

NATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR

ANYA BAST

OtherKin

*Fury*

*A Free Read*



# FURY

FURY by Anya Bast  
Copyright © December 2008 Anya Bast.  
All rights reserved.  
Unedited - Please excuse any typos.

Cover Art by Croco Designs.

This story is a work of fiction. While reference might be made to actual historical events or existing locations, the names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

*Dear Reader,*

*this free read is for readers 18 years old and over. It contains sexually explicit scenes and adult language.*

*This eBook falls under the Creative Commons License. It's free for you to copy, forward or download. However, plagiarists (anyone who passes off my words for theirs) will develop a nasty pox and rack up some really bad karma. Also, please note that while this story is free, the copyright of all other content on my website, <http://www.anyabast.com>, and that of my novels and novellas are held by either me or my publishers and are never free for download from any source. Doing so violates copyright and is punishable by law (more pox, more bad karma...and some hefty fines to boot).*

*Anya Bast*

## ANYA BAST

Nikki jumped off the broad tree limb she'd been sitting on and hit the ground running. She'd thought she'd run far enough from Fury before she'd climbed up the tree, but the sound of Wolven paws against the soft forest floor told her otherwise. Had her scent given her away? She'd made sure the winds were blowing in the direction opposite from the gathering place, but perhaps she'd misjudged. Or maybe her pursuers had a keener sense of smell than she'd assumed.

Why did they have to choose her out all the other pack females? She wasn't cut for this kind of responsibility. They knew that about her. They shouldn't have even considered her for it. Plus, unlike the others, she didn't want it.

Why the hell had they chosen the one female in the entire town of Fury who didn't want it?

She needed to get away, but one thing was for sure, she'd never outrun them in this form. For a moment, she closed her eyes and concentrated on her other self. Silken tendrils of OtherKin magick curled around her body, seductive and sensual. In a flash, they tightened hard and painfully, as they did every time she shifted. Nikki gasped, but as soon as the pain lanced through her, it was gone. Like slipping on a glove that fit perfectly, her OtherKin form consumed her human shape, burning most of her clothing up in the change. The tattered remnants of fabric that had survived the shift fell to the leaf strewn ground.

Her strides grew longer, more balanced, more sure. She reveled in the feel of the earth and grass beneath her paws. In this form she was easily more fleet of foot than the two males pursuing her, and had the advantages of being both lighter and more flexible.

Cougars were faster than wolves.

Stretching her muscles and taking joy in the hard contact her paws made as they hit the forest floor, she ran as fast as her sleek body could travel. Even now, when she ran from those that would force her to do something against her will, she exulted in the fit and the freedom of her OtherKin form.

Was she a human playing cat, or a cat playing human? Nikki wasn't sure anymore. The line blurred further with every passing day.

She made a turn around a tree trunk, her paws slipping in the fallen leaves, and stopped up short as a rock wall blocked her way. Glancing around her, she saw no clear way around. She'd managed to run herself into thick undergrowth, boulders and fallen trees. The only sure way to freedom was to go back the way she'd come...but her pursuers were too close for that.

Inwardly cursing, she peered up at the flat rock wall in front of her. She wasn't familiar yet with these forests and hadn't known her pursuers had been stealthily herding her here.

## FURY

The wind from the gathering storm gusted, bringing with it the scents of her pursuers. They were close...way too close. The choice made for her, she bolted into the thicket and hoped for a way through.

Before she could conceal herself in the thick undergrowth, she felt strong jaws close firmly yet gently enough not to break her skin around her back foot and yank. Taken off guard, she stumbled forward. Knowing better than to struggle, since that would only cause the wolf that held her to tear her flesh, she went limp.

Carefully, yet with great strength, those jaws bore her backward until she lay sprawled in the clearing. She rolled to her feet, flattened her ears close to her head and hissed. Two great wolves blocked her path to freedom, one huge black male with molten silver eyes and a hulking white with light gold eyes. They were both massive beasts, easily twice her weight.

*The elders have made their choice, Nikki, said Merrick, the white wolf, in her mind.*

*The elders have made an error, Merrick, she shot back. I don't know if you've noticed or not, but I don't exactly howl at the moon. What are they thinking?*

*The elders don't make errors, said Roane, the black.*

*They did in my case, she replied. I'm not ready to lead the Wolven. I'm a newcomer to both your pack and to Other. I don't know your ways yet and I'm not like you. Their declaration has made me the source of a lot of resentment in Fury.*

*If they declared you head female, they can sense something within you that maybe you don't yet understand or realize, said Merrick.*

*Doubtful. At twenty-nine, I think I'd know it if I had an extra backbone lying around somewhere.*

*Shift, Nikki, said Roane.*

*That was Roane. He always came straight to the point. She laughed. No way. I have better advantage against the two of you in Other Form.*

*Roane growled low in his throat, likely out of pure frustration and stepped to one side. Go then. I won't stop you. But if you leave, you're betraying your clan, your family. The only family you have. What will you do, Nikki? Go back to your old life? Leave behind these old forests forever and try to pretend you're not Shadow? I dare you to not whither up die of loneliness within a year's time. I don't think you're much of a loner, party girl.*

The thought of what she'd do if she got away from Merrick and Roane had crossed her mind. Going back to living in Minneapolis was not appealing because she'd felt so splintered before she'd discovered she was Other. She'd never fit in, had always felt like an outsider while growing up. Her family and friends had never understood her, and she'd rebelled against everyone because of that. She'd run wild and hard and had gotten into a lot of trouble growing up because of it.

## ANYA BAST

The day she'd shifted had been a complete and utter shock, yet at the same time it had been like finding something precious that she'd lost long ago. It had been like finding a piece of her soul that had been locked down deep and held away from her. When she'd found Fury, the town in northern Minnesota where many in the Wolven Clan chose to reside, had been like finding heaven. It had been like coming home.

She'd come into her OtherKin form far later than most. Usually the Shadow discovered their differences in adolescence, when hormones raged the hardest. She hadn't discovered hers until about a week after she'd turned twenty-eight.

*I – I'm just not sure I can do this, Roane, she said.*

Roane blinked his cool, piercing silver eyes. *I'll leave you with Merrick, so you can talk in private.*

*What?* she started to ask, but Roane had already bounded away. Well, that was unexpected.

Merrick dropped his head and stepped toward her. Why had Roane left? She was meant to choose between the two of them. Her choice would determine which of the two powerful and evenly matched Nathy brothers would rule the Wolven Clan.

One would rule. One would leave.

That was the way this particular game would be played out, since neither Nathy brother wanted to fight the other to the death for power, nor wanted to stay while the other ruled.

She'd been expecting a war over her. Not over her as a person, but over the possession of the mantle of power the Elders had placed on her shoulders. She hadn't expected Roane to simply turn tail and run.

Nikki studied Merrick as he approached her. His hackles were raised slightly and his head held low. He studied her with interest, walking around her, inspecting her feline body. He was aroused; the subtle signs of it were present in the way he held his tail, his head.

She and Merrick had always been attracted to one another. Though most of the Wolven females were drawn to both Merrick and Roane. Both men were strong, handsome, protective and loyal. Though it was Merrick she'd always been drawn to most. Perhaps it was a chemistry thing. She'd never believed she'd mate with either of the Nathy brothers, however. Because the Nathys were clan leaders, they were subject to the whims of the Elders in that regard.

And the Elders had decreed that Nikki would mate with one of them.

*Roane is stepping aside, Merrick growled in her head. He is leaving the clan and allowing me to take the rule alongside you.*

## FURY

*Why? Nikki stared at him, stunned. Who says I want you, Merrick? Who gave you and Roane the authority to decide the rest of my life for me?*

*He took a step forward. You want me. I know you do.*

*How unbelievably cocky and egotistical. She was not going to endure this. No way. You're a little overconfident there, Merrick. I think it's time for me to leave.*

She moved to the side in order to go around him, but he bounded toward her instead, knocking her onto the forest floor. Nikki struggled beneath the large wolf's body. In her frenzy to get away, she shifted back to human form. Merrick's soft fur brushed over her bare skin as he pinned her beneath him. "Merrick," she raged. "Let me go!"

Without warning, he shifted. Nikki drew a hard, painful breath at the feel of Merrick's hard, nude body pinning her down. His enormous cock was erect and pushing into the soft flesh of her inner thigh, dangerously close to her sex. His longish, silky brown hair brushed her skin as he lowered his mouth to her throat and bit gently. It was show his dominance. His demand that she submit to him.

Her sex plumped and dampened in sudden lust. She went still and closed her eyes. God, why did her body have to respond to him this way? She wanted to push him away, get up and leave, but the feel of his hot, hard body against her drove her insane, took away all her resolve. In that moment, she truly hated herself.

Merrick took her wrists and pinned them to either side of her head as he shifted his body to rest between her thighs. She felt his wide shaft brush her entrance and the crown of his cock come to a rest on her sensitive clit. Slowly, methodically, he began kissing and nibbling on the tender flesh of her throat. At the same time, he moved his hips, thrusting the shaft of his cock up against her swollen sex in a semblance of the actual act. She could feel the hard rub of him against her needy clit. She spread her legs a bit wider and whimpered.

He growled low in his throat, kissed her neck and then latched on with his teeth, biting gently. At the same time, he rubbed and thrust his cock against her clit relentlessly. He picked up the pace when she moaned and pushed her hips up.

Her fingers slid up his biceps and came to rest on his broad shoulders. God, he smelled so good and his body felt like silk-wrapped steel against hers. His cock moving against her this way, pushing her toward climax was incredible, erotic.....

Thrust. Retreat. Thrust. Retreat.

Nikki cried out as her orgasm shattered over her, washing her body in waves of pleasure. Her fingers dug into Merrick's flesh as her female muscles contracted and pulsed.

She tipped her head back and made a strangled sound in her throat as the ecstasy faded and reality came crashing home. The asshole had just used her own body against her.

## ANYA BAST

When it was over, he released her wrists and shifted his cock down a few inches to rest the head at her entrance. He looked down at her with dark eyes. "I told you. I know you want me. I can feel how wet and slick you are at just the thought of it."

Rage rose up from her center of her being. "Bastard." She pushed up hard and caught him in an unguarded moment. He fell to the side and she leapt up, changing to Shadow at the same time. When she hit the ground next, it was in cougar form. She took off at a dead run out of the forest alcove that had trapped her and away.

Merrick wouldn't catch her this time.

\* \* \* \* \*

Merrick watched her go, knowing he couldn't catch her now. She had a straight path right out of the forest and away from him. He'd have to go after her later, but he would find her and win her back. He had to do it for more reasons than one.

He fell back on the ground. His cock was so hard it hurt. He wanted Nikki so badly, he'd been planning to take her right here if she'd been willing.

Obviously, she hadn't been.

Feeling her come against him and hearing her breathing hitch and the low sounds of ecstasy she'd made had been a good consolation prize, but it didn't help the raging hard-on he still had.

He closed his hand around his cock and pumped, tipping his head back into the leaves and closing his eyes. How he'd wanted to part her thighs a little wider and slid himself within her tight, hot little sex. Her breasts had felt so soft, so perfect against his chest. He wished he'd had the time to hold them in his hands, kiss them, lick over her nipples. He'd do all that while he was riding her, thrusting in and out of her hard and fast. He would drive her until she came again, drenching his cock with her sweet, slick cream.

His cock jerked in his hand he came. He squeezed his shut, imagining Nikki whispering how much she wanted him in his ear.

He'd find her. And when he did, he'd make her his.

\* \* \* \* \*

# FURY

Nikki tossed and turned in her bed, twisting the sheets around her overheated body. Her eyelids fluttered open as she floated to awareness, then her body slid back down heavily toward sleep.

Even her dreams were about Fury...and about Merrick.

In her dreams, she and Merrick finished what they started in the forest a month ago. Instead of getting up and fleeing, she allowed him to spread her thighs and slid his cock into her cream-slicked center. In her dreams he grasped her wrists and held them over her head as he took slowly, then faster and harder until they both cried out in climax.

Her body trembling, her sex swollen with need, Nikki came awake with a gasp to her darkened bedroom. Panting, she stared up at the moonlit ceiling as the full force of the dream hit her. She closed her eyes and moaned against the need of her body.

God, she'd never wanted a man more than she wanted Merrick. Damn him and damn the Elders of Fury for doing this to her!

In the month since she'd returned to Minneapolis, she'd been heartbroken and lonely. She missed being with those of her own kind and felt like an alien among the swarm of non-OtherKin in the city. She'd located an apartment on the north side and had found job as a software engineer fairly easily. It was the rest of it, the feeling of being divorced from her family, that was the difficult part.

She slipped her hands under the bottom of her pajamas ran her fingers over her achy sex. Shuddering and biting her lower lip, she stroked her clit and labia. If she closed her eyes, she could imagine it was Merrick who touched her. She allowed her other hand to drift up and close over one heavy breast. Moaning, she traced her hardened nipple with her thumb and gently pinched at it. Her sex felt like it was on fire. Closing her eyes, she recalled the dream and sank two fingers into her sex.

She tossed her head and whimpered. It was good, but not good enough. Merrick was so much larger. She'd felt just how big a cock he had that day in the woods when he'd used it to rub against her clit to make her come.

Expelling a hard breath, she gave up, rolled over and retrieved her vibrator from the drawer in the bedside table. She had to find some relief, or she'd never get to sleep. It was time to get out the big guns, she mused with a smile on her lips.

She laid the vibrator on the mattress, kicked off the blankets and pulled her light nightgown off. Then she settled back against the pillows, ready to get Merrick out of her head so she could sleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

Merrick watched through Nikki's open window while he stood on the balcony of the apartment across from hers. As Nikki stripped, revealing full, luscious breasts

## ANYA BAST

tipped with suckable little cherry nipples, a sweetly curved body and that creamy, aroused sex, he'd never been so thankful for the acute vision bequeathed to him by his OtherKinness.

Merrick groaned as she leaned back into the pillows and parted those slender thighs. He wished he could go over there right now and help her find the satisfaction she sought. His cock swelled and pushed against his jeans.

Grasping the rail of the balcony, he looked around him. These apartments backed up to a lake. Nikki had tried to get herself as close to nature as possible. There were other a few other apartments around, but all the lights were out. It was the middle of the night and everyone was sleeping. Besides the other apartments, there were only trees and birds. Good thing, too, he wasn't sure he could watch Nikki get herself off without getting himself off, too. Damn, he was so hot for this woman, he'd probably come right in his jeans like an uncontrolled adolescent. There was something about Nikki that just simply did it for him. Made him half-crazed with need.

He watched her palm her breasts and tip her head back into the pillows as she teased her own nipples. His hands tightened on the rail. If he was in there right now, he'd worship each one with his lips and tongue until she writhed on the bed beneath him and begged for him to do the same to her delectable sex...and he'd oblige her.

She shifted down on the bed until her heels hit the backs of her thighs. In this position, she was completely exposed to him. With his vision, even in the low light, he could make out how aroused she was. Her labia were plumped and ready to be sucked and nibbled on, drawn into his mouth and worshipped. Her clit was full and excited.

Merrick groaned again, unbuttoned his jeans and took out his rock hard cock. He couldn't take this anymore. All he wanted was to sink his shaft into that wet heat. She'd be so silky and hot around him. He wrapped his hand around his cock and pumped, imagining how tight Nikki's little sex would feel. How smooth and soft her body would be under his as he sank into her over and over. Across from him, Nikki pushed her first two fingers into herself and thrust. With her other hand she massaged and teased a sweetly rounded breast.

"Ah, fuck, yes," Merrick said under his breath as he watched her. "That's got to feel good, baby, but I could make you feel so much better."

Panting, Nikki tipped her head back into the pillows as she sought the vibrator beside her and set the head to her slit. Slowly, tossing her head back and forth because it felt so good, she pushed within herself and started to thrust the toy in and out while she circled her clit with two fingers.

Merrick's cock jumped in his hand and he grit his teeth as he watched her writhe on the bed and pleasure herself. What was she thinking about right now? What fantasies rode her mind while she brought herself to climax? Was it the same as his fantasy? The one in which he took her for hours on end, sometimes tying her wrists so

# FURY

she couldn't move, sometimes taking her from behind with her positioned on all fours? God, he wanted her. He wanted to coat both their bodies in perspiration and pleasure all night long, over and over.

Nikki's body tensed and she arched her back as she came. In his mind, Merrick imagined how the muscles of her sex would squeeze and convulse around his length as she climaxed. His cock jumped in his palm, his balls tightened and he spurted come as the images overwhelmed him. Panting, he gripped the rail and let the pleasure recede. He had to have Nikki now. He'd waited long enough.

After cleaning himself up, he stalked out of his apartment and over to Nikki's front door. She was his mate, by the decree of the Elders. She wanted him and he wanted her, so what was the problem? He'd followed her to Minneapolis to keep tabs on her, protect her, while making sure she retained her freedom. He'd intended to wait her out. Eventually she'd want to come home on her own, but he wasn't sure he could wait that long for her. She wasn't happy here. That was apparent to anyone who watched her. She missed Fury and her family. She missed home. It was pure stubbornness that kept her away from her role as alpha as from being his mate, nothing more.

Well, hell. It had to stop and it had to stop now. He couldn't take the torment of having his mate within arm's reach and not being able to touch her, hold her, make love to her.

He didn't have a key, but he had incredible strength. As quietly as he possibly could, he forced the door in. Nightlights provided the only light within the living room as he entered, not that he needed it. He barely registered the sofa, entertainment center and small dining table as he made his way toward Nikki's bedroom. He had one goal here, and she was it.

She found him first. Wrapped in a sheet and carrying a baseball bat, she appeared in the hallway. The baseball bat dropped for a moment as recognition dawned on her face...then she lifted it and set a determined expression on her face. "Merrick, Goddamn it! Get the hell out of here or I'll call the cops."

He stopped in the middle of the room, taking her in from her cute little toes peeking from under the sheet, to the top of her tousled hair. "You can call the cops after I've had my fill of you, Nikki. Once I'm through, you won't want me to go."

She smirked. "Still insufferably arrogant, I see."

"Drop the bat, the sheet and get on the bed."

An outraged look passed over her features...at the same time the air infused with the sudden sharp scent of her arousal. "You've got to be kidding me!"

He took a step toward her. The scent was growing stronger. It was like an aphrodisiac to him. Irresistible. "I'll take you here in the hallway if you want," he growled.

## ANYA BAST

The baseball bat lowered an inch as confusion swept over her face. He lunged forward, grabbed the bat and tossed it away. She turned and ran into the bedroom. That was fine with him. He followed.

She whirled on him. "Why can't you people leave me alone?" she cried.

He stopped dead in his tracks. "You people? What do you mean? We're YOUR people, Nikki. Your family. Your friends." He paused. "I'm your mate. And you know what, Nikki?"

"What?" she asked breathlessly.

His voice lowered an octave. "Your mate can't wait another minute to have you. Get on the bed."

He took a step forward. She took a step back. Forward. Back. Finally, the backs of her legs met the mattress and he tumbled her down, following after her. He made quick work of the sheet, groaning at the feel of her soft skin beneath his hands. He worked his way down her body, kissing and licking and sucking. Under him, Nikki whimpered and moaned, fisting her hands in his hair and writhing. The scent of her arousal grew stronger until it made him drunk.

Finally, the honey pot. He spread her thighs to expose her sex, and with a growl, started to lick. Nikki gasped and her body trembled as he did what he'd been dying to do...taste her. He drew her sensitive labia into his mouth and sucked and nibbled, stopping from time to time to slide his tongue up into the heart of her. He laved over her clit and drew the sensitive bit of flesh between his lips while he slid two fingers into her and thrust. She was hot and creamy and tight, and the way her muscles rippled and pulsed around his fingers made him insane.

"God, you taste so good, Nikki," he murmured. "You're so damned sweet, so fucking perfect."

She muttered something unintelligible. He sucked on her clit and continued to thrust in and out of her slowly with his fingers until she finally shattered beneath him. She cried out his name and her body quivered. Her female muscles clenched and unclenched around his fingers as she climaxed. He was there to lick up every last bit of cream she made for him.

He rose above her, his hands fumbling at his belt. His whole world was narrowed to her body and how many ways he wanted to make her climax tonight.

"Merrick," Nikki whispered. "Merrick, no."

He stilled and looked into her face. What he saw there chilled his body and froze his libido in an instant. There was fear in her wide and shining eyes.

His mate feared him.

# FURY

\* \* \* \* \*

Nikki stared up into Merrick's black and gold eyes like a deer caught in headlights, instead of the cougar she was. Emotions and memories swirled through her. Before he'd entered her apartment, she'd been laying in bed fantasizing about him. Oh, yes. She wanted Merrick. She wanted him badly.

But she wouldn't be strong-armed into it. She wouldn't allow him to manipulate her lust for him in this way. Yes, she wanted Merrick. She just didn't know if she wanted him *for life*.

He stilled, looking down at her. His eyes widened and his body went tense. Rage bubbled up within her and she used every last bit of it to push Merrick off of her. She sprang away from the bed and landed on all fours a ways away. Merrick sprawled half on the bed, half off. She narrowed her eyes at him and hissed.

Her Other Form flickered, the tendrils of magick pulling at her. When her anger ran high, she still had trouble controlling the change. Closing her eyes in surrender, she let it take her. The brief, painful crush and explosion as her Other Form took over flashed through her and she stood in the center of the room, head lowered, golden gaze trained on Merrick, a low, dangerous growl trickling from between her feline lips.

Merrick covered his face with his hands. "Forgive me," he said raggedly. "When I see what I want, I can be aggressive about taking it."

She stepped forward on cougar paws, approaching him with her ears laid flat against her head. With measured steps, she stalked him and considered attack. She lowered her head and growled again, demanding he submit to her. Words were fine, but she wanted more than that. There were lots differences between OtherKin wolves and cougars, but the signs of submission remained mostly the same.

Merrick slowly slid down to the floor and lay on his back.

Good. That was a start. She smiled inwardly, content she'd found a measure of power within herself. This wolf needed a woman to be direct and strong with him. He just rolled right over the weak. With Merrick, she couldn't afford weakness.

She shifted back to human form. Her body hummed from his mere presence. Damn, she couldn't even form a sentence.

He pushed up and stood. "I'll go," he said in a low voice. She reached out and grabbed his forearm. "Wait. Let me get my bearings. Let me think."

He turned back toward her and she saw the heated look in his eyes. His gaze raked her nude body from head to toe and back up again. He wanted her, probably even more than she wanted him. Her body felt like it was in agony. What did his feel like?

## ANYA BAST

"I don't like having my choices taken from me," she said low. Nikki lifted a brow. "If the Elders selected me to be alpha female in Fury, you should know that."

Her breath finally steadied. She stood and sauntered toward him with all the feline grace she possessed. He watched her with a hooded gaze, his shoulders hunched as if he wanted to pounce on her.

"What happen to all that control you always displayed in Fury, Merrick?" she asked.

"I don't have any where you're concerned."

What a strange thing to say. He'd never even seemed to notice her much when they'd been Fury. She rolled her hips as she circled him, trailing her fingertip over a bicep, across his back, over one of his flat nipples beneath his T-shirt. "I will not be pushed, or bullied." She gave her head a shake. "Not by anyone. Especially not by you."

"You're as aroused as I am." He shuddered. "I can smell it."

She rubbed up against the front of him, feeling the bunch of that warm, muscled body. She fought the urge to purr and lost. The rich, deep feline sound of pleasure bubbled up from the depths of her.

"Do not tease me, woman," he rasped in a low voice.

She smiled. "You forced your way into my apartment. You forced a climax from my body without permission."

"You seemed to like it well enough," he growled.

Her smile widened. Every luscious muscle in his body seemed taut. "I never said I didn't like it. I said you took it without my consent. That's twice now you've done that. *I think I can tease you just as much as I want.*"

"I declared submissiveness to you because I know I've lost control twice now, because I know it frightened you and if there's one thing I don't want to see in my mate's eyes when she looks at me, it's fear."

She stopped in front of him. "Why are we suddenly mates? Why is it that suddenly you can't control yourself around me? It wasn't that way in Fury."

A muscle worked in his jaw. He regarded her with hooded eyes. "It was. I always wanted you, always, but I didn't know who the Elders would choose as Alpha Queen. I didn't think it would be the cougar in the pack of wolves."

Her lips parted in wonder. He'd always wanted her? A tremble of desire heated her body. She'd always wanted him, as well, but thought him out of her league.

"When they declared you," Merrick continued, "Roane stepped aside because he knew how I felt."

## FURY

She turned away. "Cougars aren't pack animals. We're solitary."

He grabbed her wrist and pulled her flush up against his chest. "You aren't completely cougar, Nikki. There's enough human in you to seek a family, friends. I know that the human Nikki wants that more than anything." His voice lowered to a silky, seductive purr. "Don't you, kitty-cat?"

She gasped at the hard press of his warm body against hers. It was true. Goddamn it, she'd always wanted people around her who understood what she was.

"You've got it in you to be Alpha, Nikki," he continued. "I just saw it. Even if you don't know it, it's there. The Elders would not have selected you if you didn't possess the right qualities."

"Maybe they picked me because you were drawn to me."

He gave his head a sharp shake. "No. They do what's best for the clan, regardless of our wishes. I was drawn to you because we're mates." His tone of voice dropped lower. "Let me show you the truth of that now."

His words rolled over her. They tingled in her sex and at her breasts. Lust flashed up her spine and pooled cream between her thighs. Merrick's nostrils flared. "But I'm a cat, not a wolf. They'll never accept me," he replied.

"Come back to Fury with me, Nikki. Give it a chance. What do you have to lose?"

She gave a bitter laugh. "My life, Merrick, if I'm challenged. A cougar could hold its own against one wolf, maybe, but not several. Not a pack. If they reject me because of my Other Form, that's what I'll be facing." As Alpha Queen, she would be expected to rule the females in Fury. The Alpha King ruled the males.

"I think you can handle yourself. I've seen you fight. Anyway...." Merrick drew his arm around her waist and pressed her against him. He dipped his head and inhaled deeply near her hair. He growled low. "Anyone tries to hurt you, they'll have me to deal with. We're mates, Nikki. That means we stand together no matter what."

The scent of him filled her nostrils, made her knees weak and her head spin. "I don't know," she whispered.

"I do." He picked her up and bore her a couple steps back to the bed, where he laid her down. "The smell of you is driving me crazy and having you nude, prancing around me is more than I can take, Nikki. Understand?"

She smiled. In silent acquiescence, her fingers went to the edges of the black T-shirt he wore. She pulled it up over his head and licked her lips at the sight of his chest. God good, the man was ripped. Unable to resist, she licked across one flat nipple, tasting the salt and feeling the warmth of his skin. He growled low in his throat.

"Stay with me tonight, Merrick, but I'm not making any guarantees about tomorrow," she murmured.

## ANYA BAST

He hesitated, his eyes flashing with everything he thought about her statement. He said nothing in response, however. Merrick pushed up from the bed, his gaze raking over her body as she lay there. He kicked off his shoes and slid his jeans down his legs. She bit her lip at the sight of him. His long, wide cock was hard and straining. Her mouth watered at the mere sight of it.

He came back down on top of her, his hands flattened against the mattress on either side of her head. His lips came down on hers. His mouth felt hard and hot on hers and the shock of it stole her ability to breath for moment. She made a low sound in her throat and rose up on her elbows, returning his kiss ferociously. She snaked one of her hands between their bodies and found his gorgeous cock. She trailed her fingers up the shaft in a teasing way, making Merrick groan against her mouth, then set about stroking him.

Merrick slid a hand around her waist and smoothed it up her back to tangle in the hair at the nape of her neck. His lips danced over hers, alternately parting them so he could allow his tongue to brush against hers. Her body, already tested further than any man had tested it, felt set to explode beneath him. All she wanted in the world was this man between the sheets of her bed. The kiss was like no other she'd ever received. This was a possession, a taking of her breath and lips and tongue by Merrick, demanding her submission. She was more than happy to give it to him...for now.

Merrick broke the kiss and made his way down her throat to her breast. She whimpered at having his cock taken from her reach, but forgot how to breathe again when his sensual lips closed around one of her aching nipples and started to suck and lave it over. Her back arched and she let out a low moan. He slid his hand down her waist, over her hips to caress her outside of her thigh. Her clit felt so plumped and sensitive that the slightest brush would bring her a shuddering climax. Her fingers closed around his shoulder and gripped as she twisted beneath him. His teeth rasped gently over her nipple and she groaned. "Please," she cried. "More."

He broke from her nipple and kissed her stomach, working downward. "What do you want, kitty-kat?" he asked. "What more do you want from me?"

She lifted up and looked at him. "I want it all."

He parted her thighs and settled between them. He brushed his finger over her swollen sex as he examined her up close. He closed his eyes and groaned. "All? You have no idea all the things I want to do to you." He opened his eyes and looked at her. "Catch your knees in your hands and show me everything," he ordered. "Spread yourself so I can lick your sweet little cunt."

She stretched her knees back and up, giving him a completely unobstructed view of her.

Merrick groaned deep in the back of his throat. He ran his fingers over her folds and slipped a finger within her. With his thumb, he massaged her clit in a circular

## FURY

motion. A climax flirted hard with her body and she gasped. He inserted a second finger to join the first, stretching the muscles of her sex. Her eyes rolled back in her head as he pulled his thick fingers out and thrust them back incredibly slowly. Again he stroked her clit, making her body shudder. She moaned and dropped her head against the mattress, arching her back and stabbing her tight nipples into the air. She could feel her cream running down her inner thighs.

"Do you want to come, kitty-kat?" Merrick asked in a low voice.

"Yes," she answered gutturally.

He removed his fingers from her sex and swept his tongue down over her, drawing her labia into his warm mouth and sucking at them gently. His tongue played with her entrance, then thrust within it. He groaned. "You are so fucking sweet. Like honey." He slid his tongue back inside her over and over, as though it was his cock. "Sweet and hot and tight. I can't wait to slid my cock into you."

He brushed his finger down to play with her anus. No man had ever touched her there before. She jerked and he shushed her. He caressed it again while he speared his tongue into her. He did it as though gentling her to his touch. Nerves she hadn't even known she'd had sprang to life and she let out a low moan. He went back to alternatively teasing her clit with the tip of his tongue and drawing her labia into the recesses of his mouth.

She let out a strangled cry and her body tensed. She wanted him to slide his cock inside her and fuck her. She wanted to hear the slap of his skin against hers as he took her hard and fast. Enough with this teasing! "Merrick, please," she gasped. "You're making me insane."

"Turn over. On your hand and knees."

She rose up and turned over. She felt the slide of his hand over her buttocks and she closed her eyes, resting her cheek against the cool comforter on the bed. He inserted two fingers into her sex once more, this time from behind. He did not thrust, but let his fingers simply stretch and fill her. "Spread your thighs further," he asked.

She parted her legs and that gave him room to rub her clit with his other hand. "Fuck, yes, please," she sobbed out through a constricted throat. "Please, make me come, Merrick."

He began thrusting in and out. He took her clit between two fingers and rubbed it back and forth. Her climax came hard and fast. It washed over her in an explosion and she cried out from the force of it. Waves of pleasure washed through her, stealing her breath and making her gasp and moan. Her muscles clenched and released around his fingers and she felt her cream flow out of her.

Merrick groaned "You don't know how damn sexy you are when you come. Those noises you make are unbelievable."

## ANYA BAST

She collapsed onto the bed and twisted to lie on her back. She was sheened with perspiration, and her breath came fast. "Now, you. I want you. Please." She spread her thighs, exposing herself. She was still aroused despite her climax, because of it, maybe.

He knelt down and buried his face between her thighs, lapping at her. She gasped at the feel of his greedy tongue licking over her labia and her clit. He made small sound like she was the best thing he'd ever tasted and Nikki gasped and clenched the comforter in both hands under the onslaught. Another climax tensed her body and when Merrick closed his mouth over her clit and sucked on it, it rushed forward and overwhelmed her.

"Yes," Merrick hissed.

While the spasm of her climax still racked her, he spread her thighs wide and slid the head of his cock into her. He slid in an inch, then withdrew and slid in a bit farther. Sweat broke out on his forehead as he apparently endeavored not to injure her with his length. Inch by inch she took him. He stretched her like she'd never been stretched, filling every bit of her. She gasped and then moaned deep at the exquisite pleasure of it.

"Your sweet sex is so slick and tight," he bit off. He withdrew nearly all the way and took her by her hips. In one smooth, hard surge, he sheathed himself inside her to the hilt. She cried out as the spasms racked her a third time. Her muscles pulsed and squeezed around his shaft like a ravenous mouth consuming him. Merrick threw back his head and groaned.

Then he began to move and she saw stars as the thick, ridged length of him pistoned in and out of her. He held her by her waist, and his hips hit her inner thighs with every inward stroke, making a slapping sound of flesh on flesh. She grabbed the blankets and held on when he took her hard and fast, over and over. The head of his cock brushed over some sensitive spot deep within her with every penetrating thrust, making her sob and cry with the pleasure of it.

Her next climax hit her hard. She sucked in a breath and let it out in a cry. The muscles of her sex milked his cock.

Merrick called her name and she felt him ejaculate within her, growing thicker and larger as an OtherKin shifter's cock did during climax. It was a strange sensation. A good one. It made her breath come faster, her own orgasm more intense. His cock jerked inside her and Merrick groaned low near her ear.

They clung together, riding out the waves of their shared climax. Finally, Merrick rolled to the side and pulled her close. "You see," he murmured. "Mated."

Every muscle in her body went stiff. Mated. Holy, shit. Well, they'd see about that. Maybe this was a just one night stand, too.

Merrick's cell rang. He groaned and covered his eyes with his forearm, clearly not wanting to answer it.

# FURY

"Merrick?" she asked softly.

With a groan, he pulled himself off the bed and fished his cell phone out of a pocket of his jeans. "Yeah?"

Nikki watched his facial expression grow cold and stone-like. That was a look she never wanted to see on his face while he regarded her. That was a look that meant death to someone.

"Okay," he bit off and snapped the phone closed. He paused for a moment, then looked up at her. "Bad shit's going down in Fury, Nikki. They need their Alpha Queen. *Now.*"

\* \* \* \* \*

Merrick pulled his black SUV into the parking lot of the Common Hall. The Elders were waiting for him to arrive. Beside him sat Nikki. She wore a pair of blue jeans and gray button-down shirt that made her eyes snap with anger, a mask for her true emotion – fear. He could feel it radiating off her.

He could still taste her on his lips and feel her around his cock. God, joining with her had been better than his fantasies. All he wanted to do was drag her into the back seat and do it all over again, but other things demanded their attention now.

They climbed out of the car and walked into the hall. Nikki had her arms crossed over her chest in a protective gesture. They opened the door and the sounds of voices arguing met his ears and the scent of the building's occupants hit his nose. It was just the Elders here. No one else from Fury was present.

The hall was a large, open room filled with tables. The inhabitants of Fury gathered here on the night of the full moon, before they ran the nearby woods. The Elders were gathered in a clump at the end of one table. There were five of them - the oldest, wisest members of Fury. They served as counsel to Fury's Alpha king and queen.

He and Nikki walked to them, their boots on the hard wood floor the only sound in the room.

"So, Nicole, you decided to come," said Martha in a low voice. Her blue eyes twinkled with barely disguised anger. She lifted a thin white brow. "Have we inconvenienced you much?"

Nikki uncrossed her arms. "Hey –"

Merrick held up a hand. "No. We're not going to argue right now. Right now is the time to come together, not pull apart. Nikki is here and she's ready to help. Let the past be the past."

## ANYA BAST

"I agree," said Douglas in a smooth voice. "As usual, our Alpha is correct."

Martha sniffed, but looked chagrined. She had a reputation for speaking before she thought.

"Wait. I have something to say," said Nikki. She drew a deep breath. "Yes, I ran away. I ran away because I'm not like you and don't feel like I can lead the Wolven. I ran because I was...am frightened. I ran because I fear the responsibility of being Alpha queen." Her voice lowered and she looked away. "I fear being his mate. I'm just being honest here."

Douglas stepped forward and took her hand. "Nicole, don't you see? That's why we had to choose you."

A confused look crossed Nikki's face. "What do you mean?"

Douglas glanced at Merrick. "All the pack females in Fury wanted Merrick for less than pure reasons. They wanted him because he's good-looking or because he represented power to them. Only you desired Merrick for his strength of character and his internal goodness. Only you saw beyond the outer to the man within. You didn't want the power at all, which is why you're the only person who should wield it."

She pulled her hand from his. "How do you know what I want? How do you know what I see in Merrick?"

Douglas laughed, an old rusty sound. "When you're our age, you see much more clearly, my girl. Now, you may not think you're strong enough to lead the Wolven, but we know differently. You simply must surrender to your power. It's great...and different from the power of a wolf."

The other Elders murmured in agreement. James stepped forward. "Trust yourself, Nicole, and everything else will fall into place."

She glanced away and stuck her hands in her pockets. "Okay...enough about me. Time for a new topic. What's going on?"

"Roane is missing," said Douglas. "We believe the Cody Springs pack took him."

Merrick's blood ran cold for a moment. On the phone they'd told him Fury had been attacked. They hadn't mentioned anything about his brother. "What? Are you sure he just didn't leave?"

Douglas shook his head. "We found two dead OtherKin shifters in his house. The place was ripped apart in a struggle. The dead shifters are both wolves and Sandra, who used to live in Cody Springs, recognized them."

Merrick shook his head. "It would very hard to take Roane in a fight."

# FURY

"Anyone, even a powerful wolf like Roane, can be overwhelmed if there's enough attackers."

Merrick rubbed a hand over his mouth, feeling stubble. "I was gone, so they assumed Roane had taken the mantle of power. What are they trying to do," he said almost to himself, "take over Fury?"

"You should prepare yourself," said Douglas in a low voice. "I can't think of many reasons they'd want to keep him alive."

Merrick shook his head. "He's not dead yet. I would know it if he were dead." He turned on his heel and walked toward the door, distracted. "I'm going in now before they have a chance to kill him." No way would he let Roane pay for his preoccupation with Nikki.

"Hey," called a feminine voice behind him. "Hold on a minute. Last I checked you were telling me I'm a queen."

Merrick stopped dead in his tracks and turned toward Nikki. She stood with a canted hip and hand on her waist.

"That means I should have a say in how we go about this, right? And I say, hold on a fucking minute and let us think this through. You go in there with nothing but a hot head and Fury might lose both the Nathy brothers. Now, get your gorgeous ass back here and let's figure this out."

He stood staring into her snapping brown eyes. She was right. His feelings of responsibilities for his brother's abduction and his fear were making him rash. He glanced at the Elders. All of them were looking at Nikki with a measure of respect in their eyes, even Martha. Giving in, he walked to her. "So what do you suggest?"

"Reconnaissance. Do you have a couple wolves you can trust? People unknown to the Cody Springs pack?"

"Bradley and Amanda," Martha suggested.

Merrick nodded slowly. "I would trust them to be stealthy and they're both loyal and strong."

"Send them in," said Nikki. "Send them tonight. Have them determine Roane's whereabouts and his condition. When they get back with the details, *then* we think storming the castle."

Merrick's lips twisted in distaste. "So tonight, I do nothing while my brother is being kept against his will somewhere."

"Look, big guy," Nikki said. "I know you're a man of action, but sometimes it pays to stalk and wait for the perfect time to pounce."

James laughed. "You see? Cougars have a different way of looking at things. That difference is beneficial to the wolves."

## ANYA BAST

Merrick pushed a hand through his hair and closed his eyes. Every instinct and muscle in his body told him to leave now with a bunch of strong wolves and rip Cody Springs apart until they found Roane. Waiting even twenty-four hours before he could act would cost him.

But Nikki had a point.

He blew out a low, careful breath and opened his eyes. "Send them. But if they're not back with useful information before noon tomorrow, I'm doing it my way." He turned on his heel and walked out. Nikki followed.

He opened the door for Nikki and they went around and climbed into the driver's side.

"You know, you probably have a traitor somewhere in Fury," Nikki said as he threw the SUV into reverse, then into first gear and headed down the main street of town toward his house.

He felt his jaw lock. "Yeah, I know. Someone had to tell Cody Springs I was gone and Roane was still here. We haven't told anyone in Fury about you being my mate and about Roane agreeing to leave Fury. So they assumed Roane was alpha and I'd left." His hands clenched on the steering wheel. "When I find out who's been passing info...." He trailed off.

Nikki laid a hand on his upper arm. "It's not your fault, Merrick," she said gently.

He choked down an angry response and concentrated on driving. They reached his home, a white renovated two-story farmhouse on the edge of town. He pulled into the circular gravel driveway and parked in front of the wide wrap around porch. Silently, he unloaded their bags and let Nikki trail him into the house.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nikki let the screen door slam behind her and perused her surroundings. She'd seen Merrick's house often from the outside, but she'd never been in inside. It was sparse and very male, everything she'd come to expect from Merrick. Thick green area rugs covered the floor of the living room to her left. A sofa and a couple chairs decorated the room. Several plants sat slowly dying in front of the large picture window. To her left lay a large old-fashioned kitchen and an Amish-made dining room table. Across from her rose a flight of stairs.

Merrick went up the stairs and she followed. He led her into his master bedroom. A king-sized bed dominated a wall. A chair and dresser completed the furniture in the room.

## FURY

He threw the bags down beside the bed and turned toward her. "Make yourself at home, Nikki, since it is. That is, if you want it to be." He pulled his shirt off and threw it on a nearby chair. Nikki's mouth went dry at the sight. "I'm going to take a shower," he finished distractedly and headed into the room's adjoining bathroom.

The water started in the shower and soon steam poured from the small room. Nikki bit her lip, torn between wanting to go in there and join him and wanting to give him some time alone. He was upset by the news of his brother, not mention pissed that he'd agree to wait twenty-fours to take direct action.

Deciding to leave him be for now, she chuffed off her shoes, socks and jeans, but left her blue cotton underwear on and pulled off her shirt, leaving her clad in a blue spaghetti strap tee. After all, he *did* say to make herself at home. If she was flaunting herself just tad bit in front of him...so she was. Hell, he needed something to distract him while they waited anyway, didn't he?

Spotting a motorcycle magazine on the floor by the bed, she grabbed it and plopped face down on the mattress and leafed through it. She was deeply into an article about repairing carburetors – well, okay, she was *pretending* to be deeply into it – when the shower shut off.

Merrick emerged from the bathroom buck naked and glistening with water. In one hand he held a white towel, which he used briskly on his hair. She let her gaze travel over his body, up his muscled thighs and his washboard stomach.

The man was a god.

He looked up and his eyes darkened. Dropping the towel on the floor, he walked toward her. Without a word, only a silent demand in his actions, he flipped her over and pinned her beneath him. He was warm from the shower and his skin was still wet. She wanted to lick all the water droplets from his skin.

Every breath rasped her bare nipples against the material of her T-shirt. The scent of him, that kind of heated male scent, made every hormone in her body flare to life. She'd been joined with this man for less than twenty-four hours and already he was becoming an addiction.

Her heart rate sped up as he stared down into her eyes. Her sex came to life at the feel of his legs against hers. He just had to be within five feet of her, it seemed, and her body readied itself to take his cock. Merrick pressed his hips down, showing her that she affected him, also.

"I want you," he said simply.

She gave a little nervous laugh. "The feeling's mutual." She hated the way her voice sounded, sort of breathy.

"Good." He moved, surprising her. He hooked his hands under her knees and bent her legs up, spreading her thighs and baring her sex to him. Merrick dipped his head and fastened his mouth on her clit through the damp material of her underwear.

## ANYA BAST

She felt his warm breath bathe her and the pressure of his full lips on the distended pout of her clit.

"Oh, God," she breathed.

His hands ran up her inner thighs slowly, to the material at her waist. He ripped the seams at both sides and the front of her underwear slithered down, exposing her to him completely. There went a perfectly good pair of panties. Trouble was, she couldn't find it within her to care at the moment.

He spread her labia apart, lowered his mouth and licked up the length of her. He made a low sound when he reached her aroused clit and sucked it between his lips. Nikki's back arched and she pressed herself against his skillfully working mouth. She grabbed the comforter on either side of her and hung for dear life when he slipped two fingers inside her needy cunt and found her G-spot. Fissures of pleasure rocked her at the combined stimulation of her G-spot and clit. The sight of his dark head buried between her thighs and the muscles of his shoulders working was an added bonus. It sailed her right over the edge.

Her climax ripped through her. Arching her neck, she threw back her head as the spasms racked her. Merrick wasn't playing around with her. He obviously meant business. He licked her over and over with the flat of his tongue, dragging her climax out even longer. She felt the press of his hard cock against her leg.

He pulled her up. "On your hands and knees."

She knelt in front of him and put her hands flat on the mattress. He covered her body from behind, making her shudder with pleasure and anticipation. Merrick dragged the hem of her tee up and over her head, then ran his huge hands down her breasts.

"God, you're so fucking gorgeous, Nikki," he said in a low voice. He stroked her nipples into hard, sensitized little peaks. He pinched them just hard enough to send a burst of pleasure down her spine to her cunt. She was already wet from her orgasm and from Merrick's mouth, but a new flood of moisture readied her sex for him now.

He braced himself on one hand and ran the other down her stomach to her sex. Gently, he flicked her clit back and forth and rubbed it until Nikki whimpered. "Merrick, please," she murmured.

"I can't be gentle with you, Nikki. Not right now."

"I don't want gentle, Merrick. I'm not made of glass. You won't break me."

He rose up and set his hands on her hips, preparing to mount her. She pressed her head down to the mattress, tipping her pelvis up to him in offering. This position felt erotic to her. It felt primal and appealed to the animal in her. When Merrick

## FURY

set the head of his cock to her entrance and surged into her with one long, hard thrust, she shattered beneath him. The muscles of her sex milked his cock as another climax hit her full-force, but Merrick didn't even pause.

Piston-like, he glided in and out of her. She was well lubricated so she could hear the wet slap on slap of flesh as he took her hard and fast. Her fingers sought and fisted in the comforter as Merrick worked behind her.

He grasped her hips hard, keeping her still, and thrust balls-deep within her. She felt his cock swell as he prepared to come. He groaned low and spilled himself.

The air filled with the sounds of their harsh breathing. Merrick pulled her onto her side, collapsing them both onto the bed. He pulled her against him and she found she fitted against his side nearly perfectly. His cock was still partially erect and glistening with their combined come.

He reached out, pushed her hair to the side and kissed her long and deep. "You feel so good to me, Nikki," he murmured. "Fucking perfect." He glanced down at his still half hard cock. "And every time I have you, I want you more."

She let her hand trail down his stomach so she could idly caress his cock and balls. He groaned and closed his eyes as she petted him. "Okay, I admit it," she said softly with a smile playing with her mouth. "Being your mate might *not* be a fate worse than death. It definitely has some benefits." She leaned down and took his cock into her mouth. Leisurely, she licked and sucked him, tasting their combined essence spread over her tongue. Within her mouth, he grew harder.

Merrick hands fisted in her hair and he groaned. "You're definitely playing with fire, Nikki. Now I have another hard on."

She lifted her head. "I guess we'll just have to take care of it, then, hmmm?"

Before she even knew what had happened, he'd rolled her beneath him and sank his cock into her to the base. "You mean like this?"

"Oh," she moaned. "Uh huh." Yep, the ability for coherent verbalization seemed to have left her.

He made love to her slowly this time, interspersing his thrusts with long, skillful kisses to her mouth and her breasts. He brought her twice again before he finally came. He left her deeply satisfied, exhausted, and deliciously sore. The last thing she remembered was Merrick covering them over with a blanket and spooning her from behind.

When she awoke, a note on his pillow told her he'd left to examine Roane's house. The note said he'd back before five. She glanced at the clock on the dresser and saw that it was about four. The note said to look in the top left drawer of the dresser. She rose from the bed and checked it. There, on a blue sweater rested a nasty looking pistol. She picked it up and checked the clip. It was loaded.

## ANYA BAST

Taking the gun into the bathroom with her, she took a long, hot shower. After she dug through her bags, she found a robe, donned it and headed downstairs. As her bare foot touched the last step, someone knocked on the door.

Suddenly, she was really grateful for the gun.

Quickly, she padded into the kitchen and peered out the window. A tan delivery van from a Fury women's clothing retailer sat in the driveway. Frowning, she went to the door, keeping the pistol behind her back, just in case. She opened it and saw Henry, a local wolf who'd always been kind to her.

"Hey, Nikki!" he said through the screen door. "Wow, I didn't expect to see you here!" He carried two large boxes.

She tried not to grind her teeth. Most people probably wouldn't expect Merrick to be dallying with a plain little cougar like her. Wait until they found out she was going to be their Alpha...if, she chastised herself inwardly, she accepted the role.

"Yeah, well...yeah." Hmmm, apparently she still hadn't regained her skill at coherent conversation. She opened the screen door one-handed and let Henry in. "Is that a delivery for...er...Merrick?" she asked doubtfully. She was kinda hoping not since Henry worked for a women's clothing and lingerie store.

He laughed. "No, Merrick said they were for the lady of the house."

"Oh."

"Would that be you?" he asked.

"I guess so. I'm the only lady here at the moment."

"Well, he called this order in an hour ago, so I guess it's you." Henry sounded surprised, damn it.

She pointed at the kitchen table. "Just set them there."

She ran upstairs and got a tip out of her purse for Henry and came back down. He left a minute later, after a little small talk about the weather. She managed to keep the gun hidden the whole time, luckily. Curiosity had shown brightly in the older man's eyes about her presence in Merrick's home. The town would be buzzing tonight.

After the delivery van had pulled out of the driveway, she set the pistol on the kitchen table and opened the boxes. One of them contained a dozen red roses...and the other packaged about twenty pairs of blue underwear like the ones Merrick had destroyed. Well, looked like he planned on shredding more of them, she thought with a smile.

She cut and put the roses in a vase she'd found buried the back of a cabinet. A foreign feeling fluttered through her chest as she did it.

Hope.

# FURY

\* \* \* \* \*

Nikki inched along the wall of the empty apartment building. Bradley followed close behind her. Her heart pounded in her chest. She was not a brave person, never had been. She was far more the "run away as fast as she could" type than she was the "save the day" type. Yet here she was taking advantage of the distraction Merrick and the other Wolven were providing to sneak into the room where Roane was being held.

Well, distraction perhaps wasn't the right word. Brawl would better encompass it.

Something crashed into the wall opposite them, making the entire corridor tremble, plaster fall from the ceiling, and the sole light bulb above them to sway, casting shadows over the stained walls. She halted and glanced back at Bradley and then continued on.

Okay, maybe war was the best word of all.

They drew closer to the room where Bradley and Amanda said they were keeping Roane. She fingered the gun tucked in her holster, hoping like hell she wouldn't need it. She couldn't shift. According to her information there were several big bad wolves guarding Roane and she'd be at a disadvantage in cougar form without any wide-open spaces in which to maneuver. The dust, must and fallen plaster of the abandoned apartment building tickled her nostrils and threatened to make her sneeze. She clamped her hand over her nose and mouth to prevent it.

She stopped in front of the door and inhaled sharply, trying desperately to swallow the sneeze. Bradley gave her a look of warning. The sneeze overwhelmed her and echoed through the corridor.

"Damn," she muttered.

The door opened, revealing a man who had to be about 6'5 and three hundred pounds. Nikki choked back her fear and pointed down the hallway. "The building is under attack! They need you! Go! Go!"

The guard stood there, staring. Obviously he wasn't the sharpest pencil in the box. His smoky eyes narrowed and a thin growl trickled from between his lips.

He wasn't going for it.

Just as she was about to launch plan B, which involved her steel-toed boot in his crotch, the guard rushed past her and ran down the hallway toward the battle in the main room.

Thank God for stupid wolves.

## ANYA BAST

Another guard ran toward her. This one was smarter and wasn't falling for her lame ruse. She brought her booted foot up, catching him solidly in the balls. He grunted and fell to his knees and Nikki brought the grip of the gun down on the back of his head. He slumped to the side.

Beside her, Bradley had shifted to wolf form. He bounded over the unconscious guard and into the room in a gray blur just in time to meet the third enemy wolf. Bradley went straight for the man's throat and Nikki turned her face away, not wanting to see the carnage.

Her gaze landed on Roane. He sat in a straight back chair in the nearly empty, white-walled room. They'd blindfolded and gagged him. They'd also restrained him with cold iron cuffs, preventing his ability to shift. Blood trickled from the corner of his mouth and down his forehead. His head lolled back, mouth agape. Damn, they'd drugged him. Good thing Bradley was here, she'd never be able to lift him herself.

She went back to the smart wolf lying in the hallway and searched his pockets. Luckily she found the keys to the cuffs on him. She'd been betting they hadn't given them to the stupid wolf. She hurried back to Roane's side. They had to hurry before stupid wolf figured out he'd been duped and came back with friends.

The sounds of Bradley fighting the other guard ended with a wet sound and a gurgling noise. Nikki winced, her fingers fumbling the keys. She felt the soft brush of Bradley's fur against her leg as he came to stand near her. By the time she had Roane's cuffs undone, Bradley had shifted back. She tried to ignore the blood on him.

Nikki wrapped her arms around Roane and helped him up, grunting at the weight of him. Roane groaned, but allowed her the contact. Bradley took the other side and together they walked him slowly to the door. Roane was so drugged up Nikki doubted he even understood what was happening. Perhaps he didn't even know he'd been kidnapped.

Her heart pounding frantically at their slow pace, they walked him down the hallway toward the exit. When they reached the end of the corridor, Bradley held him upright while she peeked her head out the door and made sure no one was there. No moon shown in the sky, making it extremely dark outside. It would help a little. OtherKin shifters had excellent night vision and an even better sense of smell.

Grunting, they dragged Roane out the door and started into the small patch of woods that separated them from their get-away car. The darkness of the woods swallowed them and Nikki closed her eyes for a moment, letting the environment sink into her senses. Evergreen crushed underfoot, sending up a fresh, welcome scent. It made her yearn suddenly for her shadow form. The leaves of the trees above their heads rustled with a breeze. A distance off she could hear a fight breaking out. Nearly the whole of Fury had come with them, spoiling for a good rumble with a rival clan.

## FURY

Fast moving footsteps behind them jerked her and Bradley into an even faster pace. Nikki tripped on a branch, but recovered before she fell. Her heart rate increased. The shifter was downwind from them so she couldn't tell who it was. They, however, were upwind.

They just had to get to the car.

The faster she and Bradley moved, the shifter behind them seemed to move even quicker. Knowing they wouldn't be able to outrun their pursuer, she let Bradley take Roane's full weight and turned, ready to fight.

Merrick emerged from the trees. "Nikki." He was nude because he'd shifted during the battle.

Her body relaxed. "Thank God."

Merrick moved past her, helping Bradley with Roane. "How is he?"

"They pumped him full of Vacxil," replied Bradley. "At least, I think its Vacxil. He's completely out of it, in any case."

Nikki fell into step beside Merrick, noting his injuries were numerous and vicious. Blood coated his side, but the shadows obscured her ability to tell if he had any gaping wounds. A stab of panic went through her. She wanted to ask him to stop so she could check him out, but she knew they couldn't do that. "Are you all right?" she asked, concerned.

Merrick slanted a grin at her as they walked. "I didn't know you cared, pussycat."

"Yeah, well." She glanced away. "Of course I do. How bad are you hurt?"

He shrugged. "Wolf teeth don't tickle, usually."

The images that one sentence stirred in her mind had another jolt of fear coursing through her. "Goddamn it, Merrick!" she swore. She quickened her pace before she even knew she'd done it. All she wanted was to get somewhere she could treat his injuries. She got a peek of the SUV through the trees ahead and she relaxed a little. They were almost there.

They reached the vehicle and all three of them pushed the doped up Roane into the back seat. Bradley tried to get into the driver's side, but she grabbed the keys from him.

"Get in the back with Roane," she ordered with a ferocity that surprised Bradley and herself. "I'm driving."

Bradley cast a confused look at Merrick who laughed. "She's going to be your queen. Better do as she says," replied Merrick.

## ANYA BAST

They climbed into the SUV and Nikki threw the car into reverse. Tires squealing, they peeled away, headed back to Fury and to the Elders. Martha, she understood, was a doctor. She'd be waiting at Merrick's house for them.

"You're making her queen, Merrick?" Bradley asked in a stunned voice from the back.

Nikki narrowed her eyes at him in the rear view window. "You sound like you have a problem with that," she said in a low, dangerous voice. All the adrenaline coursing through her body made her feel aggressive. She raised a brow. "Do you have a problem with it— Bradley?"

"You accepting then?" Merrick said in a low voice beside her.

She bit her lip and fell silent. All her life she'd just wanted to belong somewhere. It was true she wasn't a wolf, but she was an OtherKin shifter. She felt so much more at home in Fury than she ever had among the humans.

Nikki still wasn't sure about her ability to be an Alpha Queen. She wasn't sure how the rest of Fury would react to her leadership. Most of all, she wasn't sure about Merrick. They had a powerful sexual attraction, and her feelings for him went beyond the physical, but did they share enough to stay together...to rule together?

Not to mention the naming ceremony. The inhabitants of Fury might well kill her if they rejected a cougar as their queen.

"Nikki?" Merrick prodded. "You're thinking too much."

She glanced at him, then turned back to concentrating on the road. "There's so much uncertainty--"

"I know what I want, Nikki," he interrupted in a tone laced with steel. "I want you. You match with me. It's that simple."

"I want you too," she said immediately. It was the truth, God help her.

Merrick nodded. "What more do you need to know?"

Nikki tightened her grip on the steering wheel and didn't respond.

Merrick only sighed.

They raced into the driveway of Merrick's home and Martha ran out the front door to help them get Roane inside. They settled them onto the couch in the living room.

Martha turned and caught sight of Merrick. "You're badly injured. Sit down and I'll treat you first."

Merrick held up a hand. "No way. My brother's been shot up with Vacxil. Get it the hell out of him."

## FURY

"Be reasonable. You're injured far worse—"

"Take care of Roane."

She inclined her head a little. "As you wish." Martha shot a meaningful look at Nikki before going to her medical bag of tricks and fixing what appeared to be a syringe of something for Roane.

Nikki took Merrick's upper arm, feeling blood and grit who knew what else under her fingers. "Come on, you and me upstairs, big boy. Let's get you cleaned up so we can take stock of your injuries."

He glanced at Roane. "I'd rather stay here with my brother."

"He'll be fine," she answered in a firm voice. "Come on."

Reluctantly, he followed Nikki up the stairs and into the bathroom. She wet a washcloth and gently bathed his chest and arms. Her hands shook as she surveyed the damage. She bit her lip and grimaced with every bite mark, tear and gash she uncovered. "God, Merrick," she breathed.

He stilled the motion of her hand. She looked up at him and he cupped her cheek in his palm and kissed her tenderly. Merrick set his forehead against hers. "You do care," he murmured.

"Yes, I care."

He kissed her again, pulling her up flush against his body. After her knees were weak and the washcloth hung limp in her grasp from his kiss, he set his chin on the top of her head and held her close. She closed her eyes, not even caring about the blood.

"Today I was as concerned about you as I was for Roane, Nikki," he said. His low voice rumbled through her.

She nuzzled his shoulder, happy to have his warmth against her. "It went fine. Our job was much easier than yours in the end."

"I knew you could do it."

Nikki smiled against Merrick's shoulder. He had more faith in her than she had in herself. She pulled away from him. "Let's finish this. I want Martha to treat these wounds. You need stitches for some of them."

She finished her work in silence, letting the wet washcloth reveal his hurts. The bathroom sink was full of his blood and the blood of others when she was finished.

Finally, she set the ruined cloth aside and blew a tendril of hair away from her face. He was a positive mess, she thought, surveying him. A gorgeous mess, but still a mess. She shuddered and looked away from him, thinking about how easily she could have lost him in that fight. Her heart would've broken. She would've mourned him. In that moment she realized the truth; she could come to love this man so very easily.

## ANYA BAST

Nikki looked up at him at the realization. His dark, molten eyes warmed as he held her gaze and he smiled. Some unspoken understanding seemed to pass between them in that moment. Maybe they were both already on the edge of love.

How incredible.

Steps sounded on the stairs and soon Roane's huge frame filled the doorway. He looked fatigued and stood slightly hunched over as if in pain. He looked at them both in turn, giving them a lop-sided grin. "So, did you make them pay, brother?"

Merrick's eyes turned icy along with his smile. That seemed answer enough.

Roane turned his gaze to Nikki. "Thank you," he said in his deep, smooth voice. "I owe you my life."

"You don't owe me anything, Roane. I owe you for stepping aside for Merrick and I." Wow, that had almost sounded as if she was accepting her queenhood. She glanced at Merrick and opened her mouth to backpedal, but Roane spoke first.

"You're going to be a powerful queen, and you're meant to mate with my brother. If you don't understand that yet, you will soon. Now, I am going to bed. Martha wants you downstairs, Merrick." He turned and disappeared down the hallway.

They headed downstairs and Merrick allowed Martha to disinfect and treat his wounds. All the time she held his gaze, holding her recent revelation close within her. A flicker of love for him did dwell within her, and it was set for an inferno.

And it felt good. It felt right.

After Martha left, Merrick pulled her close and nuzzled her hair. "I'm starting to fall for you, Nikki," he murmured against her throat. "Stay with me."

She pulled away a little and looked up at him. "Yes."

"Yes?" he said in surprise. "Yes, you'll stay, or yes you'll be my queen."

"I'll be your queen," she answered softly.

Now all she had to do was survive the naming ceremony.

Nikki's eyes flickered open. She sighed and closed them again, snuggling back into Merrick's arms. They'd fallen asleep spooning the night before. Merrick felt so good against her, warm and comforting and strong. She could get used to this...she was already used to it.

He moved at her back and sighed. She squeezed her eyes shut and hoped for a few more moments with him. Today, in just a few hours, was the naming ceremony.

## FURY

Butterflies crowded her stomach. God. She could die today.

She swallowed her uncertainty and fear. Right now she didn't want it tainting her contentment. Having Merrick's nude body pressed against her, his arms encircling her and his breath soft and easy in her ear was heaven.

He pulled her closer, rousing. She turned in his arms and watched his eyes come open. They stared at each for a heartbeat and she watched his silver eyes grow dark and heavy-lidded. She knew that look. He rolled her under him, covering her bare body with his, and kissed her.

"Feel better?" she murmured against his mouth.

"I do now." His voice came out sleep-roughened and sexy as hell. A slow throb started between her thighs.

He shifted and slid a knee between her legs. At the same time, he eased a broad hand down her side, running it over her breast, to slide under her ass. He lifted her and she spread her legs for him, bringing his cock to rest against her swollen and aroused sex. Her clit throbbed against his shaft and she sighed and moved her pelvis. The look in his eyes became impossibly darker.

"Today you become mine," he murmured.

"I'm already yours."

"Are you? You sure about this, Nikki? There's no going back after today. Once the pack accepts you, you're queen. No more running away."

She stared up at him before speaking, memorizing the curve of his sensual lips, the crinkles at the edges of his eyes. "I don't want to go anywhere, Merrick. I don't want to be anywhere but with you." Those words hit her in the heart as a profound truth. "I love you," she finished in a soft voice, full of emotion. Why were those words so hard to say the first time? They made her feel so vulnerable.

Something shifted in his eyes. They softened a bit. "I love you, too, Nikki."

She relaxed and smiled a little, but when he shifted, rubbing the length of his cock against her, it wiped the smile off her face. She thrust her hips up at him and moaned. The man had the ability to make her beg for him.

"Do you want me?" he asked in a low voice.

She closed her eyes and arched her back. "Do you even have to ask? I want to feel every inch of you."

He bent his head and laved his tongue over her erect nipple. It responded to his touch by growing even more sensitive. It pulled a helpless whimper from her throat as her body heated and moisture trailed down her inner thigh.

"Merrick," she breathed in need.

## ANYA BAST

He set the wide, smooth head of his cock to the entrance of her sex and pushed in. Her muscles clamped down around his length as he slid in slowly to the hilt. He groaned, his fingers biting into her waist. "God, you feel so damn good, Nikki."

Her breath came fast now. Feeling him inside her was the best thing in the world. The only thing she wanted right now. "Fast and hard, Merrick. Please. I want to feel you."

He lowered his head and kissed her slowly, running his lips slow and silkily over her mouth. Finally, he parted her lips and mated his tongue with hers with an easy, possessive passion that made her heart pound. While he kissed her, he eased his cock out of her and pushed back in slow enough that she could feel every little vein, every single centimeter of his shaft.

By the time he'd hilted again, she shook from the lust and need she felt for him. She hovered deliciously on the razor's edge of a climax. Amazing, since he'd only thrust inside her twice so far. She felt completely possessed by his shaft, totally filled up. Every square inch of her sex seemed touched by him.

"Bastard," she breathed against his lips. "I said hard and fast."

She felt him smile. "Slow first, Nikki, slow and easy," he murmured. "I'm going to make you scream when you come." He lifted up and slid his hands under her ass, elevating and spreading her sex. True to his word, he shafted her slow, his gaze holding hers.

Pleasure dominated her body and her mind. His thrusts were unrelenting, powerful and possessive. Her climax built with every one of his movements. It grew in strength every time he impaled her. Soon she could barely think, could barely remember her own name. Her world was all about Merrick and the way he loved her.

Soon, the pleasure crested and exploded. Her whole body shook from the intensity of it. She arched her spine and closed her eyes as her climax swallowed her whole. She screamed for him, loud and long as her sex pulsed and spasmed with the force of her orgasm.

Just as the waves of it were dissipating, Merrick flipped her over on her hands and knees and slid inside her from behind. This time, there was nothing slow and easy about his pace. With a little growl in the back of his throat, he grabbed her hips and started shafting her hard and fast.

Nikki moaned out her satisfaction and lifted her hips, offering herself to him completely. She hit the mattress with a closed fist. "Yes, that's it," she breathed.

He pulled back and slammed into her over and over. It was just the perfect amount pain, just a touch, to make her cream hard for him, float her to the razor edge of climax. The head of his cock rubbed over her G-spot with every thrust in this position. It felt so good that it stole her breath.

## FURY

He let a finger stray to her anus. She stilled, but he stroked her there until she moaned. He slid a finger inside that tight little hole. Every nerve ending she possessed there flared to brilliant, glorious life. Nikki gasped in surprise at the sensation, at the feeling of utter possession, and how much she loved it.

She came hard. Her muscles clamped down around him and her hips bucked. She cried out from the pleasure that overwhelmed her body. At the same time, his cock jumped within her and he groaned. His come filled her.

They hovered, panting, for a moment before Merrick eased her down to the mattress and pulled her close. Her muscles shook from their lovemaking and her sex throbbed in a good, satisfied way. "God, you're going to kill me," she murmured as she nestled her head against his chest. She stiffened, remembering the naming ceremony.

He rubbed his hand down her back and kissed the crown of her head. "We were made for each other, Nikki. Sex between us is more intense than I've ever experienced."

She smiled, happy he thought so, too.

He continued to stroke her back. "We've got to go, baby. It's almost time."

Her smile faded. Oh, God. "Merrick, I—"

"You're going to be fine," he interrupted. "You're stronger than you think."

She bit her lower lip. Strong? Not quite. Today it would be all her. Merrick wouldn't be able to interfere. She'd have to deal with any challenges completely on her own in order to prove her dominance and her strength to the pack. If Merrick stepped in, or changed the rules, she'd look weak and they wouldn't accept her. She had to do this, and she had to win. She wondered if the spy would be the one to challenge her. At least this was a possible way to unmask the person who'd been feeding information to Cody Springs.

Merrick eased out of the bed and pulled her up. "Shower time."

She groaned.

In the shower they washed each other slowly and Merrick made love to her up against the slick wall with the warm water cascading over them. He made her forget what to come for a while, but by the time they were dressed and ready to leave, a tension had leached into her back and shoulders.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I name Nicole Melissa Armstrong as my queen," stated Merrick in a loud voice.

The words fell on the gathered crowd like an anvil on an egg. All went silent and then the murmuring increased and the emotion around her grew. Nikki stood to the side of

## ANYA BAST

Merrick and kept her eyes steadfastly on the fire that burned in the center of the gathering. The cool evening air caressed her hair and the forest scents infused her senses, but she did take any comfort in it.

Ever since they'd arrived, the inhabitants of Fury had been whispering and glancing at her. News had reached them that she'd been staying in Merrick's house, that they were sleeping together. Nikki suspected this recent news had really thrown them for a loop. Nikki gritted her teeth. Most the women had come dressed like they were going out on the town—their hair fixed and makeup perfect. Some of them had obviously assumed they'd had a shot.

Some them were now obviously very disappointed.

"She's not even a wolf!" someone yelled in the back. "She doesn't even belong here."

Nikki looked up, liquid steel laced with anger easing up her spine. Several of the women directly opposite her stepped back from her glare. Nikki realized in that moment how much she wanted to defend her right to this place.

Douglas stepped through the throng. "If someone wants to challenge Nicole, do it properly. Don't stand in the back of the crowd like a coward."

The crowd hushed. Tension filled the air. A murmur started that became a roar. Those who supported her battled with those who didn't. Surprisingly, she had more supporters than she'd thought.

Nikki spread her feet and waited, expecting someone to challenge her. By Fury rule, the strongest and best of her challengers would be selected to fight her. Whoever left standing at the end of fight would be declared the winner. Only a woman would challenge, of course, since whoever won would be heavily considered by Merrick and the Elders for the position of queen. After this morning, Nikki felt sure Merrick wouldn't accept anyone else, but for the good of the pack he might be forced into it.

Hell, her challenger could end up killing her. Merrick might not end up with a choice. There weren't any guarantees here.

Voices in the back of the crowd elevated to screaming level. Nikki's stomach knotted. After a few minutes, a woman elbowed her way through the crowd. She was tall and muscular—much taller and muscular than Nikki—and wore a pair of tight-fitting jeans and a dark blue T-shirt. The dark-haired woman gave Nikki a sneering once-over and put her hands on her hips.

"Cheryl," Douglas greeted. "Do you challenge?"

Cheryl shrugged and spit on the ground beside her. Charming. "I can take a cat," she said dismissively.

## FURY

Nikki took a step forward, her dander already up. "You know what they say, bitch, dogs drool, cats rule," she quipped with false bravado.

"We'll see who rules," Cheryl said, taking a step toward her.

The crowd opened up for them like a bunch of kids at recess watching a fight. Nikki could practically feel the anticipation in the air. She glanced up and caught Merrick's gaze before concentrating on Cheryl's face.

"One question before we do this," said Nikki. "You have anything to do with leaking info to Cody Springs?"

Cheryl blinked, a blankness filling her eyes before irritation. In that moment Nikki knew instinctively that Cheryl wasn't the spy.

Damn. "What are you talking about?" Cheryl snapped. "Let's cut the conversation and shift already."

Nikki was more than ready. She shifted, feeling the slight pain of transformation steal over her body. She landed on the forest floor on four big feline paws and shook herself. God, it felt good. When she opened her eyes, it was to find cool, black wolf eyes staring back at her.

Oh, man, Cheryl was a big wolf. A big, muscular, gray wolf. Much larger than her cougar form.

That was *so* not good.

Without warning, Cheryl lunged. Nikki felt huge wolf teeth tear into her shoulder. Cheryl's massive body threw her back onto the ground and Nikki lay there stunned for a moment, before turning her head with a snarl and biting deeply into fur and flesh. Cheryl yelped and bounded away.

Nikki got to her feet fast, ignoring the pain coursing through her body at the wound in her shoulder. She circled Cheryl, staring at her with single-minded determination. She lowered her head, letting a low growl trickle from between her feline lips. Her great paws padded softly over the forest floor as she stalked. Cheryl took a step back away from her. Good. Cheryl had surprised her just then, it wouldn't happen again. Nikki wanted to make sure Cheryl understood that.

Nikki narrowed her cat eyes and thought about Merrick, thought about Fury. She wanted to stay here. She wanted to prove to these people that she did belong. She wanted to be the best damn queen they ever saw. The thought of losing this place...losing Merrick, made her chest tighten. She had a lot riding on this fight, more than Cheryl.

*You're stronger than you think you are,* Merrick's words came back to her.

She just had to believe it herself.

## ANYA BAST

Nikki lowered her head and hissed. A heartbeat later and she lunged in the only way a pissed off cat can.

This time, Nikki's claws came out.

The vicious sounds of snarling and growling filled the air as Nikki and Cheryl rolled across the ground, tangled in a fighting ball of fur and teeth and claws. Nikki poured everything she was into the battle, every inch of her will and determination.

In the melee, she found Cheryl's throat and bit. Cheryl gave an anguished yelp and went limp. Nikki stood over her, holding the wolf firmly between her jaws and shaking her. She didn't want to kill her, only show her dominance. After several minutes of standing over her, Nikki dared release her and back away.

Cheryl lay on her side, panting and covered in blood. The wolf caught her gaze and held it, then slowly rolled over and showed her stomach—a signal of submission.

Nikki staggered back and let herself shift. When she came to, she found herself cradled in Merrick's arm, naked and in pain. It seemed like blood and wounds covered her whole body.

She'd won.

Behind her, the people of Fury cheered. Nikki doubted all of it was sincere, but she'd prove them she was worthy in time. She now knew she was worthy of being here. That had been the hardest part. Convincing the rest of them would be child's play.

Merrick held her close and stroked her hair away from her face. "Are you okay, Nikki?" he asked, his voice shaking. "Goddamn it, tell me you're okay."

Her eyes fluttered open. "I'm okay, Merrick." She reached up and touched his face. He looked so worried.

He crushed her against. "Fuck, we are never doing that again. That's it. Never fucking again." He murmured over and over into her hair. "I don't care about the rules or tradition. That scared the hell out of me."

"It's all right," she replied. "I'm fine. It served its purpose." She'd shown Fury she was strong enough to rule, that she was strong enough to best a wolf.

Merrick helped her to her feet and they faced the crowd. The people of Fury applauded them and cheered. Cheryl had slunk away to lick her wounds. She scanned the faces, knowing one of them was the spy. They had a lot of work ahead of them, but standing there with Merrick's arm around her, she knew they could meet any challenge together.

Nikki smiled.

**THE END**

# FURY

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anya Bast writes erotic fantasy & paranormal romance. Primarily, she writes happily-ever-afters with lots of steamy sex. After all, happily-ever-afters with lots of sex are the very best kind.

She lives in the country with her husband of ten years. They share their lives with eight cats and one perplexed dog. A native of one of the colder states, she loves to ice skate and watch hockey. She has fascination for crows, ravens and birds of prey, (especially owls). She enjoys the study of Eastern philosophy, Celtic myth, dreaming, and shamanism and incorporates what she learns into her paranormal stories.

Anya got her start writing fantasy romance. Since writing a little hotter seemed to come naturally to her, she had no trouble making the move to erotic romance. She loves writing books that are heavy on plot, emotion and character development, and also have spicy, no-holds-barred sex scenes. Exploring the elements of dark sexual fantasy in her writing is what Anya does best.

<http://www.anyabast.com>