



A Counselor Among Wolves

Liv Olteano

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Five dead leaders, their bodies arranged in a pentagram. Treason, lies, and backstabbing. A make-believe affair that turns into a real mating.

Timothy Sands is a PBI counselor, half-fey, half-elf, with a secret crush on Herman Weiss, PBI director. As a new chapter is added to the Leader Murders, it is Weiss's responsibility to investigate what seems an impossible-to-solve case. The other problem? Weiss is suffering from rages, and his only salvation lies in Tim's emotional-grid-balancing skills. They only have to pretend to be a couple for Tim to use his talents, and he owes Weiss a big favor. Piece of cake, right?

The fey might be involved in the Leader Murders. Someone on the Council might be their ally, and another prominent PBI figure looks more and more suspicious as they investigate. The stakes are upped when Timothy's father, the Fey King, threatens to leave the Council destitute if they don't hand Timothy over to him. Weiss's brilliant solution? Mating Timothy and forcing the Council into protecting him.

There's only one small hitch in that plan: instead of protecting one, the Council might decide to get rid of two.

A Counselor Among Wolves Details

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Author : Liv Olteano

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From Reader Review A Counselor Among Wolves for online ebook

Curtis says

Five leaders have been murdered and the circumstances surrounding their deaths are most peculiar. Herman Weiss, PBI director, is responsible for trying to solve the case, with essentially no real leads. On top of that, he's feeling rages, something that could put him in grave danger himself. He seeks help from Timothy Sands, a half-fey, half-elf PBI counselor, whose emotional-grid balancing abilities can keep the rages in check. But in order to make that work, the two have to pretend to be a couple. That's easy enough for Weiss, but a bit more challenging for Tim who has had a crush on the straight PBI director for some time. Can Tim help Weiss avoid his rages long enough to solve the case? Can they figure out what's causing the rages and make them stop? And when Tim's father, the Fey King, shows up and threatens the Council unless they hand Tim over to him, will Weiss be able to return the favor and save Tim?

I really, really enjoyed this story. There are so many complex layers to the plot, but it's easy to read and follow throughout. The characters are interesting and dynamic, and the writing is incredibly descriptive and engaging. This is the first book I've read by Liv Olteano, but I definitely want to seek out more by this author. The combination of the paranormal, fantasy, and romantic elements was done so well that I'm glad I picked this one up and gave it a chance.

While this is the second book in a series, one doesn't need to read the first book to understand what's going on here. I haven't read the first book and I had no problems at all. Reading the first one is probably helpful, though, and I definitely plan to go back and read it when I get a chance.

Lilia Ford says

I liked this for the same reasons I really enjoyed Book one. It's a shifter/paranormal police story that also provides a nuanced, honest look at some of the issues surrounding actual differences in power (as opposed to consensual power exchange). It's an uncomfortable truth that for some of us, real power differences can be very erotic--hence the popularity of Alpha males and a gazillion books in this and related genres. But with any real differential comes the possibility of abuse, coercion, intimidation and the like.

One of the great values of Olteano's books is how she explores the different sides of the question--using the Alpha male trope to depict a kind of hormone based domination that is both literally impossible for the sub to throw off, and is also socially sanctioned by the paranormal government. While it is obvious that the society requires more safeguards to protect vulnerable people, Olteano takes the unusual step of having the main couple debate the issues involved in a way that felt organic and even-handed. Tim the narrator and an advocate for new regulations, is honest about how much he likes his lover, Weiss' domineering tendencies, while Weiss points out the limitations of trying to use legal regulations as a substitute for what could/should be a healthy struggle between the two of them over the limits of his power.

I respected that the author didn't simply dismiss unequal power relations as if they don't exist--they obviously do--or assume that no one could knowingly be drawn to or satisfied by them despite the risks they involve, which feels condescending and dangerously normative to me. At any rate, it's refreshing to see a talented author tackle some of the questions involved in the midst of a fast-moving suspense plot, full of murders and paranormal procedural techniques, not to mention some very hot sex.

Big Pet Peeve directed at Dreamspinner's editors: both this book and the first consistently misuse the subjunctive in second and third conditional clauses i.e. "If I would have gone to the store, I would have bought milk," instead of "If I had gone to the store, I would have bought milk." I'm pretty lax about grammar, especially in highly inflected or first-person narration, but the narrator here is a Fey prince and a trained therapist not a teenager so the mistake just grates.

Carly says

Herman Weiss is a self-centered, manipulative jerk. His last minute "I've wanted you all along" confession isn't nearly enough to make up for his deplorable treatment of Timothy, who has been inexplicably in love with him for the past 5 years and is willing to sacrifice everything on Herman's behalf.

315 says

DNF 52%

Took the two tools of book #1 and gave them a book just to make them even worse and less likable.

Feliz says

Just as great as the first one... loved Tim, but wow, Weiss is a total asshole. Making me like such a selfish, scheming, obnoxious prick is no mean feat, so kudos. Also, the worldbuilding was intriguing and I loved the quirky side characters and the smart loopholes left open in the plot... that's how I like my appetite whetted for a sequel.

Elaine White says

Book – A Counselor Among Wolves (Leader Murders #2)

Author – Liv Olteano

Star rating - ★★★★★

No. of Pages – 230

Cover – Moody and Gorgeous!

POV – 1st person, one character POV

Would I read it again – Yes.

Genre – LGBT, Paranormal, Crime, Romance

**** I WAS GIVEN THIS BOOK, BY THE AUTHOR, IN RETURN FOR AN HONEST REVIEW ****

Reviewed for Divine Magazine

I'll admit, I was a little disappointed that this wasn't about Rick and Travis again, but I was happy to see that Weiss and Tim were just as interesting. What a great way to continue the series!

The slant away from the crimes, for just a little while, was similar to how book 1 began with the romance and slowly drifted into the crime. But, just as the previous book did, the crimes slowly eeked their way into the main storyline and had a major impact on all involved. The way the crimes changed slightly, though still connected to the Leader Murders, was intriguing and a nice change, so that we were just dealing with the same instances, crimes and investigation of the first book. It was refreshing, for a serial killer series to take that risk and change things up.

Once again, I fell in love with both characters. I'd always been interested in Tim, since the previous book brought him into Travis and Rick's storyline, but to get to delve deeper into his story was great. To learn what really happened between him and Travis, why and the consequences was very insightful. It was also really great to see a little vindication for Weiss, who got a really raw deal in book one.

Though I didn't like the way Rick dealt with Weiss in this story, it really is understandable and true to his character. It was so great to see him and Travis together, in a much quieter, more loving session.

At the same time, the chemistry, the push and pull and the overall atmosphere when Weiss and Tim were together was brilliant. I really felt the constant, raw sexual tension, then the slow built to emotional connections. What was even better was to see how Alf took it all and how he accepted Tim into the family fold.

I really liked getting a closer glimpse into the werewolf and fey worlds. Book 1 introduced us to the entire supernatural world of PBI, but it mainly focused on the lycans, as that was what Travis and, eventually, Rick, were. So it was nice to learn more about the other species, the ways they differed and how that effected those around them.

Yes, on the down side, there were still missing words, grammar issues and a few repeated phrases (smacking of lips, nape instead of neck and -slash- words) but there were negligible. I could completely ignore them to get totally engrossed in the story.

From the way the couple were thrown together, for the reasons why, and the emotional chaos as they worked things out between them, there was never a moment I was willing to put this down to do anything else. The exploration of their pasts, the revelation of their secrets and the eventual progress of their relationship with each other kept me hooked from page one to the end.

~

Overall, it was a brilliant follow up to the previous book and gave enough of a build up that I just know I'm going to enjoy Bert's story in book 3 just as much.

An action packed story full of sexual tension, danger and uncertainty. From beginning to end, it was a rollercoaster ride of epic proportions.

~

Favourite Quotes

“Looking on the bright side, I'd get to spend a lot of time with my crush. He was probably annoying, had smelly morning breath, and farted while he slept. After a week or two of that, I'd finally get over him.”

““We cool?”

He snorted. “Dunno about you, but I'm anything but cool. I'm not going to kill you yet, if that's what you're asking. Might change my mind by lunch, though.”

“There's that to look forward to, then,” I commented.

“You look like a tiny, breakable thing, but you're a pretty resilient bastard, aren't you?”

I smiled. “I did fight my way out of Fey Court, Weiss. And it wasn't a poetry competition.””

“I was that painfully lonely, the promise of his touch felt like salvation regardless of the reasons or end games. I gripped the shirt on his arms and bunched the fabric in my fists, pulling him even closer. It would hurt – somewhere down the road, this moment of mindless need would gut me. But at least I'd have the glorious memory of how all-consuming it was, for that one stupid second.”

“I wanted to protest but figured supposedly dead bodies shouldn't be too picky about their means of transportation.”

JR says

Five leaders have been murdered. Herman Weiss is a big bad Alpha, who is the guardian of the Council. He is suffering from rages, that could lead to his execution, but he has to solve the murders and stay alive for his son. He is not above trickery if it will achieve that goal.

What do you do when the wolf you have been madly in love with proposes a fake relationship? The relationship will keep the Alpha from being executed for being out of control. If you are Tim Sands, half fey, half elf, a PBI counselor, you say "yes" even though you know you are in for a world of hurt. In spite of the consequences, Tim can't say "no" to the man he has loved for 5 years.

Wow, do I love this series! I thought the first book was fantastic, but this one really had me losing sleep. I have a soft spot for those big bad men with soft centers and their sarcastic, witty counterparts. I certainly hope there is more to this series, or this will be one sad, sad reader.

M'rella says

[

I refuse to believe Amanda is dead. Too good of a character to waste. If that's not reason enough - show me the body! (hide spoiler)]

Jaime says

4 Stars

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(,~' (,~'*Review Copy provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange for an honest review.

Reviewed by Jaime from Alpha Book Club

~RMG says

2.5 stars - The characters weren't that likeable (mainly Weiss, Tim wasn't too bad), which made it hard for me to really enjoy the story. They had their merits though, and I did like the chemistry between Tim and Weiss.

K says

The 2nd book in the Leader Murders series focuses on the head of the PBI, the alpha werewolf Weisz and Tim Sands, the half fey half elf psychologist and emotion reader. As Weiss' mate faces execution he becomes dangerously out of control and seek's Sand's help to control his emotions.. best done by becoming mates themselves.

This was an interesting concept but it got bogged down in the number of potential bad guys and there was no resolution in the story. I don't believe Amanda is dead, we don't really know what the Fey King is up to and I don't trust Mrs Stein.

Weiss is also quite hard to like.. he's abusive, arrogant and violent but it-s all excused as his alpha status...

I might read the next book to find some resolution to the story but I am not in any hurry for it to appear on my kindle

Beth says

Dang, I was worried about liking these characters and I had every right to be. I had a hard time getting through this book. I was really hoping they would be redeemed. Tim I did start to like a bit better and but Weiss just ticked me off. He was un-apologetically "alpha" but I thought in this case it was bordering on abuse. There was never a lot of remorse for the way he conducted his relationship with Amanda or in depth explanation about what had happened. Was Amanda crazy? Were they both abusive? Did Weiss lead her on? Was he sorry? After reading I just decided he was a manipulative dick only looking out for himself and his end game.

Anyway, I will look for the coming books because I do like the world and maybe a fae and Weiss' beta (can't remember his name) will be next while he is a mole.

ItsAboutTheBook says

Review can be read at It's About The Book

Herman Weiss may be going crazy and may be destined for execution, but Tim Sands is going to save him. Tim doesn't really have a choice. Herman has made it clear this isn't up for debate. Tim will be helping. Given that Tim has been mostly in love with Herman for years, he's okay with that. Tim is more concerned he'll be posing as Herman's boyfriend. It's the only way Tim can legally use his fey powers on Herman. Tim agrees to the ruse to keep Herman alive. It's also keeping Herman's son alive and his pack together. A mass murder of leaders complicates things. Tim and Herman have to investigate. The murder was grisly, ritualistic, and contains no usable clues. Tim has to help solve the crime, prevent Herman from going into a rage, and convince everyone they're in a real relationship. It's not easy, especially considering Tim really wants to be in that relationship with Herman despite the fact it all appears to be for the sake of convenience and the advancement of Herman's own agenda. When Tim's father shows up things only get worse. Tim now needs his relationship with Herman to save his own life. Unfortunately, to save both their lives Tim has to risk not only his life but his heart on a guy who doesn't trust anyone and has a track record of using people.

I think it's important to read this book after reading the first in the series, A Tooth for a Fang. Herman's predicament starts there. You'd also miss a lot of nuance. In both books a character got out of a bad relationship and turned around and stepped right into a new relationship with the exact same set up. Herman's problems were related to the fact he mated Amanda with the goal of having an heir and securing his place as pack Alpha. Amanda's wishes weren't important. Herman then does the exact same thing with Tim. Okay, not the heir part. He's got an heir, but he's got to keep himself alive and in control of his pack. Herman is not a nice guy, yet I found myself feeling sorry for him. His mating with Amanda was a disaster partly of his own making, but he was still betrayed and had all the emotional fallout to go with the betrayal. Herman now has to throw caution to the wind and mate again to save his life and by extension the life of his son. Interestingly, we get all this from Tim's first person perspective.

This book raised an interesting question and didn't answer it. Amanda had a horrible mating with Herman. It wasn't all fun and games for Herman, but at the very least he was the one in control of the situation. Rick knew how bad the mating was for Amanda. Rick had realistic and valid fears for Tim entering a mating with Herman. However; Tim and Herman are happy with their situation. How far do you let a friend go into what could be a horrible mistake? How many warnings do you give? How can you trust people to know what's best for themselves? Tim and Herman appear to be working out wonderfully as a couple.

I'm really enjoying these mysteries. Who is the driving force behind the leader murders and who committed the particular murders in this story? As we learn more we learn new things we don't know. I liked the concept of no clues as a clue. We know one side was completely clueless they were at war. We know very little of Tim's father's motivations. He may be behind the leader murders, he may not be. We just don't know. We don't even have confirmation of the possible traitor on the council, we just think we know who that is. Tim's powers give us a tantalizing hint of possibilities for motivations, but ultimately we're kind of where we started. There are no official suspects for the murders.

I liked this book more than the previous one. I had very mixed feelings regarding A Tooth for a Fang. I felt this book was executed better, and I liked the layers it added to the overall story as well as the contrast of an alpha stepping into a possibly scary and dangerous relationship just like the previous one, whereas before we had a more submissive partner in the role of learning to trust again.

Tam says

I was torn on this. I liked the plot with the murders, I liked Tim a lot, but not Weiss. Everything he did was cold and calculated to maintain power. The way he treated his wife knowing full well what he was doing to her, the control he had over his child and the way he used Timothy to get what he wanted. He treated Tim like shit and only when Timothy pushed back would he say or do something to placate him and get him back in line, then he'd go right back to the same behaviour. I got the impression Timothy could have been any willing body that would do what he wanted in order to make sure he didn't lose his position. Man, woman, whatever. I really felt like any old hole would do. Sure he liked Timothy okay, but I never got the feeling he cared all that much.

So this one just didn't work. I had zero sympathy for Weiss and wanted to tell Timothy to run and that he could do way better than a controlling dick who has one thing in mind, keeping his powerful position at all costs. He may have said he loved you but... I don't really believe it. There you have it.

I know people loved it but I just hated Weiss. *shrug*

Morgan Skye says

Timothy has had a thing for Weiss for a long time. In fact his infatuation with Travis was because of the similarity to Weiss.

Weiss had a male lover once before, but it ended badly. Now he's stuck in a loveless mating that is about to finally be over, but he has a mess to clean up before he can be happy.

Someone is using magic to make Weiss unstable and it is up to Tim to ground him and keep him alive long enough to solve the mystery and the murders.

In a huge bout of drama our two erstwhile lovers manage to save the day and find love.

**

I really wanted to love this book. I adored book one and was so excited for this to come out.

I never liked Weiss. Sure I understood him better, but he just kept feeling like a big ol' jerk and he was never very nice to Tim.

Tim who should have been so strong ends up being a door mat and even though he survives all the trials by fire, I never felt like he was appreciated. At all.

The mystery/drama eclipsed the love story for me and took the attention away from what felt like a mediocre love affair at best.

I just never bonded with the couple as a couple and as a result found this book to be lacking.

The writing was fine as was the editing, and if you are looking for drama this is a good book. But if you want a sweet love story I'd keep looking.

2.75 of 5 stars
