



OMEGA

DEMON CHASER BOOK ONE



Charlene Hartnady

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Demon Chaser

(Book 1)

By

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Description

Demon Chasers...

Protectors of humanity. Sworn to uphold the peace. Oath bound to keep the existence of demons a secret.

Katy is an ordinary girl living an ordinary life...or at least, that's what

she thinks right up until she's abducted and for no apparent reason.

Demon Chaser Cole rescues Katy from the claws of the Alpha of a resident demon wolf pack. Hunted by Bain and his pack he must try and find out why the wolves are willing to risk a two hundred year long standing agreement with the Demon Chasers in order to have her.

The Chaser suspects that Katy is not

as innocent as what she seems. Cole had better move fast though because the longer he's with the raven haired beauty the more impossible he finds it to resist her.

Dedication

“To living with horses”

Chapter 1

Katy felt the hair on the back of her neck stand on end. Pulling in a frightened breath, she turned to scan the deli.

Probably just the after effects of too many cups of coffee. She held her breath awhile longer before letting it out slowly. Even though she knew she was being silly, it didn't stop her eyes from

darting around the room, moving from one patron to the next. From the guys in the queue behind her, most of them familiar faces she had seen here before, to the customers seated at the small number of tables. Adrenaline continued to surge through her veins even though there was nothing out of the ordinary. It took some effort to force herself to look back towards the service counter as it was nearly her turn to order.

It happened so fast, all the noises in the deli became secondary to the sound of her own heartbeat. One minute standing in the queue, and the next knocked clear across the room. The trip took no time at all, but in her shocked state it seemed to last a lifetime. Her back connected with the far wall leaving her winded and dizzy. She struggled to force air back into her tortured lungs and

barely registered being picked up and
bodily carried out the door. When she
got together enough energy to look up,
Katy immediately wished she hadn't.

The man was frigging huge and
unnervingly familiar even though she had
never seen him before in her life. Shaggy
brown hair, rough angular features, he
was a mean looking son of a bitch and he
was abducting her.

Panic rose up in her as his enormous strides ate up the pavement. It was lunch hour in Boston, the streets were crowded with people but no one seemed to notice she was being kidnapped. Katy pulled in a lungful of air.

“Don’t even think about it,” his voice so threatening she swallowed back a scream. The man pulled her closer, her feet almost came off the

ground as they turned into a deserted side ally and made towards a black SUV. Her abductor paused as they neared the vehicle, he nuzzled into her hair. Her skin crawled as she realized he was sniffing her.

Oh God...sniffing...I'm being abducted by a psycho.

Allowing herself to be taken like this was not an option because if this 'loony

tune' got her into his car, somehow, she just knew...he'd do terrible things to her. Things she best not dwell on right now. Difficult as it was, Katy had to force herself to stay calm and focused. She tried to remember a talk show she'd seen the other day on what to do in situations like this. They'd mentioned something about weak spots. Her mind raced through all the possible options.

The sound of her heels scraping along the pavement caught her attention, thank God she'd put them on in a fit of madness this morning. They made her over six feet tall so she often opted for their lower cousins. Not so today, which made her next move possible. Instead of allowing the giant to drag her any further, she lifted the spike closest to him and drove it down as hard as she

could onto the top of his foot. Although he didn't make a sound, he did release his grip a fraction allowing her enough room to elbow him in the solar plexus. Before she could turn to run, he back handed her. Katy flew several feet crashing on the asphalt behind her. Once again, all the air in her lungs was knocked out and she struggled to breathe. Stinging pain had her eyes watering. His wild eyes narrowed in on her, and for

just a second she knew what it must feel like to be prey with the hunter closing in.

He took a stride towards her, stopped and turned his head to one side, his mouth twisted into a cruel smile. “I wouldn’t if I were you,” his eyes were trained on the wall ahead. *Was he talking to her?*

Turning his face upward, he sniffed the air. His hair brushing almost to his

shoulder blades as he did. His laugh came out in a forced bark that had her cringing. “A human and an Omega. What chance do you stand against me?” he paused, his lip curling into a vicious smirk. “Pathetic! Leave now and I’ll let you live.”

A man and a woman entered the ally. Her sigh of relief was cut short when her kidnapper reached down picking her up

by her hair. Katy cried out. He turned, taking her with him so that now they faced the challengers head on. *What the hell?* Things like this didn't happen to people like her.

“This has nothing to do with you. It's pack business,” her abductor snarled.

Katy stood up on tiptoes trying to keep the burning pain on her scalp as bearable as possible.

“She’s a human Bain. The Lores are clear,” the man answered. His voice so low and dangerous, she felt, for the first time since this ordeal started, that she might survive. “By taking the girl, you put the agreement in jeopardy. Hand her over and we’ll call it even. Everybody goes home, agreement intact, no harm done.”

“No can do,” he said as his grip

tightened on her head.

As much as she hated it, another cry was torn from her throat. The challenger let his head hang down, his chin almost resting on his chest. He stayed this way for several long beats, her desperation mounted with each and every one. His eyes lifted, ice cold chards of green bore into her abductor through a mass of dark, unruly hair, Katy felt that being rescued

by the likes of him might be the equivalent of stepping from the frying pan into the furnace. The woman with him pulled a mean looking hunter's blade from deep inside her trench coat. First there was relief as the stinging grip on her hair was released and then more pain as she pummeled head first into the dumpster. Katy crumpled onto the garbage strewn floor. Her vision blurred as she struggled to stay focused on the

whirl of activity. Her abductor was moving fast, quivering, he looked like he was...changing...

Dizzy, her head slumped onto her forearm. She could still hear their shouting or was it growling? She swore she could make out a menacing snarl... then she blacked out.

Chapter 2

The first thing she managed to focus on were those hard, narrowed eyes. So deadly she felt her blood drain and her breathing hitch. She was on the back seat of a car sprawled across his lap. His hands moved down the length of her body and although he didn't linger, he touched her everywhere in firm, even

strokes.

Even though she wanted answers, she scrambled up and tried to get away from this stranger. Her head pounded from the sudden movement, she scrunched her eyes shut to ward off the dizziness.

“Shhh,” he gripped her tighter with one hand while the other moved to cup her chin. It was big, warm and

calloused. His eyes had softened to olive tones, they eased up with...

concern. “Stay still. Besides some cuts and bruises, I think you’ll live.”

There was no other option, so she allowed herself to lean back into him. Despite everything, she felt herself relax.

“Who are you? What just happened?” the words left her lips in a

whisper.

“That’s Ash...” he pointed to the blonde woman behind the steering wheel, “...and I’m Cole, but the question of the hour is who are you?”

Cole...Ash...they had to be fake names. Why would they give her fake names? *Who the hell were these people?* Best she play nice...they had saved her but could just as easily throw

her back to the wolves...the thought clawed at her memory but his insistent gaze forced her to let it go.

“Katy Devon. I’m a bookkeeper. I work for Cowley and Associates. I was standing in line waiting to be served when out of nowhere...,” she was babbling like a nervous idiot and bit down on her bottom lip instead, “What just happened?”

“I’m going to lift you up now.”

She nodded, careful not to bring on another wave of dizziness. The man she now knew as Cole helped her up slow and easy, she slid off his lap.

“Lean back against the seat for support,” when she complied he continued. “Maybe you should start by telling us why Bain was after you,” his eyes hardened back up. “Who are you

really?”

“Wait just a minute,” she sat upright, turning to face him. Not caring that it hurt like mad or that she felt a little queasy.

“That was the first time I’ve ever seen that man...Bain.” Something in her subconscious prickled. Then she noticed the speed at which the car was travelling. “Where are you taking me?” her voice sounded calm and she realized

that she wasn't scared even though she should be. These people knew her abductor and that couldn't be good.

“We're being followed,” Ash turned her head to look back as she spoke.

“Is it him...?” A surge of unexpected panic hit her like a wave. “Oh my God! What are we going to do? Where are we going? How are...,” her words melted one into the other. One big incoherent

mess, but she found that she couldn't stop. The realization of what had just happened and how close she'd come to death or worse – she could still feel that psycho sniffing at her head. Katy twisted banging at the door, she had to get out. “I need to get back to work, I have things I have to do. We're busy with a major audit.”

Cole slid both hands onto her

shoulders, he squeezed for just a second before turning her to face him, taking his arms back as soon as she stilled.

“I won’t let anything happen to you. I promise.”

The panic drained from her body. She felt her lip quiver...oh boy... this was way worse than panic. Not able to stop herself, Katy burst into tears. Cole’s jaw worked. He looked away,

uncomfortable. Just when she'd given up on any type of comfort from him, he put a reassuring hand on her arm. Right now she needed contact with another human being. Her pride be damned, she leaned into him. At first he stiffened but then he slid his arms around her and pulled her in close. It felt good to cry. She really was losing it big time because it felt good to be in this stranger's arms.

Oh hell! What was wrong with him?

Last time he checked he still had a pair of balls. All this lovey-dovey hand holding was getting in the way of business. More to the point, he hadn't just made a promise he would probably never be able to keep had he? The daggers Ash shot him in the rearview mirror told him that he had. One thing

was for sure, something didn't add up, he smelled a rat and his nose never lied. He may not trust the woman in his arms, but she sure as hounds felt good.

It had been important to check for serious injuries and to make sure she wasn't armed. He'd be damned if it hadn't been impossible not to notice that hiding beneath a no-nonsense knee length skirt and matching grey jacket, were

curves enough to put a playboy model to shame. He must be one sick bastard because the torn up stockings and dirt streaks had only helped add to the appeal. It was rare for him to be instantly attracted to trouble, and this woman was trouble with a capital T. Besides the killer body, she wasn't his type. She was either a regular girl with a regular life who'd got herself mixed up in something nasty or she was a serious

liar. Tempting as she was, he didn't do regular and he didn't do liars.

Katy had stopped shuddering and spluttering but she still held on to him as if her life depended on it which at this point it did. Finally, she pulled away, using the back of her hand to wipe her nose and then the tips of her fingers to wipe away the mascara streaks. *Damn, her bottom lip still quivered.* Cole had a

ridiculous urge to smooth it down with the pad of his thumb.

“Please just tell me what’s going on. I need to know.” One look into those crystal blue eyes and he was sorely tempted to believe her whole regular girl act. Believe that she knew nothing about what was happening and why. It wasn’t going to be that easy, he’d been fooled before by sexy-save-me

packaging that turned out to be first degree evil. It wasn't going to happen again. He needed to get to the bottom of this. Fast.

Cole moved back, trying to put some space between them. Needing to breathe, to think straight, which was difficult when he could feel the warmth radiating from her body. When he could smell way beyond her perfume and catch the

enticing scent that was uniquely hers. All woman. Experience had taught him not to trust, it had also taught him how to gauge if someone was lying.

Cole took a deep breath, “My sister and I are demon chasers and Bain is a demon wolf.”

Katy’s mouth dropped just as Ashlyn expelled a hard cuss.

“What are you doing?” Ash’s voice

was as sharp as her blade.

“I knew something was different about him. Something was happening to him just before I passed out,” Katy said.

“You knocked your head, you were seeing things.” Ashlyn was trying hard to defuse the situation.

He was graced with another bout of serious eyeballing in the mirror instructing him to shut the hell up.

“Um...Bain is the ring leader for a gang that calls themselves ‘The Demons’ and—,” Ash couldn’t continue because Cole talked over her.

“Bain *is* a demon wolf. Creatures similar to mythical werewolves except demon wolves are the real deal. Bain was erupting...changing just as you lost consciousness.” This resulted in another string of hard words from behind the

steering wheel.

“Have you lost your mind?” Ash glanced back for a second as she spoke.

“You don’t even know her.”

Her head snapped back a second time, blonde hair flying and he got the feeling that if they weren’t racing to get away from Bain’s pack, he would have been punched right about then. His sister might be a pint sized woman, but she

could fight better than most men he knew.

“Trust me. You drive, I’ll handle this.”

“Cole if...”

“Trust me okay?” He said his last piece through clenched teeth, not once taking his eyes off the woman on the seat next to him.

Ash released a pent up sigh, “You’d

better know what the hell you're doing.”

“Bain is the Alpha of a demon wolf pack that runs in your neck of the woods. Do you have any idea why he wants you?”

She shook her head, her wide eyes staying firmly on his as she spoke, “You said you chase...demon wolves?”

“Nope. We hunt and kill rogue demons, there are more than just the

wolves, but we have, or should I say *had*, a standing agreement with the wolves, and a few others. Point being, the agreement with the wolves has lasted for generations. They stay out of our way and we stay out of theirs. Until today that is. A two hundred year long agreement is in serious jeopardy.”

It was weird, the wolves generally kept to themselves. There were

sometimes incidences within the pack, but it was the Alpha's responsibility to deal with it. The agreement meant that the Demon Control Agency left the wolves alone to govern themselves and to handle any rogues. Bain was an Alpha, he was also the one causing all this shit which put them in a serious predicament.

“Protecting humans is our main

focus. Abducting you would have been, not only against the agreement, but also against Demon Control Agency rules.

Just for clarity sake—” Aside from looking a little pale, it was unbelievable how well she was taking this. Most people would have either freaked or have had a hard time believing it at all. She was either a really good actor or... something else entirely. “—I need to ask,” he felt like a class one dick but it

had to be done. “You weren’t going with
Bain of your own free will were you?”

She gasped staring at him in
disbelief.

“For the record, is that a yes or a no
Katy?”

Her eyes sparked with defiance,
“Hell no!”

He didn’t know why he felt that he

needed to reassure her at this point, but the words came out before he could stop them. “I promised to protect you and I will.”

“I can’t believe this is happening to me.”

“I won’t let him get you. We’ll figure this out.”

“You talked about different types of demons, could there be more kinds after

me?” She rallied on before he had time to answer, “Why does Bain want me? I take it he’s still alive if he’s after us?”

He tried to respond but she cut him off. “What’s this whole demon thing anyway? Werewolves I can kind of understand but demons?”

Cole put a hand up. “Calm down. I realize that you’re scared. To answer your questions, I don’t really want to get

into it too much. I've taken an oath as a Demon Chaser to protect the fact that demons exist from humans but since you are already involved....," Cole paused not sure how much to tell her. "Basically it is like being possessed. There are humans out there who have something....inside of them. Something as in demons, there are different types of species of demons. In the case of the wolves, the demon is similar to a regular

wolf. It is inside of the person and exerts itself and its traits on the human. Bain and his pack are demon wolves. There is more to the world of demons, but I can only give you information at this point that directly pertains to your situation.”

She shook her head, her mouth gaping and her eyes unblinking. Maybe he'd gone a little too far. *Hounds, was it possible to look so wide eyed and not*

be innocent? So far she was passing all of his tests. He still had a nagging feeling in his gut though. “You asked why Bain wants you and the truth is I have no idea. There have been rumors about him messing around with human women lately. Been a bit rough on one or two occasions which is why Ashlyn and I were following him in the first place.”

“Lucky for me. Did you at least manage to slow him down a little?”

“I’m not sure”—for whatever reason he was reluctant to tell her how Bain had almost kicked the crap out of him —“back in the ally, well, we were doing okay...”

Ash chuckled, “You wish Cole. We were barely holding on. Demon wolves are strong but that was insane. It was

like Bain was on something.”

“It’s a full moon tonight which would explain some of that extra energy. Anyway, we were doing *alright* when a lone wolf jumped in. He managed to distract Bain long enough for us to get away. One thing is for sure though, we’re being followed by more than one demon wolf. In fact, our sources tell us that the number of wolves chasing us

keeps on growing. We need to find out the real reason why and soon or...,” he felt it was better not to elaborate at this point.

“Why are you helping me?” Katy asked.

Cole realized that she was probably struggling with trust issues herself. “Like I said, as Demon Chasers it’s our duty to protect humans.” And he needed to find

out how she was involved in all of this.

“I mentioned the DCA earlier. It’s an Agency similar to the CIA except we specialize in demons.”

“Enough Cole,” said Ash. Her hands were white knuckled around the steering wheel as she continued, “That’s confidential information. Need to know only. She sure as hell doesn’t need to frigging know.”

Damn it but Ash was right. It wasn't like him to dole out this type of information to someone he didn't trust, especially since he'd made that mistake before.

“You are humans aren't you?”

Katy's question was barely audible and unexpected.

“As human, as human can be,” piped up Ash, her lips quirked up to the side in

a rare smile.

“Tell us exactly what happened.

Don’t leave out a single detail.” He had to get to the bottom of this. A ways into the story, Cole had to hold up his hand stopping her mid-sentence as he asked, “He sniffed your hair?”

“More than just sniffed it, he nuzzled into my hair and, yeah, sniffed at it.”

Crap, this was way worse than he’d

originally thought.

“What does it mean?” When he didn’t answer she leant forward touching his knee. Imploring him with her eyes.

“Just tell me.”

“Bain doesn’t want to kill you. He wants to mate with you...and is willing to break an agreement that’s lasted over two hundred years to do it. The question is why?”

“What do you mean he wants to mate with me?”

“I’m sorry but the only way to tell you this is to just be blunt...,” Cole normally didn’t sugar coat things, but for some reason he wanted to do just that for her. He couldn’t though. She had to understand what she was up against.

“You’re human.”

“I had noticed,” she said with a

smile.

He hesitated again, and she gave him that expectant look as if to say, “*Out with it Cole.*”

He looked away and then met her straight on. “When I say he wants to mate with you, I mean, quite simply, that he wants to fuck you.” Katy gasped and he gave her a few seconds to compose herself before he continued, “Not what

you want to hear but you need to know how serious this is. If he catches you, there will be no consideration about whether you want him or not. He will take you in any way he wants with no regard to your wishes or needs. You're human so he won't want any type of long term commitment. I still don't fully understand why he would be willing to compromise so much in order to satisfy his lust. Or why he specifically wants

you.”

Chapter 3

After four hours on the road, Cole decided that they had put enough distance between themselves and the pursuing wolves to be able to make a quick stop. Katy needed to pick up a few essentials to get by for a couple of days.

They headed straight for the jeans section of the store. Practicality was

what was needed in situations like this.

A dirty business suit just wouldn't cut it, she needed to blend in, not draw attention. As she took off her laddered stockings, she was thankful that she'd taken the time to shave her legs this morning.

Cole was going with her. To protect her, he'd said, although she got the distinct impression it was really to make

sure she didn't do something stupid like try and run.

When he stepped out of the car and removed the black trench coat he was wearing, she got a chance to look at the long, impressive length of him. More like stare. It took conscience effort to avert her eyes once she'd given him the twice over.

Tall, built, distinctly dangerous.

Wearing non-descript faded, old jeans and a plain, off-white t-shirt; he looked like he'd just stepped off the front cover of a men's health magazine, without even trying. An unwanted shiver of awareness crept up her spine. This was no time for ogling a man she hardly knew, any man for that matter. Yet, with such a strong aura about him, she was tempted to allow herself to trust him. She burned to be able to do just that but

it would be impossible, she didn't know him or his so called sister any more than she had the man who tried to abduct her earlier today. The man who wanted to rape her. Worst of all, Bain wasn't a man at all, he was a demon wolf.

Part animal. It disgusted her.

“We need to make this fast.” Cole put a hand to the small of her back ushering her in the direction of the

nearest clothing racks. The awareness grew, rushing its way through her body turning quickly to...need. *Oh God*, even through the fabric of her clothing, his hand felt hot and heavy against her. Katy moved forward and out of the range of his touch not liking how it affected her.

Instead of holding back he strode past her, then turned back, his eyes slid down the length of her so quickly that

when his eyes met hers, she found herself wondering whether it had happened at all. Her cheeks burned and her nipples tightened telling her that it had. It made her remember the way his hands had moved over her in the car. Even when he was just checking for injuries, his touch was sure and sensual. It lead her to believe that he would know his way around a woman. The patch of skin on her back still felt heated. The air

seemed to thin and her breathing hitched. Cole flashed a barely there smile, she had to work to keep her legs from turning to jelly. It would be better if she didn't think of sex in his presence.

Without warning he turned, striding away until he disappeared amongst the racks. This had never happened to her before. Physical attraction so raw and primal, so animal. Katy took in a ragged

breath. *What was happening to her?*

Before she'd had time to choose a single thing, Cole materialized at her side clutching everything she could possibly need, jeans, t-shirts, a jacket, sneakers, underwear...

OhmyGod underwear!

Exactly what she'd been looking for and all very practical. Right down to the white, cotton bra and panties. The

underwear he was holding was something her grandmother would have chosen.

“Let’s move. We’ll go out that way so that you can pick up a toothbrush and whatever else in the...women’s department, you might need.”

“Fine, but first let me try on the...”

That small, barely there smile of his was back making her stop what she was

saying.

“Don’t you trust my...instincts?” His eyes branded yet another path all the way down her highly reactive body.

Everywhere he looked clenched, puckered and heated in ways she’d never felt before, especially not for a complete stranger. This time, the appraisal was at a leisurely pace. It should have had her feeling uneasy, like

women did when they were being mentally undressed; instead, he managed to make her feel desirable, sexy.

Squaring her shoulders, she thrust her chest out, darn but she liked the burning look that appeared in his eyes.

Katy headed for the changing rooms without waiting for his permission.

There was no way she was paying for clothes she'd never tried on before.

This was some game she was playing at. Make no mistake, it was definitely a game and he wasn't going to fall for it. One thing was for sure though, he was attracted to her. Desire coursed through his veins as he watched her close the curtain of one of the changing booths.

He didn't like it.

Cole waited, standing directly opposite the velvet, blue curtain, staying alert. He wasn't worried about her escaping but with demon wolves closing in from all sides, he feared for her safety. Besides wanting her, he felt a heightened need to protect her. Cole bristled at the thought of another wolf coming within a foot of her. *Katy was his.*

Where in all the hells hounds names had that come from?

Probably from the fact that he could smell her from here, like a summer breeze and candle lit dinners but also of red lace and leather. The perfect specimen. Cole took a step away from the booth, he wished she would hurry up already. Danger lurked in every corner and even after her ordeal today, she

clearly had no idea.

A yelp of pain punctured through the curtain. His hackles rose, the need to protect taking over, Cole dragged aside the heavy fabric ready to fight the wolf trying to...there stood Katy. Alone. Her bright blue eyes widened in shock. She was wearing the dark, blue jeans he'd chosen for her. The zipper was still undone and one of her fingers was in her

mouth.

“Um...false alarm. I caught my finger.” She held out her hand to him and true enough a drop of blood appeared on the tip of her index finger.

That's when he noticed she was in her bra. The one he'd purposefully picked out. It should have looked plain, ugly even. Not on this woman. She didn't need silk, flashy colors or

designs. The white cotton molded her deep curves perfectly. *Oh hell*, he could even see her nipples through the thin cups. They tightened under his gaze. Her long, black hair fanned about her shoulders. His heart rate kicked into overdrive. Cole reached behind him, yanking the curtain closed.

Without another thought, he pushed her up against the mirror. One hand

found her cheek, the other circled her waist. He had to taste her, feel her, be inside of her and he needed it right now.

A low rumble vibrated against her mouth. His bright green eyes were glowing under the fluorescent light making him dangerously beautiful. The hard plains of his body pushed up tightly against her. He wanted her. She could

feel him hard and ready against her belly. Cole was a prime example of every woman's fantasy and temptation consumed her but she couldn't let this happen...she had to...stop.

When she didn't open her mouth, he nipped at her bottom lip. Sliding his hand to cup her ass, she felt her blood turn to fire. Temptation was winning. Katy hooked her leg around his thigh and

his hardness settled in between her legs making her gasp. Cole entered her mouth, he was gentle considering the immediate pace of their kiss. Katy couldn't help but react to him. Moaning. Squirming. It didn't matter that he was practically a stranger, she wanted him. Had to have him. The sooner the better. It didn't matter if he was the enemy come to take her to the fiery pits of hell as long as he made love to her first. Fast,

slow, hard or soft she didn't care. All she wanted was him thrusting deep inside of her. The throbbing need between her thighs was becoming unbearable. She deepened the kiss, afraid of what she might say, make that beg him to do to her.

Cole's body tensed and his eyes flashed open. He pulled away and turned, striking such a terrifying blow

that the unknown man fell into a crumpled heap at his feet. Cole calmly pulled the man into the booth with them before jerking the curtain closed, he turned, training hard eyes on her.

“What are you? Either I’m losing my mind or you’re...,” Cole shook his head, his eyes narrowed. “Get dressed. Move!”

Katy picked up her blouse.

“No! Put these on,” he pushed the t-shirt and jacket into her hands. “We were lucky this time.”

The man was big. He had the same shaggy hair as Bain. “Is he a demon wolf?” Katy asked.

“Yeah and there are more where he came from. We need to go. Right now!”

Once she was dressed, he slid his arm across her shoulders and despite

what had just happened she tried to shrug him off.

“Calm down. We just graduated to couple status.”

“Just because we kissed doesn’t...”

Cole interrupted her, “What I meant was that according to the rest of the world, I’ve just spent the last few minutes in a changing booth with you. We’re trying to blend in remember?” he

smiled and out popped his sexy dimples. Somehow he managed to exude boyish charm and raging sexual appeal all at once. She had to stop herself from doing something silly like giggle. He curled his fingers around her shoulder. “Follow my lead. Until we make it out of here, we’re going to have to act like the perfect couple.”

He pulled the curtain closed. “We

don't want anyone finding him until we're long gone," his hand slid down the side of her arm, his fingers threading with hers.

Her heart raced. *God, she'd almost...they'd almost.* She should feel at least a little disgusted in herself, but all she managed to feel was disappointment. What was happening to her? It was like she'd gone from normal

to sex addict overnight.

With a twist and pull, he had her in his arms and his head buried into her hair, his warm breath tickled her neck.

Why did he have to smell so damned good?

“Heads up. Don’t look but there’s a wolf at the purse rack next to the main exit.”

“How do you know he’s a wolf?”

she asked.

“It’s my professional opinion. Kiss me.”

Before she could ask him why, he was slanting his lips over hers. It was the merest brush of his mouth yet it left her dizzy and so hot and bothered that she felt heat creep its way up her neck. He pulled back, still so close that his breath caressed her lips. Which were

begging for more, every part of her treacherous body begged for more.

“You can open your eyes now.”

For God’s sake, she needed to pull herself together or they were not going to make it out of here alive.

“Don’t be afraid just follow my lead.

We might just be able”—he paused

—“fuck!” They ducked behind a clothes

rack. “He knows we’re here.”

“How do you know for sure?” Katy asked while trying to peer around Cole for another view.

“No you don’t,” he latched an arm around her middle. “Careful, wolves have a strong sense of smell. He’s caught your scent, he just hasn’t pinpointed us yet, but it won’t be long.”

“What are we going to do?”

“There will be more wolves. I don’t

want to cause a scene,” Cole whispered against the her ear sending an explosion of shivers across her body.

She turned away from him trying to keep her composure and spotted the fragrance section. “What if we could mask our smell?”

He tracked her line of vision.

“Brains too.” His lips slanted over hers in a quick, hard kiss. When he pulled

away, Cole looked confused for a second before pulling her to the array of various shaped bottles stacked on the shelf.

Her legs felt as if they had turned to slush. Cole had just kissed her...again... and not because he had to. It was an honest kiss, a lover's kiss. Not one given out of lust or in the heat of the moment. Katy had to stop herself from putting her

fingers to her lips. A spray of perfume brought her back from her thoughts. Cole turned the nozzle on himself and sprayed liberally.

“Men’s cologne? Seriously?” she asked while trying to wave some of the scent away.

“No time. Besides”—he winked —“smells good on you,” Cole took back her hand. “Just act normal. I won’t let

anything happen, I promised remember?”

he whispered so softly she had to strain to hear him.

Big strong man held onto her hand.

Big strong man was promising her again that he would protect her. Oh how she ached to be able to...at least believe him. Cole didn't trust her and she would be stupid to trust him. He gripped her hand tighter as they passed through the

exit and tighter still as they ran for the car. As scared out of her mind as she was, she couldn't help but feel exhilarated. Alive, maybe even for the very first time.

They dove into the already moving vehicle.

“About frigging time,” Ash said as she pushed down on the gas pedal.

Once they were far enough away to

be sure they weren't in any imminent danger, Cole pulled out a phone. "I need to call DCA. I left an unconscious demon wolf at the store. He might be able to give us some answers." He spoke to Ash as he pushed a speed dial number. He relayed briefly what had happened to the person on the other end, then snapped the phone shut.

The perfect couple. That's what they

had pretended to be earlier on. If there was anyone who knew from experience that the perfect couple did not exist, it was her. No matter how hard she'd ever tried, her relationships had never worked out. Things would always go well until they had sex. She'd been told that she was overwhelming, that sex with her was too good. *What the hell did that mean?* Her last boyfriend had called her a freak, she hadn't meant to claw at his

back. A little bit of nail action during sex was normal, *wasn't it?*

She couldn't deny that there was an attraction between herself and Cole. Couldn't shake the feeling that they would be sexually compatible. Not that she was the kinky type, but she liked that he probably wouldn't complain if she used her nails on him a little.

Shaking her head to clear her

thoughts, she looked out the window and noticed that the sun was going down fast. She'd always loved nighttime, especially during a full moon phase. Not this time. Tonight, looking up at the ominous round globe, Katy felt more vulnerable than ever.

Both Ash and Cole looked tense.

Would they really be able to protect her from the demon wolves? Cole had

promised to keep her safe and she got the distinct impression that he didn't give his word lightly.

They drove through a small town in, God only knew where, stopping at one of those cheap rent-by-the-hour motels and rented a room. It was small and seedy.

“Wash up and then get some rest, we leave in a couple of hours,” Ash said as

she pointed at the bathroom. It was tiny but at least it looked clean.

After a much needed shower Katy dressed, putting the jeans and t-shirt back on. She found Cole alone in the small bedroom.

“There was another abduction.”

He was stretched out on the double bed looking the picture of calm yet beneath the surface she sensed a

simmering readiness. This was a man you didn't mess with.

“Ash was picked up by one of the Chasers to investigate the disappearance.”

The walls seemed to close in around them as he spoke.

“Including you and this latest one there have been four so far. The first two women were found dead.”

She gasped, her legs shook so badly that she sank down onto the edge of the bed as far away from his long, muscular limbs as she could get.

“None of the victims was sexually assaulted in any way.”

They were found torn limb from limb.

Cole couldn't bring himself to say the words, she looked too distressed. It would be all too easy to buy into her innocent act when there was nothing innocent about her. Like her reaction to him in the changing room for starters. The way her nostrils had flared and her heart had raced. It had been a long time since he had lost it so completely over a woman.

What happened a year ago had been a grave mistake. Angelica, unlike her name, was the farthest thing from an angel as you could get. He'd allowed himself to be so blinded by lust and what he had thought was love that he'd chosen to ignore all the signs. Once Angelica had the information she needed, she and her fellow hellion demons launched an attack on safe houses. The locations to

which he had unknowingly disclosed.

Five Demon Chasers and eight civilians had died that night. His only saving grace was that he had delivered the death blow to Angelica himself. He was only just starting to build trust and credibility back at the Demon Control Agency. It could not happen again. *Who was this woman really?*

Her hair was still damp from the

shower and she looked more beautiful without makeup. Cole forced himself to concentrate. “The first two women weren’t sexually assaulted. What makes you different?”

From the pictures he’d seen of the other ladies, both had been attractive but neither had exuded her level of sheer sexual energy. The t-shirt she was wearing did nothing to enhance her lush

curves but neither did it do anything to hide them. Much to his irritation, his memory did the rest. To think he had almost...they had almost...her scent of arousal had been maddening. If that demon wolf hadn't interrupted he would have taken her there and then. After shredding her jeans he would have buried himself so deeply into her. No foreplay. Zero hesitation. Katy would have been ready for him. Cole would

have fucked her like an animal against that wall. If that demon wolf had arrived even a few seconds later, nothing would have stopped him from finishing what had started. It scared him, he couldn't let himself lose control again.

“I don't know what makes me different. Why did he choose me in the first place?”

Oh yeah, they'd been talking about

the abduction. *Had to keep his mind out of her panties.* “That’s what we need to find out. Like I said, Bain’s been fooling around with human women lately, getting a little rough. Complaints have been filed.”

She clutched at her throat and turned pale. The sucker in him felt like hugging her.

“It might be that it’s escalated from

playing with humans to full out taking one. It could be that Bain has nothing to do with the murders. At this stage, the Alpha is our number one suspect. If it was him, then he has others involved.”

“Why do you say that?” she asked.

Those baby blues turned on him, framed by long, dark lashes. Eyes a man could drown in. It made him more sure than ever that she knew more than what

she was telling him.

“He can’t be in two places at once.

If he’s tracking us, he couldn’t have taken the girl. There’s more to this. I’ll find the truth.”

Her hand went back up to her throat where she rubbed at her skin in a show of nerves. “Do you think he would have killed me after...after...”

His blood raced to ignition point at

the thought of another man touching her, let alone harming her. “I don’t know.”

What was wrong with him? Part of him wanted to interrogate her until he found the answers he sought whilst another wanted to fuck her until she screamed his name. Yeah sure, she was a beautiful woman, but the intense desire he felt made no sense. None of this made any sense. He stood up making for the cramped sofa in the corner “Sleep.

Nothing has changed. We're leaving in three hours. We'll eat before we go."

"What about you?"

Yeah right. Cole wasn't willing to risk her running away while he was lights out so he said, "I don't sleep much, even on a good day."

"How long have you been a Chaser?"

He had to suppress a smile, “Don’t you ever just do what you’re told?”

“Only my entire life. Are you going to answer the question?”

“It was a birthright, my whole family are Chasers.”

“Born into it then?”

“Something like that. You said you’re an Auditor. You don’t look like a

pencil pusher.”

A not so subtle change of subject.

Funny, she'd been at her desk just a few hours ago yet right now it felt like a lifetime. “Someone has to do it right?

Tell me a bit more about the demons and you guys, the Chasers?”

He hesitated, “Like the demon wolves, there are many different types of

demon species, all living right under our noses. A fragile understanding exists and there are very definite rules. Chasers are, in essence, the police, the judge, the jury and the executioners all rolled into one.”

“That doesn’t seem fair.”

“Babe, demon wolves are tame in comparison to some of the species out there. It would turn into a free for all if it

weren't for us holding it together. Hey, it's a crappy job but"—Cole took a deep breath his mouth quirking into a gorgeous smile—"someone's got to do it...right?" He leaned forward leaning his elbows onto muscular thighs and played with the large silver ring on his right middle finger. "Frankenstein's monster, vampires, trolls, hell every mythological creature you've ever heard of and some you never want to know

about, all exist.” He paused allowing the horror of what he was saying sink in and she couldn’t help but shiver. “Your worst nightmare could be living right next door to you. Katy, you’d better hope and pray that us Chasers keep on doing what we do best.”

“I wouldn’t mind if you started with Bain and his whole wolf pack. Vile disgusting creatures.”

Cole stood, his muscles bunched and his eyes turned hard. “Not all demon wolves are bad. Enough talk. We roll in two hours. Get some shut eye.”

The bathroom door banged shut and she heard the first telltale sounds of the shower splattering to life. Katy turned to face the other way, curling herself into a ball. Her head still held the remnants of a dull ache and the hair on the top of her

skull would probably never grow after the abuse it had received, but other than that she was okay. At least for the time being.

Growling, snarling and crashing.

Katy sprang awake. An enormous, dark form hurtled across the front of her bed. She fumbled for the side lamp, her fingers shaking so much it took an

eternity for her to find the switch and to turn the light on. The dark form was Cole and another man with close cropped hair. It was Cole that was snarling, his lips curled away from his teeth. His narrowed eyes were glowing unnaturally bright. Like someone had flicked a switch inside his skull. She clamped her hand over her mouth to stop herself from screaming. If they hadn't been battling it out in front of the door,

she would have tried to run. Instead, she sat as quietly and as calmly as possible hoping she would remain unnoticed. The men had their hands clutched around one another in a wrestler's grip. That was when she noticed that the stranger's nails were clawed into long daggers at the end of thick gnarled fingers. Cole's muscles on his chest and arms bunched as he shoved the other...man...wolf, bringing

his face into view for the first time. His jaw was elongated, his teeth were gleaming fangs. No longer human but still so close to being one it made him even more sinister.

Chapter 4

Katy screamed, the sound breaking through her clasped fingers. Both men paused turning their intense gazes on her. The other man's features pulled back into mostly human form. His eyes still glowed golden like burned amber.

“The Chosen one,” he spoke softly, his voice deep and gravelly.

She stared from Cole to the man and back again wanting to run, but unable to move.

“Speak or die,” Cole turned back to the unknown demon wolf as he spoke, his voice was more of a menacing growl than words.

“Is this how you treat the wolf that saved your ass?”

“I’m listening,” his tone eased

however neither man relaxed their grip on the other. She noted that Cole was only marginally bigger than the demon wolf.

“I was also following Bain. I knew he was planning to take the woman.” He gestured, with his head, in her direction.

Cole growled a vicious warning.

There was no way a human could make a sound like that which meant that Cole

was one of them...*a demon wolf*. He had to be. Katy felt betrayed. Just when she'd begun to trust him. Yet, he wasn't like Bain. Cole was not human yet she failed to summon the same disgust she felt for the creature that had tried to abduct her. They were on the same side. His actions proved that he was protecting her and that maybe he cared. *Did he, really care or was he acting out of duty?* It shouldn't matter, but it did.

“Relax, I’m here to help.” The man...*wolf* kept his voice even. He had one of the deepest voices Katy had ever heard.

“What does he want with her?” Cole asked.

“Like I said, she was chosen by Bain to be his mate, his Alpha, the ‘Chosen’ one.”

“That can’t be,” Cole released the other man who by now had completely changed back into his human form.

His eyes were now as dark as melted chocolate.

“That would mean...,” Cole stopped mid-sentence turning questioning eyes on her.

“Katy is an Omega like us,” the stranger’s deep rumble caused goose

bumps to rise on her arms.

What the hell was an Omega? She remembered Bain referring to Cole and Ash as an Omega and a human. Ash had said that she was a human. In hind sight, Cole had said nothing which meant that...*No. It couldn't be.*

“What is an Omega?” her voice sounded shrill.

As soon as she asked the question,

she wished she hadn't. She was too afraid of what the answer might be. Cole went down on his haunches in front of her. Even with all that had passed between them, she flinched, and instantly regretted it. His face clouded and his jaw tensed as he moved back out of her personal space.

“Sorry to have to break this to you, but you're half demon wolf. That would

mean that one of your parents was full human and the other a demon wolf.

Omegas are the lowest ranking wolves.

The elderly, the disabled and a wolf like me”—Cole placed his hands on his chest —“all half breed mongrels are considered Omegas. Half bloods can't erupt unless there's a full moon, we're considered weak because of it. Why didn't you tell me you knew Bain?”

“I told you I don’t know him. I’ve never...at least I’m pretty sure I’ve never...met him.” *What was his problem?* She was the one that had cause for anger. “Why didn’t you tell me you’re a demon wolf?”

“I didn’t trust you and it seems with good cause”—Cole smiled but his eyes remained cold—“just in case you forgot babe you’re one of us too and I find it

hard to believe you never knew. How does someone go their whole life without realizing something is very wrong with them?”

“This is all news to me. My parents are normal I...,” but that wasn’t entirely true.

“I struggle to believe that,” Cole’s eyes were glowing.

“Enough already. She’s telling the

truth. She's wearing a silver chain, has worn something silver since the day she was born," the other demon wolf growled.

Her hand moved up to the pendant at her neck. A gift from her father.

The unknown demon wolf took a step towards Cole. "You should, of all wolves, know how that works."

Cole's hands clenched back into

fists. “You helped us out back in the alley but I still don’t know who the hell you are?”

The other man smiled, “Gray,” he put his hand out.

Cole smiled back, “You’re Bain’s runt half-brother. I don’t think I’ve ever been with so many Omegas in one room. I heard you were finally kicked out of the pack.” He clasped Gray’s hand as he

said his piece.

“Yeah, being half human is unacceptable as you would know. Bain sought the girl out in a club a few weeks back,” Gray nodded in Katy’s direction. “He drew her aside and marked her.”

“Why would he choose an Omega? It’s always one of the high ranking Beta females that take the honors.” Cole turned to Katy, “Betas are the strong,

healthy wolves in the pack. It's only the higher ranking Beta females who would be considered as potential mates for a single Alpha. High ranking Beta males are the wolves that challenge the Alpha for pack leader. Omegas are never 'Chosen'."

"That's where you're wrong Cole. It happens more often than you think. Omegas, particularly from founding

family blood, are sometimes introduced to bring fresh bloodlines into the packs. Especially since the ‘Chosen’ Omega will turn into a full demon during a mating with an Alpha.”

“Vibes.”—both men looked her way as she said the name of the club—“He asked me if I wanted a drink and when I turned him down, he insisted, grabbing my wrist. How did I forget this?” Katy

looked down at her arm, the one that had held the bruises for days after. “Instead of taking me to the bar he pushed me into a quieter corner and told me that I was lucky because he was going to give me a gift. I was so afraid. It was the same as earlier today, no one even noticed.”

“You forgot because Bain wanted you to. It’s a little trick Alphas can perform. Wolves have the ability to

blend into their surroundings. That's why no one noticed him taking you." Gray nodded telling her to continue.

"He kissed me," she was trying hard not to cry.

Cole moved towards her, but she couldn't have anyone near her right now least of all him. She wasn't sure of her feelings about any of this. Especially where Cole was concerned, so she

moved away. His jaw tensed.

“I struggled but was no match against him. Then, he bit me on the neck.” She pulled her hair back showing the spot just behind her ear, knowing that they would see a fresh pink scar. Small but visible.

“That mark is your problem,” Gray spoke softly.

“So, let me get this straight”—Cole

paced the small space, nowhere near as calm— “Bain is after Katy because he wants to mate with her in order to make her his Chosen Alpha female. Once that happens he’ll never let her go and pack rules state that there’s nothing the Agency could do to rescue her even though she’ll be mated to him against her will.” Cole’s fists bunched and the muscles along his arms hardened.

“Yeah I’m afraid so. They’re using the pheromones being excreted by that bite to track you. All male demon wolves are going just a little nuts right about now.”

Gray put his head into the air and sniffed, a sight she was starting to get used to.

“Even us half demons aren’t immune...,” Gray took a step towards

her and Cole snarled shoving the other man back, making him chuckle. “I see that even though you’re wearing that piece of silver on your finger you’re not immune either.” Gray turned back her way. “Katy you’re also running a little... shall we say hot. The *silver* will only do so much,” he said the word like it disgusted him.

“I’m a Chaser, it’s my duty to protect

her even from the likes of you,” pure aggression poured from Cole.

“That ring doesn’t change who you are. Nothing will ever take away the demon in you. Instead of suppressing it you should embrace it. You’d be a better Chaser.” Gray shook his head.

Cole seemed to think on this for a few seconds. “Forget the ring. Every wolf within smelling distance will be

looking to mate with her. They won't be able to help themselves.”

“Yeah, they'll all be horny as all hell...but they won't mate her,” Gray responded.

This was all too much and again she had the almost overwhelming urge to rush back to Boston. To pick up with her life and bury her head in the sand, but she knew that it wouldn't help. It

wouldn't change the facts. She was half demon wolf. She'd always been a little different but there had always been a reasonable explanation. *Or had there?* It all made sense now. The way cats raised their hackles, spat and hissed at her. She loved her meat rare – the bloodier the better. The claw marks on her ex-boyfriend's back. The list was long. Long enough to have had people call her a freak. To have had every guy she ever

dated dump her as soon as they got to know her a little. Truth was, if she'd really been paying attention she would've noticed, she'd been running away for too long. It was time to face up to the truth.

“Katy might smell like every wolf's number one fantasy, but she's strictly off limits. Bain has put out the order that he'll kill anyone Alpha, Beta, Omega,

anyone who lays even a single finger on her let alone mates with her and believe me he'll stick to it. He's crazy on a regular day and since he's the one who inflicted that bite, he'll be certifiable at the moment. The pheromones will be affecting him ten times more than the rest of us."

"Yeah, it explains things. Question is what do we do about it?" Cole growled.

“There is only one thing we can do, we need to kill Bain. He won’t stop until he has her.”

Cole shook his head slowly, “The last thing I want is to become an Alpha and you Gray, you can’t tell me that you feel like leading the pack that kicked you out.”

Gray turned to her, “Any wolf that somehow manages to kill Bain will

automatically become the new Alpha of his pack.”

This was turning from bad to worse.

“Why wouldn’t your Demon Agency be able to help me if he raped me and forced me to stay with him?”

Cole looked her straight on, his eyes softened. “Bain marked you. He plans to mate with you, his seed together with a bite would bind you together. The bond

would be more powerful during a full moon. Think of it as an imaginary rope that will bind you to him. Once you are bonded there will be nothing we can do, the Demon Lores are clear, DCA will not be able to interfere once that happens.”

“What the hell are Demon Lores?

That’s ridiculous and unfair. I’ll be bound to him even if I don’t love him...

or...Oh God...will I somehow be manipulated into loving him?" The thought appalled her more than being raped by that monster.

“Demon Lores are the rules I was talking to you about. There are general Lores and species specific Lores. It gets complicated. He can't make you love him Katy, not even demon magic can influence the heart. You would be forced

to stay with him. Your heart and soul are yours alone to give though.”

She felt tears prick her eyes. She wanted to be able to be given a chance at love, more importantly to be able to choose her own mate.

“Let’s get moving. If you found us”—Cole gestured to Gray—“it won’t be long before the rest are here to bash our doors down. It’ll also give me some

time to think about what to do next.”

Gray stepped forward, “Relax! I’m the best tracker you’ll ever meet, demon or otherwise. That coupled with my Ducati make me the fastest thing on wheels. The rest are still eating my dust.” He very nearly smiled, “You’ve got some time.”

Cole looked anything but relaxed. His entire being radiated raw energy.

“I’ll head back out there to”—Gray

looked at her, then to Cole and back again—“keep an eye on things.”

Her hand was back up at her throat.

It was all true, she hadn’t lied about anything. A not-so-regular girl who had landed herself in something nasty.

A demon had managed to get past his defenses yet again. It was irrelevant that

she was half wolf and an innocent. She could have been another hellion demon like Angelica, or worse. He'd sensed that she was not what she seemed. The point being, he should have been able to put a label on it. Maybe Gray was right maybe it was time to take the ring off. Every part of him was against the idea. At least he had an answer for his irrational behavior. Lust. It was the pheromones. Nothing more.

“I’m going to walk out that door and I don’t want you to stop me,” Katy said, her voice strong, her eyes never leaving his. *Did she think he wouldn’t notice how her hands were shaking?*

“No you’re not.”

“If I stay, best case scenario you’ll become an Alpha which I know you don’t want. There’s a reason why you wear that...,” she looked at the ring on

his finger, the one that kept his demon at bay. “Worst case you’ll die,” she said the last bit like she cared which touched him. For reasons he could not fathom.

“If you walk out that door you’ll end up being bound to Bain for always. Is that what you want?”

This lust he was feeling must run deep, because the thought of her with the Alpha made his heart race and his fists

clench, it also made him feel...other things but that was just the pheromones talking.

“No! I won’t let that happen, I’ll find a wolf. I’ll seduce him, make him mate with me. Remove this curse. I’d rather die before letting Bain anywhere near me.”

His head pounded, he could hear the blood rushing through his veins, could

hear the sound of her heart as it raced, could smell her scent...so sweet...so seductive...so promising. “You’d be signing his death warrant.”

“It would be one hell of a way to go. What was it Gray said? I’m every demon wolf’s fantasy?”

She didn’t look at him and that was when he realized she had no intention of sacrificing anyone. Katy planned on

giving herself to Bain. He couldn't let that happen. Wouldn't let it happen.

Cole took a step towards her. "If that's really what you want, I want to be the one to do it."

"I'm trying to save you Cole."

"I'm the Chaser remember? I'm the one that gets to do the saving not you. Every wolf's fantasy – Gray was right I'm not immune. Mating with you..."

taking away your ‘Chosen status’ ... might just make Bain crazy enough to do something stupid.”

“I don’t know Cole, his anger could also make him stronger,” she chewed on her lip.

He stepped right in, so close he could feel her intense heat. Katy kept her eyes averted.

“Those pheromones are making him

stronger. They wouldn't be a factor if..." It was a crazy idea, but it was the only chance they had at turning the playing field. Cole cupped her chin tipping her head up so that she would see how his eyes would be blazing for her. Katy inhaled sharply and her pupils dilated. Maybe she wasn't entirely immune to him either. He'd seen the uncertainty written in her eyes earlier. She might be an Omega, one who was

attracted to him, but it was definitely against her will. Gray had said she was running hot. What was it she'd called demon wolves – vile disgusting creatures? Had her feelings changed now that she knew what she was? Or did she put him in the same category as Bain?

“You might be killed if you do this,” she licked her lips.

“He would have to kill me to get to you anyway.”

“Are you sure?”

Instead of answering he lowered his head to hers.

Chapter 5

The demon inside shrieked to be let loose on her, ravage her, to claim her for his own and he very nearly tore the ring from his finger in order to do just that. But before his lips could caress hers she took a step back, breaking the contact.

“I don’t even know you. I’m not the type of woman that would just...”

“Katy”—frustration washed over him—“we really don’t have time for dinner and a movie.”

“I know that...it’s just...maybe if you told me something about yourself, something that no one else knows and I’ll do the same. Maybe then I would feel more comfortable about doing this.”

Hells hounds, did she think that Bain was on his way to make small

talk? Maybe it was the fact that he knew he'd better make it good or else she wouldn't believe him or maybe it was something else...the pheromones... because before he could stop himself he had said the one thing he had never admitted to anyone, not even to himself. "I hate my demon blood."

Katy didn't do or say anything, she just waited for him to continue, those

baby blues were unwavering. She didn't judge him; rather, she waited patiently until he was ready to continue.

She was way too good for him.

Where did that come from? This would just be sex. There would be no future for them. Still she waited.

“I've worn this ring since I was sixteen. It was the last time I erupted. My demon wolf mother left me for dead.

The Chasers she threw me out to should have killed me. Who wants a half blood demon wolf anyway?”

She smiled in a way that made something in his chest shift, “Your family wanted you.”

She spoke softly her eyes fixed on his, the shift turned into a clench. Right on his heart, so deep his demon felt it too. *Damn these pheromones.*

“Yeah, I love being a Chaser. I’m good at it despite my demon blood.”

“Maybe because of it. Gray might have been right maybe you would be... less at odds with yourself if you took the ring off.”

“That’s never going to happen. I hate my demon half. I will never allow myself to become a wolf again. I’m a Chaser, I hunt demons. I made my choice

a long time ago and I'll stick to it.

Nothing will ever change that. What about you?"

"Why is it that I've never shown any signs of being a wolf? We are both wearing silver yet you have."

Why was he surprised when she didn't answer his question?

"My wolf has known freedom. He lays just below the surface waiting for

any opportunity to show himself.

Omegas can normally erupt during a full moon, but my silver stops that from happening. Your wolf is mostly dormant. Don't ever take that necklace off and it will stay that way. Your turn. Something no one else knows." Cole leaned forward in anticipation, needing to hear what she had to say.

“My father must have been a demon

wolf, he died when I was a baby, or at least that was what my mother told me, my step father raised me. I never had many friends growing up, but had a relatively happy childhood. Animals have never liked me except for dogs of course.”

He had to smile at that.

“I can remember going horse riding once, all of the horses at the yard

freaked out when I tried to go near them. It was so embarrassing. At least now I know why. I've also had relationship issues." Her cheeks colored and her eyes refused to meet his. "It's not the getting to know each other part that's the problem. It's the intimacy part. I've been told I'm overwhelming, too much to handle. This is so embarrassing...it's hard to explain...it's..."

“It’s not you”—his hand found its way back to her chin before gliding into her tangled hair—“they weren’t man enough for you...or should I say demon enough. The men from your past couldn’t handle the demon in you. I’ve never felt happy to be a demon before. Right now I’m stoked because I can take away your curse. I can more than just handle you, and I can show you what pleasure really

is.”

Her eyes widened and her moist lips parted but she didn't answer.

“Only if you want me to?”

Her nostrils flared, “I do.”

Her scent of arousal was back. It filled him. Threatened to carry him away. This time when he kissed her, she kissed him back. He tugged her shirt off and then pulled her bra straps down.

“You are so beautiful.” Her breasts were full, firm with nipples the color of overripe raspberries. Cole dipped down so that he could take a taut nub into his mouth and had to suppress a groan, they didn’t just look like juicy berries, they tasted just as sweet. She moaned, raking her fingers down his back. His balls pulled up. So sensitive to his touch, so fucking sexy.

“What about protection?”

“Not necessary. This will prevent pregnancy”—he twisted the ring on his finger—“the silver will also stop you from becoming bound to me. Don’t worry, I won’t bite you.” He kissed his way up her neck. “To break the curse it has to be skin to skin.”

He only hoped he could last long enough to give her pleasure. He undid

the clasps on her jeans and dipped his hands into her panties. Holy fucking hell, she was soaking wet. Katy shivered as he pushed his finger into her tight welcoming sheath. She cried out, bucking her hips against his hand as his thumb found her clit.

“Feels so good.”

“Is this what you need?” Cole inserted two fingers and continued to

pump into her, slow and easy.

“Oh God,” she cried, “Yes, yes.”

Aside from coming too quickly, his other concern was that she was so tight. Would she be able to take him? *Had to prepare her.* Even though they didn't have much time, Cole moved to his knees. Katy made a sound of protest as he removed his hand from the sliver of heaven he'd found between her thighs.

Her jeans and panties slid off easily.

“Open for me.” She obeyed

immediately. Cole breathed through his mouth. Her scent threatened to turn him into a frenzied animal. Cole fought his demon urges. If he didn't get a grip soon, he was going to pull her down and fuck her hard without any thought to her needs. *Had to stay calm.* He grit his teeth and closed his eyes for a few

seconds, forced his demon wolf to back off. Eyes tightly shut, he closed his mouth on her swollen clit, rolling his tongue in a rhythm over her sensitive flesh. The moment he inserted a finger, she cried out and bucked her hips as she began to spasm around his finger.

Skin to skin.

The thought turned her on more than

anything ever had. Katy stood on shaky legs, just as Cole pulled his shirt off and exposed the most magnificent chest she had ever seen on a man. Broad, roped with hard muscles and ribbed abs that begged for her touch. Indulge she did, by sliding her hand over hot skin and over a nipple that puckered instantly.

“The bed”—Cole rasped—“I need to...be inside of you.”

He picked her up, her legs closed around his waist. Cole laid her on the bed, moving back so that he could take off his jeans. It was like her earth shattering orgasm from a few minutes ago had never happened. That aching feeling between her legs increased as she watched him. His cock was thick, jutting from his body. Cole wanted her.

His gaze was hungry, his jaw tense

with need as he whispered, “I don’t want to hurt you.”

“You won’t.”

Cole took a small step back. “I don’t think I can be gentle. Maybe this is a bad idea.”

“I won’t break. I swear. I’m dying here Cole please...I need...I need...”

And then she did something she never thought she was capable of, Katy slid

her hand between her legs and sank a finger into her pussy. “Please Cole.” It helped ease some of her need but not nearly enough. Easing her finger back out, she threw her head back trying to stifle a moan as she thrust back inside.

“Fuck,” he growled.

His hot body covered hers. His eyes held hers, they were glowing, close to feral. Katy spread her legs wider to

accommodate him. The head of his thick erection nudged inside her. He stopped for a few seconds breathing deeply through his nose, his mouth a thin white line. “So tight,” he ground out.

Katy wished he would let himself go and just take her already. He felt amazing but it wasn't nearly enough, her sheath clenched, weeping for him to thrust into her so she leaned up and

kissed him. It was only when she licked across his lips that he opened and devoured her, his cock eased into her until he was fully seated.

“I’m sorry,” it was her only warning before he drew back. For a millisecond she thought he had decided against having sex with her and then he plunged back in. Every nerve ending awakened. Her nails dug in finding purchase on the

hard ridges of his back. His arms wound round her thighs tilting her hips to a new angle as he shoved back in. Hard. She screamed as places inside her, she never knew existed, sprung to life. Already she could feel the build but was helpless to prevent it. Helpless when she screamed as she flew over the edge. Cole didn't stop or ease off the pace, his mouth went to her throat and as his lips touched her skin, she came again. Her sex clenching

so hard that if she had been capable of having coherent thoughts, she'd have been afraid of hurting him. Cole threw his head back and roared, his body jerking as he found completion.

Cole held onto her, his face buried into her hair. It took half a minute for his breathing to normalize. He moved back and gently swept her hair from the bite

mark. “It’s done.”

Katy wanted to hold onto him as he pulled away, forgetting for a second that the reason for their joining had nothing to do with love. It had been necessity coupled with pheromones that had driven Cole to have sex with her. He didn’t even look her way as he pulled on his jeans. It was for the best. They had been forced together during a highly

stressful situation. Relationships needed solid foundations if they ever were going to work. They had next to nothing in common. So what if they were both Omegas, sexual attraction wouldn't get them very far in the long run. She didn't even know how she felt yet about finding out about being a demon wolf yet. It would take time to digest. Time alone.

“I'm sure this plan will work,” Cole

paced as he spoke, “Bain is arrogant and hot headed. When he hears that you are no longer his, he will react out of rage. We need to meet him head-on. He won’t be expecting it, we can confront him when he is most vulnerable.” He reacted when he saw her reach for her jeans, “No, shower first. They won’t be able to track you so easily if we get rid of any remaining pheromones.”

“What about you?”

Cole smiled. “I want to keep the scent of you on me. It will drive Bain mad, like I said earlier it might force him into doing something stupid, we need all the extra help we can get.”

He carried on dressing lost in his own thoughts. Any trace of the desire that had reflected in his eyes was gone. It was great, the curse was lifted. *Why*

did she feel so sad?

Cole was trying hard not to look at Katy as she climbed off the bed and just stood there naked and trembling, cloaked in a vulnerable aura that made him want to take her back into his arms and never let go. Her cheeks were still flushed and he could smell the combined scent of their love making. The pheromones

should have worn off by now. Maybe once she showered he would be able to think coherently.

It was all he could do to keep himself from following her into the bathroom, to take her again. This time with soft words while he tasted every inch of her sweet skin before sliding into her, so slow until she begged him for release. For the first time since putting

on the ring, he longed to take it off so that he could show her what demon sex was all about without any holds barred, but that might end up binding them together which was something Katy would never want. Cole couldn't blame her. She should find herself a nice human, do the whole white picket fence thing. There were guys out there who loved the whole demon trip, even if they didn't know it themselves. Just as there

were demons who infinitely preferred humans – made his job more difficult sometimes but, hey, there was nothing definitive in the Lores and who was he to judge.

Cole felt a determination creep into his blood. Katy deserved a chance at life and at love and he would make sure she got it.

Leaving the town behind them, they back tracked along the same route as the one they had driven in on. Cole was scouting for just the right spot to set up an ambush. There had been no sight of the lone wolf Gray, which was a pity because he could use an extra set of canine's right about now. His hands clenched on the steering wheel. No matter, this would be settled tonight one

way or the other. Katy would walk away from this even if it meant that he would have to go down together with Bain. He would do whatever it would take to give her back her life.

Wearing his ring meant that he couldn't erupt, even though it was a full moon, but he was used to fighting demons without the capability. This would be the toughest battle he would

ever have to face though. He could feel his demon restless, wanting out of its silver cage. The inner wolf in him might be suppressed, but his senses were still much better than any human's. He could make out that the vehicle approaching them in the distance was a black SUV. It was traveling at a murderous pace.

Bain.

There was no doubt in his mind. The

Alpha would be expecting a chase. He was hunting. The very last thing he anticipated was to be met head on. Cole pushed down on the gas pedal.

“Buckle up and hold on to something. Listen”—his eyes softened as he glanced her way—“in order for this plan to work, I needed Bain to see you. I need him mad and stupid. I’ll stop him but promise me you’ll run, let him see

you then leave. Don't do anything silly, please, just go when you have the chance. Don't look back..."

For just a second he held his hand up to her and it seemed like he would touch her but then thought the better of it as he gripped the wheel again, his mouth a thin white line. Katy swallowed hard, using both hands to hold the base of her seat.

Thank God he hadn't waited for a reply, she didn't think she could just leave him to his fate.

They were closing the gap fast, both cars staying on their collision course. It was Bain that moved to the other lane, but Cole turned back into direct line with the SUV forcing Bain to swerve out to avoid a head on collision. Cole hit the brakes as Bain's SUV rolled several

times before stopping right side up.

In no time, the big Alpha had freed himself of the crumpled vehicle, he moved quickly but then so did Cole, she hadn't seen him leave, had been too busy looking out for the demon wolf. Part of her wanted to stay in the safety of the vehicle, another part of her wanted to run, to get as far away from here as possible. To do what Cole had

instructed. The two men collided delivering bone crushing blows to one another. Katy had to get in closer, needed to see what was happening. Although there was very little she could do, she had to help Cole if he needed her. God, she prayed this wouldn't backfire on them. At least they had caught the Alpha alone which gave Cole a chance.

Cole was the quicker of the two, ducking to avoid being hit, most of his punches connecting with Bain's head. For a few seconds she allowed hope to unfurl. A particularly hard punch cracked against Bain's jaw and he staggered back two steps. Maybe Cole had been right, maybe he could defeat the wolf. Then, the big Alpha threw his head back and roared. Her blood turned

icy cold as she watched him erupt. Fur bristled, fangs bared, muscle bulged and roped. He grew taller, towering above Cole.

A wolf as black as the darkest, most hopeless of all nights. Evil rolled off him in waves. Cole squared his shoulders, his hands were fisted at his sides, his eyes locked with the beast. Neither moved for the longest time. It

was only when Bain looked directly at her that Cole reacted beating and pounding against flesh of steel. Or at least it seemed that way because Bain remained unmoved. The only other sign besides Cole's movement that anything was even happening was the dull, slapping thuds of flesh hitting flesh. The Alpha didn't seem to even notice Cole. His eyes stayed locked with hers. At that moment, she knew that it would be

useless to run, he would find her.

With one, almost gentle sweep, the wolf knocked Cole flying, dropped on all four and advanced towards her. Cole got back up, throwing himself onto the back of the beast.

“Run Katy...run...,” Cole shouted before hammering another series of blows to Bain’s ribcage. Something unlocked inside her, if she didn’t do

something soon Cole was going to die.

The thought made her ache deep inside,

like if she lost him she might lose a

piece of herself. *Might lose*

everything... Katy ran towards the

ensuing battle.

At this point, Bain had Cole on his

back, it looked as if he was trying to rip

his throat out. Cole had the Alpha

gripped by the fur on his neck and face

trying to keep him from achieving his goal. Without thinking it through, Katy launched herself on the beast. She refused to stand by and watch Cole die. She made for the wolf's eyes. One of her fingers found something soft and she pushed down. Hard. Bain yelped twisting away from Cole. Katy landed hard on her back almost blacking out, it took a few seconds to snap out of it. When she managed to sit upright, Bain

had Cole by the throat, he was growling fiercely whipping Cole from left to right. There was a gut retching scream, which she realized was coming from her. She threw herself onto Bain's bristling back, but he shrugged her off easily.

When Cole's body went limp she stepped back. It was too late, there was no way he could have survived such an attack. Bain turned to face her, Cole's

blood glistened on his jaw. She felt all the fear leave her as she told him, “You’re disgusting.”

His features eased up to mostly human. She would have hated him even if he was just a human.

“You’re also a wolf and so *is*”—he barked out a laugh that made her stomach crawl—“or should I say *was* your dead boyfriend over there.” He pointed at

Cole who was lying in a crumpled heap behind Bain, “Yet, you still managed to lower yourself to mate with a half breed mongrel like him.”

“He may have been a demon wolf, but he was nothing like you. A wolf yes, an animal absolutely not. You make me sick”

“Why would you choose a runt when you could’ve had the Alpha?” He didn’t

wait to hear her answer caring little about her opinion, “Used goods, no longer good enough to be my queen but maybe worth a little fun before I kill you.” His evil, cold eyes grew even harder and he sneered down at her, “Take your clothes off.”

She would rather die than allow a man like Bain to touch her. “Fuck you!”

When she didn't obey him, he

slashed at her shirt ripping it to threads. Even if the odds were stacked against her, Katy struggled to her feet preparing to battle.

Bain's thin lips twisted into a cruel smile. "Actually, it is *I* that is going to fuck *you* little Katy and just so you know, I love it when they fight."

"Those murdered women, we knew it was a wolf who was responsible. So,

it was you?” She’d spoken more to herself than to him. It surprised her to see Bain’s face take on a confused look for a few seconds before narrowing his eyes.

“I don’t know anything about any murders. Get on your hands and knees. It’s time you had a real man...hell”—he laughed and her blood turned icy—“I think I might let my wolf have a little go.

You are a bitch and it is a full moon after all.” He lifted one of his large hands, Katy watched in horror as claws extended from his nail beds. “Like I said, I love it when they fight so please...do me a favor, try your best to stop me.”

Before she could answer a wolf jumped Bain from behind. Although it seemed to have been aiming for the

weak spot at the base of his head, the Alpha twisted away at the last second. The animal still managed to bite down onto his collar bone. There was a crunching sound and Bain screamed. The scream turning into a howl as he erupted. Katy moved away afraid of getting caught up between the two beasts. That was when she noticed that the spot where Cole had lain seconds earlier was empty.

A silver ring glinted on the ground.

The wolf. Cole. The wolf was Cole.

The side of his neck and shoulder were bloody and he could barely stand on his front left paw, but he was alive. His coat was a toffee brown. Thick, lush, so very beautiful. He fought like a full blood demon. He fought like an Alpha, or at least better than this Alpha because Cole was winning. It wasn't long before he

had Bain on his back. He arched his spine preparing to deliver the death lunge, when a grey wolf appeared, from nowhere, shoving Cole aside, it ripped Bain's throat out in one sickening crunch. Cole collapsed just as she reached him and by the time she called his name he was back to human form and unconscious. The wound to his shoulder and neck pumped blood. Katy took off what was left of her shredded shirt and

applied pressure to the wound.

Gray leant in next to her, he was naked but she was too busy to take any real notice. Too concerned for the man who had saved her life. *Please God don't let him die. I love him.* The realization hit her. It didn't matter that she'd just met him, or that, although he cared for her and wanted to help her, he didn't feel the same way about her. Cole

had saved her life and even if she didn't know his favorite color or how he liked his steak, she knew that she loved him.

The time had come to make a pact with the higher power. Cole had to live, he just had to and if he did, she vowed she would give him up. She realized that it didn't mean much being it that he didn't return her feelings but it had to be worth something. If he lived, she would walk away and never tell him her true

feelings. *Just please God let him live.*

Please.

“Help me carry him.”

Katy opened her eyes with a start as she heard Gray’s voice. She hadn’t realized they were closed as she made her silent oath.

“We need to get him to the car. Do you have a phone?”

She shook her head. Her purse

would still be on the deli floor where it

had fallen earlier when Bain abducted

her. “Cole’s is in the car though,” her

voice cracked as she said his name.

Chapter 6

His life in the balance, Cole lay between crisp white sheets. It had been twenty four hours since Gray had brought them here and all Cole had done since then was lie there. It scared her how still and pale he was. There was a knock at the door.

“Come in,” she called out quietly.

It was Doctor Janice. She and her husband were both Chasers. This makeshift hospital was in the garden cottage of their home in South Shore in Boston. It had been explained to her by Gray that there were active and passive Demon Chasers. Cole was an active Chaser, he actively worked on maintaining the balance between the humans and demons as well as between

the different demon species whereas Janice and her husband Roger were passive Chasers. There were many of such Chasers in society. Mainly doctors, lawyers, politicians – people with influence.

“Hey. How’s he doing?” the doctor asked as she made her way into the room.

“No change,” Katy replied.

It aggravated her how little they were doing and some of that irritation must have shown. Janice put her hand on Katy's arm.

“He's a strong wolf in his prime.”

“He should be in a real hospital,”

Katy felt like she'd said that sentence a hundred times.

Janice took a deep breath. “That's not an option. A demon has to be on

death's door before being admitted. We have very few hospital staff who work for DCA so it can be a bit tricky to admit a demon. Not impossible, but tricky.

Although Cole was bad when he arrived, he wasn't nearly bad enough. You're thinking about things too much in human terms. If he'd been a human, granted, he would be dead. Katy"—the older woman sat down next to her—"Cole *is* going to make it. He can't wear silver

for a couple of days yet, until he has properly healed, but he'll be fine.

Demon wolves have the ability to regenerate at an alarming rate.”

Although Janice was a doctor who was used to treating demons, Katy had a hard time believing her. Janice had not seen Bain's attack, had not seen how his wound had gushed blood. She hadn't been on the back seat of the car when

Cole's breathing grew shallow and his heartbeat erratic. When she thought he was dying...

Please God.

How many times had she said those two words? Too many. Not enough.

“Why don't you go and take a shower or go for a walk?” Janice suggested.

“I can't leave him. What if he wakes

up?”

“I’ll stay. You need a break.”

She nodded, one quick shower and she’d come right back. Katy wanted to be the first person Cole saw when he woke up. Even though he didn’t have feelings for her, he would, out of a sense of duty, want to be sure that she was safe. The last thing she wanted was for him to do something idiotic like get up

and try and find her while reopening his wounds in the process.

Five minutes later, she was back at his side and big surprise, there had been no change. Cole lay just as silent and pale as when he'd been brought here.

She had hastily thrown on a pair of shorts and a t-shirt not bothering to brush her wet hair. It felt good to feel fresh, the scent of rosemary and something floral

still clung to her skin.

“Call if there’s any change. I’ll be back later,” Janice sighed heavily.

“Young love. All that passion...”

“No. You must have misunderstood. It’s not that way between us. We’re friends.”

Janice smiled, it was a smile that told Katy she had no idea what she was talking about.

“If you need anything please let us know.”

“Thanks Janice. We...I really appreciate it.”

The older woman nodded, smiled and turned down the lighting as she left the room saying something about Cole resting better with it dimmed.

Aside from Cole's rhythmic breathing, everything was completely

silent. Her back hurt from sitting in the chair for so long, the small break doing little to ease the ache. Katy decided to lay her head on her folded arms for a few minutes which helped.

A little while later she jolted upright. Instantly alert. Her hair was still a bit damp so she couldn't have been asleep for long. Cole had pulled himself up into the fetal position beneath the

single white sheet. His teeth were clattering, making such a noise it had woken her up.

“Cole,” Katy reached out, her hand closing on his bicep. When he turned, his eyes were glassy and feverish.

“Katy...I’m so...cold...need...”

“Hold on I’m going to fetch...,” she tried to pull away but his hand found hers, grabbing hold more tightly than

she'd thought him capable.

“No...Katy...stay...please.” Those fevered green shards focused on her.

“Don't leave me...I...need...you...” His hand tightened some more, pulling her back to him.

She'd never been more afraid. What if she stayed and he died because she didn't go for help? She would never forgive herself. Cole tried to pull

himself upright. If she left him like this, he would try to follow. She didn't have a choice. As scared as she was, she would have to take her chances and stay instead of going for the help he clearly needed. Slipping between the covers, her body molded with his. Naked as the day he was born. It was wrong on so many levels that she noticed how sculpted he was. Muscled, hard perfection. But it felt so good to be this

close.

“So...cold,” he whispered as he wrapped his good arm around her, holding her closer than she ever thought it possible to get with another human being without actually...best she not think about a thing like that at a time like this.

Marginally better, he still shook and his teeth still clattered. It made Katy

think of a survival program she'd recently watched. The best way to treat hypothermia was skin to skin contact. She made a mental note to stop watching so much television. Even though he didn't have hypothermia, she still couldn't think of a better way to help him.

“Maybe I should go and get the doctor.”

“No! Need. You.” He’d growled, sounding so strong.

Hope surged, “Okay...okay.

Shhh...,” she smoothed his thick dark waves from his forehead. “I’ll stay. I’m not going anywhere.”

His eyes opened holding hers and for just a second they were lucid before once again turning glassy and fevered. Katy pulled off her shirt and shorts,

thankful she'd forgone wearing underwear. Skin to skin except this time she'd be the one saving him.

They lay like this for an hour or more. It was hard to tell. His teeth eventually stopped clattering. His breathing slowed and steadied into a constant rhythm. If it weren't for the thickening of a definite erection she might have thought he'd fallen asleep.

Katy sat up, the sheet pooling at her hips. “I’m going to...”

“I need you...,” Cole pulled her back down. Did so in a way that had her straddling him, her sex flush with his rigid cock. He rolled his head back and groaned *in pleasure...pain?* “I want you...please...”

He lowered his gaze and although his eyes were still glassy they had lost

that fevered look. They narrowed, dropping down further to her breasts and when he looked up again, they were glowing and wild. He worked his hand up the side of her arm, curling his fingers around her neck, Cole pulled her in for a kiss. His tongue swirled with hers, slow and languid. His mouth was hot, his breathing ragged. An ache inside of her eased, while a need began to grow in its place.

This was wrong.

Pulling back, she tried to move away even though every cell in her body protested, but he held her fast turning his head and deepening the kiss. Lord help her but she whimpered and rocked up against him, her swollen clit rubbing up against the side of him in a way that had her crying out. A low growl vibrated against her lips and Cole grabbed her

ass with his good arm. He moved from her mouth using tongue and teeth on her neck and ear.

“Summer breeze...lace...leather...hades hounds...,” although he spoke softly the last came out sounding like a curse.

Cole was rambling, not of sound mind. He must be sicker than he looked, way sicker than what he felt. The

muscles on his chest bunched as he squeezed her ass opening her wider so that he could move his hand in-between her legs, using just the pad on one finger he lightly caressed her already slick clit - once, twice before dipping into her.

Oh God this felt so good.

Way. Too. Good.

If she let him do this it would be taking advantage of someone in a

weakened state...*Oh God*...he moved back to her clit, so soft, so tender. She was wiggling, squirming already so close to coming it was scary. As much as she tried and as much as she knew this was wrong, she couldn't stop. It wasn't because of the delicious sensations building inside of her or because Cole was the sexiest man she'd ever had the fortune of knowing, it was because she loved him, all of him.

Loved the essence of who he was both wolf and man. Katy needed this. It would be her way of showing him her feelings without words. She had after all made an oath, one she intended keeping. Closing her lips on his, she kissed him as if her life depended on it and positioned herself so that his head moved to her wet opening. Unable to wait a second longer. She wanted...

no...needed to be one with this man.

Cole grit his teeth. He could feel her heat. Smell her maddening scent. Driving him wilder than when the pheromones had wreaked havoc on his senses. This aching need for her had nothing to do with hormones. It had everything to do with her. Katy arched her back, slowly taking him in to her hot,

tight sex. She threw her head back sighing as they joined. Pushing down, Katy stopped only when he was in deep, right down to the hilt. Damning his weak state, he wished he could make love to her, he wanted to drive her as wild as what he felt. Needed to hear her say his name as she came.

Even though she didn't move, she whimpered and panted like she was

already there like she was going to come undone at any second. Cole squeezed his eyes shut, wrapping his arm around her back. Loving the feel of her weight. How her breasts crushed against his chest. How her heart raced against his. Katy whimpered some more and then slowly began to move. His eyes rolled back in his head and he had to suppress a roar from being ripped from his throat.

His ring.

He wasn't wearing his ring.

Katy sat up, taking up a new position to ensure that their coupling was as deep, as complete as possible. Keeping it slow and steady. So seductive. So damned sexy. Her full breasts swayed as she rocked. Katy moaned, giving herself over to him. Cole had never made love to a woman before without his silver. It

felt so fitting that Katy was his first.

Every cell in his body was firing at full capacity and molten lava flowed through his veins until he couldn't think straight, until he could hardly breathe. All Cole knew was that he wanted this to last forever. He wanted to be joined like this with Katy forever. Hells hounds how he wanted her to feel what he was feeling. Wanted it so badly he ached with the need to join with her in a fundamental

irrevocable way.

To be bound to her for always.

Moaning louder, she picked up the pace, leaning forward so that her hands dropped to either side of his head.

Arching and thrusting, arching and thrusting...

This was going too quickly. He didn't want it to end so he put a hand to her hip slowing her, then moved his hand

till it was at the hollow between her shoulder blades, he pulled her down. Needing her close. Katy kissed him. Deeper and harder than before, her mouth and tongue doing what she had been doing with the rest of her body but understanding and accepting his need to slow things down. She eased off on the pace. Still gasping every time she slid back onto him. Their love making

reduced to an excruciatingly slow friction. He was so close to release. So close that it hurt to teeter on the edge, but at the same time it was the best kind of pain. He growled deep and rough as the pleasure rolled over him, through him. Katy stiffened and stopped moving.

“Oh God Cole. Am I hurting you?”

so breathy, timid and sweet.

Katy moved back almost breaking

their connection. Another low growl escaped at the thought of her stopping and his hips rocked forward so that he would stay inside of her.

“Don’t stop...,” he wanted to say her name but she started moving again and he found himself swallowing back another roar.

Cole wrapped his hand around the chain at the back of her neck. He wanted

so badly to tear it from her throat and use his last vestige of strength to mate with her until they were one, but forced himself to stay in check. If he did that, he'd be no better than Bain. He'd be claiming her against her will. Something he would *never* do. Twisting the chain around his hand a second time, using it to weaken his wolf. He could physically feel as it pulled back into the silver cage.

Katy's body tensed as her orgasm took her. Her pace increased and she lifted a little so that she could deepen their connection. Her internal muscles clenched and released hard and fast and her breasts thud against his chest with each thrust. She was making a keening noise that had to be just about the sexiest sound he had ever heard. The combination slammed him head first into

an orgasm that would have knocked him to the ground had he been standing. *How the hell was he going to force himself to say good bye to this incredible woman?*

Chapter 7

The last thing Cole wanted to know was where Katy lived. Sure, finding out would be easy enough, but he knew he wouldn't. Just like he knew that if he did know he'd be tempted to check on her. To drive by her place from time to time. Hades help him but he'd want to watch her. Pure torture when he couldn't have

her. That was why it was a good thing that Janice and her husband Roger would be taking Katy back home.

“We’ll go and wait out front.

Whenever you’re ready Katy,” Doctor Janice smiled first at Katy and then at him.

“Thanks Doc,” Katy said.

“Take all the time you need sweetie,” the doctor winked and Katy

nodded.

It had been three days since his narrow escape. He felt almost whole again. Still weak and a little tender, but nearly his old self. Just a few more days and he'd be able to put his ring back on. The funny thing was that it had almost cost him his life. Janice had told him more than once that if he hadn't taken it off, he would be dead. She had spoken

to Katy about taking her necklace off as well. The woman was sweet, only trying to help but she really didn't know what she was talking about all the same. What kind of a life would this be for Katy? To be a half breed, not fully accepted by humans or wolves. Cole clenched his jaw holding back the words he longed to say.

Katy had held him close after they

had made love. He was sure she had cried. *Did she regret what had happened?* If so, he couldn't blame her.

Firstly he was a wolf and he still wasn't sure how she felt about that even though she was one herself, and then secondly she probably thought that he was taking advantage of her – for a second time.

The third was almost too bad to contemplate, maybe she thought that he was so out of his mind, he didn't know

what he was doing. Hades help him, maybe she felt guilty. He sure as hell hoped not.

Still weak from blood loss and with Katy tucked in his arms, he had fallen asleep only to wake up hours later with his room dark and Katy sitting fully dressed in the chair next to his bed. Fast asleep and snoring softly. He'd been so tempted to reach out and touch her.

Wanting to acknowledge what had happened between them, but he cared for her too deeply to subject her to how life would be if she stayed with him. The lonely unforgiving life of a Chaser. Cole had always loved being a Demon Chaser. The sense of duty and pride it instilled in him. It made him belong and gave him purpose. When he'd heard others complaining about it being a sacrifice and a burden, he'd never

understood until now.

By hades, he wished he didn't but he understood full well.

Just looking into Katy's wide eyes made him feel like the biggest schmuck alive. Neither of them had acknowledged what had happened that night. It was almost as if it hadn't happened at all. Cole had tried to convince himself that it had just been a

dream but he knew better. No matter, nothing had changed. Katy was about to walk out of that door and his life and he'd be the worst kind of selfish coward if he tried to stop her. Being a worthless schmuck was better than being a selfish bastard and he needed to stick to his guns. For her.

“Thank-you...” They both said at once and laughed before lapsing back

into awkward silence.

“Cole I...,” she started.

He put up his hand. There was no way he could listen to what she had to say. If she made any sort of reference to feelings for him he'd be screwed, he wouldn't be able to let her go. If she didn't, he'd be hurt. It would be better if he took control, a clean easy break. As seamless as possible.

“Just for the record, you’re going to have an amazing life. Your company will take you back even though you’ve been AWOL for a couple of days.”

She pulled in a breath and he could tell that she wanted to jump in.

“Let me finish please,” he continued.

She sucked in her bottom lip, clenching it between her teeth.

Something she did when she was trying

to keep from talking. For the gazillionth time since he'd woken up that night listening to her soft snoring, he wished he could find out all of her quirks and everything else about her. Especially how his name would sound on her lips when she came. How her blood would taste on his lips during that precious moment...*Oh hell...*

Not now. Not ever.

He knocked the thought down before it could do more damage. “Now that you know who...what you are, you’ll do better. Remember I told you that a demon would be the best...partner for you.” For the Mother of Hades, he had to look away because she held her breath in...*expectancy*? “...I was wrong. There are humans out there that actually prefer demons. They may not know that demons

exist but they are drawn to what previous males in your life...” Cole paused, trying to stop himself from growling as he spoke of the puny, stupid humans who didn’t realize what a treasure they had in Katy, “They’re drawn to that overwhelming, raw, baser side of demons.” He kept his eyes on the window overlooking the manicured gardens. “You’ll find the right person... one that will accept you...a human. A

normal life. The whole nine yards and you can have it all. You can even have children, as long as you never take the silver off and take a human you'll be able to conceive normally.”

He could picture a little dark haired cherub with bright blue eyes, just like her mommy. Couldn't help but wish it was his future too. His hand lifted, he wanted to touch her, to run the pad of his

thumb down the side of her cheek just one last time but he stopped himself.

A clean easy break.

No touching.

Cole raked his fingers through his hair before jamming both hands into his pockets.

“Thank-you Cole. You saved me.

Took off your ring...for me,” her eyes were filling.

Damn it, she was going to cry. He couldn't handle that. If she did he'd have to hug her which might lead to him confessing his love for her.

Love.

At least he was finally able to admit to himself that he loved her. It wasn't lust or pheromones or a fever muddled brain, he loved the woman standing in front of him. So much so that he had to

do the right thing by her and let her go.

Her lip quivered.

“I’m no hero Katy. I’m a Chaser and all I was doing was my duty. I would have done the same for anyone...” *Liar.*

“I mostly did it to save myself...” *Liar.*

He knew he would never have taken the ring off for anything or anyone else.

Cole had lain there feeling his blood drain from his body feeling himself

weaken with each passing second and had known that if he stayed human, he would die. He wasn't afraid of death but Katy...Bain was going to rape and then kill his beautiful Katy and he couldn't let that happen. His wolf was half mad with rage...still strong and so he'd slipped the ring from his finger.

“I knew that I would die if I stayed human so I took the ring off.”

Her face clouded and her sadness seemed to grow and then she looked as if she had reached a decision. Standing more upright, she squared her shoulders. Her lip stopped quivering and her eyes grew determined.

Damn himself to hell but he couldn't leave it like this, "but I'm glad it worked out the way it did. I couldn't let him...," Cole shook his head dispelling the

memory. He let just the tip of his finger brush the side of her arm before jamming his hand back into his pocket. “I just wish I’d been the one to rip out Bain’s throat.”

“How is Gray doing?” she asked.

“I don’t know, he can’t be having an easy time of it. The pack will not be happy with an Omega as Alpha. He has a lot of challenges to look forward to.”

“He’s strong enough, he should be okay.”

“Yeah except the challenges I’m referring to are often to the death.”

Katy gasped.

“He’ll be fine. He’s a tough wolf. Ashlyn is with the pack. It looks as if Bain had nothing to do with the murders after all. The latest victim was left for dead but somehow managed to survive.”

Cole caught the look of first horror and then relief on Katy's face. "She's not in the clear yet. She did manage to say two words before lapsing into a coma... woman and wolf...so, it's most likely a female demon wolf that murdered the other women. Your...incident with Bain was unrelated, so there is no more reason to worry. It's over." The right hand in his pocket twitched, he wanted to touch her, reassure her.

“I never told you but Bain looked shocked when I mentioned the murdered women. He told me he had nothing to do with the murders and since he was going to kill me there is no reason to believe that he was lying. I don't think he had any idea about the murders. Bain would have boasted if he'd killed those women.”

“Well that confirms it then. Thanks,

I'll let Ash know. Whoever is doing this needs to be stopped before anyone else dies. The good news is that my sister is just the right person for the job."

"But she's so small, so..." she seemed to struggle to come up with the right word.

"Fragile?...as the saying goes, dynamite comes in small packages. It's particularly true when it comes to Ash.

She is so often underestimated. It gives her the upper hand.” He smiled while saying that last part. Just thinking about Ash in action made him proud.

Katy’s whole demeanor changed, it softened. She stepped forward leaning into him, sliding her hands around his waist and he’d be damned if he could stop himself from hugging her back.

Hades hounds, he pulled her in closer,

taking in her scent. Before he was ready, she was letting him go, refusing to look him in the eye which suited him just fine. It was better this way.

They said their stilted good-byes, those baby blues looked up at him one last time before she turned to leave.

Yup, it was all true. All those wolves' tales he'd heard, tales he'd always believed to be myths. Soul mate, wolf

mate, one true love. Katy was all of those things and more. He would never feel this way about anyone ever again. Which made his choice all the more the right one.

Chapter 8

Katy threw her keys on the entrance table. The last step in moving on with her life complete, she'd tendered her immediate resignation this morning. Her apartment had been on the market since yesterday and she still didn't feel any better. There was only one thing she knew for sure after getting back home

just over a week ago, she didn't want her old life. Her boring, mundane, same old life. It didn't do it for her any more.

Despite Cole's advice, she hankered to take the necklace off. Every time she saw the silver glinting between her breasts, it felt like a lie. She was a demon wolf. An Omega. She wasn't normal. She didn't want a normal life or a human mate. She wanted Cole. Why

had she ever let him walk out of her life?

Why hadn't she told him how she felt about him when she had the chance?

The oath.

She'd made the oath and she wasn't sorry. Cole was alive and well. Maybe making the promise had helped and maybe it hadn't, but she couldn't very well take it back now could she? Even if she wanted to there was no way of

finding him. Surely though if he had wanted her, he would have said something. It dawned on her that she had been counting on just that. She had practically held her breath during most of their good-bye waiting for him to make the first move. But it never happened.

The first time they had made love it had been him helping her to break the

curse. The second time had been her taking advantage of a delirious man.

Why then had she felt such a connection?

For that magical moment she had almost felt one with him. They had been so very close to that...indescribable, intangible thing. So very nearly...*How could she have been so very wrong?*

There was a knock at the door and she realized that she was still in the

entrance hall. It was probably her mom.

That was at least one area of her life where she'd made progress. Katy had told her mother everything. Well, almost everything and her mom in return had told her all about her father, said she had known deep down that this day would come.

Katy's father was her first love, her forbidden love. It was strictly against the

rules of her father's pack for two different species to breed. Katy could well understand why. The Chernov pack, was an ancient pack more set in their ways than most. Her father's pack would never have understood nor have accepted the union, and that was why when her mother fell pregnant they were forced to part ways. Her pendant was a gift from her father who passed away when she was just a little girl. That part,

however sad, had been true.

God, how had her life changed so irrevocably in such a short space of time? What truly mattered was that she couldn't go back to how things were.

Katy opened the door, she gasped when she found a man standing there. She couldn't help but to launch herself into his arms. He at least had the decency to put a hand up to her back.

The rest of him remained still and formal.

“Aren’t you supposed to be leading a pack of wolves or something?” she asked playfully.

Gray sort of smiled. It made him look tired rather than happy, “I came to check up on you. Ash mentioned you and Cole had parted ways.”

“Come in...please. Can I get you

something? I know, I'll put some coffee on.”

Gray's eyes narrowed a little.

“Nothing beats a strong cup of decent coffee,” Katy added and his eyes narrowed some more. They walked to her small kitchen.

Katy went through the motions of setting up the coffee machine. First the filter, followed by a couple of scoops of

ground coffee, then, she added the water and switched the machine on. When she turned back, Gray was still leaning against the counter where she'd left him. Waiting.

“Spit it out already. What happened?” A man of few words, he folded his arms across his broad chest.

Were all wolves so generously proportioned? He waited and managed

to look so comfortable it made her worry he was ready to settle in for the day if it took her that long to answer.

“With what?” There was always the slight chance he wasn’t referring to her and Cole. It wasn’t something she felt like talking about.

“You two are right for one another. Even a wolf with his eyes gouged out would sense the connection. What

happened?”

There was a trickle sound and the scent of coffee permeated the air.

“I don’t want to talk about it.”

“Sorry to say this but you’re both either really chicken shit or really stupid.”

She busied herself by getting two mugs from the cupboard and setting them on the counter. “You have it wrong

Gray.”

“Stupid then,” his words remained calm and evenly delivered.

Anger rose up in her.

“What happened?” Still composed, he unfolded his arms, placing splayed fingers on the counter top on either side of himself.

“He doesn’t love me Gray so leave

it alone please.” It hurt her to say the words out loud and she was horrified to feel tears roll down her face so she wiped them away moving back to the mugs.

“Cream? Sugar?”

“Don’t you see?” Gray paused.

“Cole doesn’t think he’s good enough for you. I don’t think I’ve ever seen more chemistry between two people.”

“It’s just sexual attraction. We only knew each other for a few measly days.”

“It was way more than just sexual attraction and you know it. Time is not a factor.”

“God Gray even if I wanted to I couldn’t act on it because I made an oath that if Cole lived I’d give him up...I can’t go back on my word.”

Gray laughed. A bend over the

middle kind of laugh that both irritated and charmed her because he wasn't the type to give in to displays of emotion very often. Maybe ever.

“Here's the thing. Once Cole removed that ring, he was never in any danger of dying so your oath – sweet though the sentiment - is moot.”

Could it be true? She wanted so badly to believe him. Instead of

answering she picked up a mug of coffee she didn't remember fixing and handed it to Gray with shaking hands. Something welled up deep inside of her, it made her heart beat and her cheeks flush, it made her hands clammy and her feet itch to be mobile.

“How will I find him?”

“Easy”—he gazed deep into her eyes daring her to argue—“take off the

necklace.”

Chapter 9

Home is where the heart is.

Home had been wherever chasing had taken him. Mostly crappy hotels like this one. As for heart, he put his hand to his chest almost expecting quiet to find his fingers. The beat was still there, only it was stripped bare of all emotion.

Cole took the stairs two at a time

then flexed his right hand, still swollen from his confrontation earlier when he'd beat the crap out of a skin shifter. Yeah sure, the skin had been about to kill a man so that he could take over his identity. At least, just until he became bored, at which point he would have killed the family. The wife, the three kids, hell even the family dog. *Couldn't have the blood of all those innocents on*

his hands now could he? Then again, maybe he had gone a little too far.

Hounds, the skin would live. Well, at least until he was found guilty and put to death. Tough, so what if he was feeling a little unforgiving at the moment. It would make him a better Chaser.

Cole looked down at the ring on his hand remembering Gray's words. It had hurt physically to put the thing back on.

To push back down and cage a part of himself. His wolf. It had helped at least though to dull his emotions, the parts of him that were missing Katy more than he dared admit openly.

Katy.

Leather. Red lace. Summer

breeze...

Damn, just thinking of her made him imagine her scent. Like she was here

somewhere close. His beating, traitorous heart clenched at the thought. Cole neared the end of the hallway and bend that would lead to his door.

His nose twitched. It *was* her scent.

Well, sort of because he also smelled cheese burger and starch – the kind used in laundering clothes.

“Housekeeping.” There was

definitely someone in the next passage

but the voice was not Katy's. One explanation - he was going nuts. Cole fisted his hand as he reached the bend, already the swelling was going down. The pain had subsided to a dull resonance. Just before turning, he reached into his coat slipping his fingers over the hilt of his knife, just in case.

An overweight woman somewhere north of fifty dressed in a room attendant

outfit stood on the other side of his door. A big housekeeping trolley blocked the rest of the path. His hand tightened on the blade. Something had alarm bells sounding in his head. That scent was stronger than ever.

...besides the lace, flowers, definite candle lit dinners, he could smell fear etched with...determination.

Katy stood up from behind the

trolley.

Everything in him froze, even his breathing stopped. His heart finally had the good grace to let up, if only for a beat or two before quickly making up for lost time.

What the...?

This was so not a part of his well thought out plan.

“My room is good thanks,” Cole

addressed the cleaning lady. The hand on his weapon easing only when she disappeared down the other end of the hall.

“Hi,” he said and couldn’t help but smile as their eyes locked. She was like a break in the clouds on a rainy day. Like rain in the desert. The first cherry blossom in spring. He had to stand there for a moment or two, just to make sure

she was really there and not a figment of his tortured imagination. “Come in... please.”

Her heart raced.

The scent of her fear weighed thick in the air.

Was she afraid of him? After all they'd been through, did she still think he would hurt her? There was something more there. Damn if he knew.

Another scent he couldn't wrap his nose around.

Katy walked into the cramped room, she accessed her surroundings. Probably looking for a chair to sit down on. When she came up short, she sat down on the only available surface. The bed.

It immediately struck him how perfect she looked in his space. Then she turned those baby blues on him, eyes

fanned by thick black lashes. Her heart still raced but most of the fear had been replaced with...*desire*. Cole felt himself thicken. His wolf had been quiet ever since he'd placed it back behind silver bars. It sprang to life now though as if it knew something he was failing to see. Maybe it was as happy as he was to see Katy. That must be it. He willed the beast in him to remain calm. It was important that he be able to think clearly.

As over the full moon as he was to see her, he had to remind himself that nothing had changed. This was not the life he wanted for her. It was crucial that he harden himself to whatever she had to say because it didn't matter. He loved her too much to allow her to turn her back on what could be a happy life. A normal life. One he would never be able to give her.

“Why are you here? How did you find me?”

Katy didn't even flinch, it was like she had expected him to play hard ass.

“Gray told me how to find you.”

That would explain things since Ash knew exactly where he was and Gray and Ash were working together to solve the string of murders.

“Why are you here? Is everything okay?” *Maybe another wolf...? Maybe the female demon wolf had contacted her? Or tried to...?* Cole crouched down in front of her leaning both his hands on either side of her. “Has anything happened?”

Hades hounds, she stroked his cheek and he had to work to keep himself from moving. A part of him wanted to react

which would involve more touching.

This time from him. Another part wanted to get the hell out of there and the quicker the better.

“I’m fine. Nothing has happened. I needed to see you. I didn’t like the way things ended.”

This was what he had been afraid of. All the while her hand ran its way down his cheek before moving back up and

threading into his hair.

“Katy, there’s nothing to talk about.”

“Gray came to see me because he couldn’t believe that we weren’t together. That you had just up and left.”

Cole pulled away; he stood, taking off his trench coat as he moved. Not that he could get very far in this small room. It had become unbearably hot all of a sudden. “What was he expecting? Why

did you listen to him anyway?”

“I listened to him because he was right,” she stood up moving towards him.

“No”—Cole paced in the other direction—“he was wrong.”

“What was he wrong about?”

“Everything. He was wrong about every God damn thing.”

“Cole...Cole please look at me...

look at me damn it.”

How could he not? Her smell of fear was back. It wasn't him she feared, but rather his reaction to what she had to say. Why in the hell did that make him feel so good even in the midst of all this?

“Gray was right. There is something between us. Don't you feel it?”

He moved towards her, positioning himself right in front of her. “Yeah, I feel it alright. It’s called attraction...good old fashioned physical attraction.”

“You’re wrong Cole. It’s more than that. It’s...it’s...”

Please don’t say it...he mentally begged her not to say it...please don’t.

“Sex. Katy. Sex.” This time he saw her flinch. “Just because we’re good

together doesn't mean we're meant to be together. I've done my duties as a Chaser. You're safe and if that's all you came for then you can go." The last thing he wanted was to hurt her but he knew deep down inside that this was the right thing for her. Instead of leaving as he hoped, she stepped in closer, inches separated them.

“Fine, tell me that there's nothing

between us and I'll go.”

He couldn't.

“Tell me I mean nothing and I'll leave and never come back. I promise.”

Hells hounds but he couldn't. He could not look her in the eye and lie so blatantly. So he did the one other thing that came to mind and kissed her. At least this way she couldn't ask him things he couldn't answer and he

wouldn't be forced to lie. At first she kissed him back, made that whimpering sound he liked so much. Melting, melting and then she was freezing up so he slanted his lips, wrapping his arms more tightly around her.

As good as it felt to be with Cole like this, she knew it was wrong. If she gave in they would end up in bed

together, proving him right. That there was nothing more between them than sex which was not the case so, she fought him, and he fought back. Cole pushed his leg between hers and they fell onto the double bed that smelled of him.

Earth and powerful man.

Oh God help her she had to stop this.

His hands were on her. Stroking her through her clothes making her arch and

moan.

“Cole...you’re right,” her voice was strained and breathy. She had to try and get a grip which was difficult when she could feel his erection straining between her legs. *Why oh why had she worn a summer dress?* “There *is* a physical attraction between us”—

“Mmmm,” he said this while doing things to her nipple, right through her

thin dress.

—“but there is more to it. Way more,” she continued.

“Yeah, there’s this,” he slipped a strap from her shoulder taking her already tight bud into his hot mouth, “... and this...” Next, he slipped a finger into her panties and stroked her clit. Given another few seconds and she’d come straight into his hand proving him

right.

“Stop!” she pleaded.

He did, right away, saying softly into her ear, “I’m sorry Katy. You’re right.”

Cole moved off of her and she adjusted her clothing, but they both stayed on the bed. It was unbelievable how badly she wanted him, but she wanted more than just his body.

“Say it,” she had to look away. *What*

if she was wrong?

“That’s it,” he cussed so softly she barely heard him, “You’re not wearing your necklace. Damn it Katy I told you to leave it on.”

“I am what I am. I’m an Omega demon wolf not a human.”

“You had a chance at a normal life.”

“You’re wrong Cole. The necklace

stopped me from being who I am. I feel happier with it off.”

“What is it that you want to hear?”

he asked.

Katy had to look at him.

When she did the sternness of his features melted and his voice softened.

“That I have feelings for you. That there’s more between us than just really great sex? Look around Katy because all

I see is a flea infested, two-bit hotel room. Is this what you want?”

“I see *you* Cole. Forget the room and everything else. I see exactly what I want.”

He raked a hand through his hair, “I give you three years tops before you’re done with all the moving around, with all the death, the drama, before you decide you want more and move on. I

wouldn't blame you.”

“Three years? It's a long time, how will you feel about me in three years?”

At first he didn't move, had even seemed to have stopped breathing. Then the right side of his mouth hitched up ever so slightly. “I think I'll still be feeling as physically attracted to you as ever.”

“Physical attraction huh?”

He was looking at her lips, her eyes and back.

“You’re full of shit Cole,” she said.

He smiled breaking out his secret weapon – those incredible dimples. She found herself smiling along with him.

Then he went all serious again. “You deserve better and I care for you too much to let you waste your life on a mongrel like me.”

The bed rocked as she slid clear, standing in front of him. “Okay, have it your way but it’s important that you know, I sold my house and quit my job. I have no life to go back to. Gray said I could join the pack anytime, and I’m going to take him up on his offer.”

There were many things he could be named, but an idiot was not one of them.

It was as clear as the wolf inside him that she was trying to get a reaction out of him. Hades be damned. The wolves would go crazy if they caught a snout full of her. Omega females were much more readily accepted into a pack. Especially ones that looked and smelled like Katy.

“You wouldn’t.”

“I will. I’m a demon wolf,” she shrugged her shoulders. “I belong with

my mate but since he won't have me I'll have to make do with a second choice, but hey at least he'll be a pure blood demon wolf.”

His wolf went berserk, he was forced to shut his eyes and breathe deeply. “No.” The word left his throat in a low growl. “I won't allow it.”

“I get to decide how I live my life and I choose you. I don't care about the

hotel rooms or anything else as long as we're together it'll be okay.”

He kept his eyes shut and worked on keeping his wolf calm. If the beast in him had his way he would claim Katy as his in the most animal, most primal way possible.

“Gray told me how to find you. It's part of the reason I took off the chain. He told me if I took it off and if we were

meant to be mates, that I would be able to find you.”

His eyes flew open searching her face for any trace of deception knowing that he would find none. “It can’t be.”

“I’m here Cole. A new wolf and yet I found you. It was so easy, it wasn’t just your smell...I could sense you.”

It meant that her wolf had decided that he was to become its mate just as his

own wolf wanted Katy. If she was going to take on this life even if he didn't want it for her then maybe...

“Don't you want me Cole?”

Her words had him reaching for her, pulling her into his arms, nuzzling into her hair.

“I want you more than anything.

More than life”—he paused—“but the only thing I can promise is to love you

for as long as my Omega heart beats.”

She sucked in a ragged breath straddling him. “Oh Cole, I love you too, more than anything.”

Their mouths meshed.

“Need you...” He slipped the straps of her dress down her shoulders and her heavy, tight tipped breasts sprang free.

“God Katy...does this mean I get to love you like this forever?”

“Every day, several times a day.

That’s how sexual attraction works.”

She grappled with his pants and he groaned as his straining erection sprang free. “I can’t wait, I have to...” Then she was easing herself onto him. Not wasting any time she began to move. She leaned back moaning with each deliberate movement.

He put his hands on her hips,

thrusting into her from below. Cole sensed her urgency, it matched his.

“I love your wolf. So beautiful.”

No one had ever said that to him before. Hearing that she loved his wolf made all the years of hate evaporate. For once he felt himself really embrace the demon part of himself. A weight lifted from his shoulders, acceptance washed over him.

Cole stopped moving, “You love my wolf.”

“I love everything about you. You are mine.”

“Wait, wait just a second.” Her hair was wild and her cheeks flushed. She had never looked more beautiful. He brushed the wayward strands from her face and then held his hand to her. “I want you forever,” he growled.

Katy bit onto her bottom lip.

“Things work a little backwards in the wolf world, no pressure but if I take my ring off, we would become bound. Mates.” When she smiled he knew deep inside that this was what she really wanted. “I’d have to bite you. It won’t hurt.”

No words necessary, Katy removed the silver, tossing it to the far side of the

room.

“Are you sure?”

She was already moving again. Fast and wild. Katy threw her head back in a silent invitation. Cole nuzzled into her neck.

“Do it please,” she practically begged.

Not wanting to make her wait any longer, he bit her, choosing the same

spot as Bain. Making a new mark. His mark. Her body tensed and at first he was afraid that he had hurt her, then she cried out, her sex clamping down hard. Katy dug her nails into his back and he found he enjoyed the sting. With the taste of her blood on his lips, she screamed his name and Cole was catapulted right through heaven's door.

She was his at last.

Author's Note

Thank-you for reading the first in the Demon Chaser series. I hope that you enjoyed OMEGA as much as I enjoyed writing it.

I live on an acre in the country with my gorgeous husband and three sons, our two dogs, bearded dragon and ball python, Rudy. Aside from my passion for

reading and writing, I love anything to do with horses and firmly believe that my obsession is something I was born with. I hope one day to be able to give up my day job as corporate slave (not as bad as what it sounds) LOL in order to pursue my ambitions of full time writing. My biggest dream is to be able to have horses at home. There is something about the smell of leather, fresh hay and the thud of hooves that fills my soul.

I would love to hear from you so
please feel free to drop me a line

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Gray and Ash's Story



ALPHA

DEMON CHASER BOOK TWO

Charlene Hartnady

P.T.O. for first few pages...

Chapter 1

Gray looked into eyes made from pure liquid poison.

“Let’s get two things straight”—the female demon wolf paused—“I hate you and I don’t want this union. Step down now before you get hurt.”

It was either the words themselves, or the calm way in which they were

delivered that got to him. He grit his teeth, his natural instincts pushed at him to force her to submit while his rational side pushed back in an effort to be more understanding of how she was feeling. In the end, there was sweet little he could do about the situation.

Somehow he managed to grind out, “Our feelings have nothing to do with this. It’s not about what we want. The

pack is at stake.”

Alisha made a sound that told him he was full of it. “It’s your needs and wants that you are concerned with, this has nothing to do with the pack.”

“You will have to trust me on this one.”

She shook her head, a look of utter disbelief clouded her perfect features.

Gray’s instincts bristled; his demon

clawed at him, it continued to demand her submission. He ran a hand over the light stubble on his head and squeezed his eyes shut, fighting for control. “This has to happen, there is no other way.”

“I don’t care. Find a way that doesn’t involve me.”

With challengers closing in, his options were limited. It was either take Alisha as his mate or he would most

likely die. Where would the pack be then? The clock was ticking, he needed to be strong. Needed to believe that he could get through this.

“I’ve made my decision. You have three days to come to terms with it and to prepare. Once the full moon hits, we will mate. If you give me a chance I will prove to you that I can be a faithful and strong provider. I will do my best to

make you happy. We can make this work.”

“There is no way in hades I’ll let a bastard mongrel like you touch me.” Her voice remained even, but her eyes narrowed as she spoke.

Once upon a time, he’d actually found this female attractive. More than just attractive, *hounds*, as a young wolf he’d have given his left canine for one

night with her. Right now...he'd give anything just to get out of it. All he knew was that he couldn't blame her for hating him since she believed he'd killed her future mate, his half brother Bain. That didn't change the predicament they were all in at the moment though.

“Sorry to interrupt,” the petite

Demon Chaser rounded the corner and entered his suite without permission.

Bain would never have stood for such a breach of protocol. Especially from a human. The muscles in his shoulders cramped as he remembered why she was here. Taking a calming breath, he turned and faced her wondering how much of the exchange she had heard. He found himself hoping that she hadn't been standing there long.

Ashlyn stepped further into the room,

her head held high. She maintained eye contact, her gaze moving between himself and the female demon wolf. Alisha growled. The Chaser didn't flinch, in fact, her chin cocked to the side in an arrogant lilt.

Impressive.

“We need to talk,” she paused, her eyes brushing over the female demon wolf. “That is, when you get a chance.

I'll be in my room.”

“We're done. You may stay,” Alisha said, as if she were granting the Chaser permission to be there.

“You're too kind. Thanks ever so much. What is it that I should call you? Your highness, Alpha bitch...or maybe just bitch?”

Alisha growled, low and deep. She flashed a set of healthy canines. The

Chaser widened her stance. The pressure in Gray's head increased. Was he going to have to break up a cat fight today as well? *Could things get any worse?*

“I don't have time for this.”

He breathed a sigh of relief as he watched Alisha turn and stalk out with all the menace and cunning of a wolf and all the sleek grace of a cat. The woman

was a beauty, highly intelligent and strong. Yet the thought of tying himself to her for the rest of his very long life just wasn't appealing. He shook his head as he added the undesirable fact that she was his brother's leftovers.

Like it or not, he knew beyond a doubt that he would do what he had to do to secure his position as Alpha and to ensure the survival of this pack. He just

wouldn't do it at the cost of his own conscience or sense of who he was by forcing her. She didn't know that though, and she and the rest of the pack would just have to assume at this moment that he would take her like it or not. So, he had to win her over. For both their sakes.

Gray turned and looked out the window. The thought of his other options

were more stressful to think about than his first one. He could take one of the lesser females, but that would lower his chances of success. He could take the third option which, for him, was just plain ridiculous.