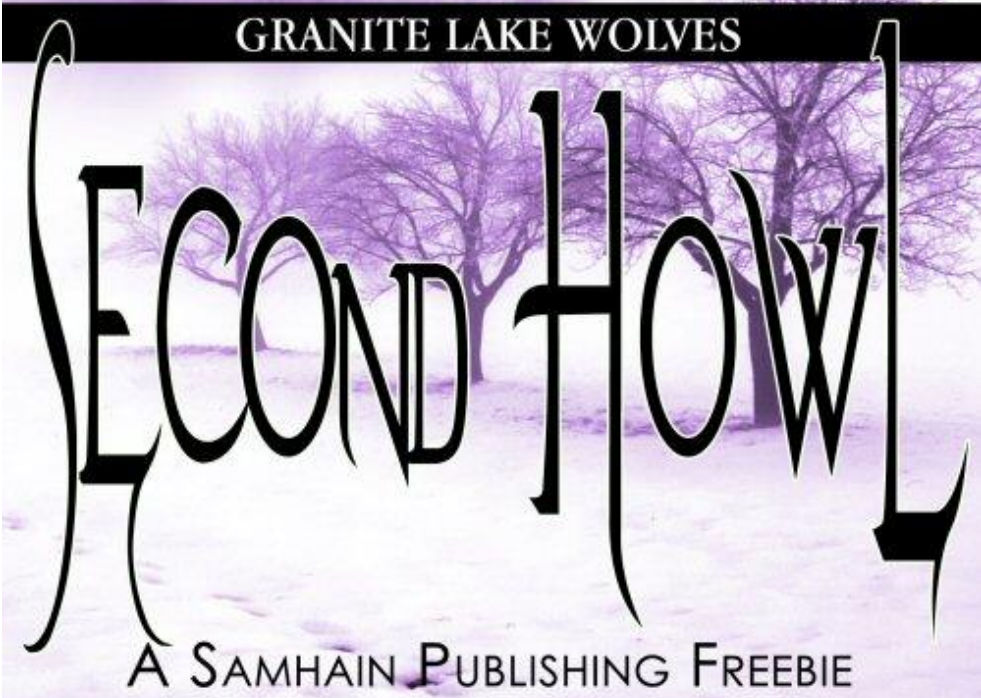




VIVIAN AREND

GRANITE LAKE WOLVES



SECOND HOWL

A SAMHAIN PUBLISHING FREEBIE

Second Howl

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"You want to know what he hit?" Tad asked.

Keil was silent for a minute. "Does it involve blood, broken bones or repair bills I'll have to pay?"

Tad considered. "No, no, and probably."

Keil sighed. "Then I don't want details. It's a party, we have babysitters lined up, and taking care of TJ is the farthest thing from what I want to be doing right now."

Tad nodded in agreement. He examined the carnage and winced one last time before he turned and they finished ascending the hill together.

The view from the top of the rise made Tad smile. The pack house was visible at the base of the hill. Farther down the road, the new bungalow he and Missy had built during the summer was nestled next to the trees. Robyn and Keil's home sat on the far side of theirs. It was a wonderful arrangement. They had privacy for their families but were still available for the pack.

The voices carrying on the air were light and happy. Children squealed in the distance, and here and there pack members in their wolf forms dashed into the forest for a moonlight run.

Later he'd suggest a run, but first—a little privacy with his mate.

Beside him, Keil gave a mighty yell, raced forward and belly flopped onto his sled. Tad matched him move for move, snow flying up from under their runners and spraying into their faces. Keil shouted. Tad just held on tight and enjoyed the ride.

Life was good, and it was about to get even better.

*

Missy laid Jamie down in his crib and rubbed his back softly. He gave a little sigh, then found his mouth with his thumb and suckled happily and her heart twisted with joy. What a beautiful baby.

A pair of hands wrapped around her waist from behind as Tad pulled her back slightly to cradle against his body. "You're the beautiful one, he's handsome."

"You hanging out in my head again, love?"

"Always. In your heart too, I hope."

Missy stretched her neck and enjoyed the kisses Tad planted under her ear, a tingling sensation building in her belly. Hmm, it had been a while since they had a moment to themselves. And Missy knew exactly what she wanted to do.

Tad kissed his son's cheek gently, then took her hand. They walked quietly from the room, both too full of happiness to speak.

Out in the hall, Tad turned her in his arms and returned to kissing her. He kissed her cheeks, her neck, her eyes. She drank in the love pouring off him and simply enjoyed.

He brushed her ear with his lips. "You want to come with me? I have a surprise for you." Surprises were good. She yawned and he chuckled. "Didn't you have a nap this afternoon when Jamie slept?"

She nodded. "I'm still playing catch-up. I feel much more rested now than after the first month." She kissed his nose. "You're a wonderful Daddy. I appreciate how much help you've been."

He winked. "Thanks, but right now I'm not anyone's Daddy, I'm your mate. Come on."

Down the stairs they crept. Tad poked his head into the kitchen and she was surprised to hear him speak to someone. She followed him and spotted two of the teenagers from the pack sitting at the table, eating chips and reading books. *Twilight*, go figure.

"Kelsey? Mel?" The girls looked up and giggled, wiggling their fingers. The baby monitor sat on the table before them.

Tad gave Missy's waist a squeeze where he still held her close. "They're on duty now, so you're off. If Jamie needs anything, they're in charge."

Woohoo. They'd gone out briefly a few times without Jamie in the month and half since he was born, but tonight...this was just what she'd been longing for. She should have known Tad would sense it.

Missy whipped around and planted a big wet sloppy kiss on his lips. She dragged her fingers through his hair, leaning into him hard with her body, needing to enjoy his touch everywhere. He returned the kiss for a second before pulling away. His gaze darted toward the girls in the room beside them and Missy laughed. He was so damn shy about sex.

"Not a word. Don't you dare say a single word out loud right now or I'll get you." His face was red but he winked.

Missy covered her mouth with her hand to hold in her laughter. It really was so much fun to tease Tad about being overly sensitive. When she'd managed to settle a little she turned to the girls. "You have what you need?"

They both nodded. "Tad bought us the coolest snacks," Kelsey said. "Don't worry, we'll take good care of Jamie. We know what to do if he gets hungry. Have fun." The girls giggled again and Missy took pity on Tad and pulled him down the hallway to the living room.

Now he gave her a proper kiss and the percolating interest in her belly jumped off simmer up to a boil. She was the one to pull away this time. "I doubt we're going to fool around in the living room, although that's fine with—"

"Stop it, you tease." Tad picked her up in his arms and shook his head. "No, not the living room. One surprise coming up. Close your eyes."

Missy obeyed and tried to guess where they were headed based on the faint twisting and turning sensation from Tad carrying her. Around the corner and down the stairs. She sniffed. The rich scent of chocolate hung the air.

In the basement?

"Open your eyes, love."

He'd turned the unfinished space into an oasis. Candlelight twinkled everywhere. On the floor at their feet a low table covered with a pretty cloth held a chocolate fondue and bowls filled with cut fruit and chunks of pound cake. Off in the corner a low mattress displayed the quilt he'd bought her for Christmas and an obscene number of pillows. Tad lowered her feet to the floor and she clasped her hands together, raising them to her mouth. Just looking, appreciating the time and the energy he'd devoted to making the space perfect.

"Missy, you okay?" He dipped his head and looked up into her eyes. "Tears?"

She wiped them away. "Not really, just hormones."

He pulled her to the ground with him, to sit in his lap as they faced the table of treats. "No hormones allowed tonight, just some fun and some loving. You deserve it." Her stomach grumbled and he laughed. "I bet you forgot to eat at dinner. Too busy taking care of everyone else, weren't you?"

Missy pulled a strawberry off the tray and bit into it. The burst of flavour bathed her tongue like a miniature explosion. "Oh my lord, that is so good."

He grabbed a piece of cake and dipped it in the chocolate, twirling it to catch the drips. Then he brought it forward and offered it to her. Missy let the mouth-watering experience wash over her.

Tugs at the waist of her shirt brought her back to reality. "Go ahead, keep eating. I'm hungry for something other than fruit and chocolate." Tad pulled her shirt free from her pants and slowly, one after another, slipped the buttons open. She ate a piece of kiwi dipped into the chocolate and then turned and kissed him, swirling her still sticky tongue into his mouth.

"Hmm, the best way to enjoy chocolate. Or maybe the second best way." He'd removed her blouse now, and undid the hooks of her bra with one hand. One shoulder at a

time he pushed the straps off her shoulders until the cups fell off her breasts, the bra landing in her lap. His pupils dilated as he stared, a twitch starting at the corner of his mouth. "Hell Missy, I'm dying here. Turn around for me."

Tad shifted until he sat sideways to the food table. He arranged her facing him, straddling his thighs, her torso toward him. Missy cupped her breasts and lifted the heavy globes up to him. "I love my body—"

"I love your body too." He licked her collarbone.

Missy giggled. "You turkey. I was going to say I love my body after the pregnancy. I feel all womanly and sexy and vava-voom." Complete silence filled the room and Missy reached for Tad, touching his cheek, sensing deep sorrow pouring from him. "What's wrong?"

He shook his head. "Damn it Missy, have I not told you often enough how sexy you are? How much I love you and admire you, not just your abilities but your drop-dead gorgeous body? Shit, I'm sorry."

Oh dear. She used her mate connection to send him reassurance and love, to let him know they were strong and solid. She leaned forward and made contact between their torsos. The soft-brushed cotton of his shirt rubbed her nipples and they stood even prouder. "You've shown me a million times how much you love me. That's not what I meant at all..."

He hesitated. "What did you mean?"

She touched his nose with hers. "*I like having big boobies.*"

He snorted, his relief clear. "You've always had big boobies. You've always had the most marvelous set of boobies on the planet. You're insane." They laughed together, and Missy enjoyed the giddiness of the moment.

Then he took her lips and kissed her like he always kissed her, like there was no moment past this one and it was all he wanted to be doing for the rest of his life. When they finally parted, they both gasped for air.

Tad licked his lips. "Can I play with them?" He was staring at her chest.

Oh lordy.

She nodded and watched with fascination as he picked up a strawberry, dipped it in chocolate then lifted the treat to her lips for her to take a bite. He used the tip of the fruit, where the juice and the chocolate ran together, to paint a spiraling pattern down her torso. Over the nipple of one breast, around the tender under-curve. Rich red and creamy brown stained her skin, a trickle of juice leaving a rivulet of colour behind as it descended. He popped the mushy chocolate mess into his mouth before sliding his sticky finger over her lips. When he pushed in to circle over her teeth and tongue with his fingertip she closed her lips around his knuckle, sucking all the chocolate off, watching the play of emotions over his face with delight. He did it again, this time with a juicy chunk of pineapple, leaving more markings on her fair skin.

He rose and carried her to the bed; arranging her so her head rested comfortably and she could see every move he made.

Then he licked her clean. Rasping his tongue over her skin, tracing the meandering paths down her torso. Stopping to circle her aching nipples again and again. Dropping to lave her belly button and clean away the fruit he'd crushed there. Minutes passed and still he touched and stroked, bringing his hands into play to tease and tickle and caress until she could barely breathe. He stripped her sweatpants and panties away, burying his face between her legs.

Oh sweet mercy. Every lick drove her desire higher. Each slow circle around her clit, the thorough way he explored all the folds of her body, every move he'd learned in the past months he used now, showing how much he wanted to please her. And when he slid two fingers into her core she trembled, already on the verge of orgasm.

"*You turn me on so much, Missy. Your taste, the way you tighten around me. You're so wet and tight.*" He did some little twist inside her pussy, touching the spot that pushed her over the edge. "*Yeah, that's it. Enjoy it love, come on, let it go.*"

She couldn't have stopped the avalanche if she tried. Waves of pleasure rolled over her as he continued to pump his fingers, continued to use his tongue and teeth intimately until she had to grab his head and still him.

"No more, it's too much."

Tad kissed her belly then rose from the mattress to tower over her. He yanked his T-shirt from his body, popped the button on his jeans. She eyed the trail of hair disappearing into his pants and she was suddenly very, very hungry. "Come here."

His zipper rasped loudly in the quiet of the room. The flickering candlelight was more than enough to illuminate the rigid length of his cock as it escaped the confines of his jeans. "Tonight is about you, sweetheart."

Missy leaned up on an elbow, her mouth watering. "This *is* about me. I want some more chocolate."

His eyes widened as she rolled and crawled toward him, stalking him. It was so much fun to play together again. She swung him down to the edge of the mattress, tugging his jeans. "Take them off while I get what I need."

Tad kissed her cheek. "I like when you get bossy."

She wiggled her brows and turned away. He wasn't going to know what hit him.

Chapter Two

Her ass wiggled from side to side as she paced slowly back to the snack table. Mouthwatering. Her taste still on his tongue, Tad imagined all the things he wanted to do to her pretty, smooth butt. How sweet it would be to bite, to nibble a line along the ticklish bit where her leg and the soft curve met.

He was still daydreaming when she returned, a plate covered with chocolate balanced on her hand. She raised a brow.

"I told you to strip."

Tad grinned and obeyed "What are you planning in that devious mind of yours?"

She shouldered his knees apart and crept between them, one hand reaching out to steady his erection. "Lollipop."

Oh hell, yeah. Tad watched with fascination as Missy leaned closer and licked the slit of his cock, her pink tongue teasing and twisting around the crown. She smiled up at him and surrounded him with her wet mouth and he fought to keep from thrusting. She suckled a few times then pulled off with a pop, only to return a second later with a fingertip of chocolate sauce.

"You're going to kill me, Missy."

"Hmm...chocolate Tootsie Pops." She coated him, the entire head disappearing from sight under a warm layer of dark chocolate.

She proceeded to lick him clean.

Tad collapsed back onto the mattress and clutched the covers, holding his hips down as she worked over his shaft. Nibbles and licks, small pulses of her lips. Everything he'd done to her earlier, every tease, every touch, now returned—more than enough to drive him mad.

Around them swirled the other bond they shared—their thoughts, their emotions—all their love for each other. Physically connecting was one thing, but their relationship was so much deeper.

Tad stilled her, threading his fingers through her hair and pulling her off his aching cock. He needed to be inside her, with their minds and bodies linked. Missy smiled sweetly and crawled next to him, licking one small spot of chocolate from the corner of her lips before she turned. She lowered herself on her elbows, pressing her hips up into the air.

Tad swallowed hard as she glanced over her shoulder and blew him a kiss. "You want me? I'm yours."

Hot damn.

Tad stroked a hand over the soft skin of her ass as he slipped his cock between her legs and pumped slowly, enjoying the friction of her soft warm thighs. Heat from her core stroked him, but he kept up the slow pace, driving them both mad.

Then Missy opened her legs and tilted her hips. His cock nudged her opening.

"Please, Tad, now."

He buried himself in her pussy. One thrust. Deep. Hard.

They both groaned with the pleasure of it. Her heat surrounded him, squeezed him tight. Tad dragged back slowly, enjoying the way they fit together so right. Then he held her hips tight and thrust again, massaging the rounds of her cheeks as his groin connected with her ass.

"Oh yeah...harder. Oh...again. Yes, like that." Missy gave a little gasp and sank her shoulders lower.

They rocked the mattress with each thrust. She pressed her ass back to help him, slamming their thighs together. The sounds and scents in the room grew thicker, louder, and it was all Tad could do to not howl his joy into the air.

A tight, burning need scratched up his spine and he held on to his control for dear life. He leaned forward over her, reaching one hand around to find her clit, rolling the tight nub of flesh between his fingers until she gasped.

"Just a little more. Oh lordy, Tad, yes..."

Another thrust, and again and she shouted, her pussy clutching him rhythmically and he let loose, let his seed and desire explode into her depths as they rocked together in their lovemaking.

Somehow they ended up on their sides, still joined. Tad had no memory of changing position after reaching his climax, but Missy was warm and sweet smelling in his arms and he sighed with satisfaction.

She giggled.

"What?"

"You're holding my breast again."

So he was. The tight nipple was so much fun to play with, he found his thumb brushing past it again and again. "I told you I love them."

"Robyn finds breastfeeding makes hers too sensitive for Keil to touch, so—"

"Missy!" Tad released her, skittering away. He didn't want to think about Robyn right now. Certainly not her—he shook his head to knock the images away.

Missy rolled to her back and laughed up at him, her big blue eyes twinkling. "Oops, sorry, I should know better. I forgot your sister never has sex. Your niece was brought by the stork."

Fine, so it was a little silly, but still... "That's right. They found her under a cabbage leaf." They smiled at each other and Missy stroked her hand down his cheek.

"I love you so much. Thanks for the New Year's date."

Tad nodded, then noticed the time. Perfect. He leaned forward to whisper against her lips, "Three...two...one." Then he kissed her as sweetly as he could, sharing his heart and his love. "*Happy New Year. May it be the first of many we share.*"

*

Missy loved the way he cared for her so gently, so completely. He really was everything she needed in a mate. There was only one thing that could make this evening better. "Can we go for a run?"

"Of course." Tad lifted her to her feet and patted her butt lightly. They walked toward the stairs hand in hand.

Missy stopped to sneak another chocolate dipped strawberry. "I am so eating the rest of this when we get back." She took the first step up toward the kitchen and Tad tugged her to a halt.

"You're not walking through the house like that. I mean, *I'm* not walking through the house like this." He shifted, stretching out and shaking his torso. His pale fur shone in the candlelight.

She laughed out loud. Tad and his blushing human ways—would he ever outgrow them? She knelt and tugged on the scruff of his neck. "You are such a goof. So we're naked, what's wrong with that?"

"*Nope. You can prance around in front of the girls if you want. I'll act as escort,*" and he bounded up the stairs ahead of her.

She giggled the whole way up the stairs and out of the house.

Missy closed the door and shivered for a moment in the icy cold Alaskan night. She walked the length of the porch to lean on the railing and look up into the star-filled sky. Beautiful.

Tad nudged her shins. "*Come on, love.*"

She shifted, taking her place at his side, and everything in her world was right.

A howl rose into the air from the house next door—Keil declaring a run. Tad and Missy answered him, others of the pack responding from farther away. One last cry broke the stillness as Robyn gave the final call.

They ran together into the night.

Tad & Missy's story is told in *Wolf Flight*:

<http://www.mybookstoreandmore.com/shop/product.da/wolf-flight>

Keil and Robyn, the hero and heroine of *First Howl*, are found in *Wolf Signs*:

<http://www.mybookstoreandmore.com/shop/product.da/wolf-signs>

Viv's website: <http://vivianarend.com/> and her Samhain author page:

<http://samhainpublishing.com/authors/vivian-arend>

About the Author

Vivian was playing hooky the day they taught about the importance of getting a "real" job; she was hiding out at the local library rereading everything for the fifth time. Since then she's become a Jack-of-all-trades with a job experience list only slightly smaller than the average phone book.

She's hiked, biked, canoed, kayaked and camped throughout Canada, Europe, Great Britain and the States, including Hawaii and Alaska. All these adventures have now become settings for her overactive muse to wander.

Vivian lives in Western Canada with her longtime sweetie, two wonderful kids and a dog that looks like a stuffed toy.

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