

The background of the cover features a man with long dark hair and a beard, wearing a black hoodie that is open at the chest, revealing his muscular torso. He is looking directly at the camera. Behind him, on the right, is a large, bright orange full moon. To the left of the moon is a black silhouette of a werewolf's head, facing right. The background is a dark blue sky with silhouettes of bare trees.

Baiting THE WEREWOLF

A SPICY MM PARANORMAL ROMANCE
TARA STERLING

BAITING THE WEREWOLF

A Spicy Paranormal MM Romance

Tara Sterling

OceanofPDF.com

Copyright © 2026 Tara Sterling

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations used in reviews or articles.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, events, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

No generative artificial intelligence was used in the writing of this work. The author expressly prohibits any use of this work in full or in part for the training of any artificial intelligence technology in any manner.

Independently Published
Cover designed by Pat Lewis

For information, please contact:
authortarasterling@gmail.com

OceanofPDF.com

CONTENT WARNING

1. Mentions of grief over the loss of a parent
2. Violence (not gory)
3. It also features light spanking between consenting adults

OceanofPDF.com

ABOUT THE SERIES



This Halloween, carve out some time to enjoy some frightfully spicy stories. Don't be afraid, the forest may be dark, but it's full of many eerie-sistible monsters. Are they real? Or is it a trick? Our boys will find out - and if they also find love? They're in for a real treat.

[Read the series here.](#)

OceanofPDF.com

ABOUT THIS BOOK

When I stalked my best friend into the woods, I didn't expect to get my reality shattered... or my world thoroughly rocked.

Logan and I are just friends. Nay, best friends. Do I want more? Sure. But why would a giant Greek god who can have anyone he wants choose a tiny introvert with an attitude problem? Besides, Logan is extremely straight.

Which is probably why following him into a dark forest wasn't my brightest idea. But I need to know why he's been lying to me.

So, when my poor life choices make me bait for the monsters lurking in the darkness, I'm not even surprised.

But when rescue comes in the form of a very familiar wolf, I have a lot of questions. Starting with how the giant animal that's been randomly showing up at my doorstep for years ended up here?

Turns out those visits weren't random at all.

Will the truth break the one relationship I can't live without? Or will it finally unleash the desires I've spent my whole life denying?

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER ONE

Wesley

“Your voice is breaking. Are you in your car?” Logan’s deep voice fills the car.

I swallow, my hands tightening on the steering wheel. “Nope. Just at home, wistfully looking out the window, listening to Sam Smith songs.” I swerve the car into a narrow road. It makes a very dramatic sound. Then someone honks loudly. “He just gets it, you know?” I shout to cover up the noise. I’m an alright driver at the best of times. Following someone through busy weekday traffic is a bit too aspirational for me.

“Uh... okay,” Logan says like he doesn’t believe me but is willing to let it pass. “But was the guy really worth pulling out Sam? He was at best Olivia Rodrigo.”

My jaw hangs open. “He was the love of my life, *Logan*.” The car in front of me makes another right. I slow down to give myself some time to think.

I’m breaking a ton of laws here. Not the ones that’ll land my ass in jail, but definitely a few that are the foundation of every liberal society. Ones that keep it from collapsing entirely and ensure the world doesn’t descend into pure chaos.

Can I ever come back from this?

“You knew him for three months,” Logan’s exasperated but fond voice adds to my guilt.

The distance between the turn and my car disappears with every second. “When you know, you know,” I say, ignoring the feeling of unease growing inside.

“Hey, are you alright?” Logan asks. His tone is one of those serious ones he only brings out when he’s really concerned. Ugh, the guy knows me too well!

And that’s exactly why I have to do this. So I take the turn at the intersection into the narrow path the other car just disappeared into. Then, suddenly, I’m on a dark path lined with dense trees blocking the setting sun. I slow down when the asphalt gets rough, the tires bumping over patches of uneven ground.

I clear my throat and steel myself. “Of course, I’m not alright. I just got my heart stomped on,” I say, only half joking.

Look, it’s never fun to be broken up with. But when I texted Logan three crying emojis, and he didn’t show up at my door within fifteen minutes with provisions, I had other, more urgent things to worry about. My best friend was hiding something from me. And it’s time I got to the bottom of it.

“He didn’t even like Sabrina,” Logan says, sounding a bit distracted.

“He is deathly allergic to cats.”

“He made fun of your ice cream choices.”

“Uh...” Okay, he got me there. The guy was a douchebag. And he was *not* allergic to cats. I only learned that nice little fact when I found his secret Instagram account filled with pictures of him with his girlfriend, and you guessed it... their cat! But I’m not telling Logan that. He already has plenty of fodder for mocking my choices in men.

“See? You’ll be fine. But I’ll be over tonight, okay? I need to go right now—”

“Are you out?” I ask before he hangs up. One last chance. That’s all he gets to come clean as I follow his car deeper into the forest.

“Nah, you know me. Just sitting in front of my boring laptop in my boring office. Listen, I have to go, Margaret is making me try her new muffin recipe.”

I let out a breath, my shoulders slumping. I don’t know what disappoints me more. The fact that he’s lying again or that he’d defile muffins for his sick attempt. “Right.”

“I’ll see you tonight, okay?” he asks, his voice a little uncertain.

I blow out a breath. “Okay.”

“Love you,” he says before hanging up.

My breath hitches like it does every time he casually throws those words at me. If I grab the steering wheel any tighter, I’ll have permanent spike marks on my hands from the wheel cover Logan jokingly made me put on and I never removed. But as always, I don’t let the words burrow in. My heart skips a beat anyway.

We are just friends. Have been for decades. Probably since the day we were born, only a day apart.

And then everything changed three years ago. One day we were catching up on the latest episode of *This Is Us*, casually lying on my couch, my feet on his lap. A week later, he canceled our six-year-standing plan with *one* lazy-ass text.

Things are crazy at work. Have to stay back.

I swallowed my frustration and tried to be supportive. Logan had finally found work he was enjoying after not holding onto a job for longer than a week. I wanted to be happy for him.

But canceling plans and lazy texts became a pattern. Team parties. Quirky colleagues needing his attention. An accident at the office. The number of injuries he and his colleagues have racked up in their corporate jobs would make the writers of *Grey’s Anatomy* blush.

Despite everything, I was happy for him at first. Excited even. I woke him up on time when he spent the rare night on my couch after our late-night rom-com marathons. All without staring at his flexed arm covering his eyes as he lay there looking soft, as soft as a six-foot-three man who’s stated ‘gym’ as his hobby on his dating profile can be.

I even packed him his favorite lunch to send him off to work.

I was the best friend anyone could ask for. What blipped my radar wasn’t that he was pulling away from me. That was bound to happen. He was going to outgrow me, a boring, plain-looking blonde introvert who didn’t even believe gym was a hobby, let alone being interested in it. An illustrator who liked his characters more than any human... Okay, most humans.

I’d accepted that fact the day he returned from a family trip one summer when we were fifteen. The minute I had to start craning my neck to

meet his eyes, his arms filling his shirt sleeves like never before, I knew he'd leave me one day. His dark eyes shined like never before, his dark hair artistically disheveled like it was styled by an A-lister's stylist.

No normal fifteen-year-old boy looks like that unless he is a fifteen-year-old character being played by a middle-aged dude.

I'll never forget the moment he pulled me into his arms, crushing me against his chest until I felt completely swallowed by him. Coincidentally, it also happened to be the first time I was certain I was gay. My whole identity crisis resolved in a second. Logan was always helpful like that.

When he didn't distance himself from the scrawny little kid (or appropriately sized one, in my opinion) right away, I was relieved. Surprised, yes. But relieved.

As expected, girls suddenly threw themselves at him, and he took full advantage. He kept me around for his slutty era that turned into his playboy era.

But I knew the inevitable was coming.

The problem wasn't that. The problem was the excuse he made for not picking up my call. He said it was because Marcus had spilled coffee all over his desk, like the clumsy person he was. Except Marcus wasn't the clumsy one. That was Matty.

I don't know why I was so certain, or why it bugged me so much, but the slip made me pay closer attention to his work stories.

They didn't line up at all. The small inconsistencies turned into glaringly obvious lies, like the day he answered my call, huffing like he was running, and said he had to climb ten flights of stairs. Sounds normal. Only his office was supposed to be on the fifth floor.

And I could hear the wind blowing on the other side. Then there was a loud bang, which he explained away as an elevator malfunction.

On the same call.

What elevator?

Maybe I was paranoid, but it worried me. He never really had his rebel phase, so maybe he'd decided twenty-four is a good time to try mixing with the wrong crowd?

The next time he came to my place, I sneaked his phone away and shared his location with myself. I hated myself all day after he left. It was a gross violation of his privacy. He'd kill me if he found out, or worse, really cut me off this time.

But then my cringe behavior paid off. Over the next week, he rarely left his place. Or maybe he just left his phone at home. Why would anyone do that?

And when he did go out, he frequented the most absurd locations. An abandoned building too far from his place to be a random stop. A police station. That one is still a head-scratcher. And the bakery that made my favorite tres leches.

All these places he seemed to visit more often than mine.

That's how I knew he lied to me today.

There's no traffic, no houses, not even a sign telling me where I am. My pitiful attempt at being stealthy means I can't see his car anymore. And as I make another turn, trees closing in around me, I know exactly which direction he's going.

I crack the window open, and cool, damp air rushes inside. It smells like wet soil and pine, with something earthy underneath. I slow down as the road winds deeper into the forest, keeping both hands steady on the wheel.

Even the harsh, bordering-on-dangerous terrain doesn't stop my mind from coming up with theories about what Logan could be doing here at seven p.m. Drugs with his wayward friends who frequently get arrested and love tres leches is winning.

My phone buzzes on the windshield. I hit connect without checking the caller ID. Big mistake.

"You better not be cooped up at your home sulking right now," Marissa's stern voice cuts through the low hum of the wind. I roll the windows back up. This is not going to be a quick call. It never is with my sister.

"I just found out, Marissa. I deserve at least a solid day's worth of sulking."

"Found out what? Does Logan have a new girlfriend?"

I take the next turn slowly, watching for branches, potholes, or anything that might appear around the bend. "What? What's Logan got to do with my breakup?"

"You broke up with that dickhead? Good for you." Her voice is filled with the kind of pride she rarely spares for me.

I shake my head. "Why did no one tell me he was a dickhead when I was dating him?"

"I did. Repeatedly. So, you're sulking *with* Logan this time?"

"No, we're not always together, Marissa. We both have our individual lives," I say primly.

"Sure you do."

"What does that mean?"

"C'mon, Wes. You know exactly what I mean."

I take a deep breath. Leave it to Marissa to bring up the worst subjects at the worst possible time. "Sure, kick me while I'm down by calling me the biggest cliché and accusing me of crushing on my straight best friend. Why wouldn't you?" Have I had some seriously non-friendly dreams about him? Sure. One was a little too vivid for my liking. But dreams don't count. Everyone knows that.

Marissa's judgmental scoff fills the car.

I ignore her implications. She's wrong. And even if she wasn't, it doesn't matter. "We're just friends," I remind her. Besides, I have way more important things to do.

"Wes, Wes, Wes... I know you're not that stupid. You know what? I kept his secret for as long as I could. He told..." Her voice breaks. "...and I caught him..." A loud crack of thunder startles me.

"You're breaking, Marissa. Can you repeat that?"

"Wes? Logan is totally..." With three beeps, the call disconnects.

My heartbeat picks up. What did Logan tell her? No, why am I even taking her seriously? Ugh! She was obviously just playing around. She has a proven track record of doing that. I can't think about that right now.

My eyes flick to the phone screen. Logan has finally stopped. Just as well, because there's no way my car would have lasted much longer under the onslaught of bumps.

I stop the car too. He's parked just a few feet away, but the trees give me perfect cover.

I sit there and stare at the dot on the screen. Guess they're planning to stay for a while.

Am I seriously doing this? What's the plan? Sneak up on him and accuse him of lying to me? Wouldn't that just prove Marissa right? Am I really a cliché?

No. I just care about my best friend. That's totally normal. I'm here to help him, and I can't do that unless I know what he's gotten himself into.

Taking another deep breath, I square my shoulders and get out of the car after grabbing the charger that was going to be my excuse when he found out, but now I can see how stupid it sounds. I carry it anyway.

The cold air hits me unexpectedly. An eerie chill hits the back of my neck. Like I'm being watched.

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER TWO

Logan

The forest is quiet. Which is never a good sign. But that's exactly what we're here for. Trouble. There's still some visibility, not that the dark would stop us.

Then thunder cracks overhead, so loud it drowns out the song my colleague insisted on playing the entire way, only pausing it for a few minutes when I took the call.

"Are you sure this is the place?" he asks from the passenger seat, lowering the volume. My ears are still ringing from how loud it was.

I nod. "The forest ranger spotted three werewolves right here. The description matched our killers."

Nick pulls out his phone to check the coordinates again. The man is not used to being in the passenger seat, literally or figuratively. But this was my department. He was just the closest available backup.

"What would it be like to be a human scared shitless of an unnaturally large wolf, and the animal control just directs your call to a person awfully curious about the fur and eye color of the said wolf? But at least this one was alive enough to answer the questions." I can't imagine Wesley reacting well to a situation like that. Not that he'll ever be in that situation. I'll make sure of that.

"Only because he was smart enough to drive away without questioning what he saw."

I nod. The other three victims weren't so lucky.

“We’ll need to continue this on foot. Let’s gear up,” Nick says.

I roll my eyes at him. “We’re just doing a general survey, we don’t need to *gear up*.” I get out of the car and lean down to look at him.

He shakes his head in disappointment. “Rookies,” he mutters under his breath, knowing full well I’ll hear it. Werewolf hearing doesn’t allow for covert insults under the breath. He gets out of the car, carrying the gear bag anyway.

“Not a rookie,” I correct him. I’ve been with the Werewolf Regulation Bureau three years now. “And between the two of us, you know we can deal with all the feral wolves on this side of the country without the fucking gear.” I shoot him a cocky smile.

Nick tries to glare at me, but a smile breaks out anyway. The guy is a giant softie. Giant to humans, but pretty standard for a werewolf. He’s about the same height and build as me.

Despite my bravado, we don’t make much noise as we look around, trying to find any traces of the wild group of werewolves that have taken shelter in our woods. We’re dealing with the worst of my kind. So we need to be careful. One mistake, and we won’t be leaving this forest.

Despite the danger, assignments like these are my favorite part of working for the secret organization that deals with werewolf-related crimes on the down low. So, there’s a lot to love here.

I take a deep breath of the fresh, brisk air. My werewolf misses this in the city. The sprawling trees, the dirt on the paths, the distant, soothing noises.

And I’d be happier to be here right now if I wasn’t so worried about Wes. I hate that I ditched him again. Especially now when he really needed me.

Nick joins me near the tree with the clear claw mark. “They were definitely here. I can smell them clearly. We don’t even need to shift, so unfortunately, you’ll be missing out on the privilege of admiring my priceless ass.”

“Yeah, dude, I’m not flirting with you. Don’t want your boyfriend to spontaneously come out of retirement and go on a killing spree.” I take the barely-there path toward the tree where the scent is the strongest.

Nick waves me off. “Eh, Elliot is harmless.”

I snort. “You’re the only person in the world who believes that.”

We walk through the bushes following the scent, dry leaves crunching under our shoes.

A faint lavender smell hits me out of nowhere. My feet still.

Wes?

I shake my head and laugh. As if he'll ever set foot in a place like this. The guy barely leaves his apartment without whining about leaving his laptop behind. I suspect this much fresh air might actually burn his skin.

When I got the call that we finally have a location on these werewolves we've been tracking for months, I was on my way to Wes's. I had the perfect heartbreak kit ready. Vanilla ice cream and Pride and Prejudice DVD because Wes is a weirdo who still likes to watch the extended DVD versions of old movies and shows. Has a collection of vintage players and an old TV with a port and everything.

Nick jerks his head to the right. "That way."

I nod and follow his lead. Nick is one of the easiest people to work with on the Bureau. Competent, friendly, and up for just about anything. "By the way, was that the best friend you've been pining over forever on the call before?" Oh yeah, he's also nosy. But that's everyone at the Werewolf Regulation Bureau, so I can't fault him. "We've got a bet going on about when you'll finally confess your undying love for him." See.

"I've not been pining over him," I clarify. I love him because he's lovable. I want to spend all my time with him because he's entertaining. And I like talking to him because he's fun. That's not pining, that's just being friends.

And while I don't have anything against some man-on-man action, I've never been into any man. I don't think so. Although, there was this one time when Wes kissed me while drunk, and it momentarily fried my brain right before he passed out.

Anyway, it doesn't matter. Wes doesn't know I'm a werewolf, let alone a werewolf agent for a secret international agency.

"Wait, what do you mean you have bets?"

Nick walks ahead, delicately sniffing around a tree. "What? Nothing." He doesn't even look at me. "And did I hear he's single again? Didn't he just start dating someone? By the way, October is scientifically the perfect time to start exploring your sexuality. I read it... somewhere."

I snort. "I know you're kidding, but Wes really has the worst taste in men." And the last one was the worst of the bunch. One of those jerks who

get off on criticizing other people. Besides, how could he not adore Sabrina? I'm not particularly fond of cats, but she's the most innocent, most lovable cat on the planet. Nate was an asshole.

"I wonder why." Nick turns and smirks.

I hurry to catch up. "Are you implying something here? Because I feel like you're implying something."

He stops and turns to face me, then sighs exaggeratedly. "C'mon, Logan. The guy makes lunches for you."

I tilt my head. "Yeah, because he makes the best sandwiches and likes to show off."

Nick rolls his eyes. "Or maybe it's because he's pining for you too," he says, then walks away.

I stand there for a second. The lavender scent hanging in the air mocks me. Is it possible? No. Nick doesn't know Wes as I do. Hell, I haven't introduced him to anyone I work with, despite Wes's repeated hints. It's just too risky. What we do is dangerous, and I want to keep Wes far away from this world.

So, no, he's not into me, not like that. Just like I'm not into him. I catch up to Nick. "He doesn't know about us. About me," I confess without meaning to.

Nick looks heavenward. "Why does everyone have to be so dramatic about the werewolf thing when no one has ever given a single fuck about it?"

I frown, then make the wise decision to ignore him. "Well, it's not safe. He gets really enthusiastic about things. If he knows, he'll want in. And I don't want him involved."

"What's wrong with being involved in our world? Literally every human I've known has never regretted it."

"Because they didn't have any options, did they? The Bureau keeps them on a watchlist," I say.

"The watchlist is a myth," he argues.

Leaves scrunch somewhere close, bringing our unnecessary argument to an end. I turn to Nick and press a finger to my lips.

He nods once, then points to the right. Then we're off. Adrenaline pumps through me, carrying my feet farther into the forest. All of Nick's stupid suggestions forgotten. This is what I live for. The rush. The feeling of doing something worthwhile.

And the sooner I'm done here, the sooner I can be back on Wes's couch eating vanilla ice cream and listening to him complain about that fucking asshole.

I ignore the lavender smell I must be imagining.

"I would never understand werewolves who use scented stuff," Nick says, bringing me to a sudden halt.

"You smell that too?" No. *Fuck no.*

Nick stops and turns when he realizes I'm no longer walking beside him. He frowns. "Yeah, man. Isn't that what we were following?"

No, I was following the sound and the rotting musk of blood, probably from one of the animals those werewolves hunted.

But clearly, the scent has been there all along. I just didn't want to acknowledge it because surely it couldn't be real. Surely Wes wouldn't be stupid enough to follow me into the woods filled with wild werewolves.

I pull out my phone and dial him while Nick looks at me, confused.

CHAPTER THREE

Wesley

My phone vibrates with a call. I ignore it without checking and continue walking. I can't deal with Marissa right now. Not when I'm almost a hundred percent sure someone is watching me. I make an executive decision to ignore that too. Acknowledging it would just give it more power. Or maybe that just applies to fear, not animals scoping out their next meal.

Is that why she's calling me? Our twin telepathy chose this moment to activate, and she can feel I'm just seconds from bidding the world goodbye?

I quicken my pace. The leaves crunch under my shoes that are absolutely not made for an impromptu hike. Every noise makes my heart jump. I look down at the little dot on my screen that's farther than I'd imagined when I decided to ditch my car. A drop of water plops down on my phone.

The rain is light, but still very inconvenient.

C'mon, Logan! What have you gotten yourself into?

A shadow moves across my periphery. I whip around to check. There's nothing. Just darkness beyond the overgrown bushes and a cluster of large trees. I take a few steps toward it without thinking, like I'm being summoned by a siren call that has historically never turned out well for anyone.

My phone buzzes again, making me stop. I look down to find Logan's name flashing on the screen.

I pick it up. “Where are you, Wes?” he barks in my ear.

“Uh...” I might or might not be dying just a few feet away from him, but is it really worth admitting I made this extremely stupid mistake? If I play this right, or wrong, depending on who you ask, I may never have to tell him anything.

“Fuck. You’re here, aren’t you?” His voice is low, dangerous.

It makes my body go hot. “Uh, of course, I’m here. In this city. On this earth. In a way, aren’t we all here?” I ramble on before I catch on to what he just said. How does he know I’m *here*? He can’t. So there’s no reason for me to act weird. Except the possibility of almost certain death, but you know, nothing serious.

“Wes? Wesley Eldon Wiley, you’ll tell me where you are, and you’ll tell me right now,” he growls, his breaths heavy like he’s running. I hear someone shouting behind him.

Then I don’t hear anything, but I see eyes blinking at me from behind the bushes. My blood runs cold. Yellow, luminescent, looking straight at me from a height that can’t possibly be a small animal. Not even a normal-sized predator. If I had to guess from the distance, and that’s what I’ll do because there’s no fucking way I’m going closer to investigate, it’ll at least come up to my chest.

“Jacob?” I ask, hoping it’s just the goofy giant wolf that used to visit me since I was a kid. I know how that sounds, okay? Besides, he hasn’t visited me in years. I had imagined him anyway. Wait, no, maybe he was real.

“Wes?” I startle. I forgot he was still on the call.

Or maybe this isn’t real either. I’m obviously imagining things. It’s already dark. I’m in a forest. My mind has decided this is the perfect time to indulge in some of that overactive imagination everyone in my life has accused me of having.

Another pair of sparkling eyes joins the first.

I swallow. No, nothing to see there. It’s just me, chilling in the dark forest, *alone*.

Then there’s another pair. This *can’t* be happening. I turn my head slowly, as if any movement would spook them, and realize I’m surrounded

by glowing eyes. My heart decides it wants no part in this and starts drilling a hole in my ribs.

Then I remember I'm not really alone. "*Logan*," I whisper, clutching my phone like a lifeline.

"*Fuck*," he says with feeling. "What's the status on the backup?"

"What?" I ask, staying as still as humanly possible. Clearly my brain has packed up and left too. I'm dying. Yep. This is happening. These giant animals of unknown variety are going to make a meal out of me. Not in a fun way. It's inevitable. "They're everywhere."

I hear some louder breathing on the other end. "I'm coming, okay?" he whispers. Does he have large animals surrounding him too? Why is he whispering? "Don't move."

Then I hear the rustling. I turn quickly. I register the paws first. Paws the size of my head. Perfect size for crushing it too. My gaze moves slowly upward, taking in the scene before me like I'm operating a camera in a low-budget horror movie.

The huge legs, very proportionate to the paws covered in dark fur. The large head of what can only be described as a wolf. Except a wolf can't be *that* large. Shouldn't be.

Its mouth is peeled back, revealing the large pointy teeth, perfectly built to rip my throat out. It hits me a second too late that this is only one of the probably thousands of wolves surrounding me right now. Wolves that are not native to the area. Or any area, considering they're fucking monsters.

I would know because I looked it up when I spotted one years ago. Then again, when a man was found mauled to death a few weeks ago right after a wolf sighting. It was in the newspaper and everything. Logan had immediately dismissed it as unnecessary sensationalization of a poor man's death.

Sucks. I'll miss the chance to say 'I told you so' to Logan for the first time.

"Wes? I'm almost there. Just stay put."

"I—I lov—"

"Don't you fucking dare. Don't do the dramatic goodbye thing. I'm coming."

The wolf clearly has had enough, and now that Logan won't even let me have my epic last words, there's no point in waiting. I glance around. Nowhere to run.

My body goes numb. I'm not making it out of here. I'm surrounded, like the wolves coordinated to cut off every possible escape route. They seem really intelligent.

Well good. At least I won't be eaten alive by dumb animals!

What was I thinking following Logan into a forest? Wait, did Logan say he's coming here? No. *Fuck*, he can't come here. "Don't come here." The words come out louder than I meant them to.

The wolves really don't like that. The leaves rustle under seventy thousand paws, and they all come out of the shadows, one after the other, like a well-practiced act they've performed many, many times.

Logan doesn't reply, but I can hear him on the other side. His footsteps are fast. Inhumanly fast. I can't let him come here. Wait, how does he know where I am? I don't remember sharing my location with him. My brain is well and truly scrambled.

The wolf in front of me growls. The sound vibrates through me, raising every hair in its wake.

My body goes lax. The phone drops on the ground.

The wolf takes another step towards me. I squeeze my eyes shut. *Fuck*, why couldn't I have just stayed home? Why couldn't I have talked to Logan like a normal person? Why couldn't I have asked why he was avoiding me?

I was afraid. That's what it all boils down to. I was afraid of more lies. Of his rejection. His dismissal. I was afraid he'd leave me.

I'm still afraid. And the worst part is I'd never know why he was lying to me.

At least, they probably won't hurt him if they're full after eating me.

The rustling grows louder, and I stand there, frozen. Waiting. For claws? For those teeth to finish the job quickly? For an angel to descend from heaven I didn't even believe in until this very second to come and save me? I don't know.

My body shivers with raw fear. The kind I've never felt in my life.

I hear more footsteps approaching. A chill runs down my spine.

Probably the last feeling I'll ever experience.

With the last steps, I imagine the wolf jumping up to dive on me.

I curl in on myself, keeping my eyes firmly shut.

There's another growl. This time, the earth shakes with its vibrations. The trees rustle violently. Then a gust of wind sweeps through.

Then... nothing.

No claws. No teeth. I sit there, huddled in on myself in my now-dripping clothes. I don't even know when I sat down. Maybe some lingering survival instinct kicking in a few hours too late.

I unclench my hands and slowly blink my eyes open.

It takes me a minute to process the scene in front of me. The wolves are still there. But they're fighting with each other? To decide which one will get to eat me?

I scramble back, away from the action. Plastering myself against a tree, I watch the most random fight unfolding in front of my eyes. Then I spot him.

Jacob.

The wolf who's been visiting me for as long as I can remember. I realize that sounds insane, but I've long since accepted I attract the most random shit. In this case, random giant animals who don't behave like animals.

Jacob, named after everyone's favorite character from the early-aughts sensation *Twilight*, first showed up in my backyard when I turned fifteen. I screamed as soon as I spotted him and ran back inside, watching him from the window until he padded away.

He didn't grace me with his presence for the next two years. Then he came back the day Mom died. We'd just come back from the hospice, and I wanted to be away from everything. So, I sat in the backyard looking at Mom's favorite flowers.

I didn't scream when I saw him that time. I didn't run. Just sat there waiting. For what? I didn't even want to wonder.

But he didn't eat me. Just walked toward me slowly. Carefully. With his head down.

For a second, I was worried he'd destroy the flowers. He didn't. Just folded his giant body to sit beside me.

I didn't move for a very long time. Just stared at the flowers, letting the tears I'd been holding back for months flow.

He didn't move either and stayed with me for hours. Just sitting there, resting his head on the ground beside the flowers.

When my dad called me for dinner, he disappeared before I could make sense of any of it.

Jacob took that day as permission to show up any time he damn well pleased. Weirdly, it was often when I needed him. Like the days when watching Dad drink himself to coma got too much. Or the day when Marissa brought her homophobic boyfriend home.

She broke up with him soon after. And Dad cleaned up his act too.

But Jacob kept showing up to help me. He was there the day I got too drunk in college in a new city and lost my way home. He patiently herded me back. But that one *had* to be a hallucination.

He was there when my first boyfriend cheated on me with a girl. Even on the day I tried to wear a grey turtleneck sweater to class. Like he knew I could never pull that shit off.

Now that I think about it, I hadn't seen Jacob around for years. Eventually, I'd written him off as a figment of my imagination.

But watching him tear apart the werewolves surrounding him from all sides, I knew he was definitely real. Very, very real.

The rain makes everything more gruesome.

I should run, I know. I should be halfway to my car by now. But I can't leave Jacob alone. Should I jump in? I try to move my legs, but they won't cooperate.

So, I just stare at Jacob, who's bigger than the other wolves, clawing one of them into submission. Then he turns to me and ...winks?

CHAPTER FOUR

Logan

Tackling the werewolf that dared to think he could hurt my Wes, I crush his neck under my claws. I snatch the one trying to climb on my back with my mouth and throw him away. If I were even a second late... *No*. I'm here now. No one can hurt him. No one can even look at him the wrong way.

I put my full weight on the wolf. The pleading groan he lets out fills me with deep satisfaction. I bury my claws in his torso, sparing his life because I'm not done with him just yet.

Two more jump at me, and I give them my full attention after making sure this one won't rise again. As I bite and claw my way out of the pile slowly forming over me, I notice Wes has decided to catch the show instead of retreating to safety.

I snort, injuring the werewolf closest to me as I lunge at another one on my side. If he wants a show, I'll give him a spectacle he'll never forget.

It takes me a second to realize my wolf, who likes to preen under Wes's attention, has more control than I do.

A wolf takes my momentary distraction as a chance to swipe his claws against my leg. White-hot pain tears through me. I growl, sinking my teeth a little too close to his neck.

He whines and falls in defeat.

I turn to find werewolves sprawled all around me in various states of consciousness. I hope I didn't actually kill any of them. Not that I'll care.

It's just that the Bureau can be a bitch about these things. Something my werewolf doesn't seem to care about.

My wolf sure hates all the wet fur, though, but at least the rain is washing away all the blood and grime.

I lunge at one of the two Nick is fighting and take him out.

Looking at the damage we've done, I remember why I really like this guy. He didn't ask why I was running headfirst towards a bunch of wild wolves. Didn't hesitate for a second. Just got to work and efficiently finished a task we were warned couldn't be done without backup.

Well, with a little help from the good ol' me, of course.

When they're all down, my gaze shifts back to Wes.

Wide blue eyes focused on me. Not Nick. Just me.

He looks spooked, ready to run. But he hasn't yet. We seriously need to talk about his self-preservation skills. Maybe I can even teach him a thing or two. Nick's partner is a human who also works at the Bureau and constantly takes on werewolves. Maybe I can introduce him to Wes?

Wait, no. Wes is never getting within ten feet of the former serial killer, and frankly, a very scary person.

I blow out a breath. It comes out as a whine.

Wes startles like a spell just broke. But he still doesn't run away. Why the fuck isn't he running away? Right, he recognizes me. My werewolf is overjoyed by the idea.

I turn to Nick, who's looking between Wes and me. He tilts his head in question.

No. We can't shift yet. Wes can't know.

But the werewolves around us are starting to stir. We need to inject them with anti-shifts before they decide they want to give it another go. I mean, I probably can, but I really don't want to. I'm still bleeding slightly, and I'm very tired.

I take a step toward Wes and growl my most vicious growl.

His eyes go wider, if that was possible. But he remains frozen in his spot. Okay, he's taking the freeze of the 'fight, flight, or freeze' response a bit too far. But I can't really blame him here. I selfishly conditioned him not to be afraid of me.

But I had no choice. Except for the first time, I only visited him in this form when I couldn't reach him any other way, and he really needed me.

I hear a pitiful growl on my left as a wolf gets up with some effort. Nick strikes him down without even looking. Then turns to me again and nods.

What the fuck does that mean?

With a snap, he's partially shifted. Mostly a human, just with inhumanly large proportions.

No no no no...

Wes lets out a scream then.

Fuck.

He still doesn't run. He has the same expression that he gets every time I force him to sit through a horror movie.

Nick raises his arms to calm him and takes a few steps towards him. "It's okay. Everything is normal. You're safe now." His voice is soothing.

Wes blinks at him, his eyes getting wider with every step. His heartbeat is louder than the groans of the werewolves.

Nick gets closer, and Wes plasters himself against the tree, shaking his head.

I growl at Nick. *That's far enough.*

He turns to look at me and frowns. "Do you *know* him?"

I look between him and Wes, who's gone back to staring at me. How do I handle this? Wes isn't going anywhere... especially now that he knows our secret.

The Bureau has an entire protocol for accidental sightings, which includes multiple discussions with an agent and some light stalking.

The idea of Wes being around another werewolf, being scared and intimidated into keeping our secret, makes me furious. I don't have a choice anymore. Just like I didn't have any the minute I heard Wes's small voice on the phone earlier. I'll have to put my big boy pants on and deal with it.

Because this is Wes and he's the only one that matters.

Nick takes my pause as acceptance and smirks. "Alrighty then. I'll let you deal with this." He walks away to get the bag we threw away when we shifted and, hopefully, our pants. As much as I'm comfortable being naked around werewolves, I don't want to spook Wes even more.

Okay, time to face the music. With a deep breath in, I shift to my human form. Years of shifting have ensured the process is quick, smooth, and painless.

“Eep.”

I want to laugh at the sound that just came out of Wes’s mouth, but I don’t. I can’t. “Wes?” I find myself imitating Nick, keeping my hands up and visible, as I take small steps toward him. “I can explain.”

His eyes scan me, the way they didn’t with Nick. The irrelevant fact gives me an unexpected ego boost. I internally shake my head in disappointment. *Focus, brain!*

“You’re naked,” he breathes out.

I follow his eyes as they trail down my muddy torso to my dick, which is starting to get the very wrong message at Wes’s scrutiny. He’s clearly in shock. The attention is a reaction to that, not a sign of interest.

He doesn’t see me that way.

He’s definitely seeing me that way right now, though. A low howl from behind me reminds me where we are. I turn to find another wolf trying and failing to get up. Right. Priorities.

I turn back to Wes, who’s starting to get some color back to his face. His eyes flick to the wolf, worried.

I wave him off. “We’re fine. They can’t hurt you, okay?”

He nods, jerkily. “I got your charger.” His voice is high.

I imagined a lot of reactions from Wes if he ever found out about me. Replayed a moment like this, albeit with way less violence, a thousand times in my head. It was my favorite hobby.

This? This didn’t even clock on the top seven hundred and seventy-seven, when one of them literally had him turning into a werewolf, playing Uno reverse on me.

“What?” I ask just to be sure I heard him right.

“I...I brought charger. Your charger. You... forgot it at my place,” he says like he’s speaking words for the first time in his life.

Nick comes barreling back from wherever the hell he had to run to retrieve our things, and the next second, my pants smack me square in the face. “The T-shirt is a no-go since you shifted before taking it off. The backup will be here in a few minutes.” He gets to work injecting the wolves.

One by one, they turn into injured humans.

I pull my wet pants up, a bitch of a process, while Wes watches Nick and the wolves with what looks like a mix of fear and fascination.

This is the worst way for him to find out my secret. Why did he have to be here? Wait, why *was* he here? “What are you doing here, Wes?”

His head snaps to mine, and he blinks again, like he forgot I was here.

Like his mind was trying really hard to make him forget I was here. To forget I was his “Jacob”. God, I hated when he called me that. But right now, I’d give anything to have him call me that or any name he wants.

“The charger,” he says instead, showing me the charger again.

“You drove all the way here to give me my charger back?”

Nick snorts.

“Yes?” Wes’s voice is so small I can’t even be angry. His eyes travel down my body again. “You’re hurt.” He walks towards me without any hesitation.

I sigh a breath of relief.

Then he touches me, and everything else goes silent. His hands move over my wet body. Softly. Like he’s afraid of hurting me. The heat from his soft palms as they run over my chest down to my torso, making sure there’s no injury, stops me from telling him I was barely nicked.

When he finds the small cut on my side, he gasps. “Logan, you’re hurt,” he repeats.

I take his hands in mine, ignoring my heart going a mile a minute. “It’ll heal. I’m fine.”

Nick walks over, having injected everyone. “Werewolves have what you may call super healing. He’ll be fine.” He pats my back. “Aren’t you going to introduce us, Logan?”

“Werewolves?” Wes squeaks out. “Like in the books?”

Still in shock, then. Got it. “Yes.” I wrap my hand around his shoulders and pull him into a side hug, thankful I’m no longer covered in dirt and blood. I have this intense urge to comfort him. When he doesn’t push me away, I pull him closer.

Wes melts into me, still facing Nick, who’s looking between Wes and me. “Is he the best friend you won’t let us meet?”

Wes pulls back to look at me. “Why won’t you let them meet me?” His voice is still hoarse and small. Then he pulls back completely and takes a step back, his face morphing into anger. “Wait, you’re a werewolf?”

The shock is clearly dissolving. “I—”

My head snaps to the right at the sound of several cars approaching us.

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER FIVE

Wesley

I thought Logan needed help. A nudge to the right side of the law. A little motivation. I wanted him to confess he had a problem, then accept my help gracefully.

What I wasn't prepared for was watching my best friend fucking *kung fu panda-ing* a dozen wolves into submission with his werewolf friend.

A fucking werewolf!

Like I was living in that weird little town in Twilight. Wait, that would actually be so hot.

But werewolves?

I stand there frozen, processing the scene in front of me now that my mind is finally back online. Glad it didn't leave permanently, even though there's a high chance I've gone crazy.

WEREWOLF!!

Then we're surrounded. Thankfully, by humans this time. I think?

Three cars stop one after the other just beyond our little alcove in the trees. A short woman and a large man walk out first.

The woman surveys the scene before walking towards us. The rain stops suddenly, like even the weather was afraid of inconveniencing her. She blows out a frustrated breath, her eyes now trained on Logan. "Maybe I need to start sending you long, comprehensive letters about missions, Logan, because you clearly can't interpret texts written in plain English anymore."

Ooh, snap! On one hand, I wanted to jump to Logan's defense. But I deserve to enjoy a tiny petite woman blow off on a gym bro.

"I had to," Logan says, his posture defensive. "They were going to attack Wesley."

That brings the woman's attention to me, and that's the moment I understand why Logan had almost regressed to a teenager in her presence. She's scary. And probably not all human.

"Oooh, who's the human, Logan?" another woman asks as she joins us.

"Yes, who's the human, Logan? And why did you bring him into a forest infested with wild killer werewolves?" the scary lady asks.

Alright, that's enough of that. "I followed him," I say, squaring my shoulders.

Logan's focus turns to me. "How?"

I sigh. Time to come clean. "I shared your phone's location when you weren't looking." Wait, I'm not the guilty one here. "That's not the point! Were you ever going to tell me about this? Twenty-five years, Lo! You didn't think—"

Logan's partner interrupts my righteous rant. "*Ooooh-kay*, I think it's time to take these werewolves to the slammer before we have to repeat the entire badass fight sequence."

My gaze stays on Logan, who looks like he'd rather take his chances with these werewolves than answer my questions.

"Yes, haul them to the cars. Nicholas, I assume you parked close by? Go get your car here too," I hear the scary lady say, all the while I seethe in anger.

I don't even care what happens to these people. Wait, did Nicholas say slammer? Are these cops? Is *Logan* a cop? How is he managing that with his corporate job? Wait a second...

"Logan? You can drive back with your friend, right?" the scary lady asks as the other six people start dragging the men into their cars.

When Logan looks at me for confirmation, I nod. "Yeah, we'll drive back in Wes's car."

"Very well. Go home. Talk to him, then bring him back to the headquarters." She watches him until he nods. Then, with a flurry, they all

get into their cars and drive away just as quickly as they came, taking Nicholas with them too.

Just leaving me, Logan, and the reservoir of secrets between us.

As the sound of tires fades away, my anger grows. If I were a cartoon character, smoke would be coming out of my ears. *Twenty-five years!* That's how long I've known the man standing in front of me, looking all hot without a hint of guilt on his face. In fact, he has the audacity to be frowning right back at me. "*What the fuck, Logan?*"

Logan's eyes go wide. "You're asking me? You drove into the woods all alone at night! Who the fuck does that?"

My jaw drops. "Do you really think you'll be the one asking questions right now?"

He sighs, his body sagging in defeat. "Why did you follow me, Wes?"

"What else was I supposed to do? I *knew* you were hiding something from me."

"Clearly, I wasn't doing a good enough job," he says.

I suddenly felt cold all over again. His dismissal hits harder than the betrayal.

He was never going to tell me, and he regrets that I found out. Here I was, believing I meant more to him. Maybe it was all my overactive imagination? Thinking I was his best friend. His family.

Because he was all that and more to me. He was *everything* to me.

Maybe that's what Marissa meant. I was so obsessed with him, I didn't stop to think maybe he didn't like me all that much. He just hung out with me... out of pity? A charitable act for the weird loner guy. His way of giving back to the world.

The thought doesn't make me angry. It just makes me grieve.

The decades I've known him. Loved him.

My eyes sting with unshed tears. I swallow them.

"You're cold. Let's go find your car," he murmurs.

I look down to find I'm hugging myself. I drop my hands and nod, unable to meet his eyes.

He doesn't say anything. Just starts walking determinately.

I have no idea how far we are from my car or if we're going in the right direction. I don't even care anymore. I follow him a few steps behind

with my eyes trained down. Wet leaves and tree roots spread across the forest bed. Everything looks the same as it was a few hours ago.

No visible signs of the explosion that just tore my world apart.

Years and years of memories play through my mind, and I try to see them through his eyes.

Everything feels different between us. Like I'd been wearing the wrong glasses all my life, and removing them made me see everything clearly.

He must really hate driving at night. That's why he chose to spend all those nights on my uncomfortable couch. The fancy Saturday morning breakfast must be something he liked for himself and decided to make extra just because I was around.

He must have done a lot of things for me just because I was around. I was always around. He clearly didn't want that.

I still don't know how to interpret every time he showed up at my door after all my breakups. Maybe he just happened to be in the neighborhood all those times.

Tears start flowing then. How could this happen? How could I have read my entire life so wrong?

I'd give anything right now to go back to the day Logan returned that summer. When he pulled me into that hug, not realizing how much stronger he'd become. I don't know why my mind went to that exact day.

My feet skid to a halt. Logan stops too and turns to look at me. "We're very close. Are you—"

"You wanted to tell me," I murmur. Because he was there. The wolf. He was at my door that night. It was the first time I saw him, and I... screamed. He wanted to tell me, and I ran away scared.

Logan walks towards me, clutching my shoulders. "Wes, are you okay? I could carry you if you're too tired."

My gaze finds his, and he suddenly looks the same. My Logan. The warmth from his palms clears the haze in my mind. "You visited me as a wolf. If you didn't want to tell me, why would you do that?"

Logan looks confused for a fraction of a second before guilt takes over his face. He takes a step back. "We should really find the car. It's not safe to be here. We don't know if we got all of them."

No, we're not doing this again. "You showed me the truth, and I ran away from you. You were going to tell me, and I never gave you the chance

to.”

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER SIX

Logan

His words threaten to claw at the long-buried hurt. I close my eyes and sigh, grounding myself. I've already made Wes's life more complicated than he deserves. I can't dump my emotions on him too. Especially when the hurt lingers right under the surface. "Can we talk about this later?"

"You came the day I lost her too," he whispers, his eyes more watery than before.

I reach out to him, but stop myself before I can touch him. "You weren't answering my calls. I had to see... I needed to be there."

"I thought I was going crazy. A giant wolf sat with me in my tiny backyard for hours. You didn't stop coming, though," he says.

"I should have." I really should have. It wasn't safe for either of us.

Wes glares at me. "Yeah? Why didn't you then? You clearly don't care about me. You don't—"

"What? What are you even saying right now?"

"C'mon, Logan. You could never tell me about you because I was spooked by a giant wolf in my backyard that one time? That's an obvious cop out."

I don't want to talk about this. I can make up a lie about a werewolf I hear nearby and get him out of here. Then what? The jig's up. He knows the truth, and he might decide he doesn't want me in his life anymore. But the way he's looking at me right now, waiting for me to confirm his worst fears, I know he'll never talk to me again if I don't fess up.

And he's one thing I can't live without.

"Everyone warned me about telling humans the truth. But I *had* to tell you. I told you everything." I focus on the tree's roots right beside him. I can't look at him. "I was so excited to show you what I can do. But then you... you were scared of me. So, I didn't want to do it again."

Wes's gasp makes me look at him. I smile to lighten the mood, but his lips press into a deeper frown of pity.

I let out a breath. "That obviously couldn't last long since I had to learn stuff. But yeah, I started to believe you'd hate me if you knew, or worse, you'd be scared of me. So, I stopped going around you in my wolf form, only using it for emergency purposes."

His face didn't change. It's already concerning that he hadn't interrupted me once. Then his eyes go wide. "You came all the way to Berkley. You made sure I reached home when I was too drunk to walk."

I chew on my bottom lip. He keeps looking at me, his gaze accusing. I sigh. "Fine. I kept an eye on you after you left. I missed you, okay."

His mouth stretches into a smile, but then he abruptly goes still. "You shifted in front of me that day."

I huff out a laugh. "You were too drunk to open the door, and I needed my opposable thumbs to help you with that."

His jaw hits the floor. "So, you did kinda tell me and I... I..."

"Forgot? Yeah." I nod.

"No." His eyes go wide again. "Did I— *fuck*. I did, didn't I?"

I know what he's remembering.

When I had to shift in front of him, I almost wished he'd remember just so I didn't have to hide this from him anymore. But when I opened his door, he finally looked at me. Really looked at me.

I stood in his room hoping for squeals and hugs. Instead, he stumbled towards me and planted his lips on mine. It was surprising, but I was more surprised by how I reacted.

I didn't push him away. I kissed him back, pulling him even closer. It was the sloppiest kiss of my life. But I'll never forget the electricity that went through my entire body the second his lips touched mine.

I buried that memory deep inside, never to be examined, and left the city before he woke up.

When he didn't mention any of it the next time we talked, I was relieved.

I shrug now. "You were drunk."

He nods quickly. "Yup. Alcohol, crazy thing." He laughs awkwardly. "Hey, look, we're in a forest. We should really leave." He turns and starts walking away in the wrong direction.

But I doubt that's the reason my hand snakes out to pull him back. "It was just a kiss, Wes." I look at his surprised face. "Are you embarrassed?"

He tries to snatch his arm back, but I don't let go. What's the big deal? He was drunk. It doesn't count. "Let me go, Logan," he says.

I search his face. He is looking behind me, avoiding my face. What the fuck? "It's really not a big deal. Why are you being so weird about this?"

His gaze finally meets mine. He looks hurt. That makes me drop his arm and walk closer. I cup his face, so he doesn't avert his eyes again. I hate when he does that. He doesn't pull back, but his expression doesn't change.

"I don't get it. Did I say something wrong?" I ask softly.

"I hate you," he says so seriously my heart drops down to my stomach.

"What? Why?"

He shakes off my hands and walks away again. Alright, I'm definitely missing something here.

I walk around him to block his way. "Are you still angry about it? I'm sorry. I should have trusted you. But you didn't even tell *me* about the wolf visiting you. I thought you believed you were imagining me. Then I joined the Bureau, and then it was too dangerous to tell you. I'm sorry. Did I say I'm sorry? I'm really sorry."

He breathes loudly, contemplating. His face still looks furious.

"Is it about the kiss? I get it. You're definitely not the first person to kiss me drunk." I laugh.

His eyes narrow. "Well, what a relief," he huffs, sidestepping me as he stomps away.

Okay, what the actual fuck? I turn and block him again. I take a step forward, getting frustrated with the whole thing. He instinctively steps back, hitting the tree trunk behind him. "I honestly don't get it. Do you *want* me to be weird about the kiss? It was just a drunk kiss, Wes."

He looks up like he's praying for patience. "Ugh, can you stop talking about it already?"

“About what? The kiss?” I smile at his indignant face. He looks too cute when he's angry to be taken seriously. I'm just glad he isn't sad anymore.

He tries to slide away, so I brace my hands against the tree trunk on either side of his head. “Logan, let me go,” he says, anger lacing his words.

I press closer, in case he gets any bright ideas about ducking down to escape. His breath hitches the moment I move. “Not until you tell me why you're angry with me,” I breathe out.

He doesn't say anything. Just breathes loudly, his chest almost touching me with every breath, his sweet lavender scent surrounding me.

I tilt my head. “You know you're being weird, right? I know you're not prude enough to be this bothered by a kiss.”

He averts his eyes, avoiding looking at me again. He's biting his lip like he does when he's uncomfortable.

I laugh again. “Dude, chill. It's not like it meant anything. I'll kiss you right now, and it would be nothing,” I say, matter-of-factly.

His eyes snap back to mine. “Do not kiss me,” he insists.

That makes me smile wider, and my eyes slide down to his mouth. Wes has very full, very soft-looking pink lips. I still remember how they felt against mine. “Why? Are you into me or something?” I ask. My eyes fixed on his mouth.

He swallows, the sound like a gunshot in the quiet forest. Then he sharply shakes his head.

That's all the permission I need. I don't try to understand why I'm insisting on doing this in the first place. I close the gap between us.

Wes's lips are just as soft and warm as they looked.

He stands there frozen while I coax him to open his mouth. I have this need to taste him again.

After a few seconds of brushing my lips over his, he responds. Softly at first, before pressing against me, trying to match my intensity.

My arm wraps around his waist so I can feel him against me. He gasps against my mouth.

When I finally slip my tongue inside, my body hums with satisfaction. He tastes sweet, sweeter than I would have expected.

I move a hand to his face and adjust him so I can get more.

I *need* more.

Deepening the kiss, I take my time exploring his mouth.

This feels natural. Something we should have been doing all along, just like cuddling on his couch and attempting new recipes while destroying Wes's kitchen. I have no idea why we haven't actually.

Wes moves to pull back. I groan and tug him closer, connecting our mouths again. I swallow his protests and whines. His soft hands move up my torso aching slowly until they rest on my chest.

It feels nice. All of it feels nice.

Then Wes pushes me away. Firmer this time.

I open my eyes to find his face red and his lips swollen. *I did that.*

His breaths are heavy. "What the fuck, Logan?" he breathes out.

It takes my brain a second to process his words. But as soon as it does, I have the same question.

What the fuck, Logan?

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER SEVEN

Wesley

My lips are still raw and tingling. My skin feels hot and too small to contain my body.

Because Logan just kissed me.

There was no alcohol involved. No one was having a stroke. At least I hope not.

On second thought, I wouldn't mind dying of a stroke right now. I can't even decide whose fault this was. My mind is all but a useless husk of mass at this point. Did my body betray me and somehow take things too far?

Then I feel Logan's firm, muscular arm clench around me. Yeah, definitely not my fault.

It was all Logan. He was the one who wrecked the neat little compartment where I'd put all my feelings for him firmly in the 'friend' category. And now those feelings have grown so much in a matter of minutes that they don't fit in there anymore.

How can we ever go back now that I know how he tastes? How can I ever watch him with someone else now that I know how it feels to be kissed by him? How can I ever look at him the same when I know his eyes get this warm glow right before he kisses?

How can I ever see him as my friend when his hands are still wrapped around me?

But none of that matters. Not really. This needs to stop.

I try to pull myself away from Logan's warm embrace. He's clearly not in his right mind. Not thinking straight, if you will. I snort at the thought, and his eyebrows furrow further.

I reach out to smooth them, then realize what I'm doing.

Extraction. We're working on extraction right now!

But he doesn't move. Just looks at me with a stunned expression.

"I think we should leave," I say. My voice comes out hoarse. He's obviously realizing what we just did. And despite everything, I don't mind giving him an out.

He still doesn't move, his eyes trained on my lips.

I shake him. "Logan?"

"I think we need to try that again," he whispers. His breath brushes over my lips.

What. The. Fuck.

That was the last thing I was expecting. But apparently not my dick. Nope, it takes instant notice of Logan's interest and starts perking up.

No. I need to slam the brakes here. "What do you mean we need to *try that again?*"

He glares at me like I said something unreasonable. Like I was the straight guy asking his very male best friend to kiss him. "I need to check something."

"*Check something?*" My eyes go wide.

He nods, his expression softening. "It's not a problem, right? Considering you're not into me and all." His voice sounds challenging.

I straighten my shoulders. "It's obviously not a problem for me. But it should be for *someone* in this equation. I don't know. Maybe the straight guy between the two of us?"

He rolls his eyes, tightening his grip on me. My body melts into him without my permission. "I'll have a better comeback for that after we've tried that again."

What the fuck does *that* mean? Before I can ask him to explain, his mouth crashes against mine, basically turning off my brain.

He grabs the back of my neck, pulling me closer as he pushes my body against the tree. It must be scraping his fingers, but he doesn't seem to care. Then he pushes his tongue into my mouth.

My eyes snap shut as I lose myself in the moment. Savoring every second.

We should stop. We really should. But I've clearly lost all control over myself because my hands clutch onto him, like I'll float away if I don't hold on tight.

He groans against my mouth. Then pulls back to drop kisses down my neck.

I tilt my head back, giving him better access. The combination of soft lips and rough stubble makes me surrender what little control I had. Everything with him feels like my first time.

His touch searing into my skin.

His lips marking me.

His arms pulling me closer.

"What are you doing?" My words dissolve into a moan.

"Do you want me to stop?" he asks.

Yes. Say yes. You absolutely fucking need to say yes. But nothing comes out.

He pulls back and looks down at me. "Can we just not stop?" he asks. His eyes are dark and so intense, I'd say yes to pretty much anything right now.

"I think we should talk about you being a different species first," I say instead, my voice pleading.

"Will that be a reason why we shouldn't do this?" He moves back, just a little bit. But I notice it immediately.

I shake my head quickly. "No. Obviously, no." Because despite the secrets and the revelations, I don't doubt for a second he's still my best friend. My person.

He smiles seconds before pulling me into a kiss again. "Then later," he says against my mouth. He slips his arm around my hips and picks me up.

I wrap my legs around him, mostly to avoid falling on my face.

Then I hear a sharp ripping sound before cold air hits my skin. I gasp against his mouth.

He just shredded my T-shirt off with his sharp, very non-human claws.

I look down at the sad piece of cloth lying on the dirt. Rough bark scrapes against my skin.

"Sorry," he says, not looking sorry at all. He's busy scanning my body instead. His gaze is so intense it's like he's trying to mark me as his. Yeah,

we'll deal with the secret thing in the next two to three business days.

He kisses down my body, sucking and biting, marking me possessively.

I grab his hair and encourage my ravishment. If there was a moment I could have tried to stop this, it's well and truly gone.

He kisses down to my nipple, taking one into his mouth. Then bites it gently, making my back arch.

"Why do you taste so good?" He mumbles against my skin.

I have no idea how to answer that, so I drop a kiss on his head.

Then there's another loud tearing noise. I look down to see my pants are in shreds. "You know they have buttons and zippers on them, right? They put them there for a reason." I say.

He kisses down my body before kneeling before me. "If you're still being a brat, I'm clearly not doing a good job here."

My jaw drops as I watch him stare at my boxer briefs that now have a giant wet spot in the front. Heat pools deep in my stomach. Out of embarrassment? Horniness? Who even knows anymore. "Wait a second, *brat?*"

He pulls down my briefs. "Yup, that's what you are." He drops a kiss on the head of my aching hard and leaking cock. It perks up even more. "A brat. A mouthy, smartass brat."

Before I can chew his head off for that, because *what the fuck*, he takes my head into his mouth.

Oh my God, what the fuck is happening right now? "You don't have to," I whimper, sounding as unconvincing as I feel.

He snorts. "So bratty." His voice is filled with affection as he continues licking my cock like it's dipped in peanut butter.

Fine, he can call me whatever he wants as long as he keeps giving my dick attention.

I grab his hair again, a little worried about hurting him with my grip.

Then all I can think about is a dark, tight heat swallowing my hard dick as he takes me in. Taking me as deep as he can, he grips the rest of it in his hand.

I feel a little bit of his teeth getting in there too, but it's not too much. "So fucking good, Lo," I moan.

The next time he takes me in, pure electricity travels through my body. Fuck, I will embarrass myself completely if he keeps doing that.

He plays with my balls with his other hand, gently pulling and carefully squeezing them.

“I’m going to cum,” I warn, pulling his head away.

He lets me without any effort.

My breath comes out in loud puffs. When I focus on him, he’s out of breath too. But there’s no regret on his face.

He’s looking up at me with a hunger I’d never seen in his eyes in all twenty-five years of knowing him.

Then his hands close around my hips, turning me toward the tree like I’m a fucking weightless doll.

“What the fuck?” I screech.

He fondles my ass. “Always thought you had a nice ass.” He plants a kiss on one cheek, then the other.

I crane my neck to look back at him. He looks fascinated.

I realize belatedly that I’m shoving my ass towards his face. But that’s mostly to avoid my cock rubbing against the bark because that will be the quickest way to put an end to whatever fantasy we’re living in right now.

“So thick,” he comments.

Well, *that* was unnecessary. “A ton of people love my ass, I’ll have you know,” I tell him.

Smack. I hear the sound before I feel his hand land on my ass cheek. A sharp wave of delicious pain ripples over my skin, jolting my entire body and making me squeak. The sound reverberates through the entire forest.

“Such a brat,” he says under his breath.

“What the fuck?” I ask, my eyes wide.

He lightly brushes his hand over my abused cheek. When he removes his hand, my skin still stings. “Want me to stop?” he asks, lightly tapping the other one, making it jiggle.

I consider it for a fraction of a second before shaking my head.

Smack. This time his rough palm lands on the other one.

Smack. Smack. Two consecutive ones on the right. *Smack.* Then another one on the left.

The hits keep coming until my eyes tear up. My body goes lax, sagging against the tree.

“Stop,” I whimper when the sting becomes too much. My dick is hard as a rod, leaking on the leaves under my feet.

His hand immediately stills.

He drops a sweet kiss on my raw cheek, then mouths the hot skin until he reaches the center.

I drop my head on the trunk, still keeping my dick far away.

My eyes still go wide when I feel him spreading out my cheeks. My breath hitches.

Logan snorts. “Where did you think this was going, baby?”

“Not there for sure,” I murmur. My voice feels raw too, like I’ve been screaming for hours. Maybe I have. I’ve lost all sense of time, the darkness cocooning us from all directions.

He licks a stripe up my hole, making me jolt. Closing my eyes, I tighten my grip on the tree. I surrender my body to whatever awakening or experimentation Logan is going through right now. My feelings don’t even matter anymore. Nothing matters, except his hot, slick tongue against the sensitive skin of my hole.

He doesn't stop. Doesn't talk. Doesn't explain. Just eats me out like he's been waiting for this opportunity for years. Like he was starving for me. Or that's just what I'm choosing to believe. Because how the fuck is he so good at this?

I must have said it out loud because I heard him laugh. Definitely not something you want a guy to be doing when he's tongue fucking your ass.

I feel his sharp chin resting on my stinging cheek. “Women have asses too, you know,” he says. Before I can process his words and my emotions, he goes back to rocking my fucking world with his talented tongue. Sparks explode behind my eyes.

His tongue moves over my hole with precision, inciting sounds from me I've never heard before.

When his hand snakes around me to make my hard cock in his hand, I lose it.

I push my ass against his face in earnest now. I'd give Logan anything he wants. And if what he wants is to make me cum my brains out, who am I to argue?

He groans in appreciation, licking me then fucking me with his tongue. A stray thought or two tries to sneak in, vying for attention. But they disappear before they can take hold.

Logan jerks me hard and fast. The man works me like he'd been handling dicks longer than I have.

When he plunges his tongue into me again, I groan, coming all over his hands. Awareness comes back in waves as I slowly take in my surroundings. Then the situation.

I wait for him to pull back. To push me away. Instead, I feel slick fingers covered in my cum spearing into my hole. The stretch feels glorious. I whimper, unable to make any other sound.

When I look back at him, all his attention is trained on his fingers disappearing inside my hole. He moves them in and out, coating me with my own cum.

My dick is just as excited as it was when this all insanity started.

He adds another finger, stretching me nice and open for what? I don't even want to guess right now. "I can't wait anymore," he says, sounding desperate, needy. My body heats at the gravel in his voice.

"Then don't," I say, without thinking. I stopped thinking a long time ago, probably before I drove into this forest.

Like he was waiting for my permission, he shoots up.

I hear a zipper.

Logan pulls me into him, sealing our bodies together, cocooning me in warmth.

His hard dick pressed against my needy hole. "Werewolves can't catch or spread STDs," he mumbles in my ear. Even the discussions on venereal diseases sound sexy in his voice. How did I control myself from jumping him every time he opened his mouth for two decades?

"I got tested last week when I started suspecting Nate. I'm clean."

"Don't fucking say his name," he growls.

My dick gets harder, if that was even possible.

Then I feel the blunt head of his hard cock against me. He pushes in slowly. The stretch is too much. "Breathe, baby," he says softly.

With slow and deliberate movements, he pushes deeper.

I grip the tree, my hands burning with the pressure. My ass cheeks are on fire. Sweat coats my entire body, despite the chilly wind. I take a deep breath, relaxing myself to let him in. Let him take whatever he needs from me.

He pulls me closer, sucking on my ear.

My body stretches wide to make space for him. I shout when he finally pushes all the way in. My voice echoes back to me. The dark, empty forest doesn't scare me anymore. I feel safe in his embrace.

Logan whispers soft, unintelligible things in my ears as he fucks into me deep and fast. "So good. The best. Fuck, baby, why haven't we done this before? You're everything. Fuck, love you so much."

I ignore them as an effect of the mercurial high of pleasure.

He increases his speed. The sound of skin against skin fills the forest around us.

My whole body tenses, waiting for the release I've craved for what feels like hours. My balls get heavier, ready to blow.

Logan fucks into me as if his life depends on it, pistoning his cock into me. He tunnels into me, keeping me open for him. "Love you so much," he murmurs again, making my spine tingle. I come without touching as he keeps drilling into my poor, wrecked hole.

After a few minutes that I spend holding myself against the tree with all my might, he bites into my shoulder and fills me with his cum.

"Fuck, that was amazing." He pulls out of me, making us groan in harmony.

Then he turns me, and his mouth is on me, swallowing me like he's starving.

I don't care where his mouth was just a few minutes ago. I kiss him back with the ferocity I didn't have a few seconds ago. He pulls me back up, guiding my legs around his waist.

Then I feel his bulge against my hole. Still very hard. "Did you think we were done?"

Fuck, what have I gotten myself into?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Logan

Hilarious. Wes really thought he was done with me. With the way he feels around my cock. The way his hole swallowed me into sweet, unrelenting heat, he's not getting rid of me anytime soon.

I kiss him again, wanting to feel him. Own him. Mark him as mine because he is *mine*.

"Fuck, I'm gonna fill you so full of my cum, you won't even remember that asshole's name."

"Are you... jealous?" Wes says, pulling back.

I glare at him, then push into him in one hard motion.

His body arches up, back hitting the poor tree.

"I got you, baby," I murmur against his sweet skin. I push up into his inviting, slick hole as he makes the most delicious noises.

Taking his nipple into my mouth, I suck hard. I want him to smell like me. To scream my name. Only my name.

"I'm gonna make you cum again," I tell him.

He laughs, but it comes out as a breathy whine. "Human anatomy," he says, breathlessly.

"Is that a challenge?"

He looks up and meets my eyes. "If you're up for it," he breathes out, my fucking brat.

I fuck into him in earnest as he tightens his hold on me, resting his head on my shoulder.

I push him back into the tree, so there's no space between us. Nothing should be between us. I drill into him, my body tingling with this new sensation that I've never felt before.

"Say you love me." I need to hear it. Need to know it.

"I love you," he says without missing a beat.

I unleash everything I was barely holding onto before.

"Logan," Wes groans. "Want to feel you."

"Yes, baby. Make you gonna cum so good."

"No," he says firmly. "Want to feel all of you."

It takes me a second to understand what he means.

"Are you sure?" I ask.

He nods. No hesitation on his face.

I swallow, stopping my hips from pistoning into him with effort. It takes a second, but I concentrate hard. Then I feel his hole stretch to its capacity as my cock grows impossibly long and wide.

Wes screams in pleasure. "Oh god, feels so good."

He feels so small in my arms. Delicate.

"You okay?"

He nods, so I pull out tentatively, tugging at his hole. He groans. But with the second push it's easier.

He whimpers as I push into him again and again until I spill into him, marking him. "You're perfect," I tell him.

I have a sudden urge to see my cum leaking out of him. I let him down gently.

When he's on his feet, I turn him. He leans heavily against a tree. "What are you doing?" he asks, hesitant.

I kneel to look at the mess we've created. It's perfect. He is perfect.

I lick him, tasting us together.

"Oh my God, you're a freak," he whines. There's no judgment in his voice. I doubt I would have cared right now either way.

I gobble him up, twisting my tongue inside him. I lap at his hole until he's screaming. Until I'm satisfied.

Then I sit back on the forest floor and just look at him.

He turns slowly, tentatively.

I wait for the regret and dread to set in. Nothing comes. I lean back, only filled with a bone-deep satisfaction I've never felt before.

Every part of me feels fulfilled. Satisfied. Looking at Wes, covered in marks that I gave him, wakes up something wild in me. I want to growl. To scream he's mine until every creature in the entire world knows it.

Wes wraps his arms around himself, looking self-conscious. I know everything about the guy except his post-coital routine. Guess I know now. He gets awkward.

That's adorable, really.

Or maybe he's cold? "We should leave. It's getting cold." I get up and look for his boxer briefs. I find them a few feet away where I threw them in a hurry to... suck his dick? Yeah, okay, I might need to sit down and think about everything that happened here.

Not now, though, when Wes looks all but ready to bolt.

He snatches it from me with wide eyes.

"I think we've crossed the line where you need to be embarrassed about underwear, babe," I say. The endearment comes naturally, like I've always been using it.

He hurries through putting it on anyway. I hunt for the rest of his clothes next. It's already too dark, I doubt he'll be able to find them with his human eyesight. They're closer to the tree, our unfortunate makeshift bed. Or did it act as a wall? Whatever it was, it couldn't have been comfortable.

When I hold them out, Wes glances at them, then looks up at me with a blank expression. "Sorry," I say. "Got carried away."

He stares at me for a second, then snatches them away too. He wears whatever is left of his sad-looking wet clothes. When he's done, he looks ready to walk down the runway at some super-edgy fashion show.

I bite my lip to not laugh because he hasn't said a single word since we... since we had sex. And I don't want to spook him any further. I'm pretty sure he's reached his lifetime limit for weirdness today.

I've slept with quite a few women who want their space after sex. It would make sense that some dudes want that too.

But when I see his hair rumpled at the back, I reach out to fix it on reflex. He stills, worryingly so. I know it's going against the fundamentals of giving space.

This is Wes, though. My Wes. We've never had any space between us before, so it'd take some practice. And after that show, I'm all for whatever practice we might need.

Looking forward to it, really.

First I need to get this adorable man into his car, then attempt to make him speak again.

We walk the few feet to his car quietly.

He continues his mute routine as we get in the car and fasten our seatbelts. So, I leave him be. See, I'm already learning.

As I drive through the treacherous terrain, I feel this vague sense of pride that Wes drove all the way here without me knowing. Not enough to not be angry about it, though. But that's a conversation for another day. I don't think it'll be hard to convince him not to follow me into scary places after what he faced today.

Besides, my mind is not in the mood for a fight right now. I'm just... happy. Fucking elated, really. Even though I'm navigating narrow roads, tires bumping over uneven ground, I feel light. Lighter than I have in years.

It may be written clearly on my face because I feel Wes's glare on me.

"You can't possibly be humming right now," he snaps. *Oops!* At least he's picked up his vocabulary again?

I shrug. "Why can't I? Just told you the biggest secret I've been hiding for years, and you didn't bolt. Had the best sex of my life. I feel like that's good enough reason to hum."

My eyes flick to him, catching him turning red under his avant-garde clothing. "I thought you'd be regretting that by now," he murmurs.

His tone makes me almost stop the car right there and kiss him until he doesn't sound so sad anymore. I take a breath instead. "And why would I do that?" There'll be a lot of kissing and other things in our future. But right now, Wes needs a shower more than anything else.

"I don't know, Logan. Because until seventy-eight minutes ago, you identified as the straightest man in the Northern Hemisphere."

I laugh. "Okay, that has to be a compliment. Not that being straight is a compliment, but being the best at anything is a big deal."

"Except maybe serial killing," he adds softly.

"Oh, you have no idea." I know and am almost friends with a couple of serial killers who could qualify for that.

Wes turns to face me. "Okay, so you're bi now?"

I think about it. "Maybe. Or maybe I just like having sex with you."

I feel more than see Wes's face fall. "Right... sex. Sure, we can have sex."

“Oh, we’re definitely having more sex. Especially now that I know for sure you’re into me.” I smirk, taking the final turn that merges us into the city traffic.

“Wha—I’m—That’s so presumptuous. I just like having sex with you too,” he finally huffs.

I hum, nodding. “Works for me. We do everything else together. Now with sex involved, you’re automatically my boyfriend.”

I turn to catch his wide-eyed expression, then bring my focus back to getting him home in one piece. “Boyfriend?”

“Fuck yeah, boyfriend. Did you really think I just ruined our friendship to get laid?”

Wes snorts. “Oh, you ruined a lot more than just friendship.”

“There’s a lot more where that came from,” I say as I drive into our new life together, knowing Wes finally knows me. All of me. “I love you,” I blurt.

“I know,” he says.

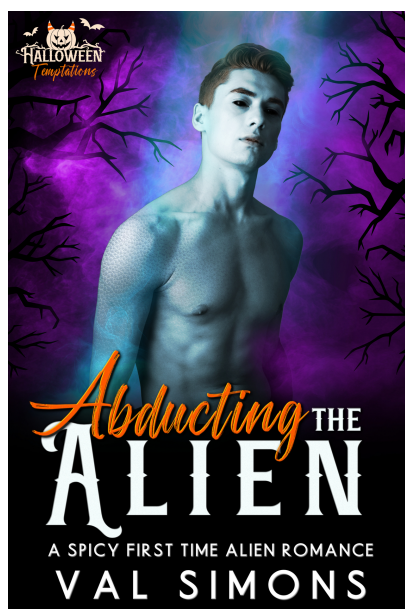
I poke him on his side.

He laughs. “God, are you always this needy in relationships?” I continue poking him. “Fine. I love you too.”

I smile and hum all the way back.

UP NEXT IN THE SERIES

Abducting the Alien by Val Simons



[Read it here](#)

Fun-loving August is just trying to get some air when he finds a guy in an alien costume alone, half-naked, and shivering in the forest. The second they lock eyes, August wants him, and before he knows it, he's sneaking the stranger into his home.

Clay knows August is his mate. That's not a bad thing, since August seems more than willing to explore their mutual attraction. There's just one complication. Okay, two: August doesn't know soul bonds exist, and Clay is a kissless virgin who's spent his whole life saving his strongest bond for the person he was destined for.

Their attraction is immediate, and one very steamy night later, Clay is more sure than ever that August is his future. But Clay's career on his home planet is only just beginning, and he can't stay on Earth forever.

OceanofPDF.com

HALLOWEEN TEMPTATIONS SERIES



This Halloween, carve out some time to enjoy some frightfully spicy stories. Don't be afraid, the forest may be dark, but it's full of many eerie-sistible monsters. Are they real? Or is it a trick? Our boys will find out - and if they also find love? They're in for a real treat.

[Read the series here.](#)

OceanofPDF.com

MORE FROM TARA STERLING

Werewolf Regulation Bureau Files

[Claws & Cover Ups \(Book #1\)](#)

[Claws & Chaotic Commitments \(Book #2\)](#)

[Deadly Howls & Double Cross \(Book #3\)](#) [Pre-orders live!]

[Deck the Halls & Cover the Howls \(Prequel\)](#)

[*OceanofPDF.com*](#)

GET IN TOUCH

I'd love to hear from you! You can find me on Instagram at *tarasterlingwrites*. Or you can join my newsletter to email me directly. That will make sure you're the first one to receive all the updates on my next releases.

You can also subscribe to my [Patreon](#) to get access to free short stories about your favorite characters from the Werewolf Regulation Bureau world.

[OceanofPDF.com](#)