

A Walk Around the Lake, Chapter 6

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The morning dawned, bright and sunny. They met for breakfast, as was their habit now. They chatted about the day ahead of them, and she was looking forward to the drive to Jasper. He was looking forward to the trip as well, but more for the fact that he would be in such close quarters with her, in the SUV. He was falling in love with her. His feelings were growing by leaps and bounds, and the thought of them, being together tonight in a cabin in Jasper caused his body to react in a way that he hadn't felt in many years. He hoped she was perhaps, maybe feeling the same way. They drove into Banff, to drop his rented vehicle off at her friend's house. Her friends were concerned about her, and when the girls went off to look at the house, he found himself being questioned as to his intentions. He was up front about his feelings for her, with her friend, and told the other man he had no intention of hurting her. He loved her. The girls came back and there were goodbyes said, and hugs, and reassurances that she would be okay. They got into her SUV and started off, stopping for gas and coffee. The drive west down the number one highway was spent in companionable silence. As they got to the junction of highway 93 north, she broke the silence. "My friends are concerned." She told him gently. "They love you." He explained. "They think I'm still mourning Michael." She said sadly. "You are." He said softly. "I have seen it, the veil fall over your lovely face, as surely as if Michael had passed yesterday." "I miss him." She said in her own defence. They pulled over at a roadside stop, to take pictures of a lake, calm and still, with the mountains reflected beautifully in the perfect stillness of the water. He watched her, and his heart skipped a beat. He loved her. He knew it, surely as the sun rose in the east. He thought of the evening and night ahead of them. Dare he hope that she share his feelings? Dare he hope that she love him too? Dare he hope. . .? They continued on the road trip, to be stopped by a herd of elk, causing quite a traffic jam on the highway. She muttered at the foolishness of people getting out of their cars to take pictures, and enticing the majestic creatures with tidbits of food. It was illegal to feed animals in the national parks, she explained to him, teaching the animals to become dependant on humans for food, instead of foraging for themselves does a disservice to the animal. "You are passionate about this part of your country, aren't you?", he asked her. "I love the majesty of the mountains. The beauty and the strength. It's hard to explain." "I think I understand, and having you to show it to me, I am honored." He smiled at her, and they waited for the

elk to clear the highway. They pulled into Jasper, and found the resort that they would be staying at and checked in and drove to the cabin that had been reserved for them. He watched her get out of the vehicle, and stretch. He got the suitcases out of the back and unloaded their camera equipment and laptops. He needed the physical work because his body was betraying his desire for this woman. She too, had butterflies, and wondered what this time together would bring them. She offered to help, but he declined, so she walked over to the river bank, only a few feet from the veranda of their cabin, and sat in a chair that had been placed there. She was in love with this man. She thought that Michael would approve of her choice.