

LONE WOLF

MY WOLF'S BANE 1.2 † THE COMPLICATION



VERONICA BLADE

Lone Wolf

Copyright © 2013 by Veronica Blade. All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means whatsoever without the prior written permission of the publisher except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

[Crush Publishing, Inc](#)
Sunland, CA 91040

Crush Publishing, Inc name and logo are trademarks of Crush Publishing, Inc and are used only with its permission.

The places, characters and events portrayed in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by author.

The Complication



Two years after my first morph into a wolf, Aunt Cara suggested my mom and I move in with them. She reasoned that two more people wouldn't make much of a difference when she was already shopping and cooking for her husband and three kids.

I didn't want to be an imposition, but after taking care of my mom for so long while juggling school, homework, and my part-time job at the auto shop, I didn't fight my mom on her decision. A part of me was relieved at the chance to breathe again, knowing someone would always be around if my mom needed something. I wouldn't worry about her as much during school.

As a new day hinted on the horizon, my eyes popped open. Instead of drifting back to sleep, I lay in bed wide-awake as the shadows in my room faded. I dreaded my first day at Verdugo Hills Academy. If I came across any werewolves and they flagged me, a scout might be assigned to watch over me — and eventually

force me to join a pack. No way did I want to get caught up in the werewolf king's politics. Selling my soul for a freak who kept shape-shifters as slaves — among other crimes — wasn't my idea of an honorable way to live. Someone was bound to discover me eventually, but I'd stay under the radar as long as possible.

After a while, I grew bored of staring at the ceiling. Barging into my cousin Trevor's room and rousting him sounded like much more fun. I tiptoed to his bed, tugged on his comforter and chuckled as I dodged his fist.

"Unless you want to take the bus to school, you better be ready to go in fifteen minutes," I warned.

"You suck," he groaned. Reluctantly, Trevor dragged his ass out of bed. A few minutes later, he rushed out the door with me.

"We're way too early. Don't know why you couldn't kill time playing a video game or something." Trevor yanked on the handle of the Jeep door and snapped on his seat belt. "You should be flogged for interrupting the best dream ever."

"Maya again?" I asked, grinning when his face flushed. After starting the Jeep, I pulled away from the

curb. “Just wanted to check out the school before my first class.”

More like I needed to scope out the faculty for any non-humans so I knew who to avoid. I couldn't tell Trevor that though. One thing I'd learned from the books my dad had left for me: I couldn't reveal my true nature to a human. My mother, aunt and cousins could never know about me or that my dad had been a werewolf.

After clearing the gate of Verdugo Hills Academy, I cruised into the nearest parking spot and killed the engine.

“I'll show you around.” Trevor jerked his head toward the wide double doors as he exited the car.

As I rounded my bumper, a car screeched. I halted mid-step and glanced over my shoulder to see this total piece of junk sputtering and coughing through the school gate.

Trevor paused beside me with a grin. “Hard on the ears, isn't it?”

Just then, the coffin-on-wheels died and barely managed to coast into a space between a shiny BMW and a sleek, black Porsche.

“Pity the driver,” I said. “Being in that thing must be an epic embarrassment.”

“Autumn’s not exactly suffering for it. Got here only a few weeks ago and she’s already school royalty.” Trevor elbowed me. “She’s taken though.”

I wanted a peek at this unavailable princess who could rise above being seen in *that* thing. I craned my neck to include her in my line of vision, but she’d slumped forward, her forehead resting on the steering wheel. A moment later, she leaned over to the passenger side, but her nearly black curtain of hair completely obscured her face.

When she bolted from the car a moment later, I froze. No wonder that hideous car couldn’t dethrone Autumn. Ferociously hot. She was slim, tall as the average guy, and wore her dark hair loose and wavy around her shoulders. I gawked, silently thanking her ancestors, whoever they were, for that olive skin and those beautiful brown eyes.

This girl could definitely be a complication in my life — like I needed more of those. Besides, she had a boyfriend.

I practically sprinted away from her as Trevor

jogged to keep up. We disappeared into the building and I didn't look back. Not that I needed another visual — her face was permanently etched in my brain.

Nothing I couldn't shake. Eventually.

Passing a restroom, I heard the patter of her sandals as she followed a few yards behind us. When I turned the corner into another hallway, a door swung open and her footfalls became muffled by walls.

I couldn't stop myself from wondering where she'd gone or if we shared any classes. Why was I so drawn to her? It's not like she was a werewolf... at least I didn't think so. Was she something else? Shape-shifter maybe? If I could get closer, I'd know for sure.

"You go ahead." I flicked a thumb toward the other end of the corridor. "I left something in my car."

"You dragged my ass out of bed early and now you're ditching me?" Trevor snorted. "Whatever, dude. See you at lunch."

We knuckle-bumped and I backtracked to the door I figured Autumn had gone through. It turned out to be a restroom. Students brushed past me, but I remained planted in the middle of the hallway, waiting for her to come out.

Not wanting to look like a stalker, I glanced around and spotted the drinking fountain right next to the restroom entrance. Why they always put drinking water so close to bathrooms was beyond me. To burn time, I leaned over and reached for the lever. I took a long, slow sip, then moved to stand up. Just as I returned to my full height, the door swung open.

An instant later, Autumn rushed out, plowed into me, and bounced off my chest. She spiraled to the floor, wincing as her palms slammed against the tile. I winced too. Man, that had to hurt.

She peeked up at me and I held out a hand. “You okay?” I asked, noting the softness of her skin. Hot tingles snaked through my wrists and strangled my insides.

Yeah, a complication all right.

Autumn nodded and tipped toward me. Her already big brown eyes widened when my hands shot to her hips to steady her. She was toned, but soft in all the right places.

“Easy there.” I had an urge to move the wayward strand of hair off her face, but I liked the feel of her hips against my palm. Damn, she was gorgeous. And the

picture of serenity as her soft brown eyes gazed into mine. Her rapid pulse, however, told me she was anything but calm. Could she be feeling it too, our connection? She hadn't spoken a single syllable and I already had the urge to kiss her. That full bottom lip begged to be sucked. By me.

But I couldn't get caught up in this girl — even though every ounce of me *really* wanted to.

A guy with long, dirty-blond hair glared at me and grabbed her wrist, jerking her away. "That's *my* girl you're touching, freak."

Right. Trevor had said she was taken. Boyfriend or not, I didn't like this loser's attitude.

"Hands off!" His eyes narrowed into a challenge, lips curling.

Helping the girl up from the floor warranted getting treated like a perv? No way. I lunged, but pulled back at the last second. Beating the hell out of this douchetard on my first day of school would get me suspended. My mom didn't need the aggravation.

Still, I couldn't resist getting right up in his face. "You need to learn some manners," I growled.

“Oh, yeah? You gonna try to teach me, girly boy?”

Screw possible suspension. This idiot needed to be taught a lesson. My fist tightened and drew back.

Autumn squeezed between us, her gaze riveted to Loser’s as though I didn’t exist. “Let’s just go,” she said in an unsteady voice.

Even though werewolves weren’t known for their patience, I wouldn’t go through her to get to him. I couldn’t imagine why she’d protect a punk like that.

Maybe she wasn’t much of a prize after all.

“Good idea.” Loser glared at me and turned away, practically dragging her along with him.

I took a deep breath and stifled the urge to put him in his place. His girl, not mine. I needed to remember that.

“Asshat,” I muttered. A part of me wished I’d said it louder so he could hear, but calling attention to myself wasn’t on my agenda, now or ever.

“Hang on and I’ll walk you to class,” Loser said, his voice growing more faint with the distance.

“Sure,” Autumn said.

To hell with both of them. I should be figuring out where my first class was, not trying to hook up with some girl who probably wasn't my type anyway. I pulled out my cell to text Trevor when I felt her gaze burning into me. Don't look, I told myself. Don't do it.

I met her eyes. She gave me a half smile and my heart stuttered as if she hadn't just walked off with the very guy who'd insulted me. Maybe I couldn't resist her, but she didn't need to know that. I twisted my lip into a sneer and raised an eyebrow.

Her smile faded and she turned away. I booked it.

I would've loved to forget ever meeting Autumn, except there was something about her. Something nagging at me. Since hitting werewolf maturity, I'd spotted more than a werewolf or two. Each time, I'd always been one hundred percent certain. Like the owner of the drive-thru stand near my old house. I'd been forced to find another place to eat where the burgers weren't nearly as tasty, just to avoid being discovered. That was a bummer.

If Autumn were a werewolf, I wouldn't be wondering — I'd know. I didn't pick up on a supernatural energy and she didn't smell like a werewolf. So why was she blipping on my supernatural radar?