

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS



Reese Gabriel

Kimberlee's
Keeper

KIMBERLEE'S KEEPER

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Chapter One

Kimberlee was hell-bent on confronting the Lavorian generals.

"Let go of me!" she exclaimed as the armed security men swarmed 'round her at the entrance to their private dining room. "I'm an American and I demand to see the junta. I know they're back there. I can smell their stench."

The maitre d' of the restaurant was here by now, pleading with her to leave. "Por favor, senorita, we want no trouble."

"I didn't make the trouble," the chestnut-haired, green-eyed Kim insisted. "They did."

"Let her pass." She heard one of the generals order in bored Spanish. "Perhaps she can amuse us a while."

Kim yanked her arms free of the humorless guards. She'd amuse them all right. Straight to the World Criminal Court in The Hague.

There were four of them at the table, three uniformed Lavorians and one Anglo civilian. It was the latter who caught her attention—not to mention her breath.

He was devastatingly handsome, dressed in khaki, with wavy black hair and piercing blue eyes of a shade Kim had never seen before. Like a chalky Mediterranean sky, mixed with the deep Pacific sea and tinged with gleams of flaming cobalt. His features were quintessentially masculine without being harsh. The two-day growth of beard on his chiseled cheeks and jawline only made him look even more delectable.

There was something else about him, too, something dark and dangerously sexy that was hard to put into words. It was like he was sitting there, supremely confident, untouchable without being arrogant. You could see it in the carriage of his lean, fit frame, the way he wore his safari clothes. The man was no poseur. He was the genuine

article. Kim could easily imagine him, out in some jungle, waiting patiently for days to make his kill, only to return home, never once bragging about it to a soul.

That seemed noble enough, and yet whoever he was, he had to be a complete scoundrel to keep company with this lot.

"Won't you join us for a glass of wine?" asked the general who'd called for her, a pink-faced man with white hair, a gray mustache and small black eyes. "We are not often graced with such beauty."

"I prefer to stand, thank you," she replied curtly.

"As you wish." He inclined his head, clearly in charge.

"I'm here on business," she reinforced. Kim was all too aware of the men's predatory eyes on her scantily clad body. She was facing risks here and she knew it. Appearing before known white slavers in a tank top and cutoffs was tantamount to waving red blankets at a convention of bulls.

The former beauty queen turned international aid worker hadn't any choice, though. When word came of Maria's arrest, Kim had been unloading supplies at the clinic she ran for the poor.

"Senorita Breen." Maria's little sister Angela had run up to her, breathless. "They take her! They take her!"

She tried to calm the young woman. "Who took her, Angela? Who?"

Angela caught her breath and proceeded to describe a scene that had been duplicating itself all across the country since this new government had taken power ten days ago. Men in an army truck, showing up with a bogus warrant, dragging a young woman from her house simply because she was pretty. They would take her to a brothel, where she would serve wealthy and powerful men.

Hundreds were disappearing, but Maria happened to be Kim's friend, a loyal worker at the clinic. Kim didn't hesitate for a second. Knowing that every minute counted in a case like this, she came directly here, to this place where various members

of the infamous eighteen-member military junta, the so-called Council of National Salvation, were known to take their lunch.

"Business...of course." The white-haired general managed a wan smile at Kim's refusal of their hospitality, but one of the others, a balding man with a thin black mustache scowled openly. Clenching the gloved fist he'd been resting on the table, he made it abundantly clear with his body language that the foreign female had crossed the line.

It was the American who addressed her next, chisel-featured, hawk-eyed, his gaze piercing her to her very soul. "You are either the bravest woman I have ever met for coming here like this," he said, "or the most foolish."

Kim lashed out at once, maybe because she felt safer doing so with a fellow countryman. More likely it had to do with the way he made her feel so damned vulnerable, with that glare of his. "And you are either a coward or a traitor," she snapped. "Probably both."

The white-haired general laughed. "The kitten has claws, *Amigo*. You should take her to bed, tame her and make her purr for you."

Kim flushed at the thought of having sex with such a man, so uncompromisingly virile and self-assured, his hands, his teeth, his cock, taking full liberties with her soft flesh, caressing and teasing, punishing and taking. Her legs wide apart, her sex sopping wet—much as it was now—primed to receive, to please, to serve. It was unthinkable, unbearable. "I would sooner die," she spat. "My purpose here is humanitarian. I come to plead for the release of Maria Borges, wrongfully detained by your government earlier today."

The white-haired general lit a cigar, enjoying a full puff. "Why trouble us with this? If she was arrested, she has committed some crime. It is a matter for the courts."

"She was picked up by the army," said Kim, making the crucial distinction.

The smoking general smiled, mostly to himself.

It was the bald one, with the pencil mustache and sadistic eyes who carried on the dialogue. "Then she is a terrorist and will be dealt with as one."

Kim knew the time had come to play her trump card. "If you will not help me, then I will go to my embassy. And if they will not help me, I will go to the press, the international courts, anywhere I must, to get satisfaction."

"Are all your women like this?" the bald, aggressive general asked the American.

His classically sculpted face remained expressionless. Kim could see the others awaiting his response, preparing immediately to take it into account. This was the sort of man other men inevitably respected or feared, and women avoided. Unless they wanted to be drawn into an inferno, that is, moths to a searing flame.

"Some are," he conceded. "Ours is a more...liberal society."

"As was ours," said the third general, a porcine man with yellow peach fuzz hair. "Until we stepped in to purify things."

It was the first time the man had stopped eating since her arrival. She was sorely tempted to say something about purifying his gluttony, but she held her tongue.

"I am curious," the white-haired general mused. "As a known slave trainer, Senor Roarke, how would you handle a female like this one? She is quite spirited, no?"

Kim's mouth formed a shocked oval. Had she heard what she thought she had? Did this man actually put women into bondage?

The bald man answered before the one called Roarke could speak. "If she were going to be my slave, I would break her at once," he bragged. "One good whipping and she would be begging to do my bidding."

Kim narrowed her gaze. "Come near me and I'll cut your balls off," she threatened, though she had no idea how she would accomplish such a thing.

"Serves you right, Escadrille," chided the white-haired general. "I asked Senor Roarke, not you."

All eyes turned to Roarke as the bald General Escadrille swallowed his obvious indignation. Kim knew she ought to be speaking up for herself at this juncture, or better still, running from the room as quickly as possible, straight to the American embassy. But something was holding her in place, transfixed. She just had to hear what the man would say, terrible and scandalous as it might be.

Like a moth to a flame, she reminded herself grimly.

And what a flame he was. What was that saying—about all roses having thorns? A man this beautiful was born to wound the opposite sex. It had been said of her as well. She'd never meant to do such things, but the hearts she played with had been so weak, so unable to meet the challenge of loving her.

It was all that despair, and the guilt that came with it that had driven her from a comfortable life in the States into relief work. Going on two years of suffering alongside the poorest and most defenseless people in the world. Did this Roarke think her a fool? Well, then, she was making a career of it. Two earthquakes, a major famine, even a civil war had yet to stop her.

"There is no one way to achieve the ends you speak of, General Oreste," the one called Roarke said diplomatically. "It depends on the personality of the woman, and that of the trainer, too."

"But it is based on fear, no?" prompted white-haired Oreste.

"To some extent." Roarke was looking at Kim, whose cheeks were crimson. Was he considering the general's idea, about taking her to bed...and taming her? "But you have to use a woman's desire, as well. There are elements of her psychology that lend themselves well to sexual slavery. The desire to please the male, for example, and the biological imperative to surrender and accept the male's seed."

"That's the problem with you *Norte Americanos*," interjected Escadrille. "You are too sentimental. You make it sound like you are wooing her. Who is the slave here and who the Master?"

"There's no confusing the roles," said Roarke. "The woman is property. Treasured though she may be. She begins and ends her training on her knees."

"Well said." The third general pointed with his fork. "But tell me this. As a student of human nature, do you believe all females are naturally slaves?"

"I can't say that," Roarke shrugged. "Any more than I could say all men are naturally Masters. In my case, I couldn't have a woman in any other way than in a subservient position. She would respect my authority in all matters, and in bed she would know her place as an object of my pleasure."

Kim's knees went weak. So it was true, this Roarke really was the male dominant he'd appeared to be. Were she ever to cross paths with him in a more intimate setting, she would be expected to yield to him. There would be no pretense of equality. He would make the decisions, and if he wished, give orders for her to follow.

Even sexually. Her pussy flooded afresh at the thought of the sorts of things a man like this might want her to do, or what he might do to her in turn. There would be no modesty, no holding back. He would use her and use her well. The sheer novelty of this was overwhelming. Most of the men she'd encountered had been too intimidated by her looks. They'd either fumbled in a cringing attempt to please her or else gone behind her back to have sex with women they felt more worthy of. And now here was a man telling her that she would be expected to perform to his specifications, rigorous as those might be.

Was he really talking directly to her, though? The discussion had been framed in a theoretical light, concerning some abstract woman to be enslaved. Surely it was not her actual body, her real-life freedom they were considering.

Was it?

"Slavery has been outlawed for the better part of two centuries," she ventured, attempting to push the case for a less concrete discussion. "You can't possibly expect to get away with keeping females in bondage."

"Women have been enslaved through most of history," the fat general happily reasoned. "Even today, the various arrangements most women live in, marriage, prostitution, even many types of employment situations are based upon fundamental principles of subjugation."

"Men are stronger," summed up Escadrille. "They take what they want. This will never change."

His beady eyes were on Kim. He was leaving nothing to her imagination as to what he thought of her or what he would like to be doing with her right now.

"Indeed." General Oreste took another puff on the cigar, thoughtful.

Kim was preoccupied trying not to think of Roarke having the power of a Master over her. He would make her kneel. He would make her obey. But what would the details look like? Would he put her in slave chains? Lock a collar 'round her throat? Touch the whip to her skin until she begged mercy?

How long would it take for her to center herself on his pleasure? She doubted it would take much, given the body he was sure to have under his clothes. There were muscles there, she knew it, and a shaft that would throb and surge in her hand. He was a big man. She could feel it. Would she be able to take the whole of him in her mouth? She'd have to, wouldn't she? A slave who displeased her Master would almost certainly be beaten. And he'd made it clear the sort of slave she'd be.

A sex slave. The kind used by men for their basest pleasures.

"This is all academic, though," said Oreste. "What I am faced with is a real-life problem. We have here a woman, Miss... I don't think I caught your name..."

"I am Kimberlee Breen," she said proudly. "Kimberlee Anne Breen."

"Yes, Miss Breen," he nodded. "All right, so we have this Miss Breen who is threatening to spread these terrible lies about us, and in such sensitive times. This is a problem, no?"

"I say we stop playing games," announced Escadrille. "I say we let this big-mouthed Americana see for herself exactly where her friend and all the other whores like her have gone. She won't be talking to the press with an endless stream of dicks in her mouth, will she?"

Kim felt the blood drain from her face. It was Maria she feared for most. Young and innocent, barely eighteen. These barbarians had to be stopped, but how?

"True enough, Escadrille," Oreste agreed. "As always, your solution is both brutal and effective."

Roarke pursed his full lips. "Pedro, I know I'm only a foreigner myself, but if I could interject something."

"By all means, *Amigo*. You are a great friend to us. Our debt to you is enormous."

Kim felt her hatred for this man growing by the moment. How could he sink to such levels as to work for men like Escadrille?

"Thank you, Pedro. It just seems this might be an occasion for me to ply my trade."

"I'd hardly wish such misery on you," Oreste chuckled. "Still, you are an expert. You really think you could convert her, so to speak? It certainly would make things simpler with regard to any problems with your government."

"I'd give it my best shot," he rasped.

"Why are you so interested?" asked the ever-suspicious Escadrille.

"Look at her," quipped Roarke. "Her body speaks for itself."

"I'm not a piece of meat," she denied, though her belly trembled at the knowledge that the man found her desirable. "Do you hear me?"

No one was listening.

She was an object now, a pretty female, in her skimpy clothes. Good, she hoped they had hard-ons under that table big enough to blow up in their pants. Especially Roarke.

"I say we go with a sure thing," Escadrille argued.

"Perhaps a wager would be in order." The white-haired general pointed his cigar. "Young lady, are you the betting sort?"

Kim let him have it with both barrels. "My life is not a game, General. If you intend to take me by force, then you might as well do it now, for I will never yield an inch."

"That suits me fine," snarled Escadrille. "To hell with you, I say. And the rest of your people with you."

"Now, now, Escadrille, we must be charitable to our American guests. In fact, I propose we allow them to have a little competition. *Amigo* Roarke, I have a million pesos says you can make this woman your slave in one week's time."

Kimberlee felt the blood pounding in her ears. They were actually putting up money...with her freedom as the stakes.

"A million against," the wild-eyed Escadrille declared fiercely. "And it will be like taking candy from a baby."

"I'll put up another million and a half on Escadrille's side," piped up the fat general.

"There, it is settled," Oreste declared. "We have our competition. What say you, my American *compadre*? Are you up to the challenge?"

"I'll have to be," said Roarke. "As you know, I hate to lose money for my friends."

General Oreste beamed broadly. Patting the American's arm, he managed a laugh, more like a low-pitched cackle. "This is why I like you so much, *Amigo*. You think as I do. I promise you, one day you will be honored alongside all of us as heroes of this country. Mark my words, when our revolution is complete, your place will be undisputed."

"It will be a place in the gutters of history," Kim could not resist blurting out, "along with the rest of the tyrants and collaborators."

Oreste shook his head, bemused. "You have your work cut out for you, *Amigo* Roarke."

"Escadrille, I give you a toast." The porcine general raised his glass. "With his loss will come our gain...two and a half million pesos in total."

"To his loss," Escadrille repeated, his face shrouded in darkness. "And our gain."

"It is settled, then," said Oreste. "You need only tell us where to deliver the female for you."

Kim could hardly believe her ears. Her sense of shock had only deepened with each passing word. For all intents and purposes, these butchers had just given her to a man to be trained as a slave according to the terms of a bet. Her freedom, cast aside for their amusement, her very life and soul for the sake of a pile of pesos.

"You cannot be serious," she declared. "I am a free woman, a citizen of the United States of America. I will never go with this man or anyone else. If you so much as touch me, I will scream at the top of my lungs."

Her heart was thundering in her chest. All she could think of was what they might do to her. How they could strip away her clothes, here and now, violating her if they wished, or if they preferred, punishing her with their belts or even a whip.

The reality terrified her, but something in the fantasy of it, in the rich chemical link she felt to Roarke, gave it a different tenor. If she were alone with this man, forced to confront these things only at his hands, what would happen, and would she fight him so terribly hard before giving in?

"In that case," said Oreste, "we shall strike a bargain. What was the name of the young woman you came to inquire about?"

"Maria Borges. She lives at 678 Via San Real. Her parents are —"

"That is enough." He waved his hand. "The name is sufficient. Here is the bargain. If you go willingly with my guards, participate in our little experiment willingly, then I shall see to it that your little friend goes free."

Kim's heart soared. Whatever happened to her, she had a chance here to give beautiful, intelligent Maria a second lease on life. "But how can I trust you? Once the bet is over?"

Escadrille pounded the table, bully that he was. "You dare doubt the word of one of the fathers of our country?"

"Hector, *no mas*." He brought Escadrille to heel. Snapping his fingers, he called for a nearby junior officer. "Give me an order of pardon."

The young officer produced a small pad and a silver pen. Oreste slashed his initials across the top piece of paper and handed it back. "Fill in the rest. Maria Borges, et cetra, et cetra. *Inmediatamente*."

The soldier clicked his heels and saluted. A moment later he was gone.

"Are you satisfied?" General Oreste asked.

"For now. I will want to hear from her on the phone, though. And I want her to have a visa, so she can leave the country. I won't have reprisals later on."

"Insolence," hissed Escadrille. "Utter and complete insolence."

"Done," said Oreste. "But you, too, have an obligation here. You must go and do as you are told and you must not attempt escape during the course of our little experiment."

"I have no reason to," she said confidently. "As I have nothing to fear. I will never be made a slave. No matter what is done to me."

Chapter Two

Edward Roarke cursed his bad Irish luck all the way to the hotel. Of all the monkey wrenches that could be thrown into an operation of this scale and sensitivity, this one had to be the worst. Stuck babysitting in the middle of an impending counter coup. Talk about a royal mess. What was that old line from *Casablanca* about the woman having to show up in his gin joint out of all the ones in the world?

Here's looking at you kid, play it, Sam, and all that.

Damned, had he really gotten that soft and sentimental – putting everything at risk for a pretty face and a pair of soulful eyes, the very epitome of the classic damsel in distress?

What else was he supposed to have done, though, once she'd stormed in there like that, all five foot three inches of her, a hundred and ten pounds of sheer, curvaceous female fury?

Talk about moxie. Did this Kimberlee Breen have the slightest clue what she was dealing with? Oreste and the rest of the junta had already jailed or put to death hundreds of political opponents, and that was just a hint of things to come. A few weeks from now this place was going to make Chile in '73 look like a walk in the park.

Unless he and his fellow undercover operatives in the Global Security Organization were able to neutralize the illegal military government, and restore the deposed President Gutierrez to power. By posing as an arms dealer with connections all over the world, he'd managed to get himself in tight with junta. Every day he was collecting the information he needed, helping to lay his part of the trap. In another week or so they would have everything in place and then they would strike, in cooperation with forces still loyal to the old president.

Everything had been going smoothly to date. Too smoothly, as it turned out. Rescuing the sexy Miss Breen from the clutches of the generals, particularly Escadrille, had been a close call. The last thing you wanted to do when posing as a brutal hired killer was to show the least bit of sympathy for any living thing, least of all a woman. A real mercenary wouldn't have lifted a finger to help Kim. But he couldn't let it go down that way, any more than he could stand up and shout the fact that he was a secret agent sworn to bring the lot of them to international justice.

The only choice he'd had was to propose claiming her as his slave for some hands-on training. He'd planned to slip her out of the country quietly, but then Escadrille, who'd sell his own mother for a plate of frioles and a bottle of rum, had made a fuss. That had led to Oreste's absurd bet, which in turn meant they'd be watching him like a hawk. Now he'd have to keep her, just as he would a real slave. He'd have to work her and train her, too, because Oreste would be expecting success. And the others would be watching carefully for any signs of fraud.

They would look in her eyes, and they'd know in an instant if she were only faking her slavery. If the right emotions and passions weren't there when they looked, then the two of them would both be dead, along with all the thousands of people counting on them to restore justice and mercy.

"One hundred fifty thousand," the cab driver quoted the fare in Lavorian pesos as they pulled up to the front entrance of the Hotel Grande, the capital city's finest.

Roarke handed over a wad of paper currency, inflated and highly colorful.

"Muchas gracias, senor."

He handed the man another hundred thousand for a tip and headed through the gleaming, gold-framed glass doors. Not too long ago the green-eyed Miss Breen had been brought into this lobby. The security guards had been given orders to take her directly upstairs to the suite of rooms he'd been occupying and chain her to the bed.

Roarke should probably have felt a twinge of guilt thinking of the attractive young aid worker, locked in a room waiting for him all this time, her body shackled in place, at

his complete mercy, while he spent another hour eating steaks with the generals and drinking brandy.

With every imagined detail of her predicament, however, he'd only gotten himself more aroused. It was a biological thing for him more than anything. Edward Roarke had liked his women bound and submissive for as long as he'd liked women, period. He would never employ force or pain like the junta generals, nor would he ever want a woman of his to be a cringing slave. Still, it was his great pleasure to help a willing female to discover within her the hidden seeds of submission.

He knew his views to be backward and unpopular. At least he was honest, though. He'd never made any bones about the terms on which a woman would be allowed into his presence, and his bed. She would be cherished and respected, yes, but she would submit all the same. She would come to him open, concealing nothing. She would be prepared to obey, trusting that he would protect her with his life and always do what was best for her. He would listen to reason, but never be dictated to.

As for sex, he was a definite dominant. His woman would have to give over full control of her body. There would be no question of denying his desires, many of which were quite kinky. When he gave the order, she would fetch the whip, cane, paddle or any other device with which he chose to mark her.

He was not a sadist, like the generals. Still, there would be no compromise in any relationship, no moderation. Only possession. Complete and absolute. Roarke had never yet found a woman capable of living in such a way with him for more than a few days at a time, and so he'd been largely alone. Fortunately, his work was itself a mistress, keeping him far from even the passing idea of a home and a mate to grace it.

Ladies of the night were more his speed. Through them he could live his dream neatly and discreetly for a few glorious hours with no morning after effects.

Admittedly, if he ever did have a slave of his own, she would be like this little package he was about to unwrap upstairs. About twenty-seven or twenty-eight by his reckoning, bright-eyed, feisty, healthy, sexy and full of passion.

It was the passion he'd noted most. Contrary to what one might expect, lackluster, spineless women made the worst sort of submissives. They could at best become robots, and often they remained simply indifferent to the methods and effects of training.

Passionate, fiery women, on the other hand—the ones who saw you coming from a mile away and fought tooth and nail for every inch of control over their sweet persons—were the ones who in the end would scream out their need, writhing in ecstasy, begging for their man's touch.

Perhaps they knew this, too, and therefore saw the need to resist so vehemently. Or maybe it was just the chemistry of conquest, the male and female being at their best in an arena of friendly opposition, the age-old tug of war and wrestling to the sexual count.

It was a little intoxicating—the brandy aside—to think as he rode the elevator to the concierge floor that he was going to have to do things to this woman, captive, bondage, dominant things, and all for the sake of her own preservation against the threat of the generals to enslave her for real.

It's just for show, he told himself. But he couldn't tell her that. Instead he'd be playing a role, the part of the real-life Master the generals were expecting him to be. She in turn would think herself a real slave. The ruse would save her life. And in ten days or so when the operation was over, she would be able to go home, none the worse for wear.

Roarke had it fairly straight in his head as he opened the door to his suite. As a matter of fact, he was feeling rather pleased with himself under the circumstances. All of that changed, however, after one look at his prisoner. In that single second it took to gaze upon her, sleeping helplessly on the bed, breathing so innocently, her wrist cuffed to the headboard, he was completely overcome.

Slain with emotion.

Never had he felt so many feelings for a woman, and all at once.

On the one hand, he was flooded with tenderness, beholding her small helpless body, barefoot, half-naked in the tank top and cutoffs, legs curled underneath her, sweet brown hair fanned about her on the pillow. He wanted to rush in and gather her into his arms, kissing her forehead, brushing back the strands of damp, errant hair from her pretty cheeks.

Was she dreaming? Good, bad or indifferent? Whatever it was, he wanted to make it all better, to make her feel safe and protected again, as a small child.

But she wasn't a child, she was a grown woman, and thus at the same time he was feeling tenderness, Roarke also wanted to touch her intimately, to turn her to her back, take off her clothes and have his way with her. Still sleepy, she would open to him, moaning as he suckled her breasts, softly yielding up her sex. Or alternatively he could wake her first, rendering her alert with imperious kisses so that he might with a single arch of his brow, a single word — "*now*" — cause her to gape her sopping wet thighs, no foreplay needed for the culmination of their mutual pleasure.

Then there was that other impulse, the beast-like part that wanted to mark her and make her his. It was this part of him that demanded she receive the kiss of leather from the get-go as well as some various other and sundry "lessons" to be imposed upon her soft and curvaceous flesh.

Roarke swallowed hard, sweat beading on his forehead. She was about a hundred times more beautiful than he'd remembered. Her oval face was that of an angel. Her lips were full and red, their quivering mirroring the motion of her sweet bosom. How frail she looked this way. Vulnerable, delicate, but strangely full of grace and dignity.

She was strong, too, though, he mustn't forget that. Underneath those fluttering lids were eyes capable of a dozen emotions at once—from imperious anger to an almost childlike sense of justice.

"Miss Breen," he announced his presence.

She made no response. His heart seized as he realized she'd fallen asleep waiting, her head framed by the pillow, her silky hair fanned out across the surface.

His heart thumped in his chest. This was going to be a hell of a lot tougher than he'd thought. His plan was to go through the motions—to play a role for her designed to bring her safely through this dangerous, potentially deadly situation. But would he be able to keep his own emotions...and his desires at bay?

Taking a sniff at the air, he caught a whiff of her perfume, lilacs and summer sunlight, the nearly indescribable scent of honey on distant combs. And daisies, blowing in a light breeze. A single one of them even, plucked in all its golden splendor and tucked behind her ear.

He found himself reaching out for her, trying to touch her hair, her cheek, lightly, far too gently and intimately for his own good. Touches like this might lead to lovemaking, to physical connections, and even emotional ones, the outcome of which was far too unpredictable to chance.

It could also lead to flashes of lust, electrical charges, arcs of need which could well lead him to tear the clothes from her body, baring her tanned, smooth flesh for his predations. How long had it been, anyway, since he'd had a woman like this, so beautiful and alive, so completely a match for his own fiery soul?

Forcing from his mind a vision of her writhing beneath him, rib to rib, breasts pushed against his chest, her pelvis and back arching as his thick, pulsing cock thrust in and out of her hot, luxuriant sex, Roarke returned to the business at hand.

Slave training.

Before waking her, he would remove the handcuffs. It was not that he intended to bestow freedom upon her—quite the opposite—it was just that she was too early in the process to wake up in bondage. After all, she might well open her lovely eyes in terror, pulling irrationally at her shackles. Employing the keys, he opened the lock, allowing the metal cuff to slip from her wrist.

"Miss Breen," he called to her, using a crisp business-like tone. "It's time to wake up. We have work to do."

Miss Breen sighed, touching her tongue to her lips. "Oh, Sir...oh...Master."

Roarke froze. What was this? Her eyes were still closed. Was she dreaming something?

The little brunette rolled to her back and thrust up her breasts. The tank top rode immediately to above her midriff, revealing a perfect belly. "Oh, yes..." she was whispering to some invisible lover. "Take me."

His cock hardened to instant steel. She was putting her hands over her head, wrists crossed. Pushing her bare ankles together, she drew her feet toward her ass, bending her knees. It was an action designed to push her thighs together, no doubt increasing the heat in her loins. Her mouth had fallen open by now, in a perfect oval of submission. Whoever was having her in slumber, he was one lucky fellow.

Roarke clenched his fists. It was all he could do not to throw himself on top of Kimberlee Breen and tear her clothes away. But that would not be training. It would be surrendering himself to captive lust.

He needed to wake her, that's what he needed to do. And he would, in just a moment or so. As soon as he'd watched a little bit more. What was it about her that so possessed him? It couldn't be her beauty alone, though she was a magnificent creature, damned near perfect.

Was it her spirit, her fire? Or some combination of things that awoke in him such conflicting desires?

Kim began to groan. "No..."

Roarke noted the sudden change in her countenance, a clear indication that the edgy sex dream she'd been enjoying was turning into a nightmare.

"No..." the lovely aid worker repeated, her sweet face twisted in pain.

Blast it. She was going to scream. Reaching for her full, rich lips, intent on quieting her, Roarke did the first thing that came to his mind.

He kissed her. Then he took her in his arms. It was a mistake, the worst he could have made. But how was he supposed to know in advance this would be the one woman in his life he'd embrace and not want to let go?

* * * * *

Kim's dream had started innocently enough. She'd been walking barefoot on a beach, somewhere far, far away, under a pale blue sky, the sand white as snow, the water a misty blue-green, sloshing rhythmically on the shore. Everything was so beautiful, she was quite sure she wanted to live here forever.

The dress she wore was white gauze and she was naked underneath. Her brown hair was flying playfully in the breeze and she was feeling rather naughty. She noticed her nipples had become erect and she gave in to the temptation to touch them lightly through the material of her dress.

Oh, yes, that did feel good. Curling her toes in the sand, she lightly pinched each one.

I want to fuck myself, she thought, employing words for the act of masturbation she'd never before dared to use. Her own wickedness made her giggle. Did she dare? Why not—she was alone on the beach. And anyway, it was a dream, wasn't it?

She could do whatever she liked.

Licking her lips, she took the fingertips of one hand and pressed them tentatively against her belly. The sensation made her shiver.

This was going to work, she decided. For sure.

Reaching for the hem of her dress, she lifted it, inch by inch.

"What do you think you are doing?" demanded a male voice.

She dropped the dress, jerking her head up to see the man standing before her. He was wearing riding boots, jodhpurs and a loose white silk shirt. His wore a feathered,

round, black mask shaped like the head of an owl. His hands were on his hips, his legs spread.

"I-I was..." Kim fell over her own words.

"You were going to touch yourself," he completed the thought. "Say it. Tell me your crime."

It was odd, because she'd never before thought of masturbation as a crime. Nevertheless, she gave him what he wanted. "I was going to touch myself."

"Indeed," he said throatily. "And now you will touch yourself for me. Take off your dress," he commanded.

Kim was powerless to resist. Her heart pounding, her pulse racing, she lifted the garment over her head, baring her shivering body. She felt ashamed to be naked in front of this stern man, but she was excited, too.

"Flick your nipples," he commanded. "Make them hard."

"M-must I?" she queried, her voice quivering.

"Yes, you must. And you will call me Sir or Master from now on."

"Yes, Sir." Her pink nubs swelled in response, eager for more.

"Feel between your legs. Tell me how hot and wet you are."

Her fingers were sucked into pure liquid heat. "Very hot...Master."

"Good. I want you to lie on the sand. On your back. You will play with yourself, while I watch."

Kim fell to her knees, unable to hold her weak, aroused body erect. "If I do a good job, will you fuck me?" she asked, needing his cock so badly.

"Don't bargain with me, Kimberlee. You will do as you are told and nothing more."

"Yes, Sir," said the scolded Kim, trying to decide where she knew the voice from.

Kim put herself into position and began to stroke her pussy. It was wicked, to be on display like this, on the gritty sand, behaving so blatantly, like a prostitute.

"You enjoy this, don't you?"

"Yes," she admitted, staring longingly at his crotch. "But tell me...who are you really?"

"You shouldn't ask that." He shook his head. "It breaks my rules."

"But I want to know," she pressed, having forgotten all about the "Sir" part.

The next thing she knew, she was no longer asking but demanding. Lightning flashed in the sky and he was taking off the mask. Her hand froze mid-stroke at what she saw.

Immediately he was gone. She got up to run after him and that's when the others started chasing her. Men in uniforms wearing more of those masks with the feathers. Instinctively she knew the men were bad, that they wanted to do her harm. As so often happens in dreams, though, she found herself moving more and more slowly, until at last she was succeeding in doing nothing more than digging herself straight down with her shuffling feet.

Finally, when she was waist-deep in the heavy wet sand, the bad men managed to catch-up and grab her. They had thick ropes, which they wound all the way around her, binding her hands to her sides.

The really strange thing about the rope they were using was that it was squeezing her tighter and tighter of its own accord, like it was some kind of living thing. She opened her mouth to say something about it when one end of the snake-like rope promptly jumped down her throat. She had to wrap her lips about it and swallow to keep from gagging. It was very much like cocksucking, at least as much as she remembered the few times she'd been dead drunk and tried it when she was in college.

The rope really must have been possessed because now the other end of it was burrowing beneath the sand, trying to get at her submerged crotch. In moments it was between her legs, filling and claiming her sex as would a man's appendage.

Several of the masked men were squatting around her, holding and pleasuring her upper body, which had somehow become exposed. One man was holding her head back and administering some great tongue kisses while two others had parked

themselves, one on each breast. A fourth was shaking his head at her, speaking in that ostensibly reasonable but actually nonsensical way characters can manage only in the world of dreams.

"It's no good, we'll never be able to get the wood hauled down here before the bonfire. Everyone's counting on us, but look how big your breasts are getting."

He was right. Her breasts were twice their normal size and growing by the second.

"There must be some mistake," she said.

At the same time she was dealing with the increased dimension in her tits, she was also facing mounting tension in her spasming pussy. The rope was worming and writhing, massaging her clit, causing the liquid to flow and the lips to swell.

She cried for mercy, but no one could hear her. The beach was sucking her down like quicksand. She felt like she was going to drown in the stuff. It was everywhere, even the air.

Meanwhile, the men in the masks continued to taunt her, laughing. The sky over the beach had grown dark and Kim was terrified. The rope was choking her, wanting to squeeze the life from her.

"No...please stop," she called out.

It was then she felt a man's lips upon hers. Strong and hot, like a branding iron, but not at all forceful or brutal. Kissing him back seemed the most natural thing in the world.

All up and down her body, she sensed the possibilities, muscular thighs, rounded biceps, a hard, concealed cock, hands playing upon her senses. Ecstasy at her fingertips, the body of an Adonis tuned entirely to her, every ounce of male strength ready to have at her breasts and belly and mouth and pussy. Throbbing, humming with energy. Was she still dreaming? If so, she didn't want it to end.

Happily, with the lips came a pair of arms, real and warm and strong and enveloping. Kim allowed herself to be held, feeling herself melting like butter. Her

kissing bandit had a heartbeat steady as a metronome, and muscles made for cradling her small woman's body.

She needed this feeling of comfort so desperately. But she needed passion, too, naked skin against naked skin, his shaft inside her, the writhing of two bodies, sweating and groaning in a glorious effort to drive away the insanity and the fear.

One coupling in the middle of the confusion. One melding to fend off madness. Just one little look first into his eyes, then she'd tear away the clothes still holding her back from the promised paradise.

Surprise registered, then shock and finally indignation as Kim beheld the face of her mystery lover. Of all the people, why him? Why not some normal, decent dreamboat? Or even someone homely. Ugly, even. So long as it was not the cruel, barbaric, utterly merciless Roarke. Roarke, the supporter of cutthroat dictators. Roarke, the self-affirmed slave trainer.

"You," Kim accused, as though his embracing her had been some elaborate scheme on the man's part. "You...tricked me."

"You were frightened," he said, trying to offer some valid explanation for initiating an act of tenderness that would do neither of them any good. "I was simply offering you...comfort."

"What you can offer me—" she scrambled off the bed on all fours "—is my shoes and an unobstructed path to the door."

He watched her move, her breasts dancing under the tank top, her tight ass wiggling so suggestively. She really had no clue of what she was capable of arousing in a dominant man such as himself. "I'm afraid leaving here would not be a wise idea," he said.

"Why?" she demanded. "Are you planning on stopping me?"

She made a fetching package, indeed, her chestnut hair all tousled, her eyes lit like emeralds, her delicious little body poised for a fight. He couldn't believe a woman such

as her wasn't married or at least heavily attached. Was there some "boy next door" waiting back home in whatever picturesque little town she came from?

"No," he said, finding himself enjoying the give and take with a woman who was both smart and courageous. "But I think you'd find our general friends are prepared to give you a somewhat inhospitable reception should they find you wandering about unattended."

"I've handled worse than them," she said proudly. "Besides, those pigs are your friends, not mine."

Roarke frowned slightly. For some reason he found it difficult not to be able to tell her that in reality those men were his sworn enemies. He really oughtn't to care what her opinion of him was, but for some odd reason, he did not want her thinking poorly of him. "I have no friends, either in this country or in the States. I'm a businessman, Miss Breen. I do what I have to for survival."

He wasn't sure which sounded stranger coming from his lips. The assertion that he was a man of business or his calling her Miss Breen when he was about to begin her training as a slave having no rights.

"Doing what you have to, yes, we all know that excuse has been used before," she defied. "By the German people in World War II, for instance, and everywhere else tyranny has been allowed to thrive."

There was simply no way to give her the answer she deserved, not without blowing his cover by revealing information that would place them both in jeopardy. He opted instead to stay in character as the incorrigible slave trainer. "That defiant tongue of yours is going to have to be the first thing to tame," he said.

"Oh, goodie, I can't wait." She flashed a sarcastic smile. "Tell you what, let's just cut it out entirely and make a complete job of it, shall we?"

Roarke pressed down his amusement. God, she was so fucking adorable. Not to mention desirable as hell. Even now his cock was throbbing in his pants, aching for a

chance to dominate the body of Miss Breen. "That won't be necessary," he assured her. "Though I appreciate the enthusiasm."

"Don't condescend to me." She pointed a pretty, manicured finger. "I want answers and I want them now. Who are you, really? And what exactly is this game you're playing with these murderers—not to mention the game you are playing with me?"

So much for her wanting to run off without a word.

"I'm someone who can save your life," he answered, attempting to keep calm. "I also happen to be the only chance you have right now. By strutting into that restaurant like you did, you made the wrong enemies, Miss Breen. You were lucky to walk out in one piece. What I intend to do with you over the next week or so will keep you that way, and in all probability get you back home to the States, too."

"How big of you," she shot back, showing not the slightest bit of gratitude for his efforts. "Considering I don't want to go back to the States. And exactly what, pray tell, have you accomplished by putting me under house arrest like this—other than giving yourself a wonderful chance to get your jollies doing god knows what to a totally defenseless woman?"

His lips thinned slightly. She'd hit on a bit of a sore point—his own role as a supposedly objective slave trainer. "Actually, I'm acting purely in your interest," he stretched the truth, just a bit. "Though you aren't able to see it."

"My interest?" She snorted. "Well, there's a rich one. Tell me, since I'm just a lowly slave, exactly what part of being dragged up here and chained like a farm animal is in my interest exactly?"

"All of it," he countered. "When you consider what the alternative is."

"Why do you insist on trying to frighten me again and again?" she challenged. "You and I both know as Americans we are protected."

"Officially, yes. But these people don't play by diplomatic rules. Oreste and Escadrille and the others work through right-wing paramilitary groups, death squads,

you name it. Believe me, a woman like you could disappear tomorrow and never see the light of day again."

"But you're man enough to protect me, right?" she ridiculed.

"I can hold my own. And right now, my concern is you. Either we change you into a credible sex slave, like Oreste wants to see, or it's curtains...for both of us."

"Curtains for both of us?" She put a hand to her mouth. "Oh, dear, you mean your precious life is in danger, too?" This was followed by another snort and a roll of her eyes. "It's been nice knowing you, Mr. Roarke. I'll be going to our embassy now. And by the way, what just happened between us on that bed meant absolutely nothing."

He was tempted to tell her that her physical reactions to him had indicated otherwise, but he opted to deal with the more pressing matter of her attempting to leave. "You recall you gave your word to General Oreste that you would not attempt to escape from me, in exchange for the freedom of your friend?" he pointed out.

"And you think the man is to be trusted? I'd sooner take my chances with the American ambassador," she retorted.

"Still, there is the matter of your own integrity, if nothing else."

Her eyes flashed like emeralds. "You are hardly one to be dispensing morality lessons, Mr. Roarke. For the final time, goodbye."

* * * * *

It took all of the willpower in the world for Roarke to hold his ground as the little beauty yanked open the door and stormed out. Common sense said to stop her before she got herself into any more trouble. She'd never make it to the American embassy, or even as far as the street corner. Agents would be watching, protecting the interests of the betting generals.

Five minutes from now she'd be picked up and brought to Escadrille, head of the secret police. That would be all the excuse he needed to move on Roarke, too, accusing

him of disloyalty to the generals. Oreste wouldn't back him up and then he might end up in jail, under torture. The only sure way to prevent this chain of events was to keep her locked up. On the other hand, if he employed force, he would be winning a mere battle and risking the war. She might become so hardened against him as to never yield. He, in turn, might find himself unable, unwilling, to carry through on his own techniques.

Sure, on paper, as far as these generals knew, he was a brutal controller of women, but in reality, he had to operate with some level of consent. No, it was clear that Miss Kimberlee Breen had to see for herself that this was where she belonged right now, on her knees, learning to be a credible slave. She'd have the rest of her life to be free and feisty. But she had to survive the next week and the counter coup, as well.

The logic was solid. The only problem was whether the woman was capable of realizing this before getting herself arrested. Fortunately, the suspense wouldn't last long. Checking his watch, he gave her about three more minutes before she got to the street.

She had that long to turn around.

Chapter Three

Kimberlee froze in the doorway as soon as she saw them out in front of the hotel. There were three of them, in trench coats, smoking cigarettes and talking. They had their backs turned at the moment but she was certain they were Laviorian secret police. Probably sent here to keep an eye out for her. Was there a way around them? Scanning up and down the street, she saw little cause for enthusiasm. On one corner there were soldiers and on the other, a uniformed policeman standing guard.

Kim was going to have to find an alternate escape route. She was in the process of heading back inside when one of the agents spotted her. Quickly he alerted the others. All three stamped out their cigarettes and started toward her, their faces dark and somber. Kimberlee closed the door and moved swiftly through the lobby. There had to be some sort of rear entrance to a place this big.

Taking a side corridor, she hoped for the best. Twice she looked over her shoulder and saw no one. Had she evaded them? Damn it, no. There was one of them right in front of her. She doubled back, just in time to meet up with the other two. The only thing between her and them was the elevator. Desperate, she pushed the button.

The doors opened and closed just in time. She headed back to the top, to the only safety she knew. It was irrational to be afraid of these agents, but then again, how rational was this new government? No sooner had she started running down the corridor than the other elevator opened.

They'd followed her up.

She ran to the door, knocking wildly. Roarke answered, shirtless.

"They're right behind me," she blurted. "They followed me up."

The man frowned. "Inside," he said. "I'll take care of it."

Kimberlee happily slipped past him, to the relative safety of his room. Roarke greeted the three agents and proceeded to explain the situation in Spanish. Yes, he knew the woman had left, and no, she did not need to be taken into custody. This was part of her training.

He made a little joke about the female spirit needing to be tamed like a horse's, which was funny to everyone but Kimberlee. Roarke offered them a drink, which they refused and that was the end of it.

Feeling she owed him a little something for saving her from them, she thanked him for making up the cover story about his letting her leave.

"That wasn't a cover story," he replied. "It was the complete and total truth. From the moment I let you leave, your training had begun."

Kimberlee tried not to be mesmerized by his bronzed chest, made up of perfectly sculpted muscles, neither too big nor too small. They were hard-earned muscles, not the sort built up in a gym. And he had the scars to prove it. One was a jagged line running down the middle of his chest to his muscle ridged abdomen. It must have come from a nasty wound, a knife of some kind. The other was a bullet wound, a small circle at his side, just above his lean waist.

Kim was overcome with the desire to kiss his wounds, to take away whatever pain still resided in his heart from them. She would dab with her small tongue, delicately, intimately, giving the pleasure due to a strong man. Her heart rate was going up again, only this time it was her desire moving her, not her fear of the secret police.

It hit her now that she ought to try and bury the hatchet. For both their sakes.

"I don't want to argue with you." She shook out her increasingly unruly hair. "It gets us nowhere. Let's just agree we will have to stay together in this room, until other arrangements can be made. We will keep to our separate spaces and we'll do just fine. At some point, as soon as I can, I will get to the embassy and be done with it. I mean no offense, I'm sure you understand."

"I'm sorry, Kimberlee," said the man with the hard, soldier's body and the perfect jaw. "But I can't give you any space. In fact, I am going to have to do the very opposite by exercising complete and total control over you for the immediate future."

Kim fought the weakness in her knees and the butterflies in her stomach. What the man was saying was scandalous, impossible. She gave up control to no man, especially not one like him. "You are as delusional as your junta friends. Sorry to break it to you, but I am not some starry-eyed little bimbo who will fall at your feet."

"That is true," he conceded, his eyes steady, measuring and totally domineering. "You are an intelligent, courageous and very capable woman."

"Thank you," she replied curtly. "I am glad you see my point."

"I wasn't done," he smiled wryly.

"Oh." She braced herself. It figured there would be another shoe to drop with this one.

"What I intended to say was that yes, you are an above average woman, but you will nonetheless fall at my feet. Just as any other female."

"You really are an arrogant bastard." She pushed back her feeling of deep intrigue with the statement. "Do you know that?"

"I know my capabilities," he said simply. "And I know women."

"Yes," she spat. "I'm sure you do. We are all slaves, fit only to grovel."

"There is no disgrace in submission," he replied. "A true slave is one who kneels in honor and respect, even love."

Roarke was confusing her, and she didn't like that. She wanted him to be a Neanderthal, pure and simple. She wanted to hate him, because hate made resistance easier. "Don't play word games with me. Men have done that to women for centuries. We're not fooled any more, we really never were."

Her outburst did not affect him one way or the other. He was on his own agenda now, and she would be along for the ride.

"Take off your clothes," he declared, breaking into her burgeoning monologue.

Kim's nipples swelled to instant attention. "Excuse me?" she said indignantly.

"The next stages in your training require your nudity," he explained.

"Over my dead body."

Kim tried to imagine herself unclothed before him, totally exposed and vulnerable. He would read her every desire, he would smell her sex, and he would grasp the terrible truth, how even now she had no way of resisting his sexual advances.

"And that is precisely what you will be if this kind of attitude is perceived by the generals," he warned. "In their eyes you serve but one purpose...as a pretty toy for their amusement. If you show complexity, if you have teeth to bite, they will have no use for you."

"And what of you?" she asked impulsively. "Am I only a pretty toy to you, as well?"

"You're a beautiful woman, Kimberlee. You know that already. Why do you seek my approval?"

"I don't," she snapped. "Actually, I was hoping I disgusted you. That way I'd be sure you wouldn't get any pleasure out of this."

Kimberlee hated how he kept trying to put her off-kilter. It was frustrating. It was aggravating. It was...well, damn it...it was exciting, too.

"But I will," he replied, his voice taking on a deep, sultry tone. "More than you can imagine."

She flashed a glance at his crotch. Oh, god, the man was hard. Hard, it would seem, for her. What was she to make of this—of a man who was finding his arousal through a discussion of her training and subjugation...as some kind of slave.

"I will not succumb as a whore," she said proudly. "To you or the generals."

His lips thinned. There was a glint in his eyes, hard to read. "The generals will never touch you," he said, the tone of his voice indicating he would back the statement up with his last breath.

"How can you guarantee that?" she wanted to know.

"Because I can."

There was more, a lot more he wasn't saying. This wasn't bragging here, this was restraint of a kind she'd never before witnessed. Then again, she'd never known a man this powerful either. She could imagine he must have to restrain himself, as a wild beast would, living among the domestic farm animals of a neighborhood barn.

"That's not an answer," she prodded.

"It's as much of one as I choose to give you," he said decisively. "For the last time, I am asking you to take off your clothes."

Kimberlee couldn't remember when she'd had a man's attention focused on her so intensely. It was a little unnerving, but also kind of hot. "What if I don't want to?"

"Failure to comply would be disobedience," he explained. "The result of which will be punishment."

Kim bit her lip. Could he? Her sex was tingling, thinking of the possibility that maybe he could, that just maybe he wasn't going to take no for an answer.

Roarke shrugged. "You're welcome to test me."

She considered the matter. Really, if this was going to be about sex, she didn't have any objections. That cock outlined by his khaki pants was big and thick. Every inch of that body was so luscious she would happily worship him, at least until they got each other off.

Hell, maybe that would be the end of it. A little roll in the hay, a chance for him to feel all macho and stud-like. And then they could start acting normal with each other again.

"I'll take off my shirt," she bargained. "Since you have yours off. Then we will work on pants."

He regarded her, expressionless. "Is that your final answer?"

Kimberlee hesitated a second before committing herself. "Yes," she affirmed, trying to be as resolute as he was.

Except she wasn't half so resolved. Maybe not a tenth. In truth she was a basket case, her every nerve on edge, her lusts raging, her hormones screaming for her to stop being such a bitch and just go over there and kiss him. But where would that lead? This wasn't like dating some relief worker or doctor. Roarke was a warrior, a self-proclaimed conqueror of females and a mover and shaker at the highest levels of foreign government.

At the same time, she was also just feeling plain old jitters about this whole Lavorian situation, up to and including Maria's disappearance. A handsome man had rescued her, albeit bizarrely, and she was just wanting to give him a simple thank-you hug.

A hug, yes, some time in those powerful arms, her small body tight against him, protected, secure. What woman wouldn't dream of such a thing?

"Very well," Roarke acknowledged her decision, walking to the dresser with a rather disconcerting finality.

"What are you doing?" she demanded, trying to still her rising panic.

He produced a round wooden paddle, a little larger and thicker than the sort used for Ping-Pong. "I am attending to your punishment," he replied.

It seemed surreal, seeing this handsome man holding an instrument of lacquered dark wood that he obviously intended to use on her.

"Are you insane? I will never allow such a thing."

"You have to be taught to obey me, Kimberlee. The bond between us must be absolute. You will need to trust me with your life."

"But I don't even like you," she despaired.

"That is not required for obedience." He took the desk chair and placed it in the center of the room. "You'll take your punishment in bra and panties." He sat down comfortably.

Kimberlee looked at the paddle then at his lap, and back to the paddle again. "Please." She hugged her breasts. "Isn't there another way?"

"Yes, but you wouldn't like it too well."

She tried to imagine something she would enjoy less than having to accept a paddling in her underwear across the lap of a male chauvinist pig. Whatever it was, she did not really want to find out right now.

"I can just run again," she said, without much conviction.

He laid the paddle on his muscular thigh, beside his irrepressible erection. With every passing second now, his authority was rising while her will to fight was diminishing. "You should know that your sentence increases with every delay."

"But that's not fair. I didn't know that."

Her tone was a little whiny, inducing a slight frown on his part. "I'm waiting, Kimberlee."

Kimberlee slid her sandals from her slender feet. It was time to concede the battle, though not the war. "I still think this is nonsense." She pulled the tank top over her head, revealing her white cotton bra. It was a simple enough brasserie, and really she could still get away with none, as firm as her breasts had managed to stay.

"I just want you to know that," she said, unbuttoning her shorts.

"Duly noted." He watched her skin the shorts down over her hips.

She let them fall to her ankles. One by one, she stepped from the legs.

"Stay there a moment," he commanded. "Stand straight, hands at your sides."

Her consciousness screamed out rebellion, but her body, already tingling in anticipation of the paddle on her buttocks, strained to obey.

"Thrust out your breasts," he said, "suck in your belly."

Her pulse raced, even as her heart felt like it would never beat again. Did he find her attractive? He'd said she was beautiful, but was she desirable to him?

"A slave is owned, Kimberlee," he said. "Do you have any clue what that means?"

"I don't. And I don't care," she defied, though to the tips of her toes she yearned to know.

It was so unfair, this whole principle. Why couldn't they be somewhere that he had to pretend to be a slave for a week, and she could keep her clothes on and use the paddle?

"It means she belongs to her Master. Her heart, her body are his. To him or anyone else he gives her to."

She thought of herself being shared, of having to submit to other men...simply because he said so. Impulsively, she wanted to fall before him on her hands and knees, just to clear her head. "Why don't you just fuck me?" she blazed. "Get it over with."

His smile was slanted. "Am I arousing you that much?"

She flushed red. He was twisting things again, making it like this was something other than an outrageous assault on her freedom. "You know what I mean, damn it."

"No," he countered. "I don't."

She attempted to stand proudly, even as she flipped back her glistening, chestnut hair yet again. "I mean that you are obviously using this...situation...as a chance to take advantage of me. You have me half-naked. Why not just molest and use me? Show me what a man you are."

"A man does not molest women," said her soon-to-be-punisher, damnably calm as ever. "He tames them."

His gaze gave no quarter. She felt completely conquered already, totally exposed and hopelessly overwhelmed. At the same time she could not avoid its draw. Like the

moth, she thought. Just like the moth. "Whatever." She shook her head, conveying the proper amount of contempt.

"That habit with your hair," he noted. "Are you aware of it?"

The flipping. He meant the flipping. "I do it when I'm agitated. So what?"

"No, it's not agitation. It's female display behavior. You are attempting to signal the stronger male to your conquest."

"If that's what you need to believe to keep your ego afloat, go right ahead. Far be it from me to disturb your little fantasy world."

He shifted in the seat, biceps flexing slightly as he positioned himself to receive her. "It's time, Kimberlee."

"Bring it on," she defied, approaching him with all the bravado she could muster.

In all actuality, she'd painted herself into a corner, talking tough about her own sexual indifference and his role as a bully. For her to put up a fight now would only give him back the power she was working so hard to regain.

Going across the man's lap was humiliating and frustrating and exciting all at once. She knew nothing of him, not even his full name and yet she was expected to drape herself, in panties and bra, across his crotch. From up close like this she could smell his scent—musk, with more than a little hint of raw testosterone. If Roarke were a planet with a gravitational force, she would be sucked into it, her every sense held captive. She so wanted to reach out and touch him, to feel his skin, sun-weathered but still smooth as only a man's could be. She wanted him naked, on top of her, splaying her, his cock engorged and filling her, his balls slapping against her as she screamed out his name.

"Roarke," she said huskily, yielding to the momentary heat. "Let's just make love...forget all this."

Roarke rejected her, promptly and harshly. "Over my knee, slave. Now."

Kimberlee put herself in place, chastised. She bit her tongue, trying not to moan as the tips of her breasts rubbed over his thighs. Her belly was next, the skin naked against

the khaki. Desperately, she tried to make a bridge of herself, her palms on the carpet holding her midsection off his lap.

The attempt was quickly thwarted. "Down," Roarke said, lightly slapping her thigh.

She felt like a pet, being given commands. The feel of his cock against her cotton-covered belly however, reminded her that she was all woman. Gritting her teeth, she tried to hold herself together. She was a wreck of need and anxiety already, and he hadn't laid a hand on her.

"You should know, Kimberlee, that I am being extraordinarily easy on you. In a genuine slave training situation, the trainer would not be nearly this patient."

"If you're waiting for a thank you," she said, attempting to spit her own hair from her mouth. "Don't hold your breath."

"I'm merely informing you, for educational purposes." Roarke's hand settled on her ass, expansive, light, but with a possessiveness that made her cream her panties.

No man had ever touched her like this. So casually...like she was really his. What were the implications? Her imagination ran wild in nonsensical, female directions as she thought of them setting up house, having babies. He'd have definite ideas for her behavior, she'd have a place, and he'd love her in it like she'd never been loved before.

"You're too kind," she tried to keep herself in the much safer sarcasm mode.

"We'll do this over your panties," he said. "This time. As we progress, you will take your discipline bare-assed."

Kimberlee clenched her pussy muscles. This was turning her on. It shouldn't be, but it was. "Unless I'm a good girl, right?" she scathed.

"That is correct," he ignored her pugnacious attitude. "The more pleasing you are, the more quickly you absorb the lessons, the less often you will have to be punished."

"When I get back to the embassy, I intend to report you for all this," she said.

He rubbed his hand across her pert bottom, sending chills up her spine. "And what exactly will you tell them?"

She tried to run the scenario through her mind. The fact that she was hot and wet, with peaked nipples, and the fact that she'd just asked *him* to make love to her a few minutes ago did not make for a very good case that she was being kidnapped or assaulted. "I'll tell the truth," she evaded.

"And I suppose for getting you there in the first place," he asked dryly, "I'll get no thanks for that either?"

Kimberlee fell silent. *This is only one battle*, she reminded herself. *I've the whole rest of the war still ahead of me to win. This is a strategic withdrawal, nothing more.*

"You will keep count," he informed her. "Should you lose track, we go back to one."

"How delightfully sadistic of you."

His hand lifted from her behind. She drew in a sharp breath, attempting to brace herself. He had his other hand on her back, holding her firmly in place. She started to reach with her hands but a verbal command cut her short.

"No, slave. Interfere in any way and you will be strung up and flogged."

Kimberlee returned her palms to the floor. She'd been given no choice but to accept whatever he delivered. A tiny part of her wanted to cry out for mercy, but she'd a sneaking suspicion it wouldn't matter anyway.

The smack came from nowhere. She hadn't been prepared for the explosion of heat. These were not mere love taps. He was spanking her, really and truly.

"That hurts, you bastard!"

Roarke spanked her again, a fresh dose of heat on top of the first.

"Let go of me." She squirmed. "You can't do this!"

It wasn't until the next blow that she remembered the counting thing. *Fuck.*

"Three," she gasped, trying to catch up.

"The count has to start at one," he reminded.

The next blow landed, filling her, forcing her to grind her pussy down on his lap. "One," she whimpered.

He gave her five more, a humbling experience, as she had to swallow her resistance in favor of a meek, slavish numbering. This business with her pussy was not good. He was administering discipline, hateful and wrong and yet her body was receiving it as foreplay. What would the man think of her? How would he maintain any respect for her as a woman?

Then again, he already considered her a slave. His personal property, at least as far as this bizarre training went. There was no need to respect your property, only to enjoy it.

"You may thank me," said Roarke, signaling the end of her lesson, "for disciplining you."

Kimberlee's head swam, and not only from the rush of blood. He was asking her to lend her verbal complicity to his barbaric act. To say these words would be to admit he had the right and that it was her place to accept it, without question. "Roarke, you can't ask me..."

He was pulling down her panties, exposing her ass.

"Oh, god," she moaned. "What are you doing?"

"Corporal punishment," he lectured, snaking a finger into her sopping pussy, "is only one means of controlling the slave. Using her sex against her is another."

Kimberlee began to writhe instantly on his probing finger. "Going...to...come..."

Roarke withdrew the pleasuring finger. "You may not come," he smacked her. "Without permission. Your orgasms, too, are the property of your Master."

Kimberlee moaned, the pain in her beaten behind mixing with the aching emptiness in her pussy. "Please," she begged for release.

"Hold still," he chided. This time he pinched her ass, a masterful twist to her tender, glowing flesh.

Kimberlee collapsed against his rock-hard cock. She wanted him inside her so bad she could cry. Why was he putting her through this? What was he trying to prove, except what a total prick he could be?

In her heart, though, she knew the answer. This was about domination. And enslavement. "I'm doing the best I can," she complained.

"You will have to do better." His finger reinvaded her pussy.

"No." She thrashed her head. "Don't touch me anymore."

Roarke found her clitoris. In a matter of seconds he had her whimpering for a climax. Holding her on the very brink, he returned to the subject of her original offense. "Why are you being punished, Kimberlee?"

He was treating her like a child. "Because I didn't follow one of your stupid commands," she blurted.

He surprised her with a finger up her posterior, firm and resolute. The pressure was enough to get her attention, and also to make her crave an ass fucking. "You will apologize now."

Kimberlee imagined herself facedown on the bed, being punished by the man's cock. Taking it up the ass for her smart mouth and for how difficult she was being.

"I-I'm sorry." She squirmed, finding no relief.

"Had this been a standard training situation—" he informed her "—you would be severely punished for that outburst. You would be put into close chains, locked in a closed room, even tortured."

She thought of Maria, praying her young friend would be spared such torment. "Just get on with it," she groaned.

"The reason for your punishment," he said again. "Tell me what it was."

"I was told to take off my clothes," said Kimberlee. "And I didn't."

His fingers returned to her still throbbing pussy. "And why did you refuse?"

Fear of exposure came to mind and a determination to hide her arousal. But she couldn't admit such things, not to a man like this, in a position like this. "I'm stubborn. Always have been."

"Slaves can't be stubborn, Kimberlee. If a Master wants to see his property naked, then you remove the offending clothes. If he wants his property spread on the floor, pussy lips wide open, then you attend to that as well."

Water was beading in her eyes. "You are a monster—" she fought back tears "—to talk to me like this."

Damn it, why was she being so emotional about this? She ought to let it all roll off. He was a pig, a loudmouth, whose opinion meant nothing to her. So he was effectively calling her a whore. Well, that was just the kind of man he was.

"Not a monster," said Roarke. "A man. One who is showing you what you have to know—what you have to be—to survive."

There was no preventing the sobs any longer. It was all catching up to her—the sheer emotional drain of the last few hours, the highs and lows, the uncertainty of the future. Why did it have to be so confusing? Was this man trustworthy or not? She wanted to put her life in his hands, hell, she had to, but there was no guarantee at all that he wasn't a worse villain than the generals.

Kimberlee felt Roarke's arms reaching down to scoop her up. He turned her gently so that she was cradled in his arms. The man was a powerhouse, so stable and strong. Instinctively she buried her head in his neck. He'd probably take this as more "female display behavior" indicating she wanted to be had by him, and maybe she did. Did it make any difference at this point?

"Use me," she breathed hot and wet into his ear.

It was an incredible concession on her part, a secret admission, and a willingness to enact a fantasy that had never seen the light of day. Somehow this Roarke had awoken something. Something that could no longer slumber. She knew the risks, especially

because he'd already rejected her once. Plus there was this whole Master and slave thing going on and her capitulation now could make it look like she was sanctioning what he'd done so far.

Roarke tossed her onto the middle of the bed on her narrow ass. "Use yourself," he said.

She glared in disbelief as he produced the dildo out of that same infernal dresser. Indignation flared and a determination to spit this rejection right back in his face.

"What the hell is that for?" she demanded. "Is yours out of order?"

"Actually it is in fine working condition. Thank you for asking. I am simply choosing to withhold it, until such time as you have earned the right."

She arched a brow. "It's just a dick, buddy, not the magic spear of the ancients."

He seemed to be fighting back a smile. Good, so she was challenging him a little at least. "To a slave, the Master's penis might as well be sacred. It is the center of her world. She must prove herself worthy to please it in every way. That is what the dildo is for."

Kimberlee took it from him. The material was flesh-like, man-colored, with realistic veins poking out in all the right places. There was even a set of balls at the base. All in all, it was more real than some of the ones she'd seen attached to real men. "So you expect me to..."

"To perform," he supplied the word. "You will, without any inhibitions, service the substitute, giving it all the loving, horny devotion you would to my living organ."

Kim's pussy flooded afresh as she thought of this device inside her...everywhere. "And what makes you think I would give you any devotion? More likely I'd cut it off with a rusty butter knife."

"You will be given incentive," he informed her. "In a manner befitting your status as an imbonded woman."

She didn't like the sound of that one little bit. She liked it even less when he made yet another move to the dresser. "Fuck those drawers," she exclaimed.

Roarke slanted her a smile. He was holding a leather whip in his hand. It was thin and long, with a square flap at the end. Kimberlee had seen such things used before, to good effect, on horses.

"I will scream," she informed him, "if that thing comes anywhere near me. Do you understand?"

"Absolutely. And in that case, I will be forced to silence you. Have you ever heard, by any chance, of a penis gag? It's rather clever actually. The outside is a conventional gag, but the inner part, designed to fit in the female's mouth, is shaped like a cock. In effect, she can be made to perform fellatio for hours at a time. The only problem is drooling, though if the slave is positioned right, all the spittle will stay on her own body. Where it belongs. How does that sound?"

"I changed my mind," she said glumly. "I won't scream."

"Good girl. Shall we get started, then?"

"I'm not a girl," Kimberlee derided the cheap, condescending praise, ashamed that it was actually arousing her at the moment. She wanted to be good for the man—in ways that would blow his mind and hers. The question was, would she be allowed any say at all down the line, even in how she wished to give pleasure? Already he had made it clear he would seek to control her intimately and completely—could she ever resist such power? Did she dare try?

"I'm only doing this to humor you." She knelt up on the bed. "And to prove how little power you really have."

Too late, she caught herself shaking out her hair. He flashed a small smile, entirely too smug in her opinion, though how could she argue with a man who seemed to be able to peg her so easily?

"To begin with, let us review, once more, the initial order you were given. Will you repeat it, please?"

For the hundredth fucking time, she was tempted to add.

"I was told to take my clothes off," she muttered.

"More loudly, please, I didn't hear you."

The hell he didn't.

"I was told to take my clothes off," said Kimberlee more loudly.

"And you disobeyed?"

"Yes."

"And then you were punished?"

"Yes," she grouched. What were they in, some kind of courtroom?

"How were you punished?"

"I was...spanked," said Kimberlee. The word stuck in her throat. Saying it aloud was like being touched by the man all over again. Hot, red slaps, deep, liquid probes, and everything in between, playing with her hindquarters with absolute mastery and mayhem.

"Did that teach you anything?" he wanted to know. "And don't try to lie to me. That is not permitted in a slave. It's also impossible to get away with, because your eyes give you away."

She wondered if that could be true. If it were, then she would have a much tougher time with the man. "You want the truth? What I learned from being spanked is that your so-called enslavement is a fraud. Mumbo jumbo. Two minutes later, and I'm no different than I was. I cried, okay, yes, I was stressed out. But now I am back on track, and if anything, I am only more pissed off and determined to resist you."

He waited a moment to see if she was through. "There is no fraud involved," he said when he was sure she'd concluded her piece. "What you will experience is very, very real. Take a good look at that dildo, Kimberlee. In a few minutes you will be responding to it, helplessly, thrusting it in and out of whatever hole I tell you to put it in, begging for a chance to come."

"Bring it on," she dared, though she had no idea how she would withstand this kind of confidence, this kind of sheer macho will.

Roarke slashed the whip through the air, landing it against his own khaki-clad thigh. "I want you naked, Kimberlee, now."

There was no defying the look in his eye or the tone of his voice. There would be no more resistance, not here and now. Quickly, with nimble fingers, she unclasped her bra, letting the cups fall forward.

"On the floor," he said, indicating where she should toss the white cotton garment.

Kimberlee regarded him, bare-breasted. She had only the panties left, that final veneer of equality between them.

"Slow," he ordered. "Do it nice and slow."

He wanted a show. Fingertips tingling, she teased at the elastic waistband. The panel was soaked through by now, giving testimony to just how turned on she was. As she feared, she was going to have to reveal the nature of her deepest desires.

With damp palms, she slid the material down over her taut belly and smooth, fit thighs. Her heart pounded as the reality hit her. She was exposing her sex to the man. And her spanked ass, too. He'd spoken of her as property...this meant her orifices, too. Her holes as he'd put it.

She had to lift her knees, one by one to remove the underwear. It was an awkward enterprise and she was all too aware of her breasts, swaying before his ravenous eyes.

"Don't drop the panties," he said when she had slipped them from her second ankle.

She looked at him questioningly.

"Put them to your nose."

Kimberlee blanched. For some reason this act was harder than anything else he'd asked her to do. "Roarke, I can't."

Roarke moved like lightning, leaning forward with the whip. He delivered a swift, efficient blow to her left breast. She cried out, looking down at the red streak he had left. No broken skin, no permanent damage, just an immediate sting. To her flesh and her pride.

"Sniff them," he said.

Kimberlee's hand trembled as she raised the tiny scrap of cotton to her face. Instantly she was overcome with the scent of her own arousal, her own impending submission. Shuddering, she closed her eyes.

"The generals will expect this kind of obedience, Kimberlee. They will want proof that I have broken you. Trained you to accept humiliation."

His explanation only made it worse. "Don't justify this, Roarke. I don't see any generals in this room now. I see you and that's all."

His eyes flashed for a moment as if she'd struck some nerve. Could it be the man had some sort of feelings underneath, some sense of human decency?

"And I don't see you fighting," he retorted.

Now she saw red. Lord, how could this man turn her emotions on a dime like this? "If you're implying I'm the kind of woman who likes this treatment..."

He picked up the dildo. "Lick it, Kimberlee."

Against her will, she began to salivate. A weak, decadent feeling came over her body. Could she really do it? She reached for the cock, so real, so completely life-like. Dabbing with her tongue, she touched the circumcised head. Wetting her lips, she kissed it. Her nipples swelled immediately in response.

"Open your legs," he ordered the kneeling woman. "A slave may not close her legs to a Master."

Her thighs parted, hungry and willing. A little more aggressively, she pressed her lips to the dildo.

"Wet it down," he encouraged. "Use your tongue over the whole thing."

She turned the underside up, revealing the thick vein, reproduced to exact specifications. Drawing short, needy breaths, both her hands cradling it, she ministered to the device.

"You're a natural slave," he told her. "It is fortunate the generals did not get hold of you."

Rebellion rose up instantly.

"No." He stopped her. "Stay where you are."

"Go on, suck on it. Take it deep...slave."

Kimberlee moaned. She could not have kept her jaw from slackening for all the money in the world. Inch by inch, she fed the flesh-simulated dick further and further back into her throat, until she thought she would gag.

"Good slave girl." He ran his hand over his fly and began to stroke himself. "Now you're ready for the next step."

Kimberlee doubted that very highly. The only thing she felt ready for was to be thrown back on the bed and ravished. But then she wasn't calling the shots anymore, was she?

She watched as his hand moved to his zipper. *Oh, god, he was going to take out his cock. Beautiful and big and...wild. I take it back, she thought, I'm not ready. I'm not. I'm not.*

Mesmerized, Kimberlee watched as the man took out his cock and began playing with himself, methodically and shamelessly. His shaft was thick, imposing, by far the biggest she'd ever seen. He'd been circumcised, just like the dildo, and there was this one tiny piece of the foreskin that had gone uncut. It lent character, and uniqueness. The head was bulbous, pinker than the rest. Sinews and veins ran across the surface. It looked hard and soft at once, like it was made to be kissed and fondled, but also to be feared.

A dick like that could pound a woman, she was sure of it. It could master her, too, leaving her no uncertainty as to her place as a female.

“You want it, don’t you?” he taunted.

Kimberlee replied with a gurgle, the dildo stuffed deep in her greedy mouth. Hell, yes, she wanted it. Even more so because of his changing mood—the sudden openness—physical and verbal.

“Show me, then, show me what a good little slave you are. Show me I didn’t paddle your ass for nothing.”

Hot and helpless, eyes moist with need, Kimberlee begged, doing more with a dick now than she ever had in her life. If she could prove herself, maybe, just maybe, she would get the real one.

“Between your legs, slave, show me how wet you are.”

She dipped her fingertips, making a slow, delicious swath. They emerged glistening, wet, telltale signs of a horny little pussy.

“Time to switch,” he said. “Dildo between your legs, fingers in your mouth.”

The man was merciless. He would make her fuck herself and suck her own sex fluids while he masturbated, taking his visual pleasure over her shameful degradation.

Was it degradation when she needed it so badly, though? Or was it just animal satisfaction? The dildo was glistening and wet. With a tremor of anticipation, her eyes desire-filled, cheeks crimson with shame and need, she pushed the thing into herself, down between her thighs, the lubricant dripping, the lips swollen in anticipation. Taking a sharp breath, nibbling her full lower lip, she eased herself into full penetrative position. She’d never masturbated in front of a man before. She didn’t even like to see it herself, preferring to love herself in darkness.

“Lick your fingers,” he ordered, his fingers still making their slow, intentional slide up and down his shaft. “Taste yourself.”

Her eyes slid shut as she put them to her lips.

"That is your submission," he said. "A good Master will elicit that with his voice alone, or even his mere appearance across the room. Your slavery starts in your pussy Kimberlee, and from there, it shoots to your brain and back."

She was slurping, busily, cleaning her fingers as he'd told her.

"Open your eyes. You have no right to privacy. Your expressions, your thoughts, your shame, all of it belong to your owner."

Kimberlee complied, transfixed by his handsome, commanding image. He was taking down his pants, stripping nude. His thighs were well-formed, quite in keeping with the rest of him. He moved with total self-confidence while disrobing, not at all like her. It was clear he was a Master, and she...she was not.

"Remove the dildo," he said, approaching the edge of the bed. "And lie on your back."

She could hardly hold herself up. The dildo popped from her thirsty hole, leaving her moaning and empty. In total surrender, she fanned her chestnut hair across the soft pillow. Of their own volition, her legs spread wide, indisputably revealing the wet, silky evidence that she was his for the taking, yearning with her every breath to be possessed.

"This will not be like sex as you've known it." He knelt between her legs, still holding the whip. "This will be a disciplinary taking. The next lesson in your slavery. When this is through, you will be ready for your chains. And your collar."

Her pussy spasmed. She felt she was going to come right here on her own, without even being touched. "I've never wanted a man so much," she confessed, her voice soft and passive. "And I don't even know you."

"It's the chemistry of enslavement." He tapped her belly with the whip. "You have kept your body fit and trim. It will make using you all the more pleasant."

"I want that." She lifted her tingling, punished ass off the bed, in the direction of his magnetism, his commanding blue eyes. "I want you to...use me."

He ran the tip of the whip across each of her nipples, slapping playfully, further inflaming her with her own delicious degradation. "Remember well later on the mood you are in now, the words you say. It is the easiest thing in the world for a horny woman to love slavery. Later, when the flame of desire has passed, you will fight me again."

She writhed, reaching for him. There was no later, only the hellish emptiness of not being fucked by this man.

He smacked her thigh, a bit more serious of a blow, not enough to leave a mark, but enough to let her know her place. "Down," he commanded.

Kimberlee obeyed, which only served to inflame her pussy all the more. No man had ever been so safe, so completely secured from the dangers of her charms.

"Hands over your head, palms down."

His hands moved into place, capturing her wrists. He was positioning himself. The time had come. It was all she could do to keep from crying out as he lined up the tip of his thick, pulsing cock. The circumcised head made contact with her swollen, eager pussy lips. The fit was natural and perfect. Her flesh yielding, and his pushing through, the petals of her labia welcoming, inviting the blood engorged, steel-fleshed conqueror.

"Oh, god," she cried. "Fuck me...please."

"Mine," growled the invader. "My pussy. My pleasure. My slave."

He ordered her to look at him, deep into his eyes.

"Yes..." she verbally submitted, her voice shallow and raspy. "Yours."

"Lift yourself," he ordered. "Give me your tits."

The only way to do this, pinned as she was above and below was to arch her back. The globes were helpless to him, open to whatever he might wish to do...most immediately with his teeth and tongue.

"Tomorrow we will train you to take nipple clamps. How would you like that?" He pushed an inch or so inside her, but no further. His physical strength, to hold his body

like this, muscles taut, must have been phenomenal. So, too, his mental discipline to keep from taking all the way the warm, silky hole so totally available and alluring beneath him.

"I-I don't know." Her chest heaved, red and flushed as her face.

"Liar," he accused, punishing her with another few inches of cock, enough to know herself as his conquest, but not enough for sexual relief. "You are turned on by it. Every single little detail about slavery, in fact, has made you hot. I've seen it in your eyes. It's written all over you."

She shook her head wildly. "No...it isn't so..."

Roarke took one of her nipples between his teeth. He ground them, just hard enough to draw her attention.

"I admit it," she cried. "Please, I admit it."

He eased up, but only slightly. "What do you admit?"

She was going to have to confess it all. "I'm...hot for it," she cried. "I want to...to feel it."

"And feel it you shall." Roarke did not stop biting, even as he moved to full penetration.

"Omifuckingod," she groaned as his cock pushed to the hilt. "Not...like this."

He was mixing her sex pleasure with pain. Making the biting a part of it. "Roarke, oh, god, what are you doing to me?"

"Teaching you what to expect." He let go of her nipple. "This is only the beginning. Tomorrow it will be the bittersweet bite of the clamps," he reiterated. "And the leather of the whip kissing virgin skin. And steel. Yes, after this you will wear steel. At all times, in some form, you will be in bondage to me."

Roarke paused to kiss her. It was less a traditional lip on lip meeting as it was a takeover—his musk over her perfume, his tongue grappling and subduing hers, his mouth, overwhelming and molding. Gathering both her hands in one of his, he freed

himself up to play with her torso, adding to her sweet torment. Kimberlee wanted to lift her legs, to wrap them around his muscular, slowly pumping ass but she had no strength to lift them.

There was no mercy, no pause. He moved from one front to another, releasing her mouth, he took her earlobe, hungrily chewing and inflaming. His hand was working its own devastations, grabbing her breast and squeezing tight enough to make her groan. Still, she wanted more.

"You'll come on command," he told her. "You'll climax when I do."

"Yes...yes...I will..."

Roarke released her wrists and breasts and placed both his palms on either side of her supine body. He was focused on the act itself now, on readying himself for climax. She was free beneath his magnificently rising and falling body, as least as free as a woman could be whose very soul hinged on the orgasm she was waiting for.

The power and friction threatened to ignite her, but in a blissful way. Up and down he moved, his cock disappearing in and out of her sopping wet tunnel. She gritted her teeth, focusing on holding back as she'd been instructed.

"Roarke," she cried, grabbing at his neck with her hands. "Oh, Roarke."

Her insides were splayed open, her very breath caught on the razor's edge of orgasm. Never had a man held her back. Always it had been her, desperate to get her fulfillment, her partners oblivious or lazy or both. But they'd not been real men like Roarke. They'd never been as in touch with their own animal spirits.

"Kimberlee..." he commanded. "Get ready."

"Oh, yes..." She was a vessel, open, anticipating, and at the same time, thirsting to be filled.

Roarke's eyes glazed. A thick sheen of sweat had formed on his body. He was that jungle cat she'd imagined in the restaurant with the generals, only sprung to life. Their flesh was melded, she was melting into him, being sucked upward. In a roar of sheer

and terrible masculinity, he said the magic words, the ones her whole being had focused on for what felt like her entire life.

“Now, Kimberlee.”

It was time to climax. He was there and she must be, too. Shudders of submission passed through her. The orgasm wasn't hers, but his. She was his. Her body belonged to the man.

She clung to him tightly, for all she was worth. His cock was spurting into her pussy, the warm, life-giving fluids bathing her tunnel. Where was it all going, what did it mean? Not like any other kind of sex she'd had. That was what he'd said and he'd been right. She was changing, already, by the second.

Her climax hit with the calling of her name. She became the orgasm, her solid body vanishing into the sensations. Kimberlee...the slave. A woman owned, and fucked. She clung and moaned his name back even as the swirl of exploding, unleashed desire catapulted her, high above the bed and even above the room and the wet, hot tropical country she'd been fighting so hard for.

His back was solid as she held him, eyes closed as the waves roiled over her, like a hurricane, for which he himself was the eye, calm and pure and steady. Together, they were blowing, a crisp and powerful force, shearing the treetops of ordinary life.

“Roarke,” she called his name, the warm waters and kissing winds awakening every nerve ending. “Oh, god...Roarke.”

His teeth sank into her shoulder and she came again, a surge of lightning passing from the mark of his teeth straight to her pussy with explosive little points in both nipples. She felt his cock expand, pulsing as he pushed the last few spurts home...deep inside her womb. Deep as any man had ever been inside her before.

“Roarke,” she said his name once again, in wonder, in amazement and acknowledgement...and with more than a little trepidation, too.

How exactly was she supposed to relate to him, as rescuer, as lover...as owner? Their relationship had all the hallmarks of something temporary, but in her heart, she

had to wonder. He was touching things, going places already that were virgin territory. And this was after just a short while. What would happen after a few hours, a few days?

Mustn't think so much, she decided. *I must try instead to live in the moment*. Roarke rolled onto his back, lazy and sated. She crawled onto his chest, kissing his large muscles. He put his hand on her bare back, running it up and down possessively.

"That was wonderful," she whispered.

"It wasn't supposed to be," he said, tongue-in-cheek. "It was supposed to be slave initiation."

"Sorry, Master. Would you like to beat me again?"

His fingers settled possessively in her hair. "There are about a million different things I could do to you, and probably would if I weren't your trainer."

"I don't know if I should consider that a good thing or a bad thing."

"The only thing you should be considering is why the hell you're here in this hellhole and not home where you belong."

"Home is where my work takes me, Roarke. And don't tell me I should be in the suburbs somewhere baking apple pie."

"Blueberry, maybe." He trailed his fingers down her back, making her want him all over again. On his terms, whatever those might be. "Seriously, though. You don't have a boyfriend or anything?"

"No. Do you?"

He smacked her ass, palming it with a crisp snap of the wrist. Her pussy clenched, wet and hot in reply. She could get addicted to this really fast.

"Come on, Rourke, turnabout is fair play. Why are you in Lavoria?"

"Work, same as you."

She caught herself kissing his pectorals. It had been subtle, instinctive. The taste of him was salty, sweet, familiar. "I can see you're not a nine to five man."

"Perish the thought. I like the outdoors."

"Oh? What were you doing in that café, then?"

"I won't talk politics, slave girl. Or religion."

"Okay." She propped her head up on her hand beside him. "Sex, then. When did you do the deed first?"

"I was working on a ranch in Montana. The boss' wife called me in one night after supper. Asked me if I knew about roping more than just calves."

She imagined him tying the wicked, willing wife. "How old were you?"

"Eighteen. She was thirty. The boss found out, and I had to take off in a hurry. He was a pretty powerful man. I ended up joining the army to get away. Turned out they had some work for me. I was a steady shooter, real patient, and it appeared that I never gave a damn if I lived or died."

"Was it true? Didn't you care?"

"As much as the next man." He shrugged, idly caressing her nipple. "It all comes down to having things you're afraid to leave behind. Wife, kids, parents. I never had any of that."

"You were an orphan?"

"By ten my old man had run off, and my mother died a year later. He just plain wore down her soul with his drinking and abuse. I only wish I had grown up sooner, I would have killed the bastard."

Kimberlee tried to imagine what sort of father Rourke must have had that he'd wanted to kill him. She'd had problems with her folks, but murder had just never seemed an option.

"I guess that made you a natural soldier," she reasoned. "Personally, everybody told me I was just born to look pretty."

"You aren't pretty." He twirled her hair. "You're stunning. But you're a hell of a lot more than that, too."

"Stop it, Rourke. I don't want to like you," she half-teased.

"Oh, don't worry, you'll hate me plenty as we go along."

"Thanks for the warning." She was aware of her words slurring. His image was getting fuzzy. "Roarke...I'm a little..."

He laid her head back on the pillow. "Sleepy," he completed her sentence for her. "I know."

* * * * *

Roarke covered her sleeping form. The woman had been through a hell of a lot and she was being a real trooper. He'd have to be careful not to push her past her limits. He'd never felt so driven before. What was he after? What did he want from her that he hadn't obtained from so many other women before Kimberlee?

Growing up in a tin roof trailer in the dust of West Texas, he'd learned to be dry as a cactus. Prickly, keeping his supply of life-giving water tight to himself. The only woman he'd ever deemed worthy of love was his mother, noble, sweet-suffering. Kimberlee had some of her qualities. The tenaciousness, the pluck, and that same silky hair.

Damn, he was pretty tired himself. It might not be bad to catch a little nap. They would both be needing their strength soon enough. Him more than her in a lot of ways. Because he'd be the one having to deny himself the pleasure he wanted. Not to mention the curiosity he had about Kimberlee's history and nature. He couldn't afford to know her any better. He was already way too attached for his own good.

Telling himself it meant nothing, he lay down beside her, his front pressing into her back. He wanted to keep her comfortable and safe from bad dreams, that was all. *I don't care about her, not one whit.*

He was still giving his little internal denial speech as he fell asleep, deep and peaceful. More so than he'd known in ages.

If ever.

Chapter Four

Kimberlee awoke on her stomach to the feel of a man's hands on her shoulders, gently massaging. She imagined herself in some European spa, or a cabana on a lovely tropical island being serviced by a dutiful hotel servant. Until she heard his voice, that is.

"It's time to wake up and continue with your training," he told her. "You dozed off."

She blinked her eyes. The hotel room, yes, and Roarke. He was telling her she'd napped, but it felt like about two weeks.

"I want you to go and get your collar," he said, the words burning hot in her ear.

Her pussy moistened in response. So it was real, he intended to impose the trappings of slavery on her. Cold steel. Hot stinging leather. Punishment. And sex.

"You want to put me in a collar?" she asked as he turned her over onto her back.

He looked at her, commanding, imperious, though not unkindly. Her question was obviously somewhat rhetorical under the circumstances. "Yes, and don't lie there with that deer-in-the-headlights look," he mused. "You'll find it in the dresser. Second drawer. Bring it to me, please."

"The dresser from hell," she murmured, feeling languid and relaxed. "How special."

He used his free hand to pinch a nipple. "Go," he repeated. "Slave girl."

Kim winced. He wasn't being brutal, still, it was a wakeup call to her new status. Contradicting the will of this man—disobedience as he called it—made her subject to physical correction. And apparently nipple torture was on the list.

"Ow," she cried. "All right, I'm going."

Her nipple was hot and throbbing from where it had been handled. To her amazement, she found the other one was a little jealous from the lack of attention. Since when did she crave such rough treatment? Padding naked on bare feet across the carpet, a little unsteady from the substantial paces he'd put her through, she went to the infamous dresser. The one with the toys that Roarke kept coming up with to torment her.

More than a little curious, she slid open the drawer, slowly, full of anticipation. She nearly swooned as she saw the contents, an array of bondage and domination devices. Some of the things were self-explanatory. Sets of cuffs with varying lengths of chain, several different kinds of leather whips and some ordinary sex toys. Vibrators of different sizes and styles. Her pussy clenched a little when she saw the penis gag he was talking about. The cock part of it was thick and black and stubby. It would fill a woman's mouth and with the straps tied on, she would be forced to suck as long as her captor desired.

There were also some leather cuffs, with metal clips. She gathered these would be for a slave's wrists and ankles. Near this was a metal chain, fairly short with a heart-shaped lock on it and a silver ring in front, suitable for attaching a leash. The chain was a half inch wide, larger than standard gauge, but still subtle and pretty enough to be worn as jewelry.

Something that caught her eye next to the chain was a small, rather conical dildo. She picked it up, surreptitiously. She'd heard of things to fit in a person's anus. Could this be one of those butt plugs? There was another like it, with a battery.

Under the plugs, she found the nipple clamps he was talking about. A pair of screw-tight clips with a silver chain in the middle. Touching her finger to the metal, she felt an imaginary little spark. So this was what he intended to put on her poor little nipples.

A few of the other things in the drawer were beyond her parameters to understand. One was a kind of metal spur that rolled on a handle, with sharp prickly points and a

small box with electrodes. Dear god, did he intend to electrocute her? There were candles, too, a box of stubby white ones, an inch wide, suitable for emergencies. Clearly these were torture devices. What kind of man would keep such things in his room?

"If you're through playing, I'm waiting for the collar. Unless you'd like to try everything at once."

"No, thank you." Kimberlee snatched up the short chain with the heart-shaped lock and brought it to him. He was sitting up on the bed, leaning against the headboard. His legs were splayed, revealing his flacid but still gorgeous cock. Trying not to look at it, or any of the rest of his perfect body, she handed him the silver collar.

"Now go into the bathroom," he said. "Wash your body and hair, return to me in five minutes."

"Are you going to time me?" she asked indignantly.

"Yes," he replied deadpan. "And you are not to dry yourself. If you are hungry, there is a granola bar on the sink."

"I'd sooner starve."

Though as she slammed the bathroom door shut, she grabbed it and wolfed it down. There had better be more food in her future, she thought, or he was going to have a cranky, fainting slave girl on his hands.

She showered as quickly as she could. It wasn't helpful to her plan for resistance that her body was hot and heavy for the man, anxious and squirming for his least little touch. Her neck craved that collar, even as her pussy craved his dick and her ass craved another spanking.

Kimberlee set the water to cold to keep her head clear. And to think she'd been feeling sympathetic toward him earlier.

"Sit here." He patted the bed in front of him upon her return. "Your back to me."

It was an awkward position, mostly because it put her way too close to the man. She didn't like having him behind her at all, what with her so vulnerable and naked. She would also have preferred a chance to put on some makeup and deal with her hair.

"Closer," he ordered until she was scooted back nearly far enough to feel his breath on her neck.

She could hear her heart slamming in her chest. She couldn't bear his hands on her anymore, she would go crazy, even though she'd just come, more than once, she was already craving more. "You certainly come with an interesting assortment of toys," she quipped, trying to keep the tone light.

Her idea was to keep from giving him the satisfaction of seeing how aroused he was making her.

"I'm going to use every one of them on you, Kimberly, in the next few days."

She drew a ragged breath. Okay, that was way unfair of him. She'd never keep her libido in line now.

"Lift your hair, Kimberlee. With both hands. Clear it from your neck."

He was going to put the collar on her. He was going to lock steel around her naked throat, like she was really and truly owned. Grasping cascades of her wild curls, she slid her fingers up her neck, raking the hair out of the way and onto the top of her head. She could see nothing that he was going to do, but she could feel him behind her, the power of his ever-churning mind, the scent of him, and the feel of his breath on her tingling back.

"To anyone on the street—" he slipped the linked metal around her slender throat "—this could be a mere necklace. Only the Master and slave understand the true meaning."

The metal was cool, but as it slid over her skin she felt nothing but tingling warmth. It was a private thing between them, that's what he was telling her. In her mind, that connoted intimacy, but to him it would mean little if anything. This was all about turning her into property. A pleasure toy, wasn't that what he'd said?

His hands were surprisingly delicate and gentle. The small lock, with its love-shaped symbol was downright beautiful. She held her breath, waiting for the delicate click of the lock. Presumably there was a key, its location known to him. Not to her.

"The collaring of a slave is the most significant event in her life, Kimberlee. What I give you now is a training collar. Were you to go on with this, you would be given a permanent collar, by your Master of record."

Roarke was speaking the words softly, his breath on her neck. Every inch of her flesh burned for his touch, his attention. Unwittingly, she began to lean back, towards him. She could imagine those capable, manly hands cupping her breasts from behind, his tongue probing her ear. God, she wanted him inside her all over again.

"Go into the bathroom," he told her. "Look at yourself in the mirror."

Kim was only half aware of getting back off the bed. She barely recognized the young woman in the mirror, her chestnut hair fresh and damp, her green eyes subdued like drops of jade, her cheeks a healthy pink, dulled slightly by the ache of fresh desire, the color evident from her slim neck all the way to her belly button.

What dominated the view, though, was the chain collar. It hung just a little loose, enough to make a small vee, so that the tiny gleaming padlock dangled at her collarbone. She swooned at the sight of it, and all that it evoked in her mind and loins. It was an intriguing piece, to say the least. With the silver ring and the thick finish, it clearly suggested a collar to which a leash could be attached. It could easily be a pet's collar, that of an exotic, nude female beast.

With the right clothing, however, and her hair done up elegantly, it could also be the prize adornment of someone's ladylove, a beloved girlfriend or spouse. Kimberlee touched the lock. At the same time the fingers of her other hand strayed inevitably to her pussy. A light dab at her clit, confirming the charge she was feeling. Roarke had locked this on her. She'd been taken. He'd made a claim for her body and she would serve him.

It was only temporary, though, she had to remind herself of that. And of course this was a good thing, as she wanted to be free of this man as quickly as possible. Didn't she?

"Kimberlee," she heard him call from the bed just around the corner. "Come back to bed."

She rubbed herself a little harder, applying pressure to her clit. "I'll be right there," she called out.

As soon as I come again, she thought. This time under my own steam. Using one hand to rub her nipple, she applied the other deeper inside herself. Like a cock—like his cock. Kim watched herself in the mirror. The masturbating slave, displaying herself in a man's collar. His collar. The bastard wouldn't get away with it. She'd turn the tables on him. Somehow. And it would all start with this orgasm.

Man-free. Roarke-free.

Closing her eyes, she felt herself ready to loft over the cliff, to spiral down into the valley of primal bliss. *Come to me, climax, she purred silently, come to me now.*

Roarke's voice pulled the rug out from under her paradise. "You are stealing from me," he said simply.

She swallowed hard. He was standing in the doorway, naked, cock at half-mast, balls full and firm again. "Stealing? What are you talking about?"

"You are playing." He inclined his head. "With my pussy."

Kimberlee read the look in his eyes. Like stone. Not brutal...but hardly soft. She noted the silver leash dangling from his hand. It was the match to her collar. Did he intend to chain her like a dog? The thought outraged her, but it made her hot, too. Damn her treasonous body, once again going over to the enemy's side.

"What are you going to do to me?" She got her back up. "Hit me with a rolled-up newspaper?"

“If that’s what it takes,” he replied without hesitation. Snapping his fingers, he pointed to the floor at his feet. “Kneel, Kimberlee.”

“Never,” she vowed, though in her heart she was not so sure. Not so sure at all.

Chapter Five

Roarke had stood in the doorway watching her before announcing his presence. She was breathtaking. With her smooth skin, deliciously flaring hips and fine, pinkened ass, the spanking still fresh. Far and away the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, free or slave. What was it about Kimberlee that made her more maddeningly desirable with their every passing interaction? The sex had only sealed it. And the collar and chain he used for training? They were exactly the right choice. Hell, they had been made for her. Just as she seemed to have been made for this, to stand naked, gorgeous green eyes closed, masturbating, a finger on the tiny lock, playing, enticing.

How could he not want her like this? That sweet brown hair down her back, that sexy turn of the hip, those perfect oval lips, wide and open. Receptive, curious, but very much independent as well. The struggle inside her was obvious, as it had been all along. She wanted to surrender, and yet she was afraid.

So far he'd enjoyed every minute of it, her petulant objections, her passionate surrenders, her feminine pleas. She was complicated and wonderful and unabashedly female. And yet she was strong, too. This was more evident with every test he put her through.

He suppressed a smile now as she refused his order to kneel. Had she any idea how close to the surface all her emotions were, how transparent to him and therefore easily manipulated? She ought to consider herself very lucky it was someone like him undertaking this training. Any real trainer would not have tolerated this defiance for a moment.

The trick was not to let her know how he secretly enjoyed her spunk. He must also make sure not to let on how blown away he'd been making love to her. A trainer ought to use a slave indifferently, with cold dispassion, but he had felt for her and with her a

unique joy and peace, a passion he had never known before. Her taste, the feel of her, the way her curves responded, and the dance of her eyes and moans of her mouth, all of this was so very new, and unexpected. If he were not careful, he would find himself captivated by her instead of the other way around.

"As I predicted." He stepped forward to clip the leash onto her collar. "Your defiance has reemerged."

"This is who I truly am." She tried to tug free. "I said submissive things before...in the heat of the moment."

"Do not move," he commanded.

She whimpered as his hand slipped between her legs, finding its comfortable place. "That isn't fair. Using my body against me."

"But it's not your body, remember?" He flicked her clitoris, working her into a quick frenzy. "Move against me," he ordered.

Kimberlee pressed herself, wantonly. "Why...are you doing this?" she asked breathlessly. "Aren't you satisfied yet?"

Roarke pushed her to orgasm, opening her to a rainbow slide, a waterfall with no bottom. Except whatever one he might provide. "No. Are you?"

Kimberlee moaned in reply. There was no going back, no holding herself up, no existing at all, unless he decided to pull her through.

"Tell me what you need." He tugged at the leash, the chain links clinking, tight and hard.

"I need you...inside me," Kimberlee cried.

"Fuck my hand," he commanded. "Come on my fingers."

"Your cock, please," she whimpered. "I need your cock."

"You are a slave," he contradicted, his flesh a wall, his eyes like cold starlight. "You come as commanded. Pride is a luxury you cannot afford."

"Bastard," she hissed, though she gave up her orgasm nonetheless. It took her less than a minute, her beautiful face contorting in sweet pain as she pushed her pelvis against him, impaling her sopping sex. He pressed the digits home, as though they were his cock penetrating and filling her. He felt her energy surge up his hand and through his entire body as her pussy muscles clenched in response.

Never had he seen a woman respond with such passion. Raw, liquid sex coursing through her veins, her entire body electric, magnetic. How could he or any other man keep his hands—or his collar—off of her? For the first time in his life he understood what it was that might drive a man to kill for a woman. Up until now he had simply never met one worth killing for.

His cock throbbed with need. The lovely slave would attend to it soon enough. In fact, she would give pleasure as she had never dreamed possible. But Roarke intended to make it last, ensuring her maximum torment. So, too, in his own sweet time he would have to attend to her punishment for refusing to kneel. "Your mouth," he ordered his gorgeous charge for the time being. "Suck my nipples with it."

Kimberlee planted her lips, taking his left nipple between them. He gave in to a small moan of his own. "You look good like this," he said. "Naked, leashed. Giving me pleasure."

He'd goaded her, deliberately testing, pushing her limits and when she tried to resist yet again, tugging futilely at her chain, he held her firmly. "You are a slave," he reminded. "You have no rights. Your choices are obedience...or punishment."

She continued to lick at his nipple, her breathing heavy. It was time to begin to show her just what it meant to be a woman in the power of a strong man. "Touch me," he commanded. "Wrap your hand around my cock."

Kimberlee was panting, on the brink of orgasm. In response to her hesitation, he reached around to deliver a disciplinary smack to her exposed ass. "You were given an order, slave."

She made a small sighing noise, something inside her giving way. A moment later he felt her small fingers, trembling and shy. He wanted to roar like an animal. This beautiful creature was his, really his, even if only for a short while.

"Squeeze it," he encouraged. "Feel the blood inside. Feel what owning you does to me."

Roarke gave a purely male groan, as the green-eyed beauty followed his instructions. "Oh, Kimberlee," he promised, taking her head in his hands. "The things I'm going to do to you."

He took her in his arms, body to body. Damn it, this wasn't in the plan. Embraces were intimate. The wrong kind of possession. Slaves ought to be possessed like material goods, not cherished as something one of a kind. A good slave owner never got more attached to a woman than he did a dog. Which is probably why he'd never been a particularly good slave owner any more than he'd been able to manage as a boyfriend.

Digging both hands into her buttocks, he fused their crotches. Sex slave training, that's what this was supposed to be. He needed to stop thinking of lovemaking, needed to stop imagining himself with this woman in different settings. Sometimes even, god forbid, with clothes on, in pedestrian situations.

Roarke broke the embrace. Her eyes, not to mention her arms clenching his back, had told him she wanted more. But this could not be about what she wanted. Or even what he might want deep down. It had to be about the sexual pleasure, and nothing more.

"But before I do anything." He brought them both back to reality. "We must address what occurred a short while ago, when you were told to kneel."

Recognition lit on her face. There was a trace of shame now at having failed to please him, and also trepidation as to what her refusal might cost her.

"Did you kneel when you were told?"

"No," she whispered, staring down at her sweet little toes.

"Look at me," he said.

Her eyes were moist, complicated storms.

"You were disobedient," he told the proud, capable woman. "What should be done with bad little slave girls?"

Kimberlee was in no place to argue, needy and horny as she was. "They should be punished," she confessed in a voice that revealed perhaps once or twice she'd dreamed of such things herself.

"Turn around," he commanded. "Bend over and grip the sink."

Her hindquarters, pink and sweet, begged his immediate predations. It was difficult to decide what to do with the little spitfire first. "Have you ever been taken anally?" he wanted to know.

"No. Not my thing." Her body tensed instantly, though she was trying to make it sound like it was no big thing.

He put his hand on her smooth back, lightly tanned and lean. He loved this part of a woman's anatomy, that little cradle just above her ass. "Slaves don't have 'things', Kimberlee. They open and submit on command, in whatever way a man feels like using them. If they fail to please they may be beaten or worse. If I can't convince the generals, Kimberlee, that I have enslaved you, they will take you and do it themselves. Do you understand?"

"I do," she said.

"No," he countered. "You don't."

How could she? A sweet woman like this, so very innocent of the ways of the world. Maybe she'd faced a pushy boy at school asking her to the prom or an obnoxious drunk at happy hour. What was that compared to the likes of the generals?

"Compared to a sex slave, a regular prisoner or slave has it incredibly easy. Not only does the sex slave endure confinement, torture and abuse, she must be aroused by it. It has to make you wet, Kimberlee, just thinking about what I'm going to do to you

right now. How I'm going to get my belt, and beat your sweet ass with it, and how after that I'm going to take your anal cherry, and how all the way through, thanks to one of my nasty little vibrators, I'm going to make you beg, even for the whipping. So that by the time I'm done you're gonna think having me shoot my hot load up your ass is the greatest privilege of your life."

Roarke touched her ass, just to show her how primed she was.

"Oh, god," she hissed, recoiling from his finger, only to push back against him.

Roarke tousled her hair, which was hanging over her face. She hadn't been able to flip it back much of late. Then again, she'd already gotten his full attention, which was the goal. How could he have ignored her, no matter what circumstances he'd met her under? He'd had his share of women ready to throw themselves at him, especially when he was back in the Army Special Forces, but this was the kind of female who would have gotten his attention. Precisely because she didn't try too hard.

"I want you to go and get on the bed," he told her. "On all fours, facing the headboard."

Kimberlee straightened, a little woozy. He pulled her to him, cheek to cheek by means of the chain. "From now on when I tell you to do something you will say, 'Yes, Roarke'. For training purposes, this will be the same as 'yes, Sir', or 'yes, Master'. Is that clear?"

Their eyes tangled, a brief battle of wills. She capitulated, as she always would. "Yes, Roarke."

He smiled, enjoying his victory. From her own lips had come the acknowledgement, the uttering of a truth between them—Dominant and submissive—that would make their sex indescribably hot, the more so as they lived it out. Releasing her chain, he let her go, only to pull her up short at the doorway with his voice.

"One more thing, Kimberlee."

She froze, his tone, his words like an invisible lead affixed to her collar. She could not have moved, hard as she tried. He drank in the sight of her, her back turned, her lovely ass facing him, her hair draped down her back.

"I want you to crawl to the bed. On your hands and knees."

Her fingers gripped the doorjamb. Several cock-pulsing, ravenous seconds ticked by as she stood...deciding. In the end, she went down, her knees buckling first, her feet adjusting. He stroked himself, watching her kneel and then put her palms to the carpet.

Slowly, with the beauty and grace of a cat, Kimberlee Breen began to crawl for him, delicately collared, trailing the leash. She was furious with him, and aroused and curious, too, he was sure, but for the moment he was focusing on his own soaring joy. It was a bizarre pride, to exercise this power and to know he was not breaking the woman really, but making her submit...only to him.

He clenched his fists, thinking again of the generals. Never before had he interfered with a mission for personal reasons, but if any of them touched this female, he would kill them with his bare hands.

* * * * *

Kimberlee could barely breathe. Was it true? Was she really reduced to her hands and knees, naked, neck encircled in metal links, locked, and dangling between her swaying breasts, the carpet rubbing her palms and knees, making her flesh tingle in anticipation of all the things he had threatened — or, rather — promised. She was going to be beaten with a belt and used...in her ass.

Could she withstand such things? Her brain feared the worst, and yet she needed this man so... She longed and yearned and burned for him. To submit, to bear his punishment was to find the deepest arousal. And he would please her too, she was sure of it. He kept on speaking of training her to be a toy, a disposable object, but that wasn't the kind of man he was. He had feelings, she could see it in his eyes, she could tell in

how he touched her, how he loved her with his flesh. There was no faking such things, no denying them.

Once or twice in her life she'd flirted with the idea of love, only to reject it. Her hunch was that this Roarke was the same way. Not heartless but...cautious. Was that the right word?

Kimberlee had reached the bed. It seemed impossibly high now. Emotions swirled in her head as she raised her head, prepared to crawl on top of it, wet, naked and panting. Roarke was changing her. She wasn't the same woman who'd been on this bed before. She didn't feel like a slave exactly, but neither was she free. No free woman would have crawled up here to accept a beating, not even if she was trapped in a hostile foreign country. No free woman would take her loving on such terms. Wearing steel and arranging her naked body for a man to torture her.

She was to await him on all fours. Facing the headboard. Her ass, completely open and vulnerable, her eyes unable to see a thing that might take place. Her breathing was jagged. She was so primed for cock. Were he to slide into her pussy she would suck him whole and come instantly.

But that was not her choice. Nothing was her choice. Except that she'd managed to win some punishment for herself for not kneeling when she'd been told. What did he want from her? Cock worship? Not that she would mind that right now.

Kimberlee strained to hear every sound around her. At a certain point, she heard him leaving the bathroom and coming back into the bedroom. Oh, god, he was opening that infernal drawer again. That thing was going to be the death of her.

She could sense his approach, the scent of musk, mixed with this electric feel in the air. With every fiber of her being, she yearned to be touched, held, comforted and reassured.

But she had other needs, too. Needs that this man had awoken and now, so it seemed, only he could slake. Needs that involved her being dealt with firmly, even punished by a man strong enough to take what he wanted, including a woman.

"Pay close attention, Kimberlee." He slapped her ass casually.

She put herself at rigid attention, like a good slave girl. "Yes, Roarke."

"I am giving you a word, a safe word. If at any point this becomes too much, use the word and I will stop. Bear in mind, though, it is in your interest to endure. Because when we meet the generals, there will be no escape valve. The word you can use is matrimony. Any other words you utter or pleas you make, I will ignore."

Matrimony. That was an odd choice, and more than a bit ironic as well. Making sure that she understood, and having her say the charged word once for practice, he told her to lift her head.

"By taking your sight—" he affixed the blindfold around her head "—we add a level of helplessness."

Also trust, she thought, though she did not say this aloud. It was incredible to think she had not even known this man yesterday, and here he was putting her through such an ordeal.

Roarke checked the tightness of the blindfold, then moved his fingers across her face, molding the contours. She nibbled on them as she could, sucking needfully.

"I imagine you are used to having your way with males," he speculated.

The collared Kimberlee did not answer. She was panting and licking Roarke's fingers. All at once a hand materialized on her breast, cupping it, feeling its full weight.

"Just to touch you, most men would do anything, wouldn't they?"

Her teeth chattered as he squeezed her nipple. *Fucking harder*, she wanted to scream, *do it harder, anything, just stop taunting*. But the proper torment hadn't even begun, had it?

"I don't know," she moaned. "Please, I don't know."

He bent to blow in her ear. It was perhaps the cruelest thing he could have done. "Do you think all the men you teased would be pleased to see you like this? Getting a taste of your own medicine?"

"I-I'm not a tease," she protested.

Well, at least she wasn't one now.

"Did you know—" he ran his hand down her back to her ass "—that slaves can be tattooed or even branded by their Masters?"

Kim was ready to cry. She needed his fullness in her pussy so badly. She needed him to slam his cock into her, to put her down underneath him and pummel her 'til she acknowledged him as her total fucking sex overlord. "Roarke," she groaned, stretching it into multiple syllables. "I can't...take it."

"You know the word," he reminded.

Yes, she did, and she was sorely tempted to use it. She couldn't let him down, though, or herself. "Yes, I do," she grimaced.

"There is your way out, then. Do you intend to use it or will you continue serving as my plaything?"

"I won't use the safe word right now," she told him, avoiding spelling out the alternative.

Roarke touched her clit, while pulling back on her hair. "What are you, then?"

The combination of sensations dissolved her to her core. "I'm your plaything," she blurted.

"And my slave."

"Yes...yes... I'm your slave and plaything."

"Are you ready—" he stroked her tender pussy "—for your beating?"

The man's voice, so calm and masterful, so utterly assured as he spoke of whipping her with his belt nearly sent her cascading into a fresh orgasm. It was like she really was designed this way, to get off on the man doing as he willed with her body.

"I'm curious, but I'm also a little frightened. I've never been...beaten," she confessed, the word sticking in her throat.

"You are a good slave for being honest." He rubbed the top of her head.

Damn, this was so confusing. Why was it his patronizing behavior could make her indignant one minute and ready to bear him sons the next?

"You're not angry with me for being afraid?" she asked softly, hating herself for being so weak all of a sudden.

"No, Kimberlee. And if I was, I would never strike you, not until the anger had passed."

Never had she felt so reassured by a man, so cared for. And yet he was about to degrade her terribly, pushing her past nearly all her limits.

Kim turned her head, seeking. "I need to be disciplined, Roarke."

"Yes," he agreed. "You do."

Roarke popped the vibrator in first. It was small enough to fit easily inside her wet pussy. The controls must have been remote, because it wasn't until it was completely inside that it began its invasive little buzzing motions.

"And that means controlling your levels of pleasure. And pain."

He increased the speed of the vibrator. She gripped at the sheets with her fingertips. Was he going to let her come first, to calm her nerves, maybe?

"The belt isn't like a spanking," he said.

She jolted as the leather touched her ass, a light brushing of a folded belt.

"Girlfriends can be spanked, and lovers. It's a sweet thing, a game. But only one sort of woman submits to leather. They say after she's tasted it once, she never forgets. I myself have seen slaves beg to stay with their Masters, cruel as they are. I have seen females crawl to their Master's feet for a taste of sweet pain."

The belt whistled through the air. Kim's electronically battered pussy could not help but push out, opening, craving. The belt hit like a slice of fire across her ass. A hot burn, a brand marking her slavery.

The heat of it continued to eat at her as he surveyed the damage. "Nice and red," he commented. "You'll have something to admire in the mirror later on."

Kim's ass shook from the combination of sensations. It made all too tempting a target for a second stripe. She moaned from the impact, a whipped, naked slave.

Roarke turned up the speed of the vibrator, making her eat the pain. "You won't be climaxing. Not like this."

The third stripe raged through her nervous system, the initial sensations settling into her pussy. She was beginning to understand what he'd said about tricking her senses, making her beg for things she would never ordinarily accept. Clenching her vaginal muscles, she tried to sort it all out.

"I hope your ass is ready," he reminded. "Because I'll be using it next."

He couldn't, she thought. I'll be sore and red and...

"Are you paying attention?" Roarke lashed into her, another looping blow. At the same time he kicked up the vibrator to what she sincerely hoped was the highest setting.

"I...yes... I'm sorry..."

"A slave thanks her Master in advance for being used."

"Thank you," she hastened to add. "For using my ass."

"You're not ready," he informed her, whipping her yet again, "to serve my pleasure."

Kimberlee had never wanted to come so badly in her life. She had a wicked, battery-fueled, whirling dervish in her pussy, pushing her to the very brink, urging her on to a mushroom explosion of private ecstasy, but his will, his whim, was holding her back. She was forbidden this release.

"I want to serve," she moaned. "I want to be...your plaything...in my ass... Take me in my ass."

"What if I want to whip you longer instead?"

His voice was like a snake, coiled about her loins, twisted around her tits, in her head and pussy, breathing for her, thinking for her. "Oh...god, then do that... Do what you will, Roarke."

Roarke stroked the side of her face, tucking her hair behind her ear. "But what of your free will?" he reminded. "Are you sure you want to surrender it?"

The fucker was taunting her, lording it over her, how he was right and how he'd been able to take over her body totally. "You win, Roarke... I concede... You have me begging. I can't help it...oh, god, I'm going out of my mind."

"The whip or my cock," he spelled it out. "You will take either?"

He had backed off totally. He wasn't touching her. Even the vibrator was shut down. He'd done it—found the cruelest torture of all. The sheer emptiness and loneliness that came with his absence. "Yes, yes, Roarke, I will accept anything, pain, pleasure, abuse, only have me, use me."

Roarke turned the vibrator on high. "Let me see you move, slave. Show me how turned on you are."

Kim thrust out her ass, undulating her body, the sexual tension near combustion level. In her dark, moist heat, she begged his attention, his love...his conquest.

The ointment was cool. He used the whole of one hand to apply it, all over her singed buttocks and then up inside her anal canal. Snatching out the vibrator, he shoved a finger deep into her rectum. Her movements were centered on his penetrating finger. She felt like she'd been skewered. The ointment made her ass tingle, nice and cool, but her pussy only got hotter.

The man was readying her for an ass fucking. She'd shown herself worthy after all. Now his other hand was on her hip, steady, corralling.

"Another step in your submission, Kimberlee." His cock pushed up against her ass between her cheeks. She felt the pressure, slippery skin, rock-hard erection nestling itself hungrily. The thing wanted in, badly, and it was going to have its way. As far down as he wanted to go, for as long as he wished, and just as fast as he wanted.

Was it appropriate to ask him to be gentle? Or to offer her complete surrender? Or simply to squeal in anticipation?

"It will be tight at first," he advised. "Don't fight it."

Roarke pushed the vibrator back into her pussy and turned it to low, reducing it to background static, too much to ignore, too little to offer true relief.

"I still have control," she declared stubbornly. "I can use the word."

Roarke pushed himself inside her, slow, relentless, his throbbing shaft opening and filling and consuming her. "The generals have no safe words," he pointed out. "They will take and take and take. There will be no escape from them. Ever. Your place will be to grovel at their feet, Kimberlee. You will lick their boots and be abused all the more for your servility."

"No," she shook her head. "Not for Maria...not for me."

"Then you must yield now," he insisted. "You must be my slave in every way."

Kim found herself well persuaded at the moment, and not only by his reasoning. There was the physical side of it, too, the way his powerful domination, only made her want more. It was as if his raw testosterone was bringing forth hormones all her own.

"I'm being...ass fucked," she gasped, acknowledging the reality.

"You are being used." He pushed her cheek to the pillow, putting her into full submission. "By the man who owns your body."

She screamed out, half in pleasure, half in wonder as he thrust his cock in deeper, giving no quarter. "Take me, Roarke...fucking take me."

Roarke turned up the vibrator. "Push your ass against me, slave. Impale yourself."

"Yes, Roarke." She was panting desperately, drenched in sweat, shaking. Trying to give the man all he craved of her, reducing herself in the process to a sex vessel, a spasming bitch in heat. "Oh, god, give it to me...more."

Her scent filled the air. She was gaping and dripping. His hand pushed down on her back, molding to her flesh, his fingers enforcing her subjugation. "It's mental," he

reminded. "Not just physical. Forget the past. Forget your dreams of the future. Live in this present. Accept the new reality. You are collared. Subject to the whip if you do not please me. You have no right to clothes, no right to choose where you go or what you do. You're a slave, Kimberlee. A sexual slave."

"Y-yes," she hissed. "I'm...a sex slave...your sex slave."

"I'm going to come inside your ass." He twisted his fingers in her hair. "You will take it, all of it."

"Yes...thank you... I will take it."

"This is how a slave is handled, Kimberlee. This is what she engenders in a true male, a true Master." Roarke pushed himself in a commanding way, his only limit that which he decided for himself.

She was utterly consumed now, the proverbial moth with wings ablaze, going down in a streak of glory. "I want your come, Roarke. I need it. Fill me. Please..."

Roarke yanked out the vibrator, ensuring that this would be about his pleasure only. She continued to feel it in her pussy, though, her body aching with the bittersweet joy of satisfying her Master. Her strong, well-muscled, and capable Master, this man who was saving her life.

His cock was punching in and out, moving as smoothly now as if he was in her pussy. She called his name, begging, pleading for an ecstasy, a release whose name she did not even know.

"You are denied orgasm, slave. You will take my come. You will beg."

Kim's nipples burned against the bed, her belly throbbed. She was slow in responding and Roarke struck her ass with his hand.

"I beg you," she whimpered, her voice an unearthly wail. "Come in my ass...use my ass."

Roarke let out a growl, like the roar of a lion. She could feel the pulsing power, the surge in his muscles. He spanked her repeatedly, tattooing his mastery upon her tender

flesh. His cock swelled—it felt like twice its size. She thought she would split wide open. How deep had he gone? Was he in all the way? One monstrous push forward, driving her into the bed, and he was coming.

Spurting white-hot semen, this time to be taken up her narrow channel, the third of her three slave orifices. Grunt after grunt emitted from his mouth, each in time to another burst of come from the head of his cock. He was so close to her, on top of her, she felt so small and safe and protected, even as she knew he was treating her just as the little pet he'd set out to make her by putting that collar around her neck.

Roarke continued to throb inside her. He chewed at her earlobe, like a big cat, continuing to play with its subdued mate. At last, his cock receding, he rolled off her and onto his back.

"Fetch a warm washcloth," he declared imperiously.

"I can't move," she complained sleepily. "I'm too exhausted."

Roarke pinched her ass. "Now, slave."

Kimberlee squealed. "All right, I'm going."

So this is what it's like, she thought, staggering to do her Master's will. *A slave really does serve in bed and out.* Far from receiving some reward for yielding to him, she'd been given another task to perform.

"You may clean my cock and balls," he announced as she presented herself with the wet piece of terrycloth. "Nice and slow, with plenty of devotion. You will continue until I am erect again."

Kim looked at the man's cock, still impressive as it lay on its side. Could she handle waking it again after all it had put her through so far? Just to get close enough to touch and smell it might undo her at this point.

"Is there a problem, slave girl?" His voice snapped at her like a whip.

"I...no," she jolted. "It's just... I thought you might want to rest."

"How considerate." His smile was slanted. He wasn't fooled for an instant. "You needn't worry, though, you will be doing all the work to get me off."

"You are too kind," she said dryly.

"A good Master always is, now get to work, before I lay some more leather into your pretty little behind."

Kimberlee hated that it made her so wet to be talked to like this. It was a total betrayal of all her feminist values. But she couldn't deny how this reached her on so many levels. Roarke liked her body, specifically her ass. Enough so that he was turned on controlling and punishing it. He was being a man with her, wanting her as a woman.

"I'm sore enough, thank you very much." She bent to dab the cloth on the tip of his cock. It had been inside her. It had ravished her and now she was responsible for replenishing it.

"A sex slave might service fifteen, twenty men in a day, Kimberlee." He put his hands behind his head. "You are fortunate to have only one Master."

His arms looked good this way, sleek and powerful. He was all muscle, all lean, a fighting machine. No doubt his enemies cringed in terror. Not to mention burned with jealousy at his place of natural superiority over the female gender.

"Have you had many others, Roarke?" she asked wistfully, as she wiped away the evidence of her own conquest. "Other slaves, I mean?"

Already his cock was showing signs of rejuvenation. Delicately, she caressed each ball sac, full and potent.

"Does that make you jealous?" He smiled. "Thinking of your Master possessing another female?"

She narrowed her gaze. "Not even close." But, yes, it did burn at her a little to think these things he was doing were not unique to her. Yes, it was obvious by now that he could as easily break and dominate any woman, but she wanted it to be only her.

"Women can't be compared, Kimberlee." He reached up to idly cup her breast like some exotic fruit. "Each is a unique creature."

Kim sighed. A little more boldly, she wrapped the cloth around the hardening shaft. "I think I could become addicted to you," she confessed.

He took her wrist, pulling it high in the air. "That would be a mistake."

She shivered at the sudden coldness of his stare and of his words. Had she touched off some nerve?

"You are done with that part." He took the cloth from her and tossed it her shoulder. "It is time to attend to the rest of me."

"But what about the washcloth?"

"You have a tongue, slave. Let's put it to good use for once."

Kim's heart thudded in her chest. "You want me to..."

"To bathe your Master, yes, slave," he completed her halting thought. "That is precisely what I want, and it is what I will have."

Confusion danced in her breast. To submit in this way, to effectively lick the sweat clean from the man would be lowering herself yet again, sinking to yet another level somewhere far below what any decent woman could be expected to endure. And yet, to not comply, to risk separating herself from his will, filled her with a sense of almost unbearable sadness.

Kimberlee wanted to please the man. She was, in some inexplicable way under his spell. He waited until she'd shaken out her hair and started lowering her head awkwardly toward his sculpted chest to seize hold of her leash.

"Not so fast." He held her tight. "There's something else I want you to do first."

Kimberlee beheld him, moist-eyed. "Yes, Roarke?"

"Get a pair of handcuffs from the drawer. Lock your wrists behind your back and then return to me."

Her mouth hung open. "I can't," she mouthed.

He took hold of her hair, pulling her in for a kiss. The force of lip to lip, the electric exchange said it all. In seconds, her breath was his, her heart subsumed, utterly. She would have crawled for him a mile, knelt at his feet in a public square in front of thousands. What a dance, she thought, what incredible ebb and flow, this training business.

At the moment, the pendulum had swung his way, all the way. Releasing her at last, a burning ember craving his life-giving air, he spoke but a single word, followed magically by her own name. It was enough, more than enough to send her scurrying for steel bracelets with which to imprison herself.

"Obey, Kimberlee" said Edward Roarke.

"Yes, Roarke," she replied, the fierce, softness of her voice giving clear indication that she might well have said "Yes, Sir".

Or perhaps even "Yes, Master".

It was a sobering, disconcerting thought, but one she could not immediately, or easily, dismiss. Her body trembled as she put herself into bondage, locking on the steel manacles for which only he had the key. Cold metal encircling one dainty wrist. Thrusting out her breasts, moving her hands into position, she locked the second cuff into place, sight unseen.

The move was a strain, she had to work on it before achieving the locking of the second cuff. She was helpless now. He could do as he wished with her. She could not hope to clothe herself or leave the room. Nor could she defend herself from any predations he might wish to make. Her breasts, her pussy and her ass were completely open to him. All of her, in fact, could be whipped or abused in any manner he saw fit.

"I am waiting, Kimberlee."

The handcuffed slave approached. *I am obeying*, she thought, *I am obeying my owner*.

* * * * *

Roarke's cock flared with monstrous heat. The female had done as she was told. Locking her wrists in steel—cool silver metal to match her leash and collar.

And now she was approaching, to lick and kiss his flesh. Every inch of it, until finally she would serve his manhood, giving him the ultimate pleasure.

With her hands secured behind her back, she had to work intensely hard to cover all the territory. His bulbous cock had ached in anticipation as she performed her servile ministrations, her body flushed and sweating as she contorted herself to run her small tongue over his muscular abdomen and chest. He took his time with her, luxuriating in the fact that he literally owned her now, having in effect purchased her temporary freedom from the generals with the aid of their bet.

Using her hair, matted with sweat, he guided her, making her cover his skin as many times as he wished. Finally, when he could stand no more, he placed her hot luscious mouth over his cock, and slid himself into the silky pocket. He pumped himself up and down.

“You’re going to have to swallow, Kimberlee. Every drop.”

The manacled woman tensed up. He gathered she was used to spitting. His fingers entwined in her tangled hair were a combination of encouragement and total male supremacy. “Your mouth was made for this, Kimberlee. Your lips, your tongue. Don’t be afraid. A slave female is thirsty for her Master at all times. She craves his seed, as a sign of his pleasure and of her subjugation.”

She moaned lightly. The lovely eyelashes slid shut. What a delight she was to use. What pleasure she would give as a real and permanent slave.

Roarke shifted his concentration to his own ejaculation. He was careful not to push himself too far back in her throat, owing to her obvious inexperience at slave fellatio. Nevertheless, he was able to work up a satisfying depth and speed.

“That’s it,” he grunted. “Open wide. Suck deep. This isn’t a blowjob, it’s a mouth fuck.”

Kimberlee moaned her response, indicating she understood the difference. Or thought she did. She looked so incredibly hot like this, her curls falling on his lap, her pretty chin slapping his balls. Her hands denied her completely as she bobbed her head, attempting to do a good enough job so as not to be spanked...again.

Harder, harder, he worked her, until finally he could hold back no longer. "Fuck...yes," he roared, shooting himself between her cheeks. Kim made swallowing motions at once. Spurt after spurt erupted. She sucked at him, pulling it all to the back of her throat. He let her keep on a while, as his cock continued to shrink.

How many times was it now that he'd come with her already? He'd lost count.

Roarke pulled her off, gently but firmly, by the hair. "You're not a half-bad, little cocksucker, Kimberlee."

Her eyes stung with tears. He'd been deliberately coarse, deliberately harsh. "Why do you have to talk to me like that?" she wanted to know.

"How do you expect to be talked to as a slave, Kimberlee?" he reminded her.

"Well, I didn't ask to be a slave, did I?"

He had no answer for that one, except to take her in his arms. She was crying by now, for real. "Kimberlee, you have to pull yourself together. I'm trying to help you here. I'm not trying to be a prick or a monster about this. You're an adult, you can handle it. I have faith in you. I'm going to be with you, every step of the way. 'Til we are done playing our roles here." He'd almost tipped his hat and said this was his assignment. That was something he could never let slip no matter what.

Instead of helping the situation, his explanation only seemed to make things worse. The handcuffed female was shuddering and sobbing. "So you're only using me? Pretending to feel something for me?"

She was overtired. She was in shock. She was...right. "Damn it, Kimberlee." He held her by the upper arms, looking her in the eye, steadied her and removed her bindings. "Must you make this so complicated? I didn't ask for this situation, neither did you. But we sure as hell can't stop it now. Do you understand?"

She nodded her head.

She didn't understand, though, not even close. How could she, when he himself was getting more and more confused as to what part of this was real and what part was merely a game.

"I want you to take a bath, Kimberlee. Lots of scents and suds and girly things. Try and relax. I'll have room service send up something for you."

"Where are you going?" she wanted to know.

Was he imagining things or was that a tiny bit of concern in her voice?

"I have to sort some things out, for my business. And you need a little space. I won't be gone too long, don't worry."

"I don't care how long you're gone," she informed him. "Or if you even come back. I was just trying to plan ahead to my next dose of torture."

Roarke resisted a smirk. The woman was plucky and she could make almost any damned situation seem funny. "Sorry, didn't mean to imply that you gave a damn about my existence on the planet."

"No offense taken," she replied. "Just kindly be more aware next time."

"You know," he said, thinking for a moment. "I had a mentor once, a seasoned trainer and slave Master from Japan who used to tell me that only the humblest man can own a slave, for he must still his heartbeat to hear hers."

"Very touching."

"You may masturbate in the bath," he told her by way of goodbye. "So long as you confine yourself exclusively to images of your Master."

She rolled her bloodshot eyes. "Yeah, you're humble all right."

He walked off, just in time to avoid laughing. She was just too damned perfect. The sexiest, softest, woman he'd ever encountered, and yet somehow she seemed more capable than any other of keeping him on the straight and narrow.

* * * * *

Kimberlee would drown herself before she would masturbate to images of that arrogant, egomaniac. Oh, she'd touch herself. She just wouldn't think of him. Soaking her sore muscles, eating little bites of the room service omelet and potatoes off the tray beside the tub, she mentally categorized all the men she could think of instead.

The handsome doctor from the clinic, Juan Ruiz. Her old boyfriend from college, Ralph the quarterback. Any of the hunks from any of the strip clubs her girlfriends had taken her to when they were in the sorority together.

Or someone on TV. That would be fine.

Except he'd already planted the suggestion. Roarke, his nude, proud body, lean and strong, cock erect and ready.

Opening her legs in the warm water, she trailed her fingers down. His picture sharpened in her mind as she touched herself. And the harder she fought it, the deeper it took root.

"Damn you," she hissed, taking one of her nipples in hand. "I won't let you."

But she couldn't stop it. Roarke was the one she yearned for and wanted. The orgasm that came from her fingers passing over her clit was made by him and belonged to him. She was the one receiving it. Surrendering to it.

Moaning aloud, she clamped her hand, sucking it deep.

If only she could take the credit. As it was, she had to fear that maybe this had everything to do with the man's burgeoning power over her body. And her soul. She had to fight it, and fast. But where to begin? Especially when surrender felt so good?

* * * * *

Roarke came back to the room around suppertime. Kimberlee, clothed and collared was lying curled up on the bed, watching television.

"Strip," he ordered, as much for his visual pleasure as for the purity of her training.

She regarded him with indignation, though she offered no opposition.

"You are a total pervert," she said, sitting up to pull her shirt over her head.

He licked his lips a tiny bit, over the sight of her bare, bouncing breasts underneath.

"No," he corrected. "I am the man who owns your body."

She pulled off her shorts and panties. "Well, you better keep up the payments," she said.

Her boldness surprised him. "Are you asking for sexual attention from your Master?"

"No. Perish the thought."

His cock was pulsing to life. He was going to have to do something to relieve the situation and soon. "Did you masturbate in your bath?" he wanted to know.

She looked away, pouting.

"Answer me, slave girl."

"I did," she startled. "Yes."

Her quick response to his verbal command made him as hard as steel. The lovely Miss Breen was learning obedience.

"And you thought of me? Exclusively?"

This time it was her red-cheeked silence that told him all he needed to know.

"Come here, slave girl."

He pushed her to her knees, directed her to open his pants and take out his cock. She kissed the head of it and then opened her mouth wide.

"Tell me." He stopped her from swallowing him whole. "Have you ever loved anyone before?"

"Once, maybe..." She sighed, looking up at him. "No, I guess not, or I wouldn't be so unsure about it."

"Me, too. I never have either. Do you suppose...?"

"Do I suppose what?"

"Nothing," he shook his head, making her suck him deep. She took it willingly, more aroused than he'd expected. Five minutes later he had her on her back on the bed. It was a slow leisurely lovemaking, the collar and leash the only indication of her status.

At a certain point, he ordered room service, teasing her with bits of steak. They ended up laughing and giggling like college kids. For the moment at least, all was forgotten, the mess the country was in, the personal risk they were facing, all of it.

Exchanging stories and dares, they tumbled into the night, their sexes exploding for one another, his shaft delighting and taunting, her canal serving as his gateway to ever-rising bliss.

Eventually, they grew quiet, listening to the sounds of the city outside their open window. Beeping taxis, laughing bar patrons, and the wail of sirens – police and fire.

Roarke's eyes were heavy, but it was Kim who fell asleep first.

Rising to his feet, he contemplated how to confine her for the night. Letting her sleep on the bed like this was an indulgence on his part, hardly in keeping with her place as chattel. He'd been making way too many of these compromises and he wasn't doing her any favors by them.

He decided to cuff her hands in front of her. He grabbed another pair of shackles for her ankles. It gave him a warm feeling, confining the beauty like this, so peaceful in her repose. Curious as to her resilience, he fetched the butt plug. She stirred only slightly as he pushed the plastic phallic shape into her already plundered hole. She would sleep this way, feeling a continuous sense of male penetration all night long. He might be easing up on some of the other staples of slavery, but not this one. There were some things on which a trainer could not compromise. Besides, there was his own desire to consider, namely his overwhelming need to make the small chestnut-haired beauty feel possessed and filled at every single moment.

Bending over her supine form, curious, he touched her, lightly exploring her glorious flanks and magnificent breasts. Taking advantage of her openness, Roarke

slipped his hand between her legs. Kimberlee was still slick and wet, ready to be entered all over again. His cock began to stiffen once more in response. Damn, at this rate it was going to be difficult to focus on anything in her training, outside of sex. Then again, she was supposed to be a sex slave.

Still unconscious, the beautiful Kimberlee arched her back. Instinctively she stretched her ankles to the limits of her shackles. He wanted her bad. Maybe another quick use of the woman's voluptuous body would sate him long enough to tend to some other matters.

He must give consideration to his work, though. He'd left things undone to come back here. He was an hour late checking in with his contact at the Lavorian Foreign Service. And after that, he was still expecting a visit from a fellow agent, who was posing at the moment as a visiting professor of anthropology. Welcoming the relief from the relentless assault on his hormones by the lovely Miss Breen, he retrieved his cell phone.

Time to save a country, he thought to himself. Not to mention the most exasperating, incredible woman he had ever met in his life.

Careful, Roarke, or you'll be in over your head. Best remember, tomorrow no more sentimentality – be ruthless with the female and the country alike, and everyone will walk away alive. Slip up, and it will be death for all of us.

Chapter Six

Kimberlee was starving. And horny. What she needed—Roarke's cock and a plate full of food—were a world away, though the physical distance was measurable in mere inches. The man was being diabolical this morning. He'd had her cut his food, pour his coffee and kneel at his side, her hand massaging his proud, erect cock.

The smell of the eggs and bacon was making her salivate, right out of the corner of her gag-filled mouth. Her breakfast was hard plastic, an artificial shaft for her to suck on to her heart's content. And lest she hope for relief of a sexual nature, he had fitted her with a chastity belt, a metal grate covering her gaping, needy hole. She had whimpered and begged him this morning for relief, but he'd given none. He hadn't even taken out the butt plug, and as she knelt now in subservience, she had that teasing torment to contend with also.

Roarke had told her this was punishment, for her conduct during the night. For stirring too often in her sleep, for begging him to fuck her. She was only dimly aware of such behavior. He'd come to bed so awfully late as it was. She was aware of dreaming, of craving a lover's touch, of chains pulling at her body, of ghostly possessors at her limbs, of needs too deep to fill.

She couldn't have called him, though. He didn't care for her one whit. He made that clear at every turn. This morning only proved the matter. He was a brute, a barbarian.

Making her stroke his cock, her mouth sadistically gagged. Denied the dignity of clothing while he enjoyed his thick, luxuriant robe. Still collared, the degrading leash hanging between her breasts.

Her pussy burned. She couldn't touch it. How could he deny her the right to her own sex? And her mouth—if she wanted to tell him to fuck off, that was her business.

"More coffee, slave girl."

And that was another thing. He wasn't using her name anymore. Just slave girl, or pet, or something equally unnerving like green eyes or wench. Kimberlee attempted to avoid eye contact as she stood to get the pot. She'd gotten herself in enough trouble, she decided. She did not need any more.

Especially not with the nasty-looking nipple clamps on the table beside him, just waiting to be used.

"You look good like this, pet." He watched her fill his white, ceramic cup. "It could grow on a man, seeing you in subjugation."

Was this part of the game? Damned if she knew anymore. The fucker just liked playing with her, it seemed.

"Set down the coffeepot and stay like that a minute."

Kimberlee froze. Of course he'd want her this way, bent over, breasts still pert, hair hanging down.

He brandished a nipple clamp. "Hands behind your head."

She interlaced her fingers, her breath jagged, her chest rising and falling rapidly.

"When we see the generals, you will be expected to obey me instantly. To take pain and pleasure." He snapped the clip in the air. "To beg for either as required."

For a second, he touched the clip to her nipple and let go. At once it devoured her, quickly squeezing. Just as quickly, he released it.

"This is pain, Kimberlee. It's real. I know it's hard. Stick with me, and it will be minimal."

She returned to his cock, more focused now, and grateful for something easy to do. The man knew what he was doing where she was concerned. He had to.

When he was done, there was still quite a bit of food left on the silver platter. Roarke took the gag out of her mouth and explained the general principle of slave dining.

"You receive what is given by your Master's whim. Food is a prime means of slave control."

She was sorely tempted to tell him what he could do with his food, but the lesson of the clamp was fresh in her mind. "I'm not very hungry," she said, attempting to recover some scrap of pride.

He smiled. "The choice is not yours. You eat what and when you are told. As you have not eaten in some time, and as you will require your full strength for the day, you will in fact eat."

She pouted as he dangled a piece of bacon. Her pride shattered, she reached for it with a desperate hand.

Roarke held it over her head. "Slaves may not eat with their own hands. Only from the hand or fork of their Master. That is your first lesson for the day."

Kimberlee snatched the dangling piece of bacon with her teeth, chewing ravenously.

"There's a good pet," he coaxed, in case she should miss the dehumanizing nature of his action.

Yesterday or the day before this would have made her fly immediately off the handle. But she was calmer now, more centered and ready to fight the man on his own turf.

"For the record, Roarke, I think you've carried this all too far. I could have faked all this for the generals, without having to play these games."

"For the record, my pet—" he scooped up a bit of jelly and put it between her lips "—you haven't a clue what you're talking about."

Kimberlee sucked the sweetness greedily. Concord grape, from off the end of his finger. The taste of it, tantalizing and rich, broke her resolve. "More," she whispered when it was gone. "Please?"

"We are going to train a while this morning." He laid out the itinerary as he treated her to a second taste, even smaller than the first. "Then we are going out to lunch. I need to meet someone. It should prove a good little test to see how you are doing so far."

Kim didn't care. She wanted some more jelly.

"Help yourself," he told her, smearing some on his cock.

Kimberlee's pussy melted. Instantly she went into that place that was getting to be second nature. That place of doing things, outrageous, sexual things, demeaning, arousing things, just because Roarke told her to.

"Lunch will be important," he said, as she licked grape jelly off his cock. "We will observe your ability to show total obedience in a public place. Ideally I'd like a few more days, but we're pressed for time."

She could pick up an edge in his voice. He'd been up half the night. She'd heard him on the phone. Someone had even come to the room. She couldn't make out what they were talking about, but she knew it was something important. Did it have to do with his involvement with the junta? It made her sick to think of him helping them any more than he already had.

Maybe at lunch she would run away. Take her chances on getting to the embassy. Such a shame, that a handsome, sexy man like this could be so dark-hearted. He probably wasn't even helping her. For all she knew, he intended to sell her into some kind of horrible slavery.

"Roarke, more jelly?"

He dabbed some on his balls. Her lips followed, her tongue licking him clean.

"Bacon," he commanded.

Kim opened her mouth, taking all he would give her. It was rich and salty. She chewed it too fast.

"Slow down," he admonished lightly, reaching down to slap her on the ass. "You'll choke."

"Yes, Roarke." She awaited the next piece with a stinging behind, eager to do better. To be more pleasing.

"Slave pets often eat from bowls or plates on the floor," Roarke explained, spearing a forkful of eggs. "Using their mouths and tongues only."

Kim tried to imagine eating like a dog, taking her nourishment at the man's feet. All too grateful for his more moderate approach, she swallowed the egg held out on the end of his fork.

"They should also be kept off the furniture. If they're put on a bed, it's for the purpose of being fucked or whipped only."

She looked longingly at his cock, glistening from her spit, cleaned of the grape jelly. If she could tear off this horrible belt, she would climb on his lap, and bury his cock within her pussy.

"Crawl to the bed, Kimberlee. Lie on your back. Arms and legs spread. Wide."

Kim lowered herself to all fours. Head down, she moved on hands and knees. To the bed. To be fucked or whipped. Or maybe both. If she was lucky.

* * * * *

Roarke's balancing act was getting ever more delicate. According to Santiago, his contact from the foreign affairs office, the generals were preparing to step up their terror campaign on their opponents. In addition, they were now planning to execute the former president, the rightful ruler of the country. Roarke had met with Armand, the agent posing as a professor, last night to go over the final plan. The man had assured Roarke that everything would be in place in time. It was still up to Roarke in the meantime to ascertain the position of all the generals' troops and to make sure they pulled no last-minute surprises.

His lunch today with Colonel Barilla would provide some of that information. Barilla was working under the generals but secretly sympathized with the legal government. His help would be invaluable and in exchange he would likely wind up as head of the armed forces once the generals had been deposed. It was a tricky business. Countercoups always were.

Having Kimberlee to take care of made it even messier. His plan was to shuttle her to the embassy as soon as she'd passed muster with the generals. From there, events would move fast as they struck at the generals' central power sources.

Kimberlee had made it to the bed by now. She was on her back, just as he'd told her, naked, save for the belt about her trim waist, imprisoning her pussy. It was strange that he felt no sense of burden at the thought of caring for her. If anything it gave him a surge of peace, almost joy. It was instinct, perhaps, the smaller female being designed to invoke in the larger male certain biological urges.

Roarke was hard-pressed to deny, though, that there was something special about this female. What if he was doing more to her than he needed? Could it be at least some of this slave training exercise was for his own satisfaction as much as or more than it was for her safety?

Perhaps. But Edward Roarke was a man who survived on instinct. Never second-guessing himself. He was a hunter, a warrior. And if his total conquest of the small, chestnut-haired beauty figured now in his overall plans to save lives, then that was precisely what would happen.

He fetched the rattan cane from the closet. It was a punishment device—bamboo, thin—but quite effective when applied on slave flesh. "Your legs are not wide enough apart." He tapped her outer thigh with the cane. "You may apologize for that."

Her eyes were wide. She could see for herself what it was he was holding. "I'm sorry, Roarke." She stretched herself, wincing slightly in the process.

"Are you being disobedient, Kimberlee?"

She shook her pretty head. "No, Roarke, really I'm not."

Her belly undulated as he ran the tip of the bamboo across her flat stomach. "Some slaves are beaten every day, Kimberlee. For the slightest of reasons. Hell, sometimes they are caned simply because it turns a man on to watch them suffer."

She clenched her fists in impotence, releasing a slight moan as he flicked her nipples. "Roarke, I have surrendered to you," she cried. "What more do you want?"

The question startled him momentarily. Exactly what did he want from Kimberlee Breen? Was it only about this mission? About delivering her safely from this particular theater of combat?

I want you to love me.

The thought had come racing through his mind, entirely unbidden. He squashed it, quickly, brutally. A warrior could not afford that kind of weakness ever.

"I want you to beg, slave. I want you to submit in ways you cannot yet dream of."

"I will, Roarke, I will...just tell me..."

His cock literally hurt with need as it strained the artificial barrier of his pants. There was no reason now, only desire for the woman. Desire to overpower, to control. To take. "Beg me to punish you, Kimberlee. Beg me to make you mine."

"Yes, Roarke." Her green eyes were lit like emeralds. "Punish me...make me yours...take everything...strip me..."

He rubbed his crotch, the beast inside having full sway now. "Turn over, Kimberlee. Yield up your ass."

"Yes, Roarke. Beat my ass...cane me, make me feel it... I'm your slave."

The perfect cheeks were bared to him as the beauty rolled onto her stomach. Collared still, and wearing the iron belt. "Play with your tits," he commanded.

Her hands slipped into place, taking hold of those sweet nipples. "Yes, Roarke...oh god, yes."

"I am going to beat you," he announced. "And then fuck you. I will open the belt and I will take my pussy. Then I will put the belt back on."

"Yes...treat me like a slave...only a slave..."

He ran the cane up and down her back. "Would you like a tattoo, my little pet? Right above your ass, a pretty butterfly, like the younger girls wear. Or my initials, here." He indicated a spot of prime real estate, dead center on her left buttock.

She was shuddering, her hips beginning to move against the bed. "Yes, Roarke, mark me...put your brand on my ass."

"We wouldn't want any doubts, would we? As to who owns you?"

"You do own me, Roarke... I can't deny it. You own my body... No one has ever done such things to me."

Twice he tapped her behind with the cane, both times inducing ferocious whimpers. "Roarke...I...I'm scared. I want it but..."

He ran his hand through her hair. "You can take it," he whispered. "I feel it in my blood. This suits you."

She relaxed at once. "Yes...thank you."

The cane whistled through the air. A moderate hit, though it left an instant welt. As he considered the matter, it would be helpful to have a little something to show the generals as proof of his activities with her.

"Good, Kimberlee. Two more."

Damn, it had turned again, from an act of sheer lust to something almost...intimate between them. She shivered after the second blow. A second welt appeared, more beautiful than the first.

"My slave," he whispered, administering the third, a sweet crack, precise and firm.

"Y-yes," she cried as though something purely sexual was going on.

Roarke was overcome by the sight of her. He could not tear fast enough at his clothes. Toppling the lamp from the nightstand, he retrieved the ointment, a very powerful topical treatment for small wounds.

"This will take out the sting." He rubbed both hands over the welted area, the white of her fine ass streaked with three crisscrossing red lines.

"Oh, that feels good, Roarke...your hands." Her voice was dreamy, lost to some other world. "Will you make love to me?"

No, damn it, you don't make love to slaves.

But this wasn't any slave, not any woman. This was Kimberlee. His Kimberlee. At least for the moment. Fuck it, he thought, to hell with the rules. Three times the key to the chastity belt slipped from his oily fingers. The woman was on her back again, though she showed no sign of pain from her wounds.

In fact, she was reaching for him, trying to pull him down to her level for a kiss. But that would end up rather frustrating if he didn't take this belt off first. At last! The lock gave way on her left hip. Halfway to victory. Quickly he moved to the right, which proved much easier.

Pulling the barrier away, he beheld Kimberlee's pussy. Damp with sweat, slick with glistening sex fluid. The lips were full and pink, puffy, enticing male attention. She was in heat, full and rosy and as ready as a woman could be. God, but she was beautiful down here. He just had to have a taste. Pushing up both her calves, he cleared a pathway.

His tongue stabbed home, a direct hit along her eager crack.

"Omigod," she screamed out. "What are you...?"

A rhetorical question, of course. He was going down on her, returning the favor for all the pleasure she'd given him so far. It was the least he could do, after all. A week from now or so, if all went well, the poor thing would be sitting in a military hospital somewhere in Germany trying to debrief all she'd been through, and how this horrible man had brutalized her. An American, no less.

Then again, this was domination, too, wasn't it? Forcing Kimberlee to feel mind-blowing pleasure. Roarke wasn't half bad with his tongue. He took the job seriously, as he did anything in life. The trick was to move the tongue vertically, and above all to

find the clitoris. Kimberlee's was easy to find. Engorged and low hanging, more than prepared to be played with.

"Oh, god," she moaned, squeezing his head with those sexy fucking legs. "Oh, Roarke."

He had no intention of letting her up, not 'til she'd come at least once. Maybe more if he felt like subjecting her to the pleasure. It was his prerogative, after all, as her trainer.

The fact that he loved it himself was just a perk.

* * * * *

Kimberlee couldn't believe her luck. A gorgeous mercenary and slave trader who gave phenomenal head. What were the odds? Or was this just more of his campaign to break her down? He'd already taken her pretty far, hadn't he? In the heat of the moment she was saying almost anything now, using the kinky slave talk to get herself off.

Roarke grasped her hips, shifting deeper yet again. Oh, fuck, yeah. Her clit was going to want to see a lot more of this guy. She had a feeling it wouldn't forgive her after they split, either.

The word stung her, harder than the cane. She hadn't thought in terms of them splitting, 'cause they weren't a couple. Were they?

"Roarke...I'm going to come... May I?"

His answer came in the form of an extra flick of his tongue, designed to slay her resistance in one fell stroke. There was no holding back now, not for anything in the world. Her superheated ass levitated off the bed, the combination of the ointment and the fading sting blending with the roiling volcano, on the verge of spilling over the fringes of her consciousness. She felt like a wild horse, being ridden and tamed, a whirlwind being kissed by fire. God, this man felt good between her legs, like he knew

her, really knew her. If only she had a clue who the fuck he was. Behind his ability to turn her world upside down and turn her into a...well, pretty much into a sex-starved, sex-desperate sex slave.

"Yes...yes...yes," she cried. Everything was coming unglued now. The lava was pouring out, melting everything. The wind was blowing down all reason. She cried out her pleasure, so he could hear, she held his head with her hands, so he would know — he was doing it, what no one else ever had.

Yes, that was her secret. Kimberlee Breen had never come this way before. None of the self-absorbed pretty boys or self-intimidated wimps had ever made it to this place with her.

Talk about being owned.

Full meltdown, a roar of liquid until there was nothing left. Burning to a core of sheer ecstasy, an uncovered ball she'd never known existed. Holding to it, desperate, she waited out the storm.

But Roarke was giving no quarter. He wasn't intending to stop.

"Please, not another."

He pressed on, his tongue a tiny, bittersweet punisher, like the whip or cane.

"I can't come again... I'll go mad."

Yes, said his mouth, she could. And his hands clamping her in place said she would. Her overtaxed muscles went limp. Beyond limp, to a place of supercharged nothing. Her pussy wanted more, in some perverted, deep place it did, and he was finding that place and turning it against her.

Roarke reached up to pinch a nipple. It was like a massive electroshock. She started coming at once, thrashing and moving with a power that came from somewhere outside herself. Mercilessly, he took the orgasm from her, wrenching it away.

And still he did not stop. She whimpered, lying in a pool of her own sweat, calling his name, begging him, Sir, Master, please, not another. But Roarke did make her come,

not once more, but twice. And after this he shoved his cock inside her. Smoothly, masterfully pumping, using her as the vanquished sex vessel she had become.

In and out, his energy and ability to master her seemingly endless. Did he never tire of pummeling her, of dominating and manipulating? But she loved it, didn't she? All the attention, the almost constant presence of this man for whom nothing else appeared to matter but her. She knew he had other things going on, big things, but his focus never wavered.

Never had a man looked at her as he had, or shown such focused interest. It was flattering, exciting, and frankly, a little terrifying, too.

"Come inside me," she begged. "Come in my pussy, Roarke."

Roarke withdrew now, whether by his own design or simply to thwart her, she wasn't sure. "Prepare to be marked, slave."

He sat astride her, his thick, purple-veined cock in his hand. She drooled at the sight of it, an ever-hard soldier, always ready to invade her sovereignty. Slowly, he moved his hand up and down, tightly clenching, pressing the engorged flesh in readiness to spurt his seed.

He was going to come on her body.

Another thing no one had ever dared to do to her before.

"Yes," she hissed. "Give it to me, Roarke. Shoot all over me. Burn me with your seed. Come on me, come on me..."

His face contorted beautifully, a study of pure male pleasure, the pleasure of a man enjoying her, doing with her exactly as he wanted.

"You're...so...damned...sexy," he grunted, the words coming in stabs.

She melted at the compliment, a different kind of melting, but orgasmic all the same. He was hardly the first man to tell her this, but she'd never cared before, not like she did with Roarke. Pushing her pelvis against him from underneath, she came again, an aftershock, timed to match his own.

The first blast hit Kimberlee in the face, wantonly splashing her cheeks, the tip of her nose and even her hair. He released low growls, his gaze fascinated with what he was doing to her. Aiming lower, he spurted on her breasts, landing a gob on her left nipple. Lastly, he got her stomach.

"Soo...good," she moaned, cupping her tits, rubbing it in.

Roarke pushed out the last little bit, and then dismounted. "It's time for bondage," he announced.

He had a leather cuff for each of her wrists and one each for her ankles. They were attached to chains, which he secured to the two front feet of the bed. He pulled them tight enough to hold her down, but not enough to cause pain. It hardly mattered anyhow, she thought. After all those orgasms, she couldn't move if she had to.

"My come will dry on you," he said.

He towered above her, majestic, imperious. And yet she'd felt his tenderness. There was no disputing what he'd done for her. Overwhelming as he'd been, he'd given pleasure. This was not a selfish man, not an abuser of women.

"I accept your will, Roarke."

Her acquiescence, strangely, seemed not to please him. "Your words are idle," he frowned, "you don't know what I intend to do."

It was true, she didn't know, and likely she'd be yelling at him in a minute, fighting him as she always did, but for this moment, she desperately wanted and needed solidarity. The fact was staying connected to him, for better or worse had become important to her. She could no longer pretend indifference or independence, hard as it was to be a part of this man's world. "I know your heart, Roarke," she offered softly. "I know the man you are deep down."

Roarke pushed a vibrator up inside her, set to low. "No woman will ever know me," he vowed.

Wasn't that a challenge if ever she'd heard one?

"You're not as mean as you act," she defied, the haze of fresh arousal already upon her. "You don't fool me."

"Don't I? How about another taste of the cane? Say twenty strokes this time?"

He was bluffing. He wouldn't do that.

"You like that, don't you? The thought of beating me makes you incredibly hard."

"That's enough, Kimberlee."

For some reason his stern glance didn't discomfit her this time. "Yes, Sir," she deferred, keeping her smile to herself.

"I am going to clamp your nipples now, and leave them on. You will lie here, teased with the vibrator and plug, my come drying on you, clamped, while I get dressed for lunch. Still think I'm such a nice guy?"

Wow. She really had found an Achilles' heel. He didn't want her to like him. "Oh, I do, Roarke, because I know this is all for my own good," she replied, trying not to lay it on too thick.

Roarke brought over the clamps. One by one he attached them. They were stinging devils, biting and gnawing at her. She wanted to shake them off, but he warned her that would make it worse.

"Concentrate on what's going on in your pussy," he counseled. "You'll bear it better."

He was right. When she focused on the sexual stimulation, the pain dulled to the background. In some ways, it even felt good, the wicked, dark pressure imposed on her helpless little nubs.

"Roarke," she sighed, looking up at him. "Is this how you like me? Do I please you this way?"

"You'll please me when you're out of my hair," he said curtly. "And safely in the hands of the ambassador."

"Roarke," she cried out as he turned his back. "Wait!"

He looked over his shoulder but the words stuck in her throat. As much as she wanted to, she simply could not tell the man that she was falling in love with him. Not yet, at least.

"What is it, slave?"

"Nothing... Sir."

He frowned again, turning up the remote on the vibrator for his trouble. He was already in the bathroom when the first orgasm hit her. Splayed, jagged-edged from the clamps, her every nerve opened wide, she let go, knowing the chains would hold her, knowing that Roarke's will would keep her from flying away. Without them, she would float away. With them, she was primed and ready, a font of energy and heat.

"Fuck me," she began to chant. "Fuck me. Fuck me. Fuck me."

He answered her with denial this time, leaving her to a slave's suffering. And the really amazing part of it all was that she would not trade this moment, not for anything in the world she might have without this man.

Was that love? she wondered. Or merely the stress of confinement? Time, she supposed, would tell, as it always did in such cases. Assuming they lived long enough to find out.

Chapter Seven

Kim was a bundle of nerves as they got out of the cab. Roarke had provided her with a very nice dress to wear, a floral print with spaghetti straps, along with her white cotton underwear. She made a point of thanking him and he replied that it was nothing, obviously she had to wear something more than shorts and a T-shirt. He did hover, however, as she slipped it over her head, her body freshly washed and shampooed.

"I thought the green of those flowers might match your eyes," he remarked. He looked quite adorable as he said this, trying to sound so precise and military.

"It's lovely." She lifted herself on tiptoes to kiss him, a small peck on the lips. "Truly."

"Well it's really no big deal," he'd repeated, determined to conceal anything close to a human emotion.

It had been an oddly tender moment between them. All morning long she'd spent tied down to the bed, in various stages of sexual torment. He'd made her beg him to come again and again, only to demand that she lay still. At one point he threatened to call for a bellboy from the front desk to "handle" her sexually, but she'd called him on the threat.

"You could never share me, Roarke, and you know it."

The remark had earned her a flogging on her breasts and belly, the many-stranded leather whip leaving red splotches across her virgin skin. All the while, the vibrator was a constant reminder of his sexual power over her. In the end he'd denied her, leaving her heavy with need.

Thus she'd showered and dressed in a state of arousal. She'd combed her hair in arousal, too. And it was more of the same as he stood in front of her and took off the leash at the doorway to the hotel room.

"You'll leave the collar on," he'd told her, removing the long dangling chain that had become like an appendage.

They were so close that either of them could have moved a millimeter and bonded their flesh in full embrace. And yet neither of them did.

"Your collar." She touched her throat, surprising herself with the comment.

Roarke had said nothing, though she saw the storm in his eyes, the complication of her remark clouding the jet blue. Just what went on in his head anyway?

He'd given her a whole host of instructions on the way to the restaurant. How to act, what not to do or say. Basically, she was to act like a precious little doll unless called upon to perform. When she pointed this out, the man cursed under his breath, muttering how it would be a miracle if they made it out alive.

"Just don't leave me," she said as they reached the front entrance of the restaurant, an ornate display of wrought iron metalwork, rounded and covered with a white and green canopy.

He took her arm. "I am going to protect you with my life," he said softly.

Her knees buckled. Not only did she believe him, she was banking her whole soul on that promise—and on him. It was as if she wanted no further existence past now, past this time they were together.

Again she wanted to say the words. And again she hesitated.

"Senor Roarke," beamed a short, balding officer with soft brown eyes. "I am so pleased you could join me."

"Colonel Barilla." Roarke put out his hand in response to the sharply dressed military officer who'd come up front to meet them. "It's a pleasure."

Kimberlee thought Roarke was a hundred times more handsome, though, in his blue jeans, button-down shirt and khaki jacket. She liked that the man never put on airs. He was who he was, for better or worse.

"No, no, the pleasure is all mine." The soldier caught sight of Kimberlee, his face lighting up in response. "And who is this lovely creature?" He beamed.

"This is Kimberlee," Roarke said in introduction. "Kimberlee, you may shake the hand of Colonel Barilla."

She put her fingers out, allowing the man to encase them. His look was vaguely ravenous, enough so to induce her to move tighter against her escort. The sheer solidity of Roarke's presence gave her considerable comfort.

It was hard to believe how quickly life had changed for her. Was it only yesterday she had met Roarke and the generals? Surely her fellow workers at the clinic would be looking for her by now. What would she do if she encountered any of them? Did she dare show recognition or must she maintain her place as Roarke's companion—possession, to be precise?

"Is she English?" The man took a guess.

"American," Roarke spoke for her.

"Indeed. I have never seen one of your countrywomen look so beautiful. She should be a movie star." Barilla winked at her, though he continued to address Roarke.

Roarke put his arm about her waist. "I prefer to keep her all to myself. Thank you."

Kim's insides liquefied at his words, not to mention his gesture. She was wishing they were alone again, so she could kiss him. Or sink to her knees and beg to suck the erection she'd spotted in the cab.

"I cannot blame you," Barilla conceded. "Shall we sit down, then? I have a table ready for us."

"Absolutely." He steered Kimberlee by the arm. She wondered if they made an attractive couple. Certainly the waiters took her for such and the other customers, too. She could see them sneaking peeks at the handsome Americans walking with the high-ranking army officer.

"I took the liberty of ordering us some wine," said Barilla as they reached the small round table in the corner. "Chablis. I hope you appreciate my tastes."

"You have the best taste, Colonel. As always, it does not go unnoticed."

Kim had the funny feeling that they were talking in some kind of code. As Roarke held out her chair for her, she tried to process what she'd heard so far. Talk of tables and wine. It could mean almost anything.

Roarke sat next to her, putting his hand on her thigh. His touch settled her nerves instantly. It was going to be all right, she thought. No matter what, Roarke was with her.

"Will your date be having any wine?" Barilla held out the bottle.

"Half a glass," said Roarke.

Kim's panties moistened. The man was controlling her, unabashedly, in public. Barilla proceeded to pour all three glasses, then raised his own.

"To the future," he said. "May it be brighter."

"To the future," Roarke tapped his glass.

Kim repeated the formula, clinking her own with the others.

The waiter came by and Roarke ordered for them both, two servings of *bistec y arroz*, the steak and rice special.

"I am curious," said Barilla. "May I ask your lovely companion a question or two directly?"

"Of course," said Roarke. Then to Kim, "You will answer the colonel, Kimberlee, directly and honestly. Is that understood?"

Kim flushed slightly, a woman under clear male command. "Yes, Roarke," she replied.

"Very well," nodded Barilla. "To begin with, I am wondering what would lead a woman such as you to come to our country. No doubt you had many choices and opportunities in your own homeland?"

"I did, colonel. But I wanted to help people. Less fortunate people."

He smiled, a bit wistfully, she thought. "Yes, we are a bit pathetic in comparison to you Americans, aren't we?"

"I meant no offense, Colonel Barilla," she supplied quickly. "People are people. We are all created equal. It's just that my people, so many of us, were born with so much more... It never seems fair."

"Ah...fairness." He inclined his head. "A uniquely American idea. No other country on earth presumes to have such a commodity, least of all for export."

"We are not superior, Colonel, we just try and make a difference... At least some of us try."

"And we are grateful, all cynicism aside, we are. Tell me, though," he switched gears. "How did you become acquainted with Senor Roarke?"

Kim's heart thumped noisily in her chest. He'd told her to be honest, but just how honest should she be? Certainly she had no desire to reveal the details of their real relationship.

"He's an old friend," she lied.

Roarke pounced quickly on her response. Leaning over to whisper in her ear, he let her know what would happen in no uncertain terms if she prevaricated again. "I will put you over my knee," he told her. "Lift up your dress and pepper your little behind, right here in front of the Colonel."

Kim's pussy flooded at his easy, casual mastery of her person. Even out in public, she belonged to him, and if he wanted to punish her, then he would do so, as he saw fit.

"I'm sorry, Colonel. What I told you wasn't true. I met Mr. Roarke yesterday. He and some of the generals have a bet...that he can train me in a week's time."

Roarke explained the details, laying out some of the nuts and bolts of what had taken place so far.

"Fascinating," the Colonel glowed. "So tell me, Kimberlee, from your perspective, is Senor Roarke winning the bet? Do you feel yourself becoming the man's slave?"

Oh, god, was she going to have to talk about her deepest feelings, in front of Roarke?

"Honestly, I am not sure what slavery really means."

"It means obedience," Roarke said with uncharacteristic impatience. "It means that if I tell you to be quiet, you will do that. Or if I tell you to stand up and take off your dress in front of all these people, you will do that, too."

Tears dotted Kim's eyes. So much for discussing anything tender.

Barilla noticed the effect immediately. "My friend, I think you have missed something. I think your slave feels more than she is letting on."

Roarke shifted uncomfortably. "With all due respect, Colonel, we do have other matters to attend. The wine, for instance."

"The wine will wait, Edward. Kimberlee, I want to know this. I want to know what is in your heart."

Something in the Colonel's eyes, kindly and supportive, urged her on. Taking a deep breath, she began. "No one has ever made me feel so helpless." She unleashed the verbal floodgates. "I have been...degraded and tormented...but there's something about it, something beautiful in its own way. Could that be true, Colonel Barilla? Could it be a beautiful thing to submit as a slave, giving everything over in total trust to a man? Could it be anything other than perverted to find...ecstasy, in bondage, in physical correction and domination?"

The queries were directed at Roarke and they all knew it. As the American was silent, it was Barilla who took a stab at an answer.

"Love, my dear young lady, takes whatever form it will. If indeed this is what you speak of, then why should it not come for some with whips and chains, even as it does for others with harps and violins?"

Kim felt lightheaded. Quickly she gulped the rest of her wine. She had not intended so much to come out, not by a long shot.

"Senor Roarke." The colonel turned to the clearly dissatisfied mercenary beside her. "Why not lend your expertise? You know much more of the psychology of the female. Have you ever seen a trainer fall in love with his pupil?"

"That would break the cardinal rule of slave training," he declared.

"But there must be temptations," he pressed. "Such as this dear creature. How could anyone not fall in love with the likes of her?"

"Kimberlee is a very attractive woman," Roarke said carefully. "That is obvious to anyone. She is also intelligent and sensitive and exceedingly passionate. She is one woman in a million. How could I not be affected, Colonel?"

Something in Kim snapped. She was tired of his whip-like compliments designed to confuse and discombobulate. "You make me sound like a disease, Roarke. The man wants to know if you love me. Is this so difficult for you to answer?"

He flashed her a look indicating that on a scale of one to ten, she had just blown her little slave girl routine to the tune of about a hundred and fifty. "That's a conversation better had in private, don't you think, *slave*?"

Kim's full lips turned into a pout. "Yes," she folded her arms. "*Master*."

So she was going to get them killed. Served him right for being such a dick. Even so, he had said some pretty nice things about her. One-in-a-million. That wasn't bad at all.

Barilla laughed lightly, covering the complete conversational disaster with a fresh toast. "To my American friends and their spirited ways. May our two countries prosper together in all things."

"Bravo," called a voice. "Spoken as a true traitor and gringo lover."

Kim's spine froze, turned instantly to ice. There was no mistaking the identity of the man behind her.

"General Escadrille," said the colonel, smiling as blithely as possible. "What a surprise."

"Yes, I'm quite sure it is," the general laughed disgustedly. "Place this man under arrest." He turned to the small company of soldiers with him. "For high treason."

"I must appeal this decision," said Barilla. He moved almost in slow motion, reaching inside his jacket for the pistol. Agonizingly, the milliseconds passed as the general's soldiers opened fire. A scream was on her lips, but before it could be fully uttered, a pair of powerful arms snatched her from the chair, pulling her safely to the floor.

As the bullets flew, Kimberlee was fully covered by her recalcitrant escort. For some reason in the midst of it all, she had the funniest thought. As bad as the situation was, Roarke was probably happy because he'd managed to get out of having to discuss his feelings.

* * * * *

Roarke cursed himself for not detecting Escadrille's entry into the restaurant. He'd been sitting here like some kind of schoolboy, his heart all aflutter at sitting next to a pretty girl instead of doing his job. For that matter, he should have known that Escadrille would come, thereby avoiding this fatal meeting. As it was, Barilla was a dead man. You couldn't blame him for pulling a gun and forcing them to shoot him. Being taken into custody by the likes of Escadrille would have been a hundred times worse. Barilla was a good man. He'd lived well and died bravely.

It was up to Roarke to make sure his death wasn't in vain. He had five, maybe ten seconds to retrieve the diskette. At the same time, he had to keep Kimberlee safe. She clung to him instinctively and well. She hadn't fought him as he'd grabbed her. She'd trusted him when the chips were down.

His heart swelled with pride. His training might leave something to be desired when it came to conversational obedience, but deep down she had surrendered, casting her lot with his. More than ever he admired her – paradoxically – for her having learned something of her own innate slavery and subservience to his male nature.

“It’ll be all right,” he whispered in her ear. “Just stay where you are. I’ll be right back for you.”

She was shivering, her nipples hard as rocks. He stole a small kiss, an electric zap, adrenaline pumping. As Barilla’s body hit the floor, he lunged, grabbing the man’s gun. Covering Barilla’s body with his own, he reached surreptitiously inside the colonel’s jacket pockets. The disk had to be here somewhere. The one with the information on the generals’ troop deployments and ongoing terror plans he’d intended to turn over to Roarke.

“It’s all right,” Roarke announced loudly. “He’s dead.”

Damn it, where was the disk?

“Seize the body,” Escadrille ordered his men.

Roarke felt inside the man’s lapel. There. He had it. Quickly he slipped it out and into his own pocket. “That was a close one,” he said, climbing to his feet.

It was going to be touch and go convincing the general that he had nothing to do with the treason of the colonel.

Escadrille narrowed his gaze. “Close for who, gringo? Him or you?”

Roarke smiled thinly. “For all of us, I would say. Imagine if the man hadn’t been detected sooner.”

The general arched a brow. “Indeed. I would say this calls for a drink. How about you buy, gringo?”

“My honor,” Roarke bowed, adding yet one more lie to the series being traded back and forth. At this point, Escadrille trusted him about as much as Roarke trusted himself being alone anymore with Kimberlee without getting in head over heels emotionally.

"Well, well," the general chimed, his natural sadism suddenly buoyed by the sight of Kimberlee rising to her feet. "What have we here?"

Damn it, why couldn't she have stayed down until he'd been able to smooth the situation a little more and introduce her himself?

"It's our little wager," he answered his own question. "In the flesh. Come here, woman, let me have a closer look at you."

Kimberlee held her ground. Back straight, she looked directly to Roarke for guidance. He smiled inwardly. Damned this woman was a cool customer. Talk about good under fire. She'd already figured out, as scary as the general was, she had to show him she was Roarke's slave and no one else's.

"You may go to the General, Kimberlee."

"Yes, Master." Her meek, servile reply stirred his cock, even in the midst of the tense situation.

Escadrille pursed his lips. You could see he was trying hard to expose something fishy. "My, my," he observed. "This is quite a change in you in only one day, is it not?"

Kimberlee did not answer. She was a foot in front of the man, hands at her sides.

"Answer the General," said Roarke.

"Yes, sir," she said. "It is a great change."

"A convenient one as well. Considering you would fare ever so much better under his command than our own."

"Sir, begging your pardon, but my Master is not easy with me. He is very hard on me."

Escadrille turned to his men, translating into Spanish. As a humorous footnote, he added his opinion as to how she might respond to his own hardness. Roarke tensed at once. He had a bad feeling this situation was going to go south in a hurry and if it did, Kim's honor would have to be protected at all costs. Even that of his own life.

"Tell me, little gringa, what does your Master do to you?"

"He beats me, sir," she said without hesitation. "He dominates and chains and fucks me. He makes me crawl and beg and come."

"Doesn't sound so appealing for a high-born American like yourself," said Escadrille. "Why just yesterday you were spitting nails at all of us, calling us pigs. And yet today we are supposed to believe you are a happy slave? Why there isn't a mark on you. What could the gringo possibly have done to turn you so fast?"

Kim squared her chin and flashed a confident little smile. Did she actually have an answer for this?

"It's simple," she replied. "He did something a man like you will never understand. He made me fall in love with him."

Roarke's heart skipped a beat. That was an answer all right. One he would never have come up with in a million years. She was a good liar, all right.

It was a lie, wasn't it? He certainly hoped so, because if not, she was going to get her heart broken in a hurry. Edward Roarke loved no one, and wanted none back in return. Especially not from someone like her. Someone so completely...perfect.

Damn it. Could it be a part of him wanted it to be true that she could love a man like him? Of all the horrible times to be thinking such thoughts. At this rate, he was going to be the one needing her protection and not the other way around.

"Love?" The general smirked. "Well, that is news. The gringos are in love," he proclaimed, his mood strangely jovial. "This calls for a celebration. Bring more tables, we will sit, all of us, and drink champagne."

Kimberlee snuck back to Roarke's side, her small, brave body clinging to his larger one. It was only now that he realized how much his adrenaline was pumping. His senses on high alert, he absorbed every detail of their surroundings. The number of soldiers standing guard, their positions with respect to the door, and the trajectory required to shoot them, one by one.

The odds didn't look great, but he'd faced worse.

"You know," said the General, as they had all taken seats at the extended table. "I might even fetch a priest to marry these two. They look so happy. Then again, she is supposed to be a slave, no? And that means we should all enjoy her as one."

Roarke had a nine-millimeter pistol tucked into the back of his belt and a bowie knife at his waist. They were his only weapons, and his only way, as near as he could tell, to save Kimberlee.

"I serve only my Master," she said, once again veering onto some course of her own choosing.

"Kimberlee..." he remonstrated, attempting to draw her back on course. "The decision as to who you serve belongs to me and no one else."

"But you are in my country, gringo. I own what you own," said Escadrille, clearly spoiling for a fight.

"With all due respect, General—"

"Both of you," interrupted Kim. "That's enough. I have a voice and I am going to use it. Roarke—" she turned to the astonished man sitting next to her. "I give myself to you, in front of these witnesses. To you and only you. Will you accept me?"

The blood thundered in his head. Something in her tone was striking a chord, a place in his heart no one else had ever touched before. He wanted to answer, but he couldn't. Too many other thoughts were crowding his mind, most centrally how they were going to make it out of this place alive. "Kimberlee, don't make this more complicated," he chided.

Kim frowned, like he'd failed some test.

A test he didn't even fucking know had been scheduled.

"It's not complicated." She got up impulsively. "It's very simple. General Escadrille, how would you like me instead?"

Escadrille laughed, low and long. "I'd say your slave training techniques leave something to be desired, gringo, wouldn't you?"

"Kim, sit down," Roarke ordered.

"No," she defied. "If you won't fight for me, someone else will."

Kimberlee knew it was a desperate gamble. She had to believe in her heart this man would fight for her, for what was right in the world, if only she pushed him hard enough. He might have been only a selfish mercenary and slave trader so far, but she knew that there was more inside him.

And for that she would gladly risk her life. Because she did love him. Against all odds, despite the shortness of the time and the bizarre nature of the circumstances, she had fallen for him, head over heels.

Her pulse raced as she moved around the table to confront the loathsome Escadrille. He'd pushed out his chair, presumably giving himself physical access to her. "Such a pretty thing." He licked his lips. "Such a pretty mouth, too. Did your so-called gringo Master teach you to suck a man at least? Or doesn't he have a cock at all?"

"He does," she said proudly. "His cock is fine and strong and I was honored to suck it."

The General's features clouded. Roarke knew from the look of him that he was about to do something nasty, something for which he would have to kill him.

"Insolent bitch," he snarled, grabbing her arm. "Get down here on your knees and prepare to choke on a real Lavorian dick."

"You're hurting me," she cried.

"Of course I am." He cocked his hand back to strike her. "It's what I do best."

Roarke fired a single bullet through the side of his skull. He was dead before he hit the floor. "Down!" he shouted to Kimberlee.

She dropped efficiently even as he started firing off rounds at the surprised soldiers. One by one they fell, like flies. The last one ran for help. Roarke took him out with the bowie knife to the back. It was a fit ending for one of Escadrille's cowardly henchmen.

"I knew you'd kill them all!" exclaimed Kim, sounding like it was some kind of game. "I knew you'd save me."

"I haven't saved spit, Kimberlee. We have about a minute to get out of here before this place is swarming with military and police. And trust me, their orders will be shoot first, ask questions later."

She kissed him dead on, disarming him completely. "In that case, we'd better get going."

Kimberlee couldn't help her elation. She'd done it. She'd brought out the hero in Edward Roarke. The rest, well, that would fall into place. Before too long, she was quite sure, they'd be laughing over all this somewhere stateside, enjoying a real date.

Roarke yanked her arm. "You're crazy. You know that?"

"Yes," she agreed. "Crazy in love."

He took her the back way, through the kitchen. They had to push their way through at gunpoint. There was an alley behind, which at this point was still quiet. "We're going to have to grab the first transportation we see," he told her.

"I hope it's a limo," she teased. "We can play in the back." Kim had no idea why she was acting this way. Hysteria, probably. Fortunately, he seemed to be keeping his head just fine.

"Hold this." He handed her the gun to hide as he flagged down the first available car. It was a four-door sedan, piloted by a teenage boy with a mop of brown hair.

"We need to borrow your car," Roarke opened the driver's door from outside. "We'll pay you back for the use of it later."

Who did he mean by "we"? Kim wondered. Surely the man realized she was flat broke?

Roarke had to pull him out. He stood there, a bit dumbfounded as the two of them hopped into the car, taking his place. Roarke took off at once, backing down the street

and heading away from the restaurant. As yet they did not appear to have anyone following them.

Roarke knew they would, though, soon enough. Everything had been blown wide open at this point. The best he could do would be to get Kim to the embassy, get the disk read and try to move the operation ahead to tonight. The country would be a fortress by morning, with every soldier and cop out looking for Escadrille's killer.

Damn it, how had the situation gotten so out of hand?

Kim was looking at the gun, fascinated by its heat and weight. All her adult life she'd been a pacifist, she'd never before seen a weapon used, and certainly not to save her life.

"Roarke, you were fantastic back there," she crooned. "You know how wet you made me?"

He glanced down. Christ, she was pulling off her panties.

"Play with me," she said wickedly. "Put your hand here and I'll let you do whatever you want."

Roarke swore under his breath. Moving his hand between her legs, he did as she asked.

"Oh, baby," she crooned. "I can't help it, I just need you."

Roarke had a bit of a need himself, it seemed, his cock stiff again under his pants. Hell, he hadn't been able to come this many times in a day since he was seventeen.

"Ooh, what's that?" Kimberlee asked, spying the swell in his crotch. "Maybe I should have a closer look."

"No," he read her mind. "And that's an order."

Kim ignored him, proving once again that her notion of slavery was rather selective and related all too often to feelings of sexual pleasure rather than pure obedience.

The vixen went for his zipper, knowing he had no way to fend her off.

"I want to see it, Roarke, out here on the road," she said.

She managed to undo his pants and tug him free of his boxers.

"Let me suck you, Roarke. Please?"

"I'm trying to save your life," he growled.

At this moment, she did not care. "I'll be a Lavorian sex slave my whole life, Roarke, but I need to feel you in my mouth. Now. Please... Master?"

"I'm not your Master, Kimberlee."

His cock thought otherwise, though, swelling before her eyes. "I'm going to do it, Master," she said wickedly. "Later you can whip my naked ass for disobeying."

He thrust his hand inside her wetness. So silky. He had to come in that hole again, one more time. The first few kisses of her lips to the top of his cock only confirmed the matter. Against all reason, he was going to pull over and fuck Kimberlee Breen. But where? The embassy was a block away. Could he crash the compound? Not very advisable. The Marine guards would cut them to ribbons.

There was a shady spot across the street, under a large lazy palm tree. That would do just fine. He killed the engine and told her, "Push your seat back, and spread."

"Yes, Roarke...oh yes." Kim was eager to open for him. She had no fear whatsoever that anything would happen to them. It was like having some kind of cloak around her. A cloak of destiny in the person of one man.

"No one's ever done it for me like you," he vowed, climbing atop her lithe body.

"Me, neither," she agreed hotly. She had her dress hoisted to her waist. She was holding her pussy lips apart, offering him clear entry. There was no need for chains now. Even the collar was only symbolic. This was something chosen by her. She wanted his cock, she'd worked for it and now she would have it.

He sunk home in one single push, meeting no resistance.

"Roarke," she sighed, her pussy muscles contracting to conform exactly to his dimensions. How could it be she felt like she'd known him her whole life?

He wasted no time, pumping her hard. The car rocked on its springs, accommodating their animalistic passion. She grabbed at his shoulders with her nails and her teeth. He answered with harder pounding designed to take away the fear, the terrible emptiness of this day, and even this stiflingly hot, politically oppressed country. It was amazing that he had anything left in him, but he could feel it coming, yet one more ejaculation.

"Come...with me," he managed to exhale.

Kimberlee pulled him close, wrapping her legs around him. She wanted to hold him so tight, to feel him so deep. Things made so little sense, but through all of this they'd ended up together, and whatever tomorrow brought, she'd be able to go back to this.

She breathed his scent, suckling his neck. He inhaled her hair. Their hands were greedy, under clothes, desperate to memorize each little detail of the other's body.

His cock swelled just before it was time. This was one of the hundreds of things she'd learned about him. And she treasured every one of them. Lord, how had she managed before him? Her life hadn't seemed empty at the time, but looking back, she saw only gaping holes. Like her pussy – unfilled and needy.

"Now," he cried. "Come now." Roarke had his hands on her tits through the dress, squeezing and pulsing. She pushed her pelvis up to him with a feminine cry, bonding and sealing them. She shook against him, their energies melting together, feverish and panting, clutching and addictive.

Never enough, thought Kimberlee, I'll never get enough.

"Got to...get going," he grunted at last, fighting the urge to just lie here on top of her, in her, forever.

"Roarke...I..."

"Hold on tight." He cut her off, rolling back to the driver's seat. There were sirens behind them. Police, after them most likely.

Kim pulled her dress down as he gunned the engine, cutting straight across the street. Two of the Lavorian patrol cars were forced to slam on their brakes to avoid a direct collision. The US Embassy was directly in front of them, a whitewashed compound behind a large black gate. Kimberlee had never been so happy to see the Stars and Stripes flying in her life.

"Run, Kim." He pulled up sideways in front of the entrance. "Don't look back."

"No," she cried. "I won't leave you. I love you, Roarke!"

"Get out, damn it!" He reached across to open the passenger door. "Stop spewing nonsense."

"You love me, too, I know you do."

"You were a nice diversion," he countered, pushing her out the door. "And that was it. A notch on my belt. Now get out before you become a dead notch."

"Roarke, wait!"

"She's American!" he shouted to the Marine guards rushing up to intercept them.

Kim struggled in their grip even as he was pulling away, speeding down the street. Gunfire was already on his tail from the Lavorians. Accelerating around a corner, he ditched them for the moment. It wouldn't last, though. He was going to have to get to the safe house and from there strike back, while he still had a chance.

Reaching for the cell phone he made a call to the secret agency headquarters. At least Kim was safe now, he thought. He'd hated to leave her like that, but it was the only way. The woman would get over it. A beauty like that—she'd have a million more chances at love.

Could he say the same for himself, though?

The question sat in his stomach like a rock as he connected through to his boss. "This is Roarke," he said gruffly. "I've been compromised. We need to go now. Repeat, we need to go now."

Pushing away all thoughts of the lovely chestnut-haired girl with the laughing eyes and the feisty temper, he returned his concentration to what he knew best. Death. And mayhem.

* * * * *

Kimberlee had been shown to a guest room after her debriefing by the ambassador. He was a tall, thin, dignified man, with a shock of gray hair. With an almost sad expression he'd listened to her entire story from behind his mahogany desk, flanked by two large flags, one for the nation and one for its Department of State, which he represented.

"You are a fortunate young lady," he informed her. "And quite a brave one as well."

He and his assistant, a short pudgy man with a charcoal gray suit, had assured her that they would work to find Maria and that they would continue to lodge protests concerning the conduct of the Laviorian military junta.

When she'd mentioned Roarke, they had grown strangely silent. She could only assume he was as notorious a character as she'd feared. He probably duped young women all the time, just to add to his thrills.

"He said he was trying to save me," she explained, keeping the details of her sexual captivity to herself.

The ambassador cast his pale blue eyes on the assistant, indicating he should speak on his behalf.

"I'm sorry, Miss Breen, there is simply nothing I can help you with in that regard. I hope you understand. We will of course see to your return to the States at the earliest opportunity."

Again the message was clear. He was a criminal and they didn't want to hurt her feelings. "I don't want to go home," she said. "My work is here."

The assistant had been prepared to argue with her, but the ambassador raised a wizened hand. "It's all right, Wilson. Miss Breen may stay with us as long as she likes. We will send word to the relief agency that she is well. Miss Breen, may I suggest a bit of rest for you? You have been through quite an ordeal."

And so she'd been escorted to a room with bamboo furniture, a creaking overhead fan and a pair of potted palms, one in each corner. Barely noticing the décor, she collapsed on the bed and gave in to the tears she'd been holding back the whole time. They came in a hot well. Confusion, anger and hurt all mixed together.

Roarke couldn't have meant the things he'd said. But then he'd never promised anything more, had he? In his own way he'd been entirely consistent. A self-centered pragmatist who'd apparently decided that saving her life could get him some cheap sex for a few days. He'd used her, though in a not entirely despicable way. And hadn't she had the time of her life enjoying the best sex ever? Nobody had asked her to fall in love. Little fool that she was. Had to ruin the game, didn't she?

At some point she must have fallen asleep. It was dark by the time she heard the roar of the guns. Big cannons, or tank shells maybe. There was small arms fire, too, machine guns and the like. Sitting bolt upright, she thought immediately of Edward Roarke. He was out there. Was he all right?

The guards began pounding at her door at once. "Ma'am, we need to get you to a safe room."

Three Marines in full combat gear escorted her from the guest room down the hall. She was taken downstairs to a kind of concrete bunker. The ambassador was already there, in his pajamas and a robe, apparently having been awoken as she had.

"I'm sorry for the disturbance," he apologized. "I'm afraid we aren't the best of hosts."

Kim laughed. "It's all right. I've had worse accommodations."

The ambassador smiled in admiration. "You are indeed an extraordinary woman. Would there were more like you in our country today." Kimberlee blushed.

"I think you are too much the diplomat. I'm not all that special."

"Oh, you are," he countered. "In more ways than one."

Wilson flashed him a look, as though trying to censor something.

"It's no good, Wilson. She has a right to know," the ambassador said. "And I intend to tell her."

"Tell me what?"

He put his hand on her shoulder. "It concerns your Mr. Roarke."

Her blood went cold. So now he was *her* Roarke? "What about him, sir?"

"He is not what he appears to be, Miss Breen. He is not a mercenary or slave trader at all. Actually, he works for an international intelligence agency. He is right now, in fact, involved in an operation all around us to unseat the generals from power."

Kimberlee resisted the urge to faint. This was after all, the twenty-first century and women didn't do that sort of thing anymore. Still, she was stunned. "Why didn't he tell me?"

The answer was obvious, though the ambassador replied nonetheless.

"He wanted to protect you should you fall into enemy hands. Truth be told, he placed himself at great risk to convey you to us."

But did he love her?

"What about now?" she wanted to know. "Is he okay?"

"We won't know —" he shook his head sadly "— until the shooting is over. Frankly, we hadn't expected this sort of action for another few days. We can only assume all is going well."

It was Wilson who spoke next. "He's the best, Miss Breen. If anyone can pull this out, it's Edward Roarke."

Kimberlee's eyes glazed over. She was beyond tears now. "I'll never forgive myself," she whispered. "If anything happens to him."

The ambassador touched her arm. "I for one am not worried for a second. The man has the strongest thing in the world going for him. Something he's never had before in his life."

"What's that?" Kim asked.

"The love of a good woman."

She smiled, a rainbow in the dark. Yes, indeed, he did have that.

* * * * *

Edward Roarke felt the shrapnel ripping into his side. Everything was warm at first, blood running red, but it quickly went cold. He was down in the middle of the courtyard, just a few hundred yards from their objective.

"Go on," he screamed to the others, urging them to leave him behind. "Don't waste the manpower."

The Presidential Palace was about to fall. The last of the generals, holed up inside, were about to meet their just end. All over the country, justice was about to be restored. In a few hours, dawn would rise once more over a free and democratic Lavoria.

It was a shame he wouldn't live to see it.

But that was the price one paid. Sooner or later he'd known it would come to this. He'd had a longer run than most. Racked up his share of victories, survived a few defeats, too. Did he have regrets? Hell, what man didn't? The Man Upstairs would have to sort it out. He'd never claimed to be more than he was. A simple soldier, trying to do the best for his nation, against terrorism.

Soldiers live in order to die. They have to be ready, or else they can't fight. And that's what he needed to do now. Die quietly and let the battle go on. But there was something else eating at him besides the wound of the artillery shrapnel.

A feeling of loss. Something missing. Something he was wanting and wouldn't have. Kimberlee. He wanted Kimberlee. Here with him, to cradle his head as the

lifeblood drained from him. Kimberlee, to hear his last confession, how sorry for all the ways he'd hurt her. Kimberlee, to hear the truth. That he, Edward Roarke, loved her, too, but wasn't cut from the kind of cloth that would ever let him say so anywhere but on his deathbed.

Kim had been the best thing that ever happened to him, with the possible exception of the Army and after it the Agency, saving him from a life on the streets. She'd opened a place in him, deep and pure. She'd made him a man in ways no amount of soldiering ever had. The way she'd fought with him, argued with him, struggled with her body and soul only to yield herself, giving her gorgeous body over to his will.

Taking his collar round her slender throat. Accepting his cock, moaning with need for him, submitting to his chains, writhing under the touch of his hand, the crack of his whip. She'd let him dominate her, she'd trusted him enough knowing he would not truly hurt her.

She had understood him. Truly grasped what he was about.

And he'd never said that to her. Not one single word.

Edward Roarke clenched his teeth in fury. Pushing aside the pain, he did something he had not done since he was a little child. He prayed.

Please, Lord. Let me live. Let me see her. One more time.

Chapter Eight

Kimberlee felt like a schoolgirl on her way to the prom. She'd spent hours on her hair and makeup with the help of the newly freed and quite happy Maria. Not to mention nearly a day in the downtown stores choosing the pale blue dress, simple and modest, cut to the knee. Really, had anyone ever put so much effort into dressing for a visit to a hospital ward before? It all had to be perfect, though, from Kimberlee's nail polish to her choice of perfumes. She might never get another chance like this again. A chance to talk with Roarke, to tell him what was really in her heart, and how no matter what he decided about his life, she would always love him and respect him.

She would always be grateful, too. He needed to know that.

Judging by the above average number of heads she was turning in the corridors of the military hospital, Kimberlee gathered her efforts were not in vain. Actually, she was only being allowed here by the authority of the ambassador. A born romantic, he'd been easily convinced to help her in her errand of mercy.

When she'd first heard Edward was safe, Kimberlee had cried with joy. It was the greatest news she'd ever received in her life. In a little while, though, that ecstasy had turned to a burning need to see him, to touch him, to hold him. Oh, she knew he would never have her. He was far too independent to take a wife, even the kind of sexually submissive wife she knew she could be, but still, she needed that one opportunity.

It would have to last a lifetime. She'd take snapshots in her mind. Of his every word, his every gesture and expression before they parted. The rest of her life, she'd live in the shadow of this, the five or ten minutes she'd get with the man.

Her heart pounded furiously. She was holding daisies. Oh, god, how foolish to get a man flowers. But she loved him so much. The nurse directed her to the room at the end

of the hall. He was out of ICU now, the worst of his wounds under control. In a few days, he'd be able to leave here and return to his life.

Standing in the doorway, she beheld him. For a few precious seconds, she enjoyed the privilege of seeing him before he knew she was there. He looked good reading a paperback book, damned good. Ruddy, not peaked. His hair was combed and glistening. He was bare-chested, a large white gauze bandage taped to his left side. He had a small gash on his cheek, already scabbed over.

The effect of seeing him in the flesh was greater, far greater than she could have imagined. In her mind, she'd worked out her brave little speech, her courageous departure, but now that she was here in his orbit, she doubted seriously that she would be able to leave him ever again. Spurn her he might, but the truth remained.

Kimberlee Breen was no longer a free woman. She had a man, a Master, sitting up in that pristine white hospital bed whose word, whose being was her heart and soul. As if to confirm this, her pussy became instantly wet, her body responding obediently, and thoroughly. Likewise, she felt her nipples stiffen and tighten beneath her dress.

His hands. She focused on his hands. She wanted them on her breasts. On her ass, soft and tender, hard and punishing, doing with her exactly what he wanted.

"Hello, Kimberlee." He looked up at her, his tone smooth, cool and natural.

"Hello, Roarke." Her mouth was hot and dry. The words barely came out.

"Are those for me?" he asked.

She'd nearly forgotten the flowers. "Yes," she nodded. "I...I thought you might like them."

"They're beautiful. But not half as much as you."

She flushed like a teenager. "Thank you."

"We'll need a vase," he observed. "That will take care of the flowers. Of course that won't help me much, will it?"

Kimberlee noted the sudden tenting under the sheet covering his lower half. Her knees went weak. The man was hard for her.

"Any idea what we can do about this?" he asked.

Her breasts rose and fell rapidly. "I'll do whatever you say, Roarke."

He pulled aside the sheet, revealing his proud, full erection. Her mouth watered instantly at the sight of it, the thick veins, the tiny opening at the head, a drop of pre-come already glistening, promising vast gushes to come. She'd never seen him so thick. His balls were so full. It was clear a man like this wasn't meant to go without more than a day or two. What had it been now — four or five days?

"Close the door, Kimberlee. Lock it and take off your dress."

"Yes, Roarke." She put down the flowers with a trembling hand and did as she was told. As the lock clicked shut she felt the butterflies in her stomach. She was his now.

"It's convenient you can shut the doors in hospitals in Lavoria," he observed. "Isn't it?"

She stood before him, unzipping her dress from behind. "Yes," she agreed, pulling it slowly overhead. "It is."

She wore matching pale blue, soft cotton underwear.

"Very pretty," he observed. "Did you wear that just for me?"

Had she? Kimberlee hadn't thought consciously of disrobing for him, but maybe deep down, there'd been some awareness of what could happen, some wish at least.

"Yes," she replied without hesitation.

Roarke touched his cock, the motion of his fingers making her shiver up and down her spine with hot desire. "What did you come here for?" he wanted to know.

Her pulse raced. What, indeed. "To see if you were okay."

He shook his head. "You already knew that."

"To say goodbye, then."

Roarke smiled slantedly. "Half-naked? Talk about leaving a man with an impression."

"I took my dress off because you told me to," she said, a bit cross.

He laughed lightly. "You are so very beautiful when you are angry, do you know that?"

"I'm not here to play games." She crossed her arms over her breasts. "In fact, now that I am actually talking to you, I am remembering everything I didn't like about you."

"Is that right? In that case, let me go for broke and give you a few more things to hate about me." His eyes were flashing, bright as cobalt, alive and playful. "I don't like bubble baths, I don't take romantic walks in the country, I snore, I refuse to give in on any point, ever. I will let a female argue 'til the cows come home, but in the end, I want my woman pliant and obedient in bed, or she'll answer to my hand with her pert little ass. I can't stand tea parties, I get restless as hell staying in one place more than a week at a time and I like whips and chains. But I also happen to love you, Kimberlee Breen. More than life itself. In fact, the only reason I pulled through at all was because I was thinking about you, your gorgeous face, and your incredible spirit. So you can tell me to go to hell, but my offer's on the table. Marry me, Kimberlee. And put me out of my misery."

Kim didn't know whether to laugh or cry. They were words she'd never expected to hear but which she'd dreamed of non-stop since she'd first heard the man was still alive. Could it be real? Should she pinch herself?

"Edward Roarke," she replied, keeping her voice as steady as possible. "You can rest assured, I will fight and argue, and never give an inch...but lucky for you, my ass seems to like punishment. And my body is kind of keen on submitting to your whips and chains, too. Provided we have a good row first."

"I wouldn't have it—or you—any other way," he grinned.

"So...it's official, then?"

"Almost," he acknowledged.

"We need a wedding," she nodded.

"That...and a little relief for my problem."

His erection. His glorious, hard and swollen, life-giving cock. "May I suck it?" she begged. "May I take you down my throat?"

"I'll consider it. But first I want to see your hand down your panties. Tell me how wet you are."

She slid her fingers under the waistband. "Sopping," she whispered.

"Play with yourself," he ordered. "Make it hot."

Kim pressed her clitoris, inducing even more dripping.

"Whose pussy is that?" he asked.

"Yours," she replied with a gasp.

"Yes...mine. And I'll put my cock in it, or lick it or lock it up. I'll make you come when I want...over and over and over."

"Oh, I want that, I do."

He was stroking himself, long and full. "You belong to me, Kimberlee. Say it."

"I'm yours, Roarke. Only yours."

"I will never share you," he vowed. "I'll never give you up. I'll hold you, forever...mark you."

"Oh, god, yes...mark me, Roarke. I want to be your woman."

"My wild filly," he groaned. "Tamed only by me...occasionally."

"Your filly," she agreed. "I like that. Your spirited and wild, occasionally tamed filly."

"Mount me," he panted. "Climb on top of me. I've been dreaming of you, since the moment we parted. Every moment in this hospital. Christ, I've been hiding hard-ons night and day."

"But your wound," she said.

"Do it," he growled. "Or you'll be over my lap for a spanking."

She knew she shouldn't risk his health, but her pussy was too hungry. Tugging down her panties and unhooking her bra, she climbed up on the hospital bed. Her pussy absorbed him easily and smoothly. It was so clear they were made for each other.

He held her by the hips. "Oh, god, Kim. I love you so much."

She lifted herself, creating a slow up and down motion. "I love you, too, Roarke. I guess I did the minute I saw you."

"Opposites attract, huh?"

"Nah. We're not so different."

"Only in the crucial ways." He buried his head between her breasts.

"Yeah," she sighed, her nipples standing at attention, pulsing with life. "You can say that again."

Roarke didn't need to say it again. Not that or anything else. He was too busy now, making love to his woman, helping her to gyrate back and forth, creating a dynamic rocking motion that would bring them both to bliss. His cock swelled inside her, the way it always did just before it was time to climax. This time would be the biggest of all. They could both feel it.

"Oh, yes, baby, that's it. That's what I need." Kimberlee arched her back, increasing the pressure on her clit.

"I'll always have it for you, Kim. As long as I live," Roarke vowed, even as he pushed his shaft in for one final thrust.

"Now," she cried. "Don't make me wait."

"Never..."

No more words were spoken as they exploded together—or, rather—imploded, their bodies falling into each other in pure love and lust. She whimpered with the pleasure, the sheer joy of taking his come inside her. He groaned his satisfaction, telling her over and over about forever.

It sounded good to her right about now. Damned good.

They lay together afterwards in the bed, watching the sunset through the hospital room window. It was a lover's sunset, if ever there was one.

About the author:

Reese Gabriel is a born romantic with a taste for the edgier side of love. Having traveled the world and sampled many of the finer things, Reese now enjoys the greater simplicities; barefoot walks by the ocean, kisses under moonlight and whispers of passion in the darkness with that one special person.

Preferring to remain behind the scenes, cherished by a precious few, Reese hopes to awaken in the lives of many the possibilities of true love through stories of far off places and enchanted lives.

For the sake of love and hope and imagination, these stories are told. May they be enjoyed as much in the reading of them as in the writing.

Reese Gabriel welcomes mail from readers. You can write to Reese c/o Ellora's Cave Publishing at 1337 Commerce Drive, #13, Stow, Ohio 44224.

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