

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

# CARTER'S UFFS

CITY  
HEAT 2

LACEY ALEXANDER

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



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Carter's Cuffs

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*CITY HEAT:*

*CARTER'S CUFFS*

Lacey Alexander

### *Dedication*

The City Heat series is dedicated to my editor, Heather Osborn, and all the great people at Ellora's Cave!

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## Chapter One

"Hey, Sparks. Lookin' good tonight."

Erin Sparks glanced up from the parking lot toward a second-floor balcony to find her sexy-as-sin neighbor, Carter Brooks, giving her a wink. He leaned forward in his patio chair, his arms resting on the railing, his chin perched lazily atop loose fists.

Her pussy spasmed slightly.

Was it because he looked so damn good sitting there with his dark, messy hair and cutoffs, that naughty twinkle in his eye?

Or because of the way *she* looked right now?

She wore a tiny black skirt that barely covered her ass, a tight red halter top that hugged what it didn't reveal of her breasts, and red stripper heels. Her dark hair, which she usually wore straight, fell in voluminous waves around her face and over her shoulders. Her eyes were done smoky with thick eyeliner and mascara, and she'd painted her lips the same color as her top and shoes. She'd just been transferred to the vice squad a month ago and given that she was used to wearing a simple beige police uniform, it was hard not to *feel* how she was dressed right now.

"I'm on my way to work," she explained, holding in her smile. She had no intention of flirting with Carter, no matter how either *one* of them looked.

"Damn. If this is how lady cops dress for work, I might have to start breaking some laws."

His slow, teasing grin melted all through her, and her own snuck out—against her will. "This isn't our usual look, you know."

"It should be," he told her. "You'd have the bad guys chasing *you*."

“Well, tonight, hopefully they will. Not chase me,” she added, a little nervous around him. “But...you know.” They’d discussed her new assignment before—working north of the Vegas Strip, hanging outside a seedy old-time bar while her partner Danny sat nearby in an unmarked car. Two other plainclothes cops would be nearby, too, all waiting to move in for a bust.

“*Proposition* you,” Carter replied.

She nodded, and for some reason her breasts tingled just hearing Carter use the word *proposition* and knowing they were talking about sex.

“I’m still confused by this,” he said then, his expression less teasing and more puzzled. “There are naked chicks parading around on stages all over this town, and signs on every cab and billboard offering female company—but the Vegas P.D. is on a mission to stamp out prostitution?”

She only shrugged. She saw the weirdness in that, too. People came to Las Vegas seeking forbidden pleasures they couldn’t get at home, and the city catered to their fantasies—in every way but one. In the *state* of Nevada, prostitution *was* legal, but in Las Vegas city limits, no. “I don’t make the laws,” she pointed out.

Carter laughed quietly as he gave her another unguarded once-over. “No, you just walk around making it impossible for guys to obey them.”

Another twinge in her panties told her it was time to go. Besides, she didn’t need to let the rest of their neighbors in the condo complex see her parading around looking like, well...like a whore. Even if the way Carter looked at her right now made her feel ready and willing to do her pretend job with him, instead of her real one. She reached for her car door and ignored the urge to give him another smile.

“What if I propositioned you, Sparks?”

She turned back toward him, raising her eyebrows. “With money? Afraid I’d have to haul your ass to jail.” Despite herself, she grinned. She liked him. It was hard *not* to flirt, even if it was in her best interests to hold back.

“I wasn’t planning on offering you money.”

She lowered her chin. "What then?"

He grinned, easy and confident. "Just me, babe. Just me."

She threw her head back in a trill of laughter, pretending her panties weren't becoming more soaked by the second, then finally opened the car door. It was well past time to leave—before she climbed up onto that balcony and attacked him. "See you later, Carter."

"Have a good night, Erin. And hey, go easy on the bad guys. You *gotta* feel sorry for 'em, 'cause you're *extremely* hard to resist, honey."

She'd seldom been as aware of her own body as when she was finally driving away from him. Jeez, that man *did* something to her. Even though she barely knew him.

He lived two doors down from her place, but they'd only exchanged a few pleasantries in the hall until Diana and Marc, whose condo sat between theirs, had invited her to a dinner party—where she'd ended up seated next to Carter.

One mere look into those eyes had left her wanting. Even just brushing her arm against his at the table had been electrifying in a way she could scarcely explain to herself. He simply *moved* her. Deeply. Sexually.

Diana had told her Carter was a great guy, but not overly outgoing—and Erin thought it an apt description from her observations at the dinner. Yet with *her*, he'd whispered little jokes and flirted mercilessly the whole evening. He'd asked her out twice since then, but each time she'd turned him down, claiming her job kept her too busy and that she didn't want to see anyone right now.

"Aw, come on, Sparks," he'd said after her last refusal, his green gaze sparkling in the sun as he flashed a playful smile. "Throw a guy a bone."

He'd been outside at the time, running an electric edger along a walkway near the condo pool. He worked in construction, building the large hotel-casinos that sprang up one after another on Las Vegas Boulevard, but he also did some maintenance at the condos. Wearing a t-shirt with the sleeves ripped out, long cargo shorts tattered on the

edges, and a pair of dirty work boots with the laces undone, he *shouldn't* have been sexy. But he *had* been. Big, messy, rugged, sweaty – and brutally, almost *painfully* sexy.

Turning him down had been agonizing—but she'd stuck to her guns. "Sorry, Carter," she'd said, trying to sound casual and carefree as she whisked toward her car—that day wearing her beige police uniform, her hair pulled back into a low ponytail. "No bones to spare."

But in reality, she wanted to *jump* his bones. She wanted to release her inhibitions and do things with him she'd never even thought about before.

She had no idea why she felt such a strong pull toward him. Could it be because of what Diana had told her over too many margaritas one night not too long after the dinner party—that early in her relationship with Marc, they'd shared a spectacular three-way with Carter? Did knowing he was that wild and that comfortable with himself and his sexuality increase her arousal for him? Or was it simpler than that? Was it his eyes? His body? His dark, tousled hair and the dark stubble on his chin? Was this just chemistry—the most powerful chemistry she'd ever experienced with a guy?

As she drove toward the downtown bureau to meet Danny, she let out a sigh. The fact was, it didn't really matter *why* she felt such heady attraction to Carter—she still couldn't act on it.

\* \* \* \* \*

A little while later, she sat in the passenger seat of an old Nissan Sentra—light blue with a dented fender—that blended in on any city street. No one would suspect the guy behind the wheel was a plainclothes cop. Next to her, Danny maneuvered the car toward the Desert Oasis, which had probably been in its heyday about the time Frank and Sammy and the rest of the Rat Pack had been appearing nightly at the Sands.

"Explain this to me again," Danny said. Hispanic and a bit older than her, in his mid-thirties, Danny was happily married with kids. They'd grown close, as police partners often did, so it wasn't unusual for her to share personal matters with him.



"You won't go out with the guy because you like him too much? Help me out here, Sparks – that doesn't make any sense."

She scowled at him from beneath her heavily made-up eyes. "You know how I feel about getting into a serious relationship."

Danny only gave his head a tired shake, which annoyed the hell out of her. "Well, don't come crying to me when you end up old and alone."

"I won't. Because as long as I'm a cop, *that's* what my life is about." Erin's father had been a Las Vegas cop, too. He'd died in the line of duty when Erin was fifteen – exactly half her life ago – shot during a response to a domestic violence call.

It had happened when her mother was ill – battling breast cancer – and the whole family had been stressed. Now her mother had long since beaten the cancer, but at the time it had torn her father apart. He'd tried to put on a strong face for both Erin and her mom, but Erin had seen how he'd suffered. And she'd also known that, because of it, he hadn't been focused on his work – he'd made a couple of mistakes on the job. She'd heard him talking on the phone about it to a friend when he didn't realize she was listening.

No one had ever said it, but Erin knew his worry over her mother had contributed to his death. He simply hadn't been at the top of his game. And a cop on the streets *had* to be at the top of his or her game – that simple.

Still, she'd admired her father immensely. She'd always understood from early childhood that he risked his life every day – but that he saw each and every moment up until then as a chance to help people in trouble. So Erin had followed in her father's footsteps without a shred of doubt that she wanted to live the same way – contributing something, doing a job that mattered. And even if standing on Las Vegas Boulevard shaking her ass at potential "johns" didn't exactly feel like a worthwhile contribution, she knew it was. Just as her previous patrol work had been, and just as the work she'd done with kids – taking the D.A.R.E. program into schools – had been worthwhile, too.

And if she kept at it long enough and did enough good work, someday she'd be promoted to detective and get to solve more serious crimes. After her father's violent death, it had become her passion in life not only to help others, but to help people find answers—families of murder victims and those suffering other kinds of loss. When and if she made detective, she hoped to make an even bigger difference.

So the work mattered. But the work required, for her at least, never letting herself become vulnerable, staying in control of herself and her emotions at all times.

So sure, she dated casually on occasion—and it met certain needs, for companionship, sex. But she would never let herself become so attached to someone that it would make her needy. She was a strong, tough cop, but she knew that inside her still lurked an emotional little girl. Falling in love with somebody, letting herself sink that deep into her heart, into her *feelings*, would only weaken her as a police officer. And a Las Vegas cop simply couldn't afford to risk losing her edge.

"You're a serious control freak," Danny told her as he pulled to the curb half a block from the bar. She spotted their backups already in position. Carl was reading the newspaper in an ancient brown Ford station wagon, and Bobby was dressed raggedly, pretending to be asleep on a bench across the street.

"But the difference between me and most control freaks," Erin pointed out, "is that I'm not trying to control anything but myself, my life. So it doesn't hurt anybody."

"Nope, nobody but you," he agreed. "Here you want to go out with this guy, but you won't. That's crazy, Erin."

She shrugged but felt a bit desolate. Normally, her "no relationships" way of life worked fine. She hadn't had a serious boyfriend since she'd joined the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department at the age of twenty-four. Six years later, she was content with her existence, liked living alone with her cat Columbo, and if she needed someone to lean on, she had her friends, her mom, or Danny. But damn it, something about this attraction to Carter was harder to fight—and making her feel lonely for the

first time since she'd given up "attachments" to the opposite sex. "Maybe," she conceded to Danny. "But you know about my dad."

"I know your *theory* about your dad. And I know the guy had a fuller life than *you*, because his job was only one part of it. Just like me, he had a family he loved. And I'm betting when all was said and done, if you'd asked him which meant more to him—the family or the badge—he'd have chosen you and your mom without even blinking."

Erin sighed. She loved Danny, but she hated when he lectured her. Then again, she'd brought this up herself so it was her own fault. "I'm hitting the street," she said, ready to end the conversation.

"We got your back, babe, but be careful out there."

She nodded, then exited the car and once more felt the full measure of how she was dressed, how much of her body was on display as she sashayed up the lightly littered sidewalk toward the streetlamp she would lean against, licking her lips when guys slowed down to stare and maybe consider making her an offer.

Darkness had just fallen over Sin City and Erin's cunt still ached for attention. She'd thought talking with Danny had distracted her from her arousal, but now that she was by herself again, more able to think, more able to feel, she couldn't believe how turned on she remained after her conversation with Carter an hour ago. Glancing down, she wasn't surprised to see her nipples erect and jutting through her tight top. God, she hoped Danny hadn't noticed. They rubbed against the thin fabric when she shifted from one foot to the other and she found herself wishing she could touch herself.

For the first time, it occurred to her that maybe this assignment was the wrong one for a girl who didn't get a lot of action between the sheets. It had been six months since she'd last gotten laid—by a nice guy she'd met at the Mandalay Bay blackjack tables during a girl's night out. A nice guy, but she'd known immediately there was no risk of her heart getting involved, so it had been safe to have a short affair with him—four dates, three of them ending in his bed. Now lust for Carter Brooks hammered at her, and every sensitive part of her body was encased by snug fabric that created an utterly

delicious and agonizing friction with each move she made. And sure, she had a vibrator and she knew how to use it, but it just wasn't the same as a real man.

Just then, a slow-moving sedan beeped, making her look up. Inside were four guys around her age who had bachelor party written all over them. They waved, and she winked, as sexy as she could, then sensually licked her upper lip. The guys appeared transfixed – but then passed on by, and she was glad. Each time she made a vice bust it saddened her on some level – wondering if the guy was married and cheating, or just so lonely and desperate that he was willing to pay for it. Of course, in this town, she knew hiring a hooker was sometimes about the thrill of it, the forbidden allure, but sex *that* casual, *that* meaningless, just didn't turn her on no matter how she looked at it.

Unless...Carter had been in that car. If she were really a hooker, and Carter wanted to pay for her services...well, she didn't like to admit it, but *that* would turn her on. Completely.

She sighed, imagining him pulling up to the curb, asking her how much – telling her she was worth any amount, priceless. She envisioned her breasts in his large, work-roughened hands, how she would arch them deeper into his palms, wanting him to push the fabric aside so that they'd be flesh to flesh – her bared breasts, his warm touch.

Oh God, if her pussy had been hot before, now it was on fire. And the sad truth was, she suddenly didn't know how she was going to stand here all night, feeling sexual, looking sexual, acting sexual, without *being* sexual.

Glancing toward Danny, she hiked a thumb over her shoulder toward the bar. The signal meant she had to use the restroom and was going in. He hated that, because it was dangerous for her to be out of sight, especially in a dive like this, masquerading as a streetwalker – so she tried to avoid it. But this, right now, wasn't really about going to the bathroom, and it wasn't something she could avoid. It was a need that had come on fast and furious.

Pushing through the door, she felt the eyes fall on her – men of all ages glancing up from the bar or from the pool table in the corner, all devouring her with their hungry

stares. She ignored the whistle that echoed over the loud rock music and—God help her—enjoyed the attention, enjoyed being wanted in such a dirty way. She could have sworn her nipples got harder and her cunt flooded heavier with each step she took through the shadowy room. Her thighs ached, and her pussy felt huge, swollen with excitement.

When finally she reached the door marked Ladies, she wasted no time going in, locking it tight, then turning to lean back against it. Finally, privacy. She didn't hesitate to lift her hands to the roundness of her breasts, squeezing, molding. And pretending. That they were Carter's hands.

She shut her eyes, imagining he was there with her, all tall and broad and commanding. She wondered how big his cock was, and imagined it pressing rock-hard at the front of her mound. Trying like hell to be quiet—she was wearing a wire and didn't want the guys on the street to know she was doing anything besides peeing—she sighed as she dipped one hand under the sinfully short skirt and between her legs.

She'd worn a thin, red mesh thong—no one would see it, of course, but if she was going to dress the part, she was going to go all the way. Now she was glad for the choice, because it was cool and light and clingy and let her feel her own touch better than if she'd selected cotton.

Oh God, she was wet—just as wet as she'd suspected. She ran three fingers deep through the furrow of her cunt. She'd been right about how swollen she was—her pussy felt enormous, and she released a small moan. *Shit, be quiet.* Reaching down to the sink next to the door, she turned on the faucet so the sound would cover any other noises she couldn't hold in.

Next, she stroked her middle fingertip over her clit. Not gently, but hard and rhythmic, as her body dictated. She spread her legs as wide as she could, still leaning against the door. Her other hand still massaged one breast. The guys outside were totally forgotten, that quickly. *Touch me, Carter, touch me.*

She'd never done anything like this before—never masturbated outside her own home. She'd never needed to. But her lust for Carter was clearly driving her to new highs—or lows, depending on how she looked at it. Either way, it was overwhelming.

Needing freer access to her clit, she found herself lifting one red platform shoe up on the old porcelain sink. Then she rubbed harder through the red mesh. *God, yes. Touch me, baby.*

That's when she caught sight of herself in the old pockmarked mirror.

Jesus, she made an obscene vision. And under normal circumstances, that might have bothered her, but right now it only added to her wild arousal. Carter wasn't the only one who could go to sexual extremes.

What would he think if he could see her like this—touching herself, thinking of him? She bit her lip, knowing the answer instinctively. He would *love* it. She didn't know him well, but she already understood him on a sexual level, and she *knew* he would go instantly hard if he could see her now.

Feeling even bolder and more hedonistic, Erin pulled her mesh thong aside until she saw her pussy in the mirror—pink and open and glistening wetly. Oh Lord. She didn't hesitate to stroke her fingers through the moisture, thinking, *God, Carter, I want you.* She wanted him in any way she could have him—watching her, touching her, she didn't even care. She just needed to connect with him in some carnal fashion.

She whimpered softly as she refocused her touches on her clit, rubbing in deep circles at first and then moving her first two fingers over it more frantically, frenetically, more like a vibrator would. God. Oh God.

She looked in the mirror, at her body on display—her pussy revealed—but she imagined that it was her man watching her as she edged closer, closer, to blessed release. What she saw she pretended *he* saw. He watched her work her own pussy. He saw how badly she needed to come. He saw what a dirty, dirty girl she could be.

And then it happened—the orgasm rocking her almost violently. She had to let go of her breast to grip the sink and keep from falling down. *Yes, yes, yes!*

Oh God.

She couldn't remember ever coming so very hard.

And she was in the bathroom of a seedy bar. By herself. On the job.

Sheesh. Not exactly her usual way of getting off.

Letting out a deep, calming breath, Erin put her clothes back in place and washed her hands in the already streaming water. How long had that taken? Two minutes? Ten? She had no idea how long she'd been inside. God, she hoped Danny or one of the other two guys didn't come storming in thinking something bad had happened.

With that in mind, she hurried from the bathroom, this time ignoring the stares of the patrons as she made her way back out into the warm Vegas night. She found Danny still sitting in the car and waved. Seeing his sigh of relief, she was sorry she'd worried him. And thankful he apparently had no idea *why* she'd worried him.

Taking her spot back by the lamppost, Erin's thoughts returned to Carter. More specifically, to what Carter had just made her do.

The fact was, it *had* been dangerous to go into that bar by herself without really needing to. Stupid, in fact.

*This is what happens when you don't stay focused, when you lose your edge.* It was a minor mistake, but a mistake just the same. A feeling of cold dread washed over her as she thought of her dad.

Clearly, she was going to have to do something to fix this situation, get back in control of herself.

"Woohoo!" The catcall came from a passing limo—more bachelor party boys—but they drove on by.

Yet even now, their attention made her breasts feel heavy, still needy—or needy *again*. Already? She was already aroused after just coming? This was getting ridiculous.

*I'm gonna have to have sex with Carter.*

She didn't see any way around it, any other way to slake her needs.

And yet...she wasn't ready to surrender to him *completely*. Far from it.

Letting herself fall for the guy—which she already knew could happen very easily—would be just as bad as her present situation, just as dangerous.

So maybe she could find a way to make it seem...totally impersonal, just like naughty fun, nothing more.

It shouldn't be difficult. After all, his come-ons were all about sex. And given what she knew about that three-way he'd had with Diana and Marc, he was obviously into wild, no-strings-attached bed sports. In fact, for all she knew, that was all *he* wanted, too—just sex.

What if...

What if...she orchestrated her own dirty little ménage a trois? What if...she took precautions, safeguards, to ensure she'd be in complete control of the whole event? What if she even devised a way to make sure she could make a clean getaway afterward, so that he'd know this was just about fucking and not about seeing each other or dating or getting emotionally involved?

She released a small sigh, then looked up as a late model Porsche slowly trolled the boulevard, approaching the Desert Oasis.

Maybe she could do it, she thought, her pussy tingling softly once more. Maybe she could arrange one wild, no-holds-barred night of hedonistic sex with Carter—and they'd both be satisfied once and for all.

Just then, the silver Porsche eased to the curb. The electric window descended smoothly and a handsome, older man in an expensive-looking suit leaned across the passenger seat. "How much for an hour, honey? And I want it all."

"All? Sweetie, you gotta be more specific." She had to make him indicate it was definitely sex they were negotiating.

"A blowjob and a fuck. Nothing too kinky," he added with a wink.



"Three hundred," she said. She normally pretended to work cheaper given that she wasn't exactly painting herself as a high-class call girl here, but she knew this guy could afford it and it might seem suspicious if she didn't demand a decent amount.

"Get in."

"Do we have a deal?" She had to get him to agree before she could make a bust. She knew to go by the book or this rich guy's lawyer might be able to weasel him out of it.

"Sure, honey," he replied. "Now come on, I don't have all night."

That was it. Car doors opened, and the "bum" across the street jumped to his feet, all of them closing in quickly, reaching for their badges. Erin whipped her own from the waistband of her skirt, flipping it open. "Sure you do. I'm afraid you're under arrest."

## Chapter Two

"Something for the birthday boy," a pretty voice said, and Carter looked up to see a blonde waitress making her way through the crowd to place a big piece of chocolate cake in front of him, complete with a burning candle. "Make a wish," she said.

*I wish the real fun would start,* he thought glumly, then blew out the damn candle.

His group of friends, along with the waitress, clapped softly, and Diana sat down next to him, sliding her arm around his shoulder. "What'd you wish for?"

He gave her a sarcastic grin. "That I'll get something better than a piece of cake for my birthday."

"There's more coming," she promised, eyes gleaming knowingly.

"You'd better hope there is."

Diana had arranged the get-together for his thirty-third birthday, promising him a "very special surprise". So far they'd had dinner at Stefano's on Fremont Street, then headed to the strip, where they'd done some light gambling at The Flamingo and The Mirage. Now they'd moved on to a Caesars Palace nightclub, Cleopatra's Barge. Shaped like a large boat, patrons had to cross a small, roped bridge to get inside. All perfectly fine activities—but Diana had made his "very special surprise" sound distinctly dirty, in a good way.

So at the very least he was expecting a stripper—but it was getting late and he was beginning to worry that Diana's historic penchant for naughty fun was changing. First, she and Marc had thrown that completely sedate dinner party last month, and now this—a night on the strip with nothing risqué in the mix?

"You're getting way too tame since you two got married," he told her, but she only smiled—flashing an expression that didn't look tame at all.

"Just because I'm only my nasty little self with Marc now doesn't mean I've forgotten how to have fun." As usual, Diana was dressed to kill in a short, sexy cocktail dress, her silky brown hair cascading down her back and over her shoulders. The look in her eye almost made Carter believe her, but...

"Then where's my Nurse Goodbody? And why didn't we go to a strip club?"

"Whoa—down, boy," she said with a laugh. "Since when are you so...on the prowl?"

Admittedly, this wasn't his usual demeanor. He lusted for women and loved sex as much as the next guy, and the night he'd spent with Diana and Marc when Diana had first come to town was the most intense erotic experience he'd ever had—but he didn't usually sit around begging for sex and Diana knew him well enough to know it.

"It's Erin," he said without weighing his words. He hadn't even admitted that to himself before right now, but he understood, in an instant, that it was his unrequited attraction to Erin making him so damn horny.

"Erin, huh?" she said with a cute little grin. He trusted Diana and had confided to her how drawn he'd been to their neighbor ever since the dinner party.

He shook his head. "I can't get her off my mind. I don't know what it is—but I've got it bad. And she's just not interested. So I get the torture of watching her head off to work wearing her skimpy hooker clothes, but none of the rewards." The truth was, he wasn't used to women turning him down, so Erin's rejection had come as a blow in multiple ways.

"Poor baby," Diana said, sounding sincere but still smiling. She lifted a kiss to his forehead. "Don't worry—before the night is over, you'll feel *all* better."

He was so horny that his cock perked to life just from the promise, and from the feel of Diana's soft, feminine arm around his shoulder.

"Hey, sweetheart, they're playing our song!"

Carter looked up to see his buddy Marc, plainly intoxicated as he drew Diana to her feet. "Sorry to steal her away, dude," he said, "but I want to dance with my woman."

Carter just laughed, because only alcohol could make Marc dance, and he had a feeling *any* song would be *their* song right now.

But as Diana slipped her hand into Marc's, Carter suffered a pang of jealousy. Not about Diana, but about how damn happy they were. He'd never met two people better suited for each other, and since Diana had come into Marc's life, Marc seemed at once more energized yet content, always wearing a smile.

And given that Carter had turned thirty-three today, the idea of settling down didn't sound bad to him. The truth was, he'd trade twenty Nurse Goodbodies for a nice, settled life with the right woman. He couldn't help envying what his friends had.

That's when he realized *all* his friends had taken to the dance floor. Maybe he was the only one not yet drunk enough. With that thought in mind, he took a swig from his beer bottle and sank his fork into his cake. *Happy-fucking-birthday to me.*

"Hey, Carter—come dance!"

Glancing up, he found Lena, a redhead, and Holly, a blonde—both girlfriends of Diana's whom he'd gotten to know socially. He'd made out with Holly last Fourth of July after they'd all watched the fireworks together at Desert Breeze Park, but it hadn't gone any further. She was cute and a lot of fun, but a little silly for his taste. Not that he needed a genius, but...hell, he guessed he *was* looking for a girlfriend, someone he really wanted to spend time with, in *and* out of bed.

Yet as Carter found himself letting Lena and Holly draw him up out of his chair toward the dance floor, he decided that maybe tonight things *would* go somewhere with Holly. Or maybe Lena, who Diana'd met in her spinning class and had predictably great legs, which she was showing off in a short leather skirt. Yep, maybe he'd just get out on the dance floor, drink his beer, have some fun and see what happened.

And that plan might actually have worked if he hadn't been thinking so damn much about Erin and her naughty hooker outfit.

Where was a cop when you needed one?

\* \* \* \* \*

Twenty minutes later, Carter was almost having a good time. Beer helped—and he'd just finished another. Something by Shakira blasted over the speakers, and though it wasn't his usual taste in music, he still swayed back and forth, the middle part of a sandwich formed with Holly in front and Lena in back. He still wished Erin was there, that it was *her* breasts rubbing so suggestively against his chest, but he was trying to make the best of it.

Diana and Marc danced next to them, and when Diana caught his eye, she leaned over to yell in his ear over the music, "Happy birthday, baby!"

And that was when it hit him. Holly and Lena. The sandwich. That was Diana's birthday surprise for him.

*Shit.* He couldn't help being disappointed.

On the other hand, though, what was he expecting? And who was he to complain? They might not be Erin, but Diana wasn't a miracle worker. And just a little while ago, he'd been hoping for a naughty Nurse Goodbody—and two ready-and-willing girls could be a lot more fun than a five-minute dance from a stripper.

"Hey, what's going on?" someone suddenly murmured behind him.

"Cops!" Holly gasped just then.

And Carter forgot all about his birthday present as he turned to see two officers making their way through the crowd onto the dance floor. Both of them women, he realized. "Sir, I'm afraid you'll have to come with us," said the blonde, fair-complexioned one.

He was just about to grasp that she was talking to *him*—when he recognized the other. "Erin?" he asked, taken aback.

She didn't answer—just peered up at him, her brown eyes wide and luminous, her dark hair tucked up under her hat. "What the—" he began, but the other policewoman cut him off.

"Hands behind your back, sir." The blonde cop was physically turning him around, reaching for his wrists.

And he was confused as hell. "What *is* this? What are you doing?" By now, everyone around them had stopped dancing and stood waiting to see what would happen.

"We're placing you under arrest," Erin said, her voice bolder than he'd heard it before. *Must be her cop voice*, he thought—but why the hell was she using it on *him*, and did she just say he was under freaking *arrest*?

"*What?*" He looked Erin in the eye.

"You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law." Erin continued with the Miranda rights and he heard the click of handcuffs around his wrists just as he felt the cool steel binding his hands behind his back.

As the two women began to usher him off the floor, Shakira still shrieking in the background, Carter couldn't think straight. Erin was arresting him? What had he done wrong? What law had he broken?

He looked up at Diana to see her mouth the words: *Don't worry—it'll be all right*. And Marc—*Marc* was fucking *laughing*! Given the beer Carter had consumed throughout the evening and the fact that he was good and drunk now, the whole thing felt impossible and surreal.

He stayed quiet, trying to wrap his intoxicated mind around it, until they'd woven through the crowd in the club and exited across the wooden bridge into a wide hall that connected two casinos. His "police escorts" turned him to the right, toward the main casino and registration desk. People stared.

"What's going on?" he asked, the club's music fading behind him. "What the hell am I being charged with?"

"Drunk and disorderly conduct," the blonde answered. They each had him by one arm, but given their hats, it was hard to see their eyes when he looked down at them now.

"When?" he asked, dumbfounded. "When the hell was I drunk and disorderly?"

An old couple passing by them scowled, apparently thinking he was a difficult prisoner.

"I think it's fair to say you're drunk right now," Erin said.

*Erin. His sweet, sexy neighbor.* He still couldn't believe this.

"And growing more disorderly by the second," added the blonde.

They brought him to a halt at a bank of lavish elevators and Erin pushed the up button. It didn't even hit him how weird that was until the doors opened and they led him inside. When a young family started to follow, the blonde held up her hand to stop them. "Police business, folks. We're making an apprehension here. Sorry." And the doors closed behind them.

"Where are we going? Since when does Caesars Palace have a police station?"

"Special outpost," Erin answered.

*Special outpost?* "Get real," he snapped.

"Oh this is very real, sir," the blonde said. "And we'll thank you to calm down and watch your tone."

Carter had never felt so bewildered in his life. And as the elevator opened a moment later and the two lady cops led him into a plush hallway, it occurred to him that he could easily overpower them and get away. But how far could he get with his hands behind his back? And now that he thought about it, Erin had mentioned knowing karate—and they *did* both have holsters at their hips.

"I don't understand," he said simply, at a loss as they guided him down the hallway lined with doors. "What is this about, Erin?" Again, he tried to look at her, but her hat shaded her face from his gaze.

This time no one answered, but the blonde cop drew a card key from her pocket and slipped it in the lock on the door they'd just halted in front of. When the little entry light flashed green, she pushed it open and they led him inside to a standard guestroom. King-size bed with a cherry headboard, large matching TV cabinet, table and chairs, and a small sofa near the window.

Guiding him to one side of the bed, they pushed him down until he was sitting on it. He'd quit asking questions since no one was giving him any real answers, and just waited to see what would happen next.

He couldn't have been more stunned when Erin walked toward the window, then turned back to face him, whipping her hat from her head to say, "Happy birthday, Carter," her voice turning silky, sexy.

He squinted. "Huh?"

She smiled bashfully, biting her lower lip, and now those big brown eyes looked...completely inviting. Especially when she reached for the top button on her uniform and gave a hard yank with both hands, opening her shirt to the waist.

"Oh," he said, blood rushing to his cock as all the puzzle pieces started falling into place. Man, he'd been stupid. And slow. He could only blame it on the beer. And her abject refusals when he'd asked her out. "You're not arresting me."

She shook her head, but it was suddenly hard to keep his eyes there because they kept dropping to what he could see of her bra—a lacy mix of lavender and blue—and the beautiful curves of her ample cleavage. "No," she said softly. "We're *seducing* you."

He shifted his glance to the blonde, who'd just tossed her own hat aside to send sexy, wavy tresses falling just past her shoulders, and who was, he'd just realized, a gorgeous girl. Then he looked back to Erin. "We?"

Lowering her chin provocatively, she gave a short but deliberate nod.



"Oh," he said again, and his cock got a lot harder, fast.

"This is Melanie," Erin said.

He looked back to the blonde once more. "Hi, Melanie."

"Nice to meet you, Carter," she replied with a suggestive smile. "Now just lie back, relax and let us do all the work."

Uh-huh, yeah, he could do that. He couldn't quite believe this was happening — that Erin was about to have her way with him and that she'd actually brought a friend along to help — but he wasn't going to argue.

Following Melanie's instructions, he eased back on the bed — only to find his hands trapped behind him. Damn, he'd gotten so excited that he'd actually forgotten about the handcuffs. He sat back up. "Uh, about these cuffs, could we, uh..."

"Yeah, about those cuffs," Erin said, then came to the bed, slid a small key from her holster, and a second later, one wrist came free. He instantly drew his arms around to his sides, ready to reach for her and get this party started — but just as quickly, her small fists closed over his hands, lifting them over his head as she urged him to his back again. Gazing up at the large, beautiful breasts curving from the bra beneath her open shirt, he let himself follow her lead, okay with the idea of surrender now. And only when he felt the cuff come back around his wrist with a snap did he look over his head to see she'd chained him to one of the tall cherry bedposts.

"Oh," he said. More fun with handcuffs. He'd never played that way before, and immediately realized he wasn't all that comfortable being confined. But on the other hand, he could be open-minded, and it was easy enough to go with the flow. Hell, his cock strained behind his zipper, so he must not mind being restrained *too* much. And if Erin and her friend wanted to have a three-way with him, he wasn't gonna nitpick over the details. Nope, he was gonna do exactly what Melanie had said — lie back, relax and enjoy.

Every nerve ending in Erin's body prickled with the reality of what she'd put into play here. She'd never really seduced a man before, and she'd *certainly* never taken part

in a threesome, so she was a little nervous. But now that the plan had actually worked, now that they had him in the room and the seduction had begun, she was equally as turned on, her pussy warm with anticipation.

The idea had hit her a week ago, that night at the Desert Oasis when she'd been so dangerously aroused because of Carter. And Melanie was the perfect partner. New to the force, she and Erin had become fast friends and Melanie had happily shared her many sexual exploits since coming to town. She'd moved to Sin City from Peoria, Illinois, seeking some excitement while she was still young enough to enjoy it, she'd told Erin. When Erin had shyly shared her idea for Carter's birthday present, Melanie had agreed, without even having seen him.

But now it was hitting her what she'd started. She'd never so much as kissed Carter, let alone fucked him, and she'd never seen her friend naked and having sex, either – and she was about to get a big dose of both.

So she had to push her nerves aside and concentrate on how hot he looked, cuffed to the bed – where she could control this whole encounter. And on how her whole body was aching with the most reckless desire she'd ever experienced. Melanie had promised to follow her lead, and now...she had to *take* that lead.

*Just pretend you're working. Get into your hooker mindset.*

*Don't feel anything for this guy, because you can't.*

*Feel only sex. Sex, sex, sex.*

*Feel it. Be it. Be his perfect seductress, for this one night only.*

*Blow his fucking mind.*

With those thoughts fueling her, and Carter's eyes possessing her, she met his gaze, ran her palms slowly up over her lace-bound breasts, and slipped her shirt off her shoulders, letting it fall behind her.

Then she turned to Melanie and curled one finger toward her, beckoning her closer. When Melanie stood directly in front of her, Erin took a deep breath then reached between her friend's breasts to begin unbuttoning *her* shirt.

She hadn't contemplated how strange it would feel to undress another woman—they'd simply decided they would help each other, thinking it would arouse him—but a tingling sensation rippled up her arms and down into her chest as she parted Melanie's uniform to reveal a push-up bra of peach lace. Melanie's breasts were not as large as her own, but as they swelled from the cups, Erin suffered the shocking desire to see what they looked like without the bra.

Meeting Melanie's gaze only briefly, Erin pushed her friend's shirt off—then watched as Melanie reached for Erin's belt buckle.

Erin's stomach contracted with arousal. She looked down at Melanie's feminine, French-manicured fingers as she carefully removed Erin's holster, setting it aside, then unzipped her pants, her touch just barely skimming Erin's mound.

Erin pulled in her breath, then glanced to Carter, whose eyes were riveted on both bodies. "That's so nice, girls," he said, his voice deep, hungry.

That's when his eyes met hers, just for half a second, before she looked away. No eye contact—she couldn't handle that; it made her feel too connected to him. She could look at Melanie, or she could look at his body, or she could even look at her own—but she couldn't meet Carter's gaze while they fucked him.

"Keep going," he said, and as Erin responded by undoing Melanie's holster, she realized she'd just followed his command—which troubled her a little. *She* wanted control here—*full* control.

Which meant that she had to *take* it. Really *take* it. Really show him that she was the one calling the shots, running this seduction, and that they would do things *her* way.

She reached once more down to Melanie's waistband, this time unzipping her friend's pants, her skin tingling madly upon realizing where her hands were, stimulated by the mere fact that they were unclothing each other.

Both pairs of pants dropped to the carpet in a rush. Under hers, Erin wore a lace thong that matched her bra. Melanie's boy-cut lace panties hugged her round ass and coordinated with her bra as well.

“Mmm...” Carter moaned at the sight of them, and as both girls stepped smoothly out of their pants and kicked off socks and shoes, Erin couldn’t help thinking it seemed more exciting to reveal the lace beneath their plain, utilitarian cop’s uniforms than if they’d both been wearing dresses and heels. It was like stripping away their tough exterior to reveal the femininity hiding inside. She wondered if Carter felt that, too—felt them becoming softer, more womanly for him with each move they made.

They still stood facing each other when Melanie let her palms glide up Erin’s arms to tenderly brace her shoulders, then leaned in to gently kiss her.

Erin couldn’t have been more stunned by the soft meeting of lips—but given that Carter was watching, and that this was supposed to be sex in its most illicit form, her cunt pulsed. She tried to hide her surprise as she took in Melanie’s soft, sexy smile.

*Stay in control by taking control.*

Her body’s response to her friend’s kiss spurred Erin to resume being the bold one, so she reached up to slide her thumbs beneath Melanie’s bra straps, sensually drawing them from her shoulders.

The peach lace cups drooped to reveal pale, medium-sized breasts, the pink nipples upturned. Erin pulled in her breath, so close to them, her curiosity fulfilled—they were undeniably pretty.

So with a quick glance at Carter, who looked consumed with lust and strangely erotic—even fully dressed—because of the way he was cuffed to the bed, she decided not to stop there. Sliding her hands to the inviting curves of Melanie’s waist, she began to push down her peach panties. Melanie wriggled her hips lightly to help, and her breasts jiggled, too. More hot blood shot to Erin’s pussy, her arousal growing as any remaining nervousness faded, and she felt herself headed to that point of no return, the one she’d reached that night outside the bar.

As she eased the boy-cut panties over Melanie’s ass, she glanced down and caught sight of her friend’s cunt—shaved completely bare. She softly pulled in her breath, not

having expected to see Melanie's slit so very on display. She herself kept her pussy well-trimmed, but it had never occurred to her to "take it all off", so to speak.

She lifted her gaze to find Melanie casting her a sensual little grin—which was when it dawned on her that both her companions had seen her studying Melanie's mound. The knowledge aroused her, and she whispered to Melanie, "Me now." It was Mel's turn to undress *her*.

"Turn around," Melanie said softly. "Face Carter." And, stepping free from the peach lace, she situated herself behind Erin—which left Erin nothing to look at besides the sexy man on the bed. Again, she met his eyes briefly, accidentally, but then shifted her focus to the large bulge at the front of his jeans. Yes, that was a much better place for her gaze. And it made her breasts heave with wanting more of him—very, very soon.

Melanie's hands eased slowly around from behind to splay over Erin's bare stomach, then moved upward, upward, just barely skimming her breasts before settling back on her shoulders.

Lord, she was *too* excited. Merely from Melanie's touches. And Carter's presence. She couldn't wait much longer to go further, get more—of him and the big, hard cock hiding behind that zipper. She kept her gaze there, wanting, wanting—and avoiding his handsome face.

She expected Melanie to lower *her* bra straps now, so it caught her off guard when her friend instead curled her fingers into the lace cups and pulled them down, letting Erin's breasts tumble out.

She gasped at the sensation of them spilling free, and Carter moaned.

Melanie rubbed against her from behind, ever so softly—she could feel the tips of Melanie's breasts at her back, Melanie's hips at her ass. A deep sigh escaped her at the intimate contact.

"That's so hot," Carter growled from the bed.

Oh *yeah*, it was hot—burning Erin up from the inside out. Touches from Melanie were something she'd never considered, even after they'd concocted this plan. But now she wanted them, craved them. Because Carter *couldn't* touch her. But he could *watch* her be touched—and to her surprise, at the moment that felt like the next best thing.

Melanie's palms splayed back across Erin's stomach, gently caressing, and when Melanie's kiss came on her shoulder, she instinctively tilted her head so the gentle female ministrations could move up her neck, delivering scintillating tingles that echoed all through her. She watched Carter's face the whole time—saw the heat in his warm green eyes, the way his darkly stubbled jaw had gone slack.

Which is when she realized she was breaking her own rule again, looking at him.

So she drew her gaze away once more and instead peered down—at her bared breasts, on display for him, at Melanie's long, tapered fingers stretching across her torso. When the fingertips of one hand barely grazed the top of her panties, her cunt throbbed and she drew in a rough breath.

"Are you ready for more?" she asked Carter, her voice deep with passion. God knew *she* was. And though it would have been strangely easy to let Melanie keep touching her in still other naughty ways, that last shot of heat to her pussy had reminded her that wasn't what she'd come here for. She'd come here to have *him*.

"Oh, *baby*," he rasped. "I'm ready for whatever you want to give me."

So with a sensual lick across her upper lip, she moved toward the bed, Melanie following. Because he was cuffed to the corner post, his body lay angled across the mattress, making it easy to situate themselves on either side of him.

Erin didn't hesitate to run her hands over his firm chest through his long-sleeved shirt as Melanie began to unbutton it, starting at the bottom. She'd feared maybe she'd turn shy at this point—given that she'd never touched him before—but she didn't. Because she *had* to have him—simply *had* to. Melanie's feminine touches had been unexpectedly scintillating, but she needed male flesh. *Now*. Beneath her fingers, between her thighs.

"Kiss me," Carter demanded then, looking up at her.

Whoa. The words caught her off guard. She narrowed her eyes and balked slightly, instinctively, even as she continued to meet his gaze.

"Damn it, I can't touch you," he said, clearly frustrated. "At least kiss me."

Oh hell.

She certainly *wanted* to kiss him.

His sparkling eyes and lush mouth both beckoned to her.

And kisses were far more intimate than she'd intended to get here, but...the cold, hard fact was that she simply couldn't resist.

With a huge sigh that stretched all through her, she lifted her hands to his face, the rough stubble of his jaw. Then she bent to kiss him full on the mouth, pressing her tongue between his lips until he met it with his own. The kiss traveled like electricity down the length of her body, making her bared breasts feel heavier as they raked the fabric of his shirt, making her thighs ache maddeningly.

That one mere kiss left her breathless, her heart beating wildly, her palms sweating—but she somehow found the strength to reel herself back in, both body and mind, and *not* to look into his eyes anymore.

Instead, she let her mouth trail downward, to Carter's neck, where she drank in the musky, manly scent of him, then to the broad, tanned chest Melanie had just bared by pushing his shirt open. She sank sensual kisses over thin, dark curls, his taut skin warm beneath her lips, then moved farther, farther, following the thin line of hair that led down into his jeans.

Melanie had beaten her to that particular area, though—she knelt at his side, working diligently at his leather belt, and Erin watched impatiently as her friend finally unbuckled it and lowered his zipper.

And—oh! *Oh my*. She pulled in her breath at how big he was, even just through the white cotton of his underwear. She felt the sight in her cunt.

Instinctively, she reached out to touch his erection, running the flat of her palm over the thick, stiff column. *So hard. Perfect and hard.* A tingle scurried up her arm and down through the rest of her body.

He moaned in response to her touch. But she *still* didn't look at him, his face—she couldn't.

*This is only sex. Nothing more. Stay in control. Of him. Of Melanie. And most of all, of yourself.*

A brief pang of regret over that decision darted through her, a longing for something passionate and *normal*, the need to gaze unabashedly into his eyes and kiss him all night if that's what she felt like doing. But when Melanie pulled down Carter's underwear, lifting the elastic waistband over the head of his cock, all Erin felt was *hunger*.

"Oh..." she murmured deeply. Yeah, he was big, all right. Big and hot, the full length of his shaft arcing up over his lower abdomen to his navel, an inviting dot of moisture resting at his tip.

At this moment, she no longer cared about looking into his eyes. She only wanted what jutted so prominently from between his legs. She wrapped her hand firmly around his cock and bent to lick the wetness from the rounded head.

As a strangled sort of groan left him, she felt the sound *everywhere*.

"So huge," Melanie purred above her.

"And beautiful," Erin heard herself add without planning, still holding him in her fist.

"Suck me," he said. Confident. And even a little demanding.

But she loved his voice. And she even loved his command, this particular one anyway. So hot, so sure. She didn't even think about not obeying, since she'd been preparing to indulge in that particular activity anyway.



She ran her tongue energetically around the tip of his erection, letting the action wet her lips—and then she sank down, taking him into her mouth, as deep as she could.

“Oh God, Jesus,” he groaned behind her. She’d positioned herself so that she faced away from him.

Lord, he filled her mouth so well, and she edged deeper, deeper onto him, until his cock touched the back of her throat. She didn’t know why she was trying so hard to take more and more of him, but she supposed it was just another form of fucking, and she wanted as much of him inside her *this way* as she would want when she finally took him into her cunt.

Eventually, she began to move her mouth up and down on him in a hot, even rhythm that had him pumping ever so slightly, softly thrusting between her lips. She heard her own breath, coming heavy, labored, and she loved the sensation of him fucking her mouth.

And—oh God, only when Melanie’s dainty hand came up under hers, cupping Carter’s balls, did she remember she was supposed to be sharing him! In fact, for a few minutes, she’d sort of forgotten this was a threesome instead of a duo.

She raised her gaze to Melanie, who hovered near, watching her every move, and was struck with how raw and erotic it was that she had Carter’s shaft in her mouth even as she made eye contact with her friend. The odd sensation urged her to revert to the original plan—to share.

Releasing Carter’s erection, she said to Melanie, “Help me. Help me with his cock.”

Both Melanie and Carter moaned in response as Erin held him by the base, offering his erection up to her friend. Melanie looked happy to be invited, her eyes darkening and her full lips curving into a naughty smile.

Oh Lord—watching Melanie drag her tongue languorously up his length made Erin’s pussy surge. And it made *her* want to lick him that way, too, so she joined in—Melanie licking one side of his majestic cock and Erin the other.

“Aw, damn,” Carter said, sounding breathless. “So good, girls. So fucking good. You look so hot doing that.”

His stirring words reminded her that she’d turned her head just enough that he could see her face. But she *wanted* him to see her suddenly – wanted him to see exactly what she was doing to him and just how naughty she could be.

So she followed her instincts.

Still running her tongue up his hard cock, she met his gaze – even held it.

Gently letting her eyes shut after a long, intense moment, she delivered hot, openmouthed kisses to one side of his long shaft.

She then eased her mouth around it, stretching, stretching, until her lips also met Melanie’s, until they were kissing each other even as they kissed his hard-on.

The only sound was that of heavy breathing – all three of them. Melanie’s hand wove into Erin’s hair, and her own snaked beneath them to fondle Carter’s balls. “Yeah, oh yeah,” he groaned between clenched teeth. “So pretty, girls. So hot.”

Backing away from Melanie, Erin kept right on following her urges and went down on Carter again, letting the hard heat of him fill her mouth, again feeling the pleasant stretch of her lips as they widened to encompass him, and this time she didn’t look away – no, this time she wanted him to see her, so she looked him directly in the eye.

His moans echoed sharp, deep, his gaze almost anguished with what she knew was actually pleasure. She moved on him vigorously, and when her mouth tired, she eased off and again offered his erection to her companion.

Under any other circumstances, she’d have likely felt jealous watching Melanie eagerly sink her mouth onto Carter’s shaft, but it was exciting to be sharing him, to be indulging in a ménage a trois. To watch her friend suck him so vigorously after she’d just done the same only added to the nearly overwhelming arousal pumping through her veins. Her entire body felt hotwired, every limb sensitive and pulsating with lust. “Yes,” she heard herself murmur, watching Melanie – even reaching to hold back her friend’s hair so she and Carter could see better. “Yes, suck him.”

Given her state of arousal, just speaking such words upped her own level of need. The sound of her voice, the frankness of the command, the feel of lips made swollen and sore from the same activity.

It was then that Melanie's hands closed full and bold around Erin's bared breasts, still framed and held high by her bra. "Oh..." she sighed, surprised, aroused. *Any* hands, any sensation right now, felt like heaven. She automatically arched them harder into her friend's soft palms.

Melanie massaged her in the same hot rhythm she used to slide her mouth up and down Carter's length. Her eyes were closed – she appeared lost in passion, and Erin felt nearly as lost to it herself.

That's when her glance fell back on his. She'd never experienced anything more intense than his gaze on her in that moment. *While my friend kneads my breasts.* It was strange. Wild. Utterly amazing.

His voice was barely audible when he spoke, low and intent, teeth still clenched. "I want to fuck you so damn bad."

Not Melanie. *Her*, he meant *her*.

And Melanie seemed not to hear or to care, still working over Carter's cock just as enthusiastically as she did Erin's sensitive breasts. Erin trembled. She wanted him to fuck her, too. She wanted him in her so deep. She wanted to wear him out.

But she didn't respond, because she could barely think, and then Melanie began to pull her, gently, *by* her breasts. She pulled Erin's full mounds closer, closer, until – dear God – she wrapped them around Carter's stone-hard shaft. A startled sob of pleasure escaped her, and Carter moaned, too.

Melanie continued to suck him – but just the head now as she rhythmically pressed Erin's breasts around him. Melanie's lips left Erin's flesh wet with each sensual descent she made. And Carter thrust more vigorously than he had up to now, each drive delivered with a low, fierce growl. The three of them moved that way, the air filling

with moans and groans, and Erin wondered if there was anyone in the rooms next door, if their neighbors could hear them, and she actually hoped they could.

“Aw God, stop,” Carter said without warning, sounding pained. “You have to stop or I’ll come.”

Erin sighed, her whole body feeling the loss when she backed away. She’d had no idea her breasts could conduct that much heat through her whole body. When Melanie released him, his wet cock plopped to his belly, and her eyes looked wild with regret for having to let him go. They all paused in place, catching their breath, coming down from the passion.

“You know, you can let me loose now,” Carter said. “I won’t try to escape or anything.”

But no way – Erin liked him right where she had him.

So she simply shook her head.

He’d probably think she was into bondage or something, but she didn’t care. She was already having enough trouble staying in full control of what was happening here. At the very least, she had to keep him cuffed to the bed so she could keep calling the shots.

“I want to *fuck* you,” he said again, sounding angry now. “I want to fuck you *both*, all damn night. And I can’t even fucking *reach* you this way.”

But she *couldn’t* let him fuck her. As much as she wanted to. Because that sounded like...like he would *take* her. Like she would have no choice but to surrender her body, and maybe more. And as tempting as that sounded in some ways, she *had* to be the one in control. She had to. There was no other way.

“Relax, baby,” she said, trying to soothe him. “Relax...and *we’ll* fuck you.”

## Chapter Three

"Get a condom," Erin instructed Melanie. She'd put three in her uniform pocket, and as Melanie departed the bed, she told her exactly where to find them. She and Carter both watched Melanie scurry naked across the carpet—at some point Erin hadn't noticed, her friend had shed her bra completely, and now her pert breasts bounced with her movements.

Erin's eyes dropped to *Carter's* body then, and she was discovering more and more that she liked the vision of him bound—even better now that his shirt was open and his pants down. Perversely perhaps, she liked the idea of him being her captive. And she instinctually ran her hand up his erection, rubbing, caressing, while they waited for Melanie's return.

A low moan left him, fueling her.

"Damn it, I want to touch you," he said then, sounding more exasperated than mad this time. He yanked at the cuffs, as if that would do any good. His voice softened then, just slightly, and she *felt* his need. "I want to touch you *everywhere*, baby. I want to run my hands over those big, beautiful breasts and all those luscious curves. I want to feel how wet your pussy must be by now."

It got wetter, just from that. And felt swollen beyond belief.

"We're doing the touching here," she informed him, still molding his cock in her hand, loving the power she felt beneath her palm.

He sighed. "I'm the birthday boy. Don't I get *some* say?"

She met his gaze, shook her head, felt her breasts sway slightly with the motion—and found she loved feeling so on display for him. "No. You take what we give you and you like it." She heard the condom package rip a few feet away.

"Mmm, and I do like it," he said on a growl. "But I want more, damn it."

"You'll *get* more. Right now," she added as Melanie climbed back onto the bed, the flesh-colored condom grasped between her fingertips. Erin drew her gaze from his to resume focusing on his penis.

She held it upright, waiting as Melanie rolled the rubber down onto him, and Erin smiled inwardly, glad she'd boldly bought the large size when she'd shopped earlier this week. And while one part of Erin wanted desperately to climb onto Carter's big cock and take it deep into her pussy, another *wilder* part of her wanted to watch her girlfriend do it first.

They kneeled on either side of him again, so Erin reached for Melanie's bare ass—so soft, round—and began to guide her to straddle him on the bed.

She studied the erotic vision Melanie made—her denuded slit parting as she balanced herself on the tip of Carter's cock. "Mmm," Melanie purred, running her hands up over her own breasts, then she slowly sank down, sheathing him inch by hot, hard inch. Erin's eyes were glued to where the two bodies met, and she didn't mind not being a part of it because she *was* still part of it. She'd made this happen, given this to Carter, and he knew it. She'd given all three of them this hot, forbidden encounter.

"Oh!" Melanie cried, taking him to the hilt. "*Big*. So big." Then she closed her eyes, seeming to luxuriate in the sensation of just having him inside her, moaning her pleasure as she used her hands to knead his chest, and then her breasts, too—this time tweaking the taut nipples between fingers and thumbs.

"Kiss them," Carter said.

Erin drew her gaze from Melanie to him.

He looked directly at her. "Kiss her breasts."

Despite herself, the command infused her with still more desire. He'd clearly seen her studying them as Melanie caressed herself.

Just as before when Carter demanded she do something, she considered refusing but didn't. Because the suggestion enticed her. And it *was* his birthday, after all.

After meeting Melanie's welcoming gaze, she leaned in and gently flicked her tongue over one pink nipple. Oh God. Strange. It felt...delicious, generating as much heat inside her as when she'd sucked Carter's cock. The tip of her tongue almost burned with the forbidden pleasure.

Melanie smiled lecherously, so Erin did it again, slower this time, more deliberately. Melanie let out a sound of delight, and Carter's voice dropped an octave. "Yeah, baby, kiss them. Kiss those pretty nipples for me."

Melanie had begun moving on him now, riding him, so when Erin leaned toward her friend's other breast, ready to truly kiss the beaded peak this time, Melanie's motions arched it into her mouth. She instinctively latched on, suckling softly, and Melanie mewled. Erin ended with a swirl of her tongue, then moved back to the other breast, kissing the hard little nipple once, twice, a third time, her pussy flooding.

She needed more, so she turned to Carter, any playfulness or gentleness disappearing. Her body ached with need, and it centered between her legs.

She rose up on her knees to look down at him and, following her urges once more, she stroked her middle fingertip sensuously through her cunt, over the lace panties she still wore. Then she hooked her fingers into the elastic at each hip and peered darkly into his eyes. "Do you want to see my pussy, Carter?"

He drew in his breath, looking stunned and aroused. "Hell yes."

Giving her lip a sensual little bite, Erin slowly lowered her thong, bit by bit, over her hips, until finally the lace dropped to the bed around her knees. Carter studied her even as Melanie continued riding him, even as he drove into her friend's cunt.

Melanie's breath wafted over them both, hot and heavy. "I want to see, too," she said, so Erin turned slightly, letting her friend study her most private spot as well. Melanie's gaze darkened with heat as it dropped to the crux of Erin's thighs.

A silent but intense moment later, Erin turned back toward Carter, easing the panties off, first raising one knee, then the other, until she was able to fling them away.

Slowly, smoothly, she lifted one thigh over Carter's chest. "Do you want to see more, Carter? Do you want to see how open I am, how ready?"

This time, he seemed able only to nod and groan. Her cunt swelled with anticipation, leaving her surprised she didn't drip on him as she eased her way up, up, finally balancing herself directly over his face. "Do you want to lick it? Do you want me to fuck your mouth?"

"God, yes."

She began to lower herself, slowly, slowly, aware that behind her, Melanie still rode him hard.

"Do you want me to fuck your mouth while Melanie fucks your cock?"

"Unh." He lifted his head then, toward her, trying to reach since she was moving so gradually.

But she wasn't going to make him work that hard. No, she was happy to do the work here, so she finally lowered her pussy over his mouth, where she felt the heat of his breath, then the scintillating blast of pleasure when he raked his tongue over her clit. "Oh...oh God," she breathed. The sensation spread through her like wildfire, starting in her cunt but rapidly expanding outward. "Oh God, *yeah*."

Letting the hot delight grip her, she moved over him, gyrating against his ministrations. She held onto the dark headboard before her, let her eyes fall shut, and drank in each and every lick he delivered, loving the sense of control the position gave her.

Carter moved his tongue deeper into her folds as they passed over his mouth, wetting her thoroughly from front to back, but always ending expertly at her clit. "Oh God, baby, that's good," she said, her voice dark with arousal. "So good." Her body urged her to push down harder, harder, giving him no choice in the matter. That's when he began to suck her clit.



She pressed her lips tight, trying to hold herself together, but a sob of abject pleasure escaped her. She clenched her teeth, her breath coming jagged, heavy, as she fucked his mouth, as promised.

Behind her, Melanie reached around, letting her small hands close over Erin's breasts. She glanced down with a rough sigh. Saw her own nipples, taut and hard, jutting between her friend's tapered fingers. Experienced a sensation of pure hedonism, as if she were indulging in a mini-Roman orgy right here in Caesars Palace. But then her eyes dropped—to Carter's.

So green. Boring into her. Situated just above her parted flesh—the vision so forbidden and wild.

"Oh God," she said, their gazes connecting as hot waves of pleasure broke over her without warning—crashing, crashing—making it all she could do to hold on to the headboard and not collapse. "Oh God!" She let her eyes fall shut, unable to keep watching Carter licking her as she came—it was too personal, too intimate.

*You thought sex with him wouldn't be personal?*

She shoved the question aside and soaked up the last of the pulsations just before her body began to feel limp and exhausted, urging her to lean back from his face.

Oh Lord, his mouth, chin and jaw were so wet. With her. She pulled in her breath, still meeting his eyes.

"Kiss me, Erin. Kiss me again."

Those deep emerald eyes beckoned, so she eased her body farther down his torso, finally bumping her ass against Melanie, who still rode his cock, who still caressed Erin's breasts in her massaging hands. Now Melanie's nipples stabbed into her shoulder blades and she found herself resting back against her friend's feminine curves for a small, reckless moment of abandon, absorbing the attention to her breasts, feeling how sensual and erotic she must look to Carter this way. Given where she sat now, she could feel his pelvic thrusts, even though it was the woman behind her he fucked.

Bending as Melanie continued caressing her sensitive mounds, she lowered slow, heated kisses to Carter's chest, his neck, and then his mouth. Full tongue kisses, her hands in his hair, and she tasted herself, salty and strangely sweet. She found herself not particularly liking the taste but kissing him harder because it was so primal—it turned something inside her feral, almost animalistic.

Melanie's hands shifted from Erin's breasts to her ass, but in some way, as she kissed Carter over and over, it was easy to imagine they were *his* hands, how he would touch her if he could.

Too much emotion swirled around her—she felt too damn much. How was it possible? She'd been so careful, so sure that if she brought a third party into the mix and chained him up and made it into something totally outrageous that it would be impossible to view it—or to *feel* it—in any other way. Yet somehow, getting this close to him, sharing something so dirty with him, letting him see parts of her *she* hadn't even known existed until this moment...made her feel tied to him now, intimately connected.

She couldn't even fight it—could only bask in it. She kept kissing him, letting Melanie run those soft fingers over her body, and she realized that without meaning to, she was rubbing her pussy against his belly, seeking more attention there, needing more stimulation, whether she liked it or not.

"Oh...oh yeah," Melanie said, low and deeply aroused. She kneaded Erin's ass now, her thighs creating friction at the back of Erin's, and with every undulation on Carter, Melanie's pussy brushed Erin's backside. They all breathed heavily together, Erin letting her fingers curl into Carter's chest, wondering if she could come again just from rubbing up against his stomach with Melanie behind her.

"Oh God, here I go!" Melanie cried. "Now!"

The group gyrations nearly rocked the bed off its foundations as the headboard banged the wall. Melanie let out high-pitched sobs as she sank her fingernails into Erin's ass, making her grit her teeth at the mix of pleasure-pain.

"Oh..." Melanie breathed more softly as she came down from her climax, her movements slowing until they halted altogether. Then she slumped over Erin's back, pushing her down against Carter's chest and seeming to hug them both. "Oh my God," she said, voice languid and spent. "That was fucking incredible." Erin could sense her friend's satisfied smile.

"Now you, Erin," Carter said a moment later, his deep voice near her ear.

She raised her gaze, shocked to find their faces so close.

"Now *you* ride my cock and make this birthday present complete."

She pulled in her breath. Another command. But also another she wanted to obey. She pushed herself upright as Melanie climbed off him and moved around to the side. Mel looked flushed and pretty and giddy as she first leaned in to kiss Erin, then bent to gently kiss Carter as well. "Thank you, baby," she said to him as Erin wondered if *Melanie* could taste her on Carter's mouth, too.

A soft, throaty laugh echoed upward from the bed. "I think *I* should be thanking you. I, uh..." he glanced over his head to where he was chained to the post "...didn't exactly do a lot."

Melanie grinned, saucy and flirtatious. "I beg to differ. You have a *fabulous* cock and you *definitely* know to use it, even attached to a bed." She caressed his chest, then turned to Erin, her gaze reckless, hungry. "Do it, Erin. Fuck him. I want to watch you fuck him."

In a way, it was hard to believe this was her friend whom she lunched with on a regular basis, but Melanie was a free and wild spirit, and her attitude since they'd gotten naked had turned Erin on and made it easier for her to do forbidden things. So, just to excite all three of them a little more, she said, "Help me."

First, the two girls replaced Carter's condom with a fresh one, their fingers touching as they slowly rolled it down onto him. Next, Melanie smiled and rose up on her knees, reaching to brace her palms on Erin's hips. Lifting a light kiss to Erin's right nipple—making her shiver and Carter moan—she helped Erin lift and lean back until she

hovered over Carter's crotch, her pussy maddeningly hungry for what lay between his legs.

Releasing Erin's hips, Melanie reached down to lift Carter's big, hard shaft from where it rested on his belly. She held it upright for Erin, who poised her cunt against the tip in just the right spot, then thrust down, hard. Erin and Carter both cried out.

She hadn't wanted to take him softly—she'd needed to feel him deep, all the way in, and she'd needed to take back the mental control she feared she'd lost. She'd needed to turn this into something rough and emotionless so that she felt only physical sensation, so that it would blot out anything else.

She rode him hard, bracing her hands flat on his stomach, feeling the jiggle of her breasts as she rocked, the feel of his pole-like cock sliding deep, deep, with each move she made.

Of course, he thrust, too, just as hard, and he was so big that the sensation was almost overwhelming, bordering on pain at times, but she didn't care—she just wanted her body to feel it, to fuck him, to give him what they both needed and to keep her emotions out of it.

It almost worked. She felt it, hard. With each thrust, she felt as if his shaft drove farther and farther into her, the sensations echoing up through her breasts, out through her arms, her legs. "Unh! Unh!" she cried out. He groaned along with her.

But the problem was with his eyes.

She looked into them.

And felt more than the sex.

She felt it all. The forbidden liaison...and the strange intimacy. She felt them peering into each other's souls. And bringing each other the hardest, deepest sort of physical pleasure. Her nails dug into his flesh.

"I wish I could touch you," he growled, sounding desperate.

"You are." She gazed down to where their bodies interlocked.

"Other ways," he breathed.

Where was Melanie?

Oh, right beside them. God, she was even caressing Erin's knee with one hand, Carter's chest with the other. But like earlier, for a few moments Erin had truly forgotten she was there. The connection with Carter ran too deep, too strong.

And her motions relaxed into something more wildly, deeply passionate than the hard downward plunges of a minute before.

She let her body go, let it take over.

She moved in small, rhythmic circles that let her clit rub against him in front while she caressed his cock with her slick inner walls.

*Good. So good.*

But she needed just a little more. Her hands left him and found her own flesh, her breasts, too big for her palms. She squeezed and kneaded and stroked, and Carter's jaw dropped with lust. "Aw yeah, baby. Do that some more. That's so fucking pretty."

Her breath came slower, louder.

And Carter said, "Come for me, baby."

Another command.

That's all it took. "Oh God!" The second orgasm was so strong it almost hurt. Her body buckled and pitched forward. "Oh God! Oh God!" The tremors shook her uncontrollably as she curled her hands into fists at Carter's chest and wished...that he could hug her. But he couldn't, of course, because she'd cuffed him to the bed. She found herself missing that natural, sure sense of security a simple hug could provide.

Yet she forgot all about that when he said, "Oh Christ, baby, hold on—here I come, too!"

And he rocked her hard, thrusting wild and deep, and she *did* have to hold on, wrapping her arms around him to stay mounted until his moans finally faded to quiet.

She lay that way a blissful moment longer, not thinking about handcuffs or Melanie—or anything but her and Carter and the fact they'd just shared intense orgasms and she wanted to rest with him this way, cuddle up against him and fall asleep.

Of course, she couldn't. Melanie was there. They'd had a *three-way*. She'd *cuffed* him to a bed to make sure she controlled the situation. And she supposed she had indeed succeeded in controlling the situation, most of the time anyway—but she hadn't exactly succeeded in controlling her heart.

"This is the best birthday present I ever got," he finally said, and she lifted her head from his chest to see a sexy, tired smile.

She let herself smile back. "It's the best one I've ever given."

"You gonna turn me loose now?" He raised his eyebrows, still grinning softly.

She only sighed. This was going to be the really tricky part. Because as tempting as it might be to uncuff Carter and snuggle up with him, she couldn't.

In fact, she had to get out of here, fast. She already felt way too much—she couldn't risk feeling any more. "Um..." she hedged, easing up off his large shaft and immediately feeling empty without it.

"Um?" he asked.

She could no longer look at his face.

Melanie, she realized, had grabbed up her underwear and scurried to the bathroom. But Erin didn't think she was going to have *time* for the bathroom, since each second from this point on felt critical, and agonizing.

Sucking in her breath, still avoiding his eyes, she hurried from the bed and spotted her panties in a twist on the carpet. She grabbed them and straightened them out and wished they weren't so soaked but put them on anyway. In one brisk move, she raised the cups of her bra back into place.

"So?" Carter said. "Uncuff me." But he sounded like he already realized that wasn't gonna happen.

Fortunately, Melanie exited the bathroom just then, back in her peach lace ensemble and somehow looking fresh and glowing despite all the hot sex they'd just indulged in. "Afraid not," she told Carter, and Erin appreciated her friend taking over.

She supposed, now that the passion had passed, Melanie could see the forlorn look Erin was desperately trying to hide. She'd never been skilled at concealing her emotions. Which was precisely why it was so vital that she not *have* too many. They just got in the way.

"What?" he asked.

Meanwhile, Erin was rushing into her shirt, stepping back into her pants—although it felt strange to put on clothes so masculine and plain at a time when she felt so wholly sensual and feminine. Like she was trying to cover it up.

But maybe she *needed* to cover it up right now, stop feeling it. Just like she needed to stop feeling so emotional about what she'd just done with him, and the fact that she wanted to do more. And that the "more" involved lots of touching and kissing and snuggling and even talking. No, no, no, this was dangerous—and bad. She couldn't have it. No way.

"We have to go," Melanie told him. Then she glanced to the clock on the bedside table. "We're due on patrol."

It was a lie, but a decent one, Erin thought. She'd told Melanie they couldn't uncuff him before they departed because then he might not let her leave easily, and she had to. She just had to do this—fuck him...and go.

"But I'm putting the key here on the table," Melanie said as she slid on her pants, then walked over to the bed, fishing a small key from her pocket. After which she bent to kiss him on the forehead. "Happy birthday."

He didn't answer for a moment, just looked at her. "You two are just leaving? Leaving me here like this?"

Erin could barely breathe. She'd grabbed up her hat and headed for the door. "Sorry, baby," she tossed over her shoulder. "But this is how it's gotta be. Just a little birthday fun for you – and for us. Now it's over and like Mel said, we have to go."

"Except...we *will* take care of this for you, hon."

Erin peeked around the corner from the entryway to see Melanie politely removing Carter's condom. Geesh! She hadn't even thought of that and was glad Melanie had. She wanted to go and she didn't want him uncuffed before she was gone—but she didn't want to leave the guy with a mess. She was officially frazzled now, not thinking clearly.

Which meant it was definitely time to make her escape.

A quick moment later, she was opening the door and trying to ignore Carter's voice behind them, saying, "I can't fucking believe you're leaving me like this!"

*I'm so sorry, Carter. I have to. I just have to.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Half an hour later, Carter still couldn't believe it. It almost felt surreal. When it had been happening, it had been an odd mixture of pleasure and frustration—getting to have Erin and her friend, but wanting so much more of her. Hell, just wanting to touch her without being able to had been brutal.

Now his pleasure had pretty much turned to pain. And his frustration had grown. He wouldn't have believed they'd leave him handcuffed to the bed like this until they'd actually done it. Even as they'd been getting dressed and taking off, he'd *still* not really believed it. Not until the door had shut behind them, leaving the room quiet—and his predicament evident.

Jesus. Would he have to wait until a maid came to clean the room? Sometime tomorrow? And God, how humiliating would *that* be? How would he keep from going to the bathroom until then? And he'd probably be starving by then, too.



How could Erin do this to him? And she thought this was a birthday gift? Un-freaking-believable.

Just then, the door opened, making him flinch. What the hell? Had she seen the error of her ways and come back to let him loose?

That's when Marc and Diana rounded the corner to find him trussed like a pig, his pants still wide open, his dick on clear display. "Oh God," he muttered.

"Whoa," Marc said, blinking, as Diana widened her eyes and laughed.

"This is funny?" Carter asked. "You think this is fucking funny?"

Diana lowered her chin speculatively. "We just kinda thought you'd be gone by now. Or at least, um, dressed by now." Her gaze dropped briefly to his exposed cock. "But I guess it's a good thing we came to check and make sure."

Carter just shook his head. "I'd *love* to be gone by now. But as you can see, I'm chained to the damn bed."

"Dude," Marc said, glancing up above Carter's head, chuckling softly. "All you had to do was stand up and unloop the cuffs."

Trying to absorb his buddy's words, Carter followed his gaze upward—to see he was right. He shut his eyes. *Shit*. He felt like an idiot. If he'd just gotten to his feet on the stupid bed, he indeed could have gotten loose. He was hooked to a tall bedpost, but it *did* come to a knobbed end about five feet above him. He'd just been too dumbfounded and distraught to realize Erin had left him an easy way out. "Christ," he bit off.

"But don't worry, baby, I'll do the honors now that we're here," Diana said, circling the bed to reach for the key Melanie had left.

He watched as Diana slid it in the lock on one cuff and a second later his arms dropped free. Damn, they were sore, his hands numb. He stretched his fingers, trying to get the blood moving again as Diana relieved him of the other cuff, as well.

"So start talking," he said, sitting up to look into Diana's eyes. "Since you're obviously in on this whole thing." Then he narrowed his gaze accusingly. "Double agent."

She shrugged. "I prefer the term matchmaker."

He rolled his eyes and, finally regaining the use of his hands, pulled up his underwear and jeans.

Glancing downward, Diana grinned. "Guess it's a good thing I've seen you naked before or this would be embarrassing."

He let out a sigh. "Guess what. It's still embarrassing. And I still don't get what happened here."

"Well," Diana said, sitting down next to him on the bed as Marc settled into the loveseat by the window, "Erin let me know she was interested in...doing something a little wild with you. I mentioned we were all going out for your birthday, so she came up with this idea. She gave me a key to the room, just so we'd be able to check on you afterward, and like I said, I guess it's a good thing we did. I thought you'd like it, but judging from the look on your face, maybe you...uh, didn't."

"I don't get it, man," Marc chimed in. "You got to have sex with two beautiful girls on your birthday. Why do you look so mad?"

Carter ran his hand back through his hair. "Hell," he said, trying to think through it all. "I was pretty damn pissed about being left chained up like that—until just a minute ago. But that aside, I'm *still* pissed at her, because why did she have to leave at all? She went running out of here like a woman on fire, like she was scared of me. Which, uh," he gave his head a quick shake, "doesn't make any sense considering that she just chained me up and had her way with me."

"I'll admit," Diana said, "her methods were a little unorthodox, but...I got the idea she'd never really done anything this extreme before, so maybe it made her nervous. Maybe she was embarrassed afterward. I just know she seemed totally hot for you when we talked."

He looked Diana in the eye. "If she's so hot for me, why not just accept my invitations for a date? Nothing extreme about *that*. Nothing to be embarrassed about. I mean, it's not like she thought she had to chain me up to make me have sex with her—I'd already made it pretty clear I was interested."

Again, Diana shrugged. She'd always been easygoing about sex; it was her nature. And he guessed *he'd* always been easygoing about it, too—up to this moment. "Maybe she just wanted to cut loose and do something really crazy, you know?" Diana suggested. "Maybe you should take it as a compliment that she chose you to do it with. If you'll recall, once upon a time, Marc and I wanted to do something really wild and we picked you, too. Because I liked you, and because Marc trusted you."

"This is a lot different than that." He couldn't put his finger on why, but something about Erin's seduction galled him.

"Yep—two girls doing you. A guy's perfect fantasy come true." Marc shook his head, no longer seeming as drunk as he'd been down in the dance club. "I still don't get the problem here."

And that's when it hit Carter. The problem. "I really like her," he said. "I really like her, and I really wanted to go out with her and get to know her. And yeah, sure, I wanted to go to bed with her. And what happened tonight was pretty astounding when it was happening." When she'd been kissing him. When she'd been riding him. When he'd been licking that sweet, luscious pussy. Every time she'd simply looked into his eyes had been freaking amazing. "But...it's like she was just *using me*. She chained me up, fucked my brains out, then left with barely a word."

"Yeah, that's heartbreaking, dude, when a girl just uses you for sex," Marc said, his voice thick with male sarcasm.

"Well, think back to when you fell for Diana. I know the sex was great, but I also know you wanted more. I wanted more from Erin, too. And since I asked her out and she turned me down, I guess it feels like...I'm good enough to fuck but not good enough to go out with."

Diana cringed lightly, her eyes turning sad. "Okay. Maybe I'm starting to see your point. When a guy uses a girl that way, well – it can be pretty abominable."

Carter nodded profusely. "Right. And I don't do that to girls. I don't expect that kind of no-strings, no-dating, no-*nothing* sex unless it's clear that the feelings are mutual. So I don't like having it done to me, either. Especially from someone I thought I really liked."

"So then," Diana said, "you don't like her anymore."

Carter sighed. "I don't know." There had been moments when she'd looked into his eyes and he could have sworn he saw something more in them than just lust – and yet didn't her actions say it all? "I *want* to like her. I liked the girl I met at your dinner party. But the girl I met tonight..." He shook his head.

"So you think she's sending mixed signals," Diana clarified.

"Damn straight."

"Well, that leaves you two choices. Forget about her and move on. Or confront her."

But already an idea had begun to form in Carter's head, and it had nothing to do with moving on, and everything to do with getting an explanation from Erin.

Yeah, he'd confront her, all right. Two could play her racy little game.

And Carter was going to confront her in a way she'd never forget.

## Chapter Four

Erin slammed her car door, hit the button on her keychain to lock it, then started up the path that led past the condo pool. It was late Saturday night, an hour when she knew she'd never get a spot directly in front of her building, so the next best choice was to park here and take the winding walk through the garden-like pool area that led to her condo on the other side. Like the past week or so, the night was hotter than normal for Vegas in the spring, but a breeze lifted her hair from her neck and caused her nipples to perk to life beneath her cocktail dress.

But on second thought, maybe she couldn't blame her hardening nipples on the wind. Because—as usual these last few days—she was thinking of Carter; she was remembering fucking him. The mere thought made her cunt tingle.

This was getting ridiculous. Fucking him was supposed to have gotten him off her mind, out of her system—but clearly that hadn't worked. She just kept reliving each and every moment of what had happened. But mostly the parts when she'd looked in his eyes, when she'd been so drawn in by him, unable not to feel that human connection. So as a result of her actions, she was doing exactly what she'd been trying to avoid—thinking about Carter all the time.

And she'd felt positively awful about the way things had ended, that he'd literally been yelling at her in shock and anger. In hindsight, she hadn't thought through all the angles of her seduction very well. Generally, she was a good planner, but something about the guy totally knocked her off-kilter.

She hadn't bumped into him in the seventy-two hours since their handcuff encounter, but she'd seen Diana, so she knew Carter had stayed upset. "He likes you," Diana had said. "*Really* likes you. He was hurt that you wanted sex and nothing more."

Erin hadn't gone into detail with Diana, had simply told her, "I *hate* that I hurt him. But...I'm just not into the relationship thing." She didn't talk a lot about her past, her dad or her fears in life. That made it easier to just move on and be a good, focused cop. Danny was the only person who really knew the whole story about why she avoided relationships like the plague.

Just then, a large shadow – a man – stepped in front of her on the dimly lit path.

Oh Lord. She'd carried only a tiny purse tonight, to go with her slinky dress, and didn't have her gun! She pulled up short, her heart racing, and prayed her martial arts training would be enough. "Stop right there," she told him.

"It's me."

Who? Then she realized, making out his face. *Carter*.

Her body should have flooded with relief, but given that he didn't sound particularly friendly, she stayed somewhat stressed – even as she creamed her panties at the mere sight of him. "Um, hi."

Stepping farther into the light of a nearby streetlamp, he gave her a once-over. "Playing a high-priced call girl now? Frankly, I would have preferred that to the whole 'you're under arrest' thing. Man, you do a lot of pretending, don't you?"

Something inside her ran cold. *If you only knew*.

But she'd already let this man see far too much real emotion from her, so it stopped here. "I just came from a fundraising gala for the police department, if you must know. And I'm sorry about the other night. I thought it would be fun. For all of us. I never thought you'd get mad about it."

"Yeah, well," he said, still sounding gruff, sarcastic, "I get a little pissed off when someone chains me to a bed in a hotel, then walks out on me."

Her whole body remained tense. It had started with fear, but now it was...what? Desire? Hard, brazen lust? Again? Oh God, yes, *again*. She wanted him.

But she wasn't going to have him. She was going to nip this in the bud once and for all, even though it meant lying and being mean.

"Look," she said pointedly, "I wanted to party with you. That's all. A little sex, a wild time I thought we could all enjoy. It was your birthday—I figured I'd make it one to remember. I didn't mean to piss you off, but given that we're neighbors, I hope you can move past it so that we can be civil to one another if we pass in the hall."

With that, she started to move past him on the narrow walkway—but he grabbed her wrist. "Not good enough," he said.

She darted her gaze up to his. "What?"

"You owe me an explanation. A real one." She could feel the testosterone just dripping off him—and onto her.

*Stay tough. Stay tough.* "That's as real as it gets, baby."

He never broke their gaze, although his voice softened slightly. "I don't believe you."

She sucked in her breath. Like before, during sex, their faces were too close. "I don't care what you believe," she told him. But her voice had softened, as well—without her permission.

And she feared he'd heard it, because his eyes went darker then, looking determined. "You'd better *start* caring, honey. Because I don't like being used. So I'd advise you to start talking—telling me what your little game the other night was really all about." He still held her arm, tight, and was slowly backing her off the walkway into the grass, another step, another step, until she bumped into the chain-link fence that enclosed the pool area. Most of the fence was covered with greenery or hidden with shrubs, but here she felt the cool steel against her arms, shoulders.

"Or what?" she asked—again, too quietly.

"Or you're gonna find out the game works both ways."

Lord, what was he talking about? And why didn't he just take her explanation at face value? How did he know there *was* more to the story? Apparently, she was a better actress when it came to being a streetwalker than a sex-hungry lady cop. "What do you mean?"

"I'll show you *exactly* what I mean," he said, threat dancing in his eyes, then slid his palms down both her arms until he laced his fingers tight and smooth between her own, effectively pinning her to the fence with his body. He was bigger, broader, than she'd ever realized before—and oh, then his erection pressed to the juncture of her thighs through his jeans, making her breasts ache and her cunt weep. That's when he pressed a blistering hot kiss to her mouth—pushing his tongue between her lips, kissing passionate and hard, making her feel every nuance of it.

She couldn't help kissing back. Something about him was so powerful, intense. She didn't *want* to kiss him back—in fact, her instincts told her to run, to get as far away from such intoxicating kisses as she could. But he had her trapped against the fence, and beneath his mouth—his lush, capable, commanding mouth—and at the moment it was all she could do not to melt.

When finally the long, sensual kiss ended, they were both panting. The front of his body grazed hers, although the bulge behind his zipper achieved more solid contact. It was hard as hell not to grind against it.

"Let me go," she said anyway. It came out stronger than she felt.

"Not a chance," he replied, masculine heat from his body buffeting her. So it made no sense when he released one of her hands—until she looked down a few seconds later to see that he'd pulled something from his pocket, furry and red, a more *gentle* set of handcuffs than the regulation ones she'd used on him.

She gasped, but not before one fur-lined ring circled her wrist, snapping shut. "What are you doing?"



Just as quickly, he pressed the back of her hand to the fence at her side and snapped the other cuff shut around a couple of the sturdy, square chain-links. "What's it look like?" he said, not an ounce of amusement in his voice.

Her heartbeat tripled and before she could even summon an answer, he'd whipped out a second pair of red furry cuffs, stretched out her other arm, and cuffed it to the fence, too. She sucked in her breath, trying to think, but it was difficult given how close to her he still stood. "Carter, you can't be serious," she finally managed. Even though he *looked* plenty serious.

He tilted his head and narrowed his gaze. "Since you like to play with handcuffs so much, I figured you'd be into this."

Part of her wanted to scream in frustration. For the first time, she understood a little of what Carter might have felt in the hotel room. Her heart still beat madly, almost painfully. Yet even amid her disbelief that Carter had really just chained her to a fence, leaving her completely at his mercy, she couldn't help realizing he'd been a little more thoughtful than her, getting the furry, playful kind of cuffs so as not to hurt her wrists.

Though with that thought in mind—that these came from some adult novelty store—she yanked both her arms away from the fence, expecting one or both to break free. But they were stronger than they looked and held tight. Damn.

She shut her eyes in defeat, then opened them to see Carter peering down at her.

"Don't worry, honey — this won't hurt. At least not much."

Once more, she sucked in her breath, shocked to discover Carter could be so cold. Well, not cold. Hot as hell, actually — hot and take-charge. But calculating and tough.

She had to get out of here somehow. Not because she was frightened of him, but because she was still *deeply* frightened for her heart if she got any closer to this man. "Carter," she said, sounding breathless even to her own ears. "You have to let me go. I can't... I just can't..."

"Sure you can, baby," he said, his voice almost teasing and soothing this time, but still possessing an underlying air of domination.

And as he ran his big hands slowly, achingly, up her hips, over her waist, the sides of her breasts, she yanked at the cuffs again, an instinct, and thought of screaming. But at the same time, she couldn't deny the pleasure echoing through every single inch of her body. She couldn't deny that her breasts were heaving and her pussy had filled with heat. And she also couldn't deny that he wasn't doing anything to her that she hadn't already done to him, and that—Lord help her—her body craved more.

Carter had never planned to be so rough with her. But maybe deep down he'd known a little roughness would be required to get her where he wanted her, and maybe he thought fair was fair. The part he supposed he hadn't expected was the way he felt right now. Like an animal. A heat-seeking, hungry beast.

He'd been plenty attracted to her before their Caesars Palace encounter, but seeing her now forced him to also see her, in his mind, as she'd been then. He couldn't not remember the way she'd ridden him, that sweet, tight pussy working his cock, or the way her beautiful breasts had spilled from her bra with those pink pointed nipples before she'd caressed them in her small, pretty hands. And he discovered that he felt now much like he had then. Lust-filled—and angry.

And since she refused to give him the one thing he'd ask of her—a real, honest explanation—his body was more than ready to move on to what they already knew worked between them. Sex. And he wasn't inclined to be gentle.

So he didn't stop himself from closing his hands firmly over her breasts through her dress. And her hot moan shot straight to his dick, telling him what he'd already sensed—she could act like this offended her, but she wanted it just as badly as he did.

Kneading her breasts—pushing, squeezing, molding—he gave her another hard, punishing kiss that he hoped she felt all the way to her cunt. Then, too heated up to even think of going slow, he curled the fingers of both hands into the draped black bodice of her dress and pulled downward, easily able to catch the fabric under the shelf her large breasts created. A skimpy black bra with thin shoulder straps resided

underneath, her lush cleavage looking ready to burst from it, so he helped it along, yanking down the cups of the bra, as well.

Her hot gasp fueled him, as did the way she looked, cuffed to the fence on both sides, at his mercy. He'd never been into bondage, but maybe this was a fetish waiting to happen, because she looked too delectable this way—chained, her voluptuous breasts bared.

He dove on them, unable not to. Letting both hands close back around the abundant curves, he feasted, sinking his mouth firmly to one hard pink peak. She sobbed softly, the sound wafting through him like sweet music as he suckled her hard.

"Oh God," she moaned. *"Oh God."*

He molded and sucked harder. Then moved his ministrations to her other breast, latching on just as tightly, savoring how amazingly rock-hard her nipples had grown for him, like pearls between his lips.

Freeing one hand, he reached down, under her dress, easing his fingers directly between her thighs. Her panties were soaked and it made his cock strain in his jeans. Oh yeah, she wanted this, all right—she wanted it with just as much ferocity as he did.

"Your pussy's so wet," he growled between suckling her breasts.

She answered by thrusting against his hand.

He moaned in response, rubbing the damp, swollen mound in a hot, hard rhythm he hoped she felt in her clit. "That's right, baby," he told her between heated breaths. "Fuck my hand."

Her heavy breathing replaced the night's silence, hot and beautiful. Carter had never realized how quiet it was where they lived late at night—in Green Valley, an outlying suburb twenty minutes from the Strip. But he noticed it now, because Erin's beautiful panting noises were all he could hear and they filled his senses as she moved on his fingers.

Needing more of her—damn, it was heaven to finally be holding her, finally have the control to do what he wanted with her—he shoved her silk panties roughly aside and sank his touch to her wet folds. “Oh God, yeah,” he said, his fingers instantly drenched with her desire. He rubbed her, really *felt* her, exploring her cunt the way he’d wanted to the other night. He raked his fingers deep through the warm, damp furrow, enjoying her noises of pleasure, then he traveled farther, farther, until he sensed the spot where she opened. His blood ran hot as he thrust two fingers up inside.

“Oh!” she cried, louder than before, so he quieted her with another hard kiss. He moved his fingers in and out of that hot, wet passage where his cock had been only a few nights ago, but somehow this felt more intimate to him—because he could touch her now, make her feel things, *make* her respond.

He loved how she met the rough kisses he slanted across her mouth, loved how her breasts jiggled against his chest, loved how damn wet she was for him. “Dirty girl,” he whispered heatedly.

“You *make* me dirty.”

“I *like* you dirty.”

She met his gaze, her lips swollen, eyes wild. “Then fuck me,” she said.

He’d never imagined she would ask under the current circumstances, but he liked it, and he told her so with another bruising kiss. Reaching under her dress, he found the elastic at her hips and yanked it toward her knees in a rush, until it fell in a small heap around her ankles, over top the sexy black heels she wore. Glancing down, he let the sight increase his arousal, and he worked at his jeans until he could shove them down, spread them open, his hard shaft bursting free.

“Ohhh...” she purred at the sight of it, and he could have sworn he grew another inch.

“You like this, baby? You want it?”

She clenched her teeth lightly, her brown eyes so wide and hungry in that moment that she looked just as reckless as he felt. "You know I do," she said, her voice sounding a little strangled. "Take me. Fuck me. Now."

Oh God—that was all he needed to hear. And she was so wet and ready that he could smell her, the sweet scent of her pussy wafting to greet him as he pushed her slinky dress up around her hips. She automatically hooked one leg around his thigh, the pointed heel of her shoe digging into his flesh in back as she used the leverage to pull him closer. He locked both hands onto her sweet, round ass and thrust his cock inside her.

They both cried out and he hoped to God no one had heard.

And then he looked into her eyes.

He'd planned to fuck her hard, be relentless, give her the most brutal pounding she'd ever had.

But somehow things slowed then, turned more rhythmic. It was the way she moved so deliberately, the way he sensed she *needed* to feel him. It was the languid, sexy, needful look in her eyes. It was how she arched against him, her body seeming to roll against him like a wave against the shore, again, again. Hot, slow—a sexy cadence he couldn't fight.

He picked her up, lifting her ass in his palms. "Wrap your legs around me," he instructed, breathless.

She did as he'd said, their gazes never breaking. He kissed her once more—pure instinct.

With her back pressed to the fence, she undulated against his cock in a tempo that felt ancient, timeless, hypnotic. Her breasts ebbed and flowed against his chest until finally he reached down and captured one pink peak in his mouth. "Oh, oh God," she murmured. "Good. Good."

He suckled, at once hard yet gentle, and used his tongue to tease the very tip of her nipple inside his mouth. Her hot sighs filled the air and drove his thrusts slowly deeper

into her welcoming cunt. He wanted to fill her, possess her. And mostly, he wanted to make her come.

"Unh..." Her hot rhythm changed then, just slightly, speeding up even as her gyrations became more drawn out. "Unh..." she moaned again.

He squeezed her ass, suckled her breast harder.

"Yes," she whispered. "Yes, baby."

In back, he splayed his fingers wider over her bottom, using the longest on each hand to reach toward her anus. Then he curled his fingertips deep into her flesh, knowing she'd feel the sensation in her asshole, that the movement would draw it slightly open, making it tighten in response. He'd never heard a sweeter sound than the shocked, ragged, high-pitched little sob that left her.

He made the same movement, stretching his fingers across her ass over and over, each time taking her deeper into a swallowing sort of bliss he was pretty sure she'd never felt before. The noises that left her were new and she seemed lost to sensation, her head falling back, eyes dropping shut as she thrust, thrust, thrust in those hot, jagged little moves against his cock.

Soon her lips trembled beneath the rays of the streetlamp and Carter studied her face as she edged still further into ecstasy.

"Come, baby," he whispered. "Come on me."

"Oh, I...unh..."

He sank deeper into the rhythm she'd set for them, trying to make her feel him more. "Come hard, honey. Come so fucking hard on me."

"Unh!" Her body jolted, once, twice, then she rocked on him, bucking like a wild rodeo girl, and she looked so fucking beautiful in the throes of passion, her arms stretched out at her sides, held in place by those red fur cuffs, that Carter couldn't hold back.

"Jesus," he groaned, then gave her what he'd planned from the beginning, those rough, brutal strokes that he wanted her to feel in every pretty limb of her naughty little body.

She cried out at each hot stroke, and he rammed his cock into her moist little cave over and over, back to feeling like an out-of-control animal.

"Yes! Yes!" she sobbed. "Do it! Fuck me!"

That last hot, dirty plea from her swollen lips pushed him over the edge into an all-consuming orgasm that rocked his whole body. "Ah, God!" he moaned, shocked by the power of it, trying like hell to keep holding them both upright as the waves of heat pulsed through him like thunder.

When finally they faded, he leaned forward, resting them against the chain-links until he could regain his strength. Finally Erin unwrapped her legs and he lowered her gently to the ground, easing out of her.

He never moved away, though—he stayed close, just looking into her brown eyes, and like the other night, feeling they'd shared something more profound than mere sex. Lifting his hands to her face, he gave her one last kiss, this one not quite so hard as the rest, but more desperate and searching.

That's when it hit him. He'd fucked her brains out, filled his animal urges—but he still didn't know why she wanted to keep this connection only a physical one.

So what had he accomplished here?

Okay, yeah, some really great sex and a couple of *insane* orgasms. But what had changed?

Nothing.

"Are you gonna leave me here like this?" she asked softly. "Cuffed to the fence?"

The question almost amused him, but she looked so worried that he couldn't enjoy her fear. "No, honey. I wouldn't do that to you." That simple. He'd never even considered it.

And, glancing down at her still-bared breasts, he lowered a kiss to the curve of one, then pulled her bra and dress back up over them before zipping his jeans. Reaching in his front pocket, he extracted the little key that had come with the cuffs, and went about unhooking her from the fence and freeing her hands.

When she drew her arms down and took turns rubbing her wrists, he said, "Are they okay?"

She glanced up, nodding. "Fine." Then guilt flashed through her eyes. "What about yours – the other night?"

He shrugged. "Had a couple red marks – no big deal."

She sighed. "I'm sorry, Carter."

Carter swallowed, just peering down into her eyes, feeling the depth of her emotions. He understood she was apologizing for more than just the marks left by the cuffs. So he decided to take another, *calmer* stab at the problem here. "You want to talk awhile? It's nice tonight, cooling down a little now."

At first, she looked hesitant, and he feared she would bolt, but after a moment, she gave in. "All right."

Carter turned to lean against the fence, letting his back slide down it until he was sitting on the grass, his knees bent before him. He reached up to take her hand. "Come on down."

Kneeling next to him in her sexy dress, she finally situated herself at his side, her back against the chain-links, as well.

He wasn't sure where to go from here, but decided maybe kindness would work. Erin had seemed so nice at Marc and Diana's party – maybe he could find that girl in her again.

"If I've been a jerk tonight, I apologize," he said. It was just hitting him that he'd been crazed enough to handcuff a woman to a fence and fuck her, right in the middle of a bunch of condos. And not just any woman, but a *cop*.



"I was the jerk," she replied quietly, looking straight ahead, toward the concrete walkway and the ornamental trees and tall, decorative grasses beyond that had made the location feel more private than it really was. "The other night, I mean. I...didn't think it through well enough when I planned it." Then she turned her head to look up at him, her eyes earnest. "And for what it's worth, I don't usually... I've never... I'm, uh, not generally that wild. It was my first threesome."

"That part I didn't mind," he confessed with a smile. Fresh heat rose in his groin, his cock perking back to life that quickly at the memories. "I have to tell you, Erin, you were fucking beautiful being that bold, that hot, touching your friend, kissing her. That part was amazing."

She lowered her gaze, still looking hesitant, appearing to choose her words carefully. "Then...what part did you mind exactly?"

"Mainly the part where you left," he answered bluntly.

She sighed. "Yeah, that's the part I didn't think through."

"Why did you do it that way? Why did you rush off?"

He saw her swallow, clearly nervous. "I...I'm just not into having relationships, Carter. It's just...not my thing." She shook her head, back to staring straight ahead now.

"That still doesn't explain it. You don't have to want a relationship to act decent after sex. And who ever even *said* anything about a relationship?" He was interested in having one with her—he couldn't deny that to himself—but he'd sure as hell never told her that. "All I did was ask you out."

Next to him, she sighed. "Well, dating often *leads* to relationships. So...I just didn't want to go there."

He stared at her pointedly. "There's more to it, more you're not telling me. Because nobody acts this weird about sex and dating without a reason. Now out with it, Erin. Tell me the truth. What's really going on here?" Maybe he was pressing too hard, but at this point, he didn't care. She was the one who'd seduced him without his consent and turned things so odd and intense between them. He had every right to find out why.

And when she didn't answer, simply sat there staring quietly upward at the crescent moon overhead, he only grew more resolute. So resolute that he picked up the furry handcuffs from the ground where they had fallen and quietly put one end around his right wrist, clicking it shut, even though it was too tight on him and needed to be loosened. Then he grabbed her left wrist and snapped the other red cuff around it, locking them together.

She gaped down at the cuffs and the silver chain between them, then raised her eyes to him. "What the hell is *this*?"

"Consider it gentle persuasion," he said. "You're gonna sit here with me until you give me a real explanation that makes sense. And guess what, honey. I've got all night if that's what it takes."

## Chapter Five

How had this happened? Erin could only stare in disbelief. She never could have known he'd be so damn upset about her leaving him or so hell-bent on understanding why. The plan had seemed so simple in the beginning—the perfect way to get close to him *sexually* without getting close to him *emotionally*. What a disaster she'd created.

"Well?" he prodded. "Gonna tell me?"

She stayed silent, unable to summon an answer, still too stunned by this whole thing. Not only his reaction—but the sex just now. It had been...overwhelming. The best she'd ever had, by a long shot.

She'd been angry at the beginning, of course, feeling trapped and cornered—suffering that loss of that control she valued so much.

But the truth was, there had been moments when she could have gotten away.

She could have fought him, but she hadn't, not even a little. And she could have screamed—they were in the middle of a condo complex, someone would have heard.

But she hadn't done those things, or *anything*—besides succumb.

"I've got all night, Erin, but if you just tell me now, we can both go inside and get some sleep. On the other hand, if you want to sit out here with me, watch the sun rise, and let some of our neighbors find us cuffed together, with your panties on the sidewalk," he pointed to where they'd landed when she'd kicked them off, "that's fine by me."

Okay, she was crazy about the guy, but he was getting on her nerves about this. And he'd just pushed her over the edge. "You want to know why I left? And why I won't go out with you?"

"Please," he said brusquely.

She glared at him. "Fine. It's because I can't date a guy like you without getting emotionally involved. And I can't afford to get emotionally involved—with anyone. And I thought I could at least have sex with you without getting emotional, but that didn't exactly go my way, either. So I left before I felt any more emotions than I already had. So there. I *feel* something for you. That's the answer. Happy now?"

His eyes widened, then narrowed, until he looked completely bewildered. "Kind of. But what the hell are you talking about—saying you can't afford to get emotionally involved? What does *that* mean? That some jerk hurt you and you never got over it? Because I know girls are like that sometime, and let me tell you, it's dumb to waste your life worrying about getting hurt by people."

Oh, the gall of him. "It's not like that," she snapped. "But even if it was, I wouldn't appreciate you telling me I was dumb."

He didn't apologize. "Then what's it like?"

She huffed in frustration. God, he was insufferable. She didn't want to tell him. Because she didn't like thinking about this, let alone talking about it. But if it got her uncuffed from Carter—if that's what it took to end this—fine, she would spill her guts a little more.

"It's like..." Her voice softened. "My father died."

He blinked, concern filling his green gaze. "I'm sorry."

But she shook her head. "It was a long time ago, when I was in high school. Only, the thing is, he was a cop, too, and he died on the job. And the reason he died on the job was...he was too emotionally wrapped up in my mother. She was sick at the time—cancer—and he was having a hard time dealing. His focus shifted from his work to her health, and he lost his edge. Then got shot by some idiot because of it."

She didn't think she'd ever heard Carter speak so gently, with such care, as when he said, "I'm really sorry about that, honey. It's awful. But...what does that have to do with *us*?"

Another heavy sigh escaped her. She bent her knees, not caring that her dress dropped to the tops of her thighs with the move. "I can't lose *my* edge, Carter," she explained slowly. "The day I chose to be a cop, I knew it meant placing the job above all other things, for my own safety. I made a conscious decision that I couldn't get too attached to anyone from that point forward. Guys, I mean."

He was looking at her like she wasn't making any sense. "Well, forgive me for pointing this out," he said, still speaking with care, "but don't most cops have...pretty normal lives? Like don't they get married, have kids, that sort of thing?"

She pursed her lips, glancing over just enough to meet his eyes. "Most cops, yeah. But...I guess I'm not most cops."

He shook his head. "I don't get it."

She let her head drop back, exasperated. She didn't necessarily expect him to *get* it—she just wanted him to accept it. But since he still didn't, she felt forced to dredge up yet one more personal truth. "I...feel things *deeply*, Carter. My father always said so. He said I had a 'sensitive soul'. He told me once that he was afraid my life would be more difficult because of it—because I get hurt easily, because I feel pain too long, too deep. And the truth is...he was right."

She paused, bit her lip, peered up again at the moon as if it held some deep secret she could interpret. "But my strength is that I know my weakness. I know how to combat it. And I need to ask you to respect that, even if you don't understand it."

"But..."

Ah hell, he was still going to argue. She'd just poured her heart out to him completely, and he was still going to fight her.

"Are you saying your plan, for your whole life, is to never, ever get involved with anybody? To...always be alone?"

She cautiously lifted her gaze, trying for a smile, even though her voice came too small. "It's not a death sentence. It's just how I choose to live."

“Aren’t you afraid...” His eyes narrowed, and she tried to ignore how lush and kissable his mouth looked in the shadowy light. “Aren’t you afraid of getting lonely? Maybe not now. But at some point, later? You really want to spend your whole life alone?”

Erin could have argued that she had friends and co-workers and a cat—but the ugly picture he’d just planted in her head, the thought that someday she might really feel alone in the world without a soul to turn to or a shoulder to lean on, sank down into her bones and made her defensive. “Why can’t you get it?” she snapped at him. “I don’t want to die! And I don’t want to leave behind someone who loves me to mourn! It’s selfish and I won’t do it!”

She sucked in her breath as soon as the words left her. Then dropped her gaze, shocked. “Oh God,” she murmured.

“It’s okay,” he said.

“No, it’s not.” She shook her head, staring at the ground, the grass between their bodies, Carter’s blue jeans, her own bared thighs.

“You’re mad at your dad, but that’s okay. It makes sense—it’s natural.”

She was still shaking her head, wanting to deny it, but at the same time, deeply buried emotions bubbled to the surface. “Why did he do it? Why did he keep going out there, night after night, risking his life, when he wasn’t up to the job? Why didn’t he just take a break, take a leave of absence or something?”

Carter’s free hand rose to cup her cheek, warm and strong. “Maybe he didn’t see it. Maybe he just wanted to keep on going, acting normal.”

She gazed into his eyes, trying not to let tears leak free. She never cried, never. And she could scarcely wrap her mind around all this. “I don’t want to be mad at my dad. I loved him. He was my world.” She shook her head, confused.

“It’s okay,” Carter said again. “It’s okay for you to be mad even though you loved him. And it’s okay for you to *feel* things, Erin. I mean, you’ve obviously been keeping a lot of shit bottled up inside—it’s probably good to get it out.”

She nodded, feeling numb, her heart beating too hard.

Was Carter right?

She could still hardly believe or understand it—but had she really been angry with her dad? All this time? She'd loved him so much.

And yet...maybe it was true. Maybe she was mad that he hadn't been careful enough when he was under so much stress, in so much emotional pain.

Or hell—for all she knew, although she'd never wanted to admit this to herself, maybe his death had truly been unavoidable. No one had seen it—his partner had been approaching the house from the back while he'd been in the front. Maybe he'd made no mistake; maybe there was nothing he could have done, no way to be more careful. She'd never wanted to believe that because she liked to believe a person, even a cop, was in control of his or her own life—just like she needed to believe she was in control of hers.

She didn't know the answers. She didn't know anything right now.

Except that the man attached to her at the moment with furry handcuffs was too sweet. Too kind and understanding. And too, too hot for words.

And she wanted to run away—from all these memories, all these fears, everything bad. And from Carter, too, because she'd let him see *way* too much of her tonight—hell, he'd drawn things from her that she hadn't even known were there. But she *couldn't* run...because of those damn soft red cuffs that tickled her wrist each time one of them moved.

"Are you okay, baby?"

The work-roughened fingertips of his free hand gently caressed her cheek as their gazes connected. Then his palm skimmed down her arm, his wrist barely grazing her breast, until his hand closed high on her outer thigh, shifting her legs across his, gathering her to him closer. The sheer comfort the move delivered nearly immobilized her. *This is what it is to be held by a man who cares for you.* She'd nearly forgotten how good it felt. She'd *made* herself forget.

But then she looked deeper into his eyes, her whole body sensitized as his hand slid slowly onto her ass—bare beneath the silky dress. And as another soft night breeze wafted over them, her pussy rippled, and a glance down revealed that the fabric had risen past it now, putting her on display.

She never answered his question. Just leaned closer to him. She never decided to—it just happened, her body led her there.

He leaned closer, too, until the warmth of his skin seeped into her. His mouth hovered not an inch away, and her whole body hungered. And when finally he kissed her, slowly, thoroughly, in a way she felt between her thighs, she melted deeper against him, and his hand eased farther around, over her ass, his fingertips teasing the tiny fissure in back before sinking down into her cunt.

“Ohhh...” she moaned, her chest swelling with arousal. This man did things to her she couldn’t understand—or fight.

And then came the sweet, hot intrusion—two fingers, at least, thrusting up into her wetness. “God,” she breathed. “Oh God.” She let her eyes fall shut.

He kissed her again, beginning to move his fingers in and out, and she heard her breathing match his rhythm, and her pleasure.

“Stand up,” he rasped against her lips.

She should argue. Stop this. Somehow.

But instead she eased slowly up onto her heels, those fingers inside her guiding the way, pushing her where he wanted her to go. Her whole body pulsed with need, and at the moment she was too weak to resist.

Still cuffed together, her left wrist to his right, she found herself dragging his hand with her, the soft weight of it pulling on her furred bracelet and sending a gentle frisson of passion up her arm and down through her breasts.



And then she was facing the fence, leaning toward it, locking her fingers through the chain-link squares. And his tongue was slicing up into her pussy, making her willingly spread her legs farther as she met his mouth with her mound.

"Oh Lord," she breathed. "So good."

She gripped the fence tighter, pressed her breasts to it and shut her eyes as Carter licked deep into her folds, his fingers still fucking her from behind.

"Yeah," she murmured throatily. "God, yeah."

She quit thinking, just letting her body absorb every sensation. She moved harder against his mouth. She cried out when his tongue traveled higher, raking over her clit—again, again.

Despite herself, she loved that their hands were locked together—the feeling of being confined, even just slightly, was weirdly arousing. She'd felt it when he'd chained her to the fence earlier, too. The friction at her wrists when she'd pulled at the cuffs, the way it spread through her whole body.

She met his skilled tongue, practically felt her clit swelling with blood beneath his ministrations, and slowly sank a bit lower, lower, bending her knees against the hard fence to better fuck his mouth.

"Yes, yes," she prodded through clenched teeth as the pleasure rose inside her, growing, blooming, getting bigger and bigger until the orgasm tore through her like a storm. She sobbed as the pulses thrust her pussy hard against his face and her body against the fence. "Oh! Oh!" she cried, until it waned, and she sank down into his lap, straddling him.

Like in the hotel room, he kissed her, tasting of her own juices, and she kissed him back just as feverishly, drowning in the rank intimacy of it. At the same time, they both struggled to undo his jeans, the furry cuffs not hindering them since they both worked at the same task.

When his enormous cock burst free, Erin sighed with pleasure, wrapped her loose hand around it and impaled herself without a second's delay. They both groaned at the impact, and she said, "Oh God – big," her voice rife with pleasure.

In one smooth, strong move, Carter anchored his free arm around her and laid her back on the soft, cool grass without his shaft ever leaving her. The moon shone behind his head as she looked into those intense eyes and, despite herself, relished having him on top of her. She loved her control, craved it, needed it, thrived on it – but being under this man was undeniably good. Feeling his strength, how much larger he was than her. Feeling the power of his erection as it drove into her so deep.

His cuffed hand rose to her breast, dragging hers with it as he yanked down her dress and bra to reveal one stiffened pink peak beneath the streetlight's glow. He licked it hungrily, leaving it to glisten, then tingle with pleasure as the soft breeze cooled her skin.

He massaged the mound in his hand as his shaft filled her with deep, hard strokes that echoed to her core. She wrapped her legs around his waist to pull him deeper and somehow felt even more hedonistic than she had during their three-way with Melanie. In that moment, she didn't care if anyone came upon them – she didn't care if the whole condo complex gathered around to watch them fuck.

That's when he found her hand, the one chained to his, and placed it full on her breast beneath his palm, and began to squeeze. She looked into his eyes and let him, let him make her touch herself. The chain connecting their cuffs scraped coolly across her soft flesh, adding to her excitement as he pummeled her with hard thrusts that pressed her ass into the ground.

"Harder," she said through clenched teeth. "*Harder.*" Needing to feel him more and more, needing to take every ounce of what he had to give.

His rough drives soon came with deep groans and she knew he was getting closer and closer to exploding in her. "Come, baby, deep inside me," she urged him,

remembering how, despite herself, his demands for *her* to come had helped push her to climax.

"Oh fuck, yeah," he said, voice deep, filled with a hard, masculine pleasure, and then he pounded into her still more roughly, brutal and hot and good, and she knew he was spilling his come inside her, and she'd never felt so physically satisfied.

He kissed her again, his mouth still flavored by her cunt, and they lay quiet for a long moment, recovering.

Finally, he rolled off her, lying beside her in the grass, their wrists still connected. "Damn," he said. "You get me so hot, baby." Then he turned his head to look at her and caught her already peering at him. "And I like you, Erin. So much."

His earnest tone made her feel the words in her gut. Shit. She hadn't expected him to come right out with it. She thought it was pretty clear that they were strongly drawn to each other, and that, yes—like it or not—there were emotions involved, a lot of them. But having a guy as hot and handsome as Carter come right out and simply say that he *liked* her hit her hard.

She turned her gaze back toward the sky and decided not to respond.

Because as good as this had been—as unbelievably intense and pleasurable—she had to get back to business here, the business of making him understand this had to end.

"I fucked up by letting myself be attracted to you," she said frankly. "And I fucked up worse by trying to...to stop it with sex. And I apologize for that."

She looked back to him, but couldn't read his expression until he said, "All right. Apology accepted. And thank you. For telling me everything you told me tonight."

She gave a short, precise nod, and realized it was her "cop nod", something she used on the job. And that was good—because she had to close the emotional floodgates now. Once and for all. "And I wish I could have something more with you, Carter, because...well, it's clear you're an amazing lover and also...a really nice guy." She blinked. "What I'm saying is...I like you, too. A lot."

*Oh hell, stop it. You're supposed to be closing the floodgates, not opening them wider.*

So she again withdrew her gaze, focused on the moon. "But like I told you, I can't allow myself to feel the things you make me feel. If I'd had to go to work the other night after we had sex at Caesars, I'd have been toast. I felt too much. I was thinking too hard. And I can't do that, Carter. It literally puts my life at risk."

"You're soft underneath," he said gently, simply.

"What?" When she looked at him this time, those green eyes were enough to bury her.

"You're soft underneath your sturdy cop exterior, and I love that, Erin."

She sucked in her breath, again felt his words in her chest.

Then forced out the ones *she* had to say, to make him finally grasp the situation. "But the two don't mix—soft girl, hard cop. So I have to choose. I have to be the hard cop all the time." And the further truth, although she didn't tell him, was that the contrasts between her true personality and her profession *did* make her do a lot of pretending—she'd realized that when he'd accused her of it earlier. Only maybe a lot of it was to herself—pretending it was easy to be so tough all the time, pretending she never needed anyone to lean on or a guy to love. And she talked herself into *believing* it most of the time, too, but Carter was wearing down her defenses.

"So," she went on, "I answered your questions. Honestly. I've told you things I've told no one else. That's what you wanted—an explanation for my behavior, and now you've got it."

She sat up then, thinking it was high time they got off the ground. "So now you can keep your end of the deal and unlock these cuffs, and this can be over. Because it has to be."

He sat up next to her, but she didn't look at him, just went on. "You get that now, right? It's over. You need to let me go, Carter."

"Give me a night," he said.

She shifted her eyes to his. *"What?"*

*"Give me one night to show you that you don't want to be alone. And that what you feel for me isn't bad. And that losing control of yourself can be a very good thing."*

## Chapter Six

Carter focused on the concrete beneath his feet, which he was drilling into with a jackhammer, the noise deafening to most people, but he used earplugs to protect his hearing. They were just getting started on the strip's next mega-hotel, which required destroying some old concrete on the large, otherwise empty site. The Las Vegas sun beat down hard, but he was used to it and wouldn't have traded it. He'd migrated from Boston some years back and only went home to see his family at the holidays. He would have liked seeing his parents more often, as well as his brother and sister and their growing broods, but Las Vegas provided an endless stream of work, mostly nice weather, and lots of beautiful women.

Not that he was noticing many beautiful women lately – other than Erin.

Saturday night had been unbelievable. He'd planned to confront her, get that answer and seduce her with those furry handcuffs he'd bought—but he'd never imagined how intense things would get, or that she'd end up confiding in him so deeply.

The truth was, he couldn't stop thinking about that soft girl he'd uncovered inside her. And he had the scary feeling that maybe he was...falling in love with her. He knew it was quick, but wasn't that how love worked sometimes?

He stopped the jackhammer with a sigh. Leave it to him to fall for the one chick in Las Vegas who wanted nothing to do with guys. He still thought her reasoning was pretty insane, but apparently the loss of her dad had affected her in a lot of deep ways that even *she* didn't completely understand. And he hoped like hell he could convince her, make her realize that caring for somebody could make you stronger, not weaker, if you let it. But she was so stubborn that he had his doubts.

A tap on his arm made him remove one earplug to hear the words, "Knock off for lunch, dude."

He looked up to see his buddy Drew – construction worker by day, college student by night. Although in his late twenties, Drew had just decided to pursue a degree in psychology last year. He and Carter weren't longtime friends, but they usually walked up the strip together each day at lunch to grab a burger or some tacos, so Carter had gotten to know him pretty well. He was majoring in sexual psychology – mainly, Carter suspected, because he was a horny bastard – and he generally had more wild stories to share than Carter. But he was a smart, friendly guy, too, and Carter liked him.

Laying the jackhammer down, Carter wiped his hands on his old jeans, then tossed his hardhat aside, leaving only a navy bandanna tied around his forehead. Drew followed suit, ditching a white hardhat in the gravel to reveal straight but shaggy blond hair above the five o'clock shadow already darkening his face even though it was only noon. Carter scratched his own darkly stubbled chin, aware he hadn't shaved the last couple of days. Erin was so constantly on his mind that he'd grown tired, lazy, lost in the haze of wanting her and not being sure he was going to get her.

"How's your wild lady cop?" Drew asked as they hit the sidewalk at the edge of the empty, sprawling lot.

It was only Monday, so Carter hadn't had a chance to fill Drew in on the latest. However, as they headed to a nearby McDonald's, decked out in extra neon due to its Las Vegas Boulevard address, Carter hit the high points, focusing not so much on the sex as the end result – that she'd reluctantly agreed to give him a night to make her want a relationship with him more than fear it.

"Damn," Drew said, shoving a couple of fries in his mouth as they sat at one of the brightly colored outdoor tables watching the traffic go by. "You got it bad for this girl, don't you?"

Carter wasn't too proud to be honest. "Looks like I do."

"So what's your plan? How do you convince her?"

Carter took a bite of his Big Mac and grinned. "More of what we've already been doing. Good, hot sex. Because as much as I like her with her clothes *on*, the sexual chemistry between us is..." He blew out a breath, remembering. "Fucking outrageous, man. So that's what I'm relying on."

"It's not enough," Drew said with a short, precise head shake.

Carter blinked. "Huh?"

"You haven't won her over with hot sex *yet*. You have to do something that pushes the envelope. Her issue is that she thinks losing control is going to endanger her, right?"

Carter nodded, curious to hear what Mr. Psychology Major was going to say.

"Then you have to play into her fears, turn them around."

Okay, nothing too insightful there. "Dude, I've got a brain—I already got that far on my own. Give me something new."

Drew ate a few more fries, finished his own Big Mac, then slurped on his Coke while Carter waited. Finally he said, "Look, you know the girl, I don't. But here's my advice. Whatever you do, you have to take it to extremes. You have to show the girl that surrendering can be...really hot."

"We've already used handcuffs, twice."

Drew flashed a pointed look. "Then guess you're gonna have to go *way* extreme. To the very edge. Take her where she's never been before, where she's never even thought about going—and make her love it."

As Carter sipped on his Coke, two sexy girls in short skirts and high heels, with "tourists looking to party" written all over them, smiled at him and Drew. He smiled back just to be nice, but he was thinking about Drew's suggestion.

The girls left the sidewalk and approached, looking like carbon copies of the Hilton sisters. The blonde reached up to lower big sunglasses just far enough that she could gaze seductively overtop of them. "So, boys, is it true what they say? What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas?"



"Sure is, beautiful," Drew said with a wink. "If you want to make some memories together, I'll be happy to let you leave 'em here with me when you go home to your boyfriend."

Carter zoned out into his own thoughts as one of the girls wrote down their room number at the Bellagio, and they probably thought he was a bore, but he didn't mind letting Drew take both of them. What he'd just said had Carter's mind spinning. People who visited Vegas could do wild things here, then after they left pretend they hadn't happened and didn't matter. But when you *lived* here, you didn't have that luxury. *Erin* didn't have that luxury. So maybe Drew was right. Take her to the edge, take her someplace she'd never go otherwise—someplace the soft girl inside her would feel *deeply*—and make it feel good, and right, just by virtue of the fact that he was the tour guide. Do that and how could she forget it—how could she *stop* feeling it when it was over?

Yep. Make her give him absolute and total control—and she'd see that letting someone take care of her a little would make her stronger, happier and more complete, even as a cop. Make her know that he was gonna be there for her, loving her, whether she liked it or not.

\* \* \* \* \*

"So tomorrow night's the night, huh?"

Still in her hooker garb after another long night outside the Desert Oasis, Erin glanced across the car toward Danny. They'd made three busts through the course of the evening and she was exhausted, both physically, from standing on those fuck-me platform heels all evening, and mentally, from trying to do her job while all this chaos with Carter hovered in the back of her mind. "Unfortunately," she replied, still unable to believe she'd let Carter talk her into a whole night alone with him.

"I still don't get you on this," Danny said, shaking his head. "You're crazy about the guy, and he's ga-ga over you, too, but you don't want to be around him."

She hadn't given Danny any details—basically, she'd told him they'd ended up getting involved and that despite trying to keep emotions out of it, she felt more for the guy than she was comfortable with and had called a quick end to it. Oh, and that now she'd also agreed to give him a chance to change her mind. "We've been through this before and you know how I feel about it."

Danny shrugged. "It was easier to take when I thought you were happy that way, by yourself, no one in your life but your mom and a few friends. Now I see you're really into this guy and trying to fight it, and it bugs me."

"Well, bug schmug—it's *my* life. Now can we please change the subject? What are *you* up to tomorrow night?" After working three nights in a row, they were both off tomorrow and the next day.

"Oh, you know, real exciting stuff. Dinner with Ann and the kids. Maybe rent a movie, maybe play some X-Box with Johnny."

Erin always enjoyed listening to Danny talk about his family. Even when he tried to sound bored, like now—implying that compared to her night, his would be a snorer—a contented little smile always played around his lips when he spoke about them. She let him go on talking—Johnny was playing a soccer tournament this weekend and Megan had gymnastics. The gymnastics were expensive as hell, but she loved it so much they didn't want to pull her out of it. And on it went, that little smile she could almost hear in his voice as they headed toward the downtown bureau.

Of course, once she got in her own car and headed toward her place, she no longer had Danny's life to distract her from her own. Driving through the neon jungle toward home, she couldn't help reflecting on her anger at her dad. She'd had a few days to work through that now, to understand and accept it. She couldn't believe she'd not recognized it all this time, carried it around inside her—but as Carter had reminded her, she'd gotten good at pretending, in more ways than one.

She'd even gone to her dad's grave yesterday afternoon before work, taken flowers, and told him she forgave him for leaving her and her mom alone in the world. Despite

herself, a tear had snuck out. "Maybe it made me stronger," she'd told him, kneeling there. "I hope it did. I've tried like hell to be strong, Dad." Of course, lately, her strength had felt depleted by her lust for a certain construction worker.

But she'd also made a decision—or made it more *firmly* anyway. As far as Carter was concerned, she was going to indulge in one more night of full-blown pleasure and that was it. She was going to let herself go completely during her evening with him, going to throw herself into it with reckless abandon—because the man knew how to please her and if she was going to do this, why not make it a night to remember, maybe the best of her life.

But then, after that, it was over—for real this time.

She knew now that she was simply incapable of fucking him without feeling an emotional link, yet she would just have to deal with the fallout of her brief, passionate time with him. Tomorrow night would be the last encounter in their short, tumultuous affair, and the next morning she would start the task of getting over him.

Of course, she'd still see him all the time, in the halls, looking all hot and sweaty and dirty good, but...well, maybe she'd move. She liked it here, she thought, pulling into the quiet Green Valley condo community, and she liked the friends she'd made in the building, but she knew the condo had already appreciated in value since buying it last year, and if she felt the need to put more distance between them, she could always move away. They were building *new* condos right up the street, after all.

She found parking directly in front of the building, and as she got out, she heard a familiar female voice call, "Hey, girlfriend."

She looked up to see Diana—and Marc—curled up in a lounge chair together on their balcony, situated between hers and Carter's. "Hey," she said, then glanced down at herself. "Uh, don't mind the sleazy outfit. I'm still on hooker detail."

"Mmm-mmm," Marc said, teasing her. "How do I get Diana on that?"

It was only then that she noticed Diana appeared to be wearing nothing but a slinky, silky robe, and as for what Marc wore, she couldn't tell, but it wasn't much. She

forgot sometimes what she'd slowly picked up on about her neighbors—they were freer spirits than her when it came to sex.

Disentangling herself from Marc's embrace, Diana got to her bare feet and took the few steps to the balcony's railing, resting her arms on top. Her short kimono draped open in front, flashing nearly as much round, sexy cleavage as the skimpy tank top Erin had on. She smiled down at her. "Hear you got a hot date tomorrow night with a hot guy."

Geesh, the whole world wanted to talk about this, didn't they? Well, she was going to nip this in the bud. "Yeah, but this thing with me and Carter—he's a great guy and all *and* totally hot, but...it's not gonna go anywhere."

Diana tilted her head knowingly. "Because you need to stay tough and keep your guard up and not get involved with anyone?"

Erin only sighed. "Carter has a big mouth. I keep forgetting how close you and he are."

Diana just shrugged. "He only told me because I kept asking him about you when he came over for pizza last night. And I know you probably don't want my advice, but I'm going to give it to you anyway."

Erin sighed, tried to smile. She truly liked Diana, so she would listen politely then say good night. "All right."

"Once upon a time, I, too, tried to wish away a part of myself, tried to close it up and pretend it wasn't there. Then I met Marc. And he made me realize how unhappy I was that way, and that I had to be who I really was and that it was okay to want the things I wanted. The right guy, Erin, can change your life forever, in lots of wonderful ways, if you'll only let him."

\* \* \* \* \*

The following night at seven, Erin stood at Carter's door holding a bottle of wine. It seemed crazy as she thought about it, since this wasn't a dinner party—it was a date for

sex. But she'd never had a date for sex before—well, other than the weird one she'd set up without his consent last week at Caesars Palace—so she wasn't sure what to do, what to bring or how to dress.

"Hey," he said with a smile, opening the door, taking the wine. God, he looked good. His dark hair was only slightly less rumped than usual, late-day stubble shadowed his jaw and his muscular body filled out his t-shirt and jeans just right. "Come on in," he said. "You look great."

She'd finally opted for a thin pink sweater with dark blue jeans, but his eyes roamed her body with the same look he wore when she was in her hooker costume. Of course, that made her tingle—all over. Which was good since she knew she had a crazy night of sex ahead, but bad since she knew this was the last time. She took a deep breath and tried to smile back as he showed her to the dining area off the kitchen—the condo having the same floor plan as her own.

She watched, feeling oddly shy, as Carter uncorked the Chardonnay and poured two glasses, passing her one. Their fingers touched as she took it, and he made a toast. "To...tonight. And possibilities." His eyes were playful—and possessive. And as usual with Carter, her pussy spasmed just from the way he looked at her, the forbidden promise in his gaze, as she swallowed her first sip of wine.

"By the way," he said, pointing to a pair of handcuffs—*her* handcuffs—that lay on one corner of the counter, "thought you might want those back."

Blushing slightly, she nodded. "Now that you mention it, yeah—if my sergeant knew what I'd used them for, I'd be dead meat."

"Well, I'm officially returning them. Consider it a peace offering," he told her. And her heart warmed a little—maybe this meant they were going to put all the kinky stuff behind them now.

A few minutes later, they sat down to barbecued pork chops from the grill on Carter's balcony, along with baked potatoes, corn, and rolls. "I hit up Marc and Diana for dinner ideas," he told her across the table as they both dug into the food. "But next

thing I know, they've got out this recipe book filled with complicated Italian dishes from Marc's mom. She's from Italy, so it's the real thing. And I'm not much of a cook, so I finally just threw up my hands and said, 'You know what? I'm just gonna go with something simple that I can make without screwing up'."

And in that moment, Erin nearly stopped breathing. Because he was so...real. Such a normal, simple, nice guy. So meat and potatoes, literally. Like her own dad had been. Of course, he was also impossibly hot, and every look at him had her cunt swelling more, her breasts feeling sensitive and heavy.

And the reason she couldn't breathe was—he was perfect. Her perfect man. He had it all—everything she wanted in a guy. Even when he was rough, demanding, when they were fucking, something about that became perfect. She'd never thought she could want that in a man, but when it came from Carter, it was the ideal attribute, complementing all the others he possessed.

"You okay?" he asked then.

She sucked in her breath. Got hold of herself. Nodded. "Yeah, fine. The pork chops are great," she assured him. And wondered how she'd survive the rest of the night without saying the words that were gathering inside her, almost pummeling her heart right now. *I love you.*

Did she? Love him?

Oh God, she feared she really did.

Which meant getting over him and moving on was going to be a hell of a lot harder than she'd realized. But she still had no choice—she had to do it. The way she saw it, Carter and her job couldn't co-exist in her life peacefully—one of them had to go. And her job meant so much to her—until Carter had come along, it had been pretty much *everything*, and she just couldn't give it up.

As the meal continued, Carter told her how he'd grown up in a whole family of construction workers, but when the seasonality of the business in his native Boston had gotten to be too uncertain for him, he'd decided to make a drastic move west. He'd been

to Las Vegas on vacation before, and for a couple of bachelor parties, and he'd liked it enough to make a home here.

With some prodding, Erin told him a little more about *her* life—growing up nearby, the daughter of a cop. She explained that she'd always straddled the line between tomboy and girly-girl, even having to choose one year between being a cheerleader and a track and field star.

"What'd you choose?"

"Track and field. I like to win," she told him, smiling.

"About your dad," he said then, speaking more quietly, "I hope you're okay. I mean, after the stuff we talked about the other night."

She nodded, sorry they'd delved that quickly back into a serious topic, but she appreciated his concern. "Yeah, I'm fine, don't worry."

"Do you see your mom a lot? Is she...I mean, did she get over losing your dad?"

Erin stiffened a little, because the answer, she understood now, related to her personal relationship issues. "It took her a very long time for her to adjust to life without him. They were...pretty crazy in love. But..." She let her tone change to a more hopeful one. "She got remarried a couple of years ago to a nice guy named Tom. And yeah, I go over for dinner once every couple of weeks, and she and I go shopping or out to lunch pretty often. We're...close, she and I."

"I'm not surprised," he said with a gentle smile.

"Why not?"

He shrugged. "Gotta be close to somebody." The unspoken part was, *And you sure don't let yourself get close to anybody else.*

After dinner, Erin helped him clear the table, but standing near him in the kitchen got her hot, quick, all over again. And the moment they bumped arms at the counter, Carter looked down at her and their eyes met, and he swooped in for a kiss. She nearly

dropped the plates in her hands, and a second later, his strong arms were easing around her from behind and he was whispering in her ear, "Put those down."

Her whole body flooded with warmth as she lowered the dishes into the sink and fought the urge to lean back into the erection she could feel growing in his pants.

"I have to tell you," he said, leaning closer to her ear, his voice as intoxicating as the wine, "I loved talking to you over dinner, just spending time with you. But I'd also be lying if I said I haven't been waiting all damn day to get close to you again, to get inside your sweet, perfect pussy."

She gasped, that particular part of her body grown heavy with anticipation. Then she turned in his arms, because she could no longer resist. Besides, she'd decided to throw herself into this, right? For this one last night? So she was ready — oh so ready.

Looping her arms around his neck, she pulled him down for a long, deep kiss, tongues swirling slowly as she pressed her body to his. Mmm, he was so hard — not just his delectable cock, but his stomach, his broad chest, the thick arms that closed around her. Construction work had built a very nice body on this man.

His hands dropped to her ass then, pressing her tighter against his crotch. Oh God, he was so big. She hadn't forgotten, yet it somehow felt brand new just to have that rock-like column stretching up her center.

"Do you remember the rule for tonight?" he asked.

She swallowed. God, had she really agreed to this? Unbelievably, in a moment of weakness, she had — so she had no choice but to nod.

His deep voice colored the dark words, making them sound just as forbidden — and frightening — as they were. "You let me have you however I want you. You don't say no to *anything*."

She couldn't seem to speak — there was a lump of trepidation in her throat — so she only nodded again. Agreed again. To let him. Do anything. And *everything*.



And it occurred to her that she had the power to stop it—she could disagree right now, tell him she'd changed her mind. But the cold, hard truth was, she didn't want to. For this one night in her life, she wanted—amazingly—to have the control taken away from her.

## **Chapter Seven**

“Wrap around me,” Carter said, then hoisted Erin up into his arms, her legs twining around his thighs, her ass in his hands. He kissed her, angling his mouth first one way, then another, as he carried her down the hall into a bedroom done in light but masculine shades of beige and sage green. The window was open, admitting a gentle breeze, but darkness had fallen, so the only light in the room came from the overhead, which she decided must be on a dimmer switch.

And only as he lay her back on the bed did she realize that a crisp, white sheet stretched beneath her, standing out from the rest of the room’s décor and clearly placed here especially. Her man, it seemed, had a plan—dimmer switch, white sheet—she just had no idea what the plan entailed or how worried she should be.

Easing between her legs, he lay down atop her, kissing her over and over, each kiss taking her deeper into desire. She liked this, just kissing him, clothes on, like normal people—not like crazy cops arresting him and cuffing him to a bed, or him chaining her to the fence a few nights ago. The crux of her thighs grew just as hot from this, simply making out with him.

She didn’t mind at all when he pushed her sweater up, sliding the soft fabric over her breasts. “Mmm, look at this,” he said, peering down at her cleavage as he brushed his thumbs over her nipples. “A pretty pink bra under your pretty pink sweater.”

She smiled, then rose slightly, letting him take the sweater over her head. “Pink panties, too,” she volunteered, feeling more comfortable now, less afraid of what the evening would hold.

He raised his eyebrows. “Let me see.” Then unzipped her jeans.

She lifted her rear from the white sheet to let him pull them down until they were around her bent knees. He lay on his side next to her now, propped on one elbow,

running his palm over the panties, just above her mound. "Perfect," he whispered, and she bit her lip, feeling pretty and sexy and ready for more.

"Take yours off, too," she said.

He made a tsking noise and reminded her, "Who's in charge here?"

She rolled her eyes playfully. "Forgot." Then let her voice go silky, seductive. "But I want you naked. I want to see that big, beautiful cock."

He grinned, both teasing and lascivious. "I like when you talk that way. Keep that up, and I might have to give you what you want."

She just giggled, kicking off her jeans the rest of the way and delighting as his hands closed over her breasts, squeezing, molding, making her cunt surge with moisture. "Mmm," she purred throatily.

"You like that?" he whispered, his voice taking on a naughty edge.

"Mmm, yes."

"I'm gonna make you feel so good tonight, baby. I'm gonna make you feel things you've never felt before. I'm gonna make you...mine."

Her toes practically curled at the promise. Or was it a threat? Either way, her entire body tingled as Carter drew the bra straps from her shoulders to begin kissing his way across her chest, and by the time he drew the cups away from her breasts, it felt like a glorious release, like she'd been trapped but was now free.

Cupping the outer sides of the two mounds in his big, rough hands, he licked and kissed first one taut nipple, then the other. She liked watching, and threaded her fingers through his thick hair to make sure he knew she wanted more of his hot mouth there. Licking her upper lip as she let herself get lost in the simple pleasure, she arched her breasts higher, thrusting one nipple deeper into Carter's mouth. He suckled her, soft at first, but then hard, in a way that shot straight to her cunt. She writhed on the bed, rubbing against him, hungry for more stimulation, everywhere.

Still kissing her breasts, he reached behind her to smoothly unhook her bra, then drew it down her arms and flung it away. Next he rose to his knees and lowered her pink panties. "I've never had you completely naked," he told her, all playfulness gone from his voice. "Tonight I'm having you naked."

The panties hit the floor, too, and he used both strong hands to part her thighs wide. She wondered if he could see how wet she was, and if her pussy was parted, open for him.

He studied her for a moment then smiled wickedly. "More pink."

Question answered.

Erin was as on fire for him as she'd ever been, and waited for him to sink his mouth to her cunt, or to finally open his pants and maybe sink his nice, stiff shaft there instead.

Which was when he eased his body up onto hers once more, skimmed his palms up her arms, urging them over her head, giving her the feel of being stretched out and on display beneath him – and proceeded to handcuff her to the damn bed.

She felt the fur, heard the clicks, and looked up above her to see that his bed possessed convenient twists of wrought iron, perfect for cuffing. It shouldn't have surprised her, but it did. And it also *reminded* her – he was in control here, he *did* have a plan, and they weren't just making out like "normal people" anymore. They were about to travel back to the land of "beyond normal" again, and that both bothered and unwittingly aroused her.

Now that she was cuffed, Carter leaned back on his knees and studied her, from her fur-bound wrists to her pretty little toes. Like it or not, he *was* developing a light bondage fetish – she looked too hot this way – and it was all her fault.

Dropping his gaze to her pussy, his mouth watered. She was open and glistening for him, ready for all the dirty surprises he was about to give her. He planned to pull out some pretty serious stops here in hopes of finally making her understand that control could be vastly overrated. And now to let the games begin.

Stroking one thumb gently through the open pink folds between her thighs, he listened to her pretty sigh. "You have a beautiful little cunt, honey," he said, his voice deep with the lust thrumming through his veins. "And I'm gonna make it even *more* beautiful."

With that he reached over the far side of the bed, raising the tray he'd placed there up onto the mattress. It held shaving cream, a razor, a bowl of water, aloe gel, a small towel and a shaving mirror usually stuck on the wall in his shower. She gasped at the sight and it made his dick harder. This was why he'd put the white sheet under her — things were about to get a little messy.

She seemed barely able to speak. "You're going to, going to..."

"Shave you," he finished for her.

"But I...I..."

Maybe he was a bastard, but something in him enjoyed her fear just now. "You what?"

He liked that it took her a minute to figure out what she was afraid of. "What if you...cut me?"

He just shook his head. The truth was, he'd shaved a woman before. It had been one of the most erotic things he'd ever experienced. And he knew he could be gentle enough not to hurt her. "You have to trust me here, baby. Because you have no other choice."

He knew it was a harsh thing to say, but tonight was going to *be* harsh. A harsh sort of pleasure designed to break through her irrational fears. Maybe it was a gamble, but hey, this was Vegas. He'd decided it was a risk worth taking.

She didn't answer — but she also didn't close her legs, still lying before him on the bed, thighs spread wide, those slender arms stretched to the headboard above her.

And she didn't flinch when he began to smooth the fluffy white shaving cream onto her dark, curling pubic hair—even if he *did* feel her muscles tighten a little. With fear? Or arousal? He hoped it was a good dose of both.

He took his time, covering her thoroughly, enjoying the feel of her mound beneath his fingertips and thinking of the soft skin he was about to reveal. He'd chosen a disposable ladies' razor during his trip to the drug store, and now held it up for her to see. "Pink," he said, teasing just a little. Only a hint of a smile crossed her face before she looked tense again.

"Hold still now," he warned as he took the first gentle stroke over her pussy.

She sighed in response, and his chest went tight as the first tuft of hair came away, revealing the smooth white skin underneath.

Dipping the razor in the water to rinse it, he returned for another smooth, soft swipe over her most sensitive area. The move drew another sigh from her, and her body relaxed a little. He kept his eyes on his task and continued working, stroke after stroke, unveiling her cunt a little more with each. And soon, just as he'd known it would, her sighs came deeper, and her expression softened into more arousal than fear.

He shaved her completely, leaving not even a strip of hair above her slit. When he'd said he wanted her completely naked, he'd meant it. By the time he was done, his arms and hands felt weighted, tingly—from careful movements and an excitement that had built more with each swipe the razor had made.

Dropping it in the dish of water at his side, he took the towel to wipe away the remnants of white shaving cream still streaking her flesh. She shivered as he did it, and—oh God—when the towel dropped away, she was fucking beautiful. Truly bared for him now.

Pulling in his breath, and trying not to come in his pants at the mere sight of her naked feminine flesh, he next reached for the aloe, squirting some on his fingertips, then sensually rubbing it in, all over her pretty cunt, until her smooth skin glistened with it.

Her voice came shaky as she tried to look down at herself. "Are you done?"

He nodded.

"Can I...look?"

He'd almost forgotten, but loved her request and reached over to grab up his shaving mirror with the little suction cups on back. He held it between her still-spread legs, angling it slightly upward. "Can you see it?"

She nodded, then visibly swallowed. Said nothing, but looked as impassioned as he felt. "Why did you do it?" she finally asked, sounded perplexed.

He cast a wicked grin. "The better to see you. The better to eat you. The better to fuck you."

She sucked in her breath. "Oh."

And now that he had seen her, he decided it was time to eat her.

Setting mirror and tray aside on the floor, Carter bent between her legs, still studying the freshly revealed flesh there, and used his hands to part it wider. So hot and pink and wet, her scent a mixture of shaving cream and the salty-sweet smell of her own wetness. Dragging his tongue up her deep, moist slit now was like a journey through a slick, smooth valley, nothing to get in his way. So he licked her from the very bottom of her pussy all the way to the swollen pink nub at the top, again, again, listening to her hot sighs evolve into high, breathy moans.

He stroked his fingers over the denuded skin at each side of her cunt, loving the soft feel of it, and through it all, he gazed up over her mound, through the beautiful swells of her breasts and into her eyes. She looked lost in passion now, just how he wanted her. Just how he needed her. Because she was going to have to surrender a lot more than just her pubic curls before this night was over. And he was more determined than ever to make her see things his way.

He licked her vigorously, soon pushing two fingers up inside her, into the swallowing warmth of her passage. "Oh!" she said when they entered her, and he wanted more now, more than her gentle responses—he wanted to *make* her feel him, get her good and ready for the various forms of fucking to come.

So he drove his fingers hard and deep, as deep as he could plunge them into her, and he licked her hard. It got him hot to take those long languid trips through her pink valley, to feel her wetness all around his mouth, to sense her pussy trying to swallow him, wrap around him—but he soon rose to concentrate on her clit, because he wanted to make her come now.

He took it between his teeth, biting lightly and making her cry out. Then he swirled his tongue around it, listening to her pant and moan and struggle against her cuffs. Finally, he locked his mouth onto that hungry little knob of flesh and sucked, sucked, the same way he would her nipple. And the thought urged him to reach up with his free hand to tweak one hard little bead, pinching just lightly as he pushed her harder toward climax.

Her low moans and eager thrusts at his mouth told him it was near, and a tremendous cry left her as the orgasm broke. He kept sucking her clit, riding it out with her, her whole body undulating as she came. He only let loose with his mouth when she went limp beneath him, her breath coming like someone who'd just run a great distance.

He kissed her right above her slit and peered up at her beautifully flushed face. "I love to make you come."

She seemed capable only of nodding, but looked well-pleasured, making him smile. Lazily caressing her hips, thighs, tummy, he let her recover, eyes shut.

But soon she opened them again and spoke softly. "What now?"

*Now*, he thought, things were gonna get really good and dirty.

*Now* he was gonna take her places she'd never been. This was the point of no return.

But he didn't tell her that. In fact, he didn't answer at all. Instead, he reached back over the side of the bed and drew out...what looked like some kind of strange whip.

Erin gasped, jerking her handcuffs against the wrought iron. "What the hell is *that*?" Still recovering from an orgasm that had blasted through her like a rocket, she could



scarcely believe Carter had actually shaved her cunt—and now *this*? Some kind of medieval-looking cat-o'-nine-tails thing? It was made of black leather, with a long, thick, rounded handle that led to loose-hanging leather strips reminiscent of a horse's tail.

"It's called a flogger, honey."

She swallowed, strange dread rolling through her. "Are you...going to beat me with it?"

Much to her confusion, Carter laughed. "No, baby," he said, a kind look taking over his dark features. "I would never hurt you. Not *really* hurt you."

"What does *that* mean?"

His face went more serious again. "Sometimes a little pain can produce a lot of pleasure. But I would never hurt you, Erin, I promise."

Uh-huh. On one hand, she was relieved, but on the other, it was hard to believe him while he sat there holding that thing. "Then...what are you going to do with it?"

"Just this," he said, then extended the tail end of the flogger out over her body, lowering it so the strips of leather came to rest at her breastbone. He dragged the tool gently downward, between her breasts, over her stomach, and she shuddered at the shivery pleasure it produced, like being tickled with great, heavy feathers.

"And maybe this," he added, then brushed the leather stripping over her clit. This time, the effect was so strong that she gasped, the sensation bursting sweetly through her.

"Maybe other things, too," he went on, his voice dropping an octave, "but I'll make you like them." He set the flogger aside on the bed and said, "Now tell me what you want, honey." And as if there was any doubt, he glanced down toward the prominent bulge in his jeans.

Everything inside her thickened at the demand—despite her orgasm, despite her worries over the flogger, she remained completely turned on, because she'd been waiting for this so long now. "Your cock," she said. "I want your cock."

Masculine pleasure passed through his green gaze as he finally reached down to yank the t-shirt over his head. She loved the sight of his muscular chest, but was still waiting, watching, as he stood up, unzipped, and let his jeans fall to his ankles. He pushed his briefs down, too, and *finally* that perfect male specimen came into view, stretching up past his navel, solid and ready for her.

Without meaning to, she licked her upper lip, then lifted her eyes to find Carter watching her. "Glad you're still hungry," he told her, and her chest tightened.

Climbing back onto the bed, Carter lifted one knee over her chest, and she remembered straddling *him* the same way during their Caesars Palace liaison. And to have his majestic shaft hovering directly above her now was intimidating as hell—because she was chained up, and he was going to push it into her mouth, going to *fuck* her mouth, and she'd have no choice in the matter, no way to back off if it was too much. But, despite herself, she also *wanted* it. She hungered, not only to suck his cock, but to let herself go to that darker place, to know what it felt like to give up *that* much control.

First, though, Carter angled his body so that his erection pressed directly to her chest, between her breasts, then he used both hands to push the mounds up around it. "Oh..." she sighed, shocked by the raw pleasure. Melanie had wrapped Erin's breasts around him, too, but she'd already forgotten the indescribable delight of having something so hard against a part of her that was so soft.

As he fucked her that way, his gaze shifted from her breasts to her eyes and back. He made longer, deeper strokes until the tip of his cock came close to her mouth with each drive, until he said, "Open up, honey."

She did, letting the head of his shaft enter her parted lips.

Oh God, yes, he felt so good there, and she welcomed it each time, sucking the head, then letting it back out. Carter dragged the wet tip down between her breasts with those long, smooth moves to moisten her there and make his passage easier, slicker, like gliding into her mouth or her pussy.

Finally, though, he eased his way farther up her body, his knees balanced astride her arms where they stretched over her head, and he slid his length full into Erin's mouth.

He didn't go too far, expect too much, just pushed in halfway, then drew back out, again, again.

Erin had never felt dirtier—in a thrilling way. To have let a man chain her up. To let him put her beneath him and fuck her mouth. Her lifelong instincts, of course, urged her to scream out, protest, somehow break free. But her body, and the lusty woman at her core, discovered she loved being at his mercy, loved having to surrender her control, loved being like a sex slave to him. She couldn't understand why—she only knew she'd never felt as wholly like a sexual being as she did in this moment, by letting herself go, letting herself explore these new sexual waters with a man who, like it or not, she cared for.

He moved his shaft in and out of her mouth for a long while, until her lips were stretched, sore, and tired. But their eyes met the whole time, and she could only imagine how she must look, and something about the power in that, the freedom to be that dirty, that obscene, inspired her to continue for as long as he wanted.

Finally, he pulled out—only to carefully turn around and straddle her once more, facing the opposite way.

"What—"

"Shhh," he said, then reinserted his cock between her lips, effectively quieting her.

Strange, her mouth was so tender, but she welcomed it back anyway, wanting to pleasure him still more.

He leaned forward over her until he was on hands and knees. Still sucking him, she could see through the space between their bodies, and she thought he might lick her pussy some more. The poor thing was starting to feel neglected, so she found herself lifting, arching her ass slightly toward him—a silent request.

But then he reached for the flogger.

Oh. She sucked in her breath. He was going to rub her with it. Okay. Fine. She didn't even care, so long as she got some stimulation down there.

And yet...why was he turning it around, holding onto it by the tail?

His cock still thrust in firm, even strokes between her lips as he—oh God, he was positioning the leather handle at her cunt. Like a dildo!

That's when she saw it—the end was shaped that way, and just the right size. Not a lifelike representation and it was not quite as big or thick as Carter, but indeed, someone had designed it with dual purposes in mind.

"Ohhh!" she cried around his shaft as he pushed the handle into her, all the way.

Without responding to her reaction, he began to fuck her with it, to slide it in and out in the same rhythm as he moved in her mouth.

Oh Lord, it was too much stimulation. One cock in her mouth, and something very *like* a cock in her cunt. It was too much and too *good*.

That quickly, she was lost to it, consumed by it.

She sobbed around his shaft as he filled her at both ends. She shut her eyes and simply absorbed the pummeling pleasure that was enough to overwhelm her. It drove away thought or worry or wonder or decision—and it left only sensation. Hot, consuming sensation like she'd never experienced before.

She had no idea how long he fucked her that way, only that when it stopped, she felt almost numb with pleasure. She no longer even thought about the fact that she was cuffed to the bed. She no longer thought about being at his mercy. She no longer

worried about what would come next. She simply *was*. She was his willing, content sex toy.

And unlike other times, he didn't ask if she was okay. He didn't say anything soothing or sweet. He only withdrew the handle after a long while and said, "Turn over, on your knees."

She hadn't realized it, but having the cuffs looped only around one little bit of wrought iron made it so that she could easily flip in the bed without them being removed.

"Good girl," he said deeply as she turned. "Now draw your knees up under you."

She did so.

"That's right," he told her. "But lift your ass some."

She followed the instruction, still aware of little more than obedience and pleasure.

That's when he brought the strips of the flogger down across her bottom in a soft but stinging slap. She flinched, yet felt the surge of heat rippling through her, centering in her pussy.

"Tell me you're a bad girl."

She never thought of not doing it. "I'm a bad girl."

He smacked her with the flogger again—the other side of her rear this time. "Tell me you're a bad girl for ever fighting me."

"I'm a bad girl for ever fighting you."

Another snap of the leather on her ass. Mmm, yes—so hot, delicious. "Tell me *you* want what *I* want, whatever I demand of you."

"*I* want what *you* want, whatever you demand."

And then things got blurry, strange. She couldn't see him any longer, so she had closed her eyes and now only absorbed. He used his hands to knead her bottom—and then, then, he dragged one finger down the valley of her ass, ever so slowly, and when he reached her anus, he stopped...circled...*rubbed*.

She bit her lip. What an odd sensation. It almost felt good.

He rubbed some more and...it *definitely* felt good. Who knew?

And then...wetness there, something cool and gooey. The aloe from before?

Whatever it was, he was rubbing it into her, lots of it, and after that, oh God! He pushed one fingertip into the fissure and she sobbed with the shock of pleasure. Behind her, his breath came heavier, audible. She realized both of her cuffed hands gripped the wrought iron of the headboard, tight.

His finger slid deeper, deeper, all the way. Oh Lord. So good. Strange. A bizarre sort of intrusion where she'd never really imagined one before. But a *welcome* intrusion. She even heard herself whimper, "Yes."

He slid his finger in and out, in and out, as Erin sank deeper into the strange, murky delight the penetration delivered. Maybe the wine earlier was finally setting in, making her feel fully drunk now, or maybe *surrendering to Carter* had made her drunk. Whatever the case, she was no longer in control of her responses.

When his finger disappeared, she didn't worry—she knew something else would come, and she waited patiently to see what it would be.

Yet, for some reason, she hadn't expected what she got—the leather handle of the flogger nudging at her ass. "Oh Lord," she heard herself whisper when she realized.

"Relax, baby." His voice was soothing now, but that was all he said.

So she tried to relax. It wasn't hard—she was so aroused now, and so into him, into whatever he wanted to give her.

At first, she thought it wouldn't fit. He prodded, gently, then began to move it rhythmically against her, and it felt impossibly thick for that particular hole—until, suddenly, it went in.

"Jesus," she said, assaulted by a head rush that accompanied its entry. And like before, with his finger, the pleasure was...strange. New and different. She was experiencing it *because* of him. And *for* him. "Yes," she said again, just to let him know

she truly wanted this. Yesterday, she wouldn't have. An hour ago, no. But he had intoxicated her, and now it was easy to just let go and *feel*.

"Oh...ohhh..." she moaned as the handle edged deeper into her ass, filling her impossibly. Behind her, Carter groaned, too.

Every nerve ending in her body tingled, tensed, as he began to move the flogger in and out, and she wondered—strangely—if she looked like she had a tail. The leather strips tickled her from behind. "God, oh God," she sobbed, pushing gently at the tool, amazed when Carter was able to thrust it in and out with relative ease.

"So good, baby," he murmured hotly over her. "Your sweet little ass is taking this so good."

*I love you.*

Shit—she almost said it. Now, of all odd times. She bit her lip, shoved the words back, resumed only feeling, not thinking. Maybe that was safer for a *lot* of reasons.

And then...he pulled the flogger out. And she moaned at the emptiness it left behind, but once more felt patient, waiting to see what came next from her lover.

"Now," he said, suddenly close to her, and she opened her eyes to see him right next to her, his face on the pillow near hers, "is where you really have to trust me, honey." He looked so serious. And so hot.

Her first thought was, *Anything, I'll do or be or give you anything you want.*

But the break in the action had brought back at least a small pinch of sanity, so she stayed quiet, only met his gaze, only gave a small nod.

"Good," he whispered. And then he covered her eyes with a black blindfold.

She sucked in her breath, but he said nothing to reassure her, only tied it tight behind her head.

Then she sensed him leaving the room. Oh Lord. Where the hell was he going?

Her heart beat wildly in her chest, but she told herself to calm down. She'd kept her eyes shut through a lot of this anyway. And she'd wanted to be his slave, his toy, hadn't

she? That was hard for her to accept, but she couldn't deny it now. And the reality of it girded her for whatever was to come. *You want to be his sex slave tonight. He said he would never hurt you. That's all you need to know.*

That's when she sensed him joining her in the bed again, when warm hands closed firm but gentle at her bare hips.

Carter said, "Get on your hands and knees," but his voice sounded farther away than he actually was.

She pushed up onto her knees, and she couldn't brace her hands on the bed due to the cuffs, but found leverage by gripping the wrought iron again. She arched her ass upward, so ready to be fucked she wondered how she'd withstood waiting for it this long. "Please," she begged. She knew she shouldn't ask, knew he was calling the shots, but she couldn't help it. "Please give it to me. Please fuck me."

The hands on her hips flexed, tightened, then his large cock eased smoothly inside her cunt. She moaned deeply, always stunned by how big he was inside her, the way he filled her body so wonderfully.

"Is it good, baby?" His voice still sounded strange, distant.

She nodded beneath her blindfold. "God, yes."

"Good. That's so good."

And then he began to move, to pound in hard, deep strokes that stretched all through her. He felt different than before somehow—in some way she couldn't explain—but still powerful and oh-so pleasing. Her body felt hypersensitive—her orgasm seemed a long time ago now, and she'd had so much stimulation to every part of her body since then that she simply wanted to be fucked, wanted to take it as hard as he could give it. She mewled and cried out with his strokes, listened to his breath and her own, and thrust back against him.

Until he went still and...and...oh God, what was happening?



A pair of hands closed over her shoulders. Only...Carter's hands were still on her ass. Weren't they? What...what *was* this? How could this be? There were too many hands.

Then she sensed a leg grazing her side, the curve of her waist—but Carter's cock was still inside her, his thighs still stretching along the backs of hers, so this made no sense.

"Carter?" she asked.

"I'm here," he assured her, his voice suddenly near her ear, the warmth of his body stretching across her back. "Don't worry."

"But what's —"

"Shhh," he told her like once before. "This is so fucking good, baby, and you're so damn beautiful. Don't be afraid. Just trust me. That's your job right now. Trust me. And let yourself feel good."

Erin could hardly breathe. She began to understand then...the man who'd just been fucking her, who was *still* fucking her, wasn't Carter!

Who the hell was it? Was he young, old? Would she find him physically appealing? Was he using protection? God, how could this be?

And now Carter was going to...what was he going to do? What were the *two of them* going to do to her *together*? This was insane! How could Carter do this to her?

The controlling part of herself thought of screaming, fighting, stopping this. He'd said he wouldn't hurt her, so if she freaked out, he'd stop—she knew it.

So maybe she should do that. Stop this somehow. Because it was insane. Impossible.

And yet her body roiled with sensation.

What she'd just found out had startled her, but it hadn't killed her excitement.

And the truth was, with two men's hands now on her, and with one cock in her pussy and another rubbing stiffly against the small of her back as Carter reached

around to caress her breasts, her arousal blossomed anew. It blossomed *immeasurably*, her body going crazy hot at the wild and unexpected turn things had taken.

She heard her own moan and knew as she arched, thrusting her cunt against the cock inside it and her breasts into Carter's grasp, that she wasn't going to stop this. Instead, she was going to do what Carter had told her to—what she'd been doing all night. She was going to trust him, and she was going to *feel* this.

Because she *could*. She *could* trust Carter. She *wanted* to. And she knew in her heart that his promise was true—he'd never hurt her.

And this was still just as insane as it had been a minute ago, but the insane part now was that she wanted it. For *herself*. And for Carter.

The mystery man behind her fucked her deeply as Carter continued touching her, kissing her shoulders, her back. His cock rested in the valley of her ass and she grew nearly overwhelmed with envisioning what they must look like on the bed together and wondering how close Carter's cock was to his friend's and if he took any pleasure from being close to another naked guy right now.

But her focus shifted and such pondering ceased when the head of Carter's big shaft pushed at her asshole.

Oh Lord. He'd been getting her ready. Ready for *this*. Ready to fuck her ass while another man fucked her pussy.

Jesus God, would they both fit? Would she be able to stand it?

She drew in a ragged breath, tense, heart pounding, wanting this—wanting them both in her—like she'd never wanted anything before. She yearned to be reckless and hedonistic for Carter, because he made it okay for her to express her most forbidden desires, things she'd never even wanted before meeting him.

Behind her, he moved slowly, gently, and she could tell he'd rubbed more of the aloe on his shaft because when it began to glide in, it felt slick and cool and then went instantly deep. "Oh!" she cried.

"Is it okay?"

"Mmm," she said, nodding. More than okay. It was unbelievable. Astounding. Impossibly filling.

And when they both began to move, pumping their cocks in and out of her—oh! She felt it in every inch of her body—she pulsed with pleasure from the top of her head to the tips of her toes. Sensation buffeted her everywhere. From the pressure of the blindfold around her head to the fur rubbing on her wrists to the many hands that roamed her skin. She cried out as they pummeled her most sensitive areas with thrust after hard thrust, feeling at once high, lost, dizzy, heady and consumed with heat. Her sobs turned to screams. How could a body feel this much?

But then, oh God, came even more—when the tail of the flogger was thrust between her thighs from underneath. She didn't even know which man wielded it and didn't care—she only knew that the leather strips rubbed and teased her pussy, and oh! Oh! She was going to come. That fast. "I'm coming!" she yelled. "I'm coming!"

And as the release blasted through her, more powerful than anything she'd ever experienced, she heard Carter say, "Christ—me, too," and felt the strange wonder of him spilling his seed in that newly opened orifice. She'd barely recovered from that when the other man let out a huge groan and drove deep, deep, deep into her pussy.

After which she collapsed on the bed, unable to bear even one more sensation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Erin didn't know how much time had passed, only that she'd slept. And that Carter was slipping the blindfold from her eyes and then unlocking her handcuffs.

She drew her arms down, feeling strange to be untethered. Her lover lay next to her, close, his eyes focused tightly on hers. They were the only two in the room. "I'm just going to say this, Erin," he told her, his voice deep and serious. "I'm in love with you."

Oh. Oh God.

“I made you give up your precious control tonight, and I know you loved it, so don’t deny it. And I proved that losing control of yourself can bring you more pleasure than you ever even imagined.”

He looked at the red fur handcuffs in his fist and said, “So now you’re free. To stay or to go. I hope you’ll stay.”

## Chapter Eight

When Carter woke up in the middle of the night, she was gone.

He knew the outrageous sex had really happened because the evidence remained — the red cuffs on the bed, along with the flogger and the tray of shaving supplies on the floor. But Erin and all her clothes were gone.

Shit.

He'd done all he could do. And hell, maybe he'd gone *too* far, too extreme, bringing Drew in to give her the ultimate fuck without giving her a choice. But he'd known she would never agree if he'd asked her and he'd also known she would relish it—and she had. And, all things being equal, he didn't see it as being much different than her and her girlfriend fucking him at the hotel, which is what had started all this.

It had been...the most profound, intense sexual experience of his life. Up until meeting Erin, that honor had lay firmly with the night he'd spent with Marc and Diana a few years ago—but Erin had changed everything.

He'd fallen in love with her, fast.

And she'd run from him, just as fast.

And the fact that she'd left now, tonight, after all they'd shared...hell, he'd tried his best to be patient and help her overcome her hang-ups, but he wasn't gonna beg anymore.

Part of him was tempted to—part of him didn't want to give up on her, ever. But with a girl as stubborn as Erin, he had a feeling he could beg all his life and until she decided to change, be brave and take a chance on love, nothing he could do would change *anything*.

He loved her, and he feared this was gonna kill him—but he was done chasing the lady cop.

\* \* \* \* \*

“You’re an idiot,” Danny said when Erin slid into the beat-up Nissan next to him.

She just glared. But he was right. She’d gotten too close to a guy soliciting her tonight—trying too hard to make him say the words, offer the money—until he’d grabbed her arm and tried to pull her into his car with him.

“Do you have any idea how fucking stupid that was? What if he’d gotten you in that car, Sparks? What if I hadn’t been able to get to you? What then?”

She let out a huff of breath. “Look, I know, okay? I screwed up.” *Just like my dad once did.*

And she’d been preoccupied, just like her dad once had.

She’d been quietly mourning how much she missed Carter, and how she’d hurt Carter, and how much she still *lusted* for Carter—and when a car had pulled to the curb, she hadn’t been ready, hadn’t had her game face on. It had thrown everything off—and she’d soon found herself in real danger. Thank God Danny and the guys had been quick to respond.

“If anything happened to you...” Danny said, then shook his head. “I couldn’t take it, Sparks. So you gotta be careful out there, got it?”

She sighed, nodded, feeling contrite.

“And you gotta get that guy off your mind, since I know good and well what you were thinking about out there tonight instead of your job.”

And that’s when it hit her.

Square in the face.

Plain as day.

Bright as the neon lights that lined the Las Vegas Strip.

"I've been so stupid," she said quietly, amazed.

He raised his eyebrows. "Oh?" He sounded as taken aback as she felt.

"All these years, I've been angry at my dad for letting worries over someone he loved cloud his brain when he was on the job. And I'm doing the exact same thing."

Now Danny blinked and went smug. "And this is news to you?"

She blinked back. "Yes. Because...I thought by staying out of a relationship, it would protect me. But instead, fighting it so hard is causing the same exact problem."

"No shit, Sherlock."

She scowled at him slightly, but then sank back into her thoughts. She was endangering herself just as much by denying her love for Carter as she'd feared she would if she got into a relationship with him.

Which kinda meant she'd be just as well off in a relationship with him.

At least then – well, if everything went all right, if he didn't break her heart – she'd have a pretty good chance of being happy, *really* happy. And a happy cop surely meant a safe and alert cop.

"Can you do me a favor?" she asked Danny, her heart beginning to beat erratically. "Can you drive me home? Not back to the bureau for my car – just straight to my place? I need to get to Carter – now. In fact, floor it. This can't wait."

Danny smiled over at her and said, "Sounds like you finally got your head out of your ass, Sparks." Then he pulled the blue dome light from under the old car's seat, set it on the dash, turned it on and sped toward Erin's condo.

For the whole ride, Erin's mind whirled. She'd just decided to declare her love for Carter and – oh Lord – nothing had ever felt so overwhelmingly right. So good. So...*safe*. He would make her safe, in every way, she just knew it. It was suddenly so, so clear.

"Honk the horn," she said when Danny screeched the car into the parking lot, racing toward her building.

"Are you sure?"

"Honk it!" she insisted.

He honked, two long blares of the horn, and Erin jumped out of the car, looking anxiously up at Carter's balcony. "Carter!" she yelled. "Carter Brooks! I love you!"

A moment later, Carter's balcony door opened and he stepped out, looking confused as he peered down, then said, "Erin? What the hell's going on?"

"I love you!" she cried again. "I've been so stubborn, hanging on to insane fears, but I've just figured out—there are no guarantees in life, Carter. Maybe you'll hurt me or maybe you won't. Maybe the sky will fall tomorrow, too—who can say? But it's stupid to waste my life worrying, right? I love you, and I'm not afraid of it anymore. Will you give me another chance?"

Her lover appeared dumbfounded—and beautifully handsome in a pair of flannel pants, no shirt, hair scruffy, face unshaven. "Of course," he finally said, his voice quiet. "Of course, baby."

A tear rolled down her cheek then, and she was no longer afraid of that, either. Crying a little didn't mean you were weak—it meant you were normal. And more than anything right now, that's what Erin wanted to be—a normal woman in love.

"And I *won't* hurt you, honey," he told her, shaking his head. "I promise." Just like he'd told her in the bedroom the other night. But this was different—bigger. It was about their love, about their whole lives.

"I believe you."

"Can I make a suggestion?" he said.

"Anything you want." She meant that, too. He'd taught her that giving and trusting could be amazingly intimate, and she was so ready to give to Carter, and to trust him, too.

"Why don't you come inside so all the neighbors don't think I've hired a hooker to come here."



She looked down at herself in her tight red mini-dress and stripper shoes. "Oh." She'd kind of forgotten how she looked right now. "Yeah, okay."

Then she waved goodbye to Danny, thanking him for the ride and seeing him wink as he drove away – then she sprinted for the stairs, hoping she didn't break an ankle in her heels.

A few seconds later, Carter met her in the hallway and she threw her arms around his neck. "I'm so sorry," she said. "So sorry I'm an idiot."

He grinned. "I love you anyway. And you're forgiven." But then he drew back slightly. "As long as the idiocy is over for good."

"Cross my heart," she said, drawing a big X across her chest.

His gaze dropped there. "You know what I think I'm really gonna like?"

She tilted her head. "What's that?"

"Having a girlfriend who pretends to be a hooker for a living. I foresee definite after-hour perks."

She grinned playfully. "Oh? And they would be?"

"Well," he confided, "since I met you, I discovered I've got a little bondage fetish going on. And right now, I think I just found out there's a shoe fetish in the mix, too. Because I'm picturing you naked except for those shoes, and I'm getting a major erection." He leaned against her, and *mmm*, the man wasn't lying.

She eased her arms provocatively around his neck, rubbed her breasts against his chest and went into her hooker routine. "Want a date, mister?"

"How much?" he asked, skimming his palms over her ass.

"For you, a freebie."

"Are you opposed to being handcuffed?"

She smiled. "Not at all."

He motioned toward his door, a few feet behind them. "I predict a long and naughty night ahead."

"I predict *lots* of them," she promised.

Erin had spent a long time pretending she didn't need a man, a relationship, someone to love, trying to make herself believe she was stronger without those things. But now she realized that love, with Carter, was going to make her stronger than she'd ever been before. So from now on, pretending would only take place when she was on the job, catching smarmy guys – or in the bedroom, seducing her man.

## **About the Author**

Lacey Alexander's books have been called deliciously decadent, unbelievably erotic, exceptionally arousing, blazingly sexual, and downright sinful. In each book, Lacey strives to take her readers on the ultimate erotic adventure and hopes her stories will encourage women to embrace their sexual fantasies.

Lacey resides in the Midwest with her husband, and when not penning romantic erotica, she enjoys history and traveling, often incorporating favorite travel destinations into her work.

Lacey welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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