

# **All Wrapped Up: Branded**

## **Ann Jacobs**

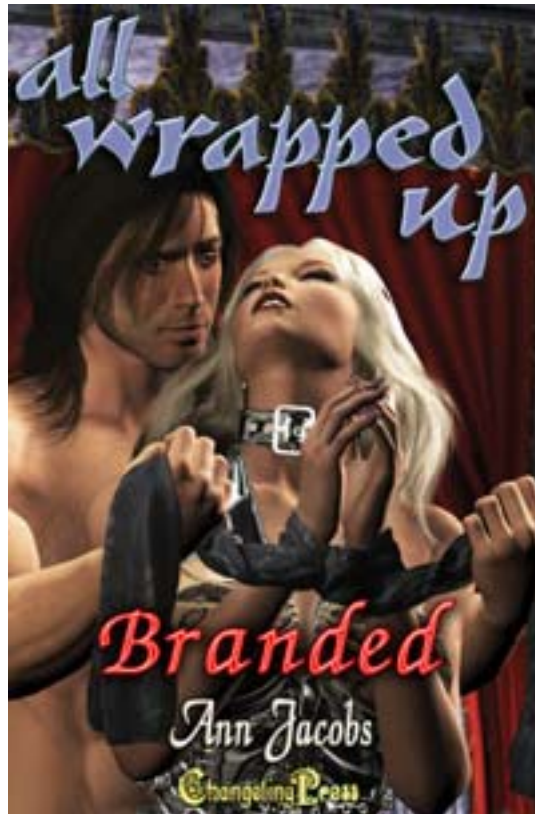
**All rights reserved.  
Copyright ©2006 Ann Jacobs**

**No part of this e-book may be reproduced or shared by any electronic or mechanical means, including but not limited to printing, file sharing, and email, without prior written permission from Changeling Press LLC.**

**ISBN (10) 1-59596-285-9  
ISBN (13) 978-1-59596-285-0  
Formats Available:  
HTML, Adobe PDF,  
MobiPocket, Microsoft Reader**

**Publisher:  
Changeling Press LLC  
PO Box 1046  
Shepherdstown, WV 25402-1046  
[www.ChangelingPress.com](http://www.ChangelingPress.com)**

**Editor: Margaret Riley  
Cover Artist: Bryan Keller**



This e-book file contains sexually explicit scenes and adult language which some may find offensive and which is not appropriate for a young audience. Changeling Press E-Books are for sale to adults, only, as defined by the laws of the country in which you made your purchase. Please store your files wisely, where they cannot be accessed by under-aged readers.

## Prologue

### The year 2150, Federation of Earth

The sub met him at the side door of the underground club and practically jerked him inside. "I'm sorry to have dragged you here, Master Cole. I know you don't come to the clubs any more, but I saw Mistress Ciel here with Amber. When Master Dax came in, I figured there was going to be trouble."

"Not your fault, Ellen. How long have they been here?"

"About two hours." Ellen sounded apologetic as she hurried them down the stairs to the underground levels. "Master Dax only got here about an hour ago. That was when I called you. When he joined them in one of the chambers."

*Oh, shit.* This club occupied the basement and sub-basements of an old garment factory. Only two exits, the one at ground level through which he'd entered, and an emergency escape route through a hollowed-out tunnel from one of the lower tiers. Bouncers manned the main door, always on the lookout for cops, so with luck the patrons could escape through the tunnel in case of a raid. That is, unless the cops discovered both exits and capture them all like rats in a trap.

The place reminded Cole of a dungeon, but not the kind he preferred, set up for the type of pleasure a certain amount of pain might bring to submissives. This dungeon was more like those used centuries ago, during the Inquisition, where pain was all about pain. Fear. Sweat and blood.

He quickened his pace as the sounds of flogging and the cries of submissives grew louder. "How much farther?"

"All the way down, Master." Ellen started taking steps two at the time, as though the noises were getting to her too.

Cole wanted to strangle his crazy sister. Why the hell had she gotten it into her head she could top Master Dax. Idiot! The vicious Dom was a known psychopath, a fine example of the type of BDSM practitioners that had gotten the lifestyle outlawed. Stupid! The laws now allowed Doms like Dax free rein, since dungeons were all illegal, and thus unregulated.

A high-pitched scream pierced the fetid air of the stairway. Cole charged toward the sound. An image of Amber's sweet face, her large eyes and soft pink lips, flashed in his mind. Nausea rose in him. Anxiety. More for Amber than for Ciel, who'd brought this on herself. If she had a death wish, that was one thing. But Amber would go down with her because that was what a good submissive would do.

He pictured her, bloodied and bruised. "Fuck!" He'd kill the bastard. "Which room?"

"That one, Master Cole."

Kicking the door in, the first thing Cole saw was Amber, bound to a St. Andrew's Cross. A cane whistled through the air, hit her breasts with a sickening thud. Blood dripped from other cuts on her shoulders, her belly, her thighs. Tears stained her cheeks, mingled with blood where the cane had struck.

Dax raised the cane again, and Cole charged in. "I'm gonna kill you, you sadistic sonofabitch."

Amber blinked through her tears. He'd come. She could hardly believe it. For the past year Cole had apparently wanted little to do with her and Ciel. Before, he'd always smiled at her when they crossed paths. He'd even taken time to do a little casual flirting when he'd run into them.

What would he do if he knew how many times she'd replayed those moments in her mind, pretending she'd read more than casual affection for his sister's friend in his smiling eyes? How she'd hoped he'd invite her and Ciel to one of his parties? In the old days when his preferred club had been open, she'd often watched him, wished she'd been the sub he'd had on her knees, lovingly servicing his cock.

The two men crashed into the wall, sending equipment clattering to the floor. Cole seized a flogger, caught the cane Dax swung at his face. If she could get free, she could help him. She could...

Cole had the bastard now. Would flog him within an inch of his worthless life. Foot planted in the center of Dax's chest, Cole raised the flogger and laid it across Dax's thighs. Dax screamed. "You don't much like it when it's being done to you, do you, you sadistic prick?" Cole raised the flogger again, but Ciel came out of the shadows like a madwoman.

"Leave him alone," she yelled, struggling to get control of the flogger, just as the door flew open and the chamber filled with cops.

"Back off, Ciel." Cole dropped the flogger. "And try to act like a victim." No chance to save himself, but with luck he'd be able to keep the cops from taking his sister as well as Amber. "Oh, shit, here come the reporters."

He whipped around, faced Amber, tried to block her so they couldn't get a shot of her naked, bleeding body. Dax and Ciel both wore concealing masks. His own face, however, would be out there on the six o'clock news for everyone to see.

As a cop clamped the cuffs on him and dragged him away with Master Dax, Cole tried to imagine a scenario where he'd come out of this smelling like anything but leftovers from last week's fish dinner.

Nothing came immediately to mind.

\* \* \*

Eight hours later Cole sat on the hot seat -- a leather chair in front of Federation Commissioner Alan Callender's desk -- having just been bailed out of the county lockup by his powerful father to the tune of ten thousand credits. Cole made himself focus on a spot beyond his disappointed parent's left ear.

He'd tried, worked hard with Alan at his various businesses since graduating from college. In that way, at least, Cole was certain he'd made his father proud. He'd taken several startup concerns and turned them into successful businesses, as well as

reviving some older endeavors and making them yield profits again. There was only one thing -- his lifestyle -- that had always given his father reason for concern.

Cole didn't kid himself. Alan knew he was into BDSM, probably even knew why he'd been at the illegal club: Ciel, who made no effort to hide her disdain for the law and who'd gotten herself into scrapes before, situations from which Alan himself had found it necessary to extricate her.

Alan looked him in the eye. "This is a difficult situation, son. I'm thinking there's only one choice here, other than imprisonment."

Cole attempted a smile. "I didn't realize there was a choice." He attempted a smile, failed. "I thought I was destined for a prison job for the next five years."

"Not if I have to collect on every bit of political capital I've accumulated, son." Alan paused, then continued. "You know, you've amassed a impressive portfolio yourself while running my companies the past few years. And earned every credit. You're a sharp businessman."

Right now Cole didn't feel very proud. "I'm afraid tonight doesn't reflect well on me. Or you."

Alan shook his head. "Treating the women as helpless victims was a clever stroke. You knew their identities wouldn't be revealed that way, and only your name and that of the other man would be involved. I'm not such a fool, though, that I don't realize all this was about Ciel."

Ciel? In his mind, Cole saw Amber, felt the pain that had radiated from her, from every bleeding welt caused by Dax's cane. She'd been a helpless victim, victim of Ciel as well as Dax. Not for the first time, Cole wondered what motivated Amber to allow such extremes to be done to her without availing herself of safe words.

"What are my choices, Father? What will help you the most?"

"It's not about me. It's about you. And exile is the choice. Permanent transportation off Planet Earth."

"What?"

"You could go to Obsidion. There's been talk of letting private investors turn it into an off-world pleasure resort."

Excitement caught Cole up for the first time since his arrest. "I could open a club there."

"That's what I was thinking -- you could capitalize on the fact there are many Earthlings who espouse a lifestyle unacceptable here. I imagine a man with your business acumen could capitalize on that, create a resort that would allow aficionados of BDSM to indulge those desires safely. A place that might allow fathers like me not to worry quite so much."

"A resort." Cole pictured not just the upscale club that first had crossed his mind, but a full-fledged vacation paradise. Hotel, restaurants, casinos, night clubs with imported talent from Earth. All the draws of Las Vegas, but with the added attraction of open, guilt-free practice of the BDSM lifestyle. "I like the idea."

It certainly beat spending the next five years in prison. "I believe I'll start out building the kind of club that will attract the more desirable elements of the lifestyle, then start on the resort."

His father nodded, sad resignation in his expression. "I'll miss you, but Obsidion is the best place for you now. I hope you'll find the happiness there that has eluded you lately. Perhaps I will send Ceil there too. You managed to save her from arrest this time, but if she stays, sooner or later she'll be caught."

"If you send her to me, I'll do my best to take care of her. Father, I am sorry."

"You will not be sorry. I will, for I will miss my youngest and dearest child." Rising, Alan circled his massive desk and drew Cole to his feet. "Perhaps someday I will visit, try to comprehend what it is about BDSM that makes people risk their freedom in order to practice it."

Cole hugged his father, hard. "And perhaps one day I will return here."

## Chapter One

### A year later, on the planet Obsidion

Everything was shaping up for an opening of *No Bounds* two weeks from Tuesday. Cole stood in his office, shrugging into a fresh shirt. They'd finished installing the equipment in the dungeon rooms, and he and the dozen men and women he'd hired to serve as club Doms and subs had been putting the equipment through its paces the past couple of days.

Fuck, but that hot Domme from Warsaw -- Magda Something Unpronounceable -- knew how to give a blow job. Cole's cock still gave an occasional twitch, and it had been half an hour since she'd gone down on him. While Magda was a natural Domme, she'd filled in as a sub when needed at her former place of employment. She'd shown him how a Dom could tie her up to the shiny rotating St. Andrew's cross and she could still make him come and come and come. Yeah, Magda would be a prime attraction for all the male subs who'd be flocking to the club. She'd be a hit with some of the other Doms as well, he imagined.

But even after a year away from Earth, Cole couldn't look down at the crown of Magda's head and not fantasize about Amber -- her soft blonde hair curling around her angel face, her delicate ears and slender throat. He couldn't help imagining how silky her skin would feel if he grazed his fingertips over her shoulders and arms while she serviced him -- a scene he'd never experienced except in occasional dreams.

He'd imagined a lot of things about Amber these past months.

And worried about her. It made Cole's gut tighten, thinking about Amber being in a place like the one where they'd been caught. Unfortunately, he had no doubt his sister had taken her right back into that maelstrom.



He'd known Amber since they were kids. She'd moved into his neighborhood to live with elderly relatives after her parents' deaths. Although she was Cole's age, Amber had let the older, more sophisticated Ciel take her under her wing. Many a time Cole had lusted after Amber but quashed his feelings because of his sister's obvious claim.

Truth was, as his attraction toward Amber had grown, he'd distanced himself more from Ciel's social pursuits -- and not only because he'd tried to keep his lifestyle under wraps once BDSM was outlawed, although that's what he'd told himself. He'd avoided Ciel because seeing Amber with her had fueled feelings he'd convinced himself were wrong.

Now it seemed Ciel was avoiding him.

His father had looked worried yesterday when they'd had their weekly conversation on the vid-phone.

"Ciel's just as uncontrolled as ever, and she still refuses to join you on Obsidion," Alan had told him after they'd exhausted the topic of progress Cole was making on *No Bounds*. Ciel's decision made Cole uneasy, because he knew whatever trouble his sister got into back on Earth, Amber would be right there with her.

The vid-phone's com link lit up just then, and Cole pushed the connect button when he saw his father's ID on the screen. "Is something wrong?" He'd talked to Alan only yesterday, and interplanetary vid-phone calls weren't cheap.

"Your sister was caught in a raid last night with her friend Amber -- you may know her. She has no choice now but to accept exile. I'm putting them both onto the next transporter leaving for Obsidion. It is due to leave here day after tomorrow."

Cole wanted to strangle Ciel for having put Amber at risk again. He couldn't deny the part of him that wanted to hug her, too, because now Amber would be coming to Obsidion.

\* \* \*

Finally. Ten days later Cole had practically finished training his staff. Only one had not worked out so far, a Dom whose tactics reminded him of a Dax-in-training. No

problem, because Cole could fill in as the fourth club Dom until he could find a suitable replacement. If he'd been into black leather and tattoos, he could have picked as many as a dozen Doms from the applicants he'd turned away, but he wanted to keep the atmosphere here more upscale so as not to scare away the women who wanted to dabble in the world of BDSM while on vacation but who weren't deeply into the lifestyle.

After all, it took a good many credits to hop on a transporter and blast off-planet for a taste of the pleasure-pain Cole would be selling at *No Bounds*. In his experience, affluence and conventionality went hand in hand, at least as far as what people expected Doms and subs to look like.

He'd leave the heavy metal and the leather to the two sleazy clubs that had beaten him into business here on the Pleasure Planet, and any that might follow. If *No Bounds* became the hit with customers that Cole expected, he'd soon be able to open the resort hotel he'd had designed, where discriminating customers might indulge their every sexual fantasy in an atmosphere of sybaritic luxury.

"Master Cole?"

His assistant stood inside his office door gawking at him, apparently enjoying the view as he began to button his shirt. Not surprising since she was also one of the subs he'd hired. "Yes, Kara?"

She held up a note. "Your father just sent you this message on the secure line. He said it was urgent and I should give it to you right away."

Frowning, for drama was not Alan's forte, Cole took the message, cursing as he read the first few lines:

*Cole, I just learned Dax Petrone was shipped out on the same transporter as your sister. Even though she has her friend Amber with her, I am concerned as this man has caused Ciel so much trouble. Please do what you can.*

Cole dropped the note on his desk and bolted out the door, not bothering to finish buttoning his shirt, hoping he wasn't too late. Apparently whatever arrangements Dax had made to avoid either prison or transportation had fallen through, and if so Dax

was going to be furious, ready to take out his frustration on everyone around him -- particularly Ciel and Amber.

Fuck. The transporter ships that brought exiles here had nothing in the way of security for anyone but the pilots. Cade gunned the hovercraft and made for the transporter docks.

\* \* \*

Amber lay, bound hand and foot, on the cold hard metal floor of the transporter's austere rear cabin, alone except for Master Dax. When she saw the sizzling branding iron, she understood what he meant to do, why he'd dragged her away from the main cabin and the rest of the exiles. The iron glowed an eerie blue-red before her eyes, held steady by the smiling satyr who had it in his grasp. "You will pay for having gotten me exiled, slave."

"No. Please, Master Dax, do not." Amber struggled through the haze of a stupor induced by too much pain, too much fucking. If Ciel were here, she'd have kept Master Dax from hurting her this way, but she wasn't. Her friend had been sleeping in the main cabin when Dax dragged her in here. As Dax brought the iron closer, Amber tried to recall the safe word. Slowly the iron descended, then disappeared from her range of vision.

"Nooooooo." The stench of her own skin burning practically blotted out the agony of being branded, the sound of sizzling flesh on her left ass cheek as Dax held it there.

Dax put pressure on the red-hot brand as though he intended to burn all her flesh away. "This is but the first of many. Learn to love it. I won't stop until I've marked every inch of you for your treachery." He raised the branding iron, watched as it regained the heat it had poured into Amber's flesh.

The transporter shuddered, then lurched forward. "*Turbulence!*" Amber screamed, suddenly remembering the safe word Dax had given her long ago.

"You have no safe word now. None. You have, however, earned a brief reprieve, for it seems we're about to land on Obsidion." He unplugged the branding iron and set it in its cradle.

Where was Ciel? Dax had to have done something to her, knocked her out. Ciel would never have stood still and let him brand her. Amber forced her eyes open as soon as they'd docked, but she could barely see through her tears.

Something crashed into the metal door, the noise making Amber cringe even before someone burst in, his accompaniment a string of curses. "You sadistic son of a bitch!" It sounded like Cole, Ciel's brother. Amber held her breath, hoping...

"Fuck you, rich boy." Dax said more, but the sounds coming from his lips morphed into a scream. Cole's meaty fist hit Dax's open mouth with enough force to make him stagger backward, spitting teeth, blood spurting from his lips.

Amber saw Cole now, standing over Dax's prone body like an avenging angel. Spots of blood dotted Cole's fists, and she saw murder in his dark expression. Amber strained against the cuffs and belts that held her on her belly, unable to move more than a few inches in any direction. Despite the burning in her butt she took solace in the knowledge Dax was feeling pain as well.

Guilt swamped her for feeling that way about a master. A submissive wasn't supposed to harbor such thoughts. But she'd used the safe word. Why hadn't he listened? How come he never listened?

Instinctively she knew Master Cole would never have ignored her plea to stop. Ever. Now, even though she was in excruciating pain, Amber felt the first sense of real happiness she'd experienced since learning Cole had been exiled more than a year earlier. A sense of joy spread over her as she looked at him, the hard-muscled chest framed in the two sides of his open shirt, the powerful thighs encased in snug denim that drew her gaze there and higher, at the outline of his cock and balls. His taut expression she imagined would soften when he was being pleased by his slave. Amazingly, arousal stirred in her despite her burning ass cheek, her shock...

Ciel! What had Dax done to her? Amber opened her mouth, managed to croak out her friend's name... but nothing more. Her throat constricted, and she had to gasp for breath.

"I sent for the medics to take care of Ciel," Cole said. "Be thankful I'm a rational man, or I'd also be summoning a mortician if there were one here on Obsidion. For this piece of shit."

"But Ciel's not dead --"

"No. If she were, I'd have killed Dax without a second thought. She's in bad shape though." Cole stripped the belt from around his narrow waist, used it to bind Dax's limp arms behind his back. Then he came to Amber, removed the cuffs and shackles that bound her. "I'll take you home and have the medics see to you too. Did you allow him to do this to you?"

"I told him no. Didn't want... I used the safe word." Amber hated the look of revulsion on Cole's handsome face. As a Dom, Cole took care never to damage his subs. Besides, she *had* used the safe word, never mind that she'd done so after Dax had pressed that red-hot brand into her tender flesh.

"I'll kill him."

The tender way Cole lifted her in his arms surprised her, considering the fierce tone of his voice. "Please do not," she said as he carried her off the transporter and settled her on her belly next to Ciel, in the cargo area of a large hovercraft marked *No Bounds*. "I couldn't bear to see you imprisoned because of me."

\* \* \*

Amber's worry for him moved Cole, bolstered him and kept him going through the next few hours. He brought in Ulrica, one of the most highly recommended Obsidion medics, and had her give Amber something for her pain before watching the woman spend almost six intense hours working on Ciel.

Ulrica pumped Ciel's stomach of the drugs Dax had forced on her, then monitored her until it appeared she'd pull through without lasting damage to her brain or other vital organs.

During that time, Amber lay in the room across the hall, and Cole peered in on her every few minutes, seeing her pain subside -- and return far too soon despite the

drugs. He couldn't bear watching her suffer. As soon as Ulrica backed away from Ciel, he asked for something stronger to give Amber.

Ten hours later, Ciel had stabilized, though she still was unconscious. Cole needed the time he took to pull a chair up beside Amber's bed and watch her sleep, reach out and stroke her hair back from her face. She'd taken the sedative, watched him with her innocent-looking blue eyes as she drank the water he held to her lips. She could have held it herself, but he hadn't let her, hadn't questioned why he insisted on making her take the pill from his hand, insisting she slake her thirst the same way.

But he knew why. He wanted her. But she was Ciel's. He had to get a grip.

"How is Ciel?" Those blue eyes were on him now as he raised his weary head from his hands and focused on her. Pale and shaken yet in no apparent pain, she managed a smile, then repeated, "What did he do to Ciel?"

"She'll survive. Barely. The bastard force-fed her enough drugs to choke a horse." He stood and pulled back the covers, grimacing when he looked at the angry wound that covered Amber's left ass cheek. "The medic told me when this heals it will be the bastard's initials. Then it can be removed with a series of skin grafts. She also mentioned it could be modified now, turned into something more attractive before your skin begins to heal."

Amber shuddered, as though the idea of enduring more of the excruciating pain Dax had inflicted terrified her. Stepping back, Cole pulled the sheet back up over a sort of platform the medic had erected to keep the covers from touching her wound and causing more discomfort.

"It would be done with a laser tool and you'd be sedated," he said, even as ire built in him for her having thought he'd countenance her going through a branding in his home.

"How would she modify the design?" Obviously Amber wasn't thrilled at having the sadistic master's initial branded on her ass even for the length of time required to do corrective surgery, and that pleased Cole immeasurably.

"The medic said it could be turned into a simple flower. A lily, maybe. Or a rose. Would you like that?"

"I believe I would like it if it were done on your order, Master Cole."

Amber, calling him Master? They'd been playmates, friends... equals. He'd tried never to let himself fantasize about the beautiful, sexy Amber as a potential slave. In fact he'd often had to remind himself he considered her more the property of his sister, not so much in a sexual way as in the manner of a companion, a submissive follower Ciel could dangle like a carrot in the faces of other Dommies and Doms she wanted to impress.

But the wanting had been there, Cole knew, buried deeply under the veneer of friendship. He recalled many nights he'd dreamed of tasting Amber's soft, pink lips, feeling those lips stretched around his cock... of claiming her cunt and ass until she came as she'd never come before... Cole grew dizzy as blood rushed to his cock, making it rock-hard and turning his brain to mush. "My order? Are you saying you wish to be my slave?"

The look in Amber's golden eyes when she raised her gaze to his slammed into Cole's gut. "If that would please you, Master," she said, her honeyed words seducing him, making him wild to take her, mark her as his in every way he knew.

Except with a brand. And he'd have to do that or wait months for the signs of Dax's abuse to be obliterated. Once again Cole wished he'd killed Petrone when he had the opportunity. He pictured that bastard holding her, ignoring her pleas to stop, cooking the tender flesh of her ass with red-hot metal. Had the pervert come while he'd been making her flesh sizzle?

Cole traced the faint blue line that marked Amber's jugular vein, realizing how small, how fragile she really was. "It would please me to take you, to control you, to care for you. But what about Ciel? What is your relationship with her?"

"I love her as a sister. We have never been lovers, except when it pleased her to use me in order to torture her slave of the moment. She will recover fully?"

Cole shook his head. "I hope so. The medics are not so sure. I know that if -- when -- Ciel comes back to us in spirit as well as fact, I will insist she get some therapy. This baiting of Dominants like Dax will be the death of her. If not now, then soon."

"Master, I believe Ciel is not a true Domme."

"You think she's a switch?" Cole doubted that, but it certainly was a possibility he was willing to consider.

"No, a submissive determined to resist those yearnings." Amber turned her head toward Cole, gave him a smile that brought out every protective instinct he'd ever had. "Unlike me. I want nothing more than to be enslaved by a master like you."

Cole wanted nothing more than he wanted to take Amber, make her his in every way. But not yet. What she needed now was tenderness, time to heal. "And I want nothing more than to claim you. For now, though, I'm going to watch over you, take care of you... make sure you heal properly." He paused, bent, and brushed his lips across hers. "I've waited years for you, you know."

"You need not wait, Master."

"Yes. I do. Loving you the way I want to would only make this hurt more." He laid a hand on the opposite ass cheek from the raw wound of the brand, caressed her gently.

"Will you have your medic change the brand, Master?"

"Yes, sweetheart. I'll find the tattoo artist now." When he reached the door, he paused. Damn it, he hated the thought of burning her. "Are you sure?"

She turned her head, met his gaze with sober blue eyes. "I want to wear no man's brand but yours."



## Chapter Two

He couldn't watch, yet he couldn't leave. Cole paced in front of a window that looked out on Obsidion's rugged terrain, trying to imagine it a year from now, once the straggly trees and shrubs grew up to lend some green to a setting now mostly rock and hard, red clay. Every time the smell of burning flesh began to gag him, he reminded himself Ulrica had sedated Amber, that she felt nothing the tattoo artist was doing to transform Petrone's initial.

She'd assured them it would look like a graceful lily once she was done. But Cole was getting impatient. He wanted her finished before the anesthetic wore off. "How much longer?" he asked, steeling himself to see what was going on and moving toward the bed.

"Would you care to see?" The artist straightened and set the white-hot laser tool in its cradle.

The first thing Cole saw were tears streaming from Amber's eyes, staining her cheeks and dampening the pillow. "You hurt her." Anger bubbled up, threatened to spill over into action. Cole took a step forward, surprised at how much Amber's tears affected him.

"Your slave was completely numbed. I would not have caused her further distress," the artist said, shooting Cole a look of disdain as she assembled her tools, fast, as though she thought it prudent to beat a quick retreat.

Amber reached out and took Cole's hand, spoke softly to him. "She didn't hurt me, Master. I cry when I am happy, and I'm very happy I will be wearing your mark and not Master Dax's."

Cole wasn't happy. He wanted to storm the jail, find Petrone, and kill him. But what he wanted wasn't nearly as important as caring for Amber. Numb now, she'd be

suffering agonizing pain before long -- pain she'd endured mostly because of Petrone, but partially because of him as well.

The door opened, and Ulrica stepped inside. "Good. I see that the work is done. If you wish, I can leave some medicine that will dull the pain once the anesthetic wears off."

"Of course I wish it. I have no desire for Amber to suffer." From the expression on Ulrica's face, Cole doubted she believed him.

"Sir..." Ulrica spoke hesitantly, as though she wasn't sure he wanted to hear what she had to say. "You will need to keep the wound covered with an antibiotic ointment while it heals. If you'd like, I can return every day to tend it."

"I will tend her myself." A labor of love, touching her so intimately yet not taking his pleasure of her while she healed -- Cole wanted to care for her, not just sexually but in every way.

"All right. Give her one of these every four hours for the pain." Ulrica handed over a bottle of capsules -- the same painkiller Dax had used to try to kill Ciel, he realized when he glanced at the label. "And you might put her on one of those swing contraptions downstairs if she gets tired of lying here on her side or belly. Don't let her move around much for at least three or four days, or the brand might break open and start to bleed."

Downstairs? Was the woman crazy? Cole wasn't about to hang Amber out for everybody who walked in *No Bounds* to gawk at. "Don't worry, I'll take good care of Amber," he said, not ready to explore the sudden sense of possessiveness his new slave evoked. "Has my sister shown any sign of coming around?"

"No, sir. As I told you, I don't expect Mistress Ciel to wake up until sometime tomorrow. She's lucky to be alive, considering the level of drugs we found in her bloodstream." Ulrica pursed her lips disapprovingly.

Apparently she thought Ciel had overdosed herself. "You've got it wrong if you think Ciel would take that stuff on her own. Petrone forced it down her, probably to get her out of the way while he tortured Amber."

Ulrica shook her head. "I hadn't thought of that possibility. In any case, I have my rounds to make at *The Leather Gallery* and *Pierced Princes*. When you get *No Bounds* opened up, I imagine I'll be needing to find a partner. Never understood it, not at all, folks like her" -- she nodded toward Amber -- "getting off by getting hurt. It's human nature, though, to lord it over another human, the way you masters do. Still, BDSM keeps us medics in business."

Cole barely managed to rein in his temper. "I don't imagine you'll be getting much, if any, business from *No Bounds*. I won't allow my employees or patrons to inflict injuries that might necessitate your services." Now, though, Cole was beginning to understand the look of fear and revulsion he'd seen in the medic's cool blue eyes when she'd first arrived in answer to his call for help. She'd obviously gotten a warped impression of the lifestyle he'd chosen, probably back on Earth -- although from what he'd seen on Obsidion, what went on at his competition had definitely reinforced her view. "I appreciate your taking care of Amber and Ciel though."

"It's my job." Ulrica picked up her bag and headed out, but when she paused downstairs at the door, Cole saw tears glistening in her eyes. "Once it heals, your slave's brand will be a thing of beauty. Unlike mine. I will never again show myself unclothed."

There had to be a story there, Cole thought as he watched Ulrica make her way down the street, past the businesses between *No Bounds* and *The Leather Gallery*. There was something about the woman, something that made him want to know her secrets, keep her from harm. Although, from her attitude, it seemed clear she wanted no protector. He couldn't help thinking she'd been hurt as Amber had, and in healing she'd lost much of herself.

Cole wouldn't let that happen to his beautiful Amber. He did have a problem now, however, because there was no way in hell he'd put her to work as a club sub the way she apparently expected him to, no possibility he'd stand by and watch customers maul what belonged to him. Exclusively.

When he went back upstairs, he paused at the closed door to Ciel's room. Amber insisted his sister had no claim on her, that they were only friends and sometimes participants in the same D/s scenes. But Cole wasn't so sure. Not that he doubted Amber, for he trusted her implicitly, but he had a feeling Ciel might harbor more proprietary feelings toward her friend.

\* \* \*

Amber woke slowly, focusing first on a mural opposite the bed. Excellent art work, it depicted lovers... a master on his knees, pleasuring his ecstatic slave. The drapes that covered her breasts and belly were dark blue, like the midnight sky back home on Earth. Like the incredibly soft covers beneath Amber's seeking fingers. Everything about the room bespoke luxury... privilege... and care for beautiful surroundings. Even though no one had told her, she knew it was Cole's room. She glanced toward the open window, saw a wrought-iron balcony lit by three brilliant moons.

The sounds of moving feet, of low-pitched voices drifted to her ears. Comforting signs that she wasn't alone, that life and business went on around her. She fantasized that Cole would have been with her but for the pressing needs of readying *No Bounds* for its grand opening. It was a beautiful place, she was sure, much like the one he'd talked about long ago, idle conversation then, something she never thought he'd do. But he'd done it, here on a planet far away from home.

Pain crept over Amber after she got up and took a shower, small twinges around the brand, moving outward, inward, seeping through her veins. She welcomed every twinge, each reminder she'd survived this latest assault on her body. Survived and won another round against the demon within her that wanted to die, wanted her to kill it and herself in retribution...

For what? For having lived when her parents and sister had died? For having been a constant reminder to her grandparents that they were gone? For the first time in her memory, Amber fought the pain, fought it with dreams not of death but of life... of a life shared with a master. Her master.

Cole Callender. A beautiful man, tall, rugged, strong enough to protect her against all comers. For years she'd watched him grow from a gangly boy who'd teased her and Ciel with cicadas and snakes to full, masterful manhood. Eyelids closed, she pictured his dark, wavy hair, his laughing blue-green eyes, sensual lips that smiled more than they frowned. The memory of his powerful muscles rippling against her softer flesh when he'd carried her from the transporter, of the gentle touch of his hands, of his deep voice full of concern, flooded her mind, blotting out the physical discomfort from the brand.

Amber didn't know where she'd ever found the courage to say she wanted him as her master, but she'd never take back the words. While he might hurt her -- which she surely would beg him to do while in the throes of passion -- the knowledge that he'd also protect her even from his own desires warmed her, calmed the constant fear in her that someday she'd let a Dom go too far, finish the job the plane crash that killed her family had left undone on her.

She crawled back into bed, settling on her side instead of her belly this time. Ouch! She winced at the sharp pain no amount of sublimating could suppress. When Cole strode in and sat beside her on the edge of the bed, she managed a ghost of a smile.

"Time for your medicine." Reaching into the drawer of the night stand, Cole fished out the bottle of pills and handed her one along with the glass of iced water he'd brought in. "Down the hatch."

"Yes, Master." Just having him here beside her chased away the pain. "I'm glad to be here. Anxious to see what Obsidion looks like."

Cole gestured toward the window. "Well, that's the most unnerving sight you're likely to see -- Obsidion's three multicolored moons. Otherwise, the planet reminds me a lot of a desert back on Earth, except that the sand's reddish-brown instead of white. Some people are experimenting with irrigating and fertilizing large blocks of land, enough for commercially growing familiar plants. When you're able to get up, I'll show you the garden I've started out in the courtyard."

His wistful expression reminded her he'd had to come here because of rescuing Ciel -- and her. "You know, I haven't told you how sorry I am about the fight that got you shipped here."

"It's nothing. At first I felt disoriented, away from everything I'd known, but now I'm looking forward to making *No Bounds* a success. To seeing Obsidion develop into a showplace pleasure planet that will attract the best elements from Earth. Already we're working on getting all the services -- hospitals, utilities, and so on, that will make it easier to attract immigrants." He paused, lifted a stray lock of hair off her brow and smoothed it back into place. "Having you here's the icing on the cake."

Amber couldn't help smiling. No one, not even Ciel, had ever made her feel as though she were the center of their world the way Cole did. She could hardly wait to serve him the way a slave should serve her master. "Thank you."

"It's true. I want to know all about you. Where you lived, what you did before you moved into our neighborhood."

Like all of Cole's orders, this one was couched as a request, but Amber knew he meant her to talk, to re-live that difficult time. "Before I came to live with my grandparents? My parents traveled. Most of the time I went with them, but they'd decided I needed formal education and left me at boarding school before they went on that last trip. Their plane crashed."

It still hurt to think about it, the sad face on the headmistress when she'd called Amber in to tell her the news, the reluctance of elderly grandparents to take in the child of their child whom they'd disowned because he'd chosen the BDSM lifestyle.

"So you came to Scarsdale?" Cole prompted.

"Yes. I'd never been so lonely. Never. Not that my grandparents didn't feed and clothe me, but they never *talked*. Until I met Ciel I had no one. No one at all." Older, street-smart Ciel had taken her under a well-manicured wing, introduced her to the world of bondage and domination. She'd called Amber the perfect submissive, one who found the ultimate pleasure in pleasing others. Perhaps she was. Back then she'd

wanted nothing more than to make those around her happy, because evoking a smile, a snippet of praise, had meant everything to her.

Now all she wanted to do was please Cole in every way. Feel his punishment as well as his desire, so she could break past deep-seated feelings of guilt, unworthiness, and reach a sexual peak that never happened without the pain... the humiliation of being on public display for others' amusement... the adrenaline of fearing this time would be the last, that the Dom of the night would take her past the point of no return.

But she wasn't certain Cole wanted her. Wasn't at all confident she wouldn't become a liability to his political aspirations here on Obsidion, just as he'd been one to his father back on Earth.

"Please take me, Master," she said, needing reassurance. Needing him.

Cole could resist no longer. He didn't want to resist. Not when she begged him to take her, not when he sensed her lack of confidence, her fears.

He stood and looped his fingers in the waistband of his jeans, unbuttoning them and shoving them and his underwear down in one quick jerk. Taking his cock in one hand, he moved close enough to feel her warm, damp breath on its throbbing head, then put his knee on the bed and sat back down, his cock in easy reach of her soft, sweet lips.

"Kiss me," he growled. When she swirled her pink tongue around the slit at the tip of his cock, he skimmed his free hand over the rich pale fall of her hair, along the gentle curve of her spine, being careful as he did not to touch the healing but still tender brand. "I wish I'd killed him for hurting you." She sighed, then sucked his cock head into the wet cavern of her mouth, her teeth grazing him, making him want more. "Yes, baby. Like that. Take it all. Deep-throat me. Suck out my come."

God, yes. Because it was Amber sucking his cock, swallowing him, licking along the vein that pulsed along the underside, he felt stronger sensations than he'd experienced with any of the other subs who had pleased him, whether here or back on Earth. "Take all of me. Swallow my come. Oh, yesss."

He'd never come so fast, so furious. Every constricting motion of her throat around his cock head triggered another burst, another wave of incredible pleasure. He grasped the headboard, steadying himself, determined not to move until she'd wrung him dry.

He rose, bent, licked his come off her swollen lips. "I owe you a climax now."

"Have I your permission, Master?"

Though he'd heard it hundreds of times from dozens of women, the title "Master" sounded strange coming from Amber's lips. Cole framed her cheeks between his palms, smiled into her eyes. "You may assume you have my leave to come anytime you like, unless I tell you otherwise."

"And you may use me in any way that gives you pleasure." When Amber laid a hand on his thigh, his cock sprang back to life. "Would you like to fuck me now?"

"Oh, yeah. I'm going to take you, ram my cock into your sweet pussy -- your ass too. But later. Today I want to eat your pussy. Make you feel good." For the first time in his life, Cole wanted to fasten his collar around a submissive's neck. Not just any submissive, but Amber. He wanted to tell the world she was his to protect, to love, to master. To him, that was what the collar meant, in addition to staking his claim of ownership for all other Doms to see and heed.

He bent his head, nipped her just below the pink shell of her ear. The light floral scent of her hair surrounded them, ensnaring him in her. He stroked along her flank, murmuring an apology when he came too close to her wound and felt her tremble.

"Roll onto your belly. Carefully. Lay your arms out over your head." When she complied, Cole cuffed her and secured her wrists to one of the rails in the headboard. "That's good. Now spread your legs and let me in." The sight of her face down, ass up, her legs apart in invitation humbled him. Such trust, so soon after Petrone had misused her...

But was it trust or just the hope she always seemed to harbor in her expression, the hope that a master would truly take care of her? Something she apparently wanted



so desperately she was willing to be tortured, as if trying to prove she could endure anything for the promise of such care and love...

Cole was going to show her, starting right now, that she should expect her master to care for her always, never cause her the type of pain Dax had inflicted on her. And, if he wanted to be honest with himself, the sort of tortures Ciel had caused her too. "There, let me slide this pillow under your hips."

"Thank you, Master. Please..." Her voice trailed off, as though she was afraid to ask for what she wanted.

"Please, what? Do you want me to eat your pussy?" Cole ran a finger along her damp, warm slit, then cupped her plump mound in his hand. "I like that you've shaved like a good sub." Too many of the women he'd interviewed the past few days had shown off shaggy, hairy cunts, a sure sign they weren't really subs -- unless they had yet to shave or be shaved for a master's pleasure.

He dipped his head, found her quivering clit with his tongue. "Oh, yes, Master. I wish..."

"What?" He spoke softly, his breath making her clit harden further. "What do you wish?"

"That I could taste you again too."

Her wistful tone touched him deeply, made him realize Dax's abuse had scarred her inside as much as out. Maybe more. "Later, after I lap your pretty pussy to my heart's content and take you gently, not forcefully as I want to do -- as I will do once you're completely healed. As for tasting each other, that, too, can wait. The last thing I want to do is hurt you."

Amber shuddered, as though the mere mention of Dax's name terrified her. "What will happen to him?"

"The police came and hauled him away to the colonial clinic to get patched up. Afterward, they moved him to the jail. He won't be getting out any time soon." Cole intended to see to that. The last thing this brand-new pleasure planet needed was a sadistic Dom like Petrone running around loose.

When Cole traced the length of her inner thigh from knees to crotch, Amber made a purring sound. He liked the way she responded to his touch, enjoyed the slow loving dictated by his care for her injury. "You like this, don't you?" he asked, running a finger along the crease between her thigh and pussy.

"Mmm. Yes, Master."

"Not Master but Cole. I want to hear you say my name."

When she turned her head, he saw her smiling profile. "Cole. Master Cole."

"Amber." It was as though they'd been lovers for years, yet Cole felt compelled to claim her fully. Rising to his knees, he positioned her, rubbed his cock along her wet, swollen slit. "Do I need to use a condom?"

"If you wish. I... Yes. I'm sorry."

Cole ground his teeth together, holding back a curse. Petrone had fucked her unprotected. Otherwise she wouldn't have hesitated. On Earth she'd have been tested weekly as all former pleasure-givers and seekers were -- as he and all of her partners had been. Of all the restrictive laws the Federation had enacted, that one made a certain amount of sense. So much sense that Cole had adopted it for all who wanted to work or play at *No Bounds*.

"I'll get one." He moved enough that he could reach the drawer of a bedside cabinet and selected a thin lubricated prophylactic. Settling again between her legs, he rolled it down over his erection. "You have nothing to be sorry for," he told her, settling a hand on her unhurt right hip and directing her to shift position just slightly so his cock would slide easily into her sweet pussy.

He sank into her slowly, savoring every contraction of her tight vaginal muscles, every moan he elicited by pulling back, then thrusting slowly, gently into her silken heat. Anger rose in him with every glance at her poor ass cheek, with regret he'd left Petrone alive -- though hopefully not able to do this to some other unfortunate sub.

She was so wet, so hot, so perfectly submissive, with only her pussy moving, her lips emitting moans of ecstasy. Cole sped up the pace, felt his own climax coming on. He would not go alone. Slipping a hand between the pillow and her satin skin, he found

her clit, stroked it, all the time fucking her slow and deep. His balls bounced against his knuckles, high and tight within their sac, ready...

"Oh, yesss, Master, I'm coming," Amber cried, her pussy muscles grabbing his cock in a stranglehold. "Oh... oh yesss."

If his life had depended on it, Cole couldn't have held back. One -- two -- three thrusts more, and he came as though he hadn't just come moments earlier. Her cunt felt like heaven -- it felt like home.

\* \* \*

The next day Amber felt much better, except that when she thought about having promised herself to Cole, guilt nagged at her subconscious. After she showered and towed her hair dry, she decided to stay up, escape these four walls that were beginning to close in on her.

She'd go find Ciel.

Ciel had been her anchor, the one constant she'd been able to count on. Amber couldn't count the number of times it had been Ciel shouting the safe word when she herself could not, jumping in and stopping the play before some Dom choked the last breath of life out of her... Amber owed Ciel a lot. Her life, if that was what she wanted.

She had to find Ciel. See for herself that Master Dax hadn't killed her. Biting her lip against the pain each movement caused her raw ass cheek, Amber managed to get up on unsteady feet before taking a crashing tumble onto the floor.

The next thing she knew, Cole had her in his arms, his touch as gentle as his words were fierce. "What the fuck did you think you were doing?" he spat out, bending and lowering her back onto the bed.

"Going to check on Ciel, Master." She didn't like the look on his face -- worry mixed with righteous anger. "I -- I can't believe he didn't kill her."

"You didn't believe me?"

"Y-yes. I believed you. I just needed to see for myself."

Cole swore softly, but he lifted her again, carried her across the hall, and kicked the door open. "There. Look all you want. Ciel is sleeping off an overdose, courtesy of

your mutual friend Dax Petrone. As I told you before, she's not likely to regain consciousness anytime soon." Not giving Amber time for more than a cursory glance at the movement of the covers when Ciel breathed in and out, he turned and strode back to Amber's room.

"Thank you, Master," she said when he laid her on the bed again.

He shot her a questioning look. "Am I your master, Amber?"

"Y-yes, sir."

"Then you will obey me in all things," Cole said. "You will not risk yourself by leaving this room until Ulrica tells me you're completely healed. If you want to check on Ciel, you will let me know and I will take you to her. If you need a change of scenery, I will provide it. I was on my way here with some refreshments and your next dose of pain pills when I heard you fall. On your belly, now. I want to make sure you did no damage to my brand."

His brand. Given with consideration and affection, unlike the cruel brand it masked. Meant to adorn and not humiliate her. Amber turned gingerly, certain that if she winced, he would take it as an act of disobedience, yet equally sure her pain would hurt him too.

"You have a gorgeous ass," he commented, his breath bringing goosebumps up on the uninjured skin around the brand. "I'd hate to have to redden it with a flogger, but I will if you pull another trick like wandering around before you're strong enough." He bent, laid a kiss on the dimples just above the start of her crack, then licked his way down until he ringed her anus with his tongue. "When you've healed a bit more, I'm going to fuck you here."

When he worked first one finger, then two, beyond her anal sphincter, her cunt began to clench, anticipating..."Master, you don't need to wait." She trusted he'd be gentle, the way he'd been earlier when he'd claimed her pussy. She didn't care if he wasn't careful, wouldn't mind if he hurt her. She welcomed the pain, because without it, she'd never been able to reach the heights of pleasure before. "Please, fuck my ass now."

He raised his head, found her swollen clit with his other hand, stroked it. Pinched it sharply, making her bite her tongue to keep from crying out with the sudden wave of sexual awareness that made her lift her hips.

"Be still or I'll hogtie you." Cole freed his hand, gave her a sharp slap on her inner thigh. When she moved again in obvious defiance, he realized Amber hadn't been joking. She was a true submissive, able apparently to receive pleasure only with punishment. "But you'd like that, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, yesss, Master. Please."

Someday Cole would show her she could trust him to bring her pleasure without the trappings of Dominance and submission, convince her she deserved that pleasure, whether or not it was delivered with pain. Now, though, what he wanted most was to give her what she'd begged for so sweetly. He got up, shed the sweatpants he'd put on before going down to check on progress the workmen were making, putting the final touches on the private chambers at the club. Now he strode to the chest by the window. Once he'd opened it, he rifled through it until he found what he was looking for.

A linked pair of nipple clamps with a clit clip dangling from the center of the link. A brand-new eight-inch glass dildo to be filled with warm or icy water as was his preference of the moment. And finally, the restraint she was begging for, although Cole doubted she'd ever seen one exactly like this one he'd recently invented -- a braided silk four-point tie that would fasten left wrist to left ankle, right to right. The leash at the center of the "H" would be fastened to a metal eye in the bed canopy, pulling her limbs together, keeping her pussy open for his pleasure.

It should give her a submissive's delight in helplessness without putting her in a position where the new brand would be irritated. Cole swore, realizing as he did at least one reason why he'd never gotten off on marking his subs. Doing so placed limits far stronger than safe words on what he might do to take a sub to the heights of sexual satisfaction. Limits that made him chafe as he rigged Amber in the device and secured the leash to the eye.

"You know, I've never claimed your pretty breasts," he said, raising her enough to slide the nipple clamps and clit clip under her. Lowering her again, he cupped the pale, firm flesh of her breasts with both his hands. "I see your nipples are pierced. Maybe I'll replace these curved barbells with gold rings to match the collar I'm having made for you."

Her breathing sped up as though the idea excited her. "Whatever gives you pleasure, Master."

"No. You have no idea what I might demand of you. I don't know for certain, myself. Your safe word will be 'boundary', and I promise I'll never ignore it." He pinched her nipples, hard, loving the way they tightened beneath his fingertips, as though they could barely wait for the bite of the clamps. "Like this, don't you?"

"Oh, yesss." She wriggled when he pulled harder on the rigid nubs.

"I'm going to clamp them now. Take a deep breath, then don't move a muscle."

Her nipples turned red, hardened further as he tightened the screws. Her breathing grew ragged. Cole's balls tightened, anticipating...

"Enjoy, my sweet slave. I will be back." She'd suffered too much of a shock already from the brandings to use ice water, he decided, turning on the hot water and waiting for it to get comfortably warm before filling the dildo. The sound of Amber's eager whimpers spurred him on, made him fight to retain the control he'd need to give her pleasure, not exacerbate her pain.

Anticipation built in Amber as the sound of running water echoed from the adjacent bathing room. She longed for Cole's touch, the heat of his big, muscular body. She loved the reassuring feeling of knowing he would take care of the burning need inside her -- the compulsion to be taken, swept out of the real world into a world where sensuality reigned. Where nothing else mattered but being mastered, taking her pleasure by answering her lover's sensual demands.

Her ass cheek still burned, but she hardly noticed it for the intense pleasure-pain radiating from her clamped nipples. Cool air tickled her exposed pussy, made her

keenly aware of her helplessness, the soft bonds that held her open from clit to ass. Delightfully, totally unable to resist her master's will.

When she raised her head, she saw him, magnificently naked, his long, thick cock erect against washboard abs, his smoothly shaved ball sac framed by muscular thighs as he moved to the bed. In one hand he held a glass dildo, glistening with lubrication. Although not as large or beautiful as his own massive purple-veined tool, Amber found the clear dildo impressive as it caught the light from the recessed overhead lighting. She wanted it... and him, filling her, driving her to that place in her head where nothing existed but ecstasy.

"Please, Master," she whispered, meeting his gaze briefly before lowering her eyes, the way a good slave must.

He knelt between her splayed legs, ran the surprisingly warm dildo along her slit. "Good. You're already wet and swollen for me. I approve." Finding her cunt, he spread her outer lips and inserted the dildo. Slowly. In maddeningly slow motion when she needed hard and fast. Inch by inch he pushed the dildo inside her until she was stretched, filled. "When you are well, I will put this in a harness, use it here while I use my cock to fuck your pretty ass. Would it please you for others to watch us?"

"If it pleases you, Master. Oooh, that hurts so good." He'd found her clit and fastened a clamp to the tiny nub, the new pressure on its chain moving to her nipple clamps, tightening their hold on that tender flesh. His hot breath bathed her slit, followed by the touch of his slick tongue lapping, licking, swirling around the base of the dildo, burrowing its way into her stretched vagina. "Oh, yesss," she hissed when he took the tip of her already clipped clit and bit her. Not hard enough to damage her... but hard enough to take her over the edge.

The first waves of her orgasm swept her along, over the top. Nothing existed. Not pain, not embarrassment, not even fear when she felt him lubricate her asshole with something wet and cold and position his thick cock head against her tight rear entrance.

"I'm wearing a condom, baby. Let me in."

All she cared about now was having him fill her, take her ass the way he'd already claimed her cunt and her mouth. As another wave of ecstasy carried her along, she relaxed her sphincter muscles. The exquisite pain of him stretching her, of feeling his cock sliding slowly up her ass, colliding through the thin barrier of flesh with his dildo, making the water inside it undulate within her cunt had her panting, whining, screaming her master's name.

"That's right. Relax and let me in."

He thrust into her ass slowly, carefully, his hands on her hips controlling her movement, holding her still. His fingers dug in, increasing the sensation of being possessed. Mastered.

"Oh, yesss, Master," she moaned when he sped up the thrusting, sank his cock inside her to the balls, set the water in the dildo in motion, lapping to and fro inside her already wet and swollen cunt.

"Hold on. Don't move. I don't want you hurting my brand." Releasing her hips, he found the dildo and began to slide it slowly in and out, its movement an incredibly arousing counterpoint to the thrusting of his cock in her ass. When he caught the chain that connected the clamps on her nipples and clit and began to tug it rhythmically as he fucked her ass and cunt, she could only feel -- not think.

Felt so good. So full. His cock swelled inside her. Its heat seared her as wave after wave of delicious sensation began in her ass, her cunt... the tortured tips of her breasts and her hardened, swollen clit. Like wildfire, the waves undulated, spreading cell by cell throughout her body.

"Please Master, don't. Don't stop," she gasped, closing her eyes and concentrating on feeling him throbbing inside her. Growing harder and bigger with every thrust until she thought he'd burst.

"Squeeze my cock. Squeeze it now. Oh God in heaven, you're..." His words trailed off, replaced by a howl of completion that shook the bed, carried her along once more.

\* \* \*



If it hadn't been daylight outside, Amber wouldn't have known whether they'd lain together for minutes or hours after Cole had removed the clamps, released her from her bonds, and tenderly bathed her bruised and swollen parts with something soothing. The drink he fed her along with the medication Ulrica had left made her sleepy -- so sleepy that as soon as he crawled into bed beside her and tossed an arm possessively over her shoulder, she drifted off into a haze of satisfaction.

## Chapter Three

"Do you plan to keep me naked, Master?" Amber stood at the edge of the bed, still shaky on her feet but determined to get around under her own steam, at least as far as the bathing room. "Or might I go retrieve something from my trunks that you'd find enticing?"

Cole laced an arm under hers, supported her as she made her way to the bath. "Take care of the necessities. Call for me when you're finished. I will provide you with what I want you to wear."

It wouldn't be anything she'd brought with her, he thought as he pulled on sweatpants and a T-shirt, for he wanted no reminders that she'd dressed to please other masters before him.

Striding to the storeroom for *No Bounds*, he quickly located a woman's costume he'd ordered for a special scene. She'd been on his mind even then, he realized as he picked up the delicately embroidered brocade corset that featured a built-in slave collar and a matching silk skirt.

Good. The material was soft enough that it wouldn't irritate her brand much. He didn't trust her to tell him if she was uncomfortable, not yet. Everything he knew about her indicated there was a vulnerable area in her psyche, no less dangerous in its own way than Ciel's self-destructive nature, for Amber obviously harbored the belief that a good sex slave should suffer whatever her master chose to dish out. Cole would teach her, in time, that the slave of his fantasies would help her master bring her the greatest pleasure by facilitating his protecting her from harm and maximizing their mutual joy.

As he hurried back to his rooms, he imagined Amber suspended in the fucking swing, the skirt lifted to bare her firm ass cheeks and his brand, the corset cinching her

narrow waist and pushing up full breasts tipped with rouged nipples that invited him to taste them. He'd never allow her to wear panties again, even when her brand healed.

He'd keep her cunt and ass easily accessible for his cock, his tongue, his hands... He'd hang her on the St. Andrew's cross and shave her pussy, then eat her until she begged for mercy. He'd come in her mouth and cunt and ass, then feast on her wet, swollen pussy and fuck her some more.

God but his cock ached even now. She had him crazy, thinking of nothing but her and him and the hot sex with his slave that he sensed he'd never get enough of.

"Master?" Her voice drifted to his ears from the bathing room, beckoning him, making him fantasize about fucking her in the big hot tub. Later. Like many other scenes he wanted to share with her, the tub would have to wait for her brand to heal. "Master?" He threw open the door and came inside.

She stood, her back to a floor-to-ceiling mirror, her head turned so she could see that brand. "It is beautiful already, Master, because it marks me as your own."

Turning, she presented her ass, the left cheek with its still-raw design of a lily -- his lily, the one he'd never look at and not grow angry knowing what lay beneath it. Her swollen pussy lips already glistened with her honey. "I found what I want you to wear. Come, I will dress you."

He'd been right. The pink brocade emphasized her delicate skin, made the pierced tips of her breasts seem redder, more inviting, as if he'd already reddened them with his teeth and tongue. A heavy pink leather collar ringed her slender neck, its metal loops positioned perfectly to anchor the slender straps that crossed from front to back of the corset. Hooked, the garment emphasized her tiny waist between fully exposed breasts and plump mound. Cole knelt and tongued her clit, then rubbed his chin against her glistening pussy lips before rising, motioning for her to step into the see-through skirt, and tackling the lacings.

Already his cock was hard as stone. His balls ached. She looked like a submissive angel -- his -- and he was of no mind to deny the silent demand she made on his sex. He buried his face between her breasts, squeezing them, taking both nipples in his mouth

and suckling until they became rigid nubs. She grasped his head, holding him there, as though begging him for more. He obliged. His nose grazed the straps, tugged at her collar, a reminder to him that she was his slave... his responsibility to give the ultimate pleasure. A reminder to her that she'd given it all to him. Her body, her will, her very life if that was what he wanted.

Amber's heart overflowed as she watched Cole suckle her jutting nipples, felt the heat and warmth of his mouth as he flailed them with his tongue. Her breath caught in her chest, constricted not as much by the tightly laced corset as by the sheer joy of feeling his collar around her neck. Of realizing that, for better or worse, she was her master's to do with as he would.

She threaded her fingers through his dark, silky hair, then stroked the corded muscles of his neck, his broad shoulders. Every tug of his lips, each scrape of his teeth felt incredibly delicious, not just where he suckled her but deep in her belly, her swollen sex. If he didn't make love to her, she thought she'd die.

As though he'd understood her silent plea, he pushed down his sweatpants and sat on a chair by the window, pulling her down to sit astride him. Carefully she lifted her skirt, let it billow over his powerful thighs as she impaled herself on his cock inch by delicious inch until his balls rested between her cunt lips, warm and smooth and pressing against her throbbing clit.

"Fuck me, baby. Fuck me hard."

Hands steadied on his muscular shoulders, she raised up on her knees until his cock head was barely lodged inside her cunt, then slammed herself back down until he nudged the mouth of her womb. So long and thick. So hard. Her asshole clenched as though it wanted action too. Amber tightened her inner muscles around her master's cock, squeezing him, taunting him as she lifted her ass, relaxing as she slammed back down on him. Over and over. Again and again as the pressure built inside her, threatening to break free.

A moan escaped her lips. A moan that sounded a lot like his name. "Yeah, like this. Let go. I want to feel you coming for me."

Cole caught her nipples, elongated now from the attention he'd given them with his mouth, and used them like reins to direct her motion, down until he felt his ball sac pressing against her slit, then up until she held only his cock head within her cunt. Over and over she rode him as the pressure built, harder and faster until all the dammed up emotions inside her collided in a climax that seemed to go on forever as it bathed his cock in white-hot heat, as her cunt clenched his flesh as though it would never let him go.

He couldn't wait. Had to spurt out his come in her cunt, claim her once more as his own. "My God, baby, I'm coming."

Grasping her around her tightly laced waist, he slammed her down on him, hard, and held her there as he came in long, hard spurts. As she milked him of every last drop. As he collapsed against the chair back, spent, and she held his softening flesh deep within her cunt.

What a climax! It hadn't been just sex, wasn't only emotion. It wasn't only a sign of mutual acceptance, master and slave, but rather a combination... an erotic mix of feelings Cole vowed would never end.

\* \* \*

As the days went by, Amber began to heal. So did Ciel, although Amber knew it worried Cole that his sister had not regained consciousness except for short periods when she moaned and whimpered but gave no indication she was aware of her surroundings. *No Bounds* was ready to open, its main dungeon and private rooms spit-shined and polished. The club Doms and Dommes had been outfitted with the tools of their trade, while the submissives awaited customers who would require their services.

Amber stood in the main dungeon, ready to play her part in the club's opening festivities. She fingered the fine gold collar Cole had locked around her neck just yesterday, replacing the one that matched the corset he had chosen especially for her.

She now owned three more of the corsets in different colors and styles, acquired at a local shop with her master's tastes in mind.

Idly, she rubbed one of the lines left on her midriff by the corset stays, then ran the same finger across the still tender brand on her ass. Last night Cole had pronounced it healed. Tonight she expected -- hoped -- he'd use one of the fine floggers he'd bought to enhance his pleasure, and hers.

Maybe he'd ad-lib a flogging into the scene they'd planned for the club opening. She looked forward to kneeling at his feet, the matching leash attached to her collar and fastened to his belt, so all who looked would know she was his willing, devoted slave. She'd suck his cock, letting her juices flow yet refrain from coming as a good slave should, until her master granted his permission. Then he'd lead her into the dungeon's observation room to play out a scene they'd rehearsed every day for the past week, since Cole had changed the jewelry in her piercings, replacing them with small rings joined together with a length of slender gold link chain.

In the scene, he'd shave her cunt, lick her pussy, and make her suck his cock before looping her leash through the chain and pulling her to her feet. The part she liked best was when he'd kiss her afterward, licking the remnants of his come from her mouth while he jiggled the chains. In the finale, she'd go up on all fours, ass in the air, begging him to fuck her there.

The fact they'd be playing to a full gallery of customers gave her a wicked sense of arousal. Not that the idea of playing with her master wasn't erotic enough to keep her cunt wet twenty-four, seven.

Amber toyed with the end of her leash. Where was Cole? The doors of *No Bounds* were set to open in less than an hour now, and he'd surely want to be here overseeing the activity.

\* \* \*

"But Amber is mine!" Ciel screeched. "Mine."

As glad as Cole was that his sister had finally awakened, he could have done without her screaming like a banshee less than a half-hour before *No Bounds* was set to open. "No, Ciel. She was -- is -- your friend. Never your slave or even your sub."

"Bastard. She's my slave. You can't take her."

"I have taken her. Collared her. Tonight I will claim her as mine for all my guests at the club opening to see." Cole spat the words out angrily, but then he looked at his sister's hollow cheeks, her sunken eyes. She was sick. Sicker than he'd realized. Damn it, he should have seen it, gotten her help long ago, intervened before she'd placed Amber's well-being at risk.

Still, as much as he loved his sister, part of him reacted to her claim to Amber as if Ciel had been another man. Amber was his. His to care for and protect, and Ciel was never going to get her back to use and expose to psychos like Dax again.

When Ciel trembled so much that the bed shook, Cole bent to embrace her. She turned in his grasp, clawing at him like a demon possessed. Blood ran down his cheek in the twin paths she'd gouged with talon-like nails as he held her wrists, restrained her from doing him or herself further harm.

"Calm down," he said, holding her wrists so she couldn't attack him again. "Nothing you do or say will change anything."

"Where is Dax?" she asked, suddenly still, apparently conceding she was no match for Cole's strength. "He swore he would brand her, make her so ugly no master would want her."

"He's in prison."

Ciel fought his hold, made Cole struggle to hold onto her. When she cried out, it was more a feral sound than words. Damn it, she'd completely lost touch with reality.

Cole pressed her back down on the bed and held her there. Then he looked her in the eye. "Believe me, Dax is in jail. And if there's a God, he'll be staying behind bars for a long, long time." Cole recalled Amber's theory that Ciel was a sub in Domme's clothing. She might have been right. "Tell me you don't think you want that sadistic bastard."

"I was about to subdue him. Amber was helping me." Ciel jerked loose from Cole's hold, practically leapt out of bed and went to stare out the window at the raw, red ground he'd had plowed to turn into a garden. "God, but Obsidion's a desolate looking place. Our father did me no favor, sending me here with Dax and Amber."

She'd get no argument from Cole about the latter. Many times when he'd tended Amber's brand, he'd wanted to kill Alan for having exiled the three together -- for having exiled Petrone, period, instead of imprisoning him for life back on Earth.

Ciel, always mercurial, seemed to have calmed down a bit. Cole managed to persuade her to take her medicine and crawl back into bed. "Give it time, Ciel. We will make Obsidion a paradise where Earthlings can come indulge their passions amongst all the luxuries of home. One step at a time. Meanwhile, I need to go. It's time we open our doors to our first customers.

"Rest now." Bending, Cole kissed Ciel's forehead. "I need you to get well, so you can show our club Dommies how we treat our subs at *No Bounds*." He had only a few minutes to tend his ravaged cheek and change into the black leather chaps, vest, and boots he was to wear in the scene with Amber.

\* \* \*

"Ciel was awake just now," Cole whispered a few minutes later when he joined Amber and clipped her leash to the thick silver chain around his waist.

"I must go to her." Amber made a move toward the stairs but stopped cold when he didn't lead the way. "Master."

"Not now."

"But, Master..."

"I said not now. She took her medicine, and should be sleeping again. Besides, we have a club to open." If he could, he'd shield Amber forever from his sister's misplaced possessiveness. While he couldn't manage that with them both living in the quarters above *No Bounds*, he could and would postpone the inevitable confrontation as long as possible.

Amber reached a hand up to her throat, fingered his collar. "Does she know?"



"Yes. She knows. Did you think I'd keep this from my own sister?" Cole traced the path his collar took, feeling a burst of pride that Amber had chosen him to be her master. "I want the whole world to know you are my slave, that you love me and I love you."

Her eyes widened when she noticed the angry scratches along his cheek. "She... why did she do this to you?" Very gently she traced the lines of the wounds.

"Hush. It's nothing."

Tears filled her eyes, caught on the thick fringe of her eyelids. "We were friends. Never more. Oh God, Master, she must have thought --"

"That you were her slave. I assured her you were not and never had been, that you were and are her friend, even though the way she used you could easily have gotten you killed." Cole used his thumb to catch a tear on its way down Amber's cheek, then rubbed the moisture over her glistening lips. "Come now, we must greet our guests."

"She was to have been here, too, taking part in the opening ceremonies. Before we left Earth, she'd planned a scene..."

Amber's hesitation told Cole he didn't want to hear the details of what Ciel had planned. Not now, when all he wanted to do was concentrate on Amber, on showing the guests he'd invited to *No Bounds* on its opening night that he had taken a slave he loved dearly, one he would go to any length to bring to pleasure. "All that's in the past, sweetheart. Forget Ciel. That's an order." He shot her a smile, then tugged at her leash as though he had to coax her to do his bidding.

## Chapter Four

Strobe lights played over the silver-flecked walls, the colors blue, purple, red and gold, moving in studied dissonance, focusing first on one piece of chrome equipment then another, showcasing the variety of devices a sexual Dominant might use in *No Bounds* to subdue or pleasure his or her slave. Muted exclamations from the observers in the glassed-in theatre above the dungeon floated like disembodied voices in a vacuum, reminding Amber that over a hundred pairs of eyes were looking down at them, even though the owners of those eyes were cloaked in darkness.

In the center of the room, she went down on her knees, head bent respectfully, hands locked behind her back in the classic pose of a submissive. Her master stood before her, his muscular legs braced slightly apart, a flogger gripped within one powerful fist. Music, muted until now, built to a crescendo, heightening her anticipation... her fear. Not true fear, for she trusted Cole with her life, but the pleasurable apprehension of the unknown, of how he would overpower her, the places he would take her, places far beyond her control. The fierce arousal that gripped her had begun the moment Cole had tugged on her leash. Even before that. Her pussy had been hot and swollen since Mistress Magda had laced her into this sparkling silver lamé corset so tightly she could barely breathe, secured her hair in a ponytail at the crown of her head, and rouged her exposed nipples.

"You may rise, slave. Have you prepared yourself for me?"

"Yes, Master." Amber made her voice quiver, in accordance with the script.

Cole reached out with his free hand, examined her swollen slit. "You are wet. But I believe you've forgotten at least one of my orders. Did you shave my pussy?"

"N-no, Master. I forgot. I am sorry."

He lifted the flogger, and she braced for the strike that never came. "I do not wish to mark my slave's tender skin. Not yet. Attendants! Prepare my slave for my attention."

Mistress Magda and a naked male sub moved out of the shadows, grasped Amber's outstretched arms, lifted her onto a chrome-plated table. They hadn't rehearsed this. At the sparkle in Cole's eyes, she knew he had planned it for her pleasure, thinking of her even on this night that was so important to him. It underscored to her what she was learning. That she was important to him. Perhaps, for once, she'd found a relationship where her master cared for her as much as she did for him. And it made her realize many things about herself, one of them being that she was worthy of being loved that way, for she loved with her whole heart as well.

A delicious frisson of anticipation shot through Amber as Magda clamped fur-lined handcuffs onto her wrists and stretched her arms back, high over her head, immobilizing them by hooking the cuffs over the pole at the end of the table. Her master arranged her legs in stirrups before ordering the sub to secure them with Velcro fasteners around each thigh, her knees, and her calves.

"Shave her cunt. Nick it and I will flay you within an inch of your life," Cole told the sub. "Slave, I order you not to come until I give permission," he said as he stepped up beside her and began to stroke her cheek, her earlobe, her throat. "So soft. So beautiful. So *mine*."

Her master's most innocent caress enflamed Amber more than the sensual scraping of the sub's razor over her mound, her pussy lips, around her ass. She closed her eyes, let the music and Cole's touch carry her somewhere safe, somewhere only the two of them existed, apart from the sub, Mistress Magda, and the unseen audience in the theatre above them.

By the time Cole found her nipples and began teasing them to tight, hard points Amber was squirming, needing to release the pressure building in her belly, her cunt, her ass. Yet she did not, would not disobey her master's order despite the burning need

that intensified when he threaded a long gold chain through her nipple rings and arranged the ends over the lacings of her corset.

Bending, he kissed one taut nipple, then the other, before ordering the sub away and stroking her newly shaved mound below the pointed front of the corset. "Ah, that's the way I like my pussy." Bending, he tongued her where his hand had been, then moved lower to suck the rigid nub of her clit between his teeth.

When he raised his head and looked up at her, it was all she could do not to beg him to continue, to lick her pussy, suck her clit, and lap the honey from her pussy lips until she screamed for mercy. Instead, she managed a breathy "Thank you, Master," before he pinched her clit between his thumb and middle finger and inserted a gold ring -- larger than the one she'd had before, like the ones he'd just fit through the holes in her nipples -- through the already engorged flesh.

Her breathing grew ragged. Her pulse raced. Her cunt clenched and her juices flowed, turning her pussy lips wet and slippery to her master's touch. The weight of the two chains he'd attached to the ring before closing it with a captive bead sent incredible sensations throughout her body. "Please, Master, fuck me now," she begged, barely able to speak as she struggled to hold back her climax.

Cole tugged sharply on the chain that connected her nipple rings with the one in her clit. "Not yet." Bending, he brushed his lips across hers, at the same time laying a hand over the lacings of her corset, tilting the platform where she was bound until she lay upside-down, her face level with his crotch. The bindings on her legs held her firmly in place. "Suck my cock, my precious slave," he said, his breath tickling her freshly shaved cunt as he looked down between her widely-spread legs.

With her teeth, she greedily caught at the hidden snaps that closed the front seam of his leather jock and ripped it open. No longer tightly confined, his cock sprang through the opening. It didn't matter that the amphitheater was full, that hordes of guests were watching. She had to taste her master, show him... She reached out with her tongue, caught the creamy drop of pre-come that glistened in his slit, then opened her lips as he flexed his hips and claimed her mouth. She loved performing this service

for him, swirling her tongue all around his massive cock head, taking him deep down her throat, swallowing convulsively around his rock-hard flesh. Most of all she loved hearing him groan when she sucked him this way, feeling his massive thighs tremble with the effort of holding back his climax.

Oh, God. He bent his head and licked her pussy, tugging with his teeth at the ring he'd put in her clit. His chest brushed against her nipples when he moved. When he sank two fingers into her pussy and another in her ass, she couldn't hold back any more. She took his cock deeper, sucked it, loved it. She loved him and the sensations he'd aroused until it felt...

"Now."

Incredible. Her cunt and ass clamped down on his fingers. It all felt so good she hurt, as wave after wave of ecstasy flowed through her. Limp, half-conscious now, she registered the fact he'd turned the platform only vaguely, until he flexed his knees and impaled her.

"I'm tired of gentle. I know you are too." His hands easily spanning her corseted waist, Cole steadied her. With every thrust of his hips, each hard stroke of his cock within her swollen cunt, she came again. And again. Finally, when she thought she could come no more, he came in her pussy, the hot bursts of life starting her to climaxing all over again.

Cole looked down at her, tenderness in his eyes. She raised his palm, kissed it, tasted the clean salty essence of his sweat. "Master, I..." A shout of warning and a shriek, the sound of a crash in the hallway outside the door, jerked his head around and stopped the words on her lips.

"Amber!" Ciel's voice was somewhere between a plaintive wail and a threatening roar, the Mistress warring with the pathetic soul she'd become. "You're mine. You're..."

## Chapter Five

"No, Ms. Ciel, you can't go in there."

"Fuck you." A whip cracked. Somebody screamed. Another crack. Feet pounded on the marble floor as people got scared and started running. "My brother betrayed me, now I'm going to make both of them pay."

Quickly Cole loosened Amber's bonds, lifted her off the modified Cross. "Stay here," he ordered, shoving her into a darkened corner of the dungeon and striding to the door. He was going to have the head of the club employee he'd set to watching Ciel. Damn it, he'd personally given her enough medication that she should have slept through the night. She must have gotten hold of something from Ulrica's bag, something that had her wired up tighter than a guitar string.

It was clear his sister had completely lost it, but there was no way he was going to let her injure Amber. He opened the door to the dungeon and stepped out into the hall. "Ciel, put the whip down."

"You..." She lifted the whip, cracked it, flicked it with her wrist and wrapped the last three feet or so of its five-foot length around Cole's legs. While he struggled to get free, she dropped the whip and fled, her long black hair snarling around her like a medusa. The expression in her eyes in the split-second she looked at him would have curdled the blood of a zombie.

"Show's over," Cole shouted toward the audience. "Welcome to *No Bounds*. Follow the rules and have fun. Dungeon mistress tonight will be Mistress Magda."

He stepped back into the shadows, to Amber. "Ciel has lost it, sweetheart. We have to go find her."

\* \* \*

Three moons shone in the night sky. Three.

*Where the fuck am I?* Ciel whirled first one way, then the other, disoriented. The neon lights of bars and clubs along the Street of Slaves blinked, blinding her to everything but her quest.

*Kill. Kill Dax. Tricked me. Wanted Amber. Not me. Amber, my friend. Gone now. Gone. Cole's slave. Wrong.* Ciel raised the dagger she'd taken from the equipment room, waved it at a couple of passers-by. *Yeah, right. I'm crazy. Crazy, you got it.*

"What's with you, lady?"

"Moons. Three of them."

The taller of the two men laughed. "Yeah, Obsidion's got three moons. Weird when you first go out at night, until you get used to it."

*Ask him.* "Jail. Looking for the jail."

"That way, lady. Take a right once you get past *Pierced Princes*, and you'll see it at the end of the street. Convenient, since half the Prince's customers end up there at one time or another."

*Almost there.* Tucking the dagger into the belt of her robe, she took off for the blinking *Pierced Princes* sign.

"You could have managed a 'thank you,' lady."

The man's sarcasm was lost on the wind.

Outside the jail, Ciel paused. *Have to collect myself. Can't rouse suspicion.* She paused, smoothed her hair. Straightened the folds of the white silk robe she'd snatched along with the dagger. And schooled her expression to one of sublime composure as she opened the jail door and stepped inside. "I want to visit Dax Petrone," she said, making sure she sounded not like a furious Domme, but like a sweet, compliant little sub. Like Amber.

\* \* \*

They'd lost precious minutes, but they'd have been thrown in jail if they'd gone out in the street in the clothes they had on for their BDSM scene. Cole and Amber paused outside *No Bounds*, looked in both directions. A drunk stumbled out of one of

the bars. A pair of tourists embraced outside a sex toy shop, their faces made surreal in the light of the neon signs.

Not a sign of Ciel. Anywhere. Amber tugged at Cole's sleeve. "Would she have gone to one of the other clubs, Master?"

"Not likely."

"Why don't you ask those guys if they saw her? They look as though they're still reasonably sober."

Cole followed Amber's gaze to the men outside the toy store. "All right. Let's do." Hurrying now, he dragged Amber along, stopping to scoop her up and toss her over one shoulder when he realized she couldn't handle his pace. "Sirs," he yelled as the two men started to amble toward *The Leather Gallery*.

They paused at the sound of Cole's voice. One of them turned "Yeah?"

"We're looking for a woman --"

"Wild black hair? A white dress? Actin' crazy?"

That sounded like Ciel, all right. "You seen her?"

"She wanted to know where the jail is. Took off that direction like a bat out of hell, didn't even say 'thanks.' Hey, don't anybody around here know how to say 'Thank you'?"

"Sorry, man," Cole yelled. "Got to hurry, try to prevent a murder."

A little winded after the three-block sprint, Cole set Amber on her feet outside the jail door. "Wait here," he ordered, but as he swung the door open, a body came through it, almost like a flying missile.

"My God, what's going on?"

Cole tore his gaze off the missile -- a cop from the look of his uniform -- and looked at Amber. "Ciel, I'm afraid."

He was more certain than ever that she'd taken something -- maybe more of the stims Ulrica had been giving her to break her out of the coma. Ordinarily Ciel would have been no match for a burly cop like the one who'd just flew out the door.



"I'm going in. She'll listen to me." Amber stepped through the door, certain Cole would stop her if she gave him half a chance.

"Damn you!" Ciel screamed, not at Amber but at the prone body on the floor.

The scene before Amber made her stagger back into the security of Cole's arms. Ciel, plunging a dagger over and over into the bloodied body of Dax Petrone, stabbing wildly at any cop who gathered the courage to try and stop her.

"Ciel," Amber said, keeping her tone mild, soothing, hoping her friend retained enough of her sanity to listen.

Ciel whirled, madness in her eyes, her hands bloody, fresh blood dripping down the white silk of her gown. "Kill you too," she rasped, lunging not toward Amber but around her, toward Cole.

"No, Ciel. You're sick. Give me the dagger." Cole looked desperate, sounded tortured, but he moved forward, caught Ciel's wrist that held the dagger. "Please."

Why were the two cops just standing there? Amber grabbed for Ciel's free hand, but found herself slammed against a wall as though she weighed no more than a baby.

Cole had Ciel pinned to the floor, but she was stabbing wildly at him.

"Help. Help Cole! Can't you see she's going to kill him?" Amber's pulse raced with fear as Cole continued to struggle for control of the dagger. "Shoot her!"

"The constable doesn't allow any weapons in the jail."

Amber moved in again, bent on getting the dagger, but she felt a cop's hands at her waist, setting her aside. "Stay out of the way. We'll deal with this."

One cop moved in, grabbing Ciel around the knees to stop her bucking. The other grabbed Ciel's arm and held it long enough for Cole to knock the dagger from her hand. Cole caught her shoulders then and wrenched her back to the floor.

"Quick. Cuff her before she gets away." The cop who had her legs was dodging vicious kicks, and Cole managed to hold her down only by pressing his substantial weight on her chest while keeping her arms pinned over her head. Even after the other cop put Ciel in handcuffs and shackles, she kept striking out, screaming obscenities, threatening to kill them all.

This blood-spattered woman who had lost a tenuous grip on reality wasn't the Ciel Amber knew, wasn't the friend who'd become her anchor after her world had fallen apart. Still Amber couldn't help seeing remnants of the friend she'd trusted. It was Ciel's high cheekbones, her regal looking nose, that dimpled chin and the slender neck Amber had always thought should wear the right Dom's collar. But the eyes... those wild eyes full of hate that watched every move as the guards zipped the man she'd killed into a body bag. They didn't belong to the Ciel she'd known.

Or maybe they did. Maybe this unfettered violence had been part of Ciel's nature for a long time, and it had worsened little by little, as an addict's need for drugs grew exponentially over time. Amber had been drawn into it, sucked in by her own vulnerability, the belief that she had to do something -- anything -- to deserve love.

She tore her gaze from Ciel to inspect Cole as he turned away from the jail's head guard. "Are you all right? Did she hurt you?"

"I'm fine. Come," Cole assured her. "There's no more we can do now. Ciel will have to stay."

Of course. Ciel had killed a man. Never mind that Amber couldn't think of one human being who'd more richly deserved to die. "What -- what will happen to her?" she asked, watching the guards pick her up and haul her away.

"An institution, I imagine. There's no way anyone could say she's sane. I'll send word to my father about what's happened and ask him to get a lawyer up here to defend her. Meanwhile, she's safer in jail where she can't harm herself than she would be back home."

They stepped outside into the eerie light of Obsidion's multicolored moons, and Amber took Cole's hand. "This wouldn't have happened if it hadn't have been for us."

"Don't say that. Don't even think it. I forbid it." Cole stopped, drew Amber into his arms, stroked her like a father might do to reassure a child.

"My sister has always had a tenuous hold on reality. We -- everyone in the family -- have always done our best to see that she didn't lose that hold. If what happened back there is anyone's fault, it's mine. I knew this afternoon when she finally

woke that the news about us set her off -- I didn't realize how badly. She seemed to take it extremely well, for Ciel. Sweetheart, don't cry. I know Ciel's your friend. We'll get her the treatment she should have had years ago, and she'll be all right."

Amber looked up, saw the caring in Cole's dark eyes, eyes so much like Ciel's except, instead of hate, they held all the love she'd ever wanted -- love she'd found in his arms, his bed. "Won't she go to prison for killing Dax?"

"Not if there's a God. In her madness that was the one sane thing my sister did -- she got rid of the sadistic bastard who hurt you. Because of her madness, she'll be one of the few who gets away with murder."

## Chapter Six

Cole quietly arranged for Petrone's remains to be disposed of once Obsidion's fledgling police department had collected the physical evidence they needed. He fought the guilt, but it wouldn't go away.

*I should have killed the fucker myself.* The memory of his sister confined in an eight-by-eight cell behind sturdy iron bars ate at him -- just as thinking of Ciel's tortured eyes, her madness, made Amber unnaturally quiet, reflective. For the first time since Amber had become his slave, he'd slept alone last night, unwilling to subject her to his nightmares, his own tenuous grip on sanity.

He stood in the main dungeon at *No Bounds*, looking at the shiny new equipment and wondering if his father had been right -- that this lifestyle he loved might have contributed to Ciel's final downfall. No. He wouldn't allow himself to go there. For whatever reasons, he got off on wielding sexual power -- using it to bring his lover pleasure. Ciel had chosen that way, too, though Cole now believed Amber was right -- that she'd cast herself into a Dominant role that didn't fit her and had lived her submissive fantasies vicariously, through Amber.

He'd talked with Alan, promised he'd help the lawyer and the shrink his father was sending get settled into what he imagined would become lucrative practices on Obsidion. He'd arranged with Ciel's jailers to treat her well. He never ceased to be amazed at how loudly money talked, particularly on a planet whose permanent inhabitants had almost all been transported because of some brush with Federation laws back home.

He had a business to run and a slave to tend. He'd done all he could for Ciel; she had to do the rest on her own. In retrospect, Cole decided, he and Alan had only

delayed Ciel's breakdown. He knew now they'd been wrong, bailing her out of every scrape, every situation where she'd put herself and others in danger.

He'd never again believe he could save someone who didn't want to be saved. Not even the older sister he'd followed like a faithful puppy when they'd been children back on Earth.

\* \* \*

They'd been children really. Teenagers trying their wings. Amber couldn't help remembering those first days after Ciel had taken her, welcomed her when all Amber had wanted to do was die -- join her family in that Great Beyond, wherever it might be. If not for Ciel, Amber might not have made it this far, might never have felt the loving sting of her master's domination.

Cole had arranged all he could for Ciel's care and comfort, Amber knew. He'd told her what he'd done, but he hadn't needed to, for she knew her master, trusted his wisdom, his kindness, his deep affection for the woman they both loved.

Last night Amber had dreamed. Jumbled, tumbled snippets, past and present scrambled. Horrific mind-photos of Ciel's hands dripping blood, of Master Dax's eyes glazed over in death and glowing as he stood over her with that red-hot branding tool, of him beating her with a cane... of Cole rushing in, turning the cane onto Dax himself.

She'd had sweet dreams too. Of Ciel taking her in hand, showing her the teenage haunts, introducing her to Cole who'd been in her grade in school. Of her first sub experience when she'd learned her pleasure came from believing a master cared enough to discipline her... and that sexual pleasure could arise from pain. Of Cole stopping her branding, making her his own...

Where was her master now? She never wanted to pass another night without him near her, bringing the security she needed, the sensual banquet she wanted. She needed the reassurance of his gentle touch, the sound of his voice in her ears, the smells of their mutual arousal... the slightly bitter, salty taste of him when he allowed her to suck his beautiful cock.

Hours ago Amber had readied herself for him. Her hair lay in riotous curls around her shoulders, the way he liked it. She'd shaved her pussy again, felt it to be sure it would feel smooth as silk beneath his fingers... his mouth. The chain that joined the rings in her nipples and clit swung back and forth when she moved, setting up a delicious tingling. Her bare pussy grew wetter and more swollen with every move she made, and when she heard his footsteps in the hall, she fairly gushed.

She longed for him to come, discipline her, show her once again that, as it had been when her parents had loved her enough to discipline her when she was a child, she could find the ultimate in pleasure from pain.

\* \* \*

Fuck. What was a man to do? Cole tore off his clothes, his gaze never leaving his slave's plump, pale ass cheeks or the still-pink lily brand that adorned one side. He'd told her to wait in his room, but he hadn't fucking told her to bend herself nearly double over the pommel horse he used as part of his exercise routine, her position perfect for spanking...

His cock was about to burst. "Amber."

"Yes, Master?"

"Do you want me to spank you?"

"Oh, yes, Master."

He laid a hand over the brand, tracing its outline with one finger. "This is still too tender, sweetheart, for me to use the flogger on you the way I'd love to."

"I welcome the pain."

Amber deserved no punishment, though Cole imagined she was mentally flogging herself over the scene last night at the jail. "No. You deserve nothing but pleasure."

If it took him a lifetime with her, he'd show her she could experience sexual pleasure without pain -- without being restrained. He came up behind her, rubbed his rigid cock along her wet, swollen pussy, pushing lightly at her asshole, her cunt, then backing away and groping in a drawer for his stash of toys.

"Relax, my sweet slave. Grasp the horse's legs with your hands." Gently he worked lubricant up her ass, then smeared some on the butt plug and inserted it one bump at the time, watching her squirm at the invasion. "Easy. Does that feel good?"

"Oh, yesss. Please, Master, give me your cock."

He slapped her smartly on her unmarked ass cheek. "In good time. I want you to be quiet for me. If you can't, I'll have to gag you."

"Yes, Master. Oooh, that feels so good," she said when he slapped her again.

He moved away and rifled through the drawer. "Here, sweetheart, you asked for it." Kneeling beside her, he inserted a ball gag in her mouth and buckled it at the back of her head before slipping a folded silk scarf over her eyes and knotting it securely. "I want you to feel my every touch. Anticipate the next. You need neither to see nor speak. Concentrate on my hands, my mouth, my cock. Let me bring you pleasure."

She whimpered, a slight sound that escaped the ball gag. Cole skimmed his fingers through her hair, then rose, taking time to nuzzle the sensitive skin at the base of her skull, bare now below the hairline while she lay upside down. Another moan, this one barely audible.

The skin on her shoulders and back felt soft beneath his fingers, tasted slightly salty when he tongued her there. He kissed the indentation at the base of her spine, tracing each bony vertebra with searching fingers. When she let out a muffled cry, he gave in, found her breasts and explored them as thoroughly as he'd just done to her back, adding a gentle tug on the chain that led from her nipples to her clit. "Come now," he ordered. "I want your cunt hot and wet when I fuck you there."

A shudder tore through her, as though he'd wrenched the climax from her. Someday... someday she'd come without the stimulus of pain. Cole lifted her free while she still was in the throes of orgasm and carried her to the bed. "Now, my darling slave, I'm going to make love to you."

Amber had never felt such gentleness and caring as he'd shown in every touch -- as he showed her now with the sweep of his hands over her body as though exploring her for the first time. His kisses, soft as a butterfly on her eyelids, her cheeks, her

swollen lips aroused her once more, as much as sharp slaps and cruel tugs on the rings he'd placed in her most tender flesh. "Yes," she whispered against his lips, "please love me."

"I do." Very gently, as though she were a fragile flower, he spread her legs and knelt between them, not entering her immediately but rubbing his hard cock along her wet, swollen slit. "This is how I'd have taken you your first time."

Her first time. Perhaps this was her first time, making love without shame, without the feeling she must be punished for wanting to be cared for by the person punishing her. Amber raised her arms, wrapped them around Cole's shoulders, held him close as she'd never done before. God but she felt free, wanted. "I love you too," she told him as he plunged inside her, joining their bodies as he'd joined their hearts when he fastened his collar around her neck.

This time they came together, great, shuddering bursts of ecstasy that caught her up, carried her over the top to a place only he could take her. A safe place where she needed to feel no fear, only the end of an erotic journey that wasn't really an end but a beginning.

More than she'd felt in ten long years, Amber felt secure as she lay afterward in Cole's arms, feeling the soft cadence of his breath against her hair. She'd found a home, where love could flourish with trust and caring. With *No Bounds* to the ways they could express it for one another.



## Epilogue

### The following summer

When Cole looked back on events of the past year, he couldn't help but feel complaisant. Yesterday he and Amber had re-enacted the scene they'd done a year ago, when *No Bounds* had first opened its doors. This time, thankfully, it had reached its intended conclusion, a mutual orgasm followed by Cole's speech of welcome to the ever growing number of upper income members coming for the first time to *No Bounds* to sample the forbidden world of BDSM.

Today, Amber joined him for a visit to Ciel at the institution where she'd been treated ever since the trial. Each visit, he noticed new improvements, beginning with a smile instead of the blank stare that had lasted from the day after she'd killed Dax until after she'd been found not guilty by reason of temporary insanity. Today she'd spoken a few words not only to Cole but to Amber. Those words made Cole believe for the first time that someday Ciel would recover and be able to join the kinder, gentler BDSM world she'd forced him to create on this planet so far from home.

Each week a transporter brought supplies, along with a few new colonists from the Federation. Most of them still came not of their own volition, and some brought serious problems for Obsidion -- the same problems that had precipitated their exile from Earth. But Cole saw hope in each brave soul who'd made a voluntary decision to come and make this a place law-abiding citizens could call home.

Cole fastened Amber's seat belt and gunned the engine of their hovercraft. It was time to go home. To *No Bounds*, where men and women could explore the farthest fantasies of BDSM, within the strictures of rules that ensured everyone's safety... where Doms sought to bring pleasure and subs sought to serve their masters.

Amber leaned over, touched his lips with her fingers, caressing him. "You're smiling, Master. What are you thinking?"

Cole kissed her hand. "That I've thought of a new safe word for you."

"I can never imagine needing one with you."

He'd sensed for a while that she'd gained more confidence in this area, but from the pensive look she had now, he knew he'd chosen the right phrase.

"It will be *No Bounds*." He tipped up her chin, held her gaze. "When you use it, you'll be reminded that I will never stop loving you, that you will never be less than perfect to me, and that there is nothing I won't do to keep you safe and ensure your pleasure. You understand?"

Joy filled her gaze, and she nodded. "It also describes the way I feel about you, Master." A smile came into her own eyes. "I wish we could get home faster so I could prove it to you."

He gave her a wicked grin, put the craft on autopilot, and pulled her over to straddle his lap. "Why wait?"

Why, indeed? Their love indeed had *No Bounds*. *No Bounds* at all.

**The End**

**All Wrapped Up**  
**Angela Knight, Ann Jacobs, Dakota Cassidy, Kate Hill**

**Now available in paperback**

**Four exceptional authors, four enticing stories.**  
**Wrap yourself up in the heat of the best in erotic romance from Changeling Press.**

Angela Knight -- Blood Service  
Ann Jacobs -- Branded  
Dakota Cassidy -- Slave School Dropout  
Kate Hill -- Tainted Kisses

**The hunter and the hunted...** Best selling author Angela Knight brings you vampire bounty hunters that sizzle.

Adiva Mayhew is a spy -- and a damn good one. But now she's running for her life from a deadly bounty hunter -- who's also a Vampire. General Borian Tang has offered a high reward for her capture, and the man known only as Vigilante apparently means to collect. When Vigilante catches up to her, she soon finds all he wants to do is take her -- over and over again. And as she yields to his seductive domination, Adiva finds she wouldn't have it any other way. Trouble is, Tang is still determined to capture her, and there are other bounty hunters eager to claim the reward...

**A distant planet, a man on a path of discovery and a tortured woman.** Author Ann Jacobs explores sexual healing.

Cole Callender -- an entrepreneur with an eye to the future. Branded a sexual deviant under Earth laws, Cole adopts Obsidion as his future. Here he will build more than just a safe haven for Doms and subs practicing BDSM -- Cole thinks in terms of community, and the future of Obsidion as a world.

Amber -- a sub with a death wish. She's barely escaped a cruel Dom with her life. The scars she's left with, both inside and out, may be permanent. Now she wants nothing more than to be Cole's loving slave. Cole sees beyond her scars, but is his love enough to help Amber learn to live again?

**Two shapeshifting cats -- one kinky cupboard** equals author Dakota Cassidy's humorous slant on BDSM.

Nyla is a cat. So is Lucas. Nyla is an Egyptian Mau, descendant of the Goddess Bast. Lucas... isn't. In fact, he's a Tom cat. Unlikely lifemates at best.

Lucas is also a sexual Dominant who enjoys just a smidge of rocky road with his bedroom pleasures. But Nyla's never considered herself submissive. No one is the boss of her. Oh, and it never hurts to mention that Nyla's family is a snobbish, upper crust bunch of shifters who will probably want nothing more than to see to it that Lucas and Nyla's newly acquired lifemate status is revoked by the lifemate council!

**A primeval vampire, a woman intent on saving her village at all costs, and a bargain.** Author Kate Hill journeys into the ultimate surrender.

*Dancing with the devil...*

**Pure Evil.** Stolen from his mother's womb by the very creature responsible for her death, Etlu was raised to destroy without mercy and sate his lust like an animal. Yet, peering through villagers' windows in the dark of night, he sees men and women sharing unfamiliar pleasures and longs to understand...

**Meets pure good.** Niabi uses her powers in defense of the weak. When Etlu's army of Viking warriors devastates a village she's sworn to protect, Niabi's only choice is to strike a bargain with Etlu -- the humans' lives in exchange for her complete surrender to his desires.

Can she find anything in him worth saving?

## **All Wrapped Up**

Available through Amazon.com, BN.Com, and retailers near you.

**ISBN(10) 1-59596-284-0**

**ISBN(13) 978-1-59596-284-3**

## **Ann Jacobs**

Ann Jacobs has lost track of how many books she's published. At least thirty at last count. That count includes several awards, including Eppies, Golden Quill awards, More Than Magic awards, and two Lories. Ann has multiple personalities -- she also writes as Sara Jarrod, Ann Josephson, and Shana Nichols.

Ann loves to hear from readers. You may contact her through her website, [www.annjacobs.us](http://www.annjacobs.us), or visit her blogspot at <http://annjacobs.blogspot.com>