



Ready & Willing

by Selena Blake

Part Twelve

The kitchen was dark. Ava huffed out a sigh of relief.

Though werewolves were not shy when it came to nudity, her nerves were so on edge she didn't think she'd be able to control herself if she had to see Kaden in the buff. He'd made it clear he didn't want her *that* way. If she were brutally honest with herself, that was for the best.

Damn. Honesty hurt sometimes.

He was stronger than she was. She should thank him. Because she knew what lay beneath his fur/clothes. A perfectly sculpted specimen of werewolf. Temptation incarnate.

In her current mood, torn between lust and frustration, she'd either clock

him or kiss him. Neither option suited.

Giving the yard one last glance, she shifted to her human form. Sitting with her back against the cool, rough wood siding she sucked in a steadying breath. Double damn. Shifting back burned like flame on kindling. It was as if she were folding herself into a milk jug. And her wolf didn't like being put back in the box.

At war with her more primitive side, she tipped her head back against the wall and willed her nerves to settle. Despite the cool evening air, sweat dotted her brow. Her father promised that the change would get easier as she aged.

She rubbed a hand over the left side of her ribcage, hoping he was right about the side splitting pain.

A light went on in the house and a warm yellow glow flooded the porch. Tucking her feet beneath her, she pushed herself up just enough to peak in the window. Wesley pulled a beer from the fridge.

The energy in the air seemed to shift around her, and thicken. Without turning her head she knew that Kaden had shifted. She was not going to look at him. She was not going to --

But then the floor boards to her left creaked and her head swiveled.

Oh my.

Thanks to the light pouring from the window and her heightened senses, she had no trouble seeing his knees or perfectly sculpted thighs covered in a fine dusting of dark hair...right at her eye level.

And even as she was telling herself to stop there, her gaze lifted.

Oh. My.

She gulped. Liquid heat poured through her and the wolf inside her wanted to let out another howl. She bit her lips.

She was in control of her body. Her hormones. Not the other way around.

Somewhere in the back of her mind she heard laughter.

So close to her goal of becoming Alpha. Of proving the naysayers wrong...she couldn't choke now. No matter how ridiculously gorgeous the man before her was. No matter how much she wanted to run her hands up those powerful thighs, past that thin arrow of hair, across those taunt abs, and lick every square inch of his incredible chest.

Friday she would be Alpha. And Saturday she'd find a man to release her pent up tension.

Frustrated with warring desires, Kaden held out his hand to the naked beauty. Somehow he managed to keep his lust in check, though she could surely see the evidence of his need.

Four more days. He could sit bare assed in the snow for four days. Had gone without food for longer than that. He would find new and inventive ways to resist his need for the woman at his feet for four more days. He had to. His position as Alpha depended on it.

But after their tryst at the river, his will power was at an all-time low. Add to that the hurt he'd seen in her eyes and the raw desire that now filled the amber depths...

She glanced at his hand and a tiny frown curved the corner of her lips down. A long pause held them still and then, as if she'd made up her mind about something her shoulders went back and her chin tipped up a fraction. She placed her hand in his and he pulled her to her feet.

He recognized that determined tilt of her head and wanted to say something. Anything to clear the air between them. To get back to those peaceful moments during their run.

She pulled her hand from his and started past him.

"Ava," he pulled her to a stop. He felt like such an ass. She'd opened up to him. Showed a different side of herself. Shared herself. Been honest about her desires. And he'd squashed all that...just so he could keep his neat and tidy life in safe compartments. Which was ironic, considering what he

wanted to do with her was far from neat and tidy.

“I didn’t mean to upset you,” he said, keeping his voice soft.

“You didn’t,” she said nonchalantly. But the words were too automatic. Too quick. She paused and glanced away. “You were being honest and I can appreciate that,” she amended.

She thought he was being honest? Far from it, beautiful. Honest was wanting to press her up against the side of the house, letting his hands and lips investigate everything his eyes could see.

“Then why won’t you look at me?” He gripped her upper arms and squeezed gently.

“Because--“ she cried, her gaze snapping to his. An electric current zapped between them, heating him from head to toe.

“Because...” he prompted, a heartbeat away from kissing her into oblivion.

Eyes pleading, she said, “if I look at you, I’ll want to kiss you. And if I kiss you, I won’t be able to stop.”

Without giving him a moment to react to her bombshell, she pulled away from him and rushed into the house.



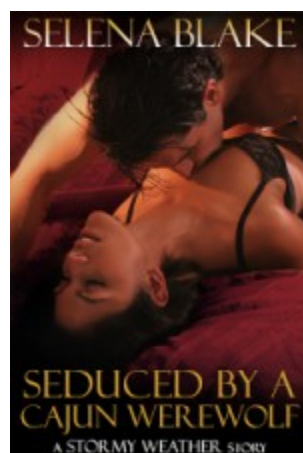
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About Selena

An action movie buff with a penchant for all things supernatural and sexy, Selena Blake combines her love for adventure, travel and romance into steamy paranormal romance. Selena's books have been called "a steamy escape" and have appeared on bestseller lists, been nominated for awards, and won contests. When she's not writing you can find her by the pool soaking up some sun, day dreaming about new characters, and watching the cabana boy (aka her muse), Derek. Fan mail keeps her going when the diet soda wears off so write to her at selenablake@gmail.com. Visit her online at <http://selena-blake.com> or become a friend at <http://www.facebook.com/authorSelenaBlake>

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