



Forbidden Publications

Cabin Fever



Shelli Stevens

CABIN FEVER

A Forbidden Publications production, JANUARY 2007

Forbidden Publications

PO Box 153

East Prairie, MO 63845

www.forbiddenpublications.com

CABIN FEVER

Copyright © 2007 SHELLI STEVENS

Cover Art by DAYNA HART © 2007

Edited by DAYNA HART - No copyright assigned.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information storage and retrieval system-except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine, newspaper, or on the Web -without permission in writing from the publisher. For information, please contact the publisher via regular mail.

All characters in this book have no existence outside the imagination of the author and have no relation whatsoever to anyone bearing the same name or names. They are not even distantly inspired by any individual known or unknown to the author, and all incidents are pure invention.

ISBN: Not Assigned.

Shelli Stevens

Cabin Fever
By
Shelli Stevens

Chapter One

Who in the hell invented Valentine's Day? Because the asshole really oughtta be shot. Nikki scowled, tossing her orange polyester suitcase into the back seat of her car before climbing into the driver's seat of the ancient Volvo.

She glanced at the house one last time--a townhouse she and her best friend had been renting since summer--and then shifted the car into reverse and backed down the driveway.

Men sucked. Love sucked. Friends who wanted the house to themselves so they could have a romantic Valentine's Day weekend sucked.

She flipped through the stations on her radio, not really hearing them as she glanced down at the map on the seat next to her. Where the hell was she going anyway? A cabin in the middle of freaking nowhere? Well, technically the northern California backwoods wasn't nowhere, but it was pretty damn close for a girl from San Francisco.

So now she was going to be stuck in a secluded cabin in the forest...All alone with just a fire, and her endless stash of marshmallows, chocolate and graham crackers. Hmm. This might not be so bad after all.

At least when Shaylee had informed her she was being booted out for the weekend, she'd given her the key to Jeremy's--Shaylee's boyfriend of the season--cabin.

Although she still didn't get why they didn't use it for themselves. A cabin in the woods sounded a lot more romantic than a townhouse smack dab in the city. *Because Justin has tickets to the theater so we need to stay in the city.* Shaylee had pleaded, begged,

and guilted her into finally agreeing to leave.

Checking the time again, she hit the gas. There were only a couple more hours before the sun went down, and getting lost in the dark was *not* her idea of a good time.

* * * *

Three hours and two cappuccinos later, she was squinting through her windshield at dark, tree-lined road. Good gravy it was cold. She really needed to get the heater in this car fixed.

Shit. She held the map up towards the light again and shook her head. Where the hell was she? Twisting the map, she looked at it from a different angle. Hell, was she even reading it right?

"Screw it." She tossed the map onto the passenger seat. It had to be nearby — she'd passed all the landmarks that Justin had told her to watch for.

Slowing the car, she looked for the unmarked turn-off that should appear after an old wooden fence.

Twenty more minutes passed and her eyes were starting to drift shut. She was sleepy, and there was virtually no light except for her headlights. She hadn't passed another car in God knew how long.

She hit the brakes as a squirrel darted across the road.

"Damn, stupid — " her eyes widened. "Oh. The fence."

It was so thin and run down, she'd almost missed it. Spotting the narrow dirt road beyond it, she turned in.

The crunching of her tires seemed obscenely loud in the quiet of the night. Her lights bounced down the road, finally locking on a small cabin at the end.

Finally! And it was exactly as Shaylee had described it. A quaint, small log built cabin with a large chimney on the side, surrounded by trees.

Nikki edged the car forward and parked it in front of the cabin. She climbed out, dragging the suitcase after her and stomped up the wooden steps to the door.

Fumbling in her purse, she tried to find the key Shaylee had given her. Damn. It sure was dark. Didn't people in the boondocks believe in porch lights?

Her fingers closed around the cold metal key, just as a yawn popped her jaw. Bed. That was the only thing on her mind. Screw the s'mores. Those could wait until breakfast.

She unlocked the door and swung it inward, reaching inside the door to find a light switch. Nothing.

Swearing under her breath, she stepped inside and kicked the door shut behind her. There had to be at least one light in this cabin.

Stretching her arms out and squinting--as if narrowed eyes would give her a better chance of seeing anything in the pitch black--she ran her hands over the smooth wooden walls.

No light switch, just more wall. Wall. More wall. Wait, what was that? Something warm, and...hairy?

"What the --" She jerked her hand back, just as arms wrapped around her waist and lifted her off her feet.

The war cry that erupted from whoever was behind her mixed with her terrified screams. The person--a man it felt like--held her higher against his chest as he crossed the cabin.

"Don't hurt me! Oh, fuck, please don't hurt me!" The air rushed from her lungs as she was flung onto a bed or couch. Fear clogged in her throat and her blood pounded.

She rolled away in an attempt to escape from whoever it was, but he was already on top of her, pinning her hands above her head with a knee on each side of her waist.

Shit! If she got out of this alive she would beat the crap out of Shaylee. Who the hell sends their friend up to an isolated cabin to get raped?

He transferred her wrists to one hand, and lifted himself away a tiny bit. She heard him click on a lamp and then bright light filled the room. She squinted her eyes shut, crying out in pain.

"Who are you? Breaking and entering is illegal in case you didn't know."

His voice was rough, raspy, and--God, she was stupid for thinking it--damn sexy.

"Who am I?" she peeked at him through one eye, wondering if the man would match the voice. Yes, unfortunately. "I'm the bitch who's about to have you arrested."

* * * *

Arrested? Was the woman nuts? Chase eyed the woman beneath him warily. She certainly looked a little... different.

Her black hair was in two braids, each one coming to rest just below her chin. Green eyes, rimmed in dark black eyeliner, glared up at him. Her tongue darted out across the lush mouth, tracing over the faded red lipstick stain.

His gaze moved lower to the tight black sweater that hugged full breasts. His cock stirred slightly, and he bit back a groan. *Stop looking at her tits.* He glanced lower, noting the obscenely tiny black and white plaid skirt that revealed pale white thighs below. Thighs which soon disappeared into knee high, laced up black boots.

He shook his head. Christ. Only he would catch a kinky gothic chick trying to break into the cabin he was using for the weekend.

"I think you've got that backwards, lady." He reached down and grabbed his belt off the floor, wrapping it around her wrists.

"Oh, *hell no*. I'm into some freaky shit, but not with a complete stranger dressed like Mr. Rogers."

Mr. Rogers? His eyebrows rose, and he glanced down at his brown slacks and blue sweater. He was not dressed like an old guy who'd done children's shows. His attire was completely normal for a dentist just off of work.

"And I wasn't breaking and entering, I had a key. Or did you miss that fact while you were tackling me like some football freak." She glared at him. "What, didn't make the team in high school, buddy? Living out your fantasy now on some poor, defenseless woman?"

"Defenseless? Ha." Scowling, he tightened the notch a little and secured her to the bed. Too bad he didn't have a gag too.

"Where did you get the key? Did you find it in a purse you stole?" He glanced at her again, hoping she was sufficiently restrained while he grabbed his cell phone.

"Purse I stole?" Her eyes widened and then her mouth twisted into a scowl. She started jerking on the belt and kicking the air towards him. "You jackass. I don't steal purses. I was given a key, Roger."

"My name isn't Roger," he snapped.

She made a face and then looked away from him. "Well, it suits you."

"Fine. Say I believe you. Who on earth would give you a key to my cabin?"

"Your cabin?" Her gaze snapped back to him, the green eyes seeming a little more uncertain now. "No. This is Justin's cabin."

He stopped before he could dial the police. Justin? His blood pressure rose and he pressed his palm against his forehead. Was she one of Justin's latest women? It would certainly make sense. The man dated anything with breasts and a pulse.

Snapping his cell shut, he walked back towards the bed.

"You know Justin?"

"Do I know Justin? Of course I know him. Do *you*?" She looked downright confused now.

"I should know him. He's my brother."

Chapter Two

Nikki's jaw dropped and then snapped shut.

"Shit." She groaned and then her head fell back against the pillow, her eyes drifted shut.

"So let me get this straight," she said calmly. "He gave us both the key to his cabin--"

"It's not *his* cabin. It's *my* cabin." He thrust a hand through his hair, his temper spiking. "Jesus, woman. What is it going to take for you to understand that?"

"Well you could have just told me. I can't believe this is your place." She tugged at the belt that secured her wrists. "I'm going to kill him when I get back."

Damn. Seeing her trying to free herself reminded him what he'd done.

He stepped forward and unfastened the belt, freeing her. "I'm sorry."

"What, for tying me up like you caught me robbing a bank or something?" She rubbed her wrists. "You should be."

He shook his head and fought the urge to roll his eyes. The woman was completely in the wrong; he'd just pointed it out, and yet she still insisted on making him out to be the bad guy.

"I'll get my suitcase and head out," she said, sliding off the bed and walking back into the darkened living room.

Leave? Chase turned on the lights and shook his head.

"You want to leave tonight?" He glanced at the clock above the fireplace. "It's almost one in the morning. Where will you go?"

"I don't know. A hotel?" She shrugged and headed towards the door.

"The nearest hotel isn't for seventy miles."

"So I'll drive all night back to San Francisco."

Was she completely insane?

"Wait."

She paused, turning to face him and raising an eyebrow.

Or maybe he was the one who was crazy. Was he really going to tell Justin's girlfriend to spend the night here? The wind whistled outside the windows, and the faint ticking of the clock confirmed his decision.

"You can't get back on the road this late at night. It's probably going to snow."

"Snow?" Her eyes widened and she looked horrified by the idea.

"Yeah, snow. White, cold stuff? Couldn't you smell it in the air?"

"Smell the snow in the air?" She blinked and shook her head. "Umm. I'm from San Francisco. I have no freaking idea what *snow in the air* smells like."

"I think you should stay here tonight."

She cocked her head and her eyes narrowed. "Are you hitting on me?"

"Am...am I hitting on you?" he sputtered. "No. Of course not."

"Hmm." She dropped her suitcase on the floor and walked past him towards the bedroom. "Too bad. You're kind of cute."

She thought he was cute?

He watched her retreating figure, noting again the curves under the bizarre, but sexy outfit. The blood in his dick stirred, and he groaned in alarm.

Oh God. What was he doing? She was not his type. She was nowhere near his type. Not to mention she was Justin's girlfriend.

"So are we sharing a bed, or are you going to be a gentleman and take the couch?" She laughed, and the soft, feminine sound tantalized his senses like silk. "I promise not to bite if you want to share a bed. Unless you ask me to, of course."

She turned around and batted her eyelashes at him. Lord, she was a flirt. And dammit, it was working. He shifted, his pants feeling a little tight in the crotch now.

"I'll take the couch." Like any horny gentleman getting hit on by his brother's

gothic girlfriend would.

"Bummer." She smiled faintly. "Hey, if your name's not Roger, what is it?"

They didn't even know each other's names. The last few minutes seemed surreal. He was sharing the cabin with a complete stranger.

"It's Chase."

"Cool. I'm Nikki. Short for Nicole." She gave a slight nod. "Thanks for letting me crash here. I'll get out of your hair in the morning."

He watched her disappear into the bedroom, standing in the small living room feeling somewhat dumbstruck. Finally he glanced at the couch and shook his head. He needed pillows and blankets. All of which were in the bedroom.

Taking a deep breath, he strode towards the doorway.

"I just need to grab--" His breath locked in his throat and his feet seemed to be stuck to the floor.

Nikki turned to look at him, seeming totally unconcerned that she'd taken off her sweater and she was naked up top save for a red lacy bra.

"I need..." Those breasts. So round, pale, full, and tempting. "Pillows."

"Pillows, Chase?" She did that sensual laugh thing again.

"And blankets," he croaked.

"Ah." She nodded and reached into her suitcase, pulling out a T-shirt. "It's your cabin, honey. Where do you keep them?"

She jerked the shirt over her head, and the luscious breasts were once again covered.

Grab the blankets and pillows, you idiot. Forcing his feet to move, he stepped fully into the room and opened the closet. Pulling out a stack of blankets and a couple pillows, he tucked them under his arm.

He turned to walk back into the living room and then hesitated, glancing at her again. "Do you need anything else?"

"Now, Chase, that's a loaded question." She grinned at him and tilted her head in that flirty way. "Are you sure you want me to answer it?"

Right about now, he was about to declare that he had a new 'type' of woman. And she was a lot like Nikki. Had she not been Justin's girlfriend, he'd be taking her up on all the suggestiveness.

He hadn't been to bed with a woman since he'd broken up with his girlfriend of four years. Since he'd gone out and got shit-faced, going home with the first woman who'd shown him any interest.

God, what had that been, like eight months ago?

"You're staring. Do you like something you see?" Amusement laced her husky question.

He blinked hard. *She's off limits.* "Good night, Nikki."

She gave a soft little sigh, and then he heard the rasp of a zipper. When she reached for the waistline of her skirt, he spun on his heel and bolted out of the room with only her laughter following him.

* * * *

Nikki rolled onto her side, resting her cheek on folded hands. She'd washed her face and brushed her teeth, all the while wondering if he'd change his mind and come back. No such luck.

She probably shouldn't have taken the bed. Was he comfortable out there on the couch?

The bedroom wasn't very big, just enough for the full sized bed and a dresser. Only the door, left open, separated her from the small living room.

All was quiet throughout the cabin, except for the occasional popping and shifting of wood in the fire Chase had built.

Chase. She closed her eyes again--his image was branded in her mind. Tall and athletic, with thick brown hair in a simple conservative cut. Then there were those sexy blue eyes that had just stared, obviously not sure what to make of her. It hadn't fazed her; it was a reaction she was used to.

What *did* he think of her? Usually she didn't even go there. Let herself wonder. But for some reason, it mattered with him. *Why, Nikki?*

And why had she come on thick as honey with the flirting? The poor guy hadn't been able to hide his embarrassment--or the nice sized erection he'd been sporting--by the time he'd left the bedroom. Which meant he was definitely attracted to her.

She frowned. So why hadn't he responded to the flirting? She hadn't seen a wedding ring. Of course he could have a girlfriend, though he hadn't thrown one up as a defense.

Stop thinking about it. You're just lonely because it's Valentine's Day weekend and you haven't gotten laid in over a year.

But it wasn't just the sex. She pulled the blankets tighter around her and sighed. It was having a man's arms wrapped around her, holding her close. The hardness of his chest beneath her head, and a different hardness between her...

No. Go to bed you horny bitch.

Taking deep breaths, she did some meditative exercises; it was her sure fire way to get her to pass out.

Chapter 3

When she opened her eyes, the cabin was cold. Freezing, to be exact. Her teeth chattered as she tucked the blankets around every inch of her body.

There was a bit of morning light peaking through the lace curtains on the window. Such a quaint little place. Her trembling lips tilted up into a smile.

She closed her eyes and lay still, listening. Listening to the sound of absolutely nothing. There were no cars, horns, yelling people, buses...it was silent.

It was nice.

She must have fallen back asleep, because when she opened her eyes again she could hear the sounds of Chase moving around in the other room and a fire crackling.

Easing the blanket down to her waist, she sat up. Thank God. It was a little warmer now. She kicked her legs over the side of the bed and stood up.

"Argh!" The wood floor was like ice. Moving quickly, she ran into the living room towards the fireplace.

There was a furry throw rug in front of it, and she sank down onto it, stretching her hands out towards the warmth.

"Cold?" his voice was just as sexy as yesterday, and tinged with amusement.

"Cold? Freezing my ass off, thank you very much." She laughed and turned to look at him. Her laughter clogged in her throat, and she swallowed hard.

Holy hell he was a hottie in the morning. Heat stirred low in her belly. His hair was disheveled, his eyes were heavy lidded and he was nursing a cup of coffee between his hands.

"I want one."

He raised an eyebrow.

"Coffee." She groaned. "Please don't make me beg."

His mouth curled into a smile. Wow. Did he have a great smile or what? How had she not noticed that last night?

"How do you like it?"

"Black, with sugar. At least two spoonfuls please." She tucked her legs under her butt to keep them warm, and keep the long shirt she had on covering down to her knees.

He made a sound of disapproval from the kitchen, but when she looked back at him he was dutifully pouring in the sugar. What a good boy.

Or man, she corrected herself when he crossed the room towards her. Carrying two cups of coffee, his white shirt was stretched taut across his chest. Her gaze lingered on the clearly defined pectorals. Mmm. So, he liked to work out.

Stop it. It obviously isn't happening.

"That much sugar isn't good for your teeth, you know," he lectured while handing her the mug of steaming coffee.

"And what are you, my dentist?"

He grinned. "Not unless you're one of my new patients."

Whoa. She blinked and then blew on her coffee. "For real? You're a dentist?"

"Yes. For real I'm a dentist." His smile widened as he sat back down on the tan couch, pushing aside the blankets and pillows.

"Oh." She took a sip and sighed. "Caffeine. Mmm."

"What do you do, Nikki?"

"What do I do? As in a career?"

"Yes."

She blew on her coffee, watching him closely. How would he react when she told him? A dentist would surely find her job to be somewhat impractical.

"I'm an artist. A painter."

Something flickered in his eyes. Interest? "What do you paint?"

"Oils. Landscapes as well as portraits."

He nodded. "Really.? I'd love to see your work some time. Where do you sell them?"

"I work with a small art gallery down by the waterfront. I can give you a card if you'd like."

"I'd like. Very much so."

A small amount of pleasure stole through her, and she felt her cheeks warming. This was just weird. Usually men got all freaked out when she announced she was an artist. Like they expected her to ask for handouts.

Maybe it was time to go. Get the hell out of Dodge. This just wasn't good. She was getting way too sappy over a dentist who so obviously wasn't hitting on her.

Standing up, she walked towards the bedroom. "I'll grab my things and head out."

"What?" She heard him get up and walk after her. "You can't leave, Nikki."

"Well, I can't share this cabin with you." She sighed, running a hand through her hair. "Look, obviously there was a mix up. You were nice to let me crash here last night, but I should leave you be."

His jaw was hard and he didn't look to be listening to a word she was saying. His narrowed gaze was moving over her body.

"What?"

"You're half naked."

"I've got a T-shirt and panties on. I'm dressed." Jeez, you would've thought she *was* butt naked. And the T-shirt covered her bottom by at least two inches.

He cleared his throat and looked away. "Anyway, you can't leave."

"Why?" What the hell? He should be begging her to leave by now, what was going on with this guy?

"Haven't you looked outside?" He walked past her and pushed aside the white lace curtain. "This is why."

Had he even opened the curtain? Her eyes narrowed and then her stomach

dropped. Oh, God. The curtains were open, everything outside was just covered in white.

She hurried to the window, pressing her hands against the glass as she looked down the road. The entire world seemed to be blanketed in snow. Why hadn't she taken him seriously when he'd brought up that *smell of snow* thing last night?

She leaned her forehead on the glass. "Oh, shit."

Chase folded his hands across his chest and tried not to look at the back of her thighs. All smooth and pale underneath the long black T-shirt.

He wanted to grab her a pair of sweatpants out of his bag--cover her up. But, then no, that was the last thing he wanted.

"Maybe I should try and drive now before it gets any worse?"

Was she nuts? "Do you have chains?"

"Chains?" She shook her head. "What do you mean?"

"Chains for your tires. Have you never driven in the snow before?"

"No! Hell, this is probably only the second time I've ever even seen the stuff besides on television."

Was she kidding? But the mixture of confusion and fascination on her face made him think she was dead serious. "You need to get out of the city more."

She wrinkled her nose at him. "Trust me, I try. This weekend was actually the biggest trip I've taken in awhile. It should have been..." She sighed. "This just wasn't how I envisioned it."

A thought hit him. One that had his gut clenching, and his hand reaching out to grab the knob on the wooden bedpost.

"Was he planning on coming up here, too?"

"He?" She dropped the curtain and sat down on the bed. "He who?"

"Justin."

She snorted. "Oh, no. He had tickets for the theater and wanted to stay in the city."

Was he missing something? "You don't like the theater?"

"It's all right, I guess." She gave him a funny look. "Why? What are you getting at here?"

"But it's Valentine's Day today!"

He was no Casanova, but never while dating a woman had he ever left them alone on Valentine's Day.

"Oh. Yeah, thanks for the reminder. I brought my black candles to burn, and a cupid voodoo doll."

Black candles? Voodoo doll? Had something happened between her and Justin? He looked at her closely, hoping for some hint in her expression. But she looked calm, maybe a little pissed at the weather as she kept glaring in the snow.

She had a pretty face. It was washed clean this morning. And under all the makeup, it was rather sweet. Round and cherub-like, with long eyelashes and a full pink lips.

When she'd walked out of the bedroom this morning, fresh faced and sleepy, she'd almost appeared vulnerable. Was that why she covered it up with the war paint? To make her appear more hard?

"You're looking at me again." She tucked a wavy strand of black hair--now down from the braids--behind her ear.

"Yeah. Sorry about that." But he wasn't. He couldn't look away and had no intention of doing so. What could looking hurt? Even if he couldn't touch. She managed to look innocent, sexy, and fun all at the same time.

"You know, Chase." She cleared her throat and slid off the bed, closing the distance between them. "We're going to be stuck here for awhile, with this big bad snowstorm outside."

The blood started pounding through his veins the closer she got. Then she was right next to him, yet not quite touching him.

She was petite, and when he looked down he was staring at the curve of her breasts. The sweet smell of patchouli oil reached his nose. She was so exotic, so different than any woman he'd ever desired before.

She licked her lips. "What are we going to do to keep busy?"

Bend you over the mattress, pull down your panties, and fuck you senseless. He bit his tongue before he could say the actual words.

"How about breakfast?" he suggested instead.

He saw the flash of insecurity in her gaze and wished things could have been different. Because how nice would it be to go away for a supposed weekend alone, and wind up with some single sex kitten who wanted to bounce the bed springs all weekend?

She finally nodded and then gave a quick smile. "Breakfast it is. Do you need me to cook?"

His brows drew together. "Excuse me? Do I need you...? Why, are you any good?"

"Honey, I'm great." She winked and sauntered past him.

Christ. He thrust a hand through his hair and shook his head. She couldn't keep walking around in the cabin wearing just that. His willpower was only so strong. She didn't seem too bothered by him though.

He followed her into the kitchen where she was swinging open the fridge door.

"You've got eggs, milk, butter..." She turned around to look at him, her eyes shiny as she bit her lip. "Do you have flour and sugar? I'm thinking crepes."

"Yeah, in the bottom cupboard on the right." She knew how to make crepes?

Nikki bent down and tugged open the cupboard. The shirt rose above her waist, exposing blue lace panties with pirate skulls on them. The lacy edges rode high on each ass cheek, leaving little to the imagination.

How the hell pirate skulls could be sexy was beyond him. All he knew was he had a raging hard on now, and his Boy Scout honor was going down the tube.

"Nikki. How the fuck could my brother leave you alone on Valentine's Day?"

She stood back up, flour and sugar bin in hand. "What? What do I have to do with your brother?"

The fog of desire that was clouding his thoughts lifted for a moment.

"Everything if you're his girlfriend."

"Girlfriend?" Nikki laughed as she pried the lid of the flour. "Honey, I wouldn't date that lazy ass for a million bucks--no offense, him being your brother and all. He's dating my roommate."

Chapter 4

Chase blinked, and then blinked again. Justin wasn't her boyfriend? The shock of her words dissipated, along with any hesitations he may have had. A green light blinked in his head. *Warning: curves ahead, proceed with caution.*

Nikki started measuring out the flour. "You didn't think I was dating Justin did-- oh!"

He was already behind her, sliding his hands around her waist and pulling her firmly against him.

She gasped and pressed her ass back against the crotch of his jeans.

"I thought you weren't interested."

"I thought you were Justin's girlfriend."

She spun around in his arms, and flour spilled over both of them as she tossed the measuring cup back onto the counter. She dragged his head down towards hers. "Silly boy."

He covered her mouth with his and fire spread through Nikki's blood. His mouth was soft and firm, parting her lips so his tongue could thrust inside.

The heat spread between her thighs and her panties grew increasingly damp. Oh, God. She wanted this. Wanted him. And he'd only been holding out because he'd thought she was dating his brother? Ugh! What a waste of time.

His hands settled on her hips and he backed her up against the counter. The jut of his erection pressed against her belly and she moaned, kissing him back just as fiercely as he kissed her.

"Nikki." He tore his mouth away and grabbed the hem of her shirt, jerking it up

her body.

She raised her arms up so he could pull it all the way off. The cool air in the cabin hit her naked breasts and her nipples tightened.

He lowered his mouth back down to hers, and she closed her eyes, her whole body tingling.

His hands slid up her waist to cup each breast and her body trembled.

"Beautiful," he murmured, and kissed his way down her neck. His fingers pinched each nipple, pulling them into rigid peaks.

"Chase." She groaned and arched into him.

He released her and she cried out to protest, but then he was lifting her onto the counter, bringing her breasts within reach of his mouth.

"Take off your shirt." She plucked at his shirt, feeling solid muscle underneath. "Now, please."

"So impatient." He laughed, but obligingly removed the shirt. She swallowed hard against the sudden tightness in her throat.

And he'd called her beautiful?

His shoulders were broad; his whole torso was muscled and defined, with just a small speckling of hair. She slipped her hands onto his shoulders, letting her fingers wander over the unyielding muscles.

She heard the shift in his breathing when she touched him. He spread her legs, stepping between her thighs to cup her breasts again. Dipping his head, his mouth locked around one sensitive nipple and she gave a choked gasp.

Her head fell back against the upper cupboards, her eyes drifted shut. Each suck he made against her flesh sent stabs of heat into her pussy.

He lifted his head. "You like that. Don't you?"

"Yes. Don't stop. *Please* don't stop." She bit her lip when he pinched the nipple he'd been sucking on, and transferred his mouth to the other breast.

She reached out blindly, threading her fingers into his hair and holding him against her. His teeth closed over the tip as he pressed his hand between her legs.

"Mmm. Warm and damp panties. My favorite."

A husky giggle escaped her, and she lifted her hips a bit, pressing his fingers harder against her aching flesh.

"What do you want?" he asked, licking her nipple. "You want me to rub your clit?"

"Yes."

His fingers pushed against her panties, sliding between her lips to her swollen clit.

"Here we are." His fingers closed over the kernel of flesh, pressing against it and moving in circles.

"Oooh..." Her hips lifted against him.

"You like that?" He pressed harder and caught her nipple between his teeth again.

"Chase."

He gripped the sides of her panties, pulling them down her thighs and off her legs. A second later she felt his fingers slipping between her legs and deep into her vagina.

She gasped and her body tightened around him.

"Nikki," he rasped. "God, you feel incredible."

She took an unsteady breath and dropped her gaze, watching as he penetrated her with two fingers. Deeper and faster he thrust them inside.

She couldn't breathe. Oh God. Her stomach clenched and she bit her lip.

He sank to his knees, pulling her ass closer to the edge. He draped her legs over his shoulders, and then plunged his fingers back inside her body.

Her body clenched around his fingers, already anticipating the touch of his mouth against her clit. She watched him lift his mouth towards her, felt his hot breath against her pussy.

His fingers parted her lips, exposing her clit. He blew lightly on it, and her hips lifted off the counter.

"Easy," he murmured.

A second later his tongue pressed against the button of nerves.

"Oooh."

This time when her hips lifted, he pressed them back down, holding her thighs and drawing her clit into his mouth.

"Mmm."

His sound of approval made her wetter, hotter, and she pressed her body against his face instead of trying to arch away.

Every nerve focused on his wet, rough tongue lapping at her pussy. Her body tightened and the room started to spin. He focused on her clit, bringing her to the brink. Her thighs trembled, her stomach clenched; he lowered his tongue, thrusting it deep into her vagina and she exploded.

He held her, his mouth continuing to move in and on her through the orgasm.

When she finished shaking he stood up and helped her off the counter.

When her feet hit solid ground she reached for his pajama pants, jerking them down and watching his cock spring free.

"Baby, I don't have any condoms."

"I'm irregular--I've been on birth control since I was sixteen. We're good."

She fell to her knees, her mouth already watering for a taste of his thick, long erection. But he lifted her up before she could touch him and carried her towards the bedroom.

"I need to be inside you. Now," he said hoarsely, laying her down on the bed.

He kicked his pants all the way off, and then climbed onto the bed. He grasped her knees and parted her legs, reaching between her thighs to run two fingers up the cleft of her pussy.

"Are you sure about this, Nikki?"

"Yes!" She nearly choked on the words. "My God, are we back to this again? What's it going to take to get you to fuck me already?"

He laughed. "I just wanted to check." Then his hot, thick cock was probing the

entrance to her vagina.

He caught her wrists, pinning them above her head and her breath caught. Glancing down, he caught her gaze. The heat in his eyes must've mirrored hers. She whimpered. He growled low in his chest, and then plunged inside her.

"Fuck." His face twisted; his mouth opening on a silent cry.

The pressure of him entering her bordered on pain, but watching his evident satisfaction sent another wave of heat through her body.

He pressed deeper and Nikki exhaled on a hiss. Oh God, it'd been so long. She made a mental note to never go so long without getting laid again. Closing her eyes, she willed her muscles to relax as he buried himself to the hilt.

"Nikki, you're so damn tight." He didn't move for a moment, instead tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine." She nodded, a little too quickly.

His expression softened and he shook his head. "Fine isn't good enough." He reached between their bodies and found her clit, circling his thumb over it.

"Mmm. You don't have to do that." *Yes, you do.*

"I want to." He lowered his head and nuzzled her breast. "And this."

He closed his mouth over her nipple and began to suckle. Each draw sent hot stabs through her, straight to where they were joined and where he was rubbing her.

Lifting his head, he stroked a finger over her parted lips. "You're all creamy for me now. Did you like that?"

She lifted her hips with a groan, needing him to start moving. "You know I did, don't get cocky on me."

He braced his arms on each side of her body and began to pull out of her. The friction of his smooth, hard dick moving against her sensitive inner walls sent a shiver through her.

When the tip of his head was at her entrance, he thrust back into, tearing a gasp from her throat. He repeated the process, creating a rhythm that her body responded to.

Nikki wrapped her arms around him, raking her nails down his back as he

continued to thrust into her; alternating deep and shallow thrusts, moving faster and then slower.

He did something with his hips and hit the perfect spot. Her muscles clenched around him and she cried out as another sweet orgasm ripped through her.

"Nikki." He pressed deep with a groan, and her body tingled all over as he came.

His arms were shaking as he lowered himself onto her. She closed her eyes and tightened her arms around his back. This was the part she loved the most. Having a man's weight pressing her into the mattress; all hard muscles against soft curves.

He made no move to roll off her, and she probably wouldn't have let him go so soon anyway. A small smile tugged at her mouth.

Lifting his head a bit, he looked at her. "Why are you grinning?"

"Besides coming down from a fantabulous orgasm?" She shrugged. "I never knew a dentist could be that good in bed."

His abdomen bounced against her as he laughed. "Contrary to popular belief, dentists do have sex."

"Well, as a dentist, your specialty should be oral. And you sure proved that in the kitchen," she teased, and enjoyed watching the slight flush that touched his face.

"Nice."

"Sorry, you brought it up." She giggled.

His stomach let out a rumble and he grimaced, rolling off of her and out of bed.

"We missed breakfast."

"Well somebody decided getting laid was more important than letting me make crepes."

He raised an eyebrow. "Are you saying it was a bad choice?"

"Oh, no. It was a very good one." She slipped out of bed after him, pressing her mouth against his for a quick, deep kiss. "And I think we should repeat it many times."

His eyes darkened, and he made that sexy little growl in the back of his throat again.

"Just not right away." She patted his shoulder and walked past him--still

completely naked – to go make breakfast.

Chapter 5

Chase watched her leave, noting for the first time the sexy tattoo just above her ass: a white and green chain of daisies.

His cock stirred and he shook his head. *Down boy*. Lord, this had to be the best Valentine's Day ever. Hands down. No expectations, no planning, just a spontaneous, fun little weekend romance.

Something stirred in his gut. Doubt? He heard her puttering around in the kitchen and scratched the back of his neck.

He couldn't want more than that, could he?

Walking to the window, he drew the curtain aside. It was still snowing, but not as heavily now.

He stepped away from the window and pulled on his pajama pants, then a T-shirt over his head. Once again dressed, he headed back towards the kitchen. Nikki stood at the counter, whipping up something in a bowl. She heard him come in and gave a coy smile over her shoulder.

"Breakfast will be in about a half hour."

"Thank you. I didn't expect you to cook, though."

"It's all right. Cooking is my thing. Well, besides the art." She winked and went back to the stove.

"Aren't you cold?" he asked, dropping his gaze to the lush curves of her ass.

She shrugged. "Not really. I'm used to walking around naked."

"Don't you have a roommate?"

"Yeah, but she's not around much. She's usually with your brother twenty-four

seven."

Chase frowned. Was Justin actually serious about this new girl? That would have been a first. He'd never been in a relationship longer than a few weeks that he'd been aware of.

"How long has he been dating..."

"Shaylee? Four months."

Amazing. Chase shook his head and scratched the back of his neck. "Look, I'm going to run out back and grab some more wood for the fire."

"Ah thanks, honey."

He stilled and then forced himself to move out the door. The *honey* endearment had hit a chord with him, though he knew it shouldn't. She'd been calling him honey before they'd even gotten it on. She was probably one of those women who called everyone honey-- man or woman.

So don't let it get to you.

He shut the front door behind him, ignoring the cold that tightened his lungs. Stepping off the porch, his feet sank into at least a good four inches of snow.

She couldn't drive in this, there was no way. The roads were covered and the snow plows wouldn't be out anytime soon. They were in back of the back roads. Not high priority on roads to be cleared.

His shoes crunched in the snow as he made his way towards the shed. He managed to grab five logs. They'd need them, and the less trips he had to make back the better.

He hurried back to the cabin, stopping short at the bottom of the steps. Nikki stood on the porch--still naked--sipping from a mug of coffee.

"This is so beautiful. I want to paint it later. I brought my stuff." She took another sip of coffee and sighed.

She was beautiful. All pale, naked curves in the falling snow. Even if she had absolutely no common sense. "Nikki, you do realize you're standing in the snow naked?"

"No one can see me, this cabin is in B.F.E."

"B.F.E.?"

"Butt Fucking Egypt."

"Ah. So, you're nude in Egypt?"

She wrinkled her nose at him. "Besides, naked is good. You should try it sometime, it's liberating."

"I'll take your word." He smiled and walked past her into the cabin; fortunately she followed.

"Jelly on your crepes okay? That's all you seem to have. Unless you've got some canned peaches or something."

"No. I can't say that I do. I'll remember that for next time, though." He went to throw another log on the fire and hesitated. Had he just said next time?

Pushing the odd thought aside, he continued to stoke the fire, whether it needed it or not.

Her soft footsteps across the floor had him looking over his shoulder. She was carrying two plates and was again wearing her T-shirt.

He looked at it and then up at her, raising an eyebrow.

"All right, I got cold." She rolled her eyes. "We are stuck in a tiny cabin during a snowstorm."

"Yes, we are." He stood up and took one of the plates, then walked to the small table that was next to the window. "Are you still upset about that?"

She followed him and sat down, not answering right away. Using the edge of her fork, she cut a slice of her crepe. Finally she lifted her gaze to meet his. "No, I'm not." Her expression was soft, intimate. "Actually, I'm pretty satisfied with how things turned out."

The way she was looking at him, in combination with her words, sent a ridiculous rush of pleasure through him. He nodded, unable to stop the sudden smile on his face.

"Good." He dropped his gaze and dug into the breakfast.

* * * *

"Let's go build a snowman." Nikki set down her cards, feeling restless and a bit playful.

They'd had a lazy afternoon. Hanging out in their pajamas, playing cards and watching random movies on television. But the itch to get outdoors was hitting hard.

"Build a snowman?" His brow rose with obvious skepticism.

Nikki climbed off the fur rug they were sitting on and stood up. "Come on. It would be fun."

He stood up too, scratching the back of his head. "Do you have some clothes? Something that covers your legs?"

"I've got some jeans. Hang on, let me get dressed." She turned and went into the bedroom, grabbing her pants and pulling them on.

Chase followed her into the room and threw on his own clothes as well.

Ten minutes later they were outside walking around the yard.

"This is great." Nikki leaned down, grabbed a handful of snow —yelping at the cold on her bare hands.

"Snowman?" He formed his own ball and then started to roll it in the snow, until it was triple its size.

Wow, he was really getting into this. She grinned and followed suit. Before long they had a full fledged snowman.

"Looks good." She grinned and on impulse, chucked the lump of snow in her hand at him.

Chase blinked, looking absolutely stunned. Then his laughter rang through the trees as he charged her. She barely had time to yelp before he'd tackled her into the soft snow.

Nikki laughed so hard her stomach ached. She tried to roll away from him and get the upper hand, but he had one leg thrown across her while he rubbed snow into her hair.

"You win!" She giggled and finally lay limp in the snow. "Okay. Now I'm freezing."

"Yeah? Me too." He climbed off her and held out his hand. "Shower?"

She took his hand and he pulled her to her feet. "Mmm. Sex in the shower?"

His husky laugh sent a rush of warm heaviness between her thighs.

"I think that could be arranged."

She kept her hand in his and followed him inside the house. He made no stops, but headed straight towards the bathroom.

"The shower's not very big." He reached for her sweater, tugging it over her head. "I hope you don't mind."

"I don't mind getting cozy." She already had his jeans unsnapped and pulled halfway down. His cock sprang free and she rubbed her thumb over the drop of moisture on the tip. "Especially with this guy."

His eyes darkened as he reached into the shower to turn it on. "Yeah?"

"Definitely."

Steam filled the small bathroom, fogging the mirrors. They quickly shed the rest of their clothes and stepped under the warm water.

Chapter 6

Nikki stepped into the small shower and under the water. Chase followed a second later.

"Hey," he murmured and covered her breasts with his large palms.

"Hey, yourself." She leaned into his touch and raised her mouth to his.

The hot water chased away the chill, and he suspected her goose bumps had more to do with being aroused rather than cold.

She wrapped her arms around his neck and pressed her tongue into his mouth. He was ready for her, stroking his against hers in a deep, hard kiss.

She ran her hands down his chest, toying with the small amount of hair, before moving lower, to the jut of his erection.

He groaned against her mouth, and it sent a thrill of confidence through her. She sank to her knees, letting the water sluice down her face and back.

Nuzzling her face against his inner thigh she was rewarded his ragged gasp. He threaded his fingers through her hair and guided her mouth towards his cock.

Her lips barely parted before he was thrusting into her mouth. The salty taste of pre-cum caught on her tongue, and she moaned, her pussy growing wetter.

"Nikki."

Chase closed his eyes--positive he wasn't going to last much longer if she kept that up.

The tension in his stomach eased some when she slid her lips off him. Then she wrapped her fingers around the length of his cock and leaned forward to lick the head.

Again and again, she ran her tongue over it, flicking against the tiny hole in the

tip. Using her other hand she cupped his sac and massaged lightly.

Her lips parted again and she lowered her head, bringing him deep into her mouth until he stroked the back of her throat.

His sac tightened, and he gently eased her away before he came in her mouth. Helping her to her feet, he immediately lifted her and backed her against the wall.

She wrapped her legs around his waist and gripped his shoulders.

His cock nudged between her thighs, finding the wet slick folds at the entrance.

He pushed inside steadily, groaning as her flesh tightened around him. Her nails bit into his shoulder as she tossed her head back.

Lowering his mouth, he kissed the curve between her neck and shoulder, pressing deeper inside her hot cunt.

Their bodies molded together as warm water rained down on them. His mouth sought the sweetness of hers, his tongue pressing deep while he rocked up into her, again and again.

He dug his fingers into her ass cheeks, adjusting her as she slipped, and hitting a spot inside her that made her gasp.

Aiming for the same spot, he pressed deep again. Her breathing immediately grew faster, her nails dug in harder.

The smell of her, the feel of her, it gave him a kind of high. He couldn't focus on anything but reaching that final pleasure. He thrust faster and deeper. His sac tightened and this time he made no effort to stop. He came hard, groaning as he emptied himself inside her.

She whimpered and lowered her mouth to kiss him, squeezing her muscles around him as if to encourage every last drop from him.

He lowered her back to the ground, steadying her when her legs wobbled.

"Nikki, you make me do, and want to do, the craziest things."

She gave him an impish grin and reached for the shampoo. "You know, you're not the first guy to tell me that."

Jealousy speared through him so fast, he had trouble identifying the emotion. All

he knew was his hands were fisted and he was ready to punch the shower stall.

Just the thought of her with another guy. He stilled, tension coiling through his muscles. She'd said she wasn't with Justin, but that didn't mean she wasn't in another relationship.

Would she really be sleeping with you if she was though?

"You're not..." He cleared his throat. "Are you seeing someone right now?"

She'd been rinsing the shampoo out of her hair and pulled her head out from the water. She blinked at him.

"Now that would make me a skanky ho. No, Chase, I'm not seeing anyone." She narrowed her eyes. "Why? Are you?"

"Of course not."

She grinned and dropped a sweet kiss on his lips. "Good. I hate to share."

When she pulled away, even stepped out the shower, disappointment had his gut clenching.

"I'm going to get dressed." She opened the door and glanced back at him. "By the way, you are really good at the sex in the shower thing."

She winked and then disappeared.

God, she was incredible Chase shook his head and reached for the shampoo, making an immediate decision. He was not letting her leave this cabin without getting her number and lining up dates for the next three months.

* * * *

Nikki hurried across the cold wooden floor and grabbed another oversized T-shirt out of her suitcase. She tugged it on over her head, and then slipped into a pair of panties with the words *sweet* on the front.

Grinning, she thought about the word and immediately started getting aroused again – which reminded her.

She reached back into the suitcase, skimming the zipper compartment for her

birth control. She needed to take two of the pills. After the shock of finding a man in the cabin last night, she'd completely forgotten to take the pill.

Hmm. Not in the zipper compartment. She frowned and looked back in the main section. Five minutes later she had everything thrown out and was sitting on the ground with her hand on her forehead.

"What's wrong?" Chase strolled into the room with just a towel around his hips.

What was wrong? She absently ran her gaze over the defined muscles on his chest. What could she say? *Oh, I forgot to pack my birth control, and I didn't take my pill last night.*

Yeah. That's not a lot of stress on a new relationship or anything. Relationship...were they in a relationship? *Twenty-four hours does not constitute a relationship.*

She raised her gaze from his chest to his eyes. The concern and intimacy in his gaze made her wonder though.

"Nikki?"

She'd always been irregular. The chances of her getting knocked up were slim.

"Nothing. Nothing's wrong."

"All right." He approached her and held out his hand. "Then let's open a bottle of wine, have some cheese, and celebrate Valentine's Day."

He was such a romantic. She considered herself low maintenance. Generally the guys she dated considered sharing a Big Mac from the McDonalds the epitome of romance, and it had never bugged her. But having something more offered to her...

"That sounds nice." She took his hand and allowed him to help her up.

Chapter 7

They spent the rest of the evening eating, drinking and cuddling on the couch. They watched a couple movies and at times just turned on the music.

When was the last time he'd had such a relaxing weekend? Taken time to slow down and enjoy himself...not to mention the woman with him?

She was sexy...unique and fresh. Like no other woman he'd ever met. She was comfortable with her sex life and thought it perfectly natural for two adults to make a snowman.

He moved his fingers down Nikki's shoulder, his chest swelling with pleasure as she sighed and snuggled closer.

"This has been so good for me," she murmured and kissed his chest.

"Me, too."

Nikki pulled away and stood up from the couch. "Okay, my legs are half numb."

She put her arms above her head and stretched. The T-shirt she had on now rose above her hips. His gaze automatically sought out what kind of panties she was wearing.

Sweet. The glittery word rested just above her plump mound under the red cotton panties.

A smile curved his mouth and his blood started pounding again. How many times could he want this woman? He couldn't even imagine a threshold.

"Come here." He tugged on her hand, tugging her back so she was standing in front of him.

"Yes? Something you need?" She quirked an eyebrow and delved her fingers into

his hair.

"Yeah. You." He pushed her shirt back over her hips and gave a low growl of approval. "Nice panties."

She laughed and wiggled her hips. "You like?"

"I like." He looked up and held her gaze, while moving his hand to cup her pussy through the thin cotton.

He moved his hand in slow circles between her legs, listening to the change in her breathing. To the soft little gasps she made, and soon the panties were damp beneath his hand.

"Sweet." He trailed the finger on his other hand over the word. "That's exactly how you taste, Nikki."

She made a small little choked sound and her knees seemed to wobble.

He moved his hands to her hips, grabbing the edge of the panties and tugging them down her thighs. Her trimmed curls appeared first, then the moist slick lips of her pussy.

"Mmm." He brought one finger between her legs, and ran it back and forth between her labia. She was warm and wet, smooth between the lips.

"Chase..." She groaned, lifting her hips and tightening the muscles in her thighs.

"Yes, baby?"

Her breath was unsteady. "I want..."

"What do you want?" He kept moving his finger. Back and forth, but avoiding her clit.

"Your fingers...your mouth...on me. Inside me."

"Why didn't you just ask?" He used the finger between her legs to push deep into her cunt. She was hot and tight, her cream slick on his finger.

"*Oh, God.*" She clenched her fingers into his hair.

He added a second finger inside her, thrusting them in and out, mimicking sex. Scooting forward, he slid down off the couch and to his knees, so his face was now lined up directly with the plump pink folds of her pussy.

He used his other hand to part the smooth lips, exposing her clit. Keeping up the penetration with his fingers, he flicked his tongue out, stroking against the small bud of flesh.

Nikki's hips jerked, and then a moan followed.

He flicked his tongue again, tasting her sweet juices and wanting more. Drawing her clit into his mouth, he sucked and licked, following the rise and fall of her hips.

He watched her stomach clench, and moved his fingers faster inside her.

"Chase." Her fingers tightened in his hair.

Her body and thighs shook, and her cream spilled onto his tongue as she orgasmed. He stayed with her, kissing and stroking her until she finally pulled away.

She took a couple wobbly steps before falling onto the couch.

"Oh God, Chase..." She was lying on her side, her cheek on the cushion. "The things you must've learned in dental school."

"Oh, no I read a manual for that one," he teased. "I believe it was *Cunnilingus for Idiots* or something?"

She laughed, her smile turning sultry. "You wanna get out of those pajama pants and I'll show you some love?"

"That one was for you." He came to sit next to her and touched her cheek. "I think Chase junior needs a time out, he's been overdoing it."

She grinned and shook her head. "Lightweight."

"Yeah? Try telling me that in the morning." He stood up and took her hand. "It's late."

"Yeah." She yawned and took his hand. "That post -orgasm thing always makes me sleepy. And we did drink a lot of wine."

"Then let's go to bed."

* * * *

The ringing of his cell phone woke Chase up. He glanced at the clock and

scowled, then went into the living room to grab it.

"You'd better have a good reason for calling at two in the morning."

"You gotta help me," Justin spoke frantically. "I fucked up. Shaylee and I went to a party tonight and I got wasted and kissed another woman."

Chase yawned and shook his head. "Shit, Justin. In front of her?"

"She walked in. I realized how badly I'd fucked up the moment I let the other chick kiss me." Chase heard what sounded like her brother hitting something. "I love her. And she's threatening to leave me."

"And you're serious about her? You go through women like water, Justin--"

"I *love* her. You know I wouldn't say it if I didn't mean it."

"Okay. Where are you now?"

"I'm walking around town. She said she needed time to think."

"Okay..." Chase shoved a hand through his hair and closed his eyes. How would he handle this if he'd done the same thing to Nikki? "Here's what you say. You need to be honest."

"What? What can possibly make it right?"

"How about...I love you. I know I've fucked up, but I promise you it meant nothing. You're the only woman I want."

"Yeah...be honest...I'll give it a shot. Thanks, bro." Justin hung up, leaving Chase holding a dead connection.

Closing his phone he yawned and peaked out the window. Hmm. It was raining. The snow would be melting soon.

He dropped the curtain and headed back to the bedroom. Stepping through the doorway, he saw Nikki climbing back into bed.

He frowned. "Hey, did I wake you?"

She shook her head, jerky movement, but she didn't say anything.

"Are you okay?"

"I...had too much wine with dinner. I have a headache and had to grab some aspirin from my cosmetic bag."

"I'm sorry, baby." He ran his hand over her back and she stiffened. "I hope it goes away."

"Me, too."

She didn't say anything more and just lay still. Obviously she didn't want him touching her.

Chase reluctantly removed his hand from her and rolled over onto his back. Hopefully it *was* just the headache, though he couldn't shake the hunch that something wasn't right. He closed his eyes and tried to fall back asleep.

Chapter 8

Nikki stared unblinking at the wall and waited for the sound of Chase's breathing to even out. A sure sign that he was asleep.

She waited and then waited some more. Listening to the rain on the roof. It was official. She was the most naïve, horny idiot on the planet.

Only *she* would get stuck with an unknown man in a cabin, screw him, and then find out he'd lied about not having a girlfriend. *Or a wife.*

Her stomach churned and she felt the first sting of tears behind her eyes.

If only it *had* just been sex. But damn it. She liked him. Really, really liked him. Like if they'd been in second grade, she would've given him the *You're Somepony special* My Little Pony Valentine.

She slipped out of bed, trying to keep as quiet as possible. Grabbing her suitcase, she started tossing the items she'd taken out back in. Once that was done, she tiptoed to the bathroom and grabbed her makeup case.

Her mini bottle of mouth wash fell out of the case, hitting the floor with a clatter. The breath locked in her throat and she peeked out of the bathroom to the bed.

Chase stirred and rolled onto his side. She watched him, waiting for him to sit up and demand where she was going. His breathing evened out, signaling he was asleep, and she bit back a disappointed sigh.

Stop it. You will not be sad you're taken lover isn't waking up to declare his love for you.

She turned and grabbed the mouthwash, setting it in her case, and zipping it all the way closed. Tiptoeing back into the bedroom, she set it in her suitcase and slowly pulled the zipper closed.

Standing up, she glanced one last time at Chase. Her stomach twisted again and

her throat grew tight. But the despondency warred with another emotion. Her blood had come to a slow boil in the time since she'd overheard part of his conversation.

She went into the kitchen and found a paper plate and pen. It was important she leave him a note, something so he didn't get the impression she'd be his adulterous booty call.

Tapping the pen against her chin, she considered her options. *You lying sack of shit* seemed a little extreme. Finally, she began to write.

Thanks for the weekend fling. It was fun. But gotta get back to the city and the real world.

She hesitated. Final enough? She put the pen to the paper again.

Have a good life.

Nikki

Unable to resist, she walked back to the bedroom and glanced through the door.

"Goodbye," she whispered under breath.

She blew him a kiss, gave him the finger, and then snuck out the door.

* * * *

Chase woke to sunshine. He blinked and stared at the ceiling, heaviness in his gut. He rolled over, already sensing she wouldn't be there.

"No." He climbed out of bed and looked out the window. Her car was gone. "No."

Running to the kitchen, he found the note he was hoping she'd left. He picked it up, read it, and then set it down. Slowly, he exhaled the air that had been locked in his chest.

He wanted to call Justin to get her number--all her information. What the hell was she thinking? Walking out on him. On them. On this life-changing-weekend they'd just had. Unless...it hadn't been life changing for her.

He closed his eyes, his stomach tight. Unless for her it had been just what she'd written. A fling.

It doesn't matter. You're from two different worlds anyway. The rational side of his brain tried to make an appearance. But deep down inside he knew—one weekend with Nikki would never be enough. Unfortunately, she'd made it clear she didn't feel the same.

* * * *

Nikki wiped the back of her hand across her mouth and flushed the toilet. She leaned against the wall, not bothering to quiet her groans.

The door flew open and Shaylee stood just outside, arms folded across her chest.

"How far along are you?"

"I don't know." Nikki averted her gaze. She knew. About eight weeks and three days.

"How long have you known?"

"A few weeks."

Shaylee stared at her for a moment, and then shook her head in obvious amazement. "I don't get it. How did you get pregnant? You haven't been having sex."

"Obviously, I have."

"You've been holding out on me." Shaylee sighed, and helped her up. "Was it a one night stand?"

More like a two night. "It doesn't matter."

She'd never told Shaylee or Justin about sharing the cabin with Chase. Didn't see any point in it. Especially after she'd fled the cabin in the early hours of the morning, without as much as a goodbye.

Shaylee guided her into the kitchen and sat her down in one of the chairs.

"Are you thinking of keeping it?"

Nikki blinked. Was Shaylee serious? Glancing up at her friend, she realized she was. The other two options hadn't been more than a flitting thought.

"Why not?" Nikki accepted the glass of water her friend handed her. "I'll be thirty

in two months. I make enough money to be able to support a child."

"But..." Shaylee sighed. "Okay. Does the father know?"

"Father know what? What are you guys talking about?" Justin walked into the room eating a breakfast sandwich.

Oh, God. She couldn't look at him without seeking out the small, but definite physical similarities between him and his brother. *Chase. The baby's daddy.*

Every time Justin came around she about had a panic attack. Had Chase said anything to him about their time at the cabin?

"Nikki's prego."

Nikki's eyes widened. "Fuck! A little discretion, Shaylee." Her stomach clenched with pure panic.

"Wow. Who knocked her up?"

So much for Chase having mentioned her. Disappointment had her throat going tight. *What? Did you'd expect he'd go bragging about his infidelity?*

"Don't know. She won't say."

Nikki wanted to cry--or punch someone. Chase. Justin. Shaylee. Hell, any of them would do now. She clenched her fists and laid her head on the table.

Her stomach rolled at the smell of sausage coming from Justin's sandwich.

"So you gonna tell us, Nikki? Who's the daddy?" He leaned over, breathing sausage smell on her.

"For fuck's sake! Get this greasy ass sandwich out of my face before I shove it up your ass," she screamed.

The room went silent.

Oh, God. She'd lost it. Nikki blinked twice and then burst into tears.

* * * *

Chase glanced out the window of his living room. The city was coming out of the morning fog, warming up into a nice summer day. It was Saturday, the second day of

his weekend since he didn't work Fridays.

It was his time to relax, to get out and do something. And he was restless, the urge to get out, to go somewhere was hitting strong. He'd considered going to the cabin, but he couldn't quite face the memories right now.

It took serious effort to not obsess about Nikki.

Although a day hadn't gone by when she hadn't been in his thoughts at some point. Five months of waking up with her image imprinted in his head.

So many times he'd considered swallowing his pride and begging Justin for her information. He'd picked up the phone more than once and called Justin with the intention of doing just that. But each time the note she'd left would flash through his head.

The phone rang and he glanced towards it, debating letting it go to voicemail. He turned away from the window and snatched it from the holder.

"Hello?"

"Hey, bro. How are things?" Justin's voice came through clear and bright.

Chase gave a small smile and sat down on the couch. The guy had lucked out all those months ago. Shaylee had taken him back, although it had taken a couple of weeks. And from Justin's hints, he planned on asking the girl to marry him soon.

"Things are...good." What else could he say? Certainly not the truth. That he was depressed and half in love with a woman who'd only wanted a fling.

Justin had no idea about the weekend Chase had spent with Nikki. Unless she'd mentioned it, but he'd never gotten that impression.

"So what's up, Justin?"

"I was calling to see if I could use the cabin this weekend. Or if you already have plans to go up there?"

Chase's mouth twisted in a bittersweet smile. "No. I'm not going to the cabin. It's all yours."

"Oh, thank God."

He raised an eyebrow. "Thank God? What's going on?"

"We need to get away. Get out of San Francisco for the weekend."

"Ah, the relationship needing a little romantic kick?"

"No. The romance is fine," Justin grumbled. "It's Shaylee's crazy roommate."

Chapter 9

Chase sat up a little straighter, his blood pounding as his hand clenched around the phone.

"Shaylee's roommate? What about her?"

"She's turned into a raging hormonal bitch. But I guess pregnancy does that to you. Anyway, we'd really like to use the cabin..."

Pregnant. The rest of Justin's words became garbled in his head. *Pregnant.*

"How pregnant?" he interrupted.

There was a pause. "What?"

"How pregnant is Nikki?"

"Wait. How did you know her name? Have I told you about her? The artist? Kind of wild, dresses a bit punk sometimes? She's cute in a weird way, but swears like a sailor--"

"Just answer the damn question!"

Another pause. "O-kay then. I think Shaylee said she's five months."

Five months. He didn't even need to do the math. The probability that the child was his flashed like a neon sign through his head.

"She's getting big though. Her ass is expanding about as fast as her belly."

"You're such an asshole. Where is she now?"

"Why? Chase, you're tripping me out. Why are you so interested in Nikki?"

"Because the *baby* is mine."

Dead silence. Then, "Fuck. I must've drunk some bad tequila. I'm putting Shaylee on."

* * * *

Nikki stood in the middle of the room, one hand on her belly as she looked around at the gallery exhibit.

They'd drawn a good crowd tonight. Couples and singles were clustered around various paintings, analyzing her art and debating whether or not to spend the money.

"Congratulations." Lisa, the owner of the gallery came to stand beside her. "This is probably your most successful exhibit since last summer."

Nikki glanced at her friend and offered a brief smile. "Thanks. I'm a little shocked."

"Why? The winter series paintings you did with the snow went fast."

"Yeah, no kidding. We sold all but one."

"Well, that may not be true in a few minutes. You have an interested buyer."

"For Cupid's Tears?" Her voice rose.

"Yes. A man expressed interest a couple minutes ago."

Nikki took a deep breath and looked away. She'd known it was a possibility, and had wanted the price set so high it would discourage buyers. She hadn't been ready to part with the painting.

The inspiration for it had come from her weekend with Chase. The oil painting, a mingling of blue and grey, showed the cabin in winter, a subtle pattern in the falling snow hinted at a lovers embrace.

"Actually that's why I'm here. The potential buyer has some questions for you. I put him in the office if you don't mind running over there real quick."

She swallowed her disappointment and gave a brief nod. "That's fine."

"Great, thanks." Lisa gave her shoulder a triple pat before dashing across the floor to talk to some more potential buyers.

Nikki took a deep breath, smoothing the black empire waist dress over her expanding curves and headed to the back office.

She stepped through the door and froze, all the color draining from her face.

"Hello, Nikki." Chase stepped forward, reaching past her to shut the door behind her.

She had the ridiculous urge to run behind the desk and hide her belly. But yeah, a little late for that.

He stepped closer, a tiny smile on his face. But really, he didn't look amused.

Maybe he really was just interested in the painting. It was possible he wasn't noticing her enormous belly, breasts, and ass. Or if he had, he'd probably just assume it was somebody else's.

"So." He stepped forward and reached out to touch the side of her cheek, sending warmth through every inch of her body. "Were you planning on telling me about the baby?"

Okay. So he wasn't an idiot. Her heart thudded so loud she was sure he could hear it. She swiped her tongue across her lips.

"You're a dentist--free dental for the kid. Of course I was going to tell you."

His eyes darkened and she was fully aware she'd just pissed him off.

"Nikki--"

"I was kidding." She lowered her gaze, her hand moving automatically to the baby bump. "Yes, Chase. I would have told you. You're his father. You have the right to know, whether you choose to be involved in his life or not."

A sense of wonder and protectiveness swept through him. She'd said *his* father. He was having a son. Chase's chest expanded as he breathed in raggedly. How could she have kept this from him?

"If I want to be involved?" His voice dropped an octave, shaking with the anger he couldn't quite hold in check.

He backed her up, until she was pinned between him and the door. Her eyes widened and he could see the confusion in them.

He ran his gaze from her top to bottom. She'd changed her appearance a bit; wasn't as punk. Her black hair was in big curls around her face and her makeup was still heavy, but rather more 1940's glam.

She still smelled the same, that sweet patchouli oil scent that would forever remind him of her.

Her body was lush with curves, her stomach already rounded with their child.

She was sexier now, five months pregnant, than she had been Valentine's weekend five months ago.

"Yes, *if* you want to be involved," she said, looking overly confident for someone who was about to make him lose his cool.

"You've got a lot of nerve."

"Yeah, so do you." She met his glare with one of her own.

"You think so? You haven't seen anything yet." He lowered his head towards hers, his blood pounding.

He heard the change in her breathing and dropped his gaze to her breasts. Her nipples were tight against the fabric.

"Are you threatening me? Because let me warn you, asshole, you never threaten a pregnant woman. I'll have you--"

He covered her mouth with his, needing to feel the softness of her lips. To remember the sweet taste of her. She pushed against his chest, her outrage obvious, but he refused to let her go.

The longer he held her, the slower he moved his tongue against hers, the less she resisted. He relaxed his grip on her, murmured a sound of approval. Then she bit his tongue.

He jerked back with a curse. "What the hell--"

"Don't you kiss me. You can't walk in here and just haul off and kiss me," she snapped, folding her arms across her chest. "I will not be your back up bitch. So you just march that cute ass home to your wife or girlfriend. Whichever one it is."

She turned, reaching for the handle on the door. "I'll call you after Dexter's born and we can work out a parenting plan."

Chase blinked. The anger draining out of him and leaving complete confusion.

"What the hell are you talking about? I don't have a girlfriend, and I'm certainly not married."

Her hand stilled on the door handle and she glanced over her shoulder at him.

"I heard you. On the phone in the cabin that night. Why the hell are you lying to me?"

"On the phone?" He shook his head. Where was she getting this?

"You said I meant nothing, and she was the only one you wanted."

The light dawned. The conversation with Justin? How much had she heard? Obviously only the part to make her assume the worst. Was this why she'd left him that night?

"I was on the phone to Justin, Nikki. If you were going to eavesdrop you should have listened to the whole damn conversation."

She gave him a wary look. "What do you mean?"

"I mean I was giving him advice on what to say to Shaylee after he got caught kissing another woman."

"You mean...you're not married?"

"No."

"And you don't have a girlfriend?"

"Obviously not."

Her mouth opened, but she didn't say anything. Just blinked a few times. Then she opened the door and walked out of the office.

Chapter 10

Chase grabbed onto the back of a chair to steady himself. She'd left him. His chest went tight, and suddenly it was hard to breath. Oh, God. She'd left him.

What the hell could he do? Force her to marry him?

"Sorry." She came back into the office and walked towards him, out of breath. "I had to tell Lisa that I won't be available the rest of the evening, and that under no circumstances should she come into this office in the next hour."

Then her arms wrapped around his neck and she slammed her mouth onto his. Walking him backwards, she pushed him down into a chair and then straddled his lap.

Relief raced through him and he locked his arms around her, pushing her dress up around her waist.

"Damn, you're aggressive."

"No, I'm horny. Pregnancy does that to a girl." She dropped a slower, less urgent kiss on his mouth. "That, and I'm in love with you."

"You love me?" His pulse slowed and then sped up to double time.

"That's what I said." She bit his lower lip. "Now's the part where you say you love me, too."

"I love you, too." His fingers slid between her legs, finding her, indeed, very horny. "It nearly killed me when I found your note."

"Yeah," she gasped when he slipped his fingers into her panties. "Sorry about that. It was complete bullshit."

"I know."

"Good, now make love to me."

"Yes." He pressed his lips to hers again, swiping his tongue deep. Then he pulled back and touched her cheek. "Oh, and Nikki?"

"Mmm hmm?" She kissed the side of his neck.

"We are *not* naming our son Dexter."

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Shelli Stevens

www.shellistevens.com

Shelli Stevens is a musician, a second degree purple belt in Tae Kwon Do, and most importantly a mom. She has been a Supervisor for an International Phone Company, a Network Analyst, even a Medical Assistant, but her passion has always been for writing. She fell in love with romance novels in the sixth grade when she first pilfered one off her mom's bookshelf. Once the shock and awe wore off, she began writing books of her own.

Shelli currently lives in the Pacific Northwest with her daughter where she is Vice President of her local RWA chapter.



If you liked this book, why not check out some of the other titles at Forbidden Publications. We offer a wide variety of books for all your reading pleasures.

www.forbiddenpublications.com