



ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

Animal Attraction

Alexa & Patrick  
Silver

ELLORA'S CAVE  
*Quickies*  
*Valentine  
Vixens*

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



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Animal Attraction

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# ***ANIMAL ATTRACTION***

**Alexa & Patrick Silver**



## **Chapter One**



“All flights are delayed. Please do not leave the airport. Your airlines will inform you when we have further details. I repeat, a strong storm has developed off Lake Michigan and...”

Tabitha Downes tuned out the announcement. She and her husband Wes had heard it a half-hour ago and again fifteen minutes ago. She understood. Their flight was delayed. They were going to miss their cruise and spend Valentine’s Day in this miserably overcrowded airport. Message received, check!

If they had been wise, they would have rushed to the doors and taken a room at the one airport hotel. When she had suggested this, Wes hadn’t been interested. He was sure this would be a brief delay and still held out hope that they would catch their cruise. Tab, on the other hand, knew the Murphy’s Law Fairy had been flying overhead, dive-bombing them. The flight was almost four hours long and the cruise was set to leave in six hours.

Now, they and the other few thousand folks in the airport wanted to get on the first flight to the warmth of Florida. The lines at the ticket counters had been ridiculous, so Wes had dialed the airline 800 number, only to be told that all departing planes from this airport were going to be held on the ground for now, even the craft in the taxi line. The deicing machines were running full tilt and the plows could be seen clearing the runways but no planes were going out and very few were coming in.

“Dammit. This ruined everything!”

Tab winced at the angry tone of Wes’ voice. Wes had been pinning a great deal of hope on this cruise. He saw it as their last chance for a new beginning. She thought the

gesture meant the world. At least Wes seemed to care again, and that was the first step in saving their marriage.

“Wes, it’s okay.” She rubbed his arm in a comforting gesture. “Let’s get away from the crowds here and find a quieter place where we can sit down.”

Her husband scanned the packed lounge area and the restaurants overflowing with harried travelers, and nodded. She picked up her overnight bag and started walking toward a corridor.

“I think this is where they have all those fancy lounges. Want to stop here?” Tab questioned. Her husband groaned but his overnight bag fell to the floor with a thump, Wes following it down. Tabitha sank to the carpet beside him, rubbing his arm. This was going to be a long day, and if Wes was in a rage, it could turn out to be very stressful for her as well.

When Wes settled his head in her lap, Tabitha began stroking his light brown hair. He’d always loved her backrubs and massages—sensual and therapeutic—and she hoped this would soothe him. He shifted, resting his head against her pussy, and she felt the first twinges of arousal.

She and Wes hadn’t been intimate in some time. Their marriage was on the rocks, and neither had been ready to risk emotional intimacy with the other. There hadn’t been any fireworks or huge fights, just a dull, boring rut of work, home improvement projects, time spent with friends and awkward silences in their home life. They had been drifting apart for months—maybe even years.

Tabitha hadn’t expected *any* Valentine’s Day gift. She and Wes had never been huge gift givers. So she was shocked when he tugged her back into bed this morning and informed her that he’d arranged for her to have a two-week vacation and that they were going away. He’d even packed her bags for her!

The romance of the day just kept getting better when Wes brought her breakfast in bed, a necklace and a ring. She was wearing both of them now, the small rose pendant nestling close to her heart and the ring sparkling on her finger.

And now, Wes was most definitely nestling his head deeper between her legs. He wasn't acting overtly sexual, but her body didn't care. She began to moisten anyway. As she combed back his hair she nestled his head lower, trying to increase the delicious pleasure on her pussy.

She dug her fingers deeper into his scalp and he moaned happily. His nostrils quivered. *Can he smell my arousal?* Sure, they were in an empty corridor, but who knew how long they would remain alone in this little oasis of peace.

A small gush of liquid moistened her crotch at the thought. She'd never been someone who had taken chances, and neither had Wes, but right now it seemed as if they were shucking their conservative everyday lives for this romantic getaway. And Tabitha was more than ready to play along.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Great! Wonderful! Are we going to sit on the tarmac any longer?" Brand Hove was getting deeply concerned. They had been sitting on this plane for some two hours. The last cockpit announcement was that they were eighth in line for deicing. He glanced out the window, knowing full well that the plane wouldn't be departing today. Hell, the plows couldn't even keep up with the snowfall.

He glanced at the flight attendant sitting in the seat across the aisle. Thankfully, he was the only one in the first-class section, so he was able to stretch his legs and pace when the restlessness got to be too much for him. But if he went *furry*, there would be hell to pay! And the longer he sat in this overgrown tin can, the more likely he'd go quadruped. And then he'd be in a mess!

"Mr. Hove, can I get you anything?" The flight attendant—Janis, according to her nametag—had been watching him quite closely, flirting with him, wafting her pheromones his way.

"Yeah. I need to get off the plane." He motioned to his cell phone, which was charging in one of the power ports. "You may have heard that I'm having a family emergency."

She didn't have to know that the emergency was that he was worried about any stranded brethren who hadn't yet checked in. He jiggled his leg and then began to pace the small aisle. Three steps forward, pivot, three steps back. The walls seemed to be closing in on him.

"We're still readying for takeoff. Please sit down. Can I get you something to drink?"

Brand shook his head and threw himself back in his seat. "No. I just have to get off. I can't just continue to sit here. Can't we deplane? I'm not stupid, nobody has taken off in hours."

The flight attendant consulted her watch. "I'll get a status update from the cockpit. Please fasten your seat belt."

He did as told. Janis called another flight attendant to the front and asked the pilot to open the secured door. As he waited for her to come back, Brand drummed his hands on his thighs. The first sign of an impending change was this burst of energy. He couldn't repress it, didn't want to, in fact. That would just lead to bigger and more *furry* problems.

"Mr. Hove? The captain just informed me that airport management and the air traffic controllers will be making an announcement at the top of the hour. That is less than ten minutes away. We request your patience until that time."

Brand nodded and picked up his cell phone. At least they hadn't asked for electronic devices to be turned off. For the last couple of hours, he'd had the in-seat satellite television on, hoping that none of his brethren had shown themselves to the public. So far, so good, but their luck could run out any minute now. Starting with him if he didn't get off this plane soon.

He grabbed his phone and connected immediately to the Council headquarters. He needed a status report. None of the rest of the ruling body had been caught in this storm, and many of the shifters on getaways with their spouses were either driving or had been diverted to other airports. The eastern half of the United States was in for a nasty storm, so his office informed him, and he was stuck in it. *Must be my lucky day.*

This snowfall meant that his meeting with the owners of Blood Anonymous, a vampire-shifter coalition, would be postponed. Denver, his assistant, would take care of rescheduling. For now, all Brand Hove, President of the International Shifter Council, needed to do was stay human until he had secured a hotel room. Easier said than done. He, more than any other shifter, was affected by human pheromones. If it was almost overwhelming in a plane that held maybe a hundred humans, what would the airport and city's hotels be like? Stupid question. He'd be swimming in a sea of human arousal. This day of the year, of all of them, guaranteed that.

Unable to stop himself, Brand pressed the heel of his hand against his cock, enjoying the thrill that the pressure provided. It had been aching for the better part of the hour, but had not become fully erect yet. He thanked every deity he could that he had been able to retain some control, because Janis was looking at him as if he was the prey and she was the big-game hunter. She had no idea she was hunting a dangerous wild animal. When *furry*, he could snap her neck in an instant, controlled only by the animal raging within. Not that he'd ever killed anyone. His parents had made sure of that, raising and rearing him to be a responsible human and shifter.

But today would test his inner strength and willpower. If he lost the struggle, not only could innocent human lives be lost, but his lapse could take down the entire shifter society.

Breathe deeply, he ordered himself, his entire body strung tightly. He was on the razor's edge of control. He clenched his fists and jaw and stared out the window, lost in thought.



"Mr. Hove?" Janis was leaning over him, her voice sounding extra sharp to his sensitive hearing. He was torn between wanting to thrust her away and pull her close, grinding his hard cock against her. But he didn't want her, and he was above using women.

"Got news?" He bit the words out through his clenched teeth.

"Yes. We're going back to the terminal. All flights have been canceled."

"Fine." Thank God and Bast, he'd finally be able to end this trip.

"But there is a problem. Visibility is so bad that the city is mostly closed down. Please take advantage of our first-class lounge."

Great. Just brilliant! He might be stuck in an airport teeming with sexual arousal. He must have pissed off someone in a past life. Otherwise, his personal visit to hell would have never occurred. He would have flown to Pittsburgh, met with the bloodsuckers and stayed at a nice respectable five-star hotel, where his inner kitty could come out to play. Staying in an airport was *not* in the cards. At least the shifters had their own lounge at O'Hare.

While he was pondering his woulda, coulda, shoulda, the airplane had been towed back to the gate. Brand grabbed his microfiber carryon—no leather for him, he wasn't about to use *animal* skins to clothe himself—and strode off the plane, purposely ignoring Janis' hopeful look. She didn't want to play with the kitty, and he had no interest in encouraging her. If he was going to mate, he'd have to find another shifter, vamp or other paranormal. They were the only ones who could match his stamina.

As he approached the end of the jetway, the faint, outdoorsy scent of shifter pheromones assaulted him. Desire coursed through him, making him stumble and fall to his knees. He nodded at the helping hand of a man, thankful that a woman hadn't grabbed him. He had no latent desire for men in general, and thus his arousal did not flare out of control. For now, anyway. He needed relief and he needed it fast. Otherwise, Chicago might just see its first runaway lion in airport story. Yeah, great, being plastered on the news was *just* what he needed!

Recovering slightly and driven by instinct and rising lust, he jogged through the gate area. There wasn't time to get a cab and find a hotel. He needed satisfaction and he needed it now.

Following the distinctive shifter scent, he rounded a corner and almost stumbled into a couple who were on the ground, her hands in his hair, his hard-on almost saluting Brand as he skidded to a stop.

Shifters. One of them was a shifter. He didn't care which one was—hell, he'd have both right now.

"Come on." He hauled the man up and then pulled the woman to her feet as well. Brand dragged the confused pair along the corridor past the first-class lounge to a plain, unmarked door. He fumbled with a credit card. "This is a special lounge for our kind. Sorry to be so abrupt, but I can't wait. I need you."

## **Chapter Two**



Tabitha could only gape at the man. She had felt arousal stirring within her, rising irresistibly before this man grabbed her. Exchanging a look with Wes, she was reassured by his slight nod. It made sense to take advantage of the private lounge and the man's generosity. Whatever he couldn't wait to do—presumably to rebook his flight or a hotel—could work out for them too.

Tab followed the tall blond man into the exclusive lounge. With a shrug to Wes, she followed. This guy seemed to know what he was doing. Maybe the best phone services were in there.

As she and her husband entered the room, the man breezed by them, securing the door. She looked around cautiously, taking in the warm décor, the comfortable chairs and the huge bed that dominated the room. There was even a bathroom attached. It looked like a luxury hotel room, hidden right here in the airport! The man's heavy breathing brought her attention back to him and she noticed a film of sweat on his forehead. Though he looked sick, Tab guessed there was some other reason for his discomfort. An emotion she couldn't quite place shimmered toward her in waves, bringing with it a scent both woodsy and warm. It tantalized her and she squirmed, her heartbeat racing and breathing quickening.

"Are you okay?" Tab automatically reached up to touch Brand's forehead. He was burning up! Was illness responsible for this behavior or were she and Wes in a heap of trouble?

"Don't!" The man reached up to push her away then seemed to think better of it. He extended his hand in a gesture she interpreted to mean that he meant no harm. "You

should know not to touch me when I'm in this state, sweetheart. The kitty might take a nice big bite out of you."

"Sweetheart? Excuse me, do I know you?" She was getting offended by his familiarity and unsettled by the way her body was reacting to his nearness.

He shook his head. "No, but you know our kind. All the pheromones and all the damn romance. I have to release this."

What the heck was he talking about? "Back up. Start from the beginning, what do you—" She stopped abruptly. Why was the man pulling off his coat and ripping off his tie? Yanking his shirt off in a jerky motion? Looking to her husband for help and guidance, Tab started to edge toward the door. This was too strange. She began to think seriously about getting out of there.

"What do you think you're doing?" At least Wes sounded strong and in control. Tab exhaled slowly, trying to will her body to calm down.

"Do you want to do it for me? I didn't stop to consider...well, okay. Take my pants off." The man invaded Wes' personal space, thrusting his hips out in carnal invitation.

Gasping in shock, Tab spoke up. "Um, enough is enough. Who are you and what specifically do you want?"

A test. It had to be a test. The man had a hungry look in his eyes as he took in Brand's chest. The woman was playing coy. He had scented shifter blood in both of them, but he couldn't work out which one was dominant—the gorgeous blonde or the handsome quiet guy. Their pheromones and desire hung heavy in the air. As he breathed it in, his cock twitched and his stomach clenched. Dammit, he wanted both of them now.

"What division are you with? Northland? Pacifica? Sucks that you got stranded here, but we can make the most of it."

"Division?" The woman was still playing the confused role. It turned him on almost as much as the musky spice of her pussy did.

"Yes, division. Shifter Division to be precise. Or are you independent?"

The woman exchanged looks with the man and then reluctantly sat on the big bed, the man crossing the room to take her hand. "We're from north of Green Bay," he said.

At least the other guy wasn't wasting his time. "That's the Great Lakes Division. Makes sense that I wouldn't know you. But look, I don't have much time. I have to fuck her, or both of you if you're willing."

"Name," Tabitha asked. She had a husky voice full of sexual promise. The woman still appeared to be dazed, though she was responding to the way her man stroked her hand and arm. "I want to know your name."

Brand ran a hand through his hair. "Fine, but can we please stop dicking around? I'm Brand Hove, Council President. And you are?"

"Wes and Tabitha Downes. She doesn't...she hasn't found hers yet. That's why she's so confused. I'm only half, but...I have those desires as well. What is your animal?"

"Lion," Brand responded, "And yours?"

"Panther. I think hers is feline too. Must be why you're so attracted." Wes turned to look at his wife. "I can't explain much now, Tab, but we have to do this. Please trust me here."

The woman gave her man another look. "I want answers, Wes. What is going on?"

She was resistant and it sounded like she was a cub that had not yet made her first shift. At her age, she should have had at least ten years of changes behind her. She'd likely be feeling the desires, her shifter scent had been tantalizing his. But she'd have no idea how to deal with these thoughts and feelings in her body.

Brand had to take matters into his own hands. His need burned within him but the woman needed to be handled carefully. He crossed the room and stroked her face with

one fingertip. Her body shuddered with clear-cut need. "Just relax and let it happen, Tabitha Downes. My touch feels good, doesn't it?"

She shifted on the bed, seemingly unsure of his touch. She clearly wanted to master her reactions, but as her shifter heritage rose within her, she'd feel the need to couple very soon. Multiple times. And with both of them. This was going to be a hell of a weather-related emergency.

*What's happening to me?* This man, this total stranger, was just running a finger over her cheek and eyelid. His touch shouldn't be making her entire body tremble and quake, her pussy gush and her body physically ache for his touch. All of a sudden, a rush of yearning heated her body. It didn't make sense but she needed this man.

Tab moaned deeply, arching her back. Her nipples were swollen little darts of desire, her pussy liquid heat. She wanted to rub herself wantonly for this man, and that shocked her almost as much as the sexy shirtless man in front of them.

Tab moved onto her husband's lap. Wes' erection pressed against her ass and she ground against it mercilessly. Her caution had disappeared sometime between her nipples stiffening and her cunt gushing. She needed sexual satisfaction so badly. Normally reserved, Tabitha was buried in a storm of lust. Her pussy was tingling, the lips swollen, and her breasts aching.

She stared at Brand's chest and abdomen. Lightly brushed with burnished gold hair, every muscle stood out sharply, a few scars weaving silvery lines over the tanned skin. His cock was outlined sharply by his pants—long, hard and rampant. She had not desired another man since meeting Wes, but this sexy blond god turned her on beyond rational thought or reason.

Wes had buried his face in her hair. Reaching around to cup her breasts, he settled her more firmly on his lap. Her husband hadn't been this aroused in ages and she took full advantage of it, rubbing and grinding against it despite the intensely disturbing presence of the strange man who attracted her so.

The touch of Wes' hands on her breasts was almost too much. He cupped them gently, his fingers branding her flesh. Suddenly she realized that she had too many clothes on and stood, yanking her shirt and bra off, exposing her nipples to the air. She thrust her chest out toward Brand, offering herself to him without words.

"Oh!" Her gasp broke the silence of the room. As the air brushed over her breasts, her sensitivity and sensations were magnified. The air itself was alive, caressing and stroking her, licking teasingly over her nipples and caressing the fullness of her breasts. While she missed the touch of Wes' hands on them, this sensation was new and altogether overwhelming.

The stranger—Brand—reached for the button on her jeans and opened it, pushing the fabric down her legs. She automatically stepped out her pants, socks and shoes. Clad only in a pair of silky panties, Tab was neither embarrassed nor scared. Everything made sense all of a sudden. She was going to have sex with both this man and her husband and it thrilled her.

She stretched and then looked up at the man. He was tall, topping six feet by a few inches. And he was all sun-burnished, from his hair to his golden skin. A rugged man who had an air of command, he was quite different from laid-back Wes, her one and only lover before tonight.

He stepped back a pace, never breaking his gaze. She was vaguely aware of Wes rustling behind her but couldn't spare the mental energy for him.

*My God, he's beautiful. I just want to touch him.* Tab's newly awakened sexual urges were spiraling out of control. Rational thought left her, even more intense desire taking its place.

Then Brand lowered her back to the bed and bent down to caress her nipple with his mouth. Fire. Aching fire rushed through her veins. His light stubble abraded her overstimulated skin. Her hand crept down to her panty-clad pussy and started rubbing urgently. She had never been one for masturbation, but as her body opened up to her

own touch, she moaned. She skinned her saturated panties off, spreading her legs wide, almost embarrassed by the way her scent hung in the air.

Brand suckled more urgently now, and Tab's finger moved from her clit and began delving into her cunt. She was hardly aware of where Wes was until his lips fastened on her sensitized clit.

"Oh God, you two..." Rational thought was impossible at the moment. Brand began plucking her other nipple and two of Wes' fingers dove into her soaked pussy. Tab's head lolled on the cushion and she concentrated on trying to breathe. She was burning up, both from the outside and inside. She was so aware of her body's responses that her blood roared in her ears and every bit of pleasure these men were wringing out of her was increased to an almost maddening level.

She brought her hand up to Brand's head and the scent of her drew his attention away from her nipple for the moment. He captured her moist finger and suckled deeply, awakening all new feelings inside Tab's body.

When he flicked playfully at her nipple, her whole body tensed. She was climbing the hill and knew she'd crest it soon if these men allowed her a release. Just then, Wes began to tap her cunt, finding her G-spot with unerring accuracy.

One, two, three taps. She was going insane with need, arching up to her husband and Brand. "Let me come! Please!"

Brand fastened himself on her other nipple, pulling and tugging. Wes sucked hard on her clit in time with his insistent tapping. The sensations of two men working on her at the same time, as well as the erotic strangeness of the whole scene, overwhelmed her.

Her world exploded. With a scream she felt herself tumbling over the edge. The orgasm shattered her, reducing her to a pile of need. Fire and ice raced through her body and then something else replaced them, a wonderful tingling.

Tab pulled Brand's head up and kissed him, tasting the subtle vestiges of her cream.



Brand watched the woman carefully for any signs of transformation. He knew that she was primed and ready, could smell her feline form within, a deeper musk that called to the primal animal inside him. "Tabitha, you're safe here. Let the change happen."

As her extremities trembled, her husband pulled her into his arms. His panther should be able to handle her cat, and after all, they were the established couple here.

His lust almost out of control, Brand jerked the rest of his clothes off and began pacing the room. This was torture. Who had he screwed in a past life to be stuck like this, in a room teeming with shifter desire?

"Hey," Wes said softly. "If you want to you can come over here, behind me. I don't mind. Right now, I want it. I want you to fuck me."

Was he serious? Brand regarded the man for only a second before crossing the room. At some point, Wes had dropped his clothes and from what Brand could see of his naked body, he was well formed. Though men weren't his preferred sex partners, he wasn't against anything that gave him pleasure, and that tight ass would give him a climax to remember.

Tabitha hadn't yet changed, but it was obvious that the process had begun. A first shift could take anywhere from ten minutes to ten hours. Given the fact that she was beyond her teens, the usual age for a first shifting, Brand bet that it wouldn't take long at all. And in the meantime he could amuse himself with her mate's muscular back and ass. And that cock looked damn tasty too.

"Nice." Resting his chin comfortably on Wes' shoulder, Brand reached over and stroked Tabitha's hair, her mewling sounds calling to his inner lion.

He nipped the back of Wes' neck, gathering the skin at the base and working it between his teeth, suckling slightly. Brand knew he was going to leave a mark, his mark of ownership, however brief.

Wes groaned and thrust his ass back. Brand relished the feel of those tight glutes clenching and releasing. It had been a long time since he'd experienced a man and the

animal inside wasn't choosy, right now it just demanded release. Wes was good-looking and not alpha enough to be a challenge. Brand wasn't interested in a testosterone-laden fight for dominance, he just wanted to fuck with animal pride, animal lust.

"Do you want this? Then prepare your woman for me while we play. When the shift comes upon her, I'll fuck her. I want you to hold her and keep your human form so she has something comfortable and familiar. If things get out of control feel free to shift and dominate her. Then, when she's rested, we'll all have some fun."

Tabitha's whole body was tingling and a feeling not unlike panic was overcoming her. She didn't feel fear, but her emotions were tightly strung, her body wound like a spring. Strange things were happening inside her, a stretching. Something was exerting a great deal of pressure on her insides. She threw her head back, moaning. The feeling was altogether new to her, yet somehow it centered her as well. And she loved the sensitivity of her skin, her hearing, all her senses seemed stronger.

Wes' cock pressed against her lower back. Was it her imagination or did he seem more erect than ever? Their celibacy had obviously added to his desire. She luxuriated in the feel of her husband's rampant cock.

As Brand spoke, Tab tuned out, focusing inward. She was curious but not frightened about these changes in her body. Everything was so surreal. Tab knew she should be feeling her emotions more deeply but all these changes were fascinating.

Her mouth was overfull all of a sudden. When she parted her lips, the small prick of a fang scraped her mouth. Fangs? She never had fangs before. Tab wriggled out from under Wes and ran to a small mirror across the room. "Oh my God! Wes?"

Her body was covered in a luxurious spotted pelt of short silky fur, her face elongating as she watched. She stroked her hands up her body in shock, unable to understand these changes in herself. As she stared at this strange human-animal hybrid in the mirror, she became aware of the man growling behind Wes.

"Wes! Is he hurting you?" She hurried over, skidding to a stop when she saw the man's hand wrap around her husband's cock. Her desire was almost painful. She wanted to share her husband's cock with Brand, but more importantly she had to focus on what was going on in her body.

"What is happening to me?"

Brand lifted his head from her husband's shoulder. There was sure to be a love-bite there. "Tell her, friend. Tell her what you can right now."

Wes swallowed hard. Did he appear more hairy too? "Tab, please don't worry. This is part of our heritage. We're shifters."

Shifters? What did he mean? Shifters weren't real! Sure, Wes had been fascinated by the phenomena, but she always figured it was his love for animals coming out.

"I...I..." She couldn't form words.

"It's true, honey. You're a leopard shifter. See the pattern on your fur? Very shortly, you'll understand. Don't resist. All of us are safe in here."

Tabitha sat on the bed and tucked her legs under her chin, desire pushed into the background by her shock at this fanciful tale.

"Are you all right?" Brand asked.

Tabitha bit off a brittle laugh. "Um, no. This is all a bit to deal with."

Brand nodded. "We'll leave you alone for now. Join in if you feel ready."

Brand moved to Wes and sank onto his knees in front of the panther shifter. It had been quite some time since he had taken another male, either orally or otherwise, and he found himself hungering for the taste of cock. Wes had a great cock, not too thick and about seven inches long. It was coated in pre-cum, the foreskin exposing the blunt head.

He ran his jaw over the other man's leg, up to his inner thigh. When Wes was gasping for air, Brand took the other man's cock in a hand now transformed with paw

pads and small claws. He stroked up and down a few times then plunged his head down on the hard shaft. Brand's throat opened up and he began suctioning hard, delivering a sensation that was two parts pleasure, one part pain. His fangs added to the stimulation by scraping over sensitive skin.

When his initial hunger was satisfied, Brand lifted his head, making a sound of pure feline satisfaction. He swiped his tongue over Wes' cock head, knowing that the rough texture would add a higher level of sensation. He worked the cock head like a master, smearing and devouring the constant stream of creamy pre-cum. Wes' lubrication had a wild taste to it, almost sweet, and the lion in Brand was responding wholly.

Wes appeared to have given himself over to a blowjob from a master. His head was thrown back and fists were clenched. Brand brought one of Wes' hands to his head, encouraging the panther to fist his hair. The bed rustled a bit as Wes' wife moved in agitation. She was getting hotter too, her spice joining her husband's in the air. Watching a near-stranger suck off her husband was probably increasing her shock. The beginning of the shift was lowering her inhibitions and raising her libido. At least Brand hoped so!

"Suck me...suck me some more, man. I want to come in your mouth," Wes' entreaty was tortured and Brand wasn't about to make him wait any longer. He sealed his mouth around the other man's cock, scraping his lion claws ever so gently over the man's tightly drawn-up scrotum.

"I want..." Tabitha's voice was needy and barely penetrated his haze of lust. Then he felt her small paws on his ass, opening him wide. Was she going to rim him? She hadn't looked *that* kinky, but her inner feline was probably bringing all her desires, no matter how nasty or kinky, to the foreground.

When his legs were fully apart, the woman settled herself on the ground and began tonguing his balls and stroking his shaft with those paws. She wasn't adept at using them and pricked him a few times, but the pain was quickly forgotten as she stroked

him. She couldn't maneuver enough to suck him, a fact that was causing her endless frustration. Finally she spoke.

"Please fuck my husband. I want to have him in my mouth as you're fucking him."

That was all the encouragement Brand needed. He crossed the room, yanked a condom out of his bag and sheathed himself carefully, considerate of his claws on the fragile rubber. He was tremblingly eager to be buried in the other man's ass.

Tabitha had helped her husband arrange himself on hands and knees. As Brand applied some lube to the condom, Tabitha settled under Wes, his cock dangling an inch away from her lips.

Brand wished he could capture this moment, these two beautiful people waiting for him to mate with them. Unlike most of his matings, this one was devoid of political overtones. It was just about sex and shifting. These people weren't using him for any reasons other than physical satisfaction. These people only wanted his body and semen, not to solidify their position or marry him for material gain. The change was quite refreshing. It had been too long since he'd been desired for his body instead of his position.

"Are you ready, Wes?" Brand questioned. The other man nodded silently. Brand gently stroked the woman's soft abdominal pelt for a moment before settling himself against Wes' back. The soft sounds of Tabitha slurping Wes' cock were the most erotic soundtrack Brand had heard in ages.

He stroked his sheathed cock over Wes' perineum, exerting enough pressure to further arouse the other man. Wes' anus seemed to relax for Brand, who pressed his cock gently but firmly against the puckered hole. It gave and Wes pulled Brand's entire cock head inside.

Fuck. Wes' tightness and heat were incredible. Brand trembled, trying to keep his desire under tight rein. He was incredibly tempted to just pound home in one thrust, chancing that the superior shifter genetics would heal any damage he made. No,

instead of risking that, he'd enter slowly, stretching out the pleasure, making it sweet instead of brutal and deny his lion satisfaction for the moment.

Another inch in. God, the tightness was getting to him. And then Tabitha ran her claws over his balls, the pricking of the sharp appendages soothed by the spongy soft paw pad and the silky fur. He tried to wait, to let Wes adjust but then the other man rocked back, seeking more of his cock, and he was lost. He pushed in with one long, deep thrust.

"YES!" Wes' voice was full of triumph and satisfaction. Brand began thrusting in and out slowly, wanting Tabitha to keep her mouth on her husband's cock. When he could tell that she was keeping up, he let loose and fucked Wes' tight ass in deep stabbing strokes, trying to wring every bit of pleasure and passion out of the other man.

His wife took Brand's hint, rolling and stroking her husband's balls and sucking him urgently. "Come on, Wes. Come in your sweet wife's mouth while I come up your ass."

The veins popped out on Wes' arms, his trembles increasing. He was so close to the edge! Brand could feel his struggle to extend the enjoyment, but he had to realize that he wasn't the one in control here. Brand was, and he had to come.

Brand rammed home and steadied himself, pulsing in the other man's ass. He reached down, fondling Wes' balls and brushed his wife's hair against those full orbs. Brand was ready to let go, but he wanted this to be a shared orgasm. He wanted Wes' climax to push him over the edge.

The soft silk of Tab's hair on the tender skin of his sac seemed to do the job. Wes began growling and thrusting forward and back faster and faster, plunging into his wife's mouth then impaling himself on Brand's shaft. Brand fastened himself on the other man's neck, growling his triumph. Wes' muscles clenched firmly around his tortured cock and Brand's world shattered in bright bursts of light. The woman scooted out of the way and Brand collapsed on the panther shifter, spent for the moment.

"That was..." The woman's voice shook.

“Incredible?” Brand supplied. “Fantastic? Erotic? Or just the beginning?”

## Chapter Three



Tabitha giggled nervously when Brand spoke. He lay atop her husband, sprawled on the huge bed. Tab's pussy was liquid, her scent perfuming the room, her body so ready for either of their cocks. Or both of their cocks. She didn't care right now. She just wanted to be fucked.

The changes in her body had added to her arousal and while she still had questions, *many* questions, she knew she'd better absorb the information after she'd had her release as well.

What she'd just seen, someone penetrating her husband, had been a total turn-on. She'd had a great vantage point of Brand's sheathed cock pounding into Wes' ass, admiring the slight differences in their cocks and balls from only inches away. Their enthusiasm had taken her to another place entirely, and instead of being put off by the close view of anal sex, she was even more aroused. Her strong-and-silent type husband had allowed another man to give him pleasure. It was both touching and arousing at the same time. And she wanted to see much more of it!

She watched Brand lever himself off her husband and disappear into the bathroom.

"Wes, are you okay?"

He looked up into her eyes, his own burning with desire. "Yeah, I'm good. Did you mind what happened?"

Tabitha's cheeks heated and she knew that her face was bright red. "No, it was actually...sexy." Her voice sounded seductive, even to her own ears.

"Good, my little leopard, because as soon as Brand gets back, we're going to take you together. Don't worry about pregnancy or diseases. You can't become pregnant



until after you've fully shifted for the first time and our kind are immune to all social diseases."

A thrill coursed through her at the thought of having both of them together. "I have so many questions, Wes. All of this..." She gestured with a paw. "I need to know who—*what*—exactly I am becoming. And how this happened. And how come you knew and I didn't."

Wes nodded, a sober expression chasing away the naughty glint in his eyes. "We'll explain that all to you, just as soon as you've been satisfied. Can you wait that long?"

Tabitha absolutely categorically needed these two men, so she would grant her husband a reprieve. In any event, her desire was so intense that she knew she wouldn't be able to concentrate on what they had to tell her. The fact that Wes knew and understood this was enough of a comfort for her. She still trusted her husband implicitly and the fact that he'd allowed her to watch him taking and getting satisfaction from a man had deepened their level of intimacy in new and exciting ways.

"All right. But you better make it worth my while."

Wes rose and gave her a gentle kiss, infusing tenderness that had been sorely missing in their marriage for years. She opened her mouth, inviting his tongue inside. He kissed her with a passion she had though was long dead and buried. It felt so good to be this emotionally close with her husband. She melted against him, her arousal building again, her love for him overshadowing the strangeness of the day.

"Happy Valentine's Day, my tabby cat. You've given yourself the best gift ever. You've found the other half of yourself. Cast your inhibitions away for just this day and let us take you to heights you never could have imagined. We've only just begun."

Tabitha stroked his strong jaw, deep in thought. Though she should be frightened, withdrawing from her husband, on some deep intuitive level Wes had calmed her fears and pushed her questions to the back of her mind. She felt safe with him, as always, and she knew he'd lead her through any confusion this new part of her life caused.

"I love you, Wes. Never doubt that." She had so much more to say but just couldn't find the words. If there were even words for the glow deep in her soul.

"Good." He smiled, brushing her hair away gently. "I think this new part of you is even more gorgeous than you usually are. This soft fur, the gleam in your eyes, the graceful way you move. You're stunning, Tab, and I've never loved you more than right at this moment. Stick with me, honey. Take this journey as my wife."

As she nodded, soul-deep wounds and cuts began to heal. Her spirit was mending, becoming whole again.

When Brand cleared his throat, Tab found herself wondering how much he had heard. She tore her gaze away from Wes, meeting the challenge in the other man's eyes.

"Are you ready for us, little kitty?"

He looked dangerous, almost a little wild. His blond hair was mussed and there were emotions swirling in his eyes. She glanced down his body, gaze hovering at his crotch. He was either still hard or had a hell of a recovery time.

"I'm ready. Take me, both of you."

Brand sat on the bed and tugged her paw, pulling her toward him. She crouched over the man, her breasts dangling in his face. He seemed unable to resist her reddened nipples, playfully snapping his mouth over one, then the other.

"Mmm," Tab moaned, rubbing her moisture over his cock, marking him.

"Not yet. Wes gets you this time. Then I'll take you while he sucks your clit."

The frank language added another level to her desire. She didn't want these men to be civilized right now, she wanted their animal attraction to take over.

She relaxed and laid down on Brand's body, pressing her cheek against his comforting chest and thrusting her ass in the air, exposing her cunt to her husband. Then she spread her pussy lips to expose the pink flesh inside. "Take me, Wes. Please." Her desire for her husband's cock and cum was overwhelming.

She sensed Wes moving but didn't expect a long slow lick. He swiped his tongue from her clit to her ass slowly, so slowly she wanted to scream. It felt so damn good! She arched her back, lifting her ass, gasping when Brand began raking his claws gently over the tops of the breasts flattened against his chest. His hard cock pressed into her belly insistently, igniting a fire that only a cock inside her would put out. She didn't care whose.

Darts of pleasure made their way from her pussy and breasts to the center of her being and radiated outward in increasing pre-orgasmic ripples. "Inside me now, please." Desire turned to demand. She simply *had* to have both of these men. Gone was the safe, staid Tab and in its place was this new person with desires that overwhelmed and controlled her. Instead of being upset or worried about this change, Tab felt liberated. She knew on some deep level that she was in touch with the deepest part of her soul.

Her husband's strong hands gripped her hips, his hands coming around to hold her breasts in a tender gesture, a counterpoint to the urgent need simmering around all of them. They encountered Brand, still softly caressing Tabitha's breasts with his shrinking claws. The other man made small satisfied sounds as Wes began stroking his flank and shoulder. Wes flicked Tab's nipple on each pass over Brand's body as he seated himself against her cunt.

This was the moment she loved the most, when her husband's length rested at her opening. He knew it and usually extended the torture until his patience was maddening. But she knew the game. He would penetrate her, he would control the depth and the timing, and if she rocked back, impaling herself on him, he'd fully withdraw and keep her at the edge for minutes.

*I can't wait!* Her thighs quivered, her willpower nearly depleted. One of Brand's hands went between her legs, stroking her husband's cock, flicking a fingertip over her clit in the upstroke. His hands had finished changing back from paws, but hers hadn't

yet. She dug those claws into the fabric of a cushion, rubbing her husband's cock head against her clit and extending the stimulation from Brand's questing fingers.

"Little cat, let your husband fill you."

Tabitha was beyond listening, though she stopped short of impaling herself on Wes' cock.

"Little cat, enough." Brand's tone was full of authority.

Wes began moaning and rocking, almost but not quite penetrating her. She needed more sensation, *more* dammit! "Give it to me!"

In response, Brand spanked her cunt lightly, just enough pain mixed with the pleasure to cause her to jump in shock and moan.

"More. Please." Her swollen pussy needed any stimulation she could get, and the spanking was such a turn-on.

Was that needy growl really hers? She cried out as Wes penetrated her quickly and started a slow back-and-forth thrust. He filled her, every ridge and vein in his cock caressing her inner walls as if he was created for only her pleasure.

Brand pulled her head down onto his chest and she eagerly lapped at one of his nipples. He tasted of the outdoors, of wood smoke, snow, and the trace of mint, spice and herbs, a blend that was entirely masculine. She began laving his chest, paying special attention to his nipples, encouraged as his breathing got harsher. Her tongue glided over the silky golden fur of his pectorals. The sensation was sexy and almost decadent. He was wild, he was civilized and the blend of both was almost too much for her to comprehend.

"Brand, you have no idea how sexy you are."

His hands were buried in her hair, stroking from her scalp outward. Both soothing and arousing, his touch and the sensations of his muscled body against her softer one pushed her toward the edge.

Wes' magnificent cock was pounding into her, his hard thighs pressing against hers with every thrust, his hand fisted in her hair. He kept emitting small growls and moans that signaled his climax was looming. Tab was elated. Her husband had *never* been anything but tender and caring in bed. Here he was, fucking her hard and without concern for her needs, causing her just a little pain that urged the pleasure onto a higher plane. She loved the wildness that had come over him.

She'd never been fucked like this before! He drove into her with renewed desire and lust, making her cunt spark and fire into an inferno. He didn't just push her over the edge, he propelled her over with the force of his thrusts and the sounds he was making.

"Wes!" Tabitha dug her claws into Brand's shoulders, screaming. Her orgasm came over her with a force that reduced her to a quaking bundle of nerves. Lights exploded behind her closed eyelids and all she could hear was her labored breathing and her blood rushing throughout her body.

Just as Wes pulled out, Brand lifted her, settling her on his cock and thrusting home. Wes moved to the edge of the bed, his cock still hard and coated with both their cum. She was stunned when Brand began lapping at her husband's wet dick, tasting them both. The aftershocks of her orgasm were still rippling through her body and it all seemed so decadent.

Tabitha panted. "I want some too." Brand guided Wes' cock head into her mouth. She dipped her tongue into his slit, drawing out the last vestiges of her husband's semen. The combined flavor of cunt and dick was ambrosia to her.

Tabitha's cunt was rippling around the full length of Brand's cock. He was allowing her to control the up-and-down movements, skimming his hands down her sides. The sensations this almost-touch aroused were incredible!

"Let me have more." Brand's face was only a millimeter away. When her husband's cock popped out of her mouth, Brand captured it and they began to kiss each other, tongues winding around Wes' cock as she thrust her pelvis against him in short, hard

strokes. Tasting. Licking. Kissing. Fucking. All the while Brand was wringing mini-orgasms out of her. This would be a quick fuck, ultimately to end in joint orgasms.

She loved the carnality of the act, it had been too long since she'd been used sexually. In the early days, she and Wes had coupled with intensity, but in the last years it had been safe, boring. Which this was decidedly not!

Brand picked up the speed, meeting her thrusts with new intensity. Tab released her husband's cock and rested her head on Brand's chest, whimpering as her body flooded with sensation. All rational thought left her mind as both Brand and Wes came, the former drenching her cunt, the latter drenching both of their faces.

Wes moved down to kiss both of them, tongues tangling, lips moving against each other's mouths. This felt so right to Tab. She didn't want this to end.

## Chapter Four



Wes watched his wife and Brand as they broke apart. Each took a hand and tugged Wes toward the bathroom. His mind whirled with the newness and the excitement of the day. *Happy Valentine's Day to me! I got my ultimate fantasy fulfilled.* Wes had known he was bisexual for most of his life, but had never experimented heavily with men. Yeah, he'd had his fun, especially in his college years, but the often soulless predatory way men approached other men had turned him off.

He'd married Tab when he was a fresh college grad and had put his bisexuality in the past. Whatever he fantasized about wouldn't hurt his marriage. Wes had been disappointed in their marriage because unlike most shifter couples, whose sex lives were enhanced by their shared genes adding a wild edge to their matings, theirs had settled into mediocrity. Though Tab never knew it, their shared shifter heritage *had* deepened their bond, just not as intensely as Wes had hoped. He'd always wondered if, because Tab had never shifted, her passions were hidden under her humanity.

His normal and boring marriage had sure ended today! Having Brand initiate his wife into life as a shifter should have aroused the most predatory protective alpha instincts in him. He should never have let the other man touch his wife. Yet Wes felt as if this was right, as if they were meant to share her.

He stood still as she and Brand washed him off gently, wanting to fondle Tab, but the exhaustion in her eyes told a compelling tale. She was drained, emotionally as well as physically. She just stood still as Brand washed their juices off her body.

"Hey, Brand. Can you find all of us a place to bunk?" They could not stay in this room much longer...surely there were other shifters in as much need of the privacy it offered as they were! "Tab has a lot of questions in her..." Since the other guy was a big

muckety-muck in the Council, evident by the fact that he'd been able to get into this ultra-exclusive shifter lounge, he should be able to score them a room somewhere. Behind closed doors and in total privacy, they could monitor Tab's first full shift.

Thankfully, her fur was fading, her paws turning back into graceful human hands. In only a few minutes, she'd look fully like herself again.

"I'll see what I can do. The storm is fierce out there."

Wes nodded, this wasn't anything he didn't already know. "We need a place for us to stay for now. And Tab will need some sleep."

"I know." Brand walked out of the bathroom and reached for his cell phone. Wes closed the door that separated the rooms before he turned to Tab.

"Are you okay? A lot has happened today."

Tab cracked a wan smile. "It is a Valentine's Day to remember. I have so many questions, but yeah, I'm okay. You? You were so worried about the cruise."

Wes jerked his head toward the door. "I got a little distracted by the hunk out there. Was what he did with me okay?"

"Yeah, it was..." Her voice faded and a blush colored her skin.

"It was what?"

"Sexy. Seeing you two together was sexy." Tab chewed on her bottom lip.

"I'm glad." Wes pulled her into his arms, rubbing her back in small circles. "We should get dressed. Brand is going to try to find us some place to stay. Your exciting day isn't over yet."

"Oh?" Tab's expression turned serious. "I'm a bit overwhelmed. It'll be okay?"

"It'll be wonderful, Tab. I've been wanting to share this with you for so long... Just be patient and you'll see."

Finding a place for them to stay was a tall order. Even calling in every favor he could didn't seem to work, until Denver, his assistant, located a shifter manager at a



local hotel. The manager offered to give them one suite, which was usually held for any VIPs. Now the problem would be getting there. Thankfully, the hotel was in the shadow of the airport. Hopefully Denver could locate a shifter cab driver who might be willing to ferry them to the hotel despite the weather and zero visibility. If that didn't work, they'd just have to walk, warming Tabitha between them. At least the sex had taken the edge off his lust. The human pheromones beyond the lounge were only an annoying buzz for now and by the time they'd become so intense that they'd steal his will, he'd be in a comfortable hotel suite with this intriguing couple and their special shifter pheromones would be all for him.

Brand noted that the couple had stayed inside the bathroom for some minutes. He wished he didn't feel so left out. That emotion was just silly. The man and wife let him share the most intimate act with both of them just now. Of course they wanted a little time to deal with everything.

He threw himself on the bed, trying to ignore their mingled scents marking the fabric. He could try to be patient. *Try* anyway. As he closed his eyes, Brand played back the events that had transpired earlier.

His cock swelled almost immediately and he wrapped a fist around it, stroking his dick up and down. His eyes snapped open when he felt not one but two mouths working on him. Tab was licking his balls while Wes was sucking his cock. It was obvious that the other man was not an expert cock sucker, but his enthusiasm more than made up for any lack of experience. Wes was making love to his cock, sucking it then licking up and down the shaft.

"So nice..." He could fall in love with these two. They seemed so open to giving pleasure to him—to Brand the man, the average everyday shifter, instead of Brand Hove, President of the Council. They didn't seem interested in any favors he could get them, just in him giving them pleasure. He had not experienced sex without strings attached for many long years and damn, it felt nice.

The couple worked his cock with enthusiasm and soon he was ready to come again, his third time in a couple of hours. He pulled Tab upright and kissed her deeply, Wes coaxing his cum out in a mild orgasm.

When Brand was able to catch his breath, he kissed first Tab then Wes gently, stroking their faces with his shaking hands. He didn't know how to put into words how they made him feel. Even if he had the words, he wouldn't say them. Always the president, he couldn't afford to let his weakness — or his vulnerability — show.

"Thanks." He settled for the simple instead, hoping they noted just how tender his voice was.

"So, what happens now?" Wes spoke, regarding Brand with a gaze full of mystery and promise.

"Right now, we make our way toward the Royal Hotel. I've secured us a suite there. We can wait out the storm and your wife's first shift there."

Wes' eyes widened in shock. "How did you manage to get a room there? That hotel is so exclusive."

Brand shrugged. Did Wes really not know how much influence he held? Within the shifter world, he was one of the most powerful men. "We just got lucky. Get dressed you two, then cancel your plans and collect your baggage. You're spending the night as my guests at the best hotel in the city."

\* \* \* \* \*

Even though they had agreed on a meeting place near the airport's outer doors and were all booked with the same airline, it took almost two hours to cancel their tickets and collect their luggage. The airport was packed and people's tempers were fraying. The sooner they got out of there, the better, Wes thought. Tab looked exhausted, and every once in a while she'd shiver. The human pheromones in the air had to be driving her crazy. They sure were spiking his lust and he was used to the benefits of shifting.

Finally, they saw Brand in the distance, his height and presence making him stand out in the crowd. A dart of pure lust spiked through Wes as he observed the other man's magnetic presence.

"Do you like him?"

He regarded Tab as he considered her question. "I lust for him, and there is something very compelling about him. What about you?"

She giggled. His wife actually giggled! "He's very interesting...and so sexy. I'm not sure I want this to end."

"Maybe we don't have to." Though Wes wasn't active in the shifter society, he knew that permanent ménages were tolerated, even encouraged. Most of these involved two females, but two males and one woman wasn't an unheard-of concept.

"Really?" Tab's voice held confusion but there was a definite thread of interest.

"Maybe. It's not unknown among our kind. See how you feel in the morning and if you want to try it, we'll see what his thoughts on the matter are."

"He's a big deal, isn't he? Famous and all?"

Wes tried to recall what little he knew about Brand Hove. Since he was with a latent shifter, he had been reluctant to join the local and state-wide societies, though their newsletters still came to his office. Joining one would have meant awkward absences that would had to have been explained to Tabby.

He couldn't give her the details in this teeming mass of humanity. "I'll tell you about it later, Tab, or maybe Brand will. Let's get over to him and out of this place."

"Please." Relief was evident in her voice. It was clear that the crowd was getting to her. His hands were filled with their rolling bags, but what he really wanted to do was guide her through the morass and into the fresh cold air. When Brand suddenly appeared at their side, his bags slung over one arm, Wes handed their two suitcases to him without a word, then wrapped his arms around Tab, tucking her under his arm.

Brand's status in the community was evident. As soon as they stepped outside the terminal, a black sedan pulled up. Brand and the driver consulted for a moment, then he tossed their bags into the trunk. "Hop in. Sherman here is going to get us to the hotel. It'll be slow going. How many inches have dropped so far today, Sherman?"

"Four so far, sir. Upward of two feet expected from this freak storm. I'm heading home as soon as you're settled, sir. It ain't fit for man or beast out here."

"Indeed. We won't call on you again while the weather is so severe."

The check-in at the hotel was expedient and soon they were in an elevator riding to the top of the high-rise. Brand had taken care of everything, ordering room service—five porterhouse steaks, rare—and their bags had been whisked upstairs. Clothes would be laid out, the bed turned back and after the food was delivered they'd be totally alone to help Tab through her first shift.

\* \* \* \* \*

"So, what do you think?" Brand asked softly.

Tab had her hands pressed against the large window in the living room area of their suite. Snow drifted down onto an idyllic scene. It was strange how all the ugliness of a city was masked by the frozen white crystals falling from the sky.

"It is beautiful. I want to be out there frolicking in it. That's so silly, though. I've never been someone who plays in the snow. And I'm near thirty, a little old for a delayed childhood." She winced, as if her words were somehow embarrassing.

Brand couldn't wait to take both Tab and Wes to the shifter retreat in South Dakota. She'd love romping in the snow with the other animals, shifter and otherwise.

"Tabitha, life as you know it has changed now. You will never be the same. You'll have to make every life decision while considering your shifter needs and desires. You've changed both inside and outside. I'll be here to help you and Wes with it. After you eat, we're going to bring that pretty kitty out to play."

She rubbed her arms in what appeared to be a gesture of comfort. "I have so many questions..."

Brand led her to the couch and settled her beside her husband. He chose to sit in the desk chair, a short distance away. If he touched either of them, he'd lose control and fuck them and Tab needed her rest right now.

Ignoring his desires for the moment, Brand began explaining the shifter society to Tab, starting with birth. He could tell that she was trying to wrap her mind around the fact that her parents had been shifters as well and wasn't surprised when she mentioned that they'd passed away when she was very young.

Without parents to lead the way, Tab must have been at sea. The Council tried to keep track of latent shifters, but clearly Tab had slipped through the cracks. Brand was impressed with the way she asked clear and well-thought questions. She was shocked and stunned, but seemed to be handling the revelation as best as could be expected.

After they ate, Tabitha told the men she needed a nap. Brand stayed behind as her husband tenderly tucked her in. He was really falling for this couple, an unexpected but welcomed magical serendipity. This all felt so *right*.

All of a sudden, he felt the need to speak to his spirit father, Nekhema. The wise man would be able to help him sort through his feelings. Decision made, he left Wes and Tab a note, took one of the room keys and his cell phone and walked down the corridor toward the stairs leading to the roof. Since the storm had brought them together, it only seemed right for him to be within it now.

The wind was cold but refreshing, the snow falling heavily. Brand was comfortable in the cold weather, his shifter metabolism adjusting to his body's needs.

"Spirit Father," he spoke into the phone. Brand regarded Nekhema as his second father. The man's wisdom and compassion made him Brand's most trusted advisor in Council matters.

"My son. Destiny has found you, I see."

“You see?” Brand had no idea Nekhema was a seer as well, but very little surprised him.

“You don’t deny it, lion cub. This is very telling. I dreamed of them, a man and a woman, both cats. You have shared yourself with them. They have touched your heart and soul, Brand. To not pursue this connection would mean that you are lying to yourself, denying yourself happiness for the greater good of your position. A leader especially must have happiness and mates to keep him calm and centered while making decisions. Let your responsibilities wait a while until you pursue this. All work and no play makes for a very grouchy shifter.”

Brand began pacing, agitated. “Why them, Father? I have walked alone for so many years and now...”

“And now your soul wants to love. Stop thinking with your head, cub. Think with your spirit and soul. Are these two your intended? If so, why fight it?”

“The politics—” Brand began, but the older man cut him off.

“The politics will not keep you or them warm at night! I have told you many times that when you find your intended, you will know it. Do you know it, my son?”

Brand sighed. Of course he knew it. He just didn’t know how to rationalize it. “Yes, Father. I know.”

Nekhema chuckled. “What is it you know, Brand?”

The old coot was going to make him say it. “I know that these two people are somehow my destiny. I feel complete with them. I must follow my heart and stop being a workaholic. The Council will manage without me for a short while. Shifter society won’t collapse in ruin if I’m not as attentive. Is that what you want to hear?”

“Exactly. Good. Now let an old man roam the woods. Go chase your destiny and I will chase mine. Perhaps a small stewed rabbit will do. They give such good chase.”

“Father! Please leave Leslie and Bronwyn alone. Eating my cousins is not the way to stay in my good books!”

The older man sighed quite dramatically. "Fine then. I will go to the market like a human. Now go, son. I'll smooth over things here and prepare your family for the announcement. And Brand? I'm very happy for you. Your voice projects your sense of peace and this is a peace I have long worried would pass you by. Open your heart, love and live. Allow them to see inside you. The leopard and the panther will never harm you."

## Chapter Five



Wes paced the hotel suite, waiting for Brand. The man had left a brief note saying he'd be back soon. The weather outside was awful. He hoped that Brand hadn't ventured outside. Even with the added strength of the shifter blood, Wes knew it was dangerous for both man and beast out there right now.

His worry for the virtual stranger had rocked him. How could he have such a depth of worry and care for a man they'd just met? It was as if the entire day was just meant to be. He'd let another man take the reins and had been perfectly comfortable with that. Socially as well as sexually, they all seemed to fit together.

Unable to settle down, Wes paced the room, his worry allowing his panther to rule his motions. In a few seconds, he had his clothes off, the change coming over him, familiar and comforting. Now a sleek feline, he padded around the room, sniffing Brand's belongings. A small sound rumbled up from his throat. He liked this man even more in panther form—his scent was intoxicating.

Brand made his way back to the suite. Tab would probably sleep for a couple of hours, and he wanted to use that time to get to know Wes better. The other man intrigued him, Wes' quiet nature held a lot of mysteries.

As Brand opened the door, he heard a strange noise, a throaty snuffle. "Hi there, kitty." He spoke softly and low, entering the room in measured steps. The cat made a small noise—satisfaction mixed with healthy interest—and came closer, pawing at Brand's pants.

"Whoa. Wait just a minute, Wes. I'm not into blood sports." He could have sworn that the big cat smiled. Brand crossed to the bathroom, closing the panther out, and



removed his clothes. This would be better than trying to remove them with a randy panther clawing at them. With luck, he'd still have some clothes intact. Shifting for him was instantaneous and painless, even in the small confines of the bathroom. Thankful that he had reopened the bathroom door before turning *furry*, he nosed the door the rest of the way open and padded over to the panther, emitting a small warning growl. They needed to establish the pecking order in this new feline pack and it was best they did it before Tabitha changed.

He *would* win. He knew it, Wes probably knew it as well, but they had to come to physical blows in animal form before they could have peace as a human ménage. It was just the way it had to be. Brand wouldn't draw the panther's blood if he could help it and would never strike a debilitating blow.

He began to circle the other man, lunging suddenly and striking a strong blow that pushed the panther back. Wes huffed out a breath, then jumped on him and the game began.

They sparred for what seemed like an eternity, dodging and lunging, catching fur in fangs and swiping claws shallowly across pelts. Finally, Brand had the upper hand in this well-matched fight. Wes was almost as dominant as him.

Brand stood behind Wes in the classically dominant pose, the other man's neck clamped firmly in his teeth. Both men had grown very aroused, but Brand wouldn't penetrate anyone when he was fully *furry*, though he wanted to plunge inside the other man so badly. It skirted too close to the bestiality line for him.

Tabitha awakened slowly. She wondered if the Valentine's Day events had been just a dream. But the sheets here were much crisper than hers and she couldn't smell Wes beside her. Something didn't seem quite right.

She lifted her hand to scratch her nose and then squeaked, a lethal-looking claw extended from a spotted paw. She'd nearly taken her eye out! Tabitha moved without legendary feline grace, her claws catching on the bedding. She slid out of bed in a heap,

shook herself off. She caught her reflection in a mirror and stopped, shocked. Gleaming tan and brown fur covered her body in a thick luxurious pelt. Her face was fully feline, only her eyes stayed the same color. And she had a muscular tail. She twitched it, accidentally knocking a vase off a table. Tab let out a low growl as she was splashed with water, the shock offending her more than the sensation.

Now that she had seen her transformation, she padded to the door, nosing it open a bit more. There was a lion in the room! The lion looked almost as though he was having sex with a gorgeous black panther. Both made low guttural sounds, the lion pressing the panther down.

Tabitha maneuvered the door until it was open enough for her to walk through. As she approached, the lion looked up, his nose quivering, his eyes curious. It was instinct that made her move closer, rubbing her cheek against his, huffing into his gorgeous mane. This magnificent creature had to be Brand.

Tabitha lowered herself to the ground, nose to nose with the panther now, and stropped her forehead against his nose. His long pink tongue came out to lick her face. Her emotions flowed pure and simple through her and she reveled in the ease and rightness of being a shifter. She had found some small part of her soul that had always been lost.

So this was what shifting was all about!

She wanted to feel these big luxurious cats against her, she wanted to know the similarities and differences between them. Hoping they would follow, Tab curled up under the window, tucking her face under her paws. Within seconds, one cat then the other snuggled against her, their rumbling sounds soothing.

She was home now. Her new life was with both of these exciting and sensual shifters. She burrowed close to both of them, thankful for the gift they had brought out in her. She'd never be the same again.

Wes awoke to find both Tabitha and Brand sleeping in human form beside him. While his neck ached a bit, all of the small cuts and bruises the lion had inflicted were gone now. He glanced at Brand, no bruises or cuts marred the perfection of the other man's skin.

Being submissive to the alpha was something he'd have to get used to, but he trusted Brand enough to know that this was the best thing for them all. Although he had been the dominant partner in his marriage, there was a certain freedom in submitting to this man's leadership. And it really couldn't have worked any other way. Brand held the highest office in the shifter world—what message would it send if he was second to Wes?

Wes moved closer to the blond, brushing his hair back and kissing him tenderly. For this man and this man alone, he'd take his place at Brand's side. He had ignored his heritage and yearnings for far too long.

"Hi, Wes." Tabitha's sleepy voice and sensual smile energized him.

"Hello, little spotted one. How do you feel?"

She sat up and stretched, lifting her beautiful breasts high. "Energized. Fully alive. I don't quite know how to describe it. I feel like I can conquer the world."

"Well, what about conquering us instead?" Brand's voice was similarly sleepy and mellow.

Tabitha wormed her way between the two men, stroking both cocks at the same time. Each man found and fondled a nipple. They were relaxed and enjoying this intimate time together. The ultimate goal wasn't orgasm, it was in their shared togetherness, in the rightness of their triad.

"This is forever." Wes had to voice the words.

"Forever," his two lovers echoed.

## **Chapter Six**



It took a few days to get Wes and Tabitha's affairs in order. Both quit their jobs — they'd find new ones in California. They sold the furniture they didn't love and movers packed the belongings they wanted. Now they were ready to leave Wisconsin and their former lives behind.

Tabitha took Brand's and Wes' hands as they surveyed the empty house. Both husband and wife were a little sad at the transformation of their lives, but eagerly looked forward to their life in California with their new husband. Brand smiled fondly at them. They were a unit within the overall triad, but instead of being angry or jealous of this, Brand learned to take their bond as one facet of the whole. He and Tabitha had begun to relate on a deeper level and he was looking forward to creating a deeper connection with Wes.

Without speaking, husband and wife said silent goodbyes to their former life and the three shifters walked out the door into a brilliant sunny day. They were ready for this new chapter.

Four hours later, after being cramped in overgrown tin cans with wings and wheels, they arrived at a sprawling property. Acres and acres of trees were dusted with snow and the only structure was a sprawling ranch house set in a small grove.

"Time to meet your family," Brand announced.

Brand kissed Tabitha's nose and pulled his new family toward the door. As they approached, Nekhema threw the door open and ran outside.

"Brand! My son! Welcome home!" The wizened older man pulled Brand into a tight embrace. "Welcome home, my son. You have been missed. And who are these beautiful people?" Nekhema's dark eyes twinkled with merriment.

“Spirit Father, I bring many gifts. The biggest and most important is my new triad. I wish to present my new family to you. Please bless them and make them welcome at your hearth. Please share your wisdom, your knowledge and your love with them. Father, please meet Tabitha and Wesley Downes-Hove. My beloved, my soul.”

Nekhema kissed both Tab and Wes on each cheek. When he stepped back, the tracks of his tears were visible. “Welcome, my new son and daughter. May you live long and happy lives with your husband Brand. Now, come inside and meet the rest of your family. We have been waiting an eternity for Brand to find the other parts of his soul. You are most welcomed in my heart and hearth. I just have one rule. Don’t eat the rabbits.”

Tabitha, Wes and Brand linked arms, walking confidently into their new lives.

## About the Author

Alexa and Patrick are a happily married couple who share their love of reading and happily-ever-afters.

Patrick is the technical geek and he makes sure everything makes sense. This superhero(in Alexa's mind, anyway) can leap tall plot holes in a single bound and defeat logic issues with a slash of his mighty sword.

Alexa is the creative type and she makes sure the romance is high on spice. This love chef mixes Alpha heroes with self-assured heroines, adds a liberal dash of sexual tension and bakes.

Their combined love of books, animal rescue and their family are only a few of the interests they share. While Alexa can often be found at her computer plotting their next project, or reading electronic books, Patrick prefers the challenge of computer games. Their reading tastes are quite different. Patrick loves to read stories from some of the latest and greatest authors in science fiction, while Alexa prefers to curl up with some of her favorite romance authors. They are each other's best friend and maintain that romance, like fine wine, only gets stronger and richer with age.

Alexa & Patrick live in the Northeast with their family.

Alexa and Patrick welcome comments from readers. You can find their website and email address on their author bio page at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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