

Chapter 169

Natalie jumped off the roof and climbed into the car. Tor drove roughly in the direction that she had pointed to. Every so often they stopped the car and she climbed up on the roof again to make sure they were still going the right way. Finally they came as close to it as it seemed they could get following the roads they were on.

Tor got out of the car and stared off over the fields. "I don't know. I don't see a house and there's no drive or a road over to those trees. Sometimes farm fields have patches of trees to act as a wind block in between fields."

"I don't remember a drive from the last time. Maybe it's so overgrown you can't see it. Or maybe we came up on it from the wrong side and it's on the other side of the trees," Natalie wrapped her arms around herself. A cold front was rolling in.

www.NoVeIWorm.com

"All right. Let's check it out. If that isn't it then I give up for now. We're going back after this."

Working their way across the field wasn't easy. Natalie grew despondent. She didn't remember it being this difficult to get there. When they got to the patch of trees, an eerie quiet permeated the wood.

Tor sniffed the breeze. Natalie watched the strange behavior with curiosity. She had almost forgotten that she was with a werewolf.

Eyes yellow and gleaming in the night shadows of the trees Tor refocused on Natalie. "I hate it when the nightlife goes quiet. Makes me paranoid. We're being followed. No big deal though. Coyotes checking us out I think."

Natalie looked around. "I don't see anything. Are we in danger?"

Smiling Tor started pushing their way through the trees again. "No. I'm bigger than any coyote. They're out hunting game. They'll look for something smaller than us."

Coming through the trees Natalie broke into a run. "That's it. Right there. That's it," she said excitedly between breaths.

www.NoVeIWorm.Com

Tor kept up easily with her run. They came up on the back side of the house. "Slow down," he said. "Let me go first."

"Are you worried about something?"

"Hard to say. Call me overly cautious."

Slinking around the house to the opening that served as a front door Tor watched the ground for traces of any activity. Satisfied that no one had been there recently they started inside.

"I can't see anything," Natalie realized. "Why didn't we bring a flashlight?" *www.NoVeIWorm.com*

"I never think to grab one. I don't need it." Tor took her by the hand. "Where are we going?"

"The basement. There's a big boiler or furnace thing. I shoved a backpack with the tapes in it behind it."

"You stay here. I don't want you falling through this floor or something. I'll go down there and get it."

www.NoVeIWoRM.Com

"I guess," she said reluctantly. "It's spooky in here. Hurry up."

Tor chuckled. "If you think it's so spooky why did you leave them here?"

"Desperation. Hurry up."

Tor carefully traversed the decaying floor boards. Creaking boards when he mounted the basement stairs concerned him. He was a lot heavier than Natalie. There was a very real concern that he might fall through. "Well caoch," he swore. Stripping down he shifted into his wolf form, hoping that weight distributed over four feet wouldn't be as bad as weight on two.

The floor boards continued to creak but it wasn't nearly as bad as it had been. Tor carefully worked his way down the stairs. Looking around the basement he spied a boiler or furnace. Stepping lightly through the basement Tor shifted back to his human form and reached around behind it.

"How much longer," Natalie called down the stairs. Her voice eerily loud in the silence of the abandoned house. She could hear the coyotes calling into the night outside. "Tor," Natalie called, starting to panic. "Something went passed the door. Tor?"

Hearing Natalie, Tor attempted to hurry. "Coming," he called back, but wasn't sure if she heard him over her own anxious shouting. Reaching behind the furnace he felt around until his hand hit some fabric. Taking hold he yanked a maroon backpack out from behind the furnace. He could feel boxes inside the bag. Slinging one strap around his neck he jogged back to the stairs, shifting as he went.

Quickly Tor picked his way up the stairs. Natalie stood, back to a wall staring wide eyed at a couple small coyotes in the doorway. Unimpressed he slinked across the floor and growled menacingly at the two smaller animals. Both backed down immediately and ran. The wolf couldn't help the brief predator urge and chased them out the door and into the field. It was the rattling of the backpack around his neck the stopped him from hunting them down.

Trotting back to the house he found Natalie standing in front of the dilapidated building staring at him. Seeing the uncertainty on her face he shifted back to human and walked up to her, pulling the backpack over his head. "This it," he asked, knowing it had to be. But he was hoping if he got her talking she wouldn't look so traumatized.

Natalie swallowed hard. The first thing she noticed was that the tattoo on his face was continued down his neck, across his shoulders, down his chest, across his hips and over his thighs. It was a solid moment of staring before she realized he had said something to her. "Huh?"

Tor couldn't help laughing. "I'll take that as a compliment. I don't think I'll ever stop being amused by the human perception of nudity."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Natalie stammered and looked embarrassed. "I don't have a problem with nudity. I've seen naked men before."

Raising his eyebrows Tor cocked his head to the side. "Alright. Let's get out of here. We have a long drive back." He started walking back the way they came.

"Aren't you going to go get your clothes? At least your shoes? It's cold out here." Natalie tripped behind him, watching the naked man walk ahead of her in the moonlight. What the hell are you thinking? Natalie chastised herself. He's a freaking werewolf. A gorgeous, dangerous, tall, dark man werewolf. She realized that she had been attracted to him for some time. Still she couldn't wrap her brain around the werewolf part of the equation.

Tor turned around and knelt down to help her up. "They're somewhere in the basement. I'd hate to risk the floor in there again if I don't have to. I have more in the car and I don't really feel the cold." They stood up together. "If it really bothers you I'll go back and get them."

"No," she responded a bit too quickly. He smiled. "I wouldn't want you to risk getting hurt." God, what wouldn't I say to keep him naked a little longer.

Tor reached up and pushed a wild red curl out of her eyes. He caught the unmistakable scent of arousal. With his wolf already close to the surface he couldn't stop the golden swirl shifting his eyes or the response of his body.

Leaning down he pressed his nose into her hair and breathed deeply. A soft growl rolled through Natalie. She never would have imagined something like that could be so erotic.

Okay now you're getting turned on by a naked werewolf in the middle of an abandoned farm field in the middle of the night. You really are insane aren't you, she asked herself, as she stood there.

When she didn't run away or slap him, Tor took that as a promising sign. "Come on," he said, pulling away from her. He knew it was never good to push thinks like this too far too quickly. She was still a human. She had no idea what she'd be getting into with him. "We have to get back."

Taking her by the hand he led her through the fields, the trees, and back to the SUV. There was something distinctly reassuring about being back at the car and seeing it undisturbed. Natalie had been fantasizing that they would reach the SUV and a bunch of government agents would jump out of the shadows, hand cuff them and drag her back to the white room with the straight jacket.

Tor opened the door for her and she sat down in the front seat realizing that part of her attraction to the man was the fact that every time she looked at him and he did something supernatural she was reassured that she wasn't insane. He opened the back of the truck and pulled a duffel bag to the tailgate. Fishing a pair of jeans out of the bag he pulled them on. He tossed the backpack into the backseat, slammed the trunk closed, climbed into the driver's seat and with the help of a GPS they were pointed straight home.

Uncertain what to say if anything, Natalie fell asleep shortly into the drive. Her dreams revolved around a sexy tattooed man in jeans.