

Changeling Press

DAWG TOWN



DAWGS

PUPPY DAWG

CAMILLE ANTHONY

Dawg Town: Puppy Dawg

Camille Anthony

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ISBN: 978-1-60521-265-4

Formats Available:

HTML, Adobe PDF,

MobiPocket, Microsoft Reader

Publisher:

Changeling Press LLC

PO Box 1046

Martinsburg, WV 25402-1046

www.ChangelingPress.com

Editor: Margaret Riley

Cover Artist: Reneé George

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Dawg Town: Puppy Dawg

Camille Anthony

Puppy. Quentin Mosely hates his nickname. He might be the youngest member of the Dawg motorcycle gang, but he's a grown male, one who's thinking about mating. Unfortunately, the female his tail is wagging for is the new librarian, and a human. Knowing a human/shifter relationship rarely succeeds, Quentin spends his days gazing hopelessly through the library windows at the luscious black woman.

Carly. Carlisle Brothers has the hots for teacher! She's moved to Barkus, Kansas -- the absolute middle of nowhere -- chasing peace and finds it in this back-of-beyond town. It's a slice of heaven... or it would be, if not for being overrun with prairie dogs. Still, she'd gladly put up with the little rodents if that sexy school teacher Quentin Mosely would tutor her on the ABC's of love. Unfortunately, she's an old-fashioned kind of gal, uncomfortable with making the first move. That's up to him.

It'll take a determined matchmaker, a summer storm, a missing baby, a huge misunderstanding and a sheriff with handcuffs to set these two stumbling lovers on the path to each other.

Dawg Town: Puppy Dawg

A night in jail wasn't Carly's ideal for her first date with Quentin Mosely, but she couldn't help laughing over how it all happened.

"What's so funny?"

The steely arm snaking around her ample middle to tug her against a broad chest stilled her giggles. His chest hair rasped across her nipples and she shivered, growing wet again. Quentin buried his nose in her collarbone, nuzzling the skin under her tucked chin, deliberately raking her with his morning whiskers.

"This whole situation. Admit it, Quen! Your sister Reba played you like a violin."

"She played us both, but I like the results too much to be angry. I waffled so much about approaching you, she must have thought I was a Weeble."

She drew back, brows bunching in puzzlement. "A who?"

Quentin's laughter softened the sharp cast of his features. "You know... Weebles wobble but they don't fall down. No?" he asked when her blank face must have told him how very far in the forest he'd left her. He shrugged. "They're rocking toy figures I used to play with. I forget you haven't been around kids much."

The unwelcome reminder wiped out Carly's laughter. "Can't freaking see how I could've forgotten I'm so much older than you."

Unbelievable as it sounded, Quentin was a prairie dog shifter, capable of changing from furry rodent to man at will. She'd watched him do it. She, on the other hand, was unadulterated human, and ten years his senior. She'd seen how much Quentin loved children... How could she burden him with a woman not only older, but barren?

His skillful lovemaking had made her forget her concerns last night, but this morning was a different matter. "Quen --"

His hand covered her mouth, stopped her words. "Don't tell me you can't have children and that should bother me, or that we can't be together because of a little age difference."

She removed his hand, dropped a kiss in his palm. "I will and I can't. Those are immutable facts."

Quentin sighed. "You're a disobedient woman. Add that to your facts. Carly, I love you. I'm sorry you can't bear children. I know you want them. We prairie dogs are among the most prolific animals on the planet. We have scores of pups and everyone treats the babies as common property. You'll be overrun with our nieces and nephews. When you decide you want one of your own, we can adopt."

Quentin went up on his knees, framed her face with his hands. His black eyes, gleaming with an emotion she hoped to her depths was love, met hers. "Carly Brothers, I don't just love who you are now, I love the you you'll become. We prairie dogs respect age and wisdom. When you reach the winter of your years, I'll still be there to cuddle with you and keep you warm. I'll never walk away from us, but what about you?"

"Me?"

"You're all I want, but what do you want?"

Carly threw her arms around Quentin. "That's simple. You. I love you."

"Now, yes, but what if you grow to resent me? You're bright and ambitious, but you can't advance your career by staying in Barkus. I left once. The outside world was horrible. I saw things..." Quentin shook his head. "I'm different. I can't stay human when I've used too much energy. In Barkus, that doesn't matter much. Can you live with that?"

"Oh, Quentin..." She tightened her arms around him, but again avoiding her answer, he closed her mouth by kissing her. Keeping their mouths merged, he took her down to the narrow mattress, pushing her legs apart and reclaiming the space he'd made his their first time.

Carly growled her encouragement. His eagerness was endearing. And exciting. "You gonna fuck me, baby?"

“Every chance I get... harder than last night. Longer than last night.”

“Impossible!”

His hands coasted over her breasts and down her belly, delving for the hot wet delta he'd sensitized to his touch. Beneath her skin, nerves sparked, lighting up her insides. Carly shivered under him, watching how his gaze lingered on the round curve of her full breasts and the slope of protruding tummy. His eyes lit up with pure, unfeigned enjoyment and she smiled, glad he liked what he saw.

Quentin's lips were warm and moist, his tongue slightly rough as it meandered up and down her body, smoothed over the dark stretch of skin of her belly on their way to her mons. He parted the puffy lips of her sex with his thumbs and exposed her erect clit, paused to glance up at her. She'd never been the recipient of such focused emotion and she felt the resultant flush of hot blood heating both her face and her pussy. Carly curled her fingers into the thatch of black hair at his nape, shivering at the heat flooding his black eyes.

“The way you look at me...” Her voice shook.

“With awe. Your body is so lovely.” He circled her clit with a long forefinger. “Now this spot is beautiful. It's a good thing it was dark last night,” he murmured as his fingers played in her folds, swirling her spilling fluid around her throbbing nubbin. “I'd never have moved past this luscious tidbit. This morning, I'm going to suck your clit until you scream. Is that okay with you?”

His eyes met hers when he asked the question, his large black pupils glinting with humor and something darker. Carly gulped, her belly clenching as she wordlessly nodded her head, yes. God, she ached to feel his tongue, craved it almost more than she craved his cock pressing into her, stretching the narrow confines of her pussy. “More than okay.”

“Open for me, then,” he crooned, giving her just enough time to obey before placing his mouth over her pussy and sucking.

“Ah gawd, yes!” Carly cried out as her torso curled up, feeling the suctioning draw all the way to the tips of her breasts. Quentin's hands rode up her body and pushed

her back down, firm fingers tweaking and twisting her nipples into sharp peaks as he continued rooting between her folds. His nibbling and licking kept her clit stiff, made it throb and her juices stream out.

Quentin groaned and lapped harder, digging his tongue in the tight opening of her sex. She clutched at him when he pulled out to meet her frenzied stare. "Don't stop!"

With a husky laugh, he swiped his lips with his tongue. "I've no intention of quitting so soon. You taste divine!"

"Then stop playing and eat me!"

The wicked grin on his teasing face was so sexy her toes curled. Carly fisted thick locks of his hair for leverage and pulled him down to her. She rocked her hips, forced her pussy against his mouth by tugging on his captured locks. She came twice before he again released her swollen clit with a meaty plop.

"Enough foreplay!" Coming to his knees, Quentin worked his cock with one fist. "Over on your belly. Raise that plump ass for me."

Last night, she'd explored every inch of Quin's body, fascinated at how such a tiny critter could change into a five-foot, eleven-inch man with a nine-inch cock that tasted better than the finest *cordon bleu* meal. This morning, she was content to let him lead. Panting, she quickly obeyed, eager to be fucked. She could feel his hips pressing against her bottom.

"Guide me in, Carly."

She braced on one hand and reached to grab his cock, tugging it toward her pussy. Unable to keep still as he fitted the thick head to the tight mouth, Carly rocked her hips back. "Hurry..."

"What a nasty little girl you are, begging for cock. I love having a wild, bad girl in my bed."

Carly flung her head back, swinging her hips in invitation. "Yes, Quentin... I'm a nasty girl who wants her pussy fucked by your long, thick cock."

"Only very naughty girls need cock this badly. Do you like being naughty, Carly?"

She stilled, swung her head around to stare at him. "I love being whatever you want me to be. I need your cock more than I need air to breathe."

The stinging swat caught her unawares, releasing a new flood of juices. "Ahhhhhh!"

Quentin continued swatting her as he swirled the head of his cock in her gushing cream, stopping only when he began pushing into her cunt. His relentless entry forced her pussy to stretch around his girth. Once seated to the balls, he firmed his grip on her hips, leaned over her back and gruffly whispered in her ear, "I'm about to fuck you like the nasty girl you are!"

"Yes, please!"

Quen set a pounding rhythm, his hard thrusts making Carly's breasts bounce and her flesh jiggle. Moaning, almost sobbing at the welcome sensation of fullness, she squeezed down, gripped the thick cock drilling her pussy. She could feel every ropy vein of the surprisingly hefty organ as it blazed through her depths, its heat scorching the walls of her vagina, each stroke creating streamers of mind-blowing sensation along her twitching nerve endings.

"Come for me, baby." A blunt finger worked its way between her folds to thrum her clit and Carly flew apart. Vaguely, she heard Quentin's lusty cries as he came with her, felt his hot seed spilling deep in her belly as her orgasm flashed over her, stealing her thoughts...

Exhausted, drunk on the potent mix of pheromones their sweaty bodies had produced, Carly collapsed face-down on the mattress, murmuring a slurred thank you when Quen covered her with the thin spread. Too tired to turn her head, she groped for his hand and squeezed, letting actions speak louder than words.

Beside her, Quentin groaned and stretched. "God, we keep getting better! I want you again before Mike comes over with breakfast." He patted her hand. "You can be on top this time."

Carly snorted. "This makes what? Three times this morning! And we fucked at least four times last night. You don't have to prove anything to me."

"Not trying to. Just trying to make up for lost time. This time yesterday, we hadn't even kissed..."

* * *

How it all began...

Quentin Mosely braced his paws against the glass and peered through the bottom window of the library, the only one he could reach in his present form. Sneaking away to ogle the new librarian was insane. He'd seen her from afar and liked what he saw, but ever since their lunch meeting to plan a fieldtrip for his English class, he'd been unable to get the luscious black woman off his mind.

Third period math had been a bitch. The unruly pups, along with the few human students that attended Barkus Elementary, had played him for his lapse. He'd get back at them with a surprise quiz, but right now, none of that mattered.

Quentin couldn't understand this driven need to enact the Prairie Dawg version of a peeping Tom. He only knew he had to see her, smell her, be as close to her as he could get. His nose twitched, trying to catch a sniff of her through the glass.

Carly, Carly, Carly...

Her name -- full of fun and curves -- was a mantra chanted in his mind. He liked wrapping his human tongue around the syllables. He liked the way she looked, too. From her pretty dark brown eyes that seemed to be always smiling, to the round, compact shape she carried with a serene acceptance he'd rarely noted among humans. He leaned closer to the window.

God, he wanted to touch that full head of fluffy black kinky twists falling to her gently sloping shoulders, softening the lines of her round face. Her dark, creamy smooth skin -- reminding him of rich loamy prairie dirt after a spring rain -- stretched across wide cheekbones. Freckles dotted the flat bridge of her wide, button nose. He just

knew she was ripe for burrowing into. What he wouldn't give to explore her fertile field, dig deep in her dark tunnels. If only she wasn't human...

"Puppy, is that you?"

Quentin froze. He knew that voice.

"What the hell are you doing skulking around the library in dawg form? You know this part of town isn't familiar with our... peculiar traits."

Looking way up, he sighed to see Logan Smith staring down at him, his lovely fiancée, Kaylee, hanging on his arm. Damn it, being found this way, by this particular gossipy dawg, was the last thing Quentin needed. He was never going to live this down.

"Hi, Mr. Mosely. What are you looking at?" Kaylee peered over his head into the large main area of the library. Her eyes widened. "Oh, I see!"

Logan wasn't looking in the window. He was focused on Quentin. "Puppy, what are you thinking, running around town in your natural shape? Someone's gonna step on you, if you're not careful."

Quentin resented Logan's interference. Just because he was the youngest member of the biker group that hung out at the Prairie Dawg Saloon didn't give Logan the right to treat him like a baby. He wasn't a child, damn it.

Kaylee aimed a light slap at her boyfriend's arm, laughing. "Logan, it's obvious what he's doing. He has the hots for the new librarian!"

Incensed, Quentin chittered at Kaylee, baring his teeth in frustration. Her soft laughter made him want to sink lower than a field mouse, but while he battled with his embarrassment, he couldn't help noticing his lack of sexual response to her. Once, he'd thought about challenging Logan for a chance at her, but no longer. The realization was sobering.

Quentin turned his head and stared, really giving Kaylee a good once-over. She was just as pretty as before, though now she was mated with Logan she no longer gave off those "fuck me" vibes. That should be it, but Quentin didn't think so. His nose had

latched on to something -- someone -- a whole lot sweeter to him than the half-breed shifter.

No. Impossible. The librarian wasn't one of them. She wasn't a shifter. Why was he harboring thoughts of mating when nothing permanent could come of this inappropriate attraction?

Sure, the rare human was okay finding out their lover was a shifter, but most couldn't handle it. Also, cross-species romances weren't easy. Just look what happened to poor Blake -- Kaylee's father -- turned into road-kill trying to get back to his human mate. The outside world was hard on prairie dog shifters.

Kaylee bit her lip, fidgeting as if debating with herself. After a few false starts, she finally blurted out, "I heard she'd been in a car accident that rendered her incapable of having children."

Logan had been remarkably silent, but now he yanked his startled gaze off Quentin and stared through the window. When he looked back down the look on his face said it all. Whistling in disbelief, Logan burst into raucous laughter. "Oh Puppy, you're so fucked!"

Embarrassed at being caught mooning, Quentin bared his teeth and barked, letting his erstwhile friend know how he felt about his teasing. Refusing to stay and be insulted, he dropped to all fours and scurried to the nearby alley. He raced through the narrow lane to the back door of his sister's bakery, Logan's loud guffaws ringing in his ears long after he'd outdistanced the annoying mechanic.

* * *

"So, tell me little brother. Did you do more than stare through the window at her this time?"

Startled, Quentin glanced over his shoulder. His eldest sister leaned in the open doorway of her pantry/stock room, arms crossed over her massive chest. Frowning, he grabbed up his clothes and held them over his groin. "Reba, how many times do I have to tell you I'm a grown assed male? You need to respect my privacy."

He turned, shook out his pants and had one leg in his trousers when a thought occurred to him. Quentin swung his head around and glared at her. "How did you know where I was? You *spying* on me?"

"You little beast!" Reba twirled her towel, swatting his naked ass. The flicking contact smarted like a wasp's sting.

"Ow!" Quentin tried to dodge.

"You *are* my business, little brother. Don't tell me to mind my own." She swung at him again, connecting.

"Ow!" He made an abortive grab at the towel.

Reba easily eluded him. "I dug your burrows when you were a pup, and that wasn't too long ago. So don't give me lip about seeing your skinny flanks. I'm a mated dawg with pups."

"You're not my mate and I'm not a baby anymore. Stop eyeing my stuff!"

"Too late. I've seen everything you've got, Puppy." She flicked the towel from hell one last time.

"Ow, Reba, quit it. That hurts!" Quentin hopped around awkwardly, trying to get beyond the long reach of her towel and pull his pants up at the same time.

His sister smirked as she folded the torture cloth over her arm. "That was for talking snappy to me." She gave him *the look*. "Who's the head of this family?"

"You are." Quentin admitted, zipping his pants and rubbed his stinging ass through the denim cloth. "That doesn't mean you get a say in whether I decide to talk to Carly."

He buttoned his shirt, slipped on his loafers and walked past his sister, into the kitchen. A mound of oven-fresh dinner rolls steamed on a cooling tray and he grabbed a few, stuffing one in his mouth, chewing with relish. "These are great."

"Stay out my rolls. They're on the restaurant menu for dinner." Reba hustled him away with the threat of the rolled up towel, and then returned to their earlier conversation as if there'd been no break.

"I'm through trying to match you with a female from around here. You turned your nose up at Rose and her sister, and Kaylee didn't pan out. I've decided I like your librarian, Carly. Stop eyeing her through the window. Wait too long, even the human won't want your decrepit body."

Quentin laughed. "I'm not that old in human years, Reba."

She waved away his protest and steamrolled on. "What's holding you back? You want her. I can smell lust a mile away."

Quentin swallowed, the roll feeling like sawdust in his mouth. "You said it. She's human. They're different. Look how Charlotte turned out to be the front woman for that *El Foresteros* drug gang. Our kind doesn't do things like that." He held up a hand, forestalling Reba's interruption. "I'm not tarring Carly with Charlotte's guilt. Thing is... I've lived in the human world. It's a hard place for us shifters. Perhaps the wolves and other predators handle it better, but I know I couldn't be happy staying there. Carly... she's bright and young, like a miniature sun full of energy. She won't be content to stay in this backwater hole long."

"You'll never know without asking, bro. Something brought her here. I can't imagine she was forced to come."

"I already love her. If she leaves it will tear my heart in two." Quentin trilled sadly, "*Isn't it better never to begin something destined to end?*"

Reba snorted. "Not always! Puppy, I know she's attracted to you. What if she's too old fashioned to make a move? Or confused by the hot and cold signals you're giving? You really want to go through life missing what you could've had?"

"What if she laughs in my face?"

Reba sighed. "Then, little brother, I'll bake you a batch of dinner rolls and let you chase them with whiskey. And when you go to ground I'll watch over you while you heal."

Quentin blew out a gusty breath. "I don't think my broken heart would ever heal."

"Spoken like a true coward..."

Quentin guffawed, amused. She'd tried that trick too many times. "Forget it, Reba. You can't bully me. I readily admit my cowardice where Carly is concerned. Discussion over."

Reba squinted her eyes and opened her mouth. He held up his hands. "Stop! I've got a stack of papers to grade and a pop-quiz to prepare. When that's finished, I'll be down at the Saloon, hanging with the Dawgs."

"You're the youngest of the group but you're still too old to waste time hanging with those bikers. You need to work at securing a mate."

Quentin's jaw clenched. He wasn't doing this again.

Reba harrumphed and brushed non-existent wrinkles from her apron, something she did when agitated. "Go. There's no getting through to you." Belatedly, she asked, "What about dinner?"

Quentin filched four more rolls from the pan and held them up with a grin. "This is dinner enough for me."

"Damn it, Quentin, I told you to leave my rolls alone." She chased him out of the kitchen, brandishing her trusty towel and Quentin laughed at her empty threats. He'd heard them all since childhood.

* * *

Her brother's dejected stance when he thought himself out of sight made Reba's heart bleed for him. Damned pup was stubborn. But Reba was, too. She'd investigated the new librarian the moment Quentin had shown an interest in her. She'd found out Carly Brothers never planned to leave Barkus. The information made Reba more determined to push Quentin in the girl's direction.

As head of her family, it was her duty to see that all the members were healthy, wealthy and happily mated. Reba chattered to herself, pulling off her apron hanging it on the rack. Setting her shoulders, she marched toward home. Some things a prairie dog matron had to see to herself...

* * *

Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!

Pushing at her slipping reading glasses, Carly Brothers glanced up from the stack of Dewey decimal cards. She'd swear that was a newborn's cry. She contemplated checking it out, but loud claps of thunder, followed by an eye-searing lightning flash made her rethink that option. No use getting soaked for what was most likely a chimera conjured by her lonely mind.

Sadly, having lost her ability to have one of her own, she now had babies on the brain. Since getting up close and almost personal with that lip-smackingly handsome schoolteacher, Quentin Mosely, all her fantasy babies sported his dark hair and intense black eyes.

The man fit her personal fantasies to a T. He resembled that actor, Milo V-something-or-other, who played Peter Petrelli on *Heroes*, though Quentin was built a tad blockier than Milo. That was all right with her. Carly loved something substantial to hold on to while coming. She'd be the first to admit she could go wild when the loving got good. Unfortunately, electronic boyfriends didn't have a "wild" button. She'd been tame for over two long years.

That might be changing... Carly smiled, thinking about her meeting with Quentin Mosely. For an hour, they'd poured over particulars for an introductory tour of the library followed by an orientation on the computers. Just listening to his voice had set her pulse racing, her pussy creaming, and her fantasies working overtime. By the time he'd left, all she could think about was getting him naked to see if that bulge in his jeans was all *him*.

Not that it would matter. With a wistful sigh, Carly settled her ample hips on her high stool and got back to work, mind still on the hunky teacher. Quentin was one fine man. He'd been so nice, too. She couldn't see him dumping his fiancée just because she could no longer have babies... not like her scummy ex-fiancée, Curtis.

On top of that blow, the news of her brother's death had sent her spinning into depression. The military stated he'd died in Iraq, a victim of friendly fire. In lieu of a body -- there hadn't been enough to ship home -- they'd delivered a virtual vault full of

guilt money. A small percentage had been Daniel's saved wages, the rest the government's official apology for screwing up.

As the old feelings welled, Carly braced her hands on the cabinet and closed her eyes, breathing deep and slow. Calm was the first step in banishing the insidious drag on her emotions, the bleak emptiness that made her feel her life was worthless without her brother or hope of children. The second was reminding herself how far she'd come...

You will not go back to being that burned out shell you became after the wreck and the news of Daniel's death. You've picked up the pieces and moved on...

To this dried up piece of dirt masquerading as a town. Barkus, Kansas. Which might as well be a different planet. No crowds, no pollution and virtually no crime. Without the brightness of city lights, the night sky was luminous with stars.

This place holds the peace and calm I need to reclaim my life.

Here, she could do something noteworthy with her life by restoring this neglected library. Twenty years from now, today's school children would be grownups bringing their children in for books and whispering about that dried up old Ms. Brothers, the one who'd been the librarian forever...

With a shake of her head, Carly blinked and got back to work, her dark fingers flying as she filed the index cards in the long narrow drawers. "I can't wait to bring the Barkus Public library into the twenty-first century. I couldn't spend Uncle Sam's guilt money on a better project. Once I've ditched this antiquated system, put all this information on computer and gotten all the units running the new programming, things will go smooth as silk."

So far, there'd been only a few curious gawkers, but Carly hoped to see the traffic increase after Mr. Mosely brought his class here and the children convinced their parents to bring them back. Once the townspeople regained their trust in librarians, they'd see she'd planned a bunch of wonderful programs for the community.

Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!

This time, Carly knew she'd heard a cry.

Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah! There! A thin, high-pitched cry almost drowned out by the thundering clash of lightning generated by the furious summer storm.

Oh my God! I should have checked earlier. Carly leapt off the stool and rushed toward the front of the building where she struggled with the door against the raging wind.

Once opened, chilly rain poured through the door in torrents, drenching her and plastering her curls to her forehead. She squinted against the slashing drops, gazing down at some type of primitive hooded cradle. From inside the basket, angry cries -- much louder with no heavy doors between them -- poured out.

Carly bent and picked up the bundle, hunching her shoulders over it to shield it from the downpour. Peeking under the rickety cover, she saw a tiny face, scrunched up in anger. Fists clenched tight, mouth opened wide, the infant screamed its outrage at the top of its lungs.

"There, little one, its okay. Carly has you now."

At the sound of her soft crooning, the baby's cries ceased abruptly. Huge button eyes opened. The baby stared, mouth agape, until a tiny fist found its way between pouting lips.

Carly's heart turned over as she stared down at the infant. Feeling for the door knob, not willing to take her gaze off the baby, she wrestled the unwieldy basket through the opening.

Deciding to close down the library so she could take the baby home, she tidied up and set the alarms, making sure the doors were locked. Carly tucked her purse inside the makeshift basket alongside the baby, readied herself for the onslaught, then held her coat overhead, guarding the baby as she dashed out into the storm, making a beeline for the small three-roomed cottage that came with the librarian's job.

* * *

Quentin stared at his distraught sister. "What do you mean, Timmy is missing? Where and when did you last see him?"

Reba wrung her hands frantically. "I left him with someone I thought I could trust, but when I went back, he was gone. No one was around. Please help me, Quen. Edison is going to kill me... or divorce me!"

"I might kill you myself, but you know Edison won't divorce you. We mate for life. How long has Timmy been missing?"

"What does it matter? Here!" She pushed a small blue garment at him. "Sniff this for Timmy's scent and go find him!"

He crushed the tiny T-shirt in his fist. "Damn it, Reba, I'm a prairie dawg, not a blood hound."

"With a great sense of smell." His sister's lips trembled. "Are you telling me you won't help me find your nephew?"

"No! God, no!" Quentin sighed. "How could you even think such a horrible thing? But you're rushing me. If you haven't told Ed, who else is searching? Where have they looked, so I don't waste time covering the same ground?"

Reba huffed. "Do you see anyone else here?"

The look around was reflexive. "No."

"That's who I told. And no one is looking, 'cause you're just standing here. Opposable thumbs denote higher development, so quit twiddling yours, pull your brains out of your ass and go find Timmy."

"Okay, calm down, Reba. I'm going. Where will you be if I need to get in touch with you?"

She rolled her eyes. "Right here. Where else would I be? Why are you still here?"

"Try to calm down, sis. I just need to gather some facts..."

"The fact is, your nephew is gone and you're doing nothing about it! You know what Quentin... you stay here in case someone brings him in, and I'll look for Timothy."

"I'll forgive your agitation because I know how frantic you must be." Quentin couldn't put his paw on it, but something was not right. He also knew his sister was a fiercely protective mother. No way would she joke about Timmy missing.

Quentin brought the tiny shirt she'd tossed him to his nose, taking a long, slow sniff. Milk breath and baby powder and beneath that, a layer of other lingering aromas... the indefinable smell of family. He had the scent. "I'll find your baby for you, sis. Don't worry." Quentin pressed his lips against Reba's forehead. She'd been the only mother he'd known; looming so large in his life he often forgot how small she was physically. He topped her by a good seven inches.

She patted his cheek. "I know you will, Puppy. I'm not worried about that one bit."

Prairie dogs might not be predators, but seeing his sister hurt like this made Quentin feel positively wolfish. "I promise you this. When I find who took your baby, I'll spend a long time making them pay."

Reba smiled. "I'm counting on that."

* * *

Quentin scampered through the pouring rain, chittering angrily. Like most prairie dogs, he hated getting wet. Hell, as a prairie dog, he didn't even drink water. None of them did. They drew the moisture they required from their diet of various grasses and the occasional small insect.

Timmy's scent led him across the middle of Main Street, a half block from the Saloon. Quentin decided to stop in and ask his friends for help. None of the Dawgs were in evidence. Jumping onto one of the special benches kept for when the shifters were in fur, he couldn't help stuffing his cheeks full of shelled sunflower seeds as he barked an explanation to Bucky, filling him in on the crisis.

The rotund Bucky played at being laid back and easygoing, but he was still a community guardian. A pup's safety was paramount. Hitching his pants up under his belly, he tugged at his open leather vest. Leaning over the bar, he shook his head. "Now that's a damn shame, Puppy. I'll alert the others. They'll be glad to help find Reba's boy."

With a yip of thanks, Quentin scampered down and hurried off, for once not bothered by Bucky's use of his old nickname. Being the youngest member of the biker

game came with perks and drawbacks. He could live with everyone calling him “puppy” because they always had his back. He’d find the kidnapper. He only hoped the gang didn’t arrive on scene before he had some one-on-one time with the filthy bugger.

* * *

“Quentin just left. Should be at the cottage in five minutes.”

“It wasn’t supposed to storm!”

“A little rain never hurt a Dawg. Timmy will be fine,” Bucky muttered as he hung up the phone. *As for Quentin...* “I hope you know what you’re doing, Reba.”

* * *

Carly was soaked, but the baby had fared better. At least, she thought so until she started unwrapping him. “Goodness, you’re sopping wet. Let’s get you out of this soggy mess before we try to find out who you belong to.”

There was an envelope sticking out of the diaper bag’s pocket. “What’s this?” Carly smiled, holding it up so the baby could see. “A note is good. It means whoever left you didn’t really abandon you.”

Carly unfolded the note, tense with anticipation. There were only a few words. *I am desperate. I promise to return for my child shortly. Until then, please guard him! His name is Timmy.*

Wow. Sounded like either the mom or the baby was in danger. Maybe both. Carly set the note down and picked up the wriggling baby. “Poor Timmy, and poor mama... whoever she is. She asked me to hide you, but I’m not sure I can. Abandonment counts as abuse. As an employee of the city, I should turn you over to the Sheriff or Child Services.”

Carly wrestled with her decision to honor the mother’s request versus reporting the incident, as she knew deep down she should. In the end, she justified her decision to delay her report by the weather. “It’s storming and you don’t need to go out in that mess tonight, but if mom doesn’t return by tomorrow, I’ll have to call Child Services.”

She smiled at the now quiet babe nestled in her arms, chewing on his fist. "Meanwhile, handsome boy, I bet you're hungry..."

Carly surveyed her small kitchen, already knowing she wouldn't find anything in the way of baby food, unless you counted the instant hot chocolate she was addicted to. "Got to find something to feed you. Hey! Maybe..."

Acting on a hunch, Carly checked the diaper bag. Sure enough, her search turned up baby food, powdered formula, and empty bottles with a roll of liners. "Look, Timmy. Mom seems to have thought of everything. Dinner will be on the table... uh, make that in the bottle, in just a few minutes."

She cleaned up both baby and basket, removing the rain-soaked blankets and replacing them with a plush bath towel before returning him to his temporary crib. "Now, let's get you fed."

Not having purified or bottled water, she used the boiled water in the kettle to prepare two bottles of formula and one of plain water. They were too hot for the baby, so she set the bottles in the freezer for quick cooling. "How about we start you off with some pureed peaches, little bit?"

About the time she'd shoveled in the first spoonful, a loud burst of thunder roared, making Carly and the baby jump. "Where'd that come from? I didn't see lightning and that was too loud for the strike not to be close..."

The noise continued, and Carly realized the thunder was banging at the front door. The furious pounding increased and was joined by a voice yelling to be heard over the storm. "Oh, for goodness sake, who could be at the door in this storm? At this time of night?"

The thought occurred that it might be Timmy's mama.

"I'm betting she's had second thoughts about leaving you here, Timmy. Which is for the best. I'm already dreading the coming separation." She'd grown to care for this baby, but knew she couldn't keep him. Timmy obviously had a family that loved him. She tucked him back into his portable bed. "Wait here while I see who's at the door..."

"Who is it?" Carly hollered through the door, wishing the thing sported a peephole. She didn't like not knowing who or what might be on the other side. Using the door as a shield, she stuck her head around...

And fell down a rabbit hole.

A muskrat, or chipmunk -- no, it had to be one of those tailless squirrels called prairie dogs populating most of the flat land surrounding the town -- stood on her doorstep. It rested on its hind legs and had crossed its little clawed forelegs over its chest. Worse, it was *talking*! Carly's mouth flew open as she gaped at the apparition as it shook a finger up at her.

"For shame, Carly Brothers! Stealing a baby because you can't have one. I was wrong about you!"

Carly grew lightheaded, and her knees gave way. The next moment, she was on her butt on the living room floor, gaping up at a furious Quentin Mosely. She saw his mouth moving, but didn't process a thing, preoccupied as she was by the mind-numbing picture he presented.

She had to be in shock. How else could she stare in hungry disbelief as Quentin Mosely stood on widened legs with his long arms crossed, much like the angry rodent she'd seen before. *Where is that thing, anyway?*

See... shock. Why else would she be wondering about the whereabouts of a badger or mole or whathaveyou, with her hottest fantasy standing before her, boldly naked and -- *oh my gawd* -- showcasing a stiff erection that answered her earlier question about whether or not it was all him.

She tried to focus her eyes above his waist, but her gaze kept dropping to that long, thick column of straining cock. Carly's mouth watered and she absentmindedly swiped away drool. It'd been forever since she'd seen cock, let alone had one filling her atrophied sex. Scratch that. Jay-Jay had just come alive, gushing so much cream Carly squeezed her thighs together to trap the river. God, he made her wet.

"Why did you do something so insane? Were you trying to gain my attention?"

She certainly wanted his attention, but she didn't have a clue what he was babbling about. "Mr. Mosely... I don't understand... do what?"

"Stop playing innocent. I'm talking about you kidnapping my nephew!"

"Timmy is your nephew?"

"You don't deny kidnapping him."

"I don't have to deny it. The idea is ludicrous."

"Then you won't mind my searching your house?"

Carly swallowed. "Look, Timmy is here, but I didn't kidnap him."

Black slashing eyebrows rose over glinting black eyes and Carly cringed at the contempt Quentin's hard expression conveyed. Her lips thinned. "I can prove I didn't kidnap him."

"How?"

"I'll show you the note. Follow me." She pivoted on her heel and stomped toward the kitchen.

Quentin stalked behind the curvy woman, his cock dripping pre-cum as he eyed her swiveling hips. Focused on her ass, he almost bumped into Carly when she came to a dead stop in the doorway of the kitchen.

"Oh my God, he's gone!"

A glance past her revealed the back door standing wide open. Quentin strode to the door and glanced about. "Where did you hide him? Timmy could drown in this downpour!"

Carly ran to the refrigerator and snatched open the freezer door. "I prepared bottles of formula and water. They're gone!"

She appeared frantic, but Quentin was convinced she was a good actress. "You're saying Timmy got up, gathered the bottles and trotted out of here on his own?"

"Oh, shut the hell up and let me think..." Carly paced the small area, ticking off facts as she walked. "Everything is gone. The basket, the diaper bag, and the bottles that were in the fridge. There's nothing remaining to show Timmy was ever here with me."

She paused before him and looked up. Something in Quentin's chest tightened at the look of fear in her dark brown eyes. "We need to call Sheriff Winslow. Someone's kidnapped Timmy."

Quentin didn't know if she was faking, or if her fear was real. "His scent trail leads from the library straight to here."

Carly met his eyes, hers swimming with tears. "I swear I didn't..."

The sound of the front door crashing open interrupted her. Both turned to find Mike Winslow standing in the kitchen doorway, gun cocked, pointed at Carly. "Hands up! You're under arrest!"

He might've been angry with her, but Quentin wouldn't have anyone waving a gun in Carly's face. "Mike, stop pointing that thing at her."

"I mean it, Quentin, Ms. Brothers. Get your hands in the air, now!"

Quentin slowly raised his hands. "You smoking something, Mike? This is *me*, Quen."

"I know who you are, Puppy. Ms. Brothers, did you invite this man in?"

Carly, looking confused, glanced at him before answering. Quentin knew she was about to lie. In that instant, he knew she had nothing to do with Timmy's disappearance. "I busted in."

Mike nodded. "You're under arrest for trespassing."

"What?" Carly sounded outraged on his behalf.

"Ms. Brothers, did you find an infant on the library steps this evening?"

"Yes, I did."

"Did you move the infant more than fifteen feet?"

"What kind of person do you take me for? The baby was out in the rain. Of course I did."

"But you didn't contact Child Services?"

Her shoulders slumped. "No."

"You're under arrest for failure to report the alleged abandonment."

Mike threw a pair of handcuffs toward Quentin. He snagged them out of the air.
“You expect me to cuff myself?”

“Nope. I expect you to cuff Ms. Brothers.”

Quentin walked over to Carly, heart clenching at the sight of her trembling bottom lip. Keeping his voice low, he murmured, “You really did find Timmy on the front steps.”

“Uhuh.”

“I’m sorry I yelled at you.”

“It’s okay. Sheriff Winslow, you can’t arrest Quentin because it’s my house and I’m not pressing charges.”

“Fine, then he’s under arrest for indecent exposure.”

She blushed.

Quentin snapped the cuffs around Carly’s wrists. “Don’t bother arguing. He’s obviously under orders.” He shot a disgruntled look toward the grinning sheriff.
“Reba’s behind this. Mike is dating my niece.”

“Reba?”

“Timmy’s mama is my sister. She’s matchmaking, wants us together.”

“Quentin?” Her voice faltered.

He had to bend to catch her quiet whisper. “Yeah?”

“What do *you* want?”

“You.”

Her smile lit up the kitchen. “I think your exposure is glorious.”

Quentin’s cock sprang higher, preening. He snuck a quick kiss. “Thank God for that. For the record, I’ve dreamed about getting you exposed, too.”

Carly smiled. “You have?”

“Nice to see you two getting along.” Mike circled his gun, signaling Quentin to turn. “Barkus City Jail only has one cell so you’ll be spending the night together.” He clicked the cuffs closed and winked. “I sleep at home.”

Carly looked over at Quentin. He felt a rush of heat as her eyes roamed boldly over his nakedness. "So... do I consider this a date?"

Quentin laughed.

* * *

Present

Nerve endings still tingling from that last orgasm, Carly opened her eyes to find Quentin had shifted back to prairie dog form. She smiled, okay with his present shape seeing he'd exhausted himself making her extremely happy.

She picked her sleeping lover up and kissed his furry head, eyes tearing as he automatically nuzzled closer. "To answer your earlier question," she whispered in his tiny ear, "you're *more* than enough for me, Quentin Mosely."

Carly drew in a deep breath and relaxed against the pillows, turning to lay with Quentin curled up at her chest. "Okay, so you turn into a rodent whenever you expend too much energy, which limits your choice of where we live. You're the sexiest, most loving man I've ever met. In my sight, you're perfect. I'm the one with imperfections. If you can live with me, I can live with waking up beside a cute little prairie dog."

Camille Anthony

A fertile imagination and a love of both Romance and Science Fiction fuels Camille's writing. Her favorite stories are those of strong, honorable people -- whatever the race or planet of origin -- who are driven by love and lust to find and do that one special someone. Camille likes her heroines feisty, her heroes dominant and her passion red hot! She loves to hear from her readers. You can e-mail her at CamilleAnthony@CamilleAnthony.com or visit her website at <http://www.camilleanthony.com>. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated.