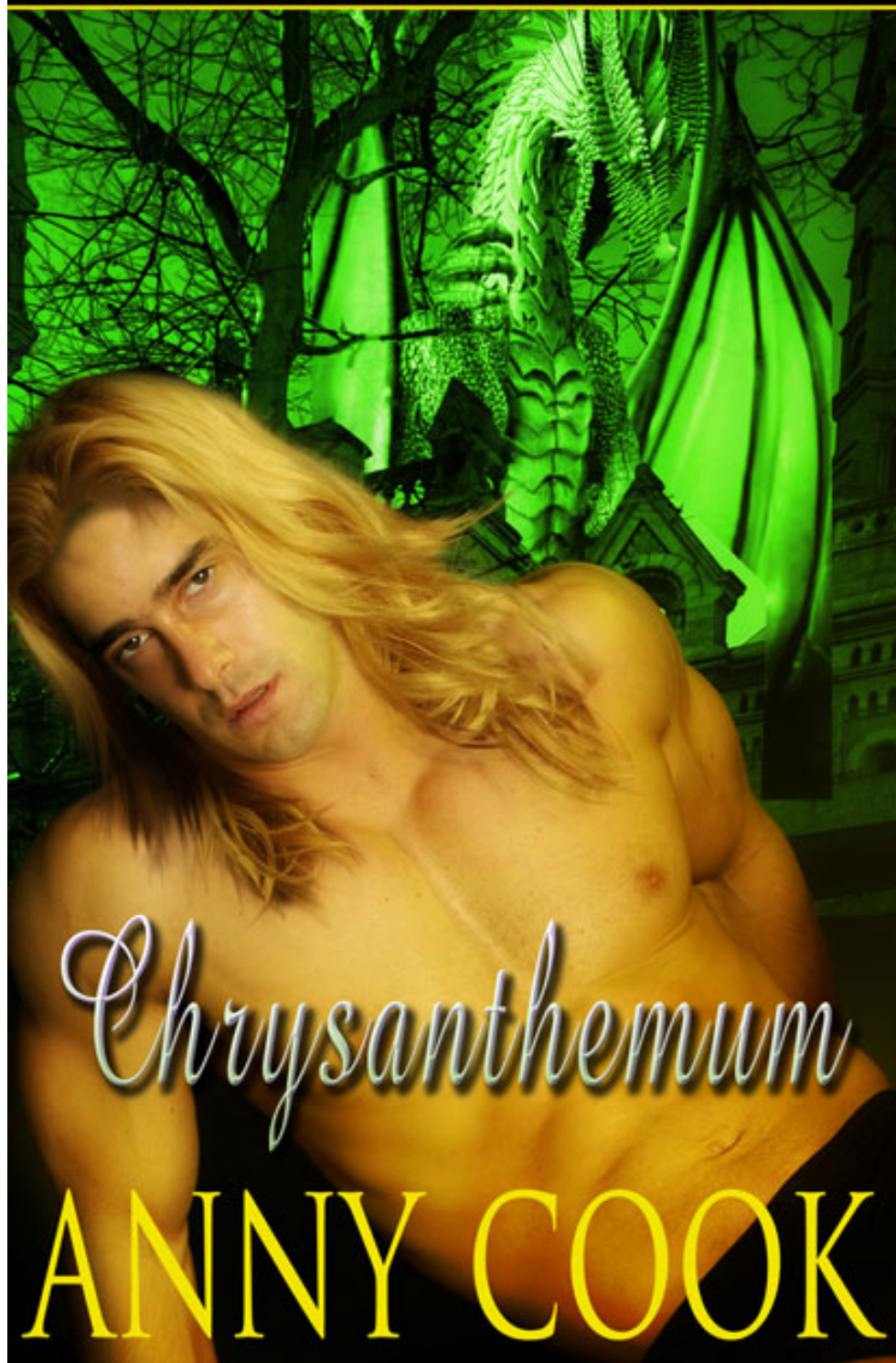


ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS



Chrysanthemum

ANNY COOK

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



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Chrysanthemum

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CHRYSANTHEMUM

Anny Cook

Dedication

This one's for my editor, Helen, who always says, "Go for it!" when I pitch a crazy new idea and for my critique group, Elissa, Cindy, Jennifer and Carol, who all know I'm a little odd around the edges but aren't afraid to point out the things I need to change anyway.

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Prologue

On that dark day Arthur, mortally wounded, was taken to the Isle of Avalon by Vivian, Lady of the Lake, and Merlin, where he died and was laid to rest in the crystal cave until he shall arise when the need is greatest and once again take up his enchanted sword, Caliburn.

Lost Manuscript – Gawaine the Bold – 512 AD

“Hogwash! Utter hogwash! What was Gawain thinking?” Gareth demanded. “On old Earth, they still believe that nonsense!”

Arthur tapped his chin and smiled at his youngest son. “Of course they still believe it. That was the whole purpose behind the story, though I freely admit, we never contemplated the story taking on a life of its own like it did.”

“You purposely lied about your end there?” Gareth stared at him in bewilderment. “Why?”

“The people needed someone to believe in, Gary,” the king explained kindly. “Dark days were coming. My time there was over.” He spread his hands and shrugged. “So Gawain wrote them a story they could believe in.”

“When the real truth was that Mom and Merlin abducted you, carried you onto your starship and brought you back to your home planet, Avalon.” Gareth shook his head. “He didn’t even spell the names correctly. His name doesn’t have an ‘e’ on the end. And Camelot! It’s not Camelot! It’s Came-a-lot! What kind of nonsense is that?”

Arthur delicately cleared his throat. “Well, the truth is, son, that *most* of the story was changed. Societies and cultures change over the years. Minstrels changed the story to a more romantic type of tale and most of the real adventures—especially the ones between the sheets—well, they weren’t acceptable anymore.”

Gareth's jaw dropped in astonishment. "You're not serious!"

Sadly, Arthur nodded his head. "They even changed Guinevere into a prissy cheating wife instead of sharing the truth about the wonderful orgies we had with what's-his-name – Lancelot. She was built like Bessie, our milkmaid – you know the one you lost your virginity with – and hotter than a party-popper for that pretty boy, Lance. He was hung like a mule and he could keep it up forever!" He sighed in memory. "And he had a backside to make a cock stand in an ice storm. I still miss him and his tight ass."

Gareth patted his shoulder in sympathy. "I'm sorry I brought it all back to you, Dad. We won't talk about it anymore."

"No. That's all right, Gary."

"What did you want to talk to me about, Dad?"

"Ahhh. Well – have you thought about marriage, son?"

Gareth choked. "Marriage?"

"I know you've been having a lot of fun with the maids in the castle, but, son, sometime you have to grow up. Now I've been thinking. Florian LeFleur, my wardrobe guardian, has asked for permission to bring his three daughters to court. His wife ran off with a group of acrobats – something about how limber they were – and he needs to settle his girls suitably so that he can sell his estate."

"Exactly how does his problem become mine?" Gareth demanded in outrage.

"Don't get your temper up. I'm just saying that there will be three new maids for you to check out. There might even be a virgin in there, but I doubt it."

"Only in that case that girl could be my wife? For sure?"

"If one of them is a virgin, then yes," Arthur admitted. "You don't find a virgin behind every bush, you know. It's not like it used to be, before the women got organized and started demanding an orgasm every time they had sex. Then the young ones wanted sex because the older ones were having a good time. Now a virgin is

scarcer than an undecorated cock. As long as the law says the royals have to marry virgins, then you'll have to grab one wherever you find her."

"After what you said about their mother, I doubt any of them are virgins and I'm kind of busy right now. I'll introduce them to the Knights of the Round Dungeon. I'm sure they'll be taken off old Florian's hands before he knows it."

"Unh-uh."

"What?"

"The knights and I are going off on our annual Dragon and Virgin Roundup next week. We're even taking Florian with us, so you'll have the castle all to yourself...along with the three sisters. Take good care of 'em, son." With that parting shot, Arthur slipped through the secret door behind the bookcase, leaving Gareth to contemplate the prospect of three horny women in a lonely castle.

Chapter One

In which Chrysanthemum makes use of the Library Table

Chrysanthemum LeFleur watched as, high overhead, the hawk heeled on the wind and changed directions. She heard the harsh cry of the raptor as it dived toward the distant woods and she longed to have the same freedom as the hawk. Instead, she was stuck here at Came-a-lot, waiting for the king to return and present her with a husband she didn't even want. When she tilted her head back, hoping to catch one more glimpse of the hawk, her loose topknot came apart allowing her glossy dark brown hair to tumble down her back.

She sighed and headed back into the castle library to work on her assignment. She and her sisters had been taken aback when the housekeeper informed them that they would be expected to do chores just like the rest of the staff. If they had known that they were going to have to work, they would have stayed at the estate. Raulf the butler had assured them if they stayed they would only have to fuck him and he would keep them safe from the other staff.

She dusted her skirt off and straightened the loose gathered neckline of her frilly blouse over her generous breasts, frowning as she noted the hard nipples poking at the soft fabric. That was another thing! The clothes the housekeeper insisted on were just impossible. No underwear. No zipsuits. And no shoes. And Gareth, the hunkalicious librarian, would probably be waiting to pounce on her from the shadows somewhere in the castle. She never knew when he was going to pop out from a dim alcove or dark closet. Those perky nipples would give him the wrong idea.

When she came through the door opening onto the patio and garden, two powerful arms embraced her and held her immobile against a huge male body. A very aroused male body. "Gareth?"

"Tchk. I warned you, Chrys. I told you that next time I caught you wandering around alone, you would have to pay a forfeit." His hands curled around her pillowy breasts and his fingers nudged at the tight nipples. "Glad to see me?"

"Not particularly."

"Liar." He yanked her top down below her breast and twirled her nipples between his thumbs and forefinger. "Ready to pay the forfeit?"

"And this is different from the last time I paid the forfeit, how?" she inquired with cool determination not to let him see how hot he made her.

He shifted her body until the soft spot just behind her ear was exposed to his rough busy tongue. She whimpered as he licked and suckled down the tight line of her neck to where it met her shoulder. Then he sharply nipped the soft pad of muscle.

"Ow!"

"Pay attention, baby. I brought toys with me for us to play with today."

"Good! Then you won't need me," she grunted as she halfheartedly tried to plant her elbow in his ribs. "You just keep teasing me. Why don't you go bother my sisters?"

He twirled her around so that she faced him, captured both hands behind her back and pressed her so tightly against the hard length of his cock that it separated the wet folds of her pussy beneath her skirt. "Ahhh, that's better! I can't bother your sisters because they aren't here."

"What are you talking about?" she cried out even as she rocked against the hard ridge between her legs.

"Hmmm. Oh yeah, baby, just like that."

She froze.

"Keep moving, Chrys, or I won't tell you another word."

Immediately, she spread her legs and wriggled around trying to rub her clit against his cock. "Yeah, yeah, like that," he sighed just before he smacked her ass with a broad

palm. She could feel the heat of his hand through her skirt. "Don't think you're going to come that easily. Keep moving!"

She whimpered and rocked. She was looking forward to losing her virginity. Wanted to actually, but Gareth was sure taking his sweet time about it.

"Some behemoth of a fellow named Raulf showed up this morning and demanded that the castle guard turn Daffodil over to him. Seems that he believes she stole his collection of cock rings and ticklers. Boy, was he steamed!"

She snorted in amusement. "He's steamed because he can't keep it up without his cock rings."

"What I found interesting was that he just happened to have a matrimonial collar and cuffs that exactly fit your sister. I don't suppose you would know anything about that?"

"You're insane if you think I'd get involved with him or even let him touch me," she panted, rocking frantically.

"Really? You don't seem to mind me touching you." Abruptly, he pulled away and bent her over a large overstuffed chair on her belly. Before she could wriggle free he had her securely restrained with sturdy cuffs attached to the chair legs in front. Moving briskly around to the back, he fastened her ankles to the back legs. Then he flipped her skirt up over her back, exposing her plump ass and legs and slick pink pussy.

When he saw the hot pink butt plug he went silent and still. Inhaling sharply, he rubbed a gentle hand over her bottom and asked, "You wore this for me, baby? How long has it been in?"

She moaned.

"How long, sweetheart?"

"I put it in at nine prime," she admitted with a hitch in her breath when he sharply tapped it.

He tapped it again. "It's the inflatable one. What setting did you put it on?"

"Ten." She whimpered and tried to twist away from his busy fingers. "Gareth!"

He gave her a gentle pat and trailed his fingers over her wet pussy. Whistling a brisk little tune, he went over to the basket of toys waiting on the wide library table and sorted through them until he found exactly what he was looking for. He returned to the front of the chair and slipped her stretchy top down underneath her soft breasts. Her nipples were already pointed little nubs but he tugged sharply just for the joy of it before attaching two little clamps to the points. The sparkling chain connecting them swung freely, almost brushing the chair seat. He frowned and returned to the basket, rummaging for a moment before returning with little jeweled weights to hook on the chain.

Chrysanthemum whimpered. Her pussy was so hot. She wished he'd get on with it.

"Perfect," he announced with satisfaction. "Now! About your other sister, Honeysuckle. The last I saw of her, she was the filling in a Hieney brothers' sandwich. Those boys have been looking for the perfect woman for a long time." He gave the little chain another tweak. "So you can see that just leaves you for my amusement."

"Gareth! Stop with the teasing and fuck me already," she demanded.

"Nope. I can't do that," he said regretfully. "You're a *virgin*. No cock in your pussy until our wedding night."

"Oh, get over it! That's never stopped you before! The other maids in the castle couldn't wait to tell me what a stud you are."

Gareth turned a little red across the cheekbones. "Well, actually, they exaggerate a lot," he admitted. "I asked them to."

"What?" She tossed her head back, trying to get her tangled hair out of her face so that she could see him. "Why would you do something like that?"

He gathered her hair in one hand, holding it up so he could see her pretty green eyes and the dusting of freckles across her cute nose. At the moment, her eyes sparkled with annoyance. "See..." he sighed. "I've never actually had a virgin. The king would like to think I spend all my spare time deflowering virgins, but really, you're the first

one I've ever met—except for Hannah, the gardener's daughter—but she's only eleven and the gardener had her fitted with a chastity suit when he caught her with the stable boy. Not that I would be messing around with a little girl like that," he added hastily.

"And the stable boy would?"

"He's only ten," he offered tentatively.

"And he's looking for pussy at his age? What kind of court does the king run?" she demanded in disgust.

"Hey! Don't blame the king for the stable boy's behavior! That's not fair. He probably got his ideas from the older boys."

"Well," she conceded grudgingly, "I suppose that's true. Anyway, I never said I'd marry you. I'm not looking for a husband." She sighed, her breasts swelled and lifted and the nipple chain tugged insistently, eliciting a little whimper from her.

"Exactly the problem." Gareth dropped her hair back over her face and trotted back around the chair. His cock got harder as he petted her ass and pussy, wetting his fingers in the cream that soaked her. He squatted and examined the butt plug until he located the tiny control button which he pressed once. A faint hiss assured him that it was expanding, preparing her for his eventual invasion.

Chrys groaned. "That stings!" she complained.

He knelt down and swiped her pussy lips with his rough tongue. She shrieked and wriggled, but he held her still and continued his sensual attack.

When he found her clit and sucked it hard, she could feel the waves of orgasm just out of her reach. He tapped her right butt cheek and admonished, "Not yet."

"Now!"

"Nope. Not until I say so." Hopping up, he moved back around the chair until he faced her. Gathering her hair up again, he fastened it back with a clip so that he could see her face. And more importantly, she could watch him as he peeled off his dark purple zipsuit.

She tilted her head back, anxious for him to uncover the work of art hidden by his zipsuit. When he was dressed, the eye was naturally drawn to his long blond hair which he wore in a thick braid that twitched across his fine tight ass when he walked. If you got past the hair, then you noticed his beautiful dark gray eyes and firm chin with the dimple in the center. Full lips. A beaky nose that did wonderful things to her clit when he was licking her pussy. She sighed again and the chain tugged at her nipples.

Gareth rolled the top of the suit down, revealing a broad chest sprinkled with pale, pale blond strands—just enough to drive a woman’s nipples wild with friction—and two flat cinnamon-colored nipples that she noted gleefully were hard and pointed in excitement. He made her wait a few minutes before he pushed the suit down over his hips to expose his cock and balls.

Her mouth watered at the vision revealed. He was long, thick and hard. Oh yeah—and decorated. Tiny little gold barbells marched up the underside of his cock. A flat glittering gold ring snugly circled his cock just below the flared crown. Between his legs, his balls swung, plump with seed and excitement.

He stroked his cock gently and inquired, “See something you want, baby?”

“Come here,” she commanded huskily.

He shook his head. “Not yet. You have to pay the forfeit first.”

She groaned. “Okay, okay. What’s the forfeit this time?”

“This time, you agree to marry me,” he said firmly. “No more playing around. I want you in my bed as my wife.”

“What? You’re crazy! Anyway, the king has to approve any match I make,” she announced triumphantly.

“That’s true,” he admitted. “So I made sure I got his approval before he left.”

She dropped her head and slumped over the chair. “I don’t believe you,” she muttered into the soft cushion.

"It's true. I also obtained your father's permission to take you. When they get back, the wedding will take place and you'll be mine—only mine." His satisfaction at that thought was clear. "I never thought to have a woman that was only mine."

"It's so important?" she asked curiously. "What about me? What if I want a man who hasn't been with anyone else?"

He shrugged. "Why would you want someone untried and unprepared? Someone who wouldn't know exactly how to please you? I'll take good care of you, Chrys. You know it, too." He tenderly lifted her head with one finger under her chin. "Say yes, Chrys."

She saw only tenderness and passion when their eyes met. She sighed and nodded. "Yes. But if you think that means you can do anything you want—"

Triumph flared deep in his gray eyes, but almost instantly it was replaced by heat and anticipation. "You know very well what your safe word is. Open your mouth, love. Take my cock and suck it like you always do. Like you want it more than life itself."

He nudged her lips with the broad dark crown and she eagerly nibbled around the weeping hole before opening wide and sucking him into the warm, wet depths. It was his turn to groan and whimper as he thrust and withdrew in a rapidly increasing rhythm. "Chrys!" he shouted as he came. Her lips stretched around his cock in a satisfied smile when he grabbed for the chair arms as he staggered. She knew his legs always grew weak and rubbery when she sucked him off.

She licked his cock meticulously cleaning him and nibbling the string of tiny bars until he slowly, reluctantly drew away and peeled his zipsuit down over his feet, kicking it under the nearest table. That was when she realized he was barefoot. So he'd planned their little tryst in the library. Then he released her from the restraints and proceeded to strip off her skirt and blouse. Once she was naked, he lifted her onto the big, sturdy library table and spread her legs.

"Hold still, Chrys. If you move, I'll have to tie you down," he warned before he dropped to his knees and buried his face in her pussy. She rocked against him, trying to

get that wonderful beaky nose to rub her clit. Surprisingly, he cooperated, spearing her with his tongue, but again, just as she reached orgasm, he pulled away and shook his head. "Don't come yet."

"Why?" she screamed with frustration.

"I won't fuck your pussy until our wedding night, but that doesn't mean I can't fuck your fabulous ass," he said with serious intent. "You're just not ready yet, baby."

"What more do you want?" she demanded with annoyance. "I would have never believed it would be so hard to get a fuck at Came-a-lot!"

"Now, Chrys. Don't be like that, sweetheart. I'm going to take care of you in just a few minutes." He retrieved several hard cushions from the couch and dumped them on the table next to her. "Turn over, on your hands and knees."

"Yeah, yeah, give me a minute!" Muttering beneath her breath, she moved around until she was arranged to his satisfaction. He stuffed two of the cushions beneath her belly and tapped her on the ass. "Lie down. And stretch your arms out in front of you."

"I thought you weren't going to tie me up," she objected, though she stretched her arms above her head. Her breasts nearly touched the table so that the nipple clamps and chain scooted across the smooth surface, tugging at the distended nipples. She groaned.

"Well, I wasn't," he admitted, "but this way your nipples will be teased while I'm busy getting into your tight ass. Oh, yeah. This will be much better." Briskly, he tied her hands to the heavy old table legs and moved back to the other end of the table. In a few minutes, she felt the butt plug start to expand – again!

"How much bigger do you think you're going to make that?" she complained.

"You started it on ten? It needs to be on fifteen. So we have a little time to kill." She wriggled her ass, hiked high over the hard cushions. Then she felt a cool, slippery egg slip just inside her pussy. It stretched the opening with little pinching movements until it fit entirely inside. She felt stuffed like a sausage.

"Gareth? What are you doing?" she whimpered.

"Hmm. Just giving you a taste, baby. Just a little taste. It's just a little egg. Not enough to break your maidenhead. Hold on, now." He turned on the vibrating egg and she bucked in shock. Covering her body with his, he held her still while he nibbled and sucked the nape of her neck.

She could feel the hard length of his cock sliding between her legs, across her hard clit. The egg vibrated against the butt plug which steadily expanded. The fiery pinch on her nipples shot down her spine. She felt like she was going to explode.

He tugged on the nipple chain. "Come for me now," he whispered softly in her ear.

And she came. For hours. At least it seemed like it.

When she was coherent again, she realized that Gareth had replaced the butt plug with his hot, hard cock. Her breath hitched in shock as he gently rocked his hips against the soft curve of her ass. "Gary?"

"Mm-hmm?"

"Is that damned egg still in me?"

"Mm-hmm. I just turned it off for now." He leaned down, blanketing her with his warm hairy body. "You doing okay, baby?"

A hard shuddering breath escaped her. "I think so. You're all the way in?"

"Oh, yeah."

"I can feel those little bars rubbing me." Involuntarily, her muscles contracted, squeezing his cock mercilessly.

"Don't do that, sweetheart, or you'll make me come and I'm not ready to do that yet. I want to just savor the feeling of being gloved deep inside you." Gareth thrust in as far as he could and held still with a deep groan.

An orgasm crept up and her inner muscles tightened around him. He shouted her name and then she felt the hot, scalding jets of his jerking release. The heated eroticism of his cock buried snugly in her ass was too much for her and she wildly contracted around him, coming so hard that she passed out cold.

Chapter Two

In which the Blue Knight captures King Arthur

Percival the dragon crouched in the narrow opening of his cave, preventing the young woman trapped inside from escaping. The Blue Knight leaned on his laser sword in front of the dragon and pushed up the face guard on his helm. "What do you mean, you won't let Bitsy go?" he demanded hotly. "She's not a virgin. You have no use for her, so hand her over!"

"Not so fast, boyo," Percival replied with a noxious puff of smoke. "Just because she's not a virgin, doesn't mean I don't have a use for her. I'm holding her as a hostage until you bring me a virgin in exchange."

"What! Where am I supposed to find a virgin? It's not like I can go gallivanting all over Avalon looking for one. You *know* I've been banished to the Dread Forest!" The Blue Knight propped his laser sword on his shoulder and paced back and forth. "I'm sure it must be different outside, but women are scarce in the Dread Forest and virgins? Hah! Bitsy was the last one I've heard of in ten years! I grabbed her as soon as Jonas the innkeeper mentioned her."

Percival snorted a long stream of smelly smoke. "It's not my fault you can't keep your cock in your zipsuit. Now she's not a virgin and that's not my fault either. So it's up to you to find one for me."

The Blue Knight ripped off his helm and flung it to the ground. "Why can't you find one yourself!" he shouted in frustration. "There's nothing keeping you from leaving the Dread Forest!"

"That's what you think," Percival replied loftily. "King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Dungeon are on their annual Dragon and Virgin Roundup. No dragon or virgin will be safe for leagues around here. *I* heard that one of Florian LeFleur's girls is

a virgin," he whispered. "I bet that Arthur would capture her for his youngest son, Gareth, if he knew."

"Damn." The Blue Knight sat down on a nearby boulder and shook his head in despair. "What am I going to do?"

"Find a virgin," Percival advised him impatiently. "Surely there must be one somewhere. Ask around. Maybe the Knights of the Round Dungeon know where you can find one."

"Not likely." The Blue Knight stared at him morosely. "If they knew of one, she wouldn't be that way for very long. If I could leave the Dread Forest, I would go find LeFleur's daughter myself."

"Well," Percival scratched his scaly green chin with one long claw, "if you can't leave, then you'll have to find a way to bring her here. Who do you know that could command a woman to travel across Avalon?"

The Blue Knight's eyes widened with sudden comprehension. "Arthur. How the hell am I going to convince him to do that?"

"Geez, Knight. Do I have to do all the thinking?" Percival demanded. "I gave you some ideas. Work it out!" He turned in the doorway of his cave and stomped back inside, shooing Bitsy ahead of him. "Don't come back without a virgin, or it won't be pretty!"

* * * * *

Wispy curls of mist rose from the damp grass on the field. Smoke drifted from nearly dead fires. The Blue Knight could hear a cacophony of snores and the loud hums of the generators that supported the air rooms and beds. At the edge of the field on the far side, the cooks were milling about the big shelter that served as both kitchen and dining room.

He sank down behind a thick bush and moved his eyes from one air room to the next, searching for the one where Arthur would be sleeping. With a frown, he noted the squires dismantling and packing up the royal air room. Where was Arthur?

Abruptly, he saw the king off to the left, heading into the woods with his silver zipsuit open and a giggling girl on each arm. The Blue Knight motioned for the vassals closest to him to follow as he headed into the woods on a collision course. They moved quietly through the thick woods, the few sounds they made masked by the encampment awakening.

When they reached the small clearing, Arthur was already stretched out on the scrubby grass with one girl bouncing energetically on his royally hard cock while the other was bouncing equally excitedly on his bristly face. The Blue Knight and his friends waited very politely for them to finish, but just to stave off boredom, they critiqued Arthur's technique.

"I thought his cock would be bigger," Baldy the Beak-Nosed whined.

"How can you tell the way that girl's bouncing around?" his companion whispered. "Look at her go!"

Kevin the Kisser leaned closer and said, "I heard his cock was three inches around."

"Three inches? No way," Marco the Muffer declared.

"Bet," Baldy said instantly. "Three days with your woman."

"What? What do I get if *you* lose? You don't *have* a woman."

Baldy scratched his nose in thought. "I've got Merkel here. You could try him out."

Marco shot him a look of disbelief. "Get real. I don't want no man. I guess the bet's off."

"Too late anyway," Kevin said abruptly. "They're finished." Since Arthur and the ladies seemed to have reached a most satisfactory conclusion to their activities, the vassals secured their captives and quickly led them away from the camp.

Arthur didn't seem to be too worried, the Blue Knight noted curiously. "King Arthur, right?" he asked just to make sure he had the right man. After all, he hadn't seen Arthur in twenty years.

Peering at him in the dimly lit forest, Arthur frowned. "Carroll? I thought you were banished to the Dread Forest," he declared. "Does your father know you're not where you belong?"

Carroll the Blue Knight laughed. "Merlin? I haven't seen him since he banished me. It's been so long he probably doesn't even remember *why* he banished me! Anyway," he said with a grin, "this is part of the Dread Forest we're walking through. Welcome to my home."

"What do you want?" demanded Arthur.

"Why, I want a virgin. Not that you would know any personally," Carroll amended hastily. "Clearly your two young companions don't fall in that category. But hopefully, you know of one or two somewhere in your kingdom who could be summoned as ransom for you."

"If I knew of one, she would be captured for my son, Gareth." Arthur stalked along the barely discernable path between two of his burly captors. "You don't merit a virgin, Carroll. You've been banished."

The Blue Knight sniffed. "I don't want her for myself. I found my own virgin and we've been married for nearly ten years."

Arthur stopped and turned to face him. "Then what do you want with another virgin?" he demanded in bewilderment.

"Percy." Carroll cleared his throat and clarified, "Percival the dragon has my wife Bitsy. He's holding her hostage until I bring him a virgin. I can't leave the Dread Forest or my cock will shrink up and never get hard again. You can, though. So you'll find me a virgin so I can have my wife back!"

"So because you couldn't hold on to your wife, I'm supposed to produce a virgin out of thin air just for you?" Arthur shook his head in disgust and continued his trek

through the woods. His guards rushed to catch up with him, lest he take a notion to escape. "You are so dead. You won't have to worry about Percival or Bitsy because my knights will find us and rescue me. And then they'll capture this Percival for our roundup. He sounds like quite an impudent fellow to me."

"If he was that easy to capture, my vassals and I would have already managed that. Why do you think I'm so worried?"

"Because you're a wuss," Arthur replied brutally. "If you weren't a wuss, you would have worked out something with your father a long time ago."

"That's easy for you to say. You wouldn't be the one with a shriveled dick," the Blue Knight shouted. "Now be quiet and walk!"

Unbeknownst to the Blue Knight and King Arthur, there had been a witness to the seizure. Stinky, a scrawny page, was squatting down behind a thick bush taking care of some personal business when Arthur arrived at the clearing. Now no one knew that Stinky was really a girl in disguise. She was stinky by design because she was one of a rare breed. She was an orphan virgin and aimed to stay that way – virgin, that is – for a while. She closely observed the antics of the king and his two paramours in the interest of gaining a little more knowledge without the experience. So she was quietly spying on them when the Blue Knight's entourage came crashing into the clearing. Knowing what would happen if her presence was revealed before she got her zipsuit fastened, she remained silent.

Once the Blue Knight and his men had taken the king and the girls away, Stinky stood, rapidly redressed and hightailed it back to the field with the news that the king had been captured.

The Knights of the Round Dungeon were not inclined to believe Stinky, especially since most of them had roaring hangovers, but she persisted until finally Cai, leader of the King's Guard, sent two men to check out Stinky's story. Within a very short time,

they returned with their findings and immediately the camp was roused as the entire group prepared to pursue the Blue Knight and his vassals.

It was not part of Stinky's plan at all to accompany them, but one of the knights seized her and tossed her on the back of his powerbike before roaring off into the woods, leaving her no choice in the matter. It seemed that she was going along for the ride, willy-nilly.

Chapter Three

In which Chrysanthemum discovers a Prince

When Chrysanthemum woke, she was cocooned in a luxurious soft bed in an enormous bedroom. Through the open window, she could see the glorious purples and oranges of dusky sunset. It appeared that she had slept the day away. Slowly, she stretched and rolled over, twisting the heavy covers around her naked body. A little pinch on her nipples got her attention and she pushed the sheet down to examine her breasts. Pretty little rings pierced each nipple. Dainty gold hearts dangled from the rings and a glittering chain connected the rings. Tentatively, she poked them, prepared for major discomfort. But only the erotic twinges they were designed for resulted. Gareth must have gotten the healer to speed-heal the piercings. She shook her head. She would have to make him pay for his impudence.

Another thought had her frantically pushing the sheet down below her crotch. She craned her head and peered down at her pussy. Every dark strand of hair was gone. She was smoother than a new baby's bottom. And dangling from her clit was another gold ring with three little strands of gold hearts. All right. Now he was just so dead.

She had no idea where she was. Brilliantly colored silks draped the windows and the high four-poster bed she was occupying. Fragile old tapestries covered the cold stone walls and thick, soft rugs were layered over the stone floors. She crawled from the bed with the sheet wrapped around her and shuffled over for a closer look at the tapestries. The clit ring bounced and jangled between her legs, pulling on her hard little clit. She squeezed her legs together and for a moment forgot where she was. Then the tapestries caught her eye again. There was something familiar about them. They reminded her of the tapestries on the walls at the High Court.

Her eyes widened in shock as she studied them closely. Naked men and women cavorted across woodlands and meadows populated with a whimsical assortment of

strange animals. There were twosomes and threesomes and the occasional foursome. Her eyes searched out the name of the embroiderer in the bottom right corner. Vivian, High Queen. Well, it was certain that these tapestries never covered the walls at the High Court!

"Who knew she was such a wild one?" Chrys muttered and shook her head before she turned around and saw Gareth casually leaning against the wide doorpost, his arms crossed and a wide satisfied smile on his face. He was dressed in a dark green zipsuit and high chocolate brown boots, but his hair was still loose, streaming down his back.

"I knew," he admitted. "She's my mother."

"Your mother? That's impossible. That would make you King Arthur's —"

"Son," he finished.

"The king's son fucked me in the *ass*?" she demanded wrathfully.

"Yes, he did — and it was *wonderful*," Gareth replied blissfully. "I can't wait to do it again. But until then, we have other things to take care of."

"Such as?" she asked huffily. "Maybe you would like to tell me where my clothes are?"

"Actually? No. I happen to like what you have on now." He strolled closer and took one long curl in his hands. "You're beautiful, Chrys."

She snatched the curl out of his hand and flicked his chin. "I need clothes, Prince. I can't walk around the castle in a sheet."

"That's true, but I wasn't really planning on you going anywhere." He sat down on the side of the bed and patted the place beside him. "I want you to stay here, Chrys," he said very seriously. Something about his expression told her that it wasn't just a whim on his part.

She sat down and sighed. "Why?"

"The king has disappeared. So has the entire cadre of Knights of the Round Dungeon." He slipped his arm around her and held her against his chest. "Your father

is gone, too. I've asked the Hieney brothers to bring Honeysuckle to the castle where she'll be safer. And I sent a messenger down to Raulf at your father's estate so he can guard Daffodil."

"What happened?" she asked quietly, taking her cue from him. He was worried, but not frantic.

"One of the squires swears that they were attacked by the Blue Knight and his vassals." He got up and went to the wardrobe where he located a turquoise silk robe and brought it back to Chrys. "Slip this on for now, sweetheart. Dinner is ready and the cook is just waiting for word that you're ready before she sends the servants up here."

Absently she put it on, found the soft tie belt and secured it around her waist. "I thought the Blue Knight was a fairy tale." Suddenly she frowned. "Why do you have women's clothes in your wardrobe?"

"I ordered them for you from the castle seamstress," he replied with a playful smile. "The minute I saw you, I knew you were mine."

Arching an eyebrow, she demanded, "Have you ever heard of asking first?"

He pursed his lips and slowly shook his head. "Let me think. No. As the youngest son of the king, I don't normally ask for permission. I was born to be the baby prince in the family. However, in your case, I want you to note, I did ask *both* my father and yours for permission to marry you." He pulled her into his arms with her soft ass against his belly.

She felt the hard ridge of his cock against her tender butt as he cuddled her against his chest. "If you tell the truth," he whispered in her ear, "you'll admit that you like it when I take you. You're such a strong-willed woman that you need a man who can take charge. That's what I love about you. I love the way you submit to me and trust me to take care of you."

"Yeah? Well, I draw the line at piercing any more body parts. What's with the nipple and clit rings?"

He cupped her breasts in his hands and twiddled the nipple rings with his thumbs. "These are the royal engagement jewels. They were my grandmother Ygraine's before my grandfather gave her new ones for their five hundredth anniversary. Rubies and sapphires, I think."

Every other girl got a diamond ring for her finger. *She* got nipple rings. Wasn't she the lucky girl? She sighed and said, "Now tell me about this so called Blue Knight."

He nuzzled the soft skin just below her ear. "He's Merlin's oldest son. He was banished to the Dread Forest." He held her tightly and nudged her sore ass with his cock. "If we don't eat now, I'm going to find something else for you to do with your mouth."

"Call the cook. I haven't eaten since breakfast."

* * * * *

Chrysanthemum ate a hearty dinner. Esmerelda the cook had delivered her best efforts. Tiny red potatoes and green beans, tender red-fleshed salmon, a crisp vegetable salad with a yummy dill dressing and steaming fresh yeast rolls and fresh pesto. When she finished she sat back with a deep sigh. "That was delicious. Please tell Esmerelda I said thank you."

He grinned at her with loving amusement. "She made you a chocolate lava cake for dessert."

She groaned. "Why didn't you tell me? I don't think I can fit in another bite!"

"That's all right. We'll have it later for a bedtime snack," he teased. "I'll eat mine off your belly."

"I don't think so," she said primly. "We need to do something about rescuing our fathers."

"What would you suggest? I think we'll hear from the Blue Knight pretty soon. He'll send a messenger listing his demands. We'll respond. There will be a battle. We will win. Then Dad will come home."

"You're pretty sure of yourself," she observed with disgust. "What if things don't go your way? Suppose he just executes them and brings an army to Came-a-lot instead of sending a messenger?"

"He won't."

"Why not? And how do you know you would win if there was a battle?" she demanded curiously.

"I'm pretty sure he wants to get his banishment lifted. If he kills Dad or the knights that won't happen," he explained patiently. "Same thing goes for the battle. If he wins, the banishment won't be lifted."

"That doesn't seem very fair to me." She frowned at him. "That just seems totally wrong. What's the point? If you already know he has to let you win, why fight at all?"

Gareth shrugged. "I don't make the rules. That's just the way it is. I didn't say that he had to make it an easy defeat—just that in the end he has to surrender. Personally, I don't like fighting. I would rather that he made a deal with Dad and sent him home."

"Why don't you just change the rules?"

"I'm not the king. More than likely, I'll never be the king. Dad and all of my brothers would have to die first. Frankly, I'm not that anxious to be the king." He summoned the servants to take away the dishes. "I'm fairly content with what I have."

"Aren't you bored? Don't you want more from life than chasing me around the castle?"

He pulled her to her feet and tugged her into the sybaritic bathroom. "I like chasing you around the castle. I look forward to chasing you around the castle for the next two or three hundred years. But," he continued as he peeled her robe off and led her into the huge open shower, "when I'm not chasing you around the castle, I do have a real job."

"Exactly what would that be?" she demanded in disbelief. "Observing the Hieney boys' ménage techniques?"

"No, no, no. I taught them everything they know back when we were all in college. And whatever I missed, I'm sure Merlin filled in." He waved a casual hand at the spray nozzles and the warm water showered them from every direction. "I'm the head historian at the Avalon State Museum."

"The head historian. So you're the jerk who refused to hire me because I'm a woman?"

"The rules. I'm not the king. I don't get to make the rules." He dipped his fingers into the bowl of soft gardenia-scented soap and slowly spread it over her smooth silky skin in slow lazy circles. "If I made the rules," he muttered thickly, "I would lock you up naked in the highest tower, chained to my bed so that you were always ready for me to fill you with my hard cock."

"Boy, talk about a fantasy," she sniffed with a sharp laugh. "Maybe it should be the other way around, Gary. Let me chain you down so that I finally get rid of my virginity. I can think of twelve ways to do that."

"Only twelve?" he asked with an arched brow. "Tchk. I'll have to work on that."

* * * * *

Queen Vivian stomped down the stairs in a snit. Esmerelda had just informed her that *that woman* was eating dinner with Gary *en suite*. Well! Vivian trotted down a long dark hall dimly lit with flaring torches. That was Arthur's idea. He liked the *ambiance* because it reminded him of the castle at Camelot on Old Earth. Never mind that the torches threatened to burn down the castle. Never mind that they could have brightly lit hallways with modern lighting. Horny old fool! She should have left him with that cow Guinevere and her fool Lancelot. Her tiny heels clicked on the stone floor as she stalked to Gareth's door where she proceeded to pound on the heavy wood with her dainty fists.

Eventually, wrapped in a sheet, Gareth flung the door open. Vivian could see Chrys dangling, arms stretched over her head, from a heavy chain hooked to a beam in the

corner. She was stark naked. Vivian's eyes widened in shock when she took in the nipple chain and clit ring. "What have you done?" she cried.

Gareth stared at her in baffled annoyance. "What? What are you doing here, Mother?"

"Keeping you from making a mistake," she replied tartly. "That girl is a servant. Why is she wearing the royal engagement symbols?"

Gareth crossed his arms over the sheet and leaned against the doorframe preventing her entry. "She's agreed to marry me. Why shouldn't she wear the royal engagement symbols? I have Dad's permission and her father's approval." He tilted his head so that he could peer directly in her eyes. "Not that any of that is your business."

"You're going to marry a commoner," Vivian hissed in aggravation.

"Um-hmm. I'm going to marry a beautiful, *sexy* commoner." He went to shut the door. "Now if you'll excuse us, Chrysanthemum and I were in the middle of a game of charades."

"Hah! It appears that your father's changed his mind!" Vivian wrestled a crumpled and stained piece of paper from her pocket and waved it under his nose. "Read this! That Blue Knight must be the most backward piece of—" Gareth plucked the paper from her hand and slammed the door in her face. A second later she heard the bolt slide home. "Well! Where Arthur finds these people, I'm sure I don't know. Not even a clean piece of paper. Coffee and food all over it," she muttered as she stomped back down the hallway. "And that one corner with broccoli on it? Looked like someone used it to clean their teeth. *Ewww!*"

Behind the securely locked door, Gareth squinted at the scraggled lines of print, trying to decipher his father's message.

Gary, my dear boy,

Pleese bring Chrysnnthumum to the Dred Forest, nrth end and wate at the Two Dick Tavern.

Gary frowned and looked at it again. No, it wasn't dick, it was trick.

The Two Trick Tavern. I hope yuv bin treeting her in your custemarry fashun because my life depends on this. The Blue Knitte needs a virgin to give to Percival the Dragun. He says if you fale to show with Chrysannthemum by noon on Friday, he will give me and the Knittes of the Round Dunjun to the Dragun insted.

Don't fale me, son.

Arthur, King of Avalon

Gareth shook his head. His father never had learned to spell or write worth a damn. If he thought Gary was going to just turn Chrys over to a dragon he was crazy.

"What does it say?" Chrys demanded.

Gareth sighed and tossed his sheet back on the bed before going over to her and releasing her hands. He handed her the letter, rubbed his hand over his face wearily and then went to sit on the bed.

"Your father wrote this?" she asked incredulously. "It's full of misspelled words and the penmanship is atrocious."

"That's how I know he wrote it," Gareth admitted dryly. "If it didn't have any errors, I would be very suspicious. You should have seen some of the letters he sent me when I was away at school." He shuddered. "I always burned them as soon as I read them. What if one of the other kids at school had found out he was illiterate? No, it doesn't bear thinking about."

"What is this Two Dick Tavern?"

"Trick. Two *Trick* Tavern. Probably where the local ladies ply their trade and by the name, there would be two of them. I would guess that it's the only spot around to wait. It's got to be on the edge of the Dread Forest."

"If you say so." She shrugged and went to sit next to him. "What do you think he's talking about when he says he hopes you've treated me in the customary fashion?"

Gareth leaped to his feet. "That's it!"

"What? What?"

"Remember when I told you Dad thinks I'm deflowering virgins right and left? Well, if you're not a virgin, the dragon won't want you!" he declared with glee.

She held up one finger and waved it at him. "One small problem there, Prince. I *am* still a virgin. And that's something you've refused deal with."

He slumped back down next to her and absently nibbled his thumb. "Okay. We'll get married, do the deed and head for the Dread Forest."

"Do the deed? *Do the deed? Oh, be still my heart!*" Chrys crawled up in the center of the bed, yanked the covers over her head and curled up in a ball facing away from him.

Gareth winced. He'd certainly screwed that up royally. Slipping under the covers until he was cuddled around her, he snuggled close and whispered in her ear, "Can I try that again? I'm a bit rattled at the idea of losing you, Chrys. It's making me nervous and when I get nervous I spend a lot of time with both feet in my mouth."

"It wasn't very romantic," she muttered. "Even if we do tease a lot about it, I want it to be special."

"It will be," he promised fervently. "I've waited too long for it to be anything else."

"If it isn't, I won't be the only one deflowered," she warned.

He turned her so she faced him and brushed her mouth with his nibbling along her lush lower lip. "First we have to get married," he said with determination. "That's the law. I can't marry you if you aren't a virgin, so no playing around until that's taken care of."

Nipping his lower lip in retaliation, she leaned back and stared at him in contemplation. "If we marry here at the castle, your mother will have a messenger zipping out of here before we finish the 'I dos'. I don't want to be responsible for a dragon fricasseeing the king."

He grimaced at that vision and frowned. "We'll have to get married secretly. We need a priest high enough up in the monastery network that he'll be willing to help us

out. He's got to be high enough that he'll be believed when our marriage is revealed and low enough that he won't feel obligated to tell my mother."

"Do you know someone like that?" she asked anxiously.

"I'm thinking. Don't rush me." He sat up in the bed. "I've got it. We'll go see Father Liksalot at the Solomon's Choice Abbey. He was my counselor when I was there."

Chapter Four

In which King Arthur loses his Zipsuit

King Arthur and Percival sat in Percy's cave playing strip poker. Bitsy, nearly comatose from boredom and pissed off, watched them from her cage in the corner. The cage had to be moved away from the table because she kept telling the two men what cards their opponent had. Since Percival didn't wear any clothes to lose, they took a piece from Bitsy when the dragon lost a hand. So far, she was down to one sock and her earrings.

The Knights of the Round Dungeon were slumped against the back wall, chained together like a chain gang. Arthur was so disgusted he refused to even look at them. Instead of rescuing him, which was their job, after all, they stumbled into the ambush the Blue Knight's vassals prepared and were so thoroughly defeated that not one escaped. That forced Arthur's hand. He had to write the letter to Gareth. Fortunately, Percy had been very helpful with the spelling or no telling what he would have done.

The king puffed on his cigar and arranged the cards in his hand. "Just tell me one thing, Percy. Why are you so all-fired determined to acquire a virgin? What good are they? After all, once you take her, she won't be a virgin anymore. You might as well save yourself the aggravation and get a woman that's been broken in some."

"Don't worry about it, King. And don't think you can distract me with your yammering," Percival replied coolly. "If you don't keep quiet, we'll play Scrabble instead and you wouldn't have a prayer of winning that."

"No," Arthur admitted sadly before brightening up. "Now if Gareth was here, he could give you a run for your money. He's real smart. Head historian for the Avalon Museum."

"Yeah?" Smoke puffed from Percival's huge nostrils. "Do they have anything about dragons at the museum?"

"Don't know." Arthur wrinkled his brow and discarded one of his aces. "Give me one card."

Percival dealt him the requested card and asked, "Why don't you know if they have a dragon exhibit at the museum?"

"Never been there." Arthur shuddered. "Moldy old books and furniture. Stuff should have all been tossed in the trash years ago. Why do people want to look at that junk?"

"Gee, I don't know, Sire. Maybe so they'll learn about the past?" Percival's disapproval was obvious.

"How would you know? Anyway, the past is overrated. I remember it just fine," Arthur protested before slapping his cards down on the table. "Four of a kind, nines."

"Royal flush, hearts," Percival retorted. "Lose the zipsuit."

The knights perked up at that. There were a couple of them who had a side bet on whether the king had his cock pierced or not. Everyone held their breath while Arthur turned his back on them and peeled off the snug one-piece suit. He kicked it behind him, turned around and walked back to his seat, his partial erection bouncing before him.

Bram, the Archery Knight, smacked his neighbor on the arm, rubbed two fingers together and demanded, "Pay up, sucker. I told you he was decorated."

Aonghus, the Horse Knight, snorted as he gave Arthur's cock a long disbelieving look. "You said he was decorated. You didn't say he was kinky."

"Kinky as a corkscrew," Bram replied cheerfully. "Pay up."

Percival just shook his head. "And they call me a monster. I'm not sure I needed to see that."

"Then you shouldn't have won the hand," Arthur pointed out huffily. "I don't know what the big deal is anyway. You would think I'd had it cut off or something."

"Might have been better." Percival slapped the cards down in front of Arthur. "Your deal."

"How many more hands?" Arthur shuffled and dealt. "I'm hungry and it's cold in here. I thought a dragon's cave would be warm. Look at poor Bitsy. Her nipples are all puckered and she has goose bumps."

Percival muttered beneath his breath and then sighed. "Oh, all right. One more hand. In the meantime, I'll start a fire so it warms up in here." He turned his huge head and breathed out a ribbon of flame toward the logs stacked in the fireplace. There was a *whoosh* and the logs began to burn with a snap.

Arthur won the next hand and Bitsy lost her remaining sock. He stacked the cards on the table and went to retrieve his zipsuit, but Percival shook his head and took the suit away, stowing it in his treasure chest. "You lost it fair and square. It's mine now."

"That seat is cold on my balls and ass," Arthur objected indignantly. "At least give me a blanket! And give Bitsy her clothes back!"

"Nope. I like Bitsy just like she is. As for you? By the way that thing's bobbing around, you could do with some cooling off. Go sit down. And stay there or I'll put you in the cage with Bitsy." Percival stomped down the tunnel to the outside entrance. "I'm going to consult with that loser, the Blue Knight. Maybe he'll know how soon your son will be here with the virgin."

"Her name's Chrysanthemum!" Arthur yelled at his scaly back.

"Yeah, yeah." With one last flick of his tail, Percy was gone.

Arthur thought about following him, but he took one look at the squat heavy trolls guarding the entrance, noting their flickering gray tongues licking their piggy snouts, and decided that patience really was the better part of valor.

He planned to keep the family jewels for as long as possible.

* * * * *

The Blue Knight was not happy. According to his spies, Gareth and his virgin, Chrysanthemum, didn't seem to be in any hurry to reach the Two Trick Tavern. Baldy the Beak-Nosed had reported that the couple had detoured long enough to spend the night at the Solomon's Choice Abbey. That news made the Blue Knight a little uneasy. Why stop at the Abbey when they could have gone straight to the inn at Split Pine?

"Well?" Percival sat on his haunches in the doorway and bellowed at Carroll. "What's the news?"

The Blue Knight shared what he knew and his concerns. "Why stop there?"

"Oh, I don't know. Could it be because they'd have private rooms with real beds and hot food at the Abbey, maybe? As opposed to a rug on the common room floor in front of the fire? Could that be why?" Percival's acid sarcasm was lost on the Blue Knight.

Carroll shrugged. "I don't know. I have a house with a bed and I used to have a wife to keep me warm."

"Don't you ever take her on vacation?" Percy demanded.

"Why would I want to take her someplace else to fuck?"

"Wow! Aren't you the romantic?" Percival absently picked at a scab on his knee with one huge claw. "I would have cut your pecker off by now if I was her." He quit picking at the scab and scratched under his chin. "Actually, that isn't a bad idea. I bet she would be really grateful."

The Blue Knight shielded his crotch with his hands and edged away from the dragon. "I don't think so."

"No?" Percival sniffed delicately at the breeze. "What is that awful odor?"

"What odor?"

"You need a new sniffer, Knight. Something stinks."

Carroll's face cleared immediately. "Oh! That's just a page who was riding with one of Arthur's knights."

Percy's scaly face wrinkled with distaste. "Ugh! Give him a bath! He's stinking up my woods."

Carroll's head bobbed like an apple in a barrel of water on Harvest Day. "Right away! Not a problem!"

Ignoring him, Percival turned away and headed for the sparkling stream for a drink. The press and smell of so many people in his cave was beginning to wear on him. He wanted his peace and quiet back. The thought crossed his mind that his life wouldn't be all that bad, even if he didn't get his virgin.

* * * * *

Following her usual *modus operandi*, Stinky was hiding in the bushes behind the Blue Knight. When Percival commanded the vassals to give the page a bath, Stinky knew she had to escape before they discovered her secret. Worming around in the underbrush, she crept past the guard on perimeter duty and headed away from the camp. Reluctantly, she decided that a bath was in order. Clearly living up to her name was calling undue attention to her presence and was no longer an advantage.

Treading through the forest with one eye on her back trail, she failed to see the edge of the small pool hidden by a honeysuckle thicket. One step later she was flailing the air in vain as she fell into the pool with a resounding splash. Fortunately, her involuntary cry of dismay was drowned out when she swallowed a mouthful of water. Choking and gurgling, she found her feet and stood up.

Water dripped from her filthy clothes and hair. Muddy streaks ran across her face. With a grimace of distaste, she peeled off the clothes, leaving them to soak in the pool and scrunched down to dunk her head under the sun-warmed water. On the bank, she spied some soap weed and gleefully ripped it up. If she was going to be wet, she might as well be clean, too. It was an opportunity too good to miss.

Downstream, Percival cocked his head to one side and listened intently. He could swear he heard splashing. Moving very quietly for such a big creature, he approached the pool until he found a hidden observation spot. He watched the dirty Stinky turn into a dainty elfin lady with pert little breasts capped with strawberry pink nipples and a surprisingly lush heart-shaped ass. When her shaggy mud-brown locks were finally clean, she had a head full of wildly curling red ringlets.

Percival sniffed carefully. *Virgin!* He moved until he blocked her only exit from the pool and silently he sat down to wait for her to notice him. She would no doubt be upset, but he didn't plan for her to get away from him. He knew deep in his heart that she was his. Soon she would know it too.

Chapter Five

In which Gareth takes a Detour

The Solomon's Choice Abbey sat perched on the crest of a cliff. Chrysanthemum, riding behind Gareth on his powerbike, craned her neck and studied their destination. It was pretty impressive, she had to admit. Towers and soaring spiraling walkways dwarfed the heavy stone buildings below them. In the center a steeple pierced the spectacular sunset sky. Gareth steered the powerbike up to the massive wooden gate and pressed the bell. Far away, they heard the deep bong of a heavy gong.

Chrys sighed. "I thought we would never get here."

"We aren't here yet," Gareth pointed out dryly. "We have to talk to Father Liksalot and see if he'll perform the ceremony."

"What if he won't?" she asked anxiously. "I can't show up at the Dread Forest tomorrow if I'm still a virgin."

"Calm down. It will all work out. I've got a couple of other ideas just in case." A small door, inset in the wooden gate, opened and a bald head appeared.

"Yes? What do you want?" the little old man querulously inquired. "We're not buying anything today. Or any other day, for that matter."

"We're seeking Father Liksalot," Gareth replied loudly. "We're not selling anything."

"We don't have anything to sell," the old man informed them. "We're not a market, you know!"

"We know! We're here to see Father Liksalot!"

"Eh? Barker kicks the box?"

"No!" Gareth bellowed. "Father Liks-a-lot!"

"Oh?" The man appeared to consider that. Then he disappeared and a few minutes later, the gate swung open far enough for Gareth to move the powerbike inside the wall. The gate shut behind them with a dull thud. "Follow me."

Gareth parked the powerbike in the alcove just inside. He waited for Chrys to slide off the back, then dismounted and stood next to her. The little old bald man scurried across the inner bailey to a small stone hut, opened the door and slammed it shut behind him. Following closely on his heels, Gareth and Chrys stopped at the foot of the steps while Gareth tried to decide whether to open the door and go on in, or wait for their guide outside. No telling what story the little man was relaying to the guards.

A moment later, two hulking guards came out of the hut, grabbed Gareth and Chrys and hustled them across the bailey to the broad entrance of the great hall.

"What do you think you're doing?" Gareth roared as he struggled vainly to free himself. "Do you know who I am?"

"Sure do," Chrys' guard gritted through his teeth when she chomped down hard on his bare arm with her teeth. "You're Prince Gareth and this one is that she-cat you think you're going to marry." He twisted her around so that she faced away from him. She tried to kick him in the shins and he retaliated by pinching one of her nipples. She froze. "That's better," he declared, panting with exertion. "Now be still."

"Get your filthy hands off her," Gareth snarled.

His own guard, silent up until then, punched him in the face. "Be quiet. The girl will behave, or we'll do whatever we want to."

Dragging their two prisoners with them, the guards entered the great hall and approached the lone man seated on the dais. "Here they are, Your Eminence," Chrys' guard announced before flinging her down at the foot of the platform. "Prince Gareth and his slut."

The man nodded acknowledgement before waving them away. "Good, good. Wait outside please while I visit with our guests."

When they were alone, he stood up and sashayed down the wide steps until he stood in front of them, close enough to touch. His gold zipsuit was heavy with embroidery and beads and his purple knee-high boots were of the softest leather. Gareth noticed they had high heels on them like the cowboy boots from Old Earth. His Eminence had always had height issues.

"Now shall we get some of the ground rules out of the way?" He nudged Gareth's bruised cheek and Gareth shuddered. The man gave him the creeps. "Tchk. Dru always did have a heavy hand. I would hate to have to let him punish you, Gareth. Or the lovely young lady. He so enjoys his work and I do so enjoy watching him." Shrugging he turned to Chrys and took her hand to help her up. "Chrysanthemum LeFleur. One of the last virgins in this part of Avalon. Possibly even the very last one. I shall take great pleasure in rectifying the situation," he whispered against her neck as he fondled her breasts before licking her just below her ear and tugging sharply on both nipples. "Unh-unh-unh, keep the hands down by your sides. If you move, I'll turn Gareth back over to Dru."

"What do you want?" Gareth demanded harshly.

"Why to prevent your marriage to a commoner, lovely though she might be," the man replied with feigned innocence. "Actually, to prevent your marriage entirely. And of course, there is the matter of your esteemed sire. There are some who feel that a change of ruler might be a good thing." When Gareth would have protested, he snapped, "Silence! Of course, no one would actually *murder* the king, but if he should just happen to fall victim to an accident? Well, that would be too bad, wouldn't it?"

"That's treason!"

"Treason! Oh, I don't think so," His Eminence replied absently as he opened Chrys' zipsuit and peeled it down to her waist with one yank. "After all, *I* have nothing to do with turning him over to a dragon." He flicked the nipple chain. "What a lovely piece of jewelry. Gareth, my boy, you have wonderful taste. Of course, it pales next to the

loveliness it decorates. These beauties are just luscious." He pinched her nipples and pulled on them again, before releasing them so he could watch them pop back.

Gareth growled and twitched.

"Now, now. Don't be selfish. I'm sure Chrysanthemum will be woman enough for all of us."

"All of us?" she squeaked. "What 'all of us'?"

"Why the monks of the Abbey, of course. Why do you think this is called Solomon's Choice? We haven't had a ritual deflowering in years. They are quite looking forward to it," he assured her as he finished peeling the suit down over her hips and legs until it was crumpled around her ankles. "Lift your foot," he commanded. He slipped off her low ankle boot and pulled the zipsuit free. "The other one." In seconds, she was standing rigidly naked while he bounced to his feet and circled around her, inspecting her carefully.

"Have you had her ass?" he queried Gareth. "Knowing you and your particular kink, I can't imagine that you haven't."

Gareth mutinously refused to answer.

With a deep sigh, His Eminence raised a hand and smacked Chrys on the ass. A deep red palm print appeared on the smooth pale pink skin of her right cheek. "Have you had her, Gareth?"

Gareth pressed his lips together so hard they turned white.

His Eminence smacked her left cheek. "I will willingly keep this up until my palm becomes too sore. At which time, I'll send someone for my collection of floggers and whips. Answer when you feel like she's had enough," he said as he raised his hand.

"Enough!"

"Oh? Are you sure?"

"I said, enough! Yes, I had her ass!" Gareth, goaded beyond endurance, leaped at the priest and grabbed him by the neck. Faster than Chrysanthemum could blink, he gave a savage twist and the priest lay dead at their feet.

They stared at each other in shocked silence for a long moment. "Get dressed, Chrys," he said in a low voice. "I've got to find something to use as a weapon. We've got to get out of here."

Scrambling into her zipsuit and boots, Chrys watched him as he quickly ransacked the chest beneath the throne. He tossed her a heavy cloak, edged with soft fur. "Take that. We may need it if we have to spend the night without shelter."

He found a laser sword, checked to make sure it was charged and belted it around his waist. Two daggers were tucked in his boots and a ceremonial amulet on a heavy chain was draped around Chrys' neck. She rolled the cloak up in a tight bundle and secured it tightly with a silken sash Gareth tossed to her. When they were finished, they stood close together, leaning against each other and sighed.

Finally Gareth shivered and pulled away. "Time to get moving. I spent two crappy years here as a teenager. Let's see how much I remember." He went to the wide door at the entrance and softly slid the heavy bar through the brackets designed to hold it. Nothing less than a rocket blast was going to get it open. He repeated his actions at every door in the huge room. Puzzled, she wondered how they were supposed to get out.

Then he took her hand and led her to the enormous stained glass window that soared to the high roof on the wall behind the throne. Exactly in the center, he opened a concealed door and helped her out onto a narrow ledge. "My brother Gawain helped design that window," he explained softly. "Follow me."

She looked down and shuddered. "I don't suppose now is a good time to tell you I don't do well with heights," she replied.

"Nope. Just hold on to my belt, close your eyes and move when I move." They edged along the ledge, around a corner and then squeezed through a narrow ventilation corridor.

"I don't suppose now is a good time to tell you I also don't do well in enclosed spaces," she panted softly.

"Nope. Just hang in there." He stopped next to a small opening. "Okay, if they haven't changed anything, this will put us in a small closet where they store the church linens. There won't be much room, so move very, very carefully."

"I will," she whimpered, stuffing her fist in her mouth so she didn't scream. Damn! She didn't want to tell him about her fear of the dark!

Long, nerve-racking moments later, they were huddled together in total darkness. She shook so hard her teeth were rattling. "Chrys?"

"I gues-ss this isn't a go-od time to tell you I don't do-do well in the dark, huh?"

He held on to her tightly and rubbed her back. "Just a few more minutes, baby. Then, we'll be safe. At least as safe as I can make us until dark."

They stood listening intently for several minutes. Then, relinquishing his hold on her, except for her hand, he cracked the door open just enough to see down the hall. As he suspected, it was empty this time of day. Edging it open far enough for them to slip out, he pulled her around the corner and swiftly pushed her through another door. She found herself in a long dusty hallway hung with trailing cobwebs. Shuddering, she pressed back against his body.

"Let me guess," he said with faint humor. "Spiders aren't one of your things, either." She shook harder. "Okay, the faster we do this, the better. Come on." He tugged her after him, moving so quickly she was trotting and the hallway became a dim blur. They plunged down a narrow spiraling stairwell that ended abruptly in a dank, smelly cellar. "Excellent!"

"Excellent?" she screeched in an indignant whisper. "What's excellent about it?"

"This cellar is under the kitchen. I don't know about you, but I'm hungry. And I don't want to leave without some food supplies."

"Okay," she agreed with another shudder. "Now what do we do?"

He pulled a small cylinder from his pocket and flicked a tiny button on the side. A bright circle of light flooded the area around them and she could see that while it was damp and smelly, it was clean.

"What is this place?"

"It used to be the wine cellar, but it floods regularly, so they don't use it anymore." His low voice sounded loud in the emptiness. "There should be a collection of storage trunks in the next room. I'm hoping the bivouac supplies are still kept there."

"What are we going to do with that stuff?"

"Hope we can find an old-fashioned tent. It would also be nice if we could find a bedroll or two. That cloak isn't going to keep us very warm up here in the mountains. And quite frankly, we're in a lot of trouble now. We're on foot and we don't have even one change of clothes. Not to mention the fact that they'll be hunting for us as soon as they find His Eminence."

"What about Father Liksalot?" she asked with a little shiver. It was cold in the cellar.

"I have a feeling that Father Liksalot is no longer with us," Gareth admitted sadly. "He was a good friend and a good man." He handed her the light. "Keep this. I'm going to check out the kitchen and see if I can find us something to eat. I'll be back as soon as I can."

He crept up the narrow stairs that led to the huge kitchen and eased open the door. A very short skinny man wielded a flashing knife with casual ease as he sliced a steaming roast. "Come on out, Gareth. No one's here but me," he said without missing a beat.

Gareth went to stand next to him and laid one hand on his shoulder. "Big John! How did you know?"

"Puh-lease! Where else would you go? You need food and supplies." He snorted. "Just because the rest of them couldn't find their asses with a map and compass doesn't mean I don't know you."

"Where's Father Liksalot?" Gareth asked as he snatched a smoking hunk of meat from the edge and stuffed it in his mouth.

Big John gestured to three stuffed packs by the cellar door. "Best put those on the steps while we're talking. That should hold you for a couple of days. You'll have to get water from the brooks or springs."

Gareth hefted them, then nodded and carefully deposited them on the stairs before pushing the door nearly closed. "Father Liksalot?"

"Took off. There was a rumor that His Eminence was part of a coup planned to take over the throne. The good Father didn't want any part of it. Thought he might be able to warn your father while he was out on the roundup." He pointed his knife at the bread cooling on a side table. "Bring me a couple of those long rolls there and I'll make you some sandwiches to eat before you go."

Gareth brought him a handful and dumped them down next to the roast.

"Hungry, are you?" Big John teased.

"Chrys and I haven't eaten since breakfast."

Big John tore a roll open, stuffed it with steaming meat and added a dollop of a sauce redolent with herbs and spices. "Here. Run this down to your lady while I make a couple more."

Gareth took the sandwich, wrapped it in a couple of heavy linen napkins and disappeared down the narrow stairs. As an afterthought he returned and carried the packs down to the cellar, depositing them next to Chrys. "I'll be back in a couple of

minutes,” he promised. “Eat while you can. It’s nearly full dark and we’ll need to leave as soon as we finish eating.”

Chrys devoured the sandwich with relish. She couldn’t remember ever eating anything that tasted so good. The flavors of hot bread, tender juicy meat and tart savory sauce had her mouth watering. She chewed contentedly, despite the danger they were in. *Eat hearty tonight for tomorrow you couldn’t be sure what life would bring.*

Gareth reappeared with more food before her sandwich was gone. “Big John told me that Father Liksalot has gone in search of my father. Do you want another sandwich?”

She shook her head. “I just don’t have room for more right now. Can’t we take them with us?”

“If I can find another pack.” He set the extra sandwiches on a low table and prowled off in search of the camping gear. There was a muffled thump. In a few moments, he returned with jumbled pile of stuff and dumped it on the floor. He shook out a heavy canvas bag and started packing. “I found a small tent and a tarp. And two new lightweight bedrolls. No air bed—but we don’t have any way to inflate one anyway.” He stuffed in a smaller bag that clanked when he moved it. “Cooking gear. We might want something warm, even if it’s just water.”

“Where are we going?”

She was shivering and though she didn’t complain, he could see that she was both cold and afraid. He disappeared up the stairs for a second and reappeared with two heavy coats. “Big John found these for us. I figure we’ll head for a small cave I know about for tonight. Tomorrow, we’ll cut across the High Plains toward the Dread Forest. We’ll probably camp tomorrow night on the edge of Sher Wood.”

She took the coat he offered and slipped it on. “What do you want me to do?”

“Rest while I finish packing this stuff. Then we’ll take off.” He winked at her. “If you need a bathroom, there’s a tiny one around that corner,” he offered, nodding off to the right. “It has a light and no window, so you won’t be in the dark.”

She ignored his teasing and went to avail herself of the facilities. No telling when she might see a real bathroom again. While she washed her hands, she peered at herself in the blurry mirror. Her hair was a mess. Between the struggle with the guard and the ride on the powerbike, her braid had long ago given up the ghost. Gathering her hair up as best she could, she braided it again in one long plait and tucked it under the coat collar. It would have to do.

Turning the light out, she returned to the section of the cellar where she left Gareth. He was waiting for her with his coat on and everything packed. Standing next to him was a short man, dusted with flour and smelling of herbs and spices. He was pressing a wineskin on Gareth. "Take it, son. You'll need something to keep you warm."

With a sigh, Gareth slung it around his neck. "It's not as if we don't already have enough to carry, John."

"You'll manage. Remember what I told you. Stay away from Brigid's Spring. The wizard that lives there is vicious and he'd take your lady away from you in a snap. When you get to Piebald Crossing give the blacksmith that token I gave you. He'll help you however he can."

He led them over to a door Chrys hadn't even noticed, lifted the bar down and swung it open. "You know where this comes out, Gary. Watch out for the guards. They're hunting for you now with a vengeance."

Gareth ducked through the low doorway and started down the tunnel, hunched over with his heavy load. "Thanks for your help, John," he called softly.

Chrys impulsively leaned down and kissed John's forehead. "Thank you for being here." Then, with a little shudder, she scurried after Gareth into the dark, narrow tunnel – which no doubt had many spiders, but at least thank goodness was at ground level.

Chapter Six

In which Percival takes a Virgin

Percival sat patiently with his great wings folded flat waiting for the petite water sprite to notice him. He was sure that when she did, the entire area would know about it from her shrieking. In fact, she totally surprised him.

"Is that a log between your legs or are you just happy to see me?" she inquired softly as she stalked out of the water toward him.

"Oh, I'm happy to see you," Percival assured her with a broad toothy dragon grin. Steam puffed from his nostrils and his ears twitched before standing straight up. The folded wings abruptly sprang out and curved around behind her. His tail switched to and fro before very gently curling around her tiny waist.

"I heard dragons eat their virgins. Are you going to eat me?" she demanded with a faint tremble in her voice.

"Oh yeah," Percy sighed ecstatically. "I'm going to start with those precious perky pink nipples and just keep moving down." Those same perky pink nipples were quivering with nerves. His eyes drifted from one delicious morsel to the next, ending with the downy red nest between her legs.

Her eyes widened in shock as she realized his meaning. His long forked tongue swiped across his mouth in anticipation. She eyed that slithery tongue with a slow beatific smile.

"Ohhh." She crept a little closer. "And then what?"

"And then I'll make you scream in ecstasy." His assurance left no room for doubt. "Will you come with me, little one, and be mine?" he asked, offering her one claw.

Inexplicably, she felt safe for the first time in many years. She wrapped her hand around his claw and nodded her head, setting the bright springy curls to dancing.

"Maybe, I should tell you my name," she said shyly. "I know your name because I heard the Blue Knight say it. You're Percival."

"Yes, I am. Tell me your name, lovely one," he said while drawing her close enough to pick up in his big paw and cuddle close to his scaly chest.

"I'm Virginia, but you can call me Ginnie," she confided with a sweet sleepy smile as she rested her head just beneath his chin. She yawned and curled up in his palm. "Sorry. I'm so tired, Percival."

His wings snapped shut decisively. Very, very carefully so he didn't poke her with his claws he held her securely with both hands and turned to go back down the path to his cave. "That's all right, Ginnie. You can take a little nap while I get rid of the riffraff in my cave," he growled under his breath. "We've got all the time in Avalon now that I've found you at last."

By the time he got back to his cave, Ginnie was sound asleep. He could hear her snoring with a dainty little purr against his chest. Percy's hands were so big that almost all of her was covered. Curious, the Blue Knight tiptoed closer, trying to see what in the world the dragon was carrying so cautiously.

Percy growled deep in his throat in warning and blew out a puff of black smoke. "Stay back."

Hastily, the Blue Knight held up his hands. "No problem. Nooooo problem. Whatcha got there, Percy?"

"None of your business," Percival snarled curtly. "Just stay away." He hurried into his cave, moved past the king, knights and Bitsy and entered his sleeping chamber, shutting the door with his tail with a soft, final thud. Arthur, Bitsy and the knights looked at each other, totally mystified.

Inside his bedchamber—although it contained no bed—Percival deposited Ginnie on his sleeping cushion. It was fashioned of a thick pile of featherbeds covered with soft velvety bedding and fluffy coverlets. She sighed once and rolled over, snuggling into

the warm nest. Percival tucked the heavy blankets around her and went to get rid of his guests.

It wasn't that easy. Perversely, once he released them, they didn't want to leave. Bitsy objected so vociferously at having to leave naked that Percival ended up giving her clothing back. Then Arthur pointed out that it wasn't fair for her to get her clothes unless he got his back also. The knights whined that they were hungry. Bitsy couldn't find one of her socks. Percival lost all patience with the entire lot of them. He had his troll guards drag them down the tunnel and dump them outside. When his cave was finally empty, he set some sweet herbs smoking on the fire to get the stench out of his living quarters while he cleaned up.

By the time the cave was clean, the herbs had done their job and he was able to sit by the fire and puff in comfort while he considered how to explain their future to Ginnie. Mating with a dragon was different from mating with a human. Much of it would depend on just how innocent she was. Although...there had been a definite gleam of interest in her eyes.

After a while, he went down the tunnel to check if everyone was finally gone. The trolls, Harry and Bob, were lounging across the cave entrance playing Go Fish while Harry's wife Stella cleaned up the clearing. It was a mess with trash and bones strewn around smoking campfires. Percy sniffed with disdain.

"Thank you, Stella. Calling the Blue Knight's vassals a bunch of pigs would be insulting the pigs."

"That's for sure," she replied with a sharp little nod. A tiny bead of perspiration rolled down her forehead and dripped off the end of her snout. "I'm nearly through here. What else do you need?"

"Just keep everyone out of the cave," Percival said firmly. "I found my mate."

Harry looked up in surprise over the top of his bifocals and so missed it when Bob slyly switched cards. "Did you now? I guess that means you'll be leaving soon, huh?"

"As soon as I can arrange it."

"And our deal still stands?"

Percy snorted. "Of course, it still stands. The cave is yours once I leave until my son comes to reclaim it."

Stella walked over and patted Percy on his massive knee. "Don't you worry. We'll make sure no one disturbs you. You go take care of your little lady."

"I'm going to miss you, Stella. You're a good troll."

She spread one trotter over her gaping grin and giggled. "You go on, Percy. We'll miss you too."

Percival sighed and went back into his cave. It was time to wake Ginnie and begin his explanations. Goodness only knew how she would react. He was taken aback when he saw Ginnie perched with her arms wrapped around her bent legs in his enormous rocking chair in front of the fire.

He caught glimpses of her plump wet pussy lips swollen and flushed a deep pink, between her ankles. His ears popped up, straight and erect and his tongue slithered out and hung down.

Ginnie blushed as she stared in fascination at Percival's growing cock, deciding she'd been wrong earlier when she called it a log. It was a freakin' tree trunk. A sequoia or redwood. There was no way it was *ever* going to fit inside her. She could use it for a seesaw.

Noting her obvious unease, Percival sat in front of her next to the fire and offered his hand. "Come here, Ginnie. Let me hold you while I explain about dragons and their mates."

"Mates?" she quavered.

"Mates," he replied firmly as he cuddled her close. "I would never, never hurt you, my Ginnie."

Oddly comforted by the feel of him, she rubbed her cheek against his shiny smooth scales, enchanted with the glittery iridescent shifting colors in the firelight. One moment

they were emerald green, the next a tawny gold and then they were a brilliant turquoise. She patted his chest with a gentle hand. "You're beautiful, Percival."

Touched beyond measure, he lowered his massive head until he could brush her bright hair with his chin. "Thank you for believing that, Ginnie, but I'm just an ordinary dragon. You're the beautiful one." She reminded him of someone, but every time he almost captured the memory, it wiggled away. He frowned at the thought that it might be more important than just an errant memory. "Ginnie, where are your parents?"

"Oh, I don't have any," she answered casually. "I think they died a long time ago. Aunt Prunella said they were travelers." She shrugged. "I don't remember them, anyway."

"And Aunt Prunella?"

She wrinkled her nose in derision. "She got tired of feeding me so she sold me to a passing tinker. He was always trying to touch me so I ran away. I didn't like him. He felt *slimy*." She shuddered in remembrance.

He cuddled her close. "Well, you have me to take care of you now."

"Tell me, Percy," she said softly. "Tell me about dragons and their mates. I won't be afraid with you." She shifted around until she was sitting on his wide leg with her feet dangling along his cock. Playfully, she tapped it with her bare toes and watched it bob in response. "Likes that, does he?"

"He likes everything about you," Percy replied wryly before flicking one of her nipples with his tongue. He watched it tighten in reaction before licking the other one. She arched against the friction of his rough tongue and moaned.

Tempting though it was to continue with their sensual play, he needed to explain everything first, so with a last swipe at her navel, he pulled back and sighed, emitting a little puff of smoke. "Dragons and their mates," he began with determination. "There are no female dragons."

"No?"

"No. I heard rumors about one, but she disappeared before anyone could prove she was the real thing." He shrugged. "So dragons bond with human females. After the bonding, a dragon is capable of shifting to a human shape so that he can mate with his chosen female. Their offspring is born human and shifts back to a dragon shape at puberty."

Ginnie's mouth formed a little O as she processed his words. "What happens then? People would notice a boy changing into a dragon," she pointed out reasonably.

"That's true. That's why all dragons take their mates to the Chrystal Isle to live as soon as they find them. The young dragons stay there until it's time for them to seek a mate of their own." Nervously, he tilted his head until he could see her expression with one great golden eye. She didn't appear to be upset, just thoughtful.

"So we won't have to live in a cave?" she asked.

"No." He clutched her tighter until she squeaked. "Sorry!" he said, loosening his hold immediately.

She patted his claw absently while she considered his words. "How do we get to the Chrystal Isle? I thought it was a myth."

"When dragons leave home, they take a saddle for their mate. You'll be perfectly safe while I fly us home. I promise." She was quiet so long he got apprehensive. "Ginnie? Are you worried?"

Ginnie shook her head. "No. I'm just waiting for you to explain the bonding part. How do we bond so you can change?"

He sat back on his tail and said, "Maybe I should just show you. Do you trust me?"

Grasping his foreclaw, she sat up and nodded briskly. "Of course. What do we do next?"

"Next we go into the sleeping chamber where we can get comfortable." He stood up with her in his arms and carried her into the bedchamber where he set her down on

the piled cushions. "On your back, sweet Ginnie," he suggested. "Spread your legs so I can stretch out between them."

She was quick to follow his directions. While she sprawled out across the soft mattresses, he built up the fire on the hearth so that she would be warm enough. When he turned back to face her, she was idly fingering her pussy with two tapered fingers while she alternated playing with her nipples until they were hard and pointed.

Dropping down on his belly, he scooted up until his head rested on her tummy. His tongue crept out, swiping across her tiny sensitive nipples. Her wet pussy and hard little clit rubbed against the stiff scales on his throat as she rolled her hips in search of more friction.

Percy shuffled down until he could slip his tongue through the soft folds between her legs. She shrieked and reared up. Her arms flailed, looking for something to hold on to when they brushed his ear tufts. She grabbed two handfuls and yanked. Percy roared in pain and pushed her arms down to the bed. Offering her a wickedly curved claw for each hand to grasp, he used them to keep her arms up on either side of her head. Then he returned to his self-appointed task of making her scream in ecstasy.

His tongue slithered and slurped, swiping her from anus to clit. The pointed forks worked independently so he could wiggle one inside her vagina while the other curled around her clit and gently tugged. The fork inside her pussy slid past her maidenhead and gently rubbed the bundle of nerves high inside.

Ginnie shrieked, writhing and tossing against Percy's steady stimulation. Abruptly, her body clenched hard in violent climax around his tongue and cream gushed from her pussy to Percival's delight. He lapped it up like a hungry kitten while Ginnie whimpered and twitched with aftershocks. When she was still at last, he raised his head and looked down at her with a golden glow in his eyes.

"Ginnie, love, are you all right?" he teased.

"I think I died," she panted out. "My God, what could top that?"

"Shall I show you?" Percy swiped across her nipples with his tongue. "I can think of a lot more things to do." He tickled under her breasts, along her ribs and under her arms. She wriggled around trying to escape his fiendish, tickling tongue.

"Percy!" She giggled breathlessly. "Stop that, you naughty dragon!"

"Why?" He captured one of her small feet and swiped the toes before tickling the sole. "Did you know I've never met anyone that was ticklish before?"

"Percival Dragon, wait a minute!" He stopped and sent her a questioning look.

"What?"

"If there are no female dragons why do you have a cock?" she asked in honest puzzlement. "What are you supposed to do with it?"

Percy grinned and swiped her pussy with his tongue. "Once we bond, I'll shift into a human. And then I plan to keep my cock buried in your snug little pussy as much as possible."

She writhed and tossed around, trying to get his busy tongue inside her. "Stick your tongue in me, Percy!" she demanded, reaching for the rigid ruffles that lined his jaw.

"Wouldn't you rather have my cock?" he teased.

"Of course I'd rather have your cock," she yelled indignantly. "But, hello! It won't fit!"

He nudged her pussy with his rough wet tongue. "It would if we finished the bonding."

"Then get on with it. I need your cock in my pussy," she whimpered. "Now."

Abruptly, he sat up, plucked her from the bed, turned her so she faced away from him and plopped her down astride his cock.

"Percy?" she said uncertainly.

"Relax," he growled in her ear, "and lean back against me."

"Okay..." she sighed with a quiver.

"Now, little love, ride my cock like it was a horse. Do you see those little openings running the length of my cock?"

Ginnie bent forward and peered intently at his cock, really examining it for the first time. Her hands luxuriated in the soft suede texture as she noted two lines of tiny slits running all the way to the massive plum-colored cap. "Yeah, I see them," she admitted readily. "What are they?"

"The bonding begins when you come on my cock. Your sweet cream will seep down in the openings and trigger the change. Then when I shift to human form, they'll produce a clear fluid to lubricate your pussy and make it easier for you to take me." His dark growling voice made her pussy wet just explaining the process.

She sat up and tried rocking her pussy on his cock, but without anything to hold on to, she nearly tumbled off. Percy slipped a huge hand around her body, carefully spreading his claws so that she was securely pinned against him. Her nipples rubbed against his pebbled palm.

"Play with your clit," he suggested. With his free hand, he slowly stroked the rest of the length of his cock, stretching and squeezing it in time to her strokes.

It was the hottest thing she had ever seen. Frantically, she rubbed her clit with her fingers while her pussy rocked against the hard, velvety surface of his cock.

With a snap, his wings flew open, curving around to shelter them as they moved. They both slowed their movements until they were engaged in a leisurely, carnal rhythm. Suddenly, there was no hurry, no rush to reach climax because they were joined in the bonding, sharing this most intimate change together.

"Ah, Ginnie love, you feel so delicious," Percy declared with a panting puff of smoke. "Yes, move just like that! Just a little faster!"

Ginnie arched her body against his hand, brushing her tight nipples on the rough surface. A streak of fire zipped down to her clit and pussy and fluid dribbled out onto Percy's cock. She watched as clear drops began to leak from the opening in his flushed knob. Licking her lips, she whimpered. "I want to taste you," she whispered.

He groaned, swiped up a bit on one claw and held it to her mouth while she avidly sucked and licked. That was the hottest thing *he* had ever seen. Abruptly, he could delay no longer. Firmly grasping his cock again in his hand, he growled, "Come for me now, Ginnie. Come now!" When he felt the hard contractions in her belly and the soft fluttering of her pussy petals on his cock, he came hard, his come jetting over his hard palm. Cream gushed from Ginnie's pussy and seeped into the slots on his cock.

They panted softly in unison as they dealt with the overwhelming passion that had consumed them. With a deep sigh, Percival gently extricated Ginnie from his cock and settled her back on the bed before tottering off to clean up. When he returned, she was sound asleep, snoring softly. He put out the light, crawled onto the cushions, curled around her and promptly went to sleep. Tomorrow, everything would change.

Chapter Seven

In which Chrysanthemum meets Robin Hood

Chrys struggled up from the depths of a restless, dream-filled sleep and slowly stretched, being careful to keep the warm covers wrapped around Gareth and her. As he had predicted the night before, it was very cold. On the whole, she decided, the cave hadn't been as bad as she feared, but if they could possibly manage it, she wanted to sleep indoors the coming night – with a warm, cozy fire.

Gary yawned. "You awake?"

"I'm awake," she admitted after a moment. "I like a nice firm mattress, but I think you overdid it this time. This one has all the give of a slab of rock."

He struggled up on his elbow and leaned over to plant a quick kiss on her cold lips. "That's because this *is* a slab of rock. A *cold* slab of rock, I might add. I feel like I've slept in an ice cave." Sliding a warm hand up under her coat, he plucked a hard nipple before undoing her zipsuit so he could cover her breast with his palm.

"Nag, nag, nag. Whine, whine, whine. What did you expect?" she teased, ignoring his leisurely explorations. "An innkeeper to pop up from the underbrush and flag us down? We're lucky we had a cave to sleep in."

"I know," he replied soberly and reluctantly withdrew his hand, carefully fastening her zipsuit shut. "I'm sorry I got us in this mess, Chrys."

"I'm not," she said flatly. "That slime bucket deserved to die." She shuddered as she recalled His Eminence's hands flowing over her naked body.

"I shouldn't have brought you to the Abbey."

"I don't think it would have mattered," Chrys said thoughtfully. "Your mother is really against our marriage. I have a feeling she's got her tentacles spread out all over Avalon. Too bad we didn't find out more before you killed the slime bucket."

"It was obvious he'd been in touch with Mother," he agreed. "But Chrys, even if Dad died, there are nine heirs before they get to me. That's not counting my brothers' kids."

"Not if they all died, too. Accidents aren't that difficult to arrange." The pregnant silence pressed down on them as he processed what she said. Abruptly, he flung back the heavy cloak covering them and clambered to his feet. "Get up! Hurry! We have to warn them!"

She got up and shook out the bedrolls and cloak before folding them up while he packed the rest of their gear. "How are you going to warn them?"

"Get to Sher Wood. Robin has an enormous first-class communications unit."

"Robin *Hood*?" she demanded in shock. "You know Robin Hood?"

"Uh-huh. Come on," he urged. "Let's get out of here."

She snatched up her pack and jogged after him. "Gareth? I hate to bring it up, but I need a bathroom and breakfast, preferably in that order."

"Find a bush. I'll dig out the sandwiches from last night." He squatted down on the bank of a little stream and rummaged in the top pack, extracting two linen napkins and two sandwiches still wrapped up from the night before. One of the napkins he dunked in the stream and wrung out, wincing at the freezing water. A quick swipe over his bristly face and grimy hands was all he could stand. He rinsed and wrung out the napkin and hung it on the branch above him, just as Chrys shrieked.

Leaving their belongings behind, he crashed through the brush until he reached her, crouching behind a bush. "What's wrong?" he demanded breathlessly.

"Shooting thorn bush," she gritted out. "I didn't see it in the dark."

He pulled out his little light and switched it on so he could see the damage. Her naked ass was hanging out with the back flap folded up and what looked like hundreds of tiny thorns were impaled in her soft skin. He grimly helped her to her feet before bending enough to hoist her over his shoulder. While making his way back to their

packs, his mind raced through their options. Without a doubt the first order of business was to remove the poisonous barbed thorns, an extremely finicky business. Then she would need to sleep at least two or three hours to allow the poison to work out of her system.

When they reached the stream, he did a quick visual survey of the area, locating a flat area to pitch the tent after he had her settled. There was simply no way he could keep her warm enough in the icy cave. But before then—he gently set her on her feet next to the tree so she would have something to support her. “Hold on a minute. Just let me get the bedrolls out so you have something to stretch out on. Did you at least get to finish your business?” he inquired.

“Barely,” she answered between clenched teeth.

“Good, because you’re not going to be moving anywhere for the next few hours.”

“What about your brothers?” she asked, teeth chattering in reaction to the poison.

“We’ll have to pray that they are alert and watchful. Dad’s still with the dragon and our deadline isn’t until day after tomorrow.” He snapped the bedding out and spread it on the ground next to the stream. “I can’t worry about them right now. One thing at a time and your ass comes first.” He helped her lie down on her belly and then he carefully peeled the rest of the suit off her body. She shivered with cold and her skin was covered in goose bumps. The little thorns quivered. Gareth covered her back and shoulders with her coat and draped the heavy cloak over her legs very, very carefully so that he didn’t get near the thorns. He extracted the tiny med-kit that Big John had insisted on, opened it up and sighed in relief when he saw the thorn antidote vial.

First things first. Fitting the injection module over the vial, he administered the antidote. Then began the tedious, backbreaking, painstaking business of extracting the thorns. Fortunately the antidote also had a mild anesthetic in it. Chrys drifted on the edge of awareness as he plucked thorn after thorn from her flesh, taking time to examine each one and make sure that he had the barbed head with it. Just over two

hours later, he sat back with a deep breath and sighed. He believed he had them all, but after a brief rest, he would make one last check.

As he crouched next to her, he allowed himself to really look at the nearly black hand-shaped bruises on her soft skin and the rage boiled up in his chest. If His Eminence had still been alive, Gareth would have been tempted to go back and kill him again. *God, it must have hurt when he smacked her and she hadn't uttered a word of protest. Not when he'd marched her through the woods half the night. Not even when he'd made their bed on a cold slab of stone.* He very tenderly rubbed the small of her back, just above the thorn-pierced flesh. She was *his* woman and his heart clutched in anger at what had been done to her.

When he was as sure as he could be that all the thorns were removed, he spread a cool antiseptic cream over the irritated skin, covered it with one of the linen napkins and rearranged the cloak so that it covered her. While she slept, he set up camp, did a quick reconnoiter of the area and, satisfied that they were far enough off the beaten path to avoid their hunters, he sat down cross-legged next to her and worked out a tentative plan of attack while he waited for her to wake up.

"Why's he c-called *Big John*?" Chrys' slurred question broke the silence of late morning. "He's *little*."

"Not all of him is little," Gareth replied with dry humor. "According to the maids at the Abbey, he's hung like a bull."

"Bigger 'an you?"

"Oh, yeah. The maids think he should have been named Priapus."

Chrys huffed and turned her head so she could see his face more clearly. "I don't believe it."

"I assure you my cock isn't all that big." Gareth rubbed her lower lip with a gentle finger. "It really isn't."

She nibbled his finger. "Tell my ass that."

"Your ass and I are not going to be on a speaking acquaintance for quite a while. Actually, I would say that most of the rest of you isn't going to be either."

"Gareth! You promised!" she protested.

"We're getting married," he said firmly. "But I absolutely refuse to hurt you in any way. We'll have to be very careful until those hellish bruises fade."

"Phft! I'm not that delicate, Gary. When are we leaving?" she asked with a huge yawn that brought tears to her eyes.

"Tomorrow morning, if you're able to walk."

Shocked, she reared up on her hands and knees, sending her covers slithering off to the sides. "What! We can't wait that long. Your brothers! Your Dad!"

Gareth crouched over her and gently pushed her back down on the bedding. "Down! We're not going anywhere until tomorrow. That antidote will make you lightheaded and disoriented. I read the information on the vial. Twenty-four hours to dissipate." He covered her back up and sat down next to her. "Rest. Tomorrow's going to be a really long day."

She dozed off and on throughout the day, swimming up through the fog of battling poison and antidote long enough to chew a few bites of the sandwich, gulp some warm tea and twice with Gareth's help she staggered off to take care of her bladder. Both times he searched the area very carefully for the thorn bushes. Sometime during the afternoon, he put the tent up and got her settled inside, but she had only the vaguest memories of moving.

When she woke, dawn was just breaking. The birds were twittering sleepily and she could see Gareth squatting next to a tiny fire, heating something in a small pot. "Gareth?"

He looked at her through the tent door and smiled. "Good morning, Chrys. Are you ready to get up, baby?"

She quirked a teasing eyebrow at him in inquiry. "I don't know. Is *John Henry* up?"

"Chrys, my love, he's always up. But this morning he's just going to have to suffer."

She rolled over and got to her hands and knees. The covers slithered off, leaving her naked and ready. Her breasts hung low so that her nipple chain caught on the cloak, tugging her nipples until they were tight little berries. "If you bring John Henry over here, I'll make him feel all better," she coaxed in a sexy little drawl.

He groaned and shifted his hard cock to a more comfortable spot in the tight zipsuit. "I knew I should have dressed you while you were still sleeping."

"Ah, come on, Gareth. I said I'll marry you. Nobody will know if we don't wait until we're married." Chrys sat back on her heels and pouted.

Gareth shook his head. "That's the point, baby. The priest will know. He's the witness that testifies to the High Court that the bride was a virgin."

She sat straight up and stared at him. "Exactly what does that mean? The priest will know? How will he know?"

"Well-ll. He just does." Gareth ducked his head and cudgelled his brain. *Why the hell hadn't her mother explained this stuff to her?*

"Gareth."

That didn't sound good, he thought. "Yes, sweetheart?"

"Explain. Now." She sat back and yanked the cloak up around her suddenly cold body.

"He witnesses the consummation." Gareth said it really fast, hoping to slip it by her.

"Uh-huh. And that would mean what? That he's in the room with us? Does he take part or does he just watch us fuck?" She held up one hand and closely examined her fingernails. "Because I have to tell you, this is so not happening. We'll just have to live in sin."

Gareth knew a roadblock when he saw one. "Just get dressed, Chrys. We need to get moving as soon as you eat."

When she was dressed and had gone off to find a private bush, he folded up the bedding, minimal though it was and took down the tent. By the time she returned, he had everything ready to go. She washed her face and hands, shouldered her pack and took the sandwich he offered all without a word. He wasn't sure whether her continued silence indicated that she was really pissed off, or whether she was thinking about the possibilities. Either way, she didn't seem too interested in having something hot to drink.

Not wanting to continue their discussion at the moment, he shrugged into his heavier pack and led the way to the trail that would lead them to Sher Wood.

* * * * *

Late afternoon found them skirting the far edge of the High Plains. Except for an uncomfortable brief break for lunch and the infrequent stops for water every time they encountered a stream, they had walked pretty much in silence all day long. Gareth knew Chrys was very tired, but he was secretly impressed with how well she'd kept up, never complaining, never whining.

They approached a small grove of trees that heralded the beginning of Sher Wood. "We'll be there soon," he assured her. "Can you walk just a little further?"

She sniffed. "Keep moving. I'll be right behind you."

He turned just in time to catch her slowly licking her lips as she eyed his ass. His glance slid down to her chest. Just after lunch, she had shed her coat, stuffing it in the top of her pack. Now her nipples were tiny points pressing against her zipsuit. His cock instantly came to attention which was *not* comfortable. Gawain had always called the zipsuits male chastity belts. For sure, there was no room in them for a swollen cock.

"Problem?" she asked impishly, noting the hard rod pulsing and creeping up beneath the fabric of his suit with deep interest.

"No," he replied shortly, turning to lead the way through the grove. "Nothing I can't deal with eventually."

Just then a brash young man dropped down out of the trees onto the path in front of him. "Well," he declared loudly, "what do we have here? Two trespassers! And one of them a lovely maiden."

"Jock, you fool," another man shouted. "That's Gareth and his lady."

Jock's eyebrows shot up as he checked out Chrys' hard nipples. "Need help with anything, sweetheart?"

"Not likely," she said dryly. "I'm not interested in boys."

"Woo-hie! I guess she told you, Jock! Run back and tell Robin they're here." The second man dropped onto the trail, approached them and offered Gareth his hand. "Welcome, Gary. We were getting worried."

"Hello, Henry. I'm glad to see you! Can you take Chrys' pack? She's about had it."

Henry smiled and tugged her pack off her back. "You do look a mite tired. What took you so long—or do I have to guess?"

"Well, it isn't what you are obviously thinking," Gareth declared shortly. "Chrys tangled with a shooting thorn bush yesterday morning just as we were leaving."

Henry winced. "Bad?"

"I stopped counting after three hundred." Two more men dropped down out of the heavy tree cover and relieved Gareth of his packs and he immediately went to Chrys, offering her his arm in support. "Is Father Liksalot at your encampment?"

Henry shook his head. "No. He heard about your father's capture and he went to talk to the dragon. He left yesterday."

When Gareth felt Chrys begin to tremble, he squeezed her lightly and murmured softly in her ear, "Don't worry, I'll find someone to marry us."

"Tuck is still with us," Henry informed them with a chuckle. "So are Father Averill and your brother, Undain."

Gareth stopped dead on the path, thunderstruck at this last bit of news. "Undain! What is *he* doing here?"

"Said he came to officiate at the weddin'." Henry winked at Chrys. "Said he figgered your lady would be more comfort'ble with him as the witness." He chuckled at their expressions. "And he said no one would dispute him as a witness, which would be a very good thing... 'Specially as the Abbey has declared an open hunt on you for the murder of His Eminence."

"What? They don't have the authority to do that!"

Henry shrugged. "They took it. Said that the king wasn't available to govern or make decisions so some fool named Brutus moved into the castle at Came-a-lot with Vivian. Merlin's in an unholy snit and stormed off to deal with the Blue Knight."

"Shit! I left Chrys' sister there with the Hieney brothers." Gareth tightened his arm around Chrys' shoulder.

"Not to worry. They escaped and Robin's got 'em stashed safely away." He walked away, leaving them to follow. "We need to get back. It'll be dark soon."

It wasn't long before Henry led them through the last little bit of woods into the clearing where Robin Hood's band had built a permanent village. Chrys stared wide-eyed at the collection of small wooden and stone huts. None appeared to be bigger than one room. A sharp cry overhead drew her eyes up to the trees and she noted with surprise that there appeared to be several dwellings built in the heavy branches of the trees. Some of them were bigger than the buildings on the ground.

As they neared the center of the encampment, a small group of men came to greet them. A tall lanky brunette with twinkling blue eyes grabbed Gareth in a bear hug. "Gary, boyo. You made it! And this is your lovely lady?"

"Chrys, this rogue is Robin, our host." Gareth took her hand and tugged her close to his chest. "Robin, this is Chrysanthemum LeFleur. We're going to be married."

"No need to squash her, Gary," Robin chided. "She'll be safe enough here. Delphie has your cottage all prepared."

Gareth looked around with a frown. "Where is Delphie? I thought she would be the first one to greet us." He wrapped an arm around Chrys and led her to one of the seats

arranged around a central fire pit where some type of savory meat was slowly roasting on the fire. She sat down, thankful to be off her tired, sore feet. "Henry said that Undain is here, too?"

Robin laughed and nodded. "Undain came in last night. Your lady's sister and her two swains showed up yesterday. Man, those boys sure are twitchy and *possessive*! No one's seen that girl since they arrived and Delphie showed them to their cottage."

"And Undain? Where is he?"

"He's with Father Averill, setting up things for your wedding." Robin shrugged. "We figured you weren't interested in waiting, so we planned it for tonight."

"There you are!" a feminine voice behind them scolded. "Robin, didn't I say to let me know right away when they got here? I tell you, you can't trust a man with anything. How are you, Gareth? And is this your lady? You come right with me, sweetie, and we'll get you squared away. I bet you haven't had a bath or a meal in no telling when. Just like a man!" the pudgy little gray-haired woman muttered as she hustled Chrys away. "Who wants to get married when they're all grungy? I have just the thing! One of the gals loaned us a lovely skirt and blouse. Now here's the waterfall and pool. Don't you worry," she assured Chrys without stopping to breathe, it seemed. "No one will bother you down here. I'll be right back with clean clothes and a towel. There's the soap in that bowl."

Feeling like she'd been in a whirlwind, Chrys slowly peeled off her zipsuit and boots, before stepping down into the warm pool of water. She stretched and sighed happily as she moved under the pounding pressure of the steaming waterfall. It was wonderful!

Chapter Eight

In which Percival becomes a Man and Ginnie becomes a Woman

Ginnie shivered in the cool darkness and patted around feeling for the covers. She froze when her hand encountered a hot, very hard male body part. "Good morning, Ginnie," a gravelly velvet voice growled in her ear. "As you can tell, I've been waiting for you to wake up."

"Percy?" she whispered.

"You were expecting someone else in your bed, honey?"

Ginnie swallowed hard. "No. I guess I expected you to still be a dragon," she admitted finally.

She felt him get up from the bed. He tossed the heavy covers over her chilly body and then it sounded like he was on the other side of the room near the fireplace. A moment later, there was a *whoosh* of flame and the tinder and wood snapped and crackled with heat. *So, she thought, he doesn't have to be in dragon form to breathe fire. That could certainly be a handy trick on a cold morning.*

He turned to face her in the flickering firelight and she forgot to breathe. He was beautiful. Ginnie just stared in rapt delight. From his short dark curly hair to his sturdy feet, everything about him shouted "male"! *Alpha* male. It didn't hurt any that he had the hard-on from heaven. Mmm-mmm, good. Percy waited, motionless while she inspected him from top to bottom.

Then she saw the expression on his face, the uncertainty in his eyes and she leaped from the bed and ran into his arms. "You're so gorgeous, Percy, you make my eyes hurt," she declared as she snuggled close, rubbing her pussy against his cock. "And you're all mine." She tilted her head back so she could meet his glittering gold eyes. "I

thought you were stunning when you were a dragon," she confided. "I never thought about what you would look like as a human."

"So this form pleases you?" he asked in puzzlement.

"Very, very much," she confirmed with an enchanting chuckle. "Very much."

She shifted around, spreading her legs to capture his cock between them. When he realized what she was trying to do, he lifted her in his arms so that she could wrap her legs around his waist. His hard length nestled between them slipping through her soft wet folds. She ran her hands over his chest, delighting in the firm ridges of muscle and velvety skin. When she discovered his nipples she gave them a little tweak, then nuzzled and suckled them in turn.

While she was exploring, Percival concluded that they would be much better off in bed where he could play too without them both ending up on the cold floor. He sat on the edge of the deep cushions, then promptly rolled over until he was on top stretched out between her legs. They took turns nibbling and kissing and sucking everything in reach.

Ginnie seized his ears in her hands and pulled his closer until she could brush his lips with hers. Her tongue flicked out to swipe his lower lip. *Ahhh, tongue play. That was something he knew about!* Immediately, his tongue tangled with hers before drawing it in his warm mouth as he sucked it gently.

His big hands cupped her breasts and he teased her nipples to hard swollen points with his thumbs before moving down so that he could feast on them. Ginnie arched and moaned.

"Percy! I need you!" she moaned.

"Not yet, Ginnie love. I want you so hot that all you'll feel is pleasure when I take you." He murmured his hot sexy intentions against her taut belly before investigating her navel with his tongue. A few swipes later and he was on the move again, heading determinedly for her pussy.

Ginnie tangled her hands in his hair and pulled. Percival's head popped up as he looked at her in confusion. "What?"

"I want to taste, too," she said firmly. "Turn around so I can play too."

Percy sighed and warned, "I won't last very long if you start playing around."

"So? Are you saying you're a one-shot deal?" she demanded in disbelief.

"Of course not," Percy snorted.

Ginnie smiled at his annoyance. Oh, yes, she knew how to get his goat now! "Well, then? What's the problem? Two can't play?"

"Oh all right," he said grumpily as he moved on his knees and straddled her until his cock was hanging temptingly near her lips.

She grabbed it in her small hands and held it so she could nibble and suck all around the fat heavy head. She had a lot of observation time in. Now she wanted the real experience.

Percy groaned.

She stopped and asked plaintively, "Aren't you going to return the favor?"

With a devilish smile that she couldn't see fortunately, he dived in, exploring her swollen lips and hard clit with excruciating, meticulous detail.

Let the games begin. The race was on. The competition was fierce as each of them strived to be the first one to bring the other to climax. Percy roared when she ran her frisky tongue along his length over the minute sensitive slits in his cock. Ginnie whimpered and writhed when he slyly slid a big finger in her tight rear entry at the same time his tongue dived into her pussy.

They rolled to their sides as Percy's legs gave out. Then at Ginnie's urging, they rolled again until she was stretched out on top. She cradled his heavy, plump balls, rolling them gently in her soft fingers before suckling on the wrinkled sac. Percy's pumping finger in her ass gave her a naughty idea. Wetting her own finger, she found

his ass and worked her finger inside while avidly sucking on as much of his cock as she could fit in her hot, wet mouth.

The end drew inexorably near. Percy wiggled a finger into her tight pussy and rubbed it against the one in her ass while he sucked her clit. Ginnie gently squeezed his balls. Suddenly, the competition was insignificant as they climaxed together in flashes of fiery heat. His come jetted down her throat as she endeavored to take it all. He scooped up her delicious juices hungrily. They trembled. And sighed.

And still entwined they dozed, wrapped in the temporary satiation of satisfied lovers.

* * * * *

The fire had burned down to a glowing bed of coals when Ginnie woke to the insistent nudge of Percy's cock against her lips. Obliging, she swiped the fat weeping head, curling her tongue around underneath the edge and investigating the two tiny slits on top. Percy twitched, howled in surprise and went from sound asleep to wide awake in three seconds flat.

Ginnie giggled. "What's wrong, big boy?"

"Holy cow, Ginnie. You nearly gave me a heart attack. I'm not used to having a sexy woman wake me up by sucking my cock." Percy huffed and panted and took a few minutes to realize that Ginnie had grown deathly still.

"You didn't like it," she said flatly.

He reached down, found her shoulders and tugged her up until they were face-to-face in the dim light. "I loved it," he said firmly. "I love anything you do, anywhere, anytime." His mouth found hers in a soft gentle kiss that heated up rapidly when she parted her lips for his inquisitive tongue. Though much smaller in his human form, it was still long, forked and very flexible.

When he lifted his head, they were both panting. "Hell, yeah," he said roughly. "Suck on anything you like."

"I do like the way you taste," she observed seriously. "And I like the way you fill my mouth and how you're so hot and hard and soft all at the same time."

Percy groaned while his cock surged against her belly. "I need you, Ginnie. Are you ready?" he asked as he trailed his fingers along her plump pussy folds. "Oh, yeah," he breathed softly as he slipped one finger inside her wet, wet pussy. "You're ready."

"What do we do now?" she asked eagerly.

"I've been thinking about that. You're so tiny I think you should be on top so you can take me at your own pace. Would you like to try that?"

She popped up and waited impatiently as he rolled onto his back and sprawled across the bed. Then she clambered aboard. When she was perched astride his belly with her pussy spread out around his cock, they both sighed. Percy cupped her breasts and thumbed the tight nipples. Abruptly, he sat up and clutched her to his chest tightly. "You were too far away," he mumbled against her shoulder. "Wrap you legs around me. I want to feel all of you against me."

She wrapped her arms and legs around him and they rocked together like that for a while, content to snuggle just touching and close. The cuddling moved naturally to more extensive explorations and kissing, always leisurely, always without any sense of urgency. This was the first time their mating would be complete and they were both determined to make it memorable, though neither of them articulated that need.

At last, the time came when the gentle longing turned to wild hunger. There weren't any words necessary. Ginnie lifted her bottom. Percy guided his cock to her sopping entrance and held it steady while she frantically wriggled around until he was seated as far as he could go. The faint twinge when her maidenhead yielded to his surging cock was lost in the wonder of completion. For long moments they were motionless, bombarded by the inexpressible sensations of a hard, thick cock filling a snug wet pussy.

Ginnie rested her head on Percy's chest and sighed blissfully. "Okay. Tell me we don't have to ever move from this spot for the rest of our lives. In my wildest fantasies, I couldn't ever image anything as wonderful as this."

Percy grinned. "Believe it or not, it does get better. Pretty soon you'll want to move. You'll *need* to move."

She tilted her head back and looked in his golden eyes. "Percy? Can I tell you something?" she asked seriously.

"You can tell me anything. Anything at all."

"I love you." Ginnie leaned forward and nibbled his nipple. "I fell in love with you when you were still a dragon," she admitted shyly.

Percy clutched her tighter as his cock surged deeper. "Ginnie!" he groaned. "You can't expect me to be still when you tell me something like that!"

Ginnie found that Percy had been telling the stark truth. She *needed* to move with him—needed it on a soul-deep level. They rocked together with Ginnie riding his cock faster and faster.

All the time, Percy was muttering something that Ginnie's wired brain finally deciphered. "*Love you, love you, love you*", over and over, matching the rhythm of their wild ride.

By now, Ginnie recognized the signs of impending climax. Her belly tightened as heat crawled up her spine. Grinding her pussy and clit against him on every downstroke, she frantically reached for that last little bit that remained out of reach. Then Percy was there with his talented fingers, tweaking her hard little clit as he pounded up into her as far as he could reach. It was enough to push her over the edge. She milked him in long powerful contractions that seemed to go on and on. When she felt his hot cum jetting deep inside, she came again, more slowly and impossibly more complete.

They sat for a long time wrapped together, stunned and touched by the power of their first mating. Neither was in any hurry to move. In a little while, Ginnie gently

squeezed the semi-hard cock still filling her. Percy surged deeper. To their surprise, they did it all over again. And again. And again.

Chapter Nine

In which Chrysanthemum takes a Prince...and a Prince

Firm masculine hands cupped Chrysanthemum's breasts, while tweaking her nipple chain with the thumbs. Chrys recognized Gareth's touch and relaxed back against his hard chest while he continued his playing and teasing under the warm deluge of the waterfall. She pressed her ass against his belly, reveling in the feel of his hard cock against her butt.

Neither was aware of Undain, perched on the side of the pool, enthralled by their obvious need and enjoyment. Thoughtfully, he undressed and joined them under the falling water. Slowly, allowing plenty of time for Chrys to object, he bent his dark head to her breasts. Gareth held them up as an offering to his brother. Chrys trembled with anticipation. She'd had all day to think and wonder about the idea of two men pleasuring her.

While Gareth held her breasts for Undain's plundering mouth, Undain slipped one big hand between Chrys' legs and tugged gently on her clit ring. Chrys cried out, the sound muffled by the roar of the water.

Gareth released her breasts and lifted her in his arms, carrying her to the low mossy shelf hidden behind the waterfall. Seconds later Undain joined them with a mound of the soft lavender-mint-scented soap piled in his hand. Together, taking their time, the men massaged the slippery suds into her skin from head to toe, paying particular attention to her nipples and breasts and the soft folds between her legs and ass.

After a brief initial hesitation, Chrys relaxed and gave herself up the decadent luxury. She trusted Gareth with her whole heart and knew that her welfare and pleasure would be his first concern. If he was comfortable with Undain's presence and participation, then all would be well.

Slick, soapy fingers probed her pussy and ass. Chrys arched against Gareth's torso, twisting with the conflicting sensations of pleasure and distant pain. Gareth captured her head and nudged her lips with his cock. Eagerly, she took him in her mouth, sucking with hunger and heat. Undain added another finger to each of her slippery openings, thrusting in quickly and retreating slowly in alternating rhythm as he spread his fingers while Gary plucked at her nipple chain and massaged her clit.

Just as Chrys felt her entire body tighten with the onset of climax, Undain withdrew his fingers and Gary gently disengaged his cock. Undain lifted her high in his arms and carried her back beneath the waterfall where the men carefully rinsed every particle of soap from her sensitive skin.

Chrys shivered with frustrated arousal. "Why?" she demanded as they hustled her out of the pool and dried her with the soft towels piled on the side. "I was nearly there!"

Gareth kissed her gently. "You'll be even more ready in just a little while when Father Averill has completed the ceremony, love. Never think that I won't make sure that you're completely satisfied tonight." He handed her a beautiful cream-colored skirt embroidered with pale pink roses around the hem. "Put this on, baby."

Seriously annoyed and frustrated, she stepped into it and pulled it up to her waist. With a quick swipe of her hand she closed the tab that secured the waist.

Wordlessly Undain held out the blouse, a matching confection of cream-colored embroidery and lace. She pulled it over her head, shimmied until the soft folds fell in place and then froze. It was missing most of the front.

Gareth stepped forward, efficiently snugged the broad band around her rib cage and fastened it in place before arranging the soft folds of lace around the top. He stood back next to Undain and they both nodded in appreciative approval.

Chrys looked down at her breasts beautifully presented by the high-waisted cinch that lifted and supported them, pursed her lips and observed coolly, "There seems to be something missing from this top."

Undain nodded agreement. "You're correct, of course." He leaned over and sucked each of her nipples until they were hard little beads. Then he carefully draped her nipple chain and heart beads so that they hung free. "There now, that's better," he declared with satisfaction. "Perfect. You're a beautiful bride, Chrys. Will you do me the honor of allowing me to give you away in place of your father tonight?"

Before she could reply, Delphie bustled around the corner. "Oh, my, what a lovely bride! You're beautiful, my dear, just beautiful. Here, let me fix your hair. Come with me, Chrysanthemum. Honeysuckle is waiting for us. Yes, yes, come this way. You gentlemen need to hurry or you won't be ready in time. Run along now," she said, making shooing motions with her hands.

Before Chrys could get a word in edgewise, she found herself propelled into a small hut, pushed into a chair and told not to move while her sister Honeysuckle and Delphie worked on her heavy, damp hair. It baffled her that neither of the women thought there was anything amiss with her breasts hanging out for all to see.

When they stood back at last and declared themselves finished, she took a deep breath and demanded, "Why are both of you ignoring the fact that my boobs are hanging out?"

Delphie fluttered her hands in agitation and murmured, "Oh, no, dear. They're lovely. Why would you want to cover them up?"

Honeysuckle snorted in derision. "I *told* Mama you didn't have a clue! I *told* her she needed to have the talk with you before she ran off with those acrobats, but no-oo, she was sure you would know everything because of all those books you read!"

"What talk?" Chrys asked in frustration. "What are you talking about?"

Honeysuckle tapped her foot in annoyance. "You know that Undain will be with you and Gareth tonight, right? That's he's going to be your witness?"

Chrys frowned and slowly nodded, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

"You do understand that I mean he's going to fuck you with Gary?"

"What?" Chrys yelled. "I thought he was just going to be in the room!"

Honeysuckle turned to Delphie in pure disgust. "See? What did I tell you? She doesn't know anything!" Planting her hands on Chrys' shoulders, she bent so she could stare her in the eye. "Listen up. Every royal bride presents their nipple chain and rings to the priests and witnesses for inspection prior to the wedding. If they wish, any of the wedding guests are permitted to touch or suck your breasts, though they may not touch you anywhere else." Chrys' mouth dropped open in shock. "After the ceremony, you will retire to your privacy cottage with Gareth and Undain. As your witness, he is expected to take part in your deflowering. Actually, most witnesses spend the entire honeymoon with the newly married couple."

Chrys tried to surge to her feet, but Honeysuckle shoved her back down in the chair. "Grow up. If you hadn't been so all-fired anxious to keep your virginity, you wouldn't be in this fix!" Delphie nodded her head in agreement. "It was bound to happen. Either a royal or a dragon would snap you up. Lucky for you Gareth found you first."

"But this is preposterous! Who came up with this stuff?"

Patting her on the cheek, Honeysuckle said, "Chryssie, baby. It's been this way hundreds of years. If you pulled your nose out of your books long enough to pay attention you would have known all about it. Every time one of the royals gets married, there's endless speculation about what goes on during their honeymoon. There's always a detailed list in the news of all the men who inspected their nipple chains...although that one girl was also inspected by a couple of women," she added thoughtfully. "Never mind that! This is just the way it is. Thank goodness most of the royals in this generation are married!"

Chrys sat up straight and determinedly asked, "Is that it? Is there anything else I'm *supposed* to know about?"

Delphie tilted her head and looked down at her in speculation. "I suppose you know about the collar and cuffs?" Chrys' baffled irritation was enough of an answer.

"Oh lord, if I ever meet your mother, I'll smack her myself!" Delphie planted both hands on her hips and said, "After the ceremony, Gareth will fasten a collar around your neck and cuffs on your wrists and ankles. They're a symbol that you accept him as your master. They *never* come off. Or rather," she amended sadly, "if he takes them off, it means that he's repudiated you. You don't want that to happen."

"Vivian wasn't wearing any collar when I saw her," Chrys objected.

"Exactly," Honeysuckle said dryly. "Arthur caught her with half a dozen stablemen up in the barn loft. It wasn't pretty from all of the reports."

Chrys' startled expression was priceless. "Half a dozen? As in six? What the hell do you do with six men at once?"

"Keep moving."

Her mouth opened and closed soundlessly as she tried to imagine taking six men at once. Two was more than she was sure she could handle. But if she had to take a second man besides Gareth, then Undain was at least a considerate lover. Chrys sat up straight and looked Honeysuckle in the eye. "Tell me about it. Is it hard taking two men at once?" she demanded.

Honeysuckle rolled her eyes and just shook her head. "I would think *hard* would be the operative word, big sister. Now if you want to know if it's *difficult*, then that's something different. It mostly depends on your men, how skilled and patient they are and how prepared you are. If you're hot and you really want it, then there's nothing you can compare it to. If you don't want it, if they're in a hurry, then it's the pits."

Delphie chuckled quietly. "From what I've heard, they're both very skilled and patient and to my way of thinking, you're more than a little curious."

There was a soft knock at the door and Delphie went to see who had the nerve to disturb them. Chrys was surprised when Delphie opened the door and let Gareth in. "Honeysuckle, it's time for us to go find a seat," she called. "Gary, don't take too long. Everyone is waiting."

After they left, silence fell over the cottage. It wasn't an uncomfortable silence, but neither Gareth nor Chrys seemed inclined to speak. Then Chrys smiled and observed, "Delphie never shuts up, does she?"

"No. Why do you think Robin spends so much time with his Merry Men?"

"She's with Robin?" Chrys was confused. "What happened to Maid Marian?"

"I'll tell you all about it while I take care of one last little thing." He motioned for her to stand and then led her around to the back of the chair. "Bend over, love and grab the front of the seat. Don't move until I tell you to."

"Gareth, what are you up to now?"

"Well, I need to prepare you for later, baby. I have here an expanding butt plug just like yours at the castle. And one of those small eggs. I'll just pop them in, set the vibrator on low and by the time the ceremony's over, you'll be —"

"Well done," she finished tartly, "and out of my mind."

"Do you trust me, Chrys?"

"Would I be bent over a chair with my ass up in the air if I didn't?" she countered.

"Then just believe that I want only the best memories for you of our wedding night." Gareth lifted her borrowed skirt up and brushed the dark bruises on her ass with a gentle touch. "Only the best."

"Well, you'd better get on with it before Delphie comes back to find out what the holdup is. Tell me about Maid Marian."

Gareth shook his head and grinned. Trust Chrys to be pragmatic in the face of a hurricane. He carefully squeezed some warm gel on the plug and began to explain, "There never was a Maid Marian." Pressing the plug against her ass, he slowly, steadily pushed in. Reflexively, she pushed out and panted.

"Gareth, don't be silly! Of course, there was a Maid Marian. It's in all the stories!"

"Nope!" When the plug was seated, he hunched down and set the little control to slowly expand. "It seems that the scribe that was assigned to write down the history of

Robin Hood couldn't spell Delphinium. He could spell *Marian* as that was his mother's name so he just put that in instead." Gareth squatted down and gently inserted the small egg in her pussy. When it was seated properly, he set the switch to low vibrate.

Chrys came up off the chair like Venus in the waves.

Gareth tapped her ass very gently. "I'm not through, yet. Bend over."

"You're a sadist!"

"Not even close." When she was bent back over the chair, he checked his handiwork, then held her ass still while he slithered his tongue down to flick at her clit.

Chrys howled.

"Shhh. Do you want the entire wedding party in here?" Gareth hissed.

She moaned. "No."

"Well, then." He bounced to his feet and helped her stand up straight. With a quick twitch he straightened her nipple rings and chain and then tipped up her chin so that their eyes met. "I love you. I've never said that to another woman in my life. I'll never say it to any woman other than you."

Her eyes filled with tears that threatened to spill down her cheeks. In a trembling voice, she admitted, "I love you, too, Gareth. I never expected to find a man like you I could love."

Tenderly, he kissed her and gently wiped away the tears. "We've been more fortunate than most, Chrysanthemum LeFleur. Let's go make it official so no one can keep us apart. Everyone is waiting for me to present my beautiful bride."

Opening the door, he led her out to the excited wedding guests. Later, when Chrys tried to sort out the bewildering welter of memories of their wedding, a limited few stood out.

First there was the long line of men lined up to "inspect" her nipple rings. Though their eyes twinkled with amusement, they were extremely respectful, planting gentle kisses on the slopes of her breasts and her flushed cheeks. The only ones who actually

touched her nipples were Gareth and Undain. They each suckled her hard nipples until she whimpered with heat and could feel her cream trickling out to wet her thighs.

The actual ceremony went by in a blur of solemn promises and responses. Almost before she realized it, Father Averill was declaring them “master and mate”. Then, in front of the altar, Undain provided a soft cushion for her to kneel on. When she was in position facing Gareth, Undain presented a gold collar fashioned from thousands of fine flexible links. In the center, there were three little strands of gold hearts that matched her nipple rings. Gareth draped it around her neck and when she bent her head, he fastened the locking clasp and gave the tiny jeweled key into Undain’s keeping. Fitting the matching cuffs on her wrists and ankles was the work of mere minutes.

Gareth pulled her to her feet, lifted her in his arms and bent his head to kiss her. The next thing she remembered with any clarity was moving through the dark trees cradled in Gareth’s arms while Undain strolled along behind them with a wide smile on his face. They arrived at a cottage centered in a small clearing. Flowers garlanded the door and windows. The glow of soft lantern light lit the clearing and doorway. Gareth carried her inside, Undain followed and closed the door carefully behind him.

Gareth was close enough to the edge that it took every ounce of self-control he had to place Chrys on the bed and back away. With shaking hands, he stripped off his zipsuit and boots, tossing them carelessly in the corner.

Undain’s lips twitched in a sternly suppressed grin. Boy, Gary had it bad. If he didn’t get Chrys undressed, Gary was just liable to rip that pretty borrowed outfit to shreds. While Gareth watched, stroking his cock with trembling fingers, Undain gently stripped the blouse and skirt from Chrys who stood in a quivering daze. He folded them carefully and placed them on the table. Then he nudged her on the bed, helping her kneel with her ass hiked in the air so he could remove her “wedding toys”.

She whimpered when his fingers brushed against her clit ring, setting it into motion. Gareth twitched and started forward, but Undain waved him back. “Chrys,

honey, the bathroom is just around that corner." He indicated with a jerk of his head. "Why don't you take your turn first, while I get undressed?"

When she was gone, Undain shoved Gareth down on the side of the bed and squatted in front of him. "Gareth, talk to me. Do you really want me to participate, or are you just doing this for tradition?"

Gareth frowned. "When it was going to be someone else, I didn't really want anyone with us. But when we got here and Robin told us you were waiting, I just thought, *Undain will be perfect.*" He looked at his brother with baffled curiosity. "Are you saying you don't want to be our witness?"

"There's nothing I want to be doing more right this minute than making love with you and Chrys," Undain admitted readily. "I just want to make sure that's what you want. Chrys is offering you something that's priceless, Gary. She's given you her complete trust, allowing you total control. That's a very rare gift." Undain sighed, stood and peeled off his clothing. "You *killed* a man to protect her, Gareth. That's a pretty powerful statement of possession."

"He was *hurting* her, Undain. You saw the bruises. He was going to *rape* her. I couldn't let that happen," Gareth explained coldly. "If there's one thing I'm certain of, it's that you won't hurt Chrys. Actually, I *need* you here to help me regain my control," he admitted sheepishly. "If I hurt her, it would kill me."

Undain nodded understandingly. "Then I'm going to make a recommendation. Let her suck you off first. I'll make her come...maybe even a couple of times. Then you'll both be ready." He shrugged. "Deflowering shouldn't be about control. It's about loving, especially when the couple loves each other like you and Chrys."

Just then Chrys came back from the bathroom, shyly clutching her hands against her belly. Gary smiled and held his arms open and she didn't hesitate to snuggle against his warm body.

"Sweetheart, are you willing to try something different?" Gareth asked her as he rubbed her back.

Chrys sniffed delicately and retorted, "I thought that's what the plan was. If having two of you at once isn't different, I have to say you've got a very odd idea about what constitutes virginity."

Undain laughed. "You're going to be *fine*. Just fine. When Gary carried you in here, I was worried, but you've got your balance back."

She peeked over Gareth's shoulder at Undain, studying his body intently. His chest was broader than Gary's with a sprinkling of dark curls, but his hips were narrower. And his cock was nearly the same size with similar decorations. Maybe...it was a little fatter. Mmmm.

"Okay?" Undain inquired, amused at her open survey.

She met his twinkling blue eyes and nodded.

"Then why don't you get on the bed on your back and spread your legs for me? I want to taste that gorgeous bare pussy. While I'm doing that, you can give Gary a little encouragement with that hot little mouth of yours."

Chrys clambered on the bed on her hands and knees, deliberately flaunting her slick pussy before turning on her back and spreading her legs. When she reached for Gareth he didn't keep her waiting. Moments later, he was nuzzling her mouth with the darkly flushed weeping head of his cock. Immediately, she opened wide and sucked him in. With a gasp and groan of appreciation, he settled into a gentle rhythm, allowing her to stop and start as she chose.

"Put your hands above your head," Gareth gasped. "Please." Without a pause, she clasped her hands together on the pillow above her head. "Good, baby. You're beautiful when you're stretched out, ready for me to pleasure you any way I want to." He plucked at her nipple rings.

Undain spread her fat pussy lips with his thumbs and tugged on her clit ring with his tongue. She twisted and rolled her hips, trying to get his mouth on just the right spot. He denied her that satisfaction for a little while longer, moving down instead to plunge his tongue in her juicy opening.

As Gary had known would be the case from the beginning, it didn't take long before Chrys' enthusiastic ministrations brought him to climax. She cried out with her own quick release around the jetting pulses of his. When Gareth tried to pull his spurting cock away, she brought her arms down around his hips and sucked so fiercely he feared he would have bruises.

Undain lifted his face and watched the show with loving amusement. Gareth had found himself a real wildcat. Her virginity was a miracle. After meeting her, Undain couldn't imagine Gareth handfasting with anyone else. They were perfect for each other.

Gareth pulled away and collapsed on the bed next to Chrys. They panted nearly in unison while Undain chuckled. "You two gonna live?" he teased.

Gareth wave one hand in weak acknowledgement as he rolled from the bed and headed for the bathroom. When the door shut, Undain tapped Chrys on her mound and observed sternly, "You were a naughty, naughty girl, Chrys. Gareth didn't give you permission to move your hands. If your ass wasn't already so bruised, we would have to punish you for that."

"So that's where he got that attitude," Chrys sniffed, though she did stretch her arms above her head.

Undain tweaked her clit ring and she curled her legs up toward her belly. He tapped her thigh. "Down. Hmmm. Does Gareth use restraints?"

Chrys rolled her eyes. "All the time," she answered drolly. "I swear he has them stashed in every room in the castle. That should have been a clue for me in the beginning, but no-oo, I had to wait until I'd promised to marry him before I found out he was a freakin' prince!"

Gareth returned in time to hear her answer and laughed. "Only Chrys would fail to wonder what kind of court librarian would dare to tie her down to Grandmother Ygraine's antique table."

Chrys stared at him in horror. "You fucked me in the ass on your *grandmother's* table?"

"Ooh, you must tell me about that," Undain chimed in. "It sounds delicious."

Gareth idly stroked his hard cock while he nodded. "It was. Incredibly delicious as you'll soon find out."

"Are you ready for the next part of our program?" Undain queried.

Leaning over, Gareth kissed Chrys before he moved his mouth to her ear and asked, "Are *you* ready, baby?"

She rolled her hips and arched her breasts. "Sometime today, guys... I'm so hot I feel like my skin's too small."

"Move over, baby." Gareth stretched out next to her and pulled her up so that she rested on his chest. "Put your legs on each side of my hips and scoot down, sweetheart."

She readily followed his directions until the fat head of his cock was nudging her pussy. Involuntarily, she pressed down. Gareth tapped her ass. "Not yet."

"Do you know? If I never hear those two words again, it will be too soon?" she said impatiently.

"Oh yeah? Sit up a little." She sat back and he rolled up far enough for Undain to stuff some pillows behind his back and head. "Okay, put your hands behind your head and lean down here a minute." When she obeyed him, he fastened the clips on the wrist cuffs to her collar. He slipped his big hands around her rib cage for support and proceeded to nibble on her breasts and nipples. "Now you can fit my cock in your hungry little pussy" he whispered. "Undain will help."

She wiggled and rocked and jiggled. He nibbled and licked and suckled. And Undain made sure Gareth's cock didn't slip out of place. The egg had stretched her a bit so the head of his cock fit in pretty quickly, but after that, it was just plain work, inch by hard-won inch as she slowly stretched to accommodate Gareth's thick cock. When

about half his length was inside, she rocked forward a little bit and then abruptly shoved back with a tremendous push. Gareth, waiting for exactly that move, lifted his hips at the same time and slid in until he was in her balls-deep—and her virginity was a thing of the past. There was a brief flash of pain, but it didn't matter because at last, he filled her to the hilt.

She froze in place, so stuffed and stretched she was afraid to move. "Ohhh," she breathed, goggle-eyed with wonder. "Mother of the ancients, but you're huge!"

"No, baby, you're just really, really tight." Gareth grimaced in near pain. "Really tight."

Undain snuggled up behind her and slid his arms around her, cupping her breasts in his big hands. "Relax, sweetheart, I've got you. Gareth, play with her clit."

Gareth twiddled her clit ring and gently massaged her mound while Undain cradled her breasts and toyed with her tight puckered nubs. He played with her nipple chain, tugging it while he rocked his stiff cock along the seam of her ass. Helplessly, she moved, unable to keep still with the stimulation they were providing. Movement produced an entirely new range of sensations when Gareth's cock delicately scraped over the nerves embedded deep in her pussy.

She froze again, unsure of which direction to move. Instinct kicked in. Delicate internal muscles contracted involuntarily around his hot hard cock as she bore down. Sensory overload kept her moving then from one new height to the next.

Undain dipped a finger in the oil waiting in a dish on the shelf over the bed and on her next downstroke, he slipped the tip of his finger in her ass. Chrys shrieked and exploded, wave after wave of rolling contractions rippling through her pussy, tugging and milking Gareth's cock. With a roar, he joyfully joined her in a scalding release. She slowly slumped over him in exhaustion as Undain carefully eased her into Gareth's arms and released her wrist cuffs from her collar.

Undain slipped off the bed and headed for the bathroom, leaving them wrapped together in sleepy, peaceful completion. When he returned he was fully dressed. Gareth

frowned in confusion. "What's wrong? Where are you going?" he demanded softly, not wanting to awaken Chrys.

Undain knelt down next to the bed. "I've done my part, little brother. Until the day I die, I'll remember this. I'll remember how beautiful you were together. Gareth, I've served as a witness several times, but I've never had the privilege of being with a couple like you and Chrys. You're special. You're two halves of a greater whole. Something would be lost if you shared her—something really important." Undain shook his head. "If you truly want a ménage sometime down the road, I'm your man, but not now. Somehow, I don't think you'll be asking, though."

Slow tears ran down Gareth's face. "Thank you," he whispered. "Thank you for understanding."

After brushing a soft kiss on Gareth's forehead, Undain stood up and left. There were people to see, problems to solve and safe exile to arrange for Gareth and Chrysanthemum. And sometime, someday he would eventually be able to forget the ecstasy and wonder on Chrys' face when she and Gary became one.

Chapter Ten

In which Chrysanthemum finally meets Percival

When Gareth finally convinced Chrys that breakfast was a necessity for a growing boy like him, it was nearly lunchtime because she kept on insisting that he demonstrate his growing part over and over until it wouldn't grow anymore. And of course, they had to nap between demonstrations, so what with one thing and another, it was late morning before he remembered they didn't have any clothes except their wedding clothes to wear. They were thrilled to find that someone had thoughtfully dumped their packs outside the door and someone else had arranged for a change of clothing for Chrys. She eyed the bright purple skirt and blinding pink blouse with pursed lips, but slipped them on after a quick shrug. Beggars truly could not be choosy. They were clean and that's what was important.

Holding hands, they walked back through the forest to the central cook fire. All signs of the wedding festivities were gone except for a lone table with the remains of the late-night feast. Delphie bustled around, busily adding lunch preparations to the leftovers. When they entered the clearing, she exclaimed with delight, "There you are! Just in time for lunch! Robin! Gareth and Chrys are here! Now what would you like to drink? I know—we have some honey mead left from the reception. Just let me fetch some cups. Gareth, the platters are over there." She pointed toward the table and then walked briskly away, still talking.

Robin appeared in the doorway of one of the nearby cottages, followed quickly by Arthur and Undain. Arthur came over at once and hugged Chrys and then Gareth. "Gary, my boy, I'm sorry I missed the wedding." Chrys briefly wondered where her father was, but they had never been close and with a silent shrug she accepted his absence.

"I take it that the dragon is not a problem any more?" Gary inquired dryly.

Arthur waved that away. "Percival? No, no. He found another virgin and let everyone go." Then Arthur stared at the trees and glared. "But I owe him something. If he hadn't given the Blue Knight the idea of capturing me, I might not have found out about the conspiracy until too late."

"So Undain told you everything?"

"And Father Liksalot," Arthur added with a nod. "Vivian has gotten entirely out of hand. I should have banished her before this but I felt that I was partially at fault." He snorted. "Not now, though. Not anymore."

"Maybe she feels like she's getting back at you for Guinevere and Lancelot," Chrys ventured quietly.

"Who?"

"Lancelot?"

"Oh, him. I keep forgetting that Gawain changed his name," Arthur said absently. "Lancelot, Lancelot," he muttered under his breath. "Must remember his name is Lancelot."

"If Lancelot wasn't his name, what was it?" Chrys asked with bright-eyed interest.

"Dewey."

"Guinevere and *Dewey*. Doesn't have quite the same ring to it, does it?" she observed thoughtfully. "I suppose it's much better to stick with Gawain's version. Anyway, maybe she's still upset about them."

"No, I don't think so," Arthur denied, shaking his head. "That was a long time ago. No, I think she's upset because of the stablemen."

"Because you repudiated her," Gareth said in a faintly accusatory tone.

"Nah. Because I *fired* 'em. Wasn't payin' them to fuck the queen. They could do that on their *own* time. Theft of services. Fired 'em right quick."

Undain gave his father a startled look of awed respect. "Now I would have never thought of that. *Theft of services*. Wow! That gives a whole new meaning to the term.

Based on that, we should fire half the maids in the castle and all of the footmen. Quick, Gareth, send out the pink slips!"

Arthur shot him an annoyed glance. "No need to be smart, Dain. I do what I have to do. When you get to be king, then you can make your own decisions."

Shaking his head, Undain pointed out, "I'm number seven son, Dad. And I'm actually sixteenth in line for the throne after the rug rats. I don't think I'll have to lose any sleep over what I'll do when I get to be king."

"Sire, you're just the person I need to talk to," Chrysanthemum said with sudden determination. "I want to know why you have a silly law that says that women can't work except as maids or cooks! Gareth couldn't hire me at the museum because I'm a woman. What kind of stupid law is that?" she demanded indignantly.

"My law," Arthur returned with spirit. "It's bad enough the women are always demanding orgasms. Look what that led to. And anyway, it doesn't matter now. Not only are you a married woman so you can't work, but you and Gareth are going to have to go into exile until I get this mess straightened out!" He turned to Gary with mounting irritation. "Did you have to kill him?"

"Yes!" Gary shouted. "He hit Chrys!"

Arthur was thunderstruck. "He *hit* her?"

"She still has the marks," Undain said quietly. "Big palm prints on her ass."

Just then, Arthur seemed to notice the bruise on Gareth's face. "What happened to your face?" he asked with dangerous quiet.

"One of the guards," Gary said with a shrug. "It's nothing. But His Eminence had Chrys scheduled for a ritual deflowering with the entire abbey. He threatened to turn her over to Dru the guard if I didn't cooperate."

An ugly silence fell over the clearing. "Undain? You'll escort Gary and Chrys to the meeting place we discussed?" Arthur asked with dreadful calm.

"Sure. No problem."

"Fetch Father Liksalot and my knights. We're going hunting at the Solomon's Choice Abbey. We'll have our own *ritual deflowering* when we're through."

"Don't hurt Big John," Chrys urged. "He helped us a lot."

"That's why I'm taking Father Liksalot with me. He'll know who's innocent. And who's not." Arthur kissed Chrys on the cheek. "Go with Undain. I've made arrangements for you and Gary to be safe until I get this mess cleaned up. By the time I see you again, I expect you to be getting fat with my grandbaby."

"We'll see," she teased.

"No seeing. Do it. Gareth, take care of it!" Father Liksalot and Aonghus the Horse Knight arrived and Arthur turned away, immediately concentrating on the business of planning their assault.

Undain led them over to a small table near the fire. "Eat something and then get packed up. As soon as you're ready, we'll leave." He looked at them with worried eyes. "I know you probably didn't get much sleep, but we can't wait. Already the Abbey elders have offered a huge reward for Gary. We'll be dodging errant knights and hunters all the way. And we'll probably be walking well into the evening. Robin doesn't have any powerbikes to spare. Chrys honey, make sure you put on those sturdy boots you wore yesterday." With a wave, he hurried off to complete his own arrangements.

* * * * *

Unfortunately, Undain's prediction came true. Well after dark Undain, Gareth and Chrys stumbled into a hidden clearing deep in the Dread Forest with their small escort. Three trolls sleepily awaited their arrival with hot food and rough pallets. Gary unpacked the heavy cloak and bedrolls, adding them to the pallet prepared for him and Chrys. After a sketchy meal, Chrys crawled under the covers and tumbled into sleep.

When all was quiet, Undain escorted Gary into a nearby cave to meet their host. Seated before a flickering fire was an enormous glittering green dragon. Undain bowed respectfully. "Gareth, I'd like to present Percival the dragon. Percival, this is my

youngest brother, Gareth.” Then, without another word, Undain left. Silence fell over the cave as each of them waited for the other to speak. Finally, Gareth sighed impatiently. “Percival, I have no idea why I’m here,” he admitted in frustration. “If you’re part of the solution my father swears he’s arranged, I hope you’ll explain it to me.”

Percival snorted a plume of smoke. “Humans! Might have known Arthur would muck it up. Your father can be an old fool sometimes.”

“What do I need to do or know?” Gareth asked, his voice hoarse with fatigue.

“Tomorrow,” Percival began. “I will take Ginnie, my mate home to the Chrystal Isle where all mated dragons live. I owe your father a favor because his knights brought Ginnie to me. And,” he hesitated before adding, “because Father Liksalot consented to marry us. I offered the shelter of our island to you and your lady as long as you need it.”

It took a while for Gareth’s tired brain to work through the simple explanation. “The Chrystal Isle? How are we supposed to get there?”

Percival took pity on him when it became obvious that Gareth was at the very end of his resources. “I’ll take you. The thing about dragons is that they can *fly*,” he said kindly. “I’ll have no difficulty carrying the three of you.”

Gareth groaned.

“What? A problem?” Percival inquired with a frown.

“Chrysanthemum. She’s afraid of heights.”

“We’ll give her some of my special mulled wine at breakfast,” Percival suggested drolly. “By the time she’s able to touch her nose or tell us her name, we’ll be there, safely on the ground. It’s what Ginnie’s decided to do. She doesn’t care much for heights, either.”

In the middle of a jaw-cracking yawn, Gareth nodded. “Sounds good. I’ll share your offer with her in the morning.”

"We'll need to leave at first light," Percival warned. "Get some sleep. You'll be in charge of keeping them in the saddle."

"We'll be ready," Gary assured him tiredly as he left, anxious to get back to Chrys.

* * * * *

Early the next morning at the edge of the Dread Forest, Percival's great wings beat powerfully, lifting his special burdens into the cold sky. Sunlight poured over the mountaintops and bounced off his glittering scales, blinding the watchers below. With some hasty modifications, his saddle had been changed enough to accommodate his three human passengers, two of whom were very drunk.

Chrys and Ginnie sat curled in the warm shelter of Gareth's strong arms, wrapped in the late unlamented Eminence's heavy cloak, singing an extremely bawdy song about a well-endowed knight's exploits at the top of their lungs. Percival's ears twitched painfully because neither of them could carry a tune in a handbasket and the resulting clash of notes was worse than clanging cymbals. Gareth wasn't suffering quite as badly because he had demonstrated his sharp intelligence by accepting Undain's thoughtful offer of earplugs and a heavy fur hat.

The girls finished that song and began another about a soldier lost in a battle. Percival wasn't familiar with it, but he had a notion it was supposed to be *sad*. Hey, not with the girls' jazzy treatment. You would have thought they were singing something for the *Dancing with the Knights* jitterbug competition. With determined patience, he tried to shut the bouncing and clapping and occasional outright kicking out of his mind and concentrate on their flight home.

He wondered what his parents would think of Ginnie. She was so petite and perky and passionate and *perfect*. She loved him for himself. She loved him as a dragon first. Let her sing. Let her shout. It didn't matter because he loved her and miracle of miracles, she loved him. Percy was impatient to get home and settle into their own cottage.

Behind him in the saddle, Gareth kept a careful eye on the girls while he studied the terrain far below them with fascinated intentness. Their flight was an unparalleled opportunity, never extended to a full human before, other than dragon mates. His fingers itched for his pocket copier, but it was long gone, lost with their powerbike back at the Abbey. He had no expectation of ever seeing it again—especially after his father finished with the Abbey. He hoped Father Liksalot would be able to restrain his dad's tendency to raze every estate he defeated down to the ground. It would be a shame to lose Gawain's window.

Ginnie and Chrys got quiet for a few minutes and he thought perhaps they were falling asleep, but no such luck. While he'd been distracted with the unfolding scene below them, the girls had come up with a new form of entertainment. Chrys reached up under his coat and yanked the fastener on his zipsuit down and four hands dived into his crotch to investigate and compare his cock with Percival's. Now mind you, he wouldn't have cared if Percival was available to participate in the comparison, but that just wasn't the case.

Ginnie was particularly fascinated by his bars and cock ring. They studied them with the sober expressions of the very drunk. Then Chrys agreed to demonstrate different sucking techniques, while Ginnie began tickling his balls. Gareth let out a startled yelp and Percival turned his head to see what the problem was. Seeing the two ladies' heads buried in Gareth's lap, Percy let out a roar of laughter. As long as they were occupied with Gary's cock, they would be too busy to worry about flying.

Gareth on the other hand was seriously entertaining the fear that in her free-spirited enthusiasm, Chrys might just suck his cock ring right off—which could ultimately prove to be painful. Desperately, he searched their surroundings for something to distract them. Providentially, he noted a flight of geese passing on their right and directed the girls' attention that way. Then while they were oohing and ahing over the stupid birds, Gareth wrestled his stiff cock back into his zipsuit and rapidly fastened up.

The geese unfortunately were a passing distraction. Soon the girls were back, pouting because Gary wouldn't allow them to play with his cock. Inspired, he suggested that they sing another song. Obediently, they launched into a treasonous version of Avalon's national anthem with several libelous references to both Queen Vivian and King Arthur.

Percival barked out another laugh and observed, "It's a good thing we're a *long, long* way from the ground and your father. I'm not sure even I would have enough credit to make up for that song!"

"Well, it wasn't your cock they were playing with," declared Gareth. "Maybe I should just knock them out until we land!"

"No need. There's the Chrystal Isle, just ahead," Percy announced with another laugh. "We should be there just about the time they finish their song."

Their attention captured by his announcement, both girls leaned over the low sides of the saddle on opposite sides trying to get their first glimpse of the Chrystal Isle. Immediately, heart pounding in sudden terror, Gareth yanked them both back. Unfortunately, Ginnie's borrowed pants were so big that Gary got a handful of fabric, but no Ginnie.

She screamed, Gareth hollered and Percy tilted his body until she slid back into the seat. Shaking like a winter leaf, Gareth shoved both girls down in the seat and tucked them under his arms. While they squawked and tried to push his arms away, Percy circled once above a small village and came to a perfect landing in the open field next to the sparkling sea.

Loud trumpeting cries from hundreds of young dragons drowned out whatever Chrys and Ginnie were going to say. Wide-eyed at the sight of so many dragons of every color and hue in flight, the girls stared enthralled while a crowd of elated, babbling humans descended on the field. Percival sat waiting with motionless dignity. Dragons landed all around with graceful displays of power and control.

A hush fell on the field when Percival's parents reached him. His father smiled with bubbling curiosity as his mother patted his leg lovingly. With proud majesty, the tired dragon declared, "I, Percival the Wise, have returned with my mate." An excited murmur ran through the crowd.

Then a huge auburn-haired man stepped forward, brushing past Percival's puzzled parents and demanded, "What of the other two humans? By what right do you have to bring them here to the secret dragons' isle?"

Percival stared down at him with unflinching composure. "I have this right, Dagnar the Great. They are Prince Gareth and his wife, the Princess Chrysanthemum, my guests for as long as they wish to stay. We owe their father, the great King Arthur of Avalon a debt beyond our power to repay."

The muttering of the crowd grew louder until Dagnar impatiently motioned for silence. "What is this great debt?" he demanded.

Percy reached over his shoulder and plucked Ginnie from the saddle, setting her gently in front of Dagnar as though she was precious beyond price. Her loose britches promptly fell down around her ankles, leaving her borrowed baggy tunic as her sole covering. She regally ignored the clothing malfunction and stood as proudly tall as she could. "Behold, my mate, Virginia," Percival announced with his heart nearly bursting with love.

Suddenly struck by the certain knowledge of what Percival was going to say next, Gareth embraced Chrysanthemum with love and delight. *Wait for it*, he muttered under his breath. *Wait for it*.

Then with a soft nudge at Ginnie's back, Percival pushed her toward Dagnar and his wife Catherine, and said with pride and love. "I have brought your daughter, the first *female* dragon, home."

The ensuing hubbub was discordant and loud. Excited voices flowed over the field in a noisy, deafening babble that threatened to overwhelm Ginnie. When Dagnar reached out to grab her up in an impulsive, joyous hug, she quickly stumbled back

against the shelter of Percy's huge body. Percival let out a terrible roar and silence fell over the field.

Staring around in disdain, he scornfully inquired, "Is this how you welcome home the first female of our kind? Is this how you would greet the king's son and his bride? Will you not provide food and drink for weary travelers?"

After a brief initial hesitation, the crowd turned and fled across the field to the village, leaving Catherine and Dagnar alone with the dragon and his passengers. Percival's parents headed home to prepare for their unexpected guests. There was an awkward uncomfortable silence as Ginnie's parents watched Percy gather her trembling body in his sheltering arms. "Shh, my Ginnie. They have all gone away now."

"I don't know how to be a dragon," she wailed against his scaly green chest.

Percival cuddled her gently. "Shh. I'll teach you everything you need to know."

While Percy comforted Ginnie, Gareth and Chrysanthemum clambered down from the high saddle and stood in the shadow of his wing. Chrys watched the circling dragons with wide wary eyes. Gareth decided it was time for him to take a hand in the proceedings and he moved to stand between the puzzled parents and the unsettled dragon mates.

With a sketchy bow, he said, "I am Gareth, son of Arthur. This is my wife, Chrysanthemum. Thank you for allowing us to stay here."

Dagnar cut him off with a sharp gesture. "It's nothing! If your family was instrumental in returning our daughter to us, then we can never repay you."

Covering her mouth with a shaky hand, Catherine struggled with tears. "How did you find her, Percy? She's been gone so long!"

He shrugged, settling his wings against his sides and cuddling Ginnie closer. "I asked her about her parents. She told me she was raised by her Aunt Prunella. I thought surely there couldn't be that many Prunellas on Avalon."

"Prunella? *Prunella*? Prunella had Ginnie?" Catherine's voice rose in a shriek. "I'll kill her! I'll hunt her down and kill her with my bare hands!"

Gareth shot Percy a quizzical look. "Who's Prunella?" he asked carefully.

"Catherine's sister," Percy replied dryly. "A witch to match your mother, the queen."

"Ah. That bad, huh? That would explain Catherine's excitement." He scratched his chin and turned to Dagnar. "Do you suppose we can find a place to sit down? Frankly, I am tired. Percy is tired. And Ginnie and Chrys are past tired, heading for exhaustion."

Dagnar nodded at once. "Come to our home. I'm sure Percival's parents will be there shortly with some clothing for him. And once things quiet down, the women will plot a wonderful revenge for Prunella, no doubt."

"No doubt. I have found the female of the species, whether mine or yours, to be most unforgiving and deadly once roused."

Dagnar reflected on that for a moment before adding with a distinct twinkle in his eyes, "Aye. That's why it's best to keep them busy making babes. 'Tis a terrible responsibility, but a man does what he must to keep his female out of trouble."

"Of course," Gareth agreed gravely with a matching twinkle in his eyes. "Duty comes first. And if one can give her a little pleasure whilst performing, then so much the better."

Epilogue

In which Chrysanthemum finally pleases the King

All over Came-a-lot Castle, windows were flung open allowing light and fresh air to sweep away the last of the influence of Vivian. Once the rebellion was squashed, Arthur had packed her up along with her new lover Brutus and sent them off to a tiny cottage in the Dread Forest.

The thin wail of a newborn's cry echoed down the brightly lit hallways at Came-a-lot. King Arthur, Undain and several of the knights, playing pool in the great hall, halted their games, raised their glasses and cheered. Soon someone would bring word of whether they welcomed a new grandson or granddaughter for the king.

Upstairs in their private suite, Gareth cuddled his exhausted, irritated wife against his chest and kissed her forehead. "I love you," he murmured. "Thank you for my son."

Julietta, the healer massaging her tight belly and waiting patiently for her body to expel the placenta, frowned. Chrysanthemum jackknifed away from Gareth's arms and shrieked. Julietta nodded as though confirming some private theory.

While Chrys pushed, and cursed Gareth, and pushed, Julietta guided the new little prince's baby sister into the world. There was another wavering squall when she firmly smacked the little princess on her tiny behind.

Chrys collapsed back into Gary's arms. He kissed her on the mouth with excited enthusiasm and muttered, "Thank you, thank you. A boy and a girl! Chrys, you're wonderful! You're the delight of my heart!"

"Yeah, yeah. Just let me breathe, here, will you?" she panted impatiently.

Julietta calmly took care of Chrys while the baby nurses bathed and dressed the newest little royals in soft tiny gowns. When Chrys was cleaned up and dressed in a

fresh nightie, Gareth lifted her in his arms and carried her to a low lounge on the cool balcony where she could hear the cheering of the castle staff.

A loud, excited male voice shouted down the stairwell to the billiards room, "Twins! The Prince Gareth had twins! A prince and a princess!"

Chrysanthemum struggled out of Gareth's clutching arms and snorted in tired disgust. "The Prince Gareth did *not* have twins! Get it *right*! The name is Chrysanthemum. Do you hear me?" she bellowed in annoyance. "Chrysanthemum!"

About the Author

Anny Cook learned to read at five years old. Learning to write was a natural extension. Through her adult years while a wife, mother, grandmother, fast food cook, warehouse book packer, Girl Scout and Cub Scout Leader, perpetual college student, executive secretary, and adult education teacher, writing served as the anchor that kept her sane.

Well, maybe not exactly sane, but close to it. Today, after thirty-five years with kids, cats, dogs, guinea pigs, and hamsters, she and her husband are empty nesters. Sigh. Finally, there's time – and quiet – to write in peace.

Anny welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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