
ALPHA SHE WOLF

Tears of the Wolf

Book 4

BETHANY DRAKE



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Bethany Drake
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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only. Nothing in this book should be interpreted as the publishers' or the author's advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

This is for my friend, Judy who has a crush on a particular celebrity chef. I promised to write her a nice spicy romance and here it is. Hope you enjoy it, Judy. This is also for my mom. I was her caregiver and lost her to Dementia/Alzheimer's last year. Giving Sarah's mother dementia was cathartic for me and gave me an outlet to share my frustration and grief about what the disease does to a loved one. I miss you, Mom.

The legendary Tears of the Queen are red diamonds that can turn someone from human to werewolf or werewolf to human. When Maximillian Santos, alpha of his pack, learns someone else is trying to find the Tears, he knows he needs to find them first. He convinces a human, Alicia Braswell, to help him.

Alicia Braswell is a gemologist and is part of that legend. The poem Max shares with her just about calls her by name and says she's the one who is supposed to find the Tears. The Tears talk to her. Not in words, but in vibrations. She gets guidance from them. Alicia uses the Tears on herself and is now a werewolf and Max's mate.

Stacey is Alicia's assistant and also a werewolf. She was sent to protect Alicia. Before she met her mate she refused to shift because of the fear her father had engrained in her. When the boy she was promised to came of age, he killed his father and started ruling his pack with an iron fist. Stacey's father took his family and ran to keep her safe. When she meets Patrick she has to face her fears.

Patrick is Max's second and very attracted to Stacey. When he realizes someone is funneling money from his company, he hires Stacey to help him find the culprit. The more time he spends with her the more he wants her. He faces the alpha she fears, defeating him and taking over his pack in the process so she will live in peace as his mate. They are now parents of a precious baby boy.

Catherine is Patrick's sister and Max's third in command. She is also the pack historian. She worked at one of the local colleges in Charlotte as a professor of Legends and Myths throughout History until Max makes her dean of the new college he is starting for werewolves. She met her mate while on assignment to help a pack that had several unsolved murders.

Jacques is Catherine's mate. He grew up in his small pack

Introduction

in Louisiana as the first son of the alpha. An accident takes his shifting ability away, making him step down as future alpha so his brother could get the training needed to take over their pack. He becomes Sheriff and the person to help Catherine with his alpha as well as the murders. The more time they spend together the stronger the passion flairs between them. Jacques doesn't feel worthy of Catherine because he can't shift. As they learn who the murderer is he finds out he had never damaged his spine, but a piece of metal kept him from shifting. He is now Max's head of security.

Now the journey of Max's pack continues...

Chapter 1

Sarah brushed her wet hair as she sat in her car. The AC no longer worked but it was a cooler day so there was no sweltering heat to cause her make-up to melt. At least she would still smell clean when she met her friend.

She felt like a thief because she had snuck into the showers at the truck stop. No one ever questioned her when she used the showers, but she knew they were there for the truck drivers, not a homeless woman, so she only used them when she absolutely had to.

If it hadn't been for her friend who had called her cheap cell phone and basically strong-armed Sarah into going to dinner with her, she would have skipped it. Her friend had been deliberately vague. It was the promise of a good meal as a birthday present that made her say yes.

She started her car and listened as it sputtered to life.

"That's a good girl." She patted the dashboard. She only needed it to last a few more weeks. Everything had been going great for her. She had a new job that would start in a few weeks when college classes started. That job gave her free room and board and she would be able to afford a new car if

she wanted. Then the building she lived in got condemned a month early and she had nowhere to go.

Sarah promised herself she wouldn't ask for any help from her parents. She knew they would have helped her in a second, but they already thought of her as a professional student, and she didn't want them to see her as a failure. She could have asked a few of her friends if she could stay with them, but something weird was happening to her.

Sarah woke up one morning and found her bed ripped open and stuffing everywhere. She had a dream the night before of running through the woods. Her bed proved it was more than a dream. The damage to her mattress was done by her, she was sure of it. Sarah sure didn't want to do that to someone's couch or spare bed, so she resigned herself to sleeping in her car until the college opened. It was only a couple of weeks. She would handle it.

It took her about a half hour to make it to the restaurant her friend suggested. This place was expensive and hard to get a reservation at. Sarah wondered how her friend Becky had managed it.

She looked down at her simple dress, afraid she hadn't dressed appropriately. Then again, she didn't own anything real fancy and her friend knew it. If she had wanted Sarah to dress formally, she would have told her.

The maître d' met her just inside the door and escorted her to the table. They were seated with six other people. Her friend stood when she approached.

"Becky?" Sarah hugged her. "How did you swing this?"

"Believe it or not I won a raffle at work that had two tickets for this meal. The moment I found out I won I knew I had to invite you."

"Because my birthday is a couple of weeks away?"

"Oh, no." She gave her a toothy smile. "You'll understand soon."

Sarah took her seat, questioning her friend's sanity. She froze when she heard his voice. The voice she heard in her fantasies. She gripped Becky's arm. "That's Conor O'Malley."

Conor O'Malley was a celebrity chef she had drooled over for years.

"I know." Becky patted her hand. "You've had the biggest crush on the man, and when I found out the tickets were for one of his meals, I knew I had to bring you. If I didn't you might not have talked to me ever again."

"This is the best birthday gift ever!" Sarah hoped she didn't act like a fool in front of him. Conor O'Malley was one of the best chefs out there. She had watched every show he had been on. All of his cooking competitions, any talk show, everything he showed up on. If he was on TV, she was going to watch it. He was well known for screaming, yelling, and swearing in Gaelic but he was also known for finding the best chefs and nurturing them into his head chefs. He was a perfectionist and wanted to make sure every meal was perfect for his clientele. She dreamed about trying his food and now that dream was going to become a reality.

Conor checked his watch. His patrons were arriving. Several tables had already filled up, including his VIPs, Maximillian Santos, and his entourage. Max was the most powerful alpha he had ever met. They had met years ago when Conor had just opened his first restaurant. Werewolves could identify each other and the moment Max walked through the door they had become instant friends. Max mentioned his place just a few times to the right people and his career took off. He now had three restaurants in Ireland, which he called home, seven in the UK, and twelve in the United States. He wanted to honor Max properly but was told the patrons were a mixture

of humans and werewolves so he would have to do it discreetly.

People continued to fill the restaurant. He took a moment to check with his chefs. Everything had to be perfect for Max. Conor only hired werewolves. Their sense of smell and taste surpassed humans and that was why his food was always the best, even when his chefs made horrible errors the food was always good.

He gathered them around. “Tonight, we cook for Maximillian Santos. I want everything perfect for him. You know what he has done for our people and our food will show him how much we appreciate what he has done for us. If any of you fuck up I will kick you out of this restaurant and off my staff. Is that clear?”

“Yes, Chef,” they said in unison.

He nodded and smiled. Turning, he went out into the restaurant and was greeted with applause. He gave everyone a smile and a slight bow, which was the way he always greeted customers. He looked right at Max as he did it.

Max smiled and gave him a nod.

Conor walked to his table and did a slight bow once again. “This is such a pleasure to have you here, sir.”

“Conor.” Max stood and shook his hand. “Good to see you, my friend. Thank you for coming to Charlotte. We have raised a lot of money for our scholarships by raffling off dinners.”

“I love helping any of your causes.” He pitched his voice so only Max could hear him. “I don’t smell any humans, sir. I would have created a better welcome but was told humans were among the patrons.”

“I’ll explain it later.” He smiled and gestured to the people at his table. “Let me introduce some of my guests. You know Alicia, my mate.”

He gave her a slight bow as well. “I don’t think you can look any prettier.”

“Flatterer.” She stood and hugged him.

“You know Patrick, and this is his mate, Stacey.”

“I heard you settled down and I can see why.” He shook Patrick’s hand and smiled at Stacey. “I hear you have a son as well?”

“Yes. In fact, this is the first time Stacey’s been away from him for a few hours so if she suddenly bolts don’t think it’s your food.”

“Patrick!”

He pressed a kiss to her cheek and winked at Conor.

“This is Jacques, head of my security and Catherine’s mate,” Max said as he continued the introductions.

Conor grabbed his heart. “Oh, Catherine, my heart breaks, but I’m happy for you.”

Jacques stood and shook his hand.

“Thanks, Conor.” Catherine stood as well and hugged him. “He makes my heart sing.” She pitched her voice so only he would hear her.

“And that’s what counts.” He pitched his as well.

A soft scent caught his attention. He spoke to Max for a few more minutes before he headed to the kitchen. Whoever the scent came from had to be a werewolf. Hopefully, he would figure it out before the meal was over. It intrigued him.

Sarah tried not to stare but she couldn’t help herself.

“Stop drooling,” said Becky as she placed her napkin on her lap.

“Is it that obvious?” She looked at her friend, feeling embarrassed. “He’s even cuter in person.”

“Well get control of yourself.” Becky picked up her glass of water. “He’s looking in this direction.”

“Really?” She busied herself with her water as well.

“Oh my god, girl, now you’re avoiding him too much.” Becky touched her arm. “I’m not going to say anything more because I seem to just make it worse. This is your night. I want you to enjoy it. Just promise me you won’t faint or cause a scene.”

Conor looked at the seating arrangements. He had figured out what table the scent came from. Now he just needed to figure out which woman it came from. It was distracting him, and he couldn’t have that. Not tonight. Knowing who was the one with the exotic scent would end the distraction and let him focus on what he needed to do tonight.

Of the eight people at the table, only two were unmated. He looked up to see the two women and found one looking back at him. Her eyes were a startling gray. Everything around him disappeared except for her. She was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. Her red hair flowed about her face and her smile took his breath away. The moment was broken when Catherine went to the table and spoke to the young woman he had been staring at. They hugged and he knew Catherine would be able to tell him who she was. That made him smile.

He made sure everything was ready and nodded to the waiters and waitresses. The moment Catherine returned to her table he made a beeline for her.

He placed his hands on the back of her chair. After acknowledging Max, he pitched his voice so only Catherine could hear him. “Who is that?”

“Who?” She looked at her mate before turning to look at

him. "I hope you don't mind, but I've included Jacques in our conversation. We're newly mated and I don't want him coming after you because he doesn't know what we're talking about."

"I'm sorry I didn't pitch my voice for the both of you." He looked at Jacques as he included him in his conversation with Catherine. "I didn't mean to offend you."

"No offense taken." Jacques linked his fingers with Catherine.

"Who are you talking about?" She looked over at the young woman she had just spoken to. "Sarah? She is my new assistant. Well, she was my grad student and I hired her to be my assistant when Max assigned me to be dean of the new college."

"Is there anyone in her life?"

"No, but you need to be aware. She doesn't know she's a werewolf."

"What?" He looked back at where she sat talking to the other woman.

"I know it sounds crazy, but she was adopted and raised by humans." Catherine placed her hand on Jacques' hand. "I'm assuming she has never shifted. Why? I can't answer."

Conor looked at Catherine. "After the meal is done can you introduce me?"

"Of course." She looked up at him. "But, Conor, if you hurt her you will have to answer to me."

"Yes, ma'am." He looked over at Sarah again. Many women had fascinated him over the years, yet there was something about her that made him think this was different. "Time to go to work."

Conor went to the pass as the waiters headed there to turn in their orders.

Sarah enjoyed every bite. The flavors flowed over her tongue. She fought her desire to moan as she ate. It was orgasmic to her. Between bites, she watched him as he worked. Food flowed out of the kitchen.

She had hoped to see that side they showed on television when he swore in Gaelic and then shouted at his cooks. So far, his people had cooked just the way he wanted. She heard him praise them. Conor laughed and smiled. He looked relaxed.

She took a sip of her drink when she heard the Gaelic swear words. "Oh my god, there he goes."

Conor slammed his hand on the pass then turned and started screaming. Sarah had learned the swear words because she looked them up after he said them. In the beginning, she sat there in awe as she heard the language. It was beautiful, but what did the words mean? She tried writing them down but found she had no idea how to spell them. It took her recording the shows and replaying them over and over to figure out how the words were spelled so she could learn their meaning. She could now swear as well as Conor.

The language might sound beautiful, but his face showed his anger. His chefs dropped their heads when they realized their error. Conor didn't care and continued to shout at them.

"Oh goody," said Becky. "Dinner and a show."

Sarah hid her laughter behind her napkin. "I knew you enjoyed his shows as much as I did."

"He knows how to keep you interested, and like you, I learned his food is the best. If this appetizer is any indication, we're in for a wonderful meal."

"Is that why you put up with me going on and on about him?"

"I don't have the crush you have, but yes, I see what you see. A lot of other people do too. I mean look at how many people wanted to come here. That's why Mr. Santos raffled off those tickets. He knew it would raise a lot of funds for the

college he started. By the way, are you ready to start work there?”

“You have no idea.” She picked up her drink and took a swig. She wasn’t going to blurt out she wouldn’t have to live in her car anymore, but she came close. Becky was her best friend. The moment they met they just seemed to click. This was the first time she had kept anything from her.

Their next course arrived.

Sarah was afraid she wouldn’t be able to eat all her food and the thought of leaving it behind made her insides cringe. To her surprise, she cleared each plate. Everything was so good she couldn’t stop until every bite was gone. It wasn’t long before she took her last bite and sat back. As much as she would have liked to stay, she wanted to move her car before anyone saw it. One look at it and they would know it held everything she owned.

She gave Becky a poor excuse and took off. Sarah felt so much better with a full belly. Now all she had to do was find a quiet place for her to park her car. There was a neighborhood where no one asked questions, but she felt it safe enough for her to be able to sleep.

She had taken the exit she wanted off the highway when her car started sputtering.

“No, no, no.” She patted the dashboard. “Come on, baby. You can’t crap out on me now. At least wait until we’re in a safer area.”

Her car coughed, shuddered, then died.

She banged her head against the steering wheel. Now what?