his recent transformation permeated her senses. "I'm not sore."

Surprisingly, she wasn't. He had been rougher with her than ever, and she felt no tenderness, nothing to indicate bruising. Having him so near and secreting that scent made her knees weak.

She turned her face and burrowed her cheek against his chest. "Why does the smell of you make me want to throw you to the ground and skip the foreplay?"

"Pheromones. You're in heat, Riley. The smell of you makes me yearn to throw you to the ground and fuck you senseless." He ground his erection against the small of her back.

Her breath came in short pants, and she felt control slipping away. Soren released her arms a bit, and she used the small amount of freedom to unbutton her jeans. Wiggling her hips, she shimmed out of them and rubbed her backside against Soren.

With a growl, he dropped one hand. He fumbled between them. The next thing she knew, she was on her hands and knees, and he knelt between her legs. One arm still held her around the waist. The tip of his cock poked at her wetness. She arched her back and whimpered in invitation. Her new instincts warned her against pushing her alpha too far too fast.

He entered her slowly. This wasn't what she wanted. Part of her knew he was trying to hang on to his control so he wouldn't hurt her. She loved him for that, but she wanted him to let go completely and take her like the mate she was.

"Please. I need this." She whined as she begged, a completely lupine noise that must have snapped Soren's control. He plunged into her hard and fast. He didn't stop to allow her time to adjust to his size as he normally did, and for that, she felt intense relief.

The feeling didn't have time to spread. Soren's thrusts came every bit as fast and hard as his initial entry. Shivers shot through her system, battering her body with relentless waves and generating more heat than she'd ever felt. Her pussy felt as if he fucked her with flames. The burning coiled tight, and her orgasm washed through her like molten lava.

Her entire body bowed and tensed, and she was unable to scream. She lost the ability to move, but Soren didn't falter. His fingers dug into her hips as he held her still to meet his every thrust. The second orgasm followed, fast and furious. It robbed her of strength. Her arms gave out and she dropped to the ground, only her hips held aloft in Soren's grip.

He howled, his triumphant noise penetrating the forest and quieting every single critter within hearing range, and his hot semen spurted, bathing her womb.

And still, he didn't stop. His cock didn't soften. He pumped into her several more times, and then he pulled out. His absence from her body was momentary. Without warning or preparation, he impaled her ass. Good thing her juices had been thick and freely flowing. The pinch of pain was minimal. He rammed into her, battering her ass with the same ferocity he had used on her pussy.

Riley liked having her ass fucked, but she had always needed clitoral stimulation as well to make her climax. Too tired to lift her hand to her pussy, she expected to lie there and ride out the storm. Heat bloomed and she felt more connected to Soren than at any previous time. He was part of her soul, and there was no way she would let his compulsion tear apart their family.

The orgasm took her by surprise. The intensity of it stole her vision, and her consciousness followed.

* * * *

Soren looked down at the limp woman in his grip. Completely unconscious, she didn't groan or protest as he removed himself from her body. For that, he was grateful. Once again, he had been too rough with her. At least he didn't scent the metallic odor of blood. He hadn't actually hurt her.

He had used her body, and she hadn't seemed to mind one bit. Her single protest had been a plea for more. She hadn't made much noise that he could hear above the blood pounding in his ears.

Gently, he scooped her up in his arms and carried her to a stream he had discovered nearby. The water was cold, but it failed to rouse her. Careful to keep his touch light, he cleaned evidence of their coming together from her body. When he finished bathing them both, he carried her to the fire and pulled her clothes over her limbs before dressing himself.

He lay her down next to the fire and curled his body around hers. Grief burned in his gut. *Would she be able to forgive him for what he would be driven to do?*

Chapter 8

Consciousness drifted away, and sleep overtook him. Not too long after, a sound jerked him from his uneasy slumber. He eased his arm from under Riley's head and sat up, ready to defend them against anything.

The sound came again. He realized it was the breaking of brush underfoot. Soren frowned. It wasn't like him to need time to identify noises. His advanced senses, acute even for a wolf, let him know these things innately. It came again and again. Someone prowled the woods, and that person was close. Too close. Soren should have sensed them long before now. Not only should he have sensed them, at this distance, he should have been able to catch a scent. He could not.

He shucked his clothes and crouched on the ground next to Riley, who remained blissfully unaware. Good. She needed time to heal, both in body and in spirit.

A pale glow soon presented itself as a beam of light. At last Soren's senses kicked in, and he recognized Teigh's scent. He rose to his feet and slipped back into his jeans. Before long, Teigh stumbled upon the miniscule clearing where they had made camp. The ambient light from Teigh's flashlight mixed with the pale moonlight filtering through the canopy, giving enough light for Soren to clearly make out Teigh's strong and striking features.

He wore hiking boots, jeans, and a heavy flannel shirt that didn't quite look right with the long dreadlocks that fell over his shoulder and down his back. Soren watched in silence as Teigh stepped closer,

looking for evidence of anger or hate. When he locked gazes with Teigh, he found nothing but relief.

“I see I’m not too late.”

Soren shoved his hands in his jean pockets. “You can’t stop me.”

“I know.” Teigh nodded, almost absently. He slung his backpack to the ground and looked down to where Riley slept. “How is she?”

“Exhausted.”

The edges of Teigh’s eyes crinkled as he smiled. Soren wanted to touch those tiny crow’s-feet. He wanted to run his fingers over Teigh’s lips and kiss him, but he didn’t know how his lover would react.

“You always were a randy one. I see that hasn’t changed.”

Soren snorted. “She attacked me. She shredded my shirt. How in the hell did you find us? She took your powers. I know you’re flying blind.”

Teigh smiled in that enigmatic way that accompanied all the legends passed down through generations of wolves. It tugged at Soren’s heart. “I was tied to wolves for three thousand years. Magic had nothing to do with the tracking skills I acquired. Did you think I always knew where the people were I needed to find?” He shook his head. “My magic wasn’t that powerful. I always found you guys the old-fashioned way.”

“Or Caiden told you.” Soren flashed a smile to soften the tenor of his words.

He nodded. “Sometimes, if one of our daughters managed to contact him first, he could tell me where they were. He never knew where the wolves were. That was my forte. That’s how I found you.”

“That’s not an answer.” Soren shifted uncomfortably. He felt like an ass for confronting the Shadow Man, but more and more memories of Teigh being his equal and his lover were surfacing. He couldn’t seem to regard the man with the same reverence, especially not when he just wanted to strip him naked and kiss every inch of his delectable body.

Teigh spread one hand wide, palm out. Soren had reached a boundary. “That’s all you’re going to get.”

Crouching down, Teigh shone the light over Riley’s body. Soren bristled, upset that his word wasn’t good enough. Then he berated himself. His word wasn’t good enough. In less than two nights, he would tie the woman he loved to an altar and steal her powers, hoping all the while she survived the process and didn’t hate him afterward.

The light stopped at the bandage on Riley’s neck. Soren had been careful to not get it wet because he didn’t have anything else to cover the wound. Teigh lifted the adhesive and inspected the wound.

“You bit her.” He glanced up, frowning. “You weren’t supposed to bite her.”

Soren ground his teeth together, regret and guilt vying for dominance. “Instinct. I couldn’t stop myself from claiming her that way.”

Except to drop his gaze back to her neck, Teigh didn’t respond. He pressed the edges of the bandage back against her skin. “Well, what’s done is done. We’ll rest here for the night. We should be able to make it to Desiree and Torment’s homes by lunchtime. They’ll see to Riley.”

Compulsion pressed at him from all sides. Soren rushed to speak before his demon could start in. It might force him to continue the journey now. “I’m not letting her out of my sight.”

Teigh narrowed his eyes at Soren. “You have no idea what the ceremony entails, do you?”

Soren shook his head. He had envisioned a stone altar, flowing robes, and a lot of chanting.

“It’s our wedding. The ceremony reaffirms the bond between our souls. That commitment transfers all of our powers to Circe and breaks the curse that keeps us away from those we love. Circe must be well in order for it to happen. She must control the flow of power or we’re all doomed to die.” Teigh stood and reached for Soren. He

rested his hands on either shoulder. "This is it, Soren. This is our last chance to make things right."

Soren's shoulders slumped, and Teigh's hands slid away. Soren turned his back on his lover. "Then we're doomed. The demon won't let me give my power to her." Soren's eyes widened with a new realization. "I won't be a werewolf anymore."

Teigh shrugged. "It's in your DNA now. There's no telling what you'll be."

"But we were mortal men before." Pain tore through his chest, an empty, hollow ache. Being a mortal man meant he wouldn't be able to see or hear or smell as well as he used to, but it also meant he wouldn't hear the demon, and his compulsion would disappear. He wanted the change, and he feared the change. Mostly, he feared the demon would force him to mess it all up.

"Mortal." Teigh closed the distance between them. His chest brushed against Soren's, kindling the flame that already burned. He cupped Soren's cheeks in his hands. "Fallible. Human. All the same things we are now. But only Circe has the power to make us live forever. She's fallible, but she's neither mortal nor human. That was always difficult for you."

"She's perfect." He closed his eyes and leaned into Teigh's embrace. "She's kind and generous and forgiving. She wasn't even mad when she found out I bit her."

Teigh brushed his lips against Soren's, feathering them in a teasing caress. "We're both here for you, Soren. Always." His fingertips played across Soren's chest, weaving a spell the taller man couldn't resist.

Soren parted his lips, inviting Teigh inside, but Teigh's lips moved to play over Soren's jaw and neck. Soren tried to unbutton the dark flannel shirt so he could return the caress, but Teigh pushed his hands away. Even one day ago, Soren would have ripped Teigh's clothes from his body and guided him into the position Soren chose.

Tonight, the need to dominate and control seemed to have fled. He submitted to Teigh, letting him guide the action.

The kiss traveled lower, and Teigh unbuttoned Soren's jeans. Metal scraped metal as his zipper lowered. Using every iota of his natural grace, Soren stepped from his jeans, freeing each leg as Teigh peeled the denim away.

Soren locked his attention on the man kneeling in front of him, studying his hard cock as if he was memorizing every nuance. Nothing about Teigh was submissive tonight. Moonlight glistened from those dark, broad shoulders. Soren wanted to touch Teigh so badly his hand ached. Tentatively, he reached out and rested his fingertips on Teigh's shoulder.

Abruptly, Teigh looked up. "Kneel in front of me."

Soren complied. Face-to-face, he leaned in, and Teigh at last kissed him the way he wanted to be kissed. His hot tongue branded Soren's lips before slipping inside to plunder and taste. His hands moved constantly, sending sparks and stoking flames.

Burning inside, Soren pressed closer to Teigh. He rubbed his cock against Teigh's thigh, all the while rubbing his thigh against Teigh's cock. Heavy denim separated their flesh and created harsh friction. Soren moaned, the vibrations of his passion passing into Teigh's mouth.

All the passion Soren thought he spent on Riley returned. Blood roared in his ears, and the sound of Teigh's heart pounding echoed through his head. Tangling Teigh's dreads in his fingers, Soren broke the kiss. "I love you, Teigh. I wish I could be half the man you are."

Teigh chuckled and pushed at Soren. "You're so much more than you think you are. At least that hasn't changed." He unbuttoned his flannel, spread it on the ground, and patted it. "Lie on your back. I have some lubricant in my pack."

Soren watched Teigh rise to his feet and cross the short distance to where Riley slept. Two of the three people he loved more than

anything in the world were there with him. He missed Caiden, the ache dull and distant. He had no clear memories of his third lover.

Teigh leaned over Riley and checked her once again. She was the anchor who held them together. The ache bloomed, and suddenly Soren's resolve, which had crumbled too many years ago to make a difference, returned. He would fight that demon. Perhaps he had no clear memories of their children, but he knew and loved the wolves who loved his daughters. Shaden was his twin, his closest friend. Demetrius, Marius, and Flynn had been his lieutenants for over fifty years. He would take his own life before he would allow that demon to destroy the people he loved.

When Teigh returned to him, Soren lay back and watched as his lover untied his boots and shucked his jeans. Needing more physical contact, Soren took the tube from Teigh, squirted some of the gel into his palm, and used his power over heat energy to warm it. He massaged the substance over Teigh's softest skin, lingering extra long when he found the place just beneath the head that made Teigh moan.

With a renewed savagery, Teigh grabbed Soren and pushed his head down. He mashed his lips into Soren's, urgency outlining every inch of his body. He pushed Soren's shoulders until they settled back against the soft flannel.

Hot lips and tongue trailed over his neck and chest. Teigh pushed Soren's knees up and out, exposing Soren in a way he'd never before been exposed. Instinct stirred a momentary panic. Soren pushed back a few of Teigh's dreads, and moonlight helped him find the love and tenderness in Teigh's deep brown eyes.

Reaching down, Teigh found Soren's opening. He massaged some lubricant into it. Soren's body jerked, and he moaned. He'd never allowed his body to be taken in the submissive position before, but he wanted to give this to Teigh. He wanted to show his lover somehow that he wasn't completely gone, that the man he knew and loved still resided inside this shell. Maybe he wasn't in complete control of his

actions, but his soul hadn't gone anywhere. Silently, he prayed for Teigh to unbury the man he used to be.

The tip of Teigh's cock pressed against the tight muscle guarding his entrance. Soren breathed deeply, forcing his body to relax, to accept love from this man. Warm steel pressed harder, at last breaching his sphincter.

Fire raced through Soren's system, igniting a need he'd never felt. He squirmed, at last understanding why Riley and Teigh lost their heads when he fucked them like this. Teigh didn't take things slowly. He knew this was Soren's first time, yet he treated him as if they'd been doing this for years. Without giving Soren a chance to get used to anything, he withdrew only to slam back inside.

Oaths fell from Soren's lips in the ancient language of the wolves. He rolled his hips, lifting them higher in offering. Tight, hot, a delicious inferno, and a small pinch of pain. The sensations spiraled out of control. Teigh's hand slipped between them. Still lubricated, it closed around Soren's hard cock. A hiss escaped as Teigh stroked and squeezed, giving a little twist every time he came to the ridge surrounding the thick head.

Soren's fingers dug into Teigh's shoulders, and his claws scratched paths across his lover's back. Lost to passion, Teigh ground his hips harder. His lips moved, forming words without sound until Soren wrapped his grip around Teigh's dreads and jerked him down to mash their lips together.

Tongues dueled and fireworks exploded. Soren came hard. His ejaculate sprayed over his chest and splattered on both their faces. Teigh came in his ass, jets of heat shooting ribbons of pleasure through Soren's body.

Teigh pulled his cock out and collapsed on Soren's chest. Soren stroked Teigh's cheek and temple with his thumb, the only part of him that wasn't trembling. Love flowed through his veins, filling a vast pool of calm for which Soren had been searching his entire life. Tears

burned behind his eyes, full of sorrow, regret, and helplessness. The feelings dueled, and he didn't know what would win.

* * * *

Riley woke up surrounded by the scent and heat of two men. Without opening her eyes, she knew Teigh's flannel-covered chest was pressed to her cheek while Soren cocooned her from behind. Heat blazed from both of them, mostly from Soren. Damp coolness seeped from the layer of leaves that covered the ground below her, yet she didn't feel a chill. It didn't take long for Riley to realize her core body temperature had risen.

She basked in this new, wolfish warmth until Soren stirred. His hand, which had been lying still on her hip, flexed. Hot memories of the previous night flooded back, and she realized someone had bathed and dressed her while she slept. There was no way the filthy, dirty mess of body fluids, sweat, and dried leaves had magically disappeared. She wondered if Soren or Teigh had tended to her while she slumbered.

Careful not to dislodge anyone or anything, she turned to face Soren. His teal eyes opened slowly. He smiled and blinked twice. Love welled in her chest and she returned his lazy smile. Riley could tell the moment his memory of recent events returned. Darkness clouded his eyes and he rolled away from her to sit up.

For the longest time, he didn't move. She stared the broad expanse of his shirt-covered back, unsure what to say that would make everything all right. After an eternity, he stood and shoved his feet into his boots. He kicked at the place where the fire had gone out, sifting the ashes to make sure they were sufficiently cool.

Riley sat up and hugged her knees to her chest in an effort to get some control over the pain his rejection caused. She bit her lip, screwed in her courage, and looked up at him, hoping to catch his eye. It didn't happen. "Soren?"

Soren kicked the bottom of Teigh's foot. "Sun's up. Time to get moving."

A groan came from Teigh. He shifted and rolled, flexing his arms and legs gingerly. His eyes didn't open. Eventually, he settled back into a light slumber.

Soren growled.

"Don't think you can threaten me with that shit. I'll get up when I can move my fucking muscles again." Teigh cracked open his eyes and glared in Soren's direction. "I haven't had to sleep on the ground in far longer than I can remember. Remind me to bring a sleeping bag next time you get the urge to hike overnight."

He had been trying for humor. Riley appreciated his attempt, but she couldn't summon even the ghost of a smile. Soren snorted and started toward a clump of trees. "Take care of business. We're out of here in five."

She knew that had been directed at her as much as Teigh. His big hand covered her shoulder and he pulled her into his embrace. She trembled in his arms, not from fear of what Soren would try to do, but from a breaking heart. No matter how she tried to reason with herself, she couldn't quite brush away the way Soren's treatment hurt.

"Just a little while longer, Circe, then we'll have him back." Teigh's whispered assurance broke the last barrier. What if they didn't get him back? What if they lost him forever?

The dam burst, and her tears flowed. She started with a hiccup, but soon torrents of sobs wracked her ribs, tearing her apart from the inside. Teigh pulled her across his lap and held her. He smoothed one hand over her hair and rocked her gently. She didn't know how long she cried. The five minutes of Soren's decree had come and gone by the time she ran out of tears, and still he didn't reappear. No doubt he heard her breakdown and stayed away on purpose. Chickenshit bastard.

Teigh led her to the stream. She crouched down and dipped her hand in. Icy cold water leached the warmth. She cupped some in her

hand and brought it to her face to wash away evidence of her grief. Strength flowed through her. She took off her jacket and pushed up her sleeves. Slivers of sun peeked through the clouds just as she plunged her arms in.

Her teeth elongated and her vision sharpened. Just below the surface of the clear water, her nails grew and her hands curved. In the distance, she heard the sounds of Soren returning. Heat overwhelmed her body. She jerked her arms from the water and stripped off her shirt.

“What are you doing?” Next to her, Teigh stood, alarm causing his eyes to grow wide and round. “It’s like fifty degrees out here.”

“Hot,” she said. “I’m burning up. He bit me. I’m shifting.” A new scent invaded her consciousness. “He scratched you. You’ll turn, too.”

Teigh’s nostrils flared. “With the full moon tonight.”

Riley lifted her gaze and looked into the sun. She saw the face of her father. Displeasure twisted his features, warring with grief. In her head, she heard his words. *I warned you against choosing mortal men, Circe. You made your decision. I cannot help you, but I will not hinder you.*

“Now,” she said, answering Teigh. “The sun feeds my power. I’m turning now. This isn’t how the power was supposed to come back to me. I don’t know what to do with this.”

She slipped out of her jeans and panties seconds before her limbs changed shape. The wavering reflection in the stream showed a gorgeous, majestic wolf. Riley didn’t think she was being vain in her assessment. Encountering a wolf like this in the wild would have stolen her breath.

When she looked up at Teigh now, her entire perspective had shifted. His jaw dropped. “Gods, Circe. You’re incredible. You shimmer with all the colors of the sun. Gold, red, black, yellow, it’s all there, moving, swirling through your fur. I could look at you for hours and never see the same image twice.”

He knelt down in front of her. One hand reached up tentatively, and stroked her fur. His lips parted and he inhaled sharply. Fear scented his blood with extra spice and his heart beat faster.

A twig cracked. Her ears perked up, gauging Soren's distance. He would arrive within thirty seconds.

"Eternity. You pulse with power and you feel like forever. For the love of all the Gods and Goddesses, Circe, shift back before he comes." The bleakness in Teigh's expression tore at her heart. She didn't mean to cause him pain. "We aren't ready to take him on. We need our daughters to even the fight. Please."

Riley didn't know how she shifted in the first place, and she sure as hell didn't know how to shift back. She lifted her face to the sun, begging her father for assistance. He said he wouldn't help, but he also said he wouldn't interfere. She called on the ancient power running through her veins stronger with each passing second. Heat filled her once again. Her bones changed shape. Within seconds, she crouched, naked in Teigh's arms.

A snort came from across the brook. Soren stood in his human form, completely clothed. His fists rested on his hips and a breeze ruffled his golden hair. "Now is not the time for that, Teigh. Dress her before I take her as she is."

Riley stood, anger supplying the heat this time. "I'm right here, you son of a bitch! If you have something to say to me, then say it to *me*."

His lips thinned, pressing together so tight they turned stark white. Riley held her ground. She might be naked, but that didn't matter. At last, he yielded in their silent war. "Get dressed."

* * * *

Teigh followed behind Circe, watching her for signs of returning power. The episode at the brook had scared his soul nearly across the river Styx. Power, energy unlike anything he'd felt in his lifetime,

radiated from her. This wasn't just the return of her original powers. This was something completely new and different. Everything in nature evolved over time. He didn't expect the magic returning to her to be the same. He honestly thought she would end up with less than she had before, not more. The fire creature standing on the bank before him had power that easily dwarfed what Circe originally had.

She might be the daughter of the sun, but in the vast scheme of things, she was one of the lesser Goddesses, beneath the notice of most immortals. History had bastardized her legend, churning it into a twisted and pale imitation of the real thing. Where they had been attacked and viciously murdered, history made her out to be a seductress with an island of slave-men she transformed into swine. No mention had been made of the full-scale slaughter of dozens of innocent women and men. Teigh closed his eyes against the pain and blocked out images of his grandchildren's lifeless bodies.

One wolf. She had made one man into a wolf to save his life. Soren's survival meant the rest of them would have another chance to live in peaceful, harmonic bliss. They had all pinned their hopes on him.

"Teigh?"

Her concern broke through his heavy thoughts. Reality crashed back around him. She wound her arm through his and squeezed his bicep. Sunlight glinted from her hair, reminding him briefly of the fiery wolf she had become.

He kissed her temple. "How are you holding up, babe?"

Her gaze shifted from him to Soren, who walked several feet in front of them. "I have no idea where we are. He wants to find Torrey, and I would be hard-pressed to find the sky right now."

"We're a half mile away." Soren threw the statement over his shoulder. "I can smell them."

Circe lifted her nose and sniffed daintily. Her nose twitched and she nodded. Wisely, she said nothing. If Soren suspected she wasn't

turning into a wolf in the normal way, his demons would likely go ballistic and demand a sacrifice right now.

A smile lifted the corners of Circe's mouth, and the clouds moved away from the sun. Teigh's spirits lifted just from watching her. She winked at him.

"Soren?"

Soren grunted in response. Teigh wanted to punch his lover for making Circe cry. Perhaps if he took the time to look at her, to remember his love for her, then it would be easier to fight the demons controlling his actions. Teigh hadn't seen them after that first morning, but then, his transfer of power to Circe had not been complete until later that day. He was nothing but a mortal man now.

Well, he would be a werewolf with tonight's moon. He hadn't seen that coming, but it didn't bother him. He had spent most of the last three thousand years around wolves. Becoming one seemed natural. The scratches in his back itched, and he felt the heat of transformation triggering through his system.

"You do know you're in for a whole lot of makeup sex for this, right? The kind where we tie you up and tease you for hours without letting you have an orgasm?"

Soren paused. He threw a long look at her over his shoulder, not bothering to hide his longing and grief. The urge to hit him receded as the amount of pain running through Soren's heart slammed into Teigh with a physical force.

"If you live through this, I doubt you'll want that from me. I doubt you'll want me near you." He spoke barely loud enough for Teigh to hear. The wolf-lady next to him didn't have a problem.

She met his challenge with an unwavering voice. "I love you, Soren. Nothing will change that." Her hand tightened on Teigh's arm, and his heart wept even as it swelled with tenderness.

Soren's face crumbled. His head inclined, and the emotions of struggle played out over his features. Then he turned away and continued walking.

Circe winked at him. “He’s coming around. That damn demon has been dancing around him for an hour and he hasn’t noticed it.”

“He noticed it now.”

She shrugged. “He didn’t hear half of what it said. Your plan was solid, Teigh, though I don’t think I can get him to have sex with me again.”

“Shhh.” Soren’s hearing could pick up any little thing she said, so it wasn’t wise for her to gloat this near to him.

“Do you think Caiden will tie him down with those wicked knots? I think we should all take turns teasing him. I’ve been thinking of the most delicious things for us to do. Have you ever had whipped cream?”

Teigh grinned. He hadn’t yet tried the dairy dessert, but he had seen it plenty of times. There were so many things he wanted to sample. “We could lick it off him. He’d squirm all over the place. I also miss the flavor of honey.”

“You could lay me across his chest and fuck me right on top of him. We could blindfold him so he would be limited to listening and feeling.” She giggled and pressed a kiss to his cheek. “I love you, Teigh. This is going to happen for us. I know it is.”

“We’re here.” Soren’s pronouncement jerked Teigh’s attention away from Circe’s sweet smile.

Teigh stopped at the point where the trees opened up to reveal two large log cabin-style homes. Just over the hill, he spied a third home under construction.

Four male werewolves appeared from nowhere, greeting them with crossed arms and sour expressions. He recognized Shaden, Marius, Demetrius, and Flynn. Teigh blinked a few times, shocked at the lack of warmth until he realized they stared at Soren.

Chapter 9

Shade stepped forward. Every bit as large as Soren, dark as sin everywhere Soren seemed to have been kissed by the sun, Shade made for an imposing figure. Riley had seen him glower before, but he'd never elicited the desired effect. Torrey often rolled her eyes and ignored him. His daughters had him so firmly wrapped around their fingers that a trembling lip negated his intention.

Just now, chills raced down Riley's spine.

"Riley, it's always good to see you. To what do we owe this honor?" Shade addressed the question to Riley, but his stare remained glued to Soren.

Soren's gaze dropped to the ground. His jaw set hard. When she heard his teeth grind, Riley set a reassuring hand on his arm. He flinched and jerked away as if she'd burned him. On her other side, Teigh squeezed her hand where it still gripped his bicep.

"It seems I'm your mother-in-law and these are two of your fathers-in-law." She released Teigh's arm and spread her hands wide. "Surprise."

Desiree and Torrey ran from the house. They showed no signs of slowing down once they made it to where their men stood. Shade caught Torrey and Marius caught Desiree, halting each in their tracks.

"Father! That's my father!" Desiree grit her exclamation from between her teeth. She stared longingly at Teigh. "Marius, let me go."

Torrey didn't protest Shade's hold. She stood a little behind him and eyed Soren warily. Her light brown eyes edged in silver, and the welcoming expression on her face cracked. Her gaze flicked from

Soren to Riley to Teigh and back. She turned to Riley, questions swimming in her eyes that didn't need a voice. "Desiree, stay back."

At Torrey's quiet command, Desiree ceased struggling. She zeroed in on Soren, which is where everyone else's gazes were parked. Her eyes widened in understanding. She exchanged an almost imperceptible glance with Torrey. Without warning, the two shifted and sprang forward. The sound of rending seams was lost in the inhuman squealing that followed.

Shade and Marius shifted. Each bounded in Soren's direction. He shifted, meeting his brothers in battle. The noise of hostile snarls filled the air.

Flynn didn't shift, but he did close the distance between him and Riley. He tried to snatch her up, but she batted his hands away. Before Soren had bitten her, she wouldn't have been able to see his approach, much less protest it. He would have been able to take her off to wherever he intended before she would have processed what happened. Now the playing field had evened out.

He settled for herding her and Teigh away from the battle.

Riley watched as Torrey landed on one demon. She held it down with her paw and ripped the head clean off. Behind her, a fire bloomed. Demetrius knelt next to it, having used his command of fire to summon it. She tossed the body in first. A shower of sparks burst, and then she tossed the head into the orange flames.

Desiree did the same with another demon. Riley gasped in shock. She hadn't seen that second one. Three more appeared. Torrey and Desiree made short work of two, but even more appeared. Hundreds.

"There are too many," she said. "They can't do this alone."

With that, she called power to her body. She heard Flynn's gasp at her transformation, but she didn't pay it much mind. Her lover, her sister, and her friend were in serious jeopardy. The demons, which looked like red-tinted leprechauns without the clothes, had multiplied. Riley had no idea how many attacked Torrey and Desiree.

She jumped into the fray, systematically decapitating demons and tossing them into the fire Demetrius had built. Sharp teeth bit her legs and body. Everywhere she looked, the sea of demons threatened to overwhelm her. Renewing her efforts, she fought hard. Soren's sanity, their future, and that of their daughters were at stake.

Her backside bumped into those of Torrey and Desiree. The demons had managed to corral the three of them, surrounding them on the edge of the valley clearing. Memories of a similar circumstance, only with humans instead of demons, surfaced. That battle had been futile. There had been too many of them, and her reluctance to use her magic to harm them had led to their defeat.

Well, she had no such compassion this time. The magic she used to transform them all had worked on the humans as well, turning them into something befitting their actions. Gathering all the iron in her will, she sent forth a pulse of magic. It behaved as a blast wave, knocking them down. Those closest to her incinerated. The she-wolves attacked those that remained. The tide of the battle had turned. Never again would these souls have the chance to attack her or those she loved.

When everything settled down, Riley searched the tangle of wolves for Soren. She found him pinned to the ground. Shade's jaw opened, unclamping from Soren's neck. He and Marius backed away. Riley rushed between them and shifted. She fell to her knees next to Soren. He stared up at her, his expression unreadable.

"Are you all right?" She smoothed her hands over his neck where Shade had bitten him, but she found no injuries.

"He didn't fight me." Shade's voice came from behind Riley, but she didn't turn around. She didn't take her eyes from Soren, whose fathomless eyes stared at her with an emotion she couldn't name.

After far too long, Soren shifted back to his human form. He sat up, hooked his hand around the back of her neck, and pulled her to him. The post-shift, wolfish scent of him held her just as much as his hand. He paused with his lips one tantalizing inch away. Tension and

anger vibrated from him. She didn't understand why he wasn't turning handsprings over the fact they had freed him from the demons.

He exhaled hard and released her. "I barely had the energy to shift back. What the hell have you done to me?"

She reached for him, but he pushed her hands away. Anguish constricted her chest and she had to force herself to breathe. "Soren, please don't do this."

Slowly, and with a great deal of difficulty, he lumbered to his feet. She rose with him, careful to keep her distance. Once vertical, he scowled at her. "I trusted you, Riley. All this time, I thought I was a danger to you, and it turns out you're the greater danger. If losing myself is what it takes to be with you, then I don't want to be with you."

She licked her lips, desperately trying to bring feeling back to them. "Your compulsion is gone. We killed hundreds of them."

"I'm barely a wolf anymore. This is what you've planned all along, isn't it?"

"No." She nearly choked on the word in her rush to reassure him. "I didn't plan any of this. Soren, I love you."

"*Riley* loved me. You're not Riley anymore. You're Circe, and I don't know her. I don't want to know her." His gaze slid past her and his body followed. "Shade, can I borrow a pair of pants?"

Blood drained from her face, leaving it so cold the tear that fell burned as it slid down her cheek. Teigh's arms engulfed her. She turned and buried her face in his chest. Once again, he held her as she cried over Soren.

"He'll come around, Circe. Give him time. Losing his ability to shape-shift isn't easy. He's defined himself as a wolf for as long as he can remember. He needs time to come to terms with it, especially now that you've gained that ability as well."

She lifted her head to stare into his warm brown eyes. "Teigh, we don't have time. We have until tonight, and then we lose Caiden

forever. All this time, all this pain and sacrifice will have been for nothing. I can't let that happen. I can't lose you or Caiden or Soren."

He smoothed his thumb down her temple and across her cheek. "Let me talk to him, babe. Let me see if I can get him to see reason."

With that, he turned her over to Torrey and Desiree. Torrey wrapped an arm around Riley's waist. Desiree squeezed her hand. Together, the three of them headed to the house into which Soren hadn't gone.

Chapter 10

Soren slid into a pair of Shaden's jeans. They fit perfectly. He eyed the wall full of shelves that held all of Shaden and Torrey's clothes. Out in the open like that, they probably didn't trigger Shaden's compulsion like things put away in drawers always did.

Compulsion. Soren had always hated his compulsion, but he had worn it like a badge of honor anyway. Having one meant he was one of the most powerful wolves in his pack. Average wolves didn't have compulsions, and Soren had always taken pride in his exceptionalism.

"Torrey made you build these, didn't she?"

Shaden smiled. If Soren had been able to muster one, they would have been mirror images. The only real difference in their physical features lay in their coloring. Where Soren had blond hair and teal eyes, Shaden had black hair and brown eyes almost as dark as the night sky. A day's growth of stubble stained both their jaws.

"It seems my soul mate prefers a home where things are picked up. I've learned to clean up my messes."

Soren raised a brow. "It's a compulsion. You can't help it."

Shaden's lifted a shoulder and let it fall. "If you don't learn to control it, it will control you. Torrey and the kids help clean stuff up after I have an episode, which happens much less frequently than they used to. She doesn't get mad or pissy about it, but she does find it frustrating. Soren, you're stalling. I think the real issue is what the hell did you do to Riley out there?"

The brightness of midday drew Soren to the window. Being on the second floor, the window offered a breathtaking view. A long yard led down to a stream. Across the way, the tree-covered slope rose to

impressive heights. Wanderlust seized him just from looking at the vastness. The image of Riley as a wolf came to him. Full of reds, golds, and oranges, she displayed all the colors of the sun, as befit the daughter of the sun. He pinched the headache starting between his eyes, generated by shades of regret and pangs stemming from the bleakness of her eyes as he walked away from her.

"I spent ten years looking for her. I wanted to apologize. I wanted to make it up to her. I wanted..." He pressed his forehead against the cool glass.

"You wanted to make a life with her."

Soren nodded. "I never thought I would meet a woman that made me feel like I could be more than I am. But she did. I wanted to kick this compulsion for her. I left Lyton. I gave all of my responsibilities to Tiffany and I left the pack. I had no power and no way of getting any. I thought it was gone."

Shaden flopped down on the bed. He settled back against a bank of pillows and crossed his legs at the ankle. "Compulsions don't go away."

The moment that demon had appeared, the truth of his curse had come crashing down on him.

"No, they don't, especially not when you flip for someone who turns out to be a minor Goddess." He sat on the edge of the bed opposite his brother. "Shaden, she took some of my power. I understand why she did it. I dragged her here to have you guys perform the ceremony to restore her immortality, and then I planned to harvest her power. I'm barely a wolf now, and I've never been much of a man."

Shaden scooted across the bed to sit next to Soren. "Stop beating yourself up. She fell in love with the man, not the wolf. When you had her at the house, she had no idea you were a wolf. She spent that time getting to know you. Believe me, I've spent years watching her hold on to her anger toward you because that's all she had left."

Anger indicated strong feelings. It hadn't taken much for Soren to convert her feelings to positive ones. He knew the point Shaden tried to make, yet he couldn't get over the way weakness constricted his chest. He'd always been the strong one. He was the pack leader. Nobody had more developed senses. If he no longer held claim to any of those things, what did he have to offer a mate?

Soren waited, knowing his brother hadn't finished speaking. When the silence stretched, he turned and found Shaden rubbing his jaw, deep in thought. "You don't seem upset about what she's done to me."

Shaden laughed briefly, and then he regarded Soren with a somber expression. "She's given you back to me. If that makes you a weaker wolf, so be it. I can't find it in my heart to be angry at a woman who made it so that my best friend and brother can be part of my life again."

A knock at the door interrupted anything more Shaden might have said. Soren should have been able to identify the scent of the person standing on the other side of that slab of wood, but his senses failed him. He growled in frustration.

The door opened to reveal Teigh. The handsome man rested a hand on each side of the door frame. "Does that growl mean I should come in or go away?"

Soren's heart pounded. Would Teigh reject him now, subjecting him to the same heartbreak he had dealt Riley? "Come in."

Teigh crossed the room and held his hand out to Shaden. "I'm glad to see you made good use of that address. Torment is exceptionally happy, and those girls are just lovely."

Though he didn't forget his manners, confusion wrinkled Shaden's brow and pursed his lip. He shook Teigh's hand. "Have we met?"

"Teigh's the Shadow Man," Soren supplied. "And my lover."

The wrinkles disappeared as Shaden's brows shot to his hairline. "I didn't see that coming, but I guess I should have. Torrey told me she and Des had three fathers."

"Caiden will join us as soon as the girls get the ritual going." He threw a look at Soren that sent Soren's heart into overdrive. "That is, if Soren can get his head out of his ass."

Shaden stood, hands parked on his hips. "She siphoned off a fair bit of his power. He can barely shift. Still, I think it's not stuck, but he could use help pulling it out."

Though his brother had just been trying to talk him into realizing the necessity of Riley's actions, he didn't hesitate to defend Soren. His twin was his other half, his conscience, and his best friend. He hadn't realized how much he'd missed having Shaden on his side.

Unimpressed, Teigh stepped into Shaden's personal space, a risky endeavor when confronting a wolf. He poked a finger into Shaden's chest. "He knew this power wasn't his to keep when he accepted it."

Soren slid between his lover and his brother before Shaden lost his temper. "I don't have the memories you have, Teigh. This isn't easy for me."

"No, I guess breaking Circe's heart and making her cry is much easier to do."

Shame flamed his face. Soren had fled that morning at the first sign of her tears. He closed his eyes and hung his head. "At least she has you."

Teigh hissed and turned away. He headed to the window Soren had so recently vacated. "She remembers loving me, Soren, but she loves you. I won't have that with her until after the ceremony when her memories all return. Watching her with you, knowing I'm getting the scraps because she can't truly remember me, that's sucked majorly. Even you feel the emotion toward me, but you have no logical basis for it. You don't remember all the time we've spent together. You're taking it on faith and intuition. You don't really remember me either."

Soren felt Shaden looking at him. He felt the weight of his brother's unasked questions. More than that, he finally understood that Teigh had endured just as much pain. He'd lost all of the powers he'd wielded as the Shadow Man, yet he hadn't complained once. He'd watched as the woman and the man he loved barely included him in the deepest levels of their hearts.

"I'm sorry." Words were inadequate. Soren closed the space between them in three steps. He slid his arms around Teigh's waist. "I've been selfish. I'm sorry."

Teigh leaned his weight against Soren and let his head rest against Soren's shoulder. "You always were a selfish bastard. But you're also one of the most generous men in the world. Nothing about this has been easy, but if you can find it in your heart to forgive Circe and return her power to her, we can finally be together. All of us."

Teigh turned in his arms and lifted his lips. Soren kissed him with all the love and tenderness in his heart. Maybe he didn't completely remember Teigh, but they had forged new memories, and Soren had fallen in love with Teigh all over again.

Behind him, the door closed softly as Shaden left them alone.

* * * *

Riley paced the length of Desiree's long living room. Seven nieces followed her about and clamored for her attention. Normally, she would revel in spending time with the kids, but now she couldn't keep her gaze from wandering to the door every five seconds.

Finally, Desiree called them away for lunch, leaving her alone with Torrey. For as long as she could remember, Riley had worshipped the ground Torrey trod upon.

"Don't expect me to call you 'Mom.'"

Riley laughed and sat on the sofa next to her sister. The huge room afforded an unexpected level of privacy. Situated away from the bedroom and kitchen, it sported two long couches and four

overstuffed chairs. Everything centered around a low wooden table that had to measure six feet across and three feet the other way.

She lifted her feet to rest on that scarred surface. "I don't even expect you to call me Circe, though the more time passes and the more powers I absorb, the more I remember that name. I may be that person, but I'm still your little sister."

"So, how long have you known?"

Riley lifted a shoulder and let it fall. Soren had reentered her life only five days ago, yet it seemed he had always been there. "I'm still acclimating. It's like I have this life as Riley and now all these other memories and this whole other identity are imprinting in my mind. Last week, I was moping because I hadn't been on a date in a few months. This week, I have three lovers. Next week..."

She couldn't voice the thought sending ice through her veins. If Soren didn't come around, then Caiden would fade away. She might spend the rest of her life with Teigh, but they would both always be missing Soren and Caiden.

Torrey leaned forward and took Riley's hands in her own. "You haven't been a wolf for that long. One of the things you'll come to realize is how being a shape-shifter becomes an integral part of who you are. If Soren's losing that on top of all the hell he's put himself through because of the demons, then he needs you to be understanding."

"I know." Riley swallowed hard. "I wish we had time for him to come to terms with this on his own, but I don't. If we don't do the ceremony before the next dawn, Caiden pays the ultimate price. We all do, though it will be delayed for us."

Torrey nodded. "So maybe you don't want to wait here all day. Maybe you want to head over to my house and talk some sense into him. I bet he'll have a much more difficult time staying away from you if you're there with him."

As always, Torrey gave excellent advice. Riley pushed to her feet and threw her sister a grateful smile. "I guess I'm off then. Wish me luck."

Torrey rose and enveloped Riley in her arms. "You don't need luck. He loves you. Capitalize on it."

* * * *

Ten minutes later, Riley stood outside the door leading to Torrey and Shade's bedroom. She heard the murmur of voices as Teigh and Soren spoke, and she hated to interrupt. Finally, she took a deep breath and pushed open the door.

She'd been inside Torrey's bedroom many times before. Shelving dominated one wall and a huge bed took up half the available floor space. Given the impressive dimensions of the room, that meant the bed could easily sleep Torrey, Shade, and all three of their kids on a stormy night.

Comfortable chairs were situated under the window. Teigh and Soren occupied those. Both sat forward on their cushions, leaning toward one another. As one, each man sat up a little straighter. Soren rubbed his palms on his thighs, fingers spread wide.

Teigh held out a hand, beckoning her closer. She closed the door and crossed the room. "Circe, babe, I'm glad you're here." He vacated the seat and pushed her gently into it. "Soren has something he needs to say to you."

A razor-sharp lump cut her throat, rendering her temporarily incapable of speech. She met Soren's somber gaze and managed a nod.

His hands rolled into fists. He flexed them a few times. "I'm sorry, Riley. I know this is the way things are supposed to happen, but it's a blow. I wasn't expecting any of this. When I found you after all this time, I thought the hardest part would be convincing you to give

me a chance. I thought being with you, spending my days loving you, would be the easy part.”

She opened her mouth to assure him she had no idea any of this would happen, but Teigh motioned for her to stay quiet.

Soren shook his head. “I might not have a clear memory about how we got into this mess, but I don’t want out of it. Honey, can you forgive me?”

Instead of answering, she threw herself at him. He caught her as she wrapped her arms around his neck and buried her face in his hair. Relief flowed through her. Tense muscles relaxed and she molded her body to Soren’s. His arms enveloped her, one looping round to hold her close around the waist and the other rising to tangle his fingers in her hair.

Teigh’s warm body pressed against her from the back, sandwiching her between two of her lovers. The palm of one hand played up and down her bare arm, pushing up the edge of the short sleeve when he encountered it. His other arm wound around Soren. They stayed like that for a long time, basking in the warmth and love each had to give to the other two.

The hair spilling down her neck on one side moved. Teigh replaced it with the weight of his lips. They skimmed up and down her sensitive skin, and gooseflesh traveled down her back. She let her head fall back to be cradled by his shoulder.

Dipping his face to her throat, Soren took advantage of the offering. His lips sent new waves of desire lapping through her body. Hands touched her everywhere. Someone tugged her shirt up. She raised her arms. The soft cotton slipped away, exposing her torso. She hadn’t been wearing a bra.

Teigh’s lips traveled down her spine and his hands reached around to cup her breasts. He kneaded the globes, and she moaned. Soren lifted her hips and stripped off her borrowed jeans and panties in one motion. He pushed her thighs apart. One finger separated her wet

folds. He spread her cream along her labia, massaging it in as he went.

Behind her, Teigh adjusted her position so that she sat across Soren's lap. He opened her thighs wide and watched Soren tease sweet heat into her slick pussy. His brown eyes lightened, sparkling with love and need. She wanted to reach for his cock, but Soren held her with one arm across her midsection. She whimpered a protest, and Teigh's gaze rose to meet hers. He smiled and captured her lips in a searing kiss that made her toes tingle.

When he released her, he kissed his way down her body, pausing at Soren's arm to worship him a little. Then he crouched lower. His tongue flicked the tip of her clit, the barest hint of a promise. Soren's fingers continued their lazy ministrations. Teigh didn't avoid Soren at all. His tongue flicked and licked both Soren's fingers and her weeping pussy.

The heat remained steady, and neither of them did a single thing to increase it. At this rate, she would never orgasm. She might die of pleasure, but not of completion.

"Teigh." She figured he would respond first. He had never denied her anything. Soren and Caiden both needed to dominate her in bed, but Teigh skipped the games. "Please."

She hoped he would remove Soren's fingers and replace them with his own, pumping into her as he sucked her clit until she screamed his name. Instead, he sat back on his heels and peered up at Soren.

Soren lifted her and set her on her feet. She wobbled a bit, but her knees didn't give out. He stood before Teigh. With slow, reverent movements, Soren unbuttoned Teigh's flannel and pushed it from his shoulders. Riley unbuttoned the cuffs and tugged the sleeves until the flannel fell away to reveal Teigh's magnificent torso. Lacking Soren's methodical patience that seemed to have come from nowhere, she ran her hands over Teigh's smooth skin.

She explored his back, adding her lips and tongue to the mix. Reaching around to the front, she slid a hand down the front of his jeans. Soren opened the fly to give her more room to maneuver, and she used the space to wrap her hand around his hard cock. Soren knelt in front of Teigh. He slid Teigh's pants down with the same sedate pace that was beginning to rub off on Riley. The urgency, the need to come, receded. In its place, she felt a profound need to make love with both men.

Riley kissed her way around Teigh's side. She rose to her toes and turned her face up to him. Teigh accepted her offering. His lips met hers, burning with smoldering passion. He moaned into her mouth and broke the kiss. Shades of ecstasy crossed his face, and his head fell back.

Glancing down, she saw Soren exploring Teigh's cock with his fingertips. Soren took the same time and care worshipping Teigh as he had used with Riley. Her heart swelled, and the amount of love she felt nearly sapped the strength from her knees. She steadied herself against Teigh, who trembled and swayed. With her hands and lips, she paid the same loving attention to the broad expanse of skin on his chest and back. Returning to her place behind him, she kneaded his ass the same way he had kneaded her breasts.

When Teigh's breaths came faster, Soren stopped and rose to his feet.

Now that both Teigh and Riley were naked, they teamed up and turned their attention to Soren. Working together, they stripped him, taking the time to appreciate him with the same reverence he had used on them. She knelt before him and licked the length of his throbbing cock. Though she could fit little more than the head in her mouth, she lavished him with all the tenderness in her heart.

A familiar kind of magic filled the air. Riley felt the particles of light energy zipping around the room, reflecting from one surface to another, their eternal energy never waning.

Soren's large hands wrapped around her shoulders and lifted her. His cock popped out of her mouth and his tongue replaced it. He ravaged her mouth, sucking her tongue and twirling his around it. When he released her, she opened her eyes to find the room lit with a golden glow. Those particles of light had become visible to her. She had no idea how she was able to see something that moved so fast, and intuition told her she could control it if she concentrated.

She filed that thought away for later. Right now, she wanted to love and be loved. Soren and Teigh pressed their bodies on either side of hers, sandwiching her between them as they kissed. The trio made their way to the large bed. Given the chanting penetrating the closed windows, she didn't think Torrey would be too upset about them using her bed. The ritual had begun.

Teigh set her on the bed and kissed her. He mastered her mouth and nibbled on her lips as he settled his weight over her. Just when she expected to feel the heat of his body, a hand on his shoulder pulled him back. Looking up, she gasped.

"Caiden."

He smiled, and the corners of his clear blue eyes crinkled invitingly. Her heart pounded harder. Bending down, he brushed a light kiss across her lips.

A shadow fell over them both. Caiden's muscles tensed, and he straightened up. He turned his head first, and his body followed. Riley followed the flowing linen pants and shirt up his body, but she could no longer see his face. Soren stood in front of Caiden, less than a foot away, but neither reached out to touch the other. For the longest time, they stared at one another.

Riley recognized the greedy look in Soren's eyes as he drank in the sight of Caiden standing before him in the flesh. The first time she'd seen him, Caiden had bowled her over with his classic Irish handsomeness and the depth of wisdom reflected in his eyes.

Soren towered over Caiden, who turned out to be a little shorter than Teigh in real life. He lifted his hand and laid it on Caiden's shoulder.

The contact broke the spell and triggered a physical reaction. Caiden slid his hands up Soren's bare chest and cupped his face. "Face-to-face at long last."

The awe and tenderness in Caiden's tone melted Soren completely. He lowered his lips and pulled Caiden's body tight against his at the same time. Riley and Teigh watched, letting them have this moment undisturbed. Caiden's abilities hadn't allowed him to contact Soren in any way, and they had been separated for a long, long time.

By the time the kiss ended, Soren had stripped away Caiden's loose garments. He pressed his forehead to Caiden's, resting it there as he caught his breath. "Riley is the key. We need to all be inside her for the ceremony to be complete."

At her core, Riley understood what had to happen. On the surface, trepidation made her hesitant. Keeping a rhythm with two lovers had proven difficult. She couldn't imagine coordinating the rhythmic effort for three of them. For what they proposed, she had to become a passive vessel.

Her eyes met Caiden's, and she understood what he had been trying to gain from tying her down. If time had permitted, he could have trained her to respond with automatic submission.

"Are you ready, darling?"

She nodded and held out a hand to him. He kissed her, tapping into that connection she had already established between her, Soren, and Teigh.

When he finished greeting her, Caiden turned his attention to Teigh. Kneeling with his legs straddling her, Teigh twisted his body so that it came in maximum contact with Caiden's. He threaded his fingers through Caiden's soft black hair. Watching the kiss drew more cream from Riley's pussy. It smeared across her thighs and trickled

down to leave a wet spot on the bed. Aching with need, she whimpered.

At first, she thought her wolf snuck through. The whimper, which she thought would have been a plea, came out as an insistent growl. Then she realized it hadn't come from her. Soren's growl had drowned out her tiny sound.

Caiden gently extricated himself from Teigh's hold. He reached out and drew a finger down Soren's ready cock. "Lie down, Soren, on your back."

Soren sprawled next to Riley in the position Caiden had ordered. The three of them looked to Caiden for direction, and Riley realized which one of her men claimed the most dominance.

"Circe, darling, straddle him. Don't take him into you just yet."

Teigh moved so that Riley could get up. He pulled her to her knees and guided her onto Soren. Caiden moved in behind her. Soren automatically spread his legs to give Caiden a place to kneel. Multiple hands pushed her shoulders down. Her hands shot out to catch her before she could fall on Soren, not that it mattered. He could take her weight with no problem.

Fingers traced through her wetness. As Soren's hands were the only ones she could see, she knew his were the ones playing with her breasts. He teased with light strokes, alternating them with sharp pinches and twists. That, combined with the hands exploring her wet and swollen pussy, nearly sent her over the edge.

One or both of the hands—she was fairly certain Teigh and Caiden both played between her legs—moved her cream back to coat her anus. Fingers pressed inside, wringing a moan and a whimper from deep inside her chest.

Someone lifted her hips and a hand reached between her and Soren. He gasped, and the tip of his cock nudged her opening. Either Teigh or Caiden had positioned him there. Instead of guiding her down onto him, they used his cock to tease her as they had just done with their fingers.

Riley didn't know how much more she could take. "Please."

Teigh chuckled. Soren moaned, seconding her plea. Caiden pulled her hips back, and she sank down on Soren, filling her wanton pussy with his blazing heat. She closed her eyes to savor the sensation.

Soren's gentle caress moved down the side of her face. "Open your eyes, honey. Let me see you."

Love shone from every inch of his face. It gentled his eyes and softened his lips. The feeling in her heart, the one that seemed to reach out to include them all, expanded.

"Oh, Circe, that's perfect. I can feel your power growing."

Breaking her gaze from Soren's, she turned her head to find Teigh kneeling next to them. His luscious lips spread in a huge grin to complement the praise he had just given.

Behind her, Caiden pressed the tip of his cock to her anus. "Ready, little Goddess?"

The feel of his crown nestled against the ring of muscle guarding her entrance made Riley shiver in anticipation. With all this loving attention lavished on her, she certainly felt like a goddess.

"Yes, Caiden. I'm ready."

He pressed, and the thick crown breached her ass. Ever so slowly, he filled her. With each small thrust forward, the room became brighter.

Soren looked around in wonder. "Are you doing this?"

Power rushed through her veins, a series of tiny fires threatening to burst with the pleasure generated by two of her lovers. Her lips tingled. A glance down showed her fingertips glowed. "I think we're all doing this. I don't know how I could possibly do this by myself."

Caiden drew a hand down her spine. "Our daughters have begun the ceremony. The powers you scattered among us are returning to you. Everything will soon be put right." He withdrew almost all the way and thrust back in.

Riley gasped. Insistent fingertips urged her head back. The head of Teigh's thick cock traced her lips, spreading pre-cum like lipstick.

She wiped it away with the tip of her tongue. Opening her mouth, she sucked him inside. He wrapped a hand in her hair and groaned.

“Babe, you feel so good.”

With her mouth full, Riley’s moan of agreement vibrated against his cock. She relaxed her jaw and her neck, letting Teigh hold her head how he wanted it. Soren and Caiden claimed the rest of her body. On some cue, probably from Caiden, the three of them began a slow rhythm. Riley, firmly encased in the arms of her lovers, turned the keeping of her body over to them.

At the moment of her surrender, an incredible power surged through her body. Memories mixed with the intense pleasure her three lovers gave, and the pieces of her long, ancient history fell into place. Nights spent in the arms of her lovers as they loved her and one another. Hours spent with her daughters as they grew up and found soul mates of their own. Those last desperate moments when she chose to divide her powers instead of live an eternity without her family.

Heat and light suffused her core. Moans and shouts of pleasure filled the room. The tempo of their thrusts increased. Caiden shouted a command, and all four of them climaxed together. A burst of energy shot through the room. It blinded them all momentarily, and then it swept outward in an ever-expanding circle.

Molten blood poured through Riley’s veins and beat in her heart, but it didn’t hurt. It felt right. The feel of her three lovers holding her sated a need deep within her soul. After all this time, she was once again Circe.

Chapter 11

Construction on her home had been completed to the point where they could finally move in. Riley, who still thought of herself by this more recent name, wandered through the empty rooms and mentally filled them with furniture and people.

Eight months had elapsed since her daughter and granddaughters had performed the ceremony to bring back her powers and memories. Though she had the ability, Riley had chosen to not return them to the island home that existed just a little out of sync with the rest of the world. It held too many painful memories.

Arms closed around her from behind. She had scented Caiden's presence long before he made it into their house. She tilted her neck to give him access, and he planted a string of kisses along the bare skin.

Of them all, he had yet to become a shape-shifter. Soren had been relieved to retain that ability after the ceremony. Since he had bitten Teigh and Riley, they also had the ability to shift into wolves. Each of them had offered to share the power with Caiden, but he refused each time.

The ceremony hadn't completely sapped anyone's powers. Both of her daughters retained their abilities to work magic and commune with the earth. The werewolves all held sway over fire. Soren had adjusted to having a little less power. When he stepped back and took a hard look at his abilities, he realized he hadn't lost nearly what he thought he lost.

Her granddaughters, genetic products of werewolves and witches, had powers more closely aligned with Circe. Like her, they could shift

into any animal they chose. Riley knew they had more options than animals. If she wanted, she could become a dragon or a tree. However, she didn't want to put ideas into the seven urchins running around the area. She would wait until they were a little older to tell them about that ability.

Caiden hadn't been completely changed, either. He could project his mind anywhere in the world, including the dreams of others. Riley couldn't count the number of times he set romantic and erotic scenes in her dreams. Each time, she woke with either Soren or Teigh watching her as she writhed and climaxed while asleep. Their grins always translated into ardor. Each of them were slaves to the acute sense of smell that made them have to taste and fuck her every time they caught the scent of her arousal.

Because of that, Riley sported a bulge in the region of her belly. Caiden stroked the swell of her stomach. He had already been into their unborn daughter's dreams. A rarity in the werewolf world, Riley only carried one baby.

"How are you feeling?"

She turned in his arms and lifted her lips to his. He bent closer and brushed his lips against hers. "Like a large, ripe watermelon. This house is huge, Caiden. How many kids are we having in here?"

Soren appeared in the room, naked and smelling musky. He had been out for a run that morning. The scent of his musk never failed to make her nose twitch and her pussy weep. "As many as you want, Riley. We're all willing to do the necessary work."

She raised a brow. "Work? Having sex with me is work?"

He slid his arms around both her and Caiden. "How else can we justify taking eight months to get to this stage of construction on the house?"

Behind her, Teigh laughed. His musky scent revealed that he had also been out in wolf form, running with Soren. If she knew them, they had likely stopped to play around. He pressed his naked body and raging hard-on against her backside.

After planting a kiss on her neck, he pressed a hello kiss to Caiden's lips. "How about we get to work, then?"

Caiden nodded. "We should at least bless each room with our love."

Soren chuckled. "Sex in every room? We can do that."

Vision of the house filled with furniture and evidence they lived there faded from Riley's imagination, but the expression in her lovers' eyes soon replaced those visions with pleasure that had light and love glowing from every cell in her body.

Later, as the brilliant glow faded from the empty room, Soren maneuvered himself into sitting position and watched the particles of charged energy ping around the room. "I guess if the electricity ever goes out, we can just take turns licking your pussy to generate more."

Next to him, Caiden laughed. He sat up and rested his cheek against Soren's bare shoulder. "We can tie her down again once she's had the baby."

Caiden hadn't attempted bondage with her since evidence of her pregnancy had begun swelling her stomach. He hadn't skimmed on what Teigh liked, however, and Teigh's new incarnation as a wolf meant he could take more punishment from Caiden's various torture devices. And so, in his quiet and effective way, he demanded more.

Riley snuggled closer to Teigh. Since there was no furniture in the house, they lay sprawled on the floor of what would be the living room. With the extra weight she carried, her back didn't care for the hard surface. She used Teigh as her mattress. He held her close with both arms wrapped around her body. His hands played over her skin, especially her stomach, and he pressed occasional kisses to her face.

A wicked thought lit in her mind. "I want to tie Soren down and teach him the value of a good lover."

Soren trailed his fingertips from her hip to her ankle. A shiver of anticipation ran through him. "You did that last week, honey."

Caiden threaded his fingers through Soren's pale locks. "That was one part of a multi-part lesson, lover. You know she's never going to

be done teaching you to appreciate us. After all, she learned the art of torture from the best.”

Riley concentrated on the particles of light energy in the room. Though they had pretty much faded from sight, she instinctively knew where they were. Using her powers, she wove them. Soon, silken ropes appeared. Sparkling with otherworldly light, they snaked around Soren’s wrists and ankles. He eased onto his back and relaxed his muscles.

Hazarding a glance in her direction, he offered a lopsided smile. “It’s a small price to pay, Circe. Just be warned, honey. One day soon, you won’t be pregnant, and then I will get my turn.”

Teigh lifted her from his body and brushed a kiss across her lips. “Yeah, babe. All bets are off once you’re not pregnant. But for now, Soren’s cock is ready, willing, and able.”

“Can you hold yourself up on your hands and knees over him, Circe?” Caiden’s flickered to her stomach, and a frown marred his handsome face. It seemed she’d grown even larger overnight.

She maneuvered her body into the position Caiden wanted. Her stomach rested solidly against Soren’s, which relieved the burden on her back. Lifting her head, she grinned at Caiden and Teigh. “Ooh, this works for me.”

Caiden swept his tongue into her mouth, and she eagerly accepted her reward. Leaning back, he made room for Teigh to do the same thing.

“All right, Teigh. Do you want to be in the middle or at the end?”

The position Caiden had in mind would cast two of them in the submissive role, not including Soren. Bound tightly with particles of light, he would squirm and struggle, listening and watching while they made love above him. Teigh, who had once been solidly submissive, no longer assumed just the one role. Being a wolf made him need to dominate every now and again. Caiden and Soren had adjusted to it just fine.

A warm sense of excitement suffused Riley as she thought of the ways in which she'd turn the tables on them once she was no longer carrying a child. The wolf inside her had nothing on the Goddess who demanded sharing the dominant role.

Teigh positioned himself behind her and slid into her pussy with agonizing slowness. "I'll take the middle position."

His hands tightened on her hips as Caiden established his control. Even before the three of them began moving as one, Soren growled and strained at his bonds. She widened her legs just a little more, lowering her pussy so that it brushed against his erection.

He partially morphed his fingernails into claws and swiped at the ropes.

Riley giggled at his futile action, but her glee was lost as Teigh thrust into her, spreading pleasure with expert accuracy.

The dimming glow in the room brightened. Particles of love zipped around the room and sexual energy heated their blood. In the distance, wolves howled. Circe was finally home.

THE END

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Michele Zurlo is a wife, mother, and a teacher. She's always working on a new story, and she loves to hear from readers. Check out her website and like her on Facebook to see what she's up to now.

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