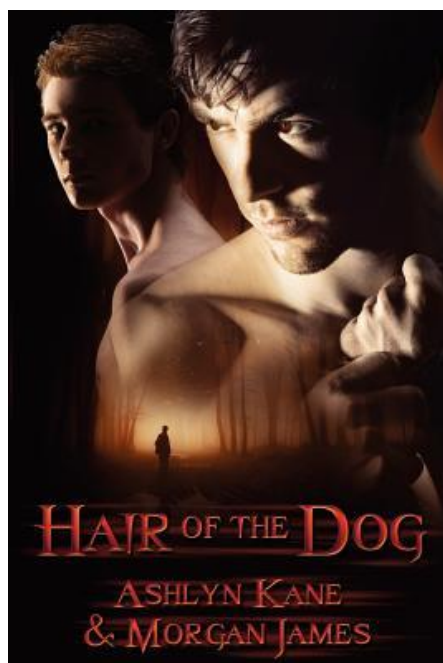




Hair of the Dog

Ashlyn Kane , Morgan James

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It's nine o'clock the morning after his father's funeral, and Ezra Jones already knows it's going to be a bad day. He wakes up hungover, sore, and covered in blood. Then it gets worse: the handsome and compelling Callum Dawson shows up on his doorstep claiming Ezra's been turned into a werewolf. Ezra wants to be skeptical, but the evidence is hard to ignore.

Ezra doesn't have a lot of time to get used to the rules Alpha Callum imposes—or the way his body responds to Callum's dominance—as he's busily working for the CDC to help uncover the origins of a lycan epidemic. When the sexual tension finally breaks, Ezra barely has time to enjoy it, because a new danger threatens. Someone wants Ezra for their own unscrupulous purposes and will do anything to get him.

Hair of the Dog Details

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From Reader Review Hair of the Dog for online ebook

Sarah says

I had to comment on this - One thing that tossed me out of the story was when one of the main characters, in describing the shifting of a human to wolf, says the knees flip backwards. To the author: please at least do research on wolf/dog anatomy before stating something like that! Wolves do indeed have a knee joint that bends in the same direction as a human. The 'backwards knee' that you are talking about is actually the *ankle* joint. The flipping of the knees is also mentioned during the first 'shift'... really threw me out of the story.

As for the rest, basically starts out paranormal, heavy on the sniffing and pheromones. Big focus on intro to wolf society, light on the actual shifting. The storytelling which felt somewhat disconnected... Several times you read about events after they took place and were just told what happened. Some plot lines were barely touched (the whole father death thing, securing the estate etc). But, all in all, its a decent read. Not a big fan of mysteries but this kept my interest. Well fleshed out characters and a well planned ending.

Nikki says

In the interests of full disclosure, I got Hair of the Dog from netgalley to review... It's a quick read, with both plot and intense sexual tension between the main characters, which I thought was very well handled. Often romance can swallow up the mystery aspect of a story, or vice versa, but I felt this was well-balanced.

I was also impressed by the handling of the power imbalance -- Callum worries about manipulating Ezra, gives him the ability to resist him, resists the temptation to go all caveman (cavewolf? wolfman?) on his ass... It endeared Callum to me. Ezra, too: his submission, and his lack of shame about it, combined with the fact that he was still a strong character, still able to take care of himself, and eager to ask questions and find out about the world he finds himself landed in. Actually, I liked a lot of the characters: the lycanthrope community was well built up, and the world felt real because of it.

The villain was just a little bit (a lot) obvious, though that's partially from me reading other people's reviews. Unsubtle names, too. Overall, I enjoyed it, though, and the ending made me smile.

Christy says

Since the authors of 'Hair of the Dog', Ashlyn Kane and Morgan James, may not be familiar with me as a reviewer, I'm going to let them in on a well known fact for anyone who reads my reviews. I freaking love shifters. Shifters of all kinds, although wolves and large cats hold a special place in my heart, but I can vouch for a bunny shifter I met and lost my heart to once. The more original the storyline, the more invested I am, though I still love the "normal" lore. With all of this said, let me be the first to tell you, I really liked this book. The writing is great, the characters are complex, unique, and interesting, and, well, the sex is intense. What more could a girl ask for who likes her men to be a little hairy and toothy?

"'You can't be serious.' Could he? 'I was bitten by an escaped convict werewolf? That's the line you're going with? Really?'"

'No. He was a psychiatric patient. Sort of. And we prefer lycanthrope, or lycan.'
Oh, so it was a crazy escaped were - sorry lycanthrope. That...really didn't make Ezra feel better. 'Listen, buddy,' he began, 'you need to lay off the HBO.'"

Thanks guys, I was happily reading along and then I snorted water out of my nose. People always have varying responses to discovering they've been turned into a lycan, and I never get tired of hearing them. The authors have built a very interesting world with some factions of the government and the CDC being aware of lycans. The CDC Center for Lupine Research is where Ezra ends up with Callum Dawson, PhD, and alpha lycan, for Callum to test Ezra's blood. It appears that the escaped lycan who bit Ezra carries a disease they've named ARD which messes with hormone levels and causes infected lycans to go violently crazy. This means that Ezra has to return to Callum's pack to stay for the next three weeks until Ezra changes again so he can be monitored. Good for Ezra since he'll be around other lycans and can learn. Bad for Callum as he's responding in ways he doesn't want to, because Ezra is his fantasy come to life and apparently Callum's wolf thinks so too.

The next few days have Ezra trying to settle into pack life while dealing with some changes his body is undergoing. Ezra is also not too thrilled to discover he is one of the many beta members of the pack and is, apparently, a very natural submissive. Ezra volunteers to help Callum at the lab as his unofficial research assistant, mainly to give Ezra something to do as he's going stir crazy. Callum needs someone to research missing persons and Jane/John Does to see if any of them might be ARD victims not known about yet. This also gives Callum the opportunity to help train Ezra in things most born lycans learn during puberty, i.e., to control his responses to scents and to learn to not always immediately follow every suggestion from a lycan with alpha strength. Luckily for Ezra he also gets "Myth Debunking 101" and it was interesting to see the lore these authors built this world upon.

This was a fascinating shifter book. The intrigue and mystery, so to speak, surrounding the "disease" ARD was well done and kept me interested mainly due to not being predictable and there was good action adventure. The world building was very unique within this genre and definitely held my attention. Last, but not least, the love story was extremely satisfying. So, in a nutshell, I really enjoyed it and was significantly impressed with both authors.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

Cole Riann says

3.5 stars

Enjoyable shifter romance with a bit of mystery and danger. Pretty par for the course, but generally well written. I liked the characters, enjoyed the few diverging details from popular shifter lore and biology, and had a good time reading. Not outstanding, but a good read.

Mantastic says

I was excited about this release from the first time I heard about it. It promised an original shifter concept and it certainly delivered on that front. I liked the characters, both main and supporting. I enjoyed the plot direction and pace of events; there was instant attraction and leaking pheromones, but there was a nice build

up before anything too physical happened between them. And involving the new wolf, Ezra, in the community and CDC investigation gave the story more depth while everyone waited for him to shift for the first time.

The bad guy was well hidden. So much so that it isn't until the very, very end that it is even clear what his motivation was. There was a long while when I didn't have any idea who it could have been. I love when that happens because I don't want the mystery to be too easy. But was it by design? Even knowing the end and thinking back, I'm not sure I can pick out any clues I could/should have picked up on. We learn relatively early on that the "experiments" are expendable weapons, presumably against anyone opposing the baddy, but once the baddy is revealed I was momentarily disappointed when old-fashioned bigotry and prejudice appeared to be the cause. Luckily, it wasn't the sole reasoning, as more information in the last few paragraphs paint a much larger scheme.

I don't usually mention technical aspects in my reviews because I am certainly no expert, but I find 2 points relevant in this case. They are:

The first point being tangents. Every story starts with basic, somewhat dry facts that grow into something more exciting by way of color commentary. There were quite a few times in this story that the color commentary driving the action and inner dialogue would enhance the facts but would wind itself into circles and on in to left field somewhere before making it's way back to the topic at hand. As most books have instances of this happening at some time or another, I almost didn't mention it here. The only reason I do is because this point is more obvious in combination with my next point.

The word "had." As much as I liked the concept of the story, the characters of the story, and the events of the story, I kept getting sidetracked, setting the book aside. After thinking it over I have decided I am not a fan of the past tense/passive style this story is written in. So much happened off-page, earlier, just outside of "now" so the characters needed to "catch us up." There was no sense of urgency in this high-pressured situation because everyone is obviously fine if they were all sitting around talking/thinking about what just happened. Two potentially awesome, non-typical FBI agents appeared watered down, almost like they were waiting for the answers to just fall in their laps. A quick word search shows that the word "had/hadn't" shows up over 1,000 times in 231 e-book pages, not counting he'd/she'd/they'd/you'd/we'd variations that could have been either "he had" or "he would" depending on the context. The phrase "had been" was used 150 times alone. The following example is a complete paragraph, which may or may not be technically correct, but strikes me weird.

Though [baddy jr.] wasn't able to move B-H30-5 until the Boss had arrived and told him to cooperate, he had fitted him with handcuffs and promised that a fight would be had soon. B-H30-5 hadn't listened, of course, but when the Boss arrived, he had submitted to being moved easily enough.

A quick word search of a few stories of similar length that I rated 5 stars has the "had" count falling between 100-200. While this may mean very little to anyone else's reading enjoyment, it tells me that I prefer to be right next to my characters ... when they know, I know.

Valentina Heart says

I honestly don't know what to say about this book or how to rate it. I loved the beginning and both guys, the whole idea for the story was very nice too. I also thought the mystery part was done nicely. But all of it together? I read it but somehow dragged through it. At parts it would just sparkle and then dull again and just leave me going through the motions. Sorry, can't explain it better than that.

The romance part was a bit strange, not really finalized and a lot of it was wasted on all the hormone talk (way too much of that btw.) and the hot sex was sort of hinted at but ultimately fell short. I'm not really disappointed because I had no expectations when I started reading this, but I am sort of confused and still don't know what to think about this story. A better rating would be 3.5 stars but can't really up it to 4 although that was my initial impression.

Chris says

Good paranormal m/m romance about a guy who wakes up covered in blood the morning after his father's funeral and quickly learns (from the mysterious men waiting outside his door) that he was bitten by a werewolf. It was an interesting storyline, but the timeline was too murky for my pattern-matching brain, leading the story to feel jumpy.

Kristy Maitz says

I have to say the book is totally boring. Main character did not pull me in. Really disappointing.

April says

(Originally posted @ CSI:Librarian.)

Over all, the writing was pretty solid and I never felt like I was reading something by two authors, which is always cool. That said, I felt severely let down by the book as a whole, particularly in terms of character development, plot, pacing, and organization. I wanted to like what happened just as I wanted to enjoy Ezra becoming comfortable being a werewolf, but I didn't like the sort of werewolf he was fated to be or that the plot was sort of all over the place and really didn't come together all that well.

As werewolves/lycans/etc, none of the pack members were really well-developed and most of them were irritating due to being defined by one to two characteristics. I spent the whole book wishing all of them would go away so that there could have been some more Gay Romance in my Gay Romance. Sadly, the first 100 pages of the book offer very little. I had a very hard time caring about Callum and Ezra's sudden yet inevitable relationship. I liked both characters individually as well as their situation and the humor in their point of views, but I felt like the book really went out of its way to say that what was going on between them initially had no genuine romantic vibe so much as werewolf pheromones that they both had little control over there pheromones due to lack of experience on Ezra's part and an inability to want to reign himself in on Callum's.

While I was waiting for them to make some progress, Ezra had awkward scenes with werewolf woman that nearly made me abandon the book. Then he went out and found someone else to sleep with, which really didn't help matters. Then Callum explained to him what was going on and they just sort of decided to see what happens sometime after the Full Moon once Ezra has come to terms with what he is. But as soon as the Full Moon hit and after an awkward human to wolf transition, they go at it like crazed teenagers without any further adieu or really any sort of conversation.

The book got somewhat back on track somewhat once the werewolves were finally in a relationship although

I didn't really get why they'd developed one and by then I wasn't sure what the actual plot was supposed to be either. Then another plotline showed up and while I didn't mind the kidnapping angle? By the time it was added to the mix along with a villain named Darius Maulsby,* it couldn't be more than a nice notion that couldn't serve as interesting a purpose as I would have liked. Similarly, the ending struck a fairly sweet chord for me, but not nearly as much of one as it might have had I been invested in Callum or Ezra for the bulk of the book.

Maybe more die-hard fans of Werewolf Paranormal Romances will view Pheromones Made Them Do It as a pleasant break from the Insta-Soul-Mate angle that continues to be very popular? But somehow I doubt it because at least if Callum and Ezra had been mates there would have been some engaging aspects to the brief not-courtship they had. Learning to control scents combined with copious usage of the words Alphas, alphas, and betas** to explain the dynamics between Callum and Ezra was not an adequate substitute for emotional chemistry.

In conclusion, a quick and fun read with a clever title, but not a very successful Gay Romance. There such a real rushed and uneven quality to so much of what I actually liked that I really wouldn't recommend *Hair of the Dog* to others.

* That's right. Darius Maulsby. Granted, that was apparently not his real name... But honestly it just isn't a name anyone should adopt as an alias, particularly not an evil werewolf who doesn't want to get laughed at. For one thing, a name like that belongs in a Historical Gay Werewolf Romance. For another, it is a hard name to take seriously. It's like naming an evil vampire Markus Von Plasmastein.

** I'm still not sure when one uses a Big A or a little a. Or what the actual difference would be.

Phaney says

Callum and Ezra are cute together. The progress of their relationship makes a lot of sense to me. And while I might have enjoyed some more one-on-one time once they got into things (and no, I am not referring to more sex) at least this reticence ensured that things remained subtle. Very cute indeed.

Great, well-balanced side characters, too. Those FBI agents are fun. This clearly is not one of those books that only feature shallow, stereotypical or sexist female characters.

Teeny-tiny niggles? Please don't name both the (view spoiler) and the little kid Nick. Unless there's a compelling reason.

I really enjoy this particular take on werewolf lore. It feels closer to the original and less like following the trodden romance path. (I particularly enjoy that biting people during sex is "not socially acceptable". Heh.) And people remain people.

Even the evil scientist angle seems less haphazard and instead grounded in a goal very specific to the person seeking it.

Some things are perhaps not perfectly consistent.

We never learn that Ezra got to take care of those errands that were so important after his father's wake. And why take him into company after he was told he should not go out until after his transformation?

Or the fact that on the first day – as well as at the end – Callum shows his partial wolfiness to Ezra, yet apparently changes only happen during the full moon and are whole-body experiences rather than partials. There might be explanations for these things, but those were not obvious to me while reading.

Time to go off on a tangent.

More often than not in books that feature this – when we get a POV shift to an enemy to catch us up to what the evil side is plotting – I get bored. Occasionally such scenes work for me, but those cases are few and far between.

What I would like to know is whether that's just me or if it happens to anyone else, too?

It's just that it tends to not ratchet the tension up at all for me. (If anything, my tension goes down.) I usually don't care for those people; and to be fair most of them conform to the expected stereotypes anyway. So it's rarely actually necessary to be given the information.

Here we get a bit of both. I enjoyed the prologue because it was so “other” and I liked its pace and the very canine feel to it.

The scientist however? Eh. It's appropriately gruesome and sad as things progress. But it took away my happy buzz.

And the secrecy surrounding who the big bad is felt awfully forced. I mean it is fairly obvious right away, so the persistent hiding of his name in his POV scenes comes across as silly more than anything.

The finale is great in that it takes one of the highly unlikely things romance authors like to slap us with and makes it actually work. (view spoiler) Excellently done. I completely buy it.

There is no excess mush (or really any at all) and while this story is not told in an abrasive way, no time is “wasted” dwelling on emotions. They're mostly inferred.

Towards the end the odd punctuation mark or two are missing, as are a few words here and there. Not a big distraction but definitely noticeable.

So this did not give me the full extent of the happy fuzzies I am craving right now; although the ending came pretty close to that. <3

All in all it was a great story.

... It just figures my opinion on this would be in the minority again.

Nikyta *Miss Forgetful* says

In addition to the great cover, this book was fun and gave a slightly different and unique take on werewolves which made it very much enjoyable to me.

Ezra is having a rough life lately. His father just died, he's lost his job and he's just been unknowingly made into a werewolf by a crazy, disease infected lycan. In comes Callun. Alpha lycan to the local pack, doctor, scientist and investigator of the new lycan disease called alphetropin regulatory dysfunction (ARD). When he finds out about Ezra, he takes Ezra home to keep him safe and recruits him as his assistant in finding the source of ARD. The only thing wrong with that is Ezra is the perfect submissive who unwittingly teases Callun with his wolf-like gestures. On top of that, because of the strain of turning into a lycan, Ezra can't do anything strenuous or he risks having heart failure from over exertion. That's all well and good but the pheromones Callun puts off calls to Ezra's inner submissive and makes him want Callun even more with no release in their future. When the person behind the new disease gets frustrated by Callun and Ezra's progress,

one thing leads to another and Ezra gets much more involved in the case than Callun intended.

One of the things I enjoyed about this story were the characters. All of them were funny in one way or another, both Ezra and Callun and all the secondary characters. Ezra was amusing and pretty damn cute. Callun was just sexy and the way he tried to control himself around Ezra but failed almost every time made this story both sexy and entertaining. The way they were both attracted to each other, which was only heightened by the pheromones they were both putting off, had me enjoying the book a lot. The banter, bickering and snark added to the story made it easy to like all the characters as well.

The story gives a slightly different take on lycans. Whereas they do turn into werewolves and have alphas and betas, this story has the added benefit of pheromones which gave it an interesting twist. The fact that every pack has two alphas, a female and male but don't need to be mated, also gave the story a unique factor. There are a few other things that made the story different from other wolf shifter stories but I'll leave you to find them out since they were cute and funny.

While I enjoyed the book very much, there were a lot of inconsistencies and a need for a tad bit more editing especially content editing. I had a lot of questions about the mystery (which I figured out who the bad guy was very early on), more specifically how a lot of things were able to happen (view spoiler) and a few questions about what happens next. Also, at times, the writing was stunted and choppy but not enough to make reading difficult, just enough for me to notice.

With all that said, though, I really did enjoy the story. I loved the characters (Ezra and Callun are very sweet and hot together!) and the world that was created around them. I loved how these lycans are unique in their own way but more than that, this book was just *fun*. It was an easy and entertaining read and even with it's faults I'd recommend it.

Brandon Witt says

Hair of the Dog was a fun, easy read (in a good way!)—not to mention sexy! I've read a lot of werewolf novels, and I can honestly say I've never read one quite like this one. It was interesting to hear a new take on the infrastructure of the werewolf society from both a political and genetic level. That said, it didn't bogged down in the details of that, but it added a nice backdrop and framework for the story, which was part romance and part mystery (who done it kind of thing).

Mysterious says

2.5 rounded up. A little too much world-building and mystery, not enough romance.

Book Binge says

Ezra feels like he's been run over by a truck. His entire body aches and he has dried blood in his hair. As far as he can remember he was walking home from his father's wake and he didn't think he drank all that much. Why can't he remember what happened.

When his doorbell rings Ezra is confronted with men in black – or at least that's how he looks at it. He let's

the men in and they soon come up with a story that is beyond ridiculous...that he was bit by a sick werewolf – they prefer Lycan – and that he will soon turn into one as well. What? Really? He's more than skeptical until the Alpha of the pack shows his teeth growing. Ezra follows directions and is soon ensconced in one of the pack members homes just waiting for the full moon. He's bored and the hormones flying around – that he can now feel and almost taste on his tongue because of his heightened sense – are making him hornier than hell. Of course he wants nothing more than to take care of that issue with Callum but he was told that he wasn't supposed to have sex until the full moon.

Ezra finally gets bored enough to force his way in to the Lycan side of the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and offers to become Callum's unpaid assistant. Callum is trying to figure out how the lycan that bit Ezra got sick. Callum thinks that it's a disease but he's not sure how to stop the hormones that are going crazy in the lycan's system. Ezra helps and then in a twist of fate discovers that it's not a disease at all but someone actually injecting the hormones into the lycans. Callum, Ezra and soon the FBI try to figure out who's behind the atrocities before they can do any further damage.

Hair of the Dog is a decent suspense novel that I felt had a relationship in it. Can I call it a romance? Probably not but there are lust, sex and the I Love You's involved.

The story of the hormone problem and the investigation that ensues really takes up the majority of the book. I really liked how the characters went about figuring things out and Ezra using his computer programming skills to help out. That part of the story worked really well for me.

Then there's the relationship. We know from the get go that Ezra would jump Callum in a hot minute and that Callum pretty much feels the same but nothing can be done about it until the full moon. Once that moon rises Callum is all over Ezra and Ezra's right there with him. From there Callum has Ezra in his bed and there's no question that he will remain there. I liked that Callum finally made his move on Ezra but from that time we saw nothing of the daily ins and outs of the relationship as the men were caught up in the investigation. I understand that it was on their minds but I missed seeing the connection between the two men more clearly. I think the possessiveness was clear and present on Callum's side and I could tell Ezra was getting more attached - I would have loved to have been shown the budding relationship more. The end I Love You scene just didn't have the same punch as it would have had we had more insight.

The two female FBI agents were....interesting. I seriously didn't know what to make of them when they first came on the scene. One talked like a tomboy surfer dude and the other was just odd. I honestly thought they weren't really FBI and were playing Callum and Ezra until the book went on further. I kept thinking they were on the wrong side of the law. I was surprised when I realized they were on the up and up! lol

In the end it was a good book that I enjoyed reading but I did have some issues with it as you can see. I would definitely read more from these authors in the future.

This review was originally posted on Book Binge by Tracy.

Simsala says

The pheromone-tango...not between the sheets that could have been nice!
The first part of of the book felt like attending a lecture about the biochemical processes in lycans/werewolves...

The blurb is misleading - 100% BDSM-free and no D/s here in the common sense just an alpha who threw bossy pheromones around and a beta who scrambled to obey - because of the beta-pheromones... ("Bossy" if one considers orders like "go upstairs", "shut the door" and the occasional bite as bossy...)

The story had no chemistry (aside from the above mentioned talked-to-death pheromones...), no werewolf/paranormal feeling and most important no noticable emotional connection between the MC`s. At the the end of the book an "I love you" didn`t make a romance. That was a WTF-moment - "where did that come from suddenly" - I had no idea. It was more like insta-lust (because of the pheromones...) and even that was not convincing. The mystery in the second part of the book (from that point on the "romance" was in the backseat) was interesting with just a few minor plot mistakes BUT new characters were introduced and the story felt overcrowded and increasingly confusing.

An uneven storyline and writing that lacked smoothness made this - despite the interesting story - a disappointing read.