



A Knight's Fall

MacKenzie Reed

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Dedication

To my loving husband who inspires me to be the best that I can be.

Chapter One

His callused fingers trailed sensuously across her naked and aroused skin, drawing a moan of pleasure from her lips. She arched her back, craving more of his touch. He chuckled softly. "So my little flower, you enjoy my touch?"

"Please ... touch me more."

"As you wish." He leaned forward, captured her burgeoning nipple between his teeth and nipped, causing a stab of pleasure between her legs. She gasped when his long golden hair brushed against her inflamed skin. Wetness gathered and seeped from between her nether lips. She nearly came off the bed when he sucked her hardened peak into his mouth. Oh, God! The heat, the intensity was almost too much to bear. His tongue flicked her nipple, sending sharp stabs of pleasure throughout her entire body. More, she chanted silently ... more.

She must have spoken the words aloud because his mouth left her breasts and covered her lips in a sizzling kiss that nearly shattered her. His kisses were intoxicating and devastating to her senses. It was as if he was trying to take her very essence inside himself. By the time he pulled back they were both breathing heavily.

"You are so beautiful." His gaze traveled the length of her nude body and sent shivers down her spine. When his eyes stopped at the juncture between her thighs she almost screamed for him to take her. His eyes were full of hunger and desire for her. She wanted him. Now!

"Make love to me," she whispered.

"Be sure, my sweet. Once you are mine I will never let you go."

She hesitated for just a moment his words ominous and yet arousing. Did she want to be his forever? The resounding answer was yes. "What's your answer?"

She smiled. "Yes. Make me yours."

He bent down and took her lips in a long, drugging kiss that fired her insides to an explosive level. She reached up and fisted her hands in his long, golden hair. He groaned.

His body shifted, covering hers, and she shivered in anticipation. His swollen shaft pulsed against her inner thigh. A gush of liquid rushed from her pulsating core. She wiggled, trying to get him right where she wanted him, succeeding in bringing the head of his cock to the door of her femininity. Yes! she chanted silently. It was finally going to happen. He was going to take her.

The head of his cock slid against her slit, setting off tiny tremors. He broke their heated kiss and the look in his eyes thrilled and frightened her at the same time.

"Now, I will make you mine."

He pushed hard and thrust deep. A cry of pleasure erupted from her throat...

*

For the eighth night in a row, Danielle Tremaine woke gasping for air, her body covered in sweat and aching with unfulfilled desire. She rolled over and moaned.

"God, not again. I can't take these dreams anymore." Danielle punched the pillow beneath her and rose from the bed. Her silk nightgown twisted like a vine around her body, transparent and soaked. With a frustrated growl, she jerked the gown over her head,

and tossed it to the floor. She walked into the bathroom, flipped the switch and looked at herself in the mirror. An aroused woman stared back at her. Her skin flushed with arousal, Danielle touched a fingertip to her puckered and swollen nipple, groaning from the pleasure. She continued perusing her body and noticed the glistening wetness on the nest of curls between her legs. Her clit throbbed, begging for release. It would be so easy to slide her fingers through the curly hair, find her swollen clit and, with just light pressure, send herself skyrocketing into the world of orgasmic bliss. Unfortunately, that would only work for a little while.

What she really needed was a man with a thick cock who knew how to use it. But, since that wasn't possible, Danielle hoped a long, cold shower would cool her body's desire and hunger enough that she could get back to sleep.

Danielle stepped into the shower pulling the curtain closed. She turned on the water, adjusted it to the right temperature, then stepped under it. The water pelted her heated skin. A small sigh of relief rushed past her lips. Already her body temperature was returning to normal and the ache between her legs subsiding to a dull throb. Danielle rested her head against the wall, her best friend Trina's parting words from last night echoing in her thoughts.

"Look, Danielle. I'm all for being discreet in choosing a lover, but damn, girl ... you take it above and beyond."

Danielle shrugged, "I can't explain it, Trina. I'm so horny I can't see straight and yet these stupid dreams are driving me nuts. His touch is so familiar, so arousing." She threw up her hands in frustration. "He's the only man I want."

Trina seemed stunned by Danielle's announcement and said nothing more. Either Trina thought Danielle was crazy or she understood perfectly. Damn! That was an even scarier thought. The girls parted ways and Danielle came home alone, climbed into her lonely bed, and dreamed of her lover with the long golden hair.

Goosebumps formed on her body, the cold water seeping into her skin. Shivering, Danielle stepped from the shower, grabbed a fluffy black towel and dried off. She returned to her lonely queen-sized bed, climbed beneath the sheets and closed her eyes once more. Sleep finally came and with it, peace from the dreams.

* * * *

Dominick Knight woke alone in his giant bed with a raging hard-on. He threw back the covers and moved to the side of the bed. Setting his feet on the floor, Dominick's hands dangled between his hairy thighs. He cursed the dreams that plagued him. Who was this beautiful and sensuous creature that tempted him beyond his endurance? In his dreams, she begged for his kisses, his touch. Her alabaster skin beckoned to him each night, drawing him deeper and deeper until his body shook with the need to possess her. The question still remained though ... was she real or just a dream?

He closed his eyes and pictured all his past liaisons and her face wasn't among them. Was she a passing acquaintance, or maybe a secretary at Knight Enterprises?

He knew one thing for sure. The woman driving him crazy in his dreams wasn't Sable Greystone. He'd met Sable through her father, Thomas, during deal negotiations with Greystone Industries. She was a nice enough woman. Beautiful and intelligent, too. After one date he'd known there was no chemistry, but unfortunately she hadn't taken the hint. Just the day before he'd had to be firm to the point of harshness, telling her there

was nothing between them and never would be. Thank God, her father was a businessman, and hadn't let the situation interfere with the deal.

The ache in his groin reminded him that the results of the wet dream lingered. Something had to give soon.

"Grrr ... who are you?" Dominick stood and strode to the bathroom. Maybe a cold shower would help. He snorted. *Yeah, right! Not likely, old pal.* Whoever this woman was she had a body made for loving ... his loving. When he found her, Dominick would give her a night of loving that she would never forget. First, he would start by kissing her soft, full lips from corner to corner, teasing them open. When she complied he would dive in head-first and give her a kiss that would blow her mind. He would have her begging for his touch in no time at all...

The constant throbbing of his shaft drew him from his reverie. Dominick groaned. Thanks to his thoughts about sex, he was now harder and hornier than before. He thought back to the last time he'd had sex. Damn! He couldn't remember. Obviously, it had been far too long. The woman before Sable had been after the Knight name and the prestige it carried. Because he was one of the three Knight heirs and the eldest, she'd tried to sink her claws into Dominick. When he'd caught on to her little game and he'd broken it off, she tried to move on to Jackson, then finally to Beau. Fortunately, Dominick had warned his brothers.

Dominick stepped into the shower, turned the cold water on full blast and stepped into the line of fire. The water cascaded over his heated flesh and sluiced down his body to swirl around his feet. He wrapped his hand around his turgid shaft and groaned when it jumped at his touch. Relief! That's what his body needed. Well, actually a woman was what his body craved, but since the latter wasn't a possibility at three a.m. then his hand would have to suffice.

His fist tightened around his cock and worked the sensitive flesh in an up-and-down stroke from the very tip down to his balls. His head dropped back on his shoulders. Each slide of his hand brought him closer to the edge. Faster now, he stroked his aching flesh, gripping his cock tighter as release grew near. Delicious thoughts of a dark-haired woman with charcoal gray eyes and ruby red lips sent him over the edge into oblivion. Semen spurted over his hand, mixing with the water and twirling down the drain.

Dominick pumped a few more times and then collapsed against the wall. When his legs stopped wobbling and he could walk without stumbling, Dominick rinsed his body and turned off the water. Maybe now he could sleep without thinking of his dream lover with the eyes that seemed to see into his soul.

Dominick dried off, tossed the towel on the floor and went back to his bedroom. He bypassed his bed and kept walking until he reached the floor-to-ceiling windows that overlooked the city. The twinkling lights of downtown Chattanooga drew him, and he wondered if she moved about down there right now searching for him. He growled and rubbed his hand across his face. "Who am I kidding? Why would she be looking for me? I don't even know who in the hell she is."

Dominick continued gazing out the window a few minutes more before finally deciding to return to bed. Would he toss and turn all night or would he sink into sleep only to dream of his lover once again? He was too tired to care either way. It was time to get some much needed sleep. A big meeting was scheduled in the morning and he needed to be awake and alert. As he climbed between the sheets and got comfortable, his

thoughts once more drifted to the woman. Who was she? He felt the pull of sleep calling out to him and he let it take him.

Chapter Two

Danielle woke tired, with a touch of arousal still flowing through her. Glancing at the bedside clock, she noted the time. Seven a.m. That meant she'd only had about four hours of uninterrupted sleep. She rolled over onto her stomach, buried her face in the fluffy, white pillow and let out a frustrated scream—which made her feel a little bit better. Maybe now she could face the day. Another long and grueling day at the coffee shop she managed. The mortgage on her house was only one of the reasons she continued to manage the Brick Oven Café. The other was because she really enjoyed the camaraderie with the employees and the patrons who visited. She grinned. That, and all the coffee and pastries her heart craved.

It might not be her dream job, but it paid the bills. However, once the mortgage was paid off, she would decide what she wanted to do with the rest of her life. Several thoughts came to mind but none of them really sparked her interest. One thing she did pride herself on was her independence. Danielle had made up her mind long ago never to depend on anybody to take care of her needs, and that included a man between her thighs giving her the wildest, hottest sex she could imagine. She gave an unladylike snort. There wasn't a man around who had ever given her what she considered mind-blowing sex. Granted, she'd only had two lovers but still...

Surely there's a man out there who can give me a wild ride on his thick, long cock? Her thoughts drifted to the man of her dreams and she grinned. Now *that* was a cock. She could still recall the smooth texture of encased steel resting against her thigh while he kissed her. Danielle's blood began to heat and a flush of arousal climbed up her chest, covering her neck and finally centering in her cheeks. Danielle covered her cheeks and gasped at the heat she detected on her smooth skin.

"Please. If there is a God and you can hear me, send me my dream lover." She rose from the bed and walked to her closet, throwing open the door. She flipped through the hangers, finally settling on a soft beige-colored skirt and a pale yellow top. After dressing, Danielle sauntered over to her dresser, combed her waist-length black hair, and twisted it into a pile on top of her head. She clipped it with two silver combs and pulled a few tendrils loose to frame her face.

With her flawless skin she didn't need makeup. Just a dab of lipstick and a little eyeliner to bring out her dark gray eyes and Danielle was ready to go. A quick glance at the clock told Danielle she had a good thirty minutes to enjoy a cup of chocolate coffee and a croissant before opening the doors for business. She grabbed her purse and keys and left the apartment, ready to start what she hoped would be a day with no complaining customers or employees and no major problems.

Danielle arrived at the Café right on schedule, grabbed her coffee and croissant and headed to her office to go over the work schedule, the delivery schedule and whatever else needed her attention. Taking a sip of her coffee and groaning in pure pleasure, Danielle got down to business.

She went through the bills, marked the ones needing payment, and put the others aside for later. As she worked on the delivery schedule Danielle's thoughts drifted once again to the man in her dreams. A soft sigh escaped her lips.

“Who are you and where are you?” voicing her questions to the four walls of her tiny office. She knew they wouldn’t answer but it helped to ask them aloud even if there wasn’t anyone to talk back. A quick glance at her watch told her she’d wasted a good thirty minutes in la la land thinking about her mysterious dream man.

“I don’t have time to dwell on that right now. There’s work to be done,” she picked up her pen and began working on the day’s schedule, all the while pushing him to the back of her mind.

A soft knock on her door brought Danielle’s head up. “Come in.”

Trina’s smiling face peeked around the door. “Hey, girl, are you coming out here anytime soon?”

Danielle leaned back, working the kinks from her neck and shoulders. “What time is it?”

Trina laughed. “It’s almost noon.”

Danielle gasped. “What?” She jumped up from her chair and rounded the desk. “You are joking, right?”

Trina shook her head. “Nope. Look at your watch. That’s what I gave it to you for.”

Danielle lifted her left wrist and gaped. Damn! It *was* noon. The last time she’d looked it had been nine-thirty. About that time her stomach rumbled and both girls giggled.

“Somebody’s hungry,” Trina said.

“I guess so. Come on. Let’s go grab a bite to eat.” Danielle pushed her arm through Trina’s and the two headed down the short hallway to the Café. When they shoved open the door, a soft hum of noise greeted them. Danielle looked around the place, smiled and nodded at familiar faces. The girls found an empty booth and slid into it. Immediately one of the waitresses walked over and took their orders. After she left, Danielle glanced out the window and her heart nearly stopped beating. There, across the street, dressed in a dark blue three-piece suit, stood her dream lover. Or at least someone who looked a hell of a lot like him.

Her body instantly came to life. Fire coursed through her veins straight to her clit. Wetness soaked her panties and her nipples hardened to tight little buds. Each brush of her bra against the aroused peaks shot sparks of hunger through her aroused body. Just looking at him set off tiny explosions deep inside her. But, wait! He couldn’t be the man from her dreams. That man was imaginary ... wasn’t he?

Danielle looked him over from the top of his golden blonde head to the tips of his shiny shoes and nearly melted. Drop-dead gorgeous and built like a Greek god, he filled out the suit to perfection. She could make out his broad shoulders and bulging biceps when he leaned over and picked up his briefcase. Oh, my! She licked her lips wondering what he would taste like. She gave him the once over again and nearly swallowed her tongue when she reached his face. Oh, my God! Gorgeous blue eyes were now focused on her. Shoot! Nothing like being caught ogling a stranger. But he sure was delicious-looking.

Staring back at her was a pair of beautiful baby blues that set her pulse on fire.

She watched a sexy, come-hither smile bloom on his handsome face. Danielle found herself starting to rise from her seat and go to him. Then sanity reared its ugly head and she sat back down and waited. It didn’t take long. The next thing she knew, Mr. Tall, Dark, and Handsome crossed the street and headed her way. Damn, he was fine. He

walked with an air of confidence and arrogance. He moved like an animal, all grace and stealth. Out of the corner of her eye Danielle saw a woman approaching him, waving her arm. Her lips moved, but she must not have been addressing Mr. Dream Man because he didn't turn. His focus was all on Danielle, the way she wanted it to be. Was this really happening?

A hand waving in front of her face broke the connection. Danielle turned to find Trina staring at her with a curious look on her face.

"What are you looking at? Did you see a movie star or..." Trina's voice trailed off. Uh-oh! She'd spotted Mr. Gorgeous. Trina whistled softly. "I want some of that."

Danielle looked out of the window just in time to see him make it to the Café door and open it. She turned toward the door and watched him look at her. The minute their eyes met, that sexy smile returned and he looked ready to eat her up.

"Danielle, girl. You've been holding out on me," Trina whispered, excitement evident in her voice.

"Huh?" Danielle mumbled, her gaze never wavering from the man headed her way.

"Who is that delicious dish headed our way and why haven't you introduced him to me?"

"I don't know who he is."

Trina snorted. "Girlfriend, please. The current running between the two of you is so hot it's about to start a fire."

Just as Trina finished her statement he walked up to the table. The woman from the street followed him through the door. After glancing toward them, she found a place nearby and sat. But what she did barely registered with Danielle for, as the man reached their table, she was mesmerized by his presence. Danielle couldn't speak or look away. Something about this man exuded sex and her body answered his call.

"Danielle," Trina whispered furiously. "Say something."

Danielle looked from him to Trina and back again. "Hello."

* * * *

Dominick smiled. "Hello, I'm Dominick Knight." He held out his hand and waited, praying she would take it. He needed to feel her touch. It was silly he knew, but when he'd been standing across the street and getting ready to enter the car, he'd sensed someone watching him. A wave of intense heat had hit him right in the solar plexus and awakened his sex. Dominick had sucked in a breath and when he raised his eyes and found her looking at him, he'd almost come right then and there.

It was her! The woman from his dreams—and her body called out to him with its hunger and need. When he'd found her checking him out it was all he could do not to strip naked, hold out his arms and say "Come and get me, baby." Work no longer mattered. All that mattered at that moment in time was crossing the street and seeing her face-to-face. He was damn glad he had. She was even more beautiful than in his dreams. Her charcoal gray eyes were nearly black and glazed with need. His gaze drifted to her lips and he nearly groaned when she licked them.

He wanted to lick her lips, to stroke her tongue with his in an all-consuming kiss that would leave them both breathless. Would her taste be sweet and innocent, or would it be spicy and naughty? Dominick didn't really care either way except that he wanted a taste and he wanted it now.

"I'm Danielle Tremaine," she placed her hand in his. Dominick swallowed down the groan threatening to escape. Her touch traveled through his body like lightning during a bad storm. Fire licked through his body, centering on his growing arousal. His shaft pushed against his trousers and Dominick was glad he was wearing a suit jacket that hid it from her eyes. It certainly wouldn't do to shock her on their first meeting.

He jerked his thoughts back to the present when he felt her shiver. Dominick glanced at her face, relieved to see awareness there. Good! She had felt it too. He took a deep breath and drew in the scent of aroused woman and chocolate. She must be drinking chocolate coffee. Mmmm ... he bet her lips and mouth tasted of chocolate. He wanted to taste her, needed it like the air he breathed. But not here, and certainly not in front of a restaurant full of people. No, when he kissed her for the first time it would be the two of them alone somewhere dark and cozy.

"Can I have my hand back now?" Her amused voice drew his attention.

He quickly let go. "Sorry. I got, uh, distracted." Yeah, he was distracted all right. It was lunchtime and he was standing here thinking about kissing a woman he'd just met. Dominick ran his hand through his hair and smiled. "May I join you ladies?" He turned his gaze to the other woman and found her staring at him speculatively.

Then Trina smiled and nodded. "Sure, have a seat."

Dominick sat beside Danielle facing the other woman. "I'm sorry. I didn't catch your name earlier."

"Trina Long."

Dominick inclined his head. "It's nice to meet you, Trina. So what do you ladies recommend here that's good?"

He glanced over at Danielle just in time to catch her look away. Her skin glistened a rosy pink hinting that she'd been caught doing something. Ahh ... she was checking him out. Inside he grinned. That was fine by him since he was checking her out as well. Up close her skin was fresh and clean, without a hint of makeup to mar her beautiful complexion. Her lips were soft and pink and perfect for kissing, nibbling, and ravishing. His gaze drifted lower and he could see the swell of her breasts beneath her blouse. Were her nipples pink-tipped as in his dreams? He unconsciously licked his lips as though tasting her. The aching bulge between his legs was now throbbing painfully with every beat of his heart.

"The chicken salad is excellent."

Dominick jerked his gaze upward and found Danielle staring at him. Oh, great! She'd caught him looking at her breasts. He opened his mouth to apologize but quickly snapped it shut. He couldn't apologize. Maybe she didn't know what he was looking at. Maybe she thought he was looking past her. Yeah, yeah ... that was good. Dominick looked away and spotted a pretty redhead coming toward their table. He breathed a sigh of relief. A distraction. Perfect.

The redhead set down two plates and with a smile asked him what he wanted. Dominick's first thought was Danielle naked lying on the table waiting for him. His cock jumped in his pants. He nearly groaned aloud.

"Dominick, are you going to order or not?" asked Danielle.

"I'll have the chicken salad on whole wheat bread and a bottle of water."

"Coming right up." She turned and walked away, stopping to hand a check to the customers in the booth next to theirs before continuing to the kitchen to place his order.

“So, Dominick, what do you do for a living?” Trina asked.

“Family business.”

“And exactly what is the family business?” This time it was Danielle who voiced a question. “Are you a gangster or something?”

Dominick whipped his head around and stared at her, his mouth gaping. “What? No! Hell no!”

Both girls started to laugh and Dominick relaxed, chuckling along with them.

“I’m sorry. I just couldn’t resist. The way you said family business, and all decked out in that suit...” Danielle shrugged and smiled.

Dominick felt his heart rate pick up. Her smile was radiant and beautiful and did funny things to his insides, not to mention sending the blood rushing to his rock hard shaft once again. Damn! This woman had some major power and he wanted to bask in her glow all night long. He was about to ask her out when his food arrived. Laying his napkin across his lap, Dominick picked up his sandwich and took a bite. He made an *mmm* sound.

He swallowed the bite and smiled. “This sandwich is delicious. Thanks, ladies. If I had a hat I would tip it to you both.” He took another bite and for the rest of lunch the three chatted amiably. Dominick was surprised to learn that Danielle managed the Brick Oven Café. She was charming, intelligent, and he absolutely had to see her again. When he was finished, Dominick took one last swig of his water and wiped his mouth with his napkin. His cell phone rang.

“Excuse me a moment, ladies.” Dominick flipped it open. “Dominick here.”

“Hey, bro, where in the hell are you? We’ve been waiting for you over an hour. Are you coming to eat or not?”

Holy hell. “Sorry, Jackson. The meeting must have slipped my mind.” He glanced at Danielle and whispered, “Sorry about this.” She mouthed back, no problem.

“Meeting?” Jackson asked chuckling. “What meeting? I’m talking about lunch.”

“I understand.”

“Dom, man, have you been drinking?”

Dominick was getting exasperated. He wanted to ask Danielle out and he couldn’t do that if he was playing twenty questions with his brother.

“Look, Jackson, can I call you back later? I’m right in the middle of something.” Danielle’s brow arched at being called *something*. Dominick shrugged and winked.

“Oh shit, Dom. Are you with Sable? Dammit, man. I can’t believe you are in bed with the daughter of one of our soon to be partners in a lucrative business deal, and in the middle of a workday. That is so not like you man. Dad is gonna be pissed when he finds out.”

“It’s not...” Dominick sighed. “I’ll explain everything later. Bye.” He closed the phone and pocketed it. “Sorry about that. My brother, the pest.”

“Older or younger?” Danielle asked.

“Younger. I’m the oldest of three.”

She nodded and glanced at her watch. “I’m sorry, Dominick, but I really have to get back to work. It was nice meeting you.”

He was being dismissed and it rankled. No way was he going to let her slip through his fingers.

“Will you have dinner with me, Danielle?”

The look on her face could only be described as shock. "Excuse me? Did you just ask me out?"

He smiled. "Yes, I did. So will you?"

Danielle looked at Trina and then back to Dominick. A slow smile curved her luscious pink lips. "I'd love to."

"Great, I'll pick you up around seven." He rose from the booth and held out his hand to help her up. Zing! There it was again, that electrical pulse that shot straight to his groin. He didn't immediately relinquish his hold and she didn't seem in any hurry either. Dominick wanted to kiss her, to taste the sweetness of her lips. Instead he kissed her hand.

"I'll see you tonight, Danielle." He let go of her hand, grabbed his briefcase and turned to leave the Café. He'd gotten almost to the door when Danielle's soft voice stopped him.

"Uh ... Dominick? Wouldn't you like my address?"

Dominick stopped and glanced over his shoulder. Danielle stood there trying to keep from laughing. Geez, he had it bad. Really bad. "Yes."

Danielle picked up a napkin and scribbled her address down before walking toward Dominick. She held out the napkin and his fingers brushed against hers as he took the square from her. "Thanks."

Danielle inclined her head, turned around and walked back to her friend, Trina. Dominick didn't know how long he stood there simply watching her walk away, enjoying the slight sway of her hips beneath the skirt she wore. The clearing of a throat to his left told him it was longer than necessary. He gripped his case and pushed open the door, stepping out into the sunlight and fresh air. For the first time in a long time, Dominick smiled. Life was good and about to get a hell of a lot better.

Tonight he was going to dinner with a sexy woman and hopefully they would go back to his place and explore each other far into the night. Yep! Life was good. He spotted his car and driver across the street and started walking toward it whistling a tune.

Just as he reached the car his cell rang again. "Hello."

"What is this I hear about my son being in bed with a woman in the middle of the day?"

Dominick laughed. "Jackson exaggerates, Pop. I was having lunch in a café with a woman." *The woman of my dreams*, he thought.

"So tell me about this woman who makes you forget lunch with your father and brothers."

Dominick climbed into the back seat, settling in before answering his father.

"Her name is Danielle. She's smart, funny, and a serious businesswoman."

"So she is a woman with the same idiosyncrasies as you. Two people who both work hard and don't play enough. And when are you seeing this Danielle woman again?"

Dominick grinned. "Tonight!"

His thoughts so focused on Danielle, Dominick didn't see Sable exit the Café and watch him drive away.

* * * *

Sable couldn't believe Dominick had blown her off like that. He must have heard her shouting his name as he walked across the street and entered the tiny little café. Hoping

to see what captured his attention, Sable followed him into the diner and took a seat near the door. She watched him walk down the aisle and stop at a table containing two women. Her hackles rose. How dare he flirt with another woman when he was hers! The dark-headed witch. Sable stared at the woman with hatred in her eyes. Dom was hers and no other woman was going to get him.

Sable watched Dom smile at the woman and then sit beside her. His gaze never wavered and the heat Sable could see in his eyes for the woman caused her to see red. Dom had never looked at her like that. The one date they'd gone on, Sable had flirted and dropped subtle hints that she would welcome Dom into her bed. Anticipation filled her loins and accelerated her heart rate when he'd walked her to the door and took her in his arms. But instead of a fiery hot kiss that sizzled all the way to her toes, Dom gave her a brotherly peck on the cheek and told her goodnight.

As he walked away, Sable had stood there frozen. What the hell had happened?

Sable came crashing back to the present when she heard Dom's name called. Grabbing a menu, Sable hid behind it until Dom walked out the door. With one last hateful look at the woman, Sable rushed out the door and watched Dom get in the limo and drive away.

"Oh, no! You are not going to dump me for that little twit in there."

Sable crossed the street and got into her silver Mercedes, a plan forming in her devious female mind.

Chapter Three

Danielle couldn't believe she'd accepted a date from a man she'd just met, but how could she not? Hadn't she prayed just that morning to the powers-that-be for her dream lover? And man, did they ever oblige. Dominick was a superb male animal in prime condition. His touch was electrifying and sparked her already aroused libido into high gear. All she had thought about as she watched him walk across the street and into the Café was how much she wanted to tear his clothes off and have hot, sweaty sex with the man. Did that make her desperate? Maybe. Horny? Definitely!

From a short distance, Dominick was to drool over, but up close and personal he was absolutely, positively edible. His face chiseled to perfection, with high cheekbones, an aristocratic nose and a mouth that gave her naughty and wicked ideas as to what he could do to her. Everything about him oozed sex, but the feature that drew Danielle in—hook, line, and sinker—was his gorgeous baby blue eyes. They were a rich vibrant color of blue that reminded her of the crystal clear waters in Jamaica. When she gazed into his eyes she got the feeling she was looking into his soul, his inner being. And damn if she didn't want to see more.

"Whew, girl. That man is one hot commodity," Trina said fanning herself. "The heat between you two was so electrifying I thought it was gonna set the sprinklers off."

"I don't know what you're talking about."

Trina arched a brow. She didn't say a word, just sat there staring at Danielle. After a few minutes, Danielle started to squirm beneath the scrutiny.

"Okay, okay. So there's an attraction," Danielle said. "But that doesn't mean anything and you know it."

"Uh huh. You just keep right on telling yourself that, Danielle."

Danielle was losing this battle and fast. If Trina had any inkling that Dominick looked just like the lover of Danielle's dreams she'd take it and run with it. Danielle sighed inwardly. What was she going to do?

"Listen, Danielle. I can see those wheels turning in your head. Stop it right now. You go on this date with Dominick and have a good time. Then after dinner, take the man back to your place and screw him senseless."

Danielle spurted with laughter. "Trina!"

"What? You know that's what you want. So do it." Trina grabbed her purse and stood. "I've got to go, but I expect a full report tomorrow morning. I'll meet you here at nine o'clock sharp." With that Trina turned and left the Café, leaving Danielle to question her own sanity.

* * * *

Danielle arrived home with less than an hour to get ready for her date with Dominick. Everything that could go wrong had. The food order didn't arrive, one of the waitresses called in sick, and the espresso machine stopped working. And now here she stood, still in her work clothes and wondering why the hell she stayed at work so long?

“Shoot. I don’t have a lot of time,” she grumbled dashing down the hall and into her bedroom, stripping as she walked. After a quick shower and brushing her teeth, Danielle, wrapped in nothing but a towel, walked back into her bedroom and over to the closet. Rummaging around inside, she finally found the perfect dress to wear.

“Yes,” she smiled and pulled the dress out. “This one is perfect.” It was a royal blue confection that hit her mid-thigh and left one shoulder totally bare. The dress fit like a glove leaving no room for anything beneath it but skin. When she’d spotted the dress in the window of her favorite boutique, Danielle had bought it on impulse.

Danielle dropped the towel and pulled the dress over her head letting it shimmy down her body. She looked in the mirror and smoothed the dress down her sides, turning this way and that to see how it fit.

“Perfect! Dominick Knight, get ready to be seduced.” She giggled like a schoolgirl with her first crush. She strode to her vanity table, sat down and began putting on her makeup. Not much, just enough to accentuate her features. Once finished, Danielle brushed her hair until it sparkled and shone. Satisfied with the results, she glanced at the clock and noted she had about ten minutes before Dominick arrived.

Butterflies danced in her stomach. Why now? She hadn’t been nervous all day and now, when it was almost time for Dominick to arrive, butterflies. And they felt like really big ones. Danielle laid a hand on her stomach to soothe her nerves and nearly jumped out of her skin when the doorbell chimed. “He’s early,” she whispered to her reflection. With one last look in the mirror, Danielle rose and went to greet her date.

* * * *

Dominick rocked back and forth on his heels and tugged at his shirt collar. Why had he worn a tie? The darn thing was strangling the life out of him. He stuck his fingers inside and gave a little tug, relieved when it loosened a bit. He glanced down at the bouquet of flowers he held in his hand and smiled. He hoped Danielle like orchids. When he’d spotted them in the florist’s shop he knew they would be perfect. Something about them brought the lovely Danielle to mind and so he bought them.

Impatient, Dominick checked the time. He was ten minutes early. Anxious to begin his date with Danielle, he didn’t take into account she might not be ready yet. He fidgeted, shifting his weight from one foot to the other. Doubts started to assail him. Maybe she wasn’t home yet. Could she have fallen asleep in her bed? This brought more thoughts, but of the erotic kind. He pictured Danielle lying naked in her bed, sound asleep, her breasts rising and falling with each breath. In his mind’s eye, he saw himself enter the room and walk softly to the bed. Her eyes were closed but fluttered open as if she sensed his presence. A soft smile of welcome blossomed on her lips and she lifted her arms toward him, beckoning him...

“Hello, Dominick.”

Dominick jumped as if he’d been bitten. So caught up in his erotic fantasy, he hadn’t heard Danielle open the door. He focused on her and his eyes nearly fell out of their sockets. Standing before him was a sultry, sexy siren, one that he wanted to pick up and carry off to bed. The shimmering blue gown looked stunning on her and made her skin glow in the moonlight. He met her gaze and smiled.

“You look absolutely beautiful, Danielle.”

Her shy smile and whispered thanks intrigued him. The woman was a man's dream come true, a blend of sexy and sweet all at the same time. He shook his head and smiled. Where had this Danielle been hiding? *In your dreams*, the voice in his head replied. Dominick shook from his thoughts and found Danielle glancing from his face to the flowers. Cripes! He'd forgotten about the flowers.

"These are for you," he said, thrusting the orchids toward her.

"Thank you." Danielle took the flowers and brought them to her nose. "They smell wonderful. How did you know these were my favorites?"

Her question struck a mysterious chord deep inside. How did he know? Lucky guess? He had to admit; when he'd entered the florist's shop his intent had been to buy pale pink roses to match the color of her skin. However, when he'd spotted the orchids it was as if they were calling out to him. What could he say? I've seen you in my dreams and know you like orchids? Hell! She'd probably turn right back around, enter her apartment and slam the door in his face.

He shrugged. "They reminded me of you when I saw them in the shop. I had no idea they were your favorites, though."

Danielle's eyes narrowed. "Are you sure Trina didn't tell you?"

Dominick chuckled. "No, your friend Trina didn't tell me. Besides I haven't seen either of you since lunch, so when would she have shared this knowledge with me?"

Danielle laughed. "Good question. Let me put these in some water and then we can go." She turned and walked down a hallway, which he figured led to the kitchen. He took this time to look at her. She had a real fine ass. His fingers tingled, itching to caress and squeeze those heart-shaped globes. Dominick imagined his fingers clenching those mounds of flesh while he slowly pumped in and out of her. In one heartbeat his cock went from semi-erect to fully erect, pressing against the placket of his slacks, wanting out.

Dominick cursed silently and turned from the delectable sight before him. One look and he was ready to burst. How in the hell was he supposed to sit across from her and eat dinner when all he could think about was kissing her painted lips? He took a couple of deep breaths trying to cool the fire in his loins. Finally under control, Dominick turned and found Danielle coming toward him, a smile on her face. That smile stirred something familiar and hot, deep inside Dominick.

"Okay, I think I'm ready to go now."

Danielle's voice brought him out of his thoughts and straight into lust heaven. Mmm ... mmm ... mmm. She looked stunning tonight. That dress showed every curve that he wanted to sample. She turned to pick up her purse and Dominick boldly raked his gaze over her. Beautiful! Absolutely, heart-stoppingly beautiful. His eyes lingered on her ass—that fine heart-shaped ass—and his eyes narrowed. He cocked his head to the side and tried to figure out what had captured his attention and then it came to him. No lines showed beneath her dress. He sucked in a harsh breath. She didn't have anything on under that dress. How was he supposed to think about anything else when Danielle looked good enough to eat?

"Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. Shall we?" He smiled and held out his arm for her. The minute her arm slid in and draped over his, Dominick shuddered. It was going to be a very long night.

Chapter Four

Danielle closed and locked the door, dropping the key into her evening purse. *Evening purse, my eye.* It was more like a teeny tiny contraption designed to make women crazy. Whoever thought up that little invention obviously didn't have a modern woman in mind to carry it. All she could manage to get into hers tonight was her lipstick, her license, just in case she needed it, the house key and a condom. A girl couldn't be too prepared. If they needed more, then they could come back to her place where she had a box full of them in her bed stand.

Danielle chanced a glance at the man next to her and wondered why a man as sexy as Dominick was going out with *her*? He made a dashing figure in his dark suit and reddish burgundy tie. Somehow the color suited him perfectly. As he guided her toward his car, she couldn't help but notice his muscular arm. Man, she would love to run her fingers up and down that arm, to feel the muscles bunch beneath her touch. Was he hard like that all over? Her body creamed at the thought of running her hands over his chest, his back, his tight butt and his...

She dropped her train of thought. Damn, if she wasn't ready to yank him to the ground and sample him right now, this minute—and to hell with the rest! Boy, oh, boy. It was going to be a long night.

They reached the car and Dominick opened the door. Danielle slid in gracefully, enjoying the coolness of the leather seat beneath her legs. She waited until he'd closed the door and walked around the car before tugging on the hem of her dress. A hem that hit her at mid-thigh and went no further. A horrifying thought struck her overzealous brain. What if he thought she was a horny slut? She glanced at him sharply as he slid into the driver's seat and shut the door.

Instead of starting the car, Dominick slowly turned his body toward her. Her heart rate kicked up a notch and her nipples beaded against her silk dress. His eyes dropped from her eyes to her shoulders, coming to a halt on her breasts. Danielle fought the overwhelming urge to put her hands over her chest to hide her reaction to him. Especially once he raised his gaze to her face again. His eyes were sparkling with desire and something else. Mischief? Amusement? She couldn't be sure for in the next instant he leaned forward and her eyes focused on those gorgeous male lips that were going to kiss her.

Oh, how she wanted that kiss! Danielle wanted to feel his lips pressed tightly against hers. Would his kiss be fierce or gentle? It didn't matter one whit to Danielle, just as long as he kissed her. She closed her eyes, leaned forward, and waited. She didn't have to wait long. His lips brushed over hers in a feathery-light caress. Danielle wanted more. Suddenly his lips were gone and she whimpered.

"Dominick," she moaned. *Kiss me*, she cried out silently. He must have heard her plea because his hands cupped her face and his lips captured hers again—deeply, savagely. *Yes!* Danielle wanted Dominick to devour her. His tongue swept across her lips seeking entrance. Danielle opened and nearly swooned when he swept inside and plundered her mouth. She slid her arms up his chest and locked them around his neck, pulling him closer. Her fingers tangled in his hair, holding him close.

He was like an addiction. His kisses like the darkest chocolate, bitter and a little sweet. Feeling bold, Danielle stroked her tongue against his and felt his body shudder. Bolder still, she curled her tongue around his and sucked. His groan vibrated all through her body and centered between her thighs. She felt a trickle of moisture dampen her thighs. Her pulse beat a staccato rhythm, her heart pounded in her chest.

Light flashed behind her closed lids, she couldn't breathe. All she could feel, see, and hear was Dominick. He surrounded her. *More*, her body cried out in need. Danielle pulled back from the intense kiss panting heavily. Opening her eyes, she looked at Dominick and saw the same desire and need on his face. His chest rose and fell harshly as he tried to catch his breath. In that instant Danielle knew what she wanted, needed. But was she brave enough to take it?

"Danielle," he whispered.

* * * *

Dominick suffered as well. His shaft, pressed tightly against his zipper, pulsed in time with his rapidly beating heartbeat, making him a bit uncomfortable. Hell! He was a whole lot uncomfortable. Every muscle in his body clenched and bunched with the need to pounce on the sensuous woman right in front of him. From the moment he'd seen her all he could think about was kissing her, tasting those lush lips. He figured one little taste wouldn't hurt. Right? Wrong. That one little kiss went from zero to sixty in one second flat. The minute he'd touched her lips and stroked his tongue across their softness, all was lost.

Danielle's mouth tasted sweet with a hint of mint. Her kisses spoke of some experience, but not much, and for some reason that pleased Dominick immensely. Over the years, he'd had his share of women, but they knew the score. Straight-out sex with no emotional attachments. That had worked well for both parties in the past, but Dominick sensed that with Danielle that wasn't going to be the case. For one thing, the heat between them was highly combustible. Their gasps for breath after one kiss was strong evidence of that. Then there were the dreams. The highly erotic, wickedly hot dreams that made his body ache.

Now as he sat in the leather seat of his Jaguar, Dominick wanted nothing more than to jerk Danielle from the car, lay her across the hood, spread her thighs and sink balls-deep into her moist flesh. He wanted to forget dinner, drinks and the seduction he had planned. The only thing on his mind now was sex—hard and fast, mind-blowing, brain-jarring sex. Risking a glance at Danielle, he found her watching him with a passion-glazed expression that made his cock thump in reaction.

He groaned. "Don't look at me like that. If you knew what I was thinking right now you'd..." Dominick broke off his words and closed his eyes and tried to cool his ardor enough that he could talk to her without pouncing.

"I'd what, Dominick? Beg you to take me in your arms and love me like in my dreams?"

Dominick's head shot up his eyes narrowed. "Dreams? What are you talking about?"

Chapter Five

Danielle shifted in the leather seat, trying not to squirm at Dominick's look. A look that closely resembled the fierce one she'd seen a few moments before during their heated embrace. Crap! Why did she have to go and blurt out about her dreams? *Danielle, old girl. The fat is in the fire. What are you going to say now?*

"Danielle? What dreams?" his tone insistent and curious.

What should she do now? Tell him? Would he think she was a raving lunatic if she told him that he starred in her dreams night after night?

"Danielle, please tell me."

She had to think fast. In a flash it came to her. "Oh, you know, a dream man. The man every girl dreams about?"

"I see," he replied, disappointment evident in his voice.

Danielle wondered why. Why would he be disappointed in her words? Was he expecting her to say something else? She shook her head. There was no way he knew about the erotic dreams she had, with him in the starring role.

Danielle opened her mouth to speak, but Dom beat her to it.

"Fasten your seat belt, Danielle." He started the engine and put the car into gear.

"Dominick?" she asked hesitantly. "Is everything okay?"

"It's fine."

Danielle couldn't understand what was wrong. One minute he seemed happy to see her and now he sounded angry. Her eyes welled with tears and she turned to face the window so Dominick wouldn't see how his harsh tone had hurt her.

The drive to the restaurant was quiet and suited Danielle's mood at the moment. Again doubts crept in, taking hold of her thoughts. Was Dominick wining and dining her in the hopes of a quick roll in the hay? If so, would she oblige him or say goodnight at the door, knowing she would never see him again?

She sighed.

"Danielle, is everything okay?"

Was it? Absolutely not! Should she tell him? She mentally shrugged. Probably, but she wasn't going to.

She looked over at him and again marveled at the strength and power that emanated from his body. He handled the car like a dream. Her gaze drifted to his hands gripped around the leather of the steering wheel and wondered yet again what those hands would feel like against her skin.

"Honey?"

She jerked from her thoughts and focused on his face. A frown marred his handsome face and when he looked at her, his eyes were troubled and questioning.

"Everything's fine." *Liar*, her inner voice whispered. "I was just thinking about work today and the problems I ran into after lunch."

"Oh?" Interest suffused his words. "What happened?"

"One of my waitresses called in sick, the delivery truck didn't arrive today, and the espresso machine went on the fritz. I called about the delivery and found out the driver was in the hospital with a broken wrist."

“What happened? Wreck?”

She snorted. “No. More like he had an argument with his brother over which one of them was supposed to be sleeping with the sister-in-law.”

Dominick whistled.

“If you ask me, he got off easy. If he’d been my husband he wouldn’t have just had a broken bone.”

“Value fidelity, do you?”

Her gaze fixed on him. “Yes.”

* * * *

Dominick gripped the wheel tighter relief rushing through him at her answer. It shouldn’t matter, but it did. Of course, he’d always been faithful to his lover of the moment, never jumping into the sack with another woman until it was over with the first one. He played hard, fucked hard, but he never kept more than one woman at a time. One was hard enough to handle.

At least Danielle was speaking to him now. He couldn’t figure out what happened from the time she opened the door, and the kisses they’d shared. One minute she was sending out signals of want, strong enough to knock him over, and then in an instant she’d clammed up. He narrowed his eyes and pinpointed the exact moment she’d changed. It had been when he’d asked about the dreams. He guessed it was too much to hope for that she was having the dreams, those same heated dreams that he was having and hoping she was too.

Instead she’d said something puzzling about every girl’s dream man and nothing more. The disappointment that swamped him at her words was overwhelming. Well, he wasn’t giving up. Dominick Knight hadn’t gotten where he was today by giving up.

They reached the restaurant with moments to spare. Dominick escorted Danielle into The Bistro, one of his all-time favorite places to eat. The food was superb, the service excellent and the ambiance geared to romance. The *maitre d’* led them to a secluded little table in the far corner of the restaurant, which pleased Dominick. He didn’t want to share Danielle’s beauty with anyone tonight. After being seated, Dominick was content to simply look at the vision of loveliness sitting across from him. The candlelight picked up the subtle colors in her raven hair with each shifting strand. His fingers itched to touch the silken strands and find out if they were as soft as they appeared. While she was occupied with the menu, he allowed his gaze to examine every little nuance of the woman before him.

He found himself wanting to know everything about her. Her favorite color, what types of movies she liked, and about her family. The waiter chose that moment to arrive. He told them the special of the day was baked spaghetti and both of them ordered it. Dominick ordered a bottle of red wine that would accentuate the flavor of the pasta and its rich sauces. After the waiter left, Dominick leaned forward and rested his elbows on the table.

“Tell me about yourself, Danielle.”

She looked startled, then shrugged. “What do you want to know?”

“Everything.”

Danielle laughed, a tinkling sound that went straight to Dominick’s heart. It lit up her whole face making her even more breathtaking.

“Everything?” Danielle asked, laughing.

He nodded.

Deep in thought, her brow furrowed, drawing his gaze to her face. She had an oval face with an air of mystery and a touch of innocence. He took his time memorizing her features—from the perfectly arched brows above a pair of gray eyes that appeared almost silver to the pert little nose turned up on the end. Last, but certainly not least, her lips—full, luscious lips the color of ripe plums ready to be picked, tasting sweeter than honey. Lips that were moving, spitting out words that he really needed to listen to.

“I have two sisters, Dee and Vanessa, both of whom are older than I.”

“So you’re the baby of the family, then?”

A thoughtful smile curved her mouth.

“Yes, I guess you could say that. I was a surprise baby—unexpected, if you will,” her face took on a faraway look. “My parents call me their gift from heaven.”

“Why?”

Her smile was eager and alive with affection and delight as she answered his question.

“Because when Vanessa was born, the doctors told my mother that she couldn’t have anymore children.” Her face clouded. “There were complications and they didn’t think my sister nor my mother were going to make it.”

Her forlorn expression touched a chord deep inside him, and all Dominick could think about was soothing her, taking away the hopelessness in her eyes. Placing his hand atop hers, he gently squeezed. “But, obviously both she and your sister made it or you wouldn’t be here.”

“That’s true.” A smile trembled over her lips.

“Tell me more,” he told her, eagerness in his voice.

“Are you sure you want to know more?” Her eyes sparkled with amusement, captivating him. What he wouldn’t give to reach across the table and drag her to him, to feast on her honeyed lips once more. Just thinking about it made his heart race and his palms sweat. This reaction frightened Dominick. Never had a woman wrung such a strong response from him. Sure, he’d felt desire and lust, but never simple need. All he could think about was touching her, feasting on her. His shaft throbbed painfully.

A faint groan escaped his lips before he could stop it. Could a man die from a case of lust so potent that his cock stood at attention for hours upon end? Because that’s sure as hell what was happening. From the moment he’d seen Danielle staring at him from across the street his manhood stayed semi-erect or at full attention, ready for action. One touch of her soft hands on him and he would explode.

“Dominick? Are you all right?” Danielle’s concern reached through his haze of lust and pulled him back to the present.

“I’m fine, honey. It’s just a slight cramp in my leg, nothing to worry about.”

Dominick shifted and grimaced. As inconspicuously as possible he reached between his legs and adjusted his shaft. It didn’t help at all.

“Go on, I’m listening.”

She licked her lips. Dominick resisted the urge to dive over the table and capture those soft, pink lips beneath his. He stroked his own lips in anticipation of another sip from hers.

“I run the Café where we met,” she chuckled and shrugged. “I manage it, anyway. Most of the time I’m cloistered in my office with the door closed, going over receipts, and placing orders. I forget to come up for air, which is why I have Trina. She’s the woman you met this afternoon.”

Dominick nodded while picking up his glass for a much needed sip of water. It seemed that he and Danielle had a lot more in common than their shared dreams. Like her, Dominick worked inside his office all day, sometimes forgetting lunch unless it was with his brothers and father. Except for today, his mind was always on work. Seeing Danielle and talking to her had taken over today until he’d totally forgotten about lunch with his family and the appointment to close a deal. His father had ranted and raved over the deal, but in the end Dominick had soothed him, rescheduling the meeting for tomorrow morning. Even though Dom ran the business, his father still kept in the loop and the promise of rescheduling seemed to pacify his father for the moment.

The waiter arrived with their food and after checking to make sure everything was satisfactory, he left them to eat.

Dominick lifted his gaze to Danielle. “Shall we adjourn your story until after we eat? I must admit I’m starved.”

“I’m a bit hungry, too, and the food looks delicious.”

Dominick lifted the wine and poured each of them a glass. Silently they ate their spaghetti, moans of delightful pleasure the only sounds.

“This is exquisite food. You picked a wonderful place, Dominick. Do you come here often?”

“Yes, my brothers and I often eat here after business meetings and such.” Dominick took another bite. The full spectrum of flavors burst in his mouth. He couldn’t help but think that he’d always come here with his brothers, but never with a woman. That was a puzzle that he would work out later. Right now, he just wanted to enjoy the company of his lady and sip his wine. They finished the meal and, after ordering a cappuccino, sat back and relaxed.

“What’s your favorite color, Danielle?”

Danielle looked startled for a moment. “Huh?”

“Your favorite color? Remember, I said earlier I want to know everything about you.”

She wrinkled her nose. “I was hoping you’d forgotten about it.”

Dominick chuckled. “Not likely. So tell me.”

“Red.”

He raised his brows. “Red? That is your favorite color?”

“Yes.”

Red. That would not have been his guess, not in a million years. No, he would have guessed pale pink or something softer, never anything as sexy and racy as red. But now that she’d told him, Dominick’s mind flooded with risqué images of Danielle lying in his bed with nothing on but a see-through lace teddy, her painted red lips curved into a come-hither, downright naughty smile. He sucked in a sharp breath. He had to stop thinking about the two of them in bed together. But first he wanted to know why red. It had wiggled its way into his brain and taken up permanent residence. He had to know.

Dominick cleared his throat. “Why red?”

“Because it’s not like me,” she shrugged and looked around the quiet restaurant.

Not like her? Dominick rolled that statement around in his head for a moment. Why would she say something like that? Red might not be the color he would have picked for her, but it suited Danielle. He couldn't explain his reasoning for it but everything about her shouted that beneath that air of innocence that surrounded her beat the heart of a fiery siren just waiting to escape. He looked at Danielle and found her staring back.

A small smile of enchantment touched her lips, and immediately his libido shifted into high gear. He needed to get them out of the restaurant and someplace private before he embarrassed himself. The rapidly growing erection he sported wasn't going to be appeased for much longer. He wondered if Danielle knew just how close she was to getting fucked right here on the table. Would she like it?

Dominick glanced around for the waiter, motioning for the check. When he turned back Danielle had a puzzled look on her face, her perfectly shaped brows creased into a frown that he wanted to wipe away. "Is something wrong?" he asked, handing the waiter his charge card.

"I don't know." She bit her lip, drawing Dominick's gaze to it. He wanted to be the one biting that full, succulent flesh only to soothe it with a flick of his tongue. Danielle looked away.

He was about to ask her again but the waiter chose that moment to return with Dominick's card and receipt. Dominick scribbled his name, left a generous tip and thanked the waiter. He returned his card to his wallet along with the receipt and put it back in his jacket pocket.

"Sorry about the interruption, honey," he grinned and took her hand. "Now tell me what's wrong."

Chapter Six

There was something familiar about the couple waiting to be seated. Danielle couldn't quite put her finger on it, but there was something about the woman...

"Honey, are you all right?"

"Huh?" her gaze still on the couple, especially the woman. For some reason Danielle felt as though she'd seen this woman before. But that was impossible because she didn't move in the same circles as the woman. Her mannerisms, clothes, the way she carried herself, all spoke of money. Something Danielle didn't have a lot of and probably never would.

"You know, it's not nice to ogle another man when you're on a date?"

She jerked her gaze to his. "What? I wasn't ... I mean that is..." Oh, hell! She didn't know what she meant. And it didn't matter for the striking couple was headed their way. Danielle watched their approach and was taken aback by the hatred flashing in the woman's green eyes. What in the world was that all about?

"Danielle, what are you looking at?" he asked, puzzled, and turned around. The hand on hers stiffened.

"Dom, darling," the auburn-haired woman purred. "I've missed you. I had to beg Jackson to bring me to dinner, and what a surprise to find you here."

"Hello, Sable," he nodded. "Jackson."

"Hello, brother." The man named Jackson turned to Danielle and smiled. Her breath caught. Of course, how could she not see the resemblance? Both Jackson and Dominick had that commanding presence and gorgeous blue eyes.

"And who might you be, beautiful lady?" He lifted her hand from Dominick's and kissed her knuckles.

"She's a friend," Dominick growled. Danielle's face heated. *A friend?* Was that what he considered her?

"Ah, is this the friend that made you miss lunch with Dad and us?"

Danielle was mortified. What had Dominick said or insinuated about them? She looked past Jackson and found Sable staring at her with cold fury in her eyes. This was too much. She needed air and now.

Removing her hand from beneath Dominick's, Danielle stood, placed her napkin on the table and picked up her purse. "If you will excuse me, I need to powder my nose." Without waiting for a response, she stood and left the table. She kept her steps slow and easy, not wanting Dominick to know how hurt she was.

"A friend." She muttered, pushing open the bathroom door. She walked to the mirror and stared into it, searching for the answers. What was going on? Maybe she was just superimposing her feelings for her dream lover onto Dominick.

"Yes, that's it." She nodded to her reflection. That would explain why the word friend didn't settle well within her. *Liar!* She gripped the sink edge and groaned at the silent voice. It was right, she was a liar. She saw him as more of a lover, not a friend.

"I've just met this man." Another thought popped into her overworking brain. Did Dominick not want his brother and the woman to know they were a couple? *Not yet, you aren't.*

“Oh, shut up,” she growled.

A feminine chuckle sounded behind her. Danielle turned and found herself face to face with Sable.

“Do you always talk to yourself?” her voice tinged with amusement.

“Sometimes.”

The woman raised a long painted red fingernail to her chin and tapped. “Here’s more food for thought. Stay away from Dom—he’s mine.”

Danielle’s eyes widened. “Excuse me?”

Sable narrowed her eyes and took a step forward. “I said, Dom is mine.”

Danielle’s hackles rose. What was going on here? “What do you mean, yours?”

Sable slapped the counter. “You aren’t that stupid. You know exactly what I mean. Dom is my lover and my fiancé.” She sniffed and grabbed a tissue from the box on the counter. “We had a tiff and he’s getting back at me by going out with you.”

Okay, something wasn’t ringing true here. One, Sable had no ring on her finger and two, if Dominick was her fiancé, why was she out with his brother?

“If Dominick is your fiancé then why are you out on a date with his brother? To make him jealous?”

Sable bristled. “Jackson and I are practically family. Besides, this is a business dinner. Dom was supposed to attend too.”

Confusion engulfed Danielle threatening to drown her. Sable’s words sounded sincere and honest, but something about the woman made Danielle’s senses go on full alert. There was only one way to find out if there was any truth to her words.

“Excuse me,” she told Sable and quickly left the ladies’ room, never seeing the smug smile on the other woman’s face.

* * * *

Both men watched Danielle walk away. Dominick’s gaze narrowed on Danielle until she disappeared from view. Her abrupt departure worried him. Something wasn’t right. That’s why he sent Sable to check on Danielle. He wanted to make sure Danielle was okay and Sable’s quick agreement relaxed him a bit.

Now that he and Jackson were alone, Dom whirled around. “Why are you here with her?”

Jackson shrugged. “She called distraught because you’d broken your dinner date with her.”

“I had no plans with her,” he chanced a glance at the door and when he didn’t see either woman he continued. “I broke it off with Sable after one date.”

“Why?”

“Because there was no chemistry, not like there is with Danielle.”

“Well, then, since Sable and you are no longer an item, I think I’ll see if I can coax her into my bed for a little fun.” Jackson chuckled. “I bet she’s a wild woman in bed.”

Dominick took a sip of wine. “I wouldn’t know. I never took her to bed.”

“What about Danielle? Is she good in bed?”

Dominick growled. “Watch it, Jackson. You are treading on thin ice.”

“What? I just asked if she was hot in bed. You’ve never minded talking about your conquests before.”

“Danielle is different.”

"She is that all right. She and Sable are like night and day." Jackson shook his head chuckling. Dominick couldn't explain it either. Or not so that Jackson wouldn't think he was crazy anyway. He could see it now. *"Danielle and I have made love in my dreams. The woman is sexy as hell naked and I can't get enough of her."* Yeah, right. Jackson would have one hell of a good time with that one.

Dominick craned his neck and looked toward the ladies' room door. What the hell was taking so long?

"Dom, man, she'll be back in a minute."

"I know that," he muttered. But that still didn't dampen his concern about Danielle.

Jackson chuckled and Dominick turned a scowl on his face. "What is so damn funny?"

"You." Jackson pointed at him. "You are so worried about your two women that you can't even sit still for a few minutes."

"They are not my women." Dominick growled. "I'm concerned about my date is all."

Jackson snorted. "Yeah right."

"Look, why are you here with Sable anyway?"

"I told you—she was upset that you canceled dinner with her tonight and she called me." Jackson shrugged. "So I'm consoling Sable while you try to get Danielle in bed."

"Jackson," Dominick said in a low voice vibrating with anger. "You'd better watch your words. I told you I'm not with Sable." And just because he was pissed, Dominick tossed out a barb meant to irritate Jackson. "Besides, Sable's only with you to get to me. She figures pitting us against one another will get her what she wants ... to be in my bed."

A sharp gasp filled the air. Dominick turned to see Danielle standing there her face pale and drawn. Shit! He stood and started toward her. "Danielle, honey, it's not what you think."

She held up her hand halting him in his tracks. "Don't. Just don't." She walked stiffly toward the exit. "I want to go home. Now!"

Dominick sighed and nodded. This night hadn't gone at all like he wanted. He frowned at Jackson. "I'll talk to you later." With a terse goodnight, Dominick followed Danielle through the restaurant and outside into the cool night air.

Neither Dominick nor Danielle saw the satisfied smirk on Sable's face.

Dominick mentally kicked himself over and over. What in the world had possessed him to goad Jackson like that—and with such a boldfaced lie? Sable might want to be Dominick's lover, but that wasn't going to happen. The woman was a nuisance and he just couldn't see himself with her past one date.

But the woman in front of him...

His gaze drifted over her, noticing her angry stride and the way her ass moved beneath that silky confection she wore. She was stunning. Not in a beauty queen sort of way, but in an earthy, real woman kind of way. Everything about Danielle appealed to him, from the top of her head to the pretty pink-painted tips of her toes. Dinner had been enjoyable before Sable and Jackson arrived. He'd learned quite a bit about the exquisite creature in front of him and he wanted to know more. Like how she tasted. Was she a moaner or a screamer? Or was she a silent lover?

Danielle stopped by the car, arms crossed, and waited for Dominick to open the door. He gallantly opened the door and stepped out of the way. Otherwise, he thought Danielle would probably step on his foot, and with those killer heels she could cause some serious damage. She slid into the car and he found himself admiring her long legs. His manhood twitched. He wanted those legs wrapped around his waist, squeezing him tight as he pumped in and out of her tight sheath.

He nearly stumbled when Danielle jerked the door from his grasp and closed it. Great! Just great. She was mad as hell and if he didn't do something—and quick—this would be their first and last date. He crossed in front of the car, his hand running through his hair in frustration. Goaded Jackson had been stupid and childish. It wasn't Sable's lips he wanted to taste or her body he wanted to make love to, it was Danielle's. So why had he said what he said?

Dominick opened the door and climbed in. After closing the door, he started to put the key in the ignition and stopped. He couldn't stand the silence another minute. He had to explain what Danielle had overheard.

Turning his body toward her, he said, "Danielle, about what you heard..." He glanced out the front window before continuing. "I didn't mean it. I don't know why I said it."

She turned her face toward him and he could see the bright sheen of her eyes, tears hovering, just waiting to fall down her soft cheeks. Before he even thought about his actions, his hand reached out and caressed her cheek. "Ah, baby, I'm sorry."

Danielle jerked from his touch. Her eyes hardened. "Just tell me one thing. Are you engaged to that woman, Sable?"

"What? Who the hell told you that?"

"Sable did, in the ladies' room." Danielle turned her gaze away. "In fact, she said you two had been fighting and you asking me out was your way of getting back at her."

Dominick fumed. That bitch. He should have known she would cause trouble. Dominick gently grabbed Danielle's chin and turned her face back to his.

"She lied. We're not fighting and we are *not* a couple. I went out with her one time and there was no chemistry, nothing, nada. So I broke it off. Obviously, Sable hasn't gotten that through her pretty little head yet."

Her gaze searched his face for a long time. The truth must have been written on his face, because she nodded and said, "Okay."

Relief poured through him. He cradled her face in the palm of his hands and drew her close for a soft, gentle kiss. Raising his mouth from hers, he gazed into her eyes. "Thank you," he whispered. And then because he needed it, Dominick pressed his lips to hers once more, this kiss more persuasive. He wanted to devour her, to slide his tongue deep in the recesses of her mouth and taste her. But now was not the time, and a restaurant parking lot was definitely not the place.

With one last kiss, he pulled away and keyed the ignition. He moved to put the car in gear when a slender hand hesitantly rested on his thigh. Immediately he tensed, muscles bunched, and his shaft lengthened and hardened. The touch of her hand was almost unbearable in his current state of arousal. When she started drawing circles on his upper thigh edging closer and closer to his rock hard erection, he placed his hand atop hers, stopping her movement.

“Honey, if you don’t stop that I won’t be held responsible for my actions.” To soften his words he lifted her hand to his lips and kissed it before resting it on his leg once more. The warmth from her hand seeped through the fabric, making him squirm inside. If he didn’t get her into bed, and soon, he was going to internally combust.

Dominick shifted into gear and drove to Danielle’s house. The drive to the house was silent, their breathing the only noise in the car. Each time Danielle shifted in her seat, her dress slid across the leather like a whisper and her scent wafted beneath his nose. She smelled of vanilla, sweet and plain. He loved anything made with vanilla or that smelled like vanilla. Vanilla ice cream, vanilla fudge, even vanilla-flavored coffee. A thought struck him.

“Danielle, why do you work at the Café?”

“I get all the free coffee and pastries I want?” Her voice held amusement. He needed more information.

“Is that the only reason?”

He heard a soft sigh before she responded. “I’m paying off my mortgage and once I’m done with that, I will decide if I want to stay there or move on.” She shifted on the leather seat and he knew she was moving away.

“Don’t...” he tightened his grip on her hand. “Don’t move away. I like you being near.” He glanced her way and was rewarded with a smile.

“Okay,” she whispered and then moved closer once more. Dominick wasn’t ready for what happened next. Her warm breath wafted along his cheek followed by her soft lips. His body shivered with delight. She must have felt it too, because she did it again. She was driving him to distraction. Like throwing gasoline on a dying fire, Danielle’s kisses were having an explosive effect on his libido. Did she know what she was doing to him? There was one surefire way to find out. Taking her hand, he guided it to his cock.

She drew in a breath and then exhaled on a moan. Her hand molded to his shape and size, squeezing gently. It was his turn to moan. With her fingers she traced the outline of his cock, back and forth. Every nerve-ending was on fire. He lifted his hips into her touch telling her without words that it felt good. His breath caught in his throat when she unzipped his slacks and released his aching shaft into her waiting hands. The feel of her soft hands on his aroused flesh was more than he could stand.

“Danielle.” He wanted to beg and plead for her to end this torture. Just a few strokes and he would spill his seed in the car. But that’s not what he wanted. No, he wanted to be inside Danielle when he came, to sink into her tight sheath.

“What?” Her breath whispered against his jaw. “Can’t take the heat?”

“Oh, I can take the heat,” he growled, downshifting before pulling into her driveway and coming to a screeching halt. “The question is, can you?” He flicked the steering wheel up and turned toward her, grabbing her face between his hands and devouring her mouth. His tongue found hers, tangling, fighting, as he plundered her mouth. Every crevice was explored and her taste imprinted on his tongue. It wasn’t enough. Her hand still caressed his flesh, moving up and down, squeezing with just the right amount of pressure to keep him hovering on the precipice.

He jerked his mouth from hers, pleased to see the haze of desire in her eyes. Her lips were puffy and swollen from his kisses. She was as beautiful as the goddess Aphrodite, drawing men in with her shy smile and petal-soft lips. Easing back, he looked into her charcoal gray eyes and quirked his brow questioningly. The need to take her in his arms

and finish what they'd started rushed through his veins, his body demanding relief. But he wouldn't push. This was Danielle's decision and he wasn't about to rush it.

The expectant look on her face nearly crumbled his resolve. No woman had a right to look like a siren and an innocent all at the same time. He rubbed his thumb over her swollen lips and silently groaned when her tongue darted out and licked the tip. Suddenly his thoughts shifted down south, below the belt. A vision of Danielle on her knees in front of him with her lips wrapped lovingly around his shaft took his breath away.

"Danielle? Honey?" he spoke against her lips, pleading for an answer, needing one—and soon—before he exploded.

Chapter Seven

Danielle stared at Dominick, amazed at how everything about him was so achingly familiar. His touch soothed and aroused, his scent flooded her senses making her dizzy with desire for him. Did she want to make love with this man? Hell, yes!

Her body was softening, readying itself for his invasion. And what an invasion it would be. She couldn't see his cock, but she sure as hell could feel it. Long, thick and hard, it was too large for her to fully wrap her hand around. She whimpered in need. Velvety smooth skin over hardened steel pulsed in the palm of her hand. She wanted it ... bad. The slick wetness of her excitement coated her thighs. Clamping them together, Danielle continued to caress his shaft. Her lips stung from his kisses. Long, drugging kisses that burrowed deep in her soul and straight to her woman's core.

She could hear his breathing, harsh and uneven and knew he was aroused as she.

"Kiss me again," she whispered against his lips. *Kiss me, take me, love me*, she silently cried out.

His groan just before he recaptured her mouth echoed her own. Kisses weren't going to be enough. She needed ... no, wanted ... to feel his naked flesh against hers as he thrust into her core. Wanted to run her hands all over his body and find out if he was as hard all over as he felt beneath his clothes. Her thoughts scattered when his hand moved from her shoulder with light touches until he covered her breast. Instant heat consumed her. His touch was like nothing she'd ever felt before. His fingers traced maddening circles around her nipple without actually touching it. Her breasts were heavy and aching.

Jerking her mouth from his she whispered her needs in a throaty voice. "Touch me, please."

"Where, honey?" he captured her nipple between thumb and finger and lightly squeezed. "Here?" His tongue swept across her lips, his teeth nipping and soothing. "Or here?"

His teasing was killing her. She was going to die of sexual overload right here in his Jaguar. "Dominick."

His forehead rested against hers. "Danielle, honey. We need to go inside. If I don't get you naked and under me in the next few minutes I'm going to take you right here, right now." Each word was punctuated with a quick kiss or a nip.

With great effort she opened her eyes and looked at him. What she saw there took her breath away. Heat, desire, hunger and need. This man wanted her and badly. She brought her hand up and touched his cheek, feeling the beginnings of a five o'clock shadow.

"Take me to bed, Dominick."

Quicker than she could comprehend, Dominick pulled back, stuffed his erection back into his slacks and carefully zipped up. In a flash, he was out of the car and opening her door.

He held out his hand and without hesitation she took it. The moment they touched, it was like lightning striking. Heat traveled from her hand to his, the intensity of that touch nearly taking her breath away. His indrawn breath revealed that he felt the electricity, the heat between them, just as she did. He tugged her from the car and into his strong arms,

his lips lowering to hers. This kiss was different from the others but just as potent. It was soft, featherlight and intoxicating.

When he pulled away she felt the loss all the way to her pulsing core. More, her body cried out ... more. She thrust her fingers through his thick hair and drew his face to hers in a renewed embrace. Just before their lips touched, a silly thought occurred to her and she murmured, "Your hair's shorter."

Then the thought was no more. His kiss sang through her veins, leaving a smoldering fire in its wake. The arms holding her tightened, pulling her closer to his body. Through their clothing she could feel his rock hard cock pressing into her lower belly. Rising on her toes, she cuddled his male hardness in the cradle of her thighs. Danielle couldn't get enough of Dominick. His tongue plundered her mouth, taking possession and daring her to fight back. But she didn't want to fight for control. All she wanted were more of those mind-numbing, toe-tingling kisses, everywhere.

Danielle tightened her fingers in his hair and held him close. Their tongues danced to an age-old rhythm, both of them wanting more. When Dominick pulled away, Danielle whimpered and tried to follow.

"Danielle..." He gave her a hard kiss. "We need a bed, now."

Her brain was mush. A bed? He wanted a bed? No! She wanted kisses, lots more of his tasty kisses.

"Kiss me," she whispered leaning toward him again.

Strong male hands rubbed her back before lightly gripping her upper arms. "Open your eyes and look at me, honey."

Open her eyes? Were they closed? She forced them open and gazed into Dominick's hungry blue eyes.

He lightly shook her. "Danielle?"

"Yes?"

"Bed ... now!"

That woke her right up. Well, that and the fact that he looked like a starving man staring at his favorite meal and she was it. She pulled away and grabbing his hand, headed for her front porch. A bed sounded like the best idea in the world, if they could make it there without burning up first. Her body was hot, her blood like molten lava. The heat from his palm shot straight through to hers and right down to the sweet spot between her thighs. Even now she could feel her desire seeping from her nether lips, coating them, readying them for Dominick's touch. Her breasts throbbed with need, the tips hard and aching for his lips and tongue.

Faster! She cried out to herself. Walk faster. The walk to the porch seemed like a lifetime but finally they reached the steps and the front door. Danielle twisted the key and heard the click of the lock opening. She turned the knob, pushed open the door and pulled Dominick inside. The door closed with a loud click—and then all hell broke loose. Suddenly she found herself being spun around, her back against the door, Dominick's aroused body pressed to her front. His mouth came down on hers, hungry and hot. Every thought in her head vanished with his possessive kiss until only one remained ... they needed to find her bed.

His hands were everywhere, touching, teasing her until she was burning up. Her breath caught when his hands slid down her sides and gripped the silky material of her dress and started pulling it up. A cool breeze blew across her flesh. With each pull of the

fabric, a little more of her body was revealed until he broke the kiss and pulled the dress up and off her body. His mouth found hers again and his hand moved lower until the tips of his fingers rested against her pubic bone. Just a little farther and he would touch the spot where she was wet and hot. Danielle shifted and was rewarded with his fingers sifting through her juices to find the petal-soft folds of her womanhood. When he started to rub the swollen flesh of her clit, Danielle pulled her mouth from his lips and cried out in delight.

“Yes, yes ... right there.” She no longer cared if she was begging and pleading. Danielle wanted this man with every fiber of her being, and before the night was over she would have him.

“Is this what you want, baby?” His fingers pinched her clit and she nearly fainted, the pleasure was so intense. He knew exactly where to touch, how to make her body sing. “Or this?” His fingers slid through her slit and straight into her pulsating core. It was too much. Danielle screamed as a mighty orgasm exploded in her body. She rode the potent waves, her body quivering and quaking with each stroke of his fingers. But he didn’t stop. Dominick continued to work her body, thrusting his fingers in and out, while his thumb caressed her clit. Danielle cried out as another climax rippled through her, even more powerful than the first one.

“No more,” she whispered in a hoarse voice, probably from all the screaming. “I can’t take anymore, Dominick.”

“Oh, but you can, honey. There’s more. A whole lot more,” he said, sliding his fingers from her body. “I’m going to taste every square inch of your body.” He brought his fingers to his mouth and, looking at her, licked them clean. “You taste like sweet marmalade.” She whimpered at the stark, hungry look in his eyes. Oh, God! She wasn’t going to survive the pleasure. Her body was shaking and her core pulsed with each beat of her heart and damn if his words didn’t send a fresh wave of heat through her body.

He let her go and removed his jacket, tossing it on the floor with her discarded dress. Danielle moaned when his fingers moved to the buttons of his shirt and undid them one by one. When he pulled the shirt from his pants and slipped it off, Danielle sucked in a breath. Naked from the waist up, Dominick was built solidly, not an ounce of fat anywhere on him. Her mouth watered to taste his skin.

“Honey, if you keep looking at me like that we are going to have some serious trouble.”

She peeked at him from beneath her lashes. “Trouble?” she licked her lips watching his eyes catalog the movement. “I so love trouble.” The waiting was killing her. She had to touch him. Her gaze locked with his as she took first one step and then another until she was close enough to touch him. Never taking her eyes off his, Danielle reached out with one finger and traced his nipple thrilled with his reaction. His nipple hardened and his breath quickened.

She smiled. This was going to be fun.

* * * *

Dominick didn’t know how much more of her exploring he could take before his baser instincts took over. He wanted very badly to be inside her. To feel her inner muscles tighten around his cock and drain him dry. His cock hardened even more at just the thought of spearing Danielle. The first time wouldn’t be slow and easy. Nope! He was

too far gone for that. But he would make sure she climaxed again before he spilled his seed inside her. Condom! Oh, shit, he did remember a condom didn't he? His mind raced back and he sighed in relief. Yes, he remembered sticking several condoms in his pants pocket.

His breath left him in a whoosh when Danielle's tongue licked first one nipple, then the other. Her fingers were drawing circles all over his torso and driving him mad. She moved lower following the line of sparse hair on his lower abdomen, stopping where it vanished into the waistband of his slacks. *Lower*, he silently cried out. Her fingers toyed with his waistband and he held his breath. Waiting. Hoping. Praying. He almost groaned in frustration when her hands followed along his waistband, moving to his rear. But it was when her hands slid inside his pants to his butt cheeks, massaging and squeezing him through the fabric of his shorts, that his cock jerked. He was going to spontaneously combust.

"Danielle, honey. You're killing me here." He reached out and gripped her hips in his hands and pulled her flush against him, grinding his erection into her lower belly.

"I want to make love to you. Now," he growled the last word as his mouth swooped down on hers and devoured her lips. Enough was enough. It was time to finish this.

Jerking his mouth from hers, Dominick picked her up in his arms and asked, "Where's your bedroom?"

Her arms tightened around his neck. "Second door on the left."

Dominick turned and headed for the indicated door, not stopping until he'd dumped her on the bed. His hands went to the button of his pants and then his zipper followed. Shoving the slacks down his legs, Dominick stepped out of them and turned to face the woman on the bed.

"Oh, my!" Her whispered words of awe thrilled him, excited him beyond control. He grabbed the condoms out of his pocket, tossed them on the nightstand and climbed on the bed beside her.

Her hands were everywhere, touching him and teasing him. When they moved to wrap around his aching shaft his body shivered. Her tiny fingers worked his flesh until he felt like a well-played violin. His balls tightened, ready to spurt their life-giving wealth into her sheath. If she kept stroking him it was going to be in her hand instead of her womanhood.

"Enough," he muttered, grabbing her hands and holding them. "Much more and I'm going to come." He let go of her hands and rolled over to get a condom. It was amazing he could get the package open, much less roll it onto his throbbing shaft. Finally, he managed. Dominick rolled over, pulled Danielle beneath him and spread her thighs with his.

"This first time is going to be fast and furious. All that damn foreplay has got me ready to burst." He nudged her nether lips with his cock, feeling the heat from her core. He could feel her opening for him like a flower and it thrilled his male ego. The finger fucking he'd given her earlier had made her wet and he hoped to God she still was, because he couldn't wait any longer.

"You are mine." He gripped her head in his hands and kissed her just as he thrust hard into her core. It was heaven. Her slick walls seized his manhood in their tight-fisted grip as though she would never let him go. He sank all the way in and rested there, all the

while sipping from her lips. Her tongue wrapped around his the way her vagina did his shaft and that was nearly his undoing.

Perfect! That's what came to his mind as he started moving inside her. Perfect. Her fingers gripped his upper arms, her nails digging into his flesh. Tomorrow he would have little marks, but right now he didn't care. Right now the only thing on his mind was pounding into Danielle's softness until they both slipped over the edge into oblivion. Which, from the way her inner muscles were working his shaft and her legs tightening around him, wouldn't be long. He'd known from the beginning that the two of them would burn up the sheets. How? He didn't know. Vaguely the dreams flooded his mind, but quickly dissipated with each stroke of his cock inside her heat.

She was so hot that it was like being inside a furnace. Her juices coated his cock, while her tiny whimpers and moans drove him higher and higher. He broke their kiss and rose to his knees, never once missing a thrust. Gripping her thighs, Dominick continued to thrust—deeper, harder. At this angle he could feel his shaft butting against the opening of her womb. God, just the thought of giving this woman his seed to impregnate her was too much. Faster and faster he moved, flesh slapping against flesh.

Danielle's body tightened beneath him. She moved against him, hot, wet, abandoned, lifting her hips to his thrusting body, her movements frantic and wild. It was more than Dominick could stand.

He pumped into her harder and faster, his balls slapping furiously against her ass.

"Come for me, baby," he commanded, keeping his strokes short and fast. "Come. Now." She whimpered and moaned, her head thrashing on the pillow.

"It's too much," she cried out in a hoarse voice. "Please ... I need..." Her words trailed off as a tiny tremor shook her body. "Oh, God! Dominick..." she moaned. "What's happening to me?" Her legs clasped him around the lower back and her hands gripped his biceps in a bruising grip.

"Let it go, honey," he shouted, thrusting hard and deep.

Suddenly she cried out his name and her body shook violently as she climaxed. When her inner muscles clamped tight around his cock, Dominick lost it. He came with a shout, his seed flooding the condom he wore. His body shuddered and his arms nearly lost their strength as he continued to empty himself inside her. As the last tremor shook him, Dominick had enough presence of mind to roll them both on their sides without sliding out. He pulled Danielle into his arms and kissed her on the forehead, his tongue tasting the sweat from their lovemaking.

He pulled in a lungful of air before letting it out, ruffling the hair on top of her head. Never had sex been this hot, or this arousing, with any other woman—only with Danielle. Tightening his arms around her, he felt his cock start to slide from her body. With great reluctance he let go of Danielle and slipped from the bed, heading for the bathroom. He needed to remove the condom and clean himself up. Then he would climb back into Danielle's big old bed, tug her into his arms and hold her all night long.

He grinned. Or he could make love to her again. After stripping away the condom and taking care of business, Dominick wet a washcloth and returned to the bedroom and the gorgeous woman lying there. While he'd been gone Danielle had rolled onto her side away from him and pulled a corner of the sheet over her body. The fabric draped along her back in a provocative way, bringing renewed life to his body. He sat down on the bed

and gripped the sheet intending to uncover her body and cleanse her, however it seemed Danielle had another thing in mind.

The woman who moments before had been wet, wild, and abandoned in his arms was snoring like a baby.

“Well, damn.” Dominick shook his head and chuckled. He rose from the bed and returned the cloth to the bathroom. After turning off the lights he pulled back the covers and climbed into bed. He fluffed the pillow to his liking and, rolling to his side, gently brought Danielle into his arms and tucked her against his body. Immediately his shaft hardened and thickened, thumping against her backbone.

Dominick sighed and willed his body to relax. A silent, tormented moan hissed from his lips when Danielle wiggled her bottom against him before finding the sweet spot and settling in for the night. He hugged her close and whispered, “Sweet dreams, baby,” before he drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Eight

Danielle woke slowly, stretching languorously and stifling a moan as aching muscles and assorted body parts protested the motion. A masculine chuckle startled her into awareness. Dinner, Dominick, sex ... oh, my! It hadn't been a dream. Opening her eyes, she turned her head to the right and found Dominick grinning at her. She smiled back.

"Good morning." His voice rumbled deep inside her body, awakening it once again for his touch. How could a man do that by just speaking?

"Good morning to you, too. Did you sleep well?" She turned on her side facing him forgetting momentarily that she was totally naked beneath the sheet. Heat stole into her cheeks and she made a grab for the sheet, only to be stopped by Dominick's hand.

"No, don't cover yourself. I want to see your body in the light of day." They played tug of war with the sheet before she finally relented and let go. It wasn't like he hadn't seen everything already.

"Do you know how beautiful you look with your skin that pretty pink, and your nipples hard and begging for attention?" He leaned forward and took a nipple into his mouth and, just like that, Danielle was ready for round two. She arched upwards seeking closer contact and was rewarded with an insistent tug on the throbbing tip. His mouth and tongue worked her taut nipple, sending sharp tugs of arousal straight to her core.

Her fingers tunneled through his hair holding him to her breast. "Dominick," she breathed on a sigh. "What are you doing to me?"

He lifted his mouth from her nipple and blew on the distended tip. "If you have to ask, then I must not be doing it right."

She yanked on his hair. "Watch it, big boy. I would hate to have to toss you out on the street for being a smart ass."

He chuckled, the sound vibrating over her skin as his tongue continued to worry her engorged nipple. She lifted her leg and ran her toes up his calf, enjoying the feel of his hair-roughened skin. She slid her hands along his shoulders that were wide and rounded with muscle. Eyes closed, her body humming with unleashed desire, Danielle smoothed her hands down his arms and over the strong, muscular planes of his chest. He was hard all over, and she did mean all over. His arousal throbbed hard against her inner thigh, a drop of moisture leaking from the tip and onto her skin.

"Dominick, make love to me." She shifted restlessly beneath him, moving her body until the tip of his cock rested against the portals of her womanhood. He pressed the head inside and stopped.

"Dominick," she moaned, wanting him inside her now.

"Is this what you want, honey?" he asked sliding another inch inside. Oh, yes! That's what she wanted, only more. An inch wasn't enough. She wanted all of him, and she wanted him now.

The shrill chirping of a cell phone stopped his forward thrust and brought a curse from his lips. Her sentiments exactly.

"Sorry, Dani," he kissed her lips and rolled over, digging his cell phone from his pants pocket.

"Yeah?" he said into the phone.

“Hey, bro, where the hell are you?” Jackson asked sounding ticked. “Did you forget about the meeting with Thomas Greystone this morning? You know Greystone Industries, our big deal?”

“Shit,” Dominick uttered. Yes, he had forgotten all about the meeting, and everything else for that matter. Once he’d kissed Dani, stripped her naked and slid between her thighs, Dominick’s mind had gone blank. Nothing mattered but fucking Danielle.

“Yo? Dom are you listening, man?” Jackson shouted. “Dad is pissed as hell that you aren’t here and Beau is pacing back and forth wondering if he should kick your ass or wait and see if you can talk your way out of this one.”

“Jackson, tell Dad and Beau to chill. I’m on my way.”

“Where are you?” The question brought Dom up short.

“Why?”

Jackson lowered his voice. “Have you talked to Sable recently?”

“No. I haven’t seen nor heard from Sable since I left you back at the restaurant. What the hell has Sable got to do with this?” An uneasy feeling invaded Dominick. He glanced over his shoulder just in time to see Danielle slide from the bed and put on a robe before leaving the room. He covered the mouthpiece and called out, “Danielle? Come back here.”

“Dom, listen get your sorry ass out of bed and get over here. Things are real sticky and if you aren’t here in a flash things could get ugly.”

Jackson’s tone captured Dom’s attention and fast. He looked back toward the door watching for Danielle and asked, “What the hell is going on there?”

Jackson sighed. “I can’t get into it right now, but let’s just say Greystone isn’t happy and Sable looks like the cat that swallowed the canary. Get. Over. Here. Now.” He punctuated each word and hung up the phone.

Dominick snapped the phone closed and tossed it on the bed. Rubbing the back of his neck, he wondered how his day had suddenly gone from hot to cold in a matter of seconds. One stupid phone call and everything was shot to hell. He turned toward the open doorway again, wondering where the hell Danielle had gone.

“Where is that woman?” He stood up and grabbing his pants from the floor he pulled them on, zipping but not buttoning them. He shrugged into his shirt and left it unbuttoned. It didn’t matter if he was all neat and tidy at the moment because he had an extra suit at the office. Once he arrived, he’d grab a quick shower, put on fresh clothes and soothe Thomas Greystone’s ruffled feathers in a flash.

He searched the room and made sure he had everything before going in search of Danielle. He needed to get out of there, but first he wanted to say goodbye and ask her if he could see her tonight. The sounds of water running and dishes clanking told him that Danielle was in the kitchen. Following the sounds, Dominick rounded the corner and stopped in the doorway simply to watch her. She was beautiful standing there in a pale blue silk robe, barefooted, with her hair a mess.

He rested his shoulder against the doorframe and drank in the sight of her. He could watch her all day long and be content. Every move, so graceful and feminine, spoke volumes. She was a lady from head to toe, but beneath the surface lurked a wild and sexy woman. From the moment he’d seen her watching him from the Café, his insides had turned upside down and inside out with her soft smile.

He grinned when he heard Danielle muttering to herself. Her words were too low for him to hear but from the way she was nibbling on her lower lip, and the frown marring her beautiful features it was serious. He wanted to ask her what she was thinking about so hard, but a quick glance at the wall clock told him his time to leave was approaching fast. He had no doubts that Beau and Jackson could hold their own with Thomas, but he also knew Thomas could be a real ass sometimes, especially when he was kept cooling his heels on a major deal. But there was something in Jackson's voice when he'd mentioned Sable that worried Dominick. What had the woman done now? Damn, but he didn't want to leave Danielle.

* * * *

In the kitchen Danielle was plagued with questions of her own. She'd heard Sable's name mentioned by Dominick while on the phone and, though she wanted to ask—no—demand why he was talking about her while still in her bed, Danielle didn't. Instead she'd risen from the bed, donned a robe and left without a backward glance. She puttered in the kitchen washing what few dishes were there and wiped the counters twice, all the while watching the clock and counting off the minutes that Dominick was on the phone.

Was he even now talking to Sable smoothing ruffled feathers and promising it wouldn't happen again? Oh, God! She covered her face with her hands. Was she sleeping with another woman's man? Surely not. That would be a disaster if it were true. After making love to Dominick last night Danielle now knew the truth. He was the one she'd been searching for all her life, the man she dreamed about each and every night.

"No, I won't believe that." She shook herself out of her stupor and glanced at the doorway again. She sighed. There was still no sign of Dominick.

"What in the world could be taking so long?" Danielle moved to the sink and started putting the dishes now dry away.

Unaware of being observed, Danielle began muttering to herself. "Get a grip, Danielle. You don't own Dominick." She wiped the counters and looked out the window above the sink. "But I sure as hell wish I did."

A clearing throat startled her and she turned to find Dominick lounging in the doorway, brawny arms crossed over his massive chest watching her. She tossed the dishcloth aside and rested her back against the counter.

"Uh, how long have you been standing there?" She asked aloud, but really wanted to know, *did you hear what I said about wanting you for mine?*

He shifted from his relaxed pose and walked toward her, a smile forming at the corner of his very kissable mouth. She fidgeted and made a move to walk around him but ended up trapped between his arms.

"Going somewhere?" his question was casual, but with an underlying tension.

She looked into his eyes and, seeing the desire banked there, her body responded in kind. Moisture gathered between her nether lips, her nipples puckered and pushed hard against her silk robe. She licked her lips and watched his nostrils flare and his eyes darken.

"Danielle, honey, don't look at me like that," he whispered, moving his body a fraction closer to hers, his aroused state evident in the hard bulge resting against her belly.

"How am I looking at you," she asked in a sultry voice.

He moved his erection against her. "Like you want me to take you, right here, right now."

She sucked in a startled breath at the images his blunt words provoked. Her eyes shifted to the kitchen table then back to him. "I'm game if you are."

Dominick groaned, leaned forward and claimed her mouth in a hard, quick kiss. He jerked away and moved back a couple of steps. "We can't do this. I'm late for an important meeting and as much as I would like to stay here and explore some more, I can't." He grabbed his jacket and tie tossing them over his shoulder. He backed out of the room and when he reached the doorway, turned to go.

"Danielle?" he called without turning. "Will you have dinner again with me tonight?"

"Yes."

He nodded his head and with a promise to call, hurried out the door.

Excitement welled up in Danielle and she did a happy dance right there in the kitchen. After a few minutes though, her smile faded and the excitement waned. What did this mean? Were Dominick and Sable truly engaged? She wanted to believe that Sable was a conniving bitch; after all, she didn't have a ring, so they probably weren't engaged.

Hope sparked and then dimmed once more as another thought intruded. Dom hadn't indicated that there was anything between them other than an explosive, physical relationship. And last night when she told Dominick that she valued fidelity, he suddenly grew quiet. As much as she needed him, was he just using her?

"I can't think about this right now," she said, heading for the bedroom. "I've got to get ready for work."

Chapter Nine

Danielle arrived at work fifteen minutes late and was greeted with the sight of Sable sitting at one of the tables waiting. Danielle groaned.

"Great, just what I need this morning." She walked over to Sable's table.

"Hello, Sable. What are you doing here?"

Sable looked up, eyes narrowed and her mouth spread into a tight-lipped smile. She gave Danielle the once over and then sniffed before looking away.

Danielle's hackles rose at the blatant dismissal. She opened her mouth to speak when Sable turned back.

"I came to reiterate that Dominick is my fiancé."

Hands on her hips, Danielle asked snidely, "Oh, yeah? Then where's the ring, Sable?"

A flash of amusement crossed Sable's face a moment before she raised her left hand. Danielle's eyes widened at the giant rock Sable now sported. Her stomach started churning and a cold sweat broke out on her forehead. She was going to be sick. With what she hoped passed for a smile, Danielle said, "Congratulations. Now if you'll excuse me, I've got work to do."

"You do that."

Danielle turned and walked away hoping and praying she'd make it to her office and the bathroom before she threw up. She made it to the door leading to her office when Sable called to her.

"Oh, and Danielle ... stay the hell away from Dominick."

Danielle swallowed and kept walking, barely making it to the bathroom in time. She heaved and gagged, but there was nothing to get rid of. So Danielle sat there on the floor and let the tears fall. She cried and cried until there were no more tears. Getting up off the floor, Danielle had just finished washing her face when someone knocked on her door.

The door opened. "Hey, girlfriend!" Trina entered the room and closed the door. "I've come for all the juicy details about Mr. Gorgeous."

Danielle hiccuped and Trina turned with a smile that faded quicker than butter on a hot biscuit. "What's wrong?" Trina grabbed Danielle's hands and fresh tears filled her eyes.

"Danielle?"

Danielle pulled her hands from Trina's and swiped at the tears running down her cheeks. "Oh, Trina, he's engaged."

"What the hell do you mean engaged? Then why was he all over you like a bee on honey?"

"He was using me to get back at his fiancée. Evidently they'd had a tiff and he decided to have a boys' night out."

"Are you sure? I would have sworn that man wanted you and no other."

Danielle took a deep breath and let it out. "I took him home and we made love. It was hot, exciting, and wonderful." She shook her head. "I lusted after another woman's man."

Trina patted her leg. "Now you listen here. Dominick should have told you he was engaged and as a matter of fact, he never should have asked you out in the first place."

"I know that."

"Are you sure this woman is telling the truth?"

Danielle gazed at Trina, hope beginning to bloom. Hadn't Dominick told her last night that Sable wasn't his fiancée or anything else? Then her hopes fell. Sable was wearing a ring—Dominick's ring, so she said.

"Oh, Trina, I don't know. When we ran into Sable and Dominick's brother, Jackson, last night at the restaurant, I was so confused and hurt. Then Sable told me to stay away from Dominick, that he was hers. I didn't believe her until I walked out intending to question Dominick and overheard him and his brother arguing."

Danielle stood and started pacing. "Dominick said Sable was just using Jackson and that what she really wanted was to be in Dominick's bed. I'm so freakin' confused it's driving me nuts."

"You know what you have to do. You need to go confront Dominick and ask him point blank if Sable is his fiancée."

"But she has a ring."

Trina snorted. "Girl, she could have bought that ring herself."

Danielle let that little tidbit sink in for a moment. Could that be true? But why would Sable lie? There was only one way to find out. She had to talk to Dominick.

* * * *

Dominick entered his office followed by Beau and Jackson. He loosened his tie, walked to the mini bar and got a bottle of water out of the fridge. Then he waited for the barrage of questions he knew was coming. He sauntered over to his desk and sat down in his leather chair.

"Okay," he said while twisting off the cap. "Go ahead and get it over with."

He took a drink of water and watched his two brothers exchange a look. He knew that look. They were trying to decide who was going to be the one to ask the questions. A moment later the barrage began.

Jackson leaned forward and rested his elbows on his knees. "What the hell were you thinking? You know that Thomas Greystone hates to be kept waiting and yet you were thirty minutes late because you were in bed with a woman. One who isn't your fiancée I might add."

Dominick slammed down his water. "Thomas knows the truth. Sable is not my fiancée. I did not propose to her nor did I buy her the god-awful ring she's wearing." The only woman he wanted to buy a ring for was Danielle. Which reminded him. He needed to call and confirm their plans to have dinner tonight. He reached out to pick up the phone when Beau spoke.

"Dammit, Dom. Can you listen for a minute here? We can't afford to alienate Thomas or make him mad. And even though she's a royal pain in the ass, he will believe whatever Sable tells him."

"I know that." Dominick pinched his nose. "I went out on one date with the woman and that was the end of it." His head was starting to pound.

“Last night after you and Danielle left, Sable said she liked me better than you. Then the woman blatantly came on to me.” Jackson shivered. “She’s got a nice ass and a killer figure but underneath all that beauty she’s a shark and a damned clever one.”

The three brothers chuckled over the picture Jackson’s words brought to their minds. Dominick was the first to sober. “I told Thomas this morning that Sable was lying about the engagement and the ring. I also told him that I was seeing another woman that I was very serious about.” He let his words sink in, waiting to see what his brothers thought of his words. It didn’t take long.

Jackson voiced the question. “Are you sure? I know she’s a beauty to look at, hell, I saw that last night. But do you really think it’s serious?”

Dominick thought about mentioning the dreams but vetoed the idea. His brothers wouldn’t understand what he knew. That Danielle and he were fated to be together. So he said the only thing he could. “Yes, I’m sure.”

The brothers stood to leave while Dominick remained seated. Just as Beau reached the door to open it, the knob twisted and the door opened. In walked Sable. She stopped when she saw Beau and Jackson, a smile curving her bright red lips.

“Well, well. If it isn’t the other two sexy Knight brothers.” She reached a hand out and ran a finger down the front of Jackson’s shirt. “Hello, Jackson,” Sable purred. “I so enjoyed our evening last night.” She glanced at Dominick before turning back to Jackson and whispering in a voice still loud enough for Dominick to hear. “You didn’t tell Dominick about our kiss did you? He might get angry with us, you know.”

“Sable, leave Jackson alone.” Dominick motioned for the other two men to leave and waited to see just what the hell Sable was up to. The door clicked shut and Sable turned and sauntered over to Dominick, resting her hip against his desk.

“Good morning, darling. Did you have a nice evening with that woman? What was her name ... Denise? Doris? Oh, I remember ... Danielle, wasn’t it?” She flicked an imaginary piece of lint from her sleeve, flashing her ring.

Dominick held his temper. “Be careful, Sable.” He stood up and walked over to stand in front of his big picture window. What was she doing right now, he wondered? Was she reliving the night as he was? His cock stirred to life at the memory of Danielle’s naked body writhing beneath him, begging him for more.

He jumped when Sable slid her hand down his chest and stopping at his belt. “You look tense, darling,” she purred. “Let me help you.” She moved to undo his belt and Dominick grabbed her hand and shoved it away.

“What the hell are you doing? And why did you tell your father that I had proposed when you know damn good and well that I didn’t.” He shoved his hands in his pockets and waited.

“But, you did propose to me,” she replied in a teary voice. “Don’t you remember?”

Dominick’s eyes narrowed. What the hell was Sable up to now? Tears and lies? It didn’t make sense.

“Look, Sable. You’re a beautiful woman and any man would be a fool not to snatch you up.” She made a move toward him and he held up his hand stopping her. “But, that man isn’t me. I’m in love with Danielle.”

Sable’s eyes flashed angrily, her mouth twisted into a sneer. “She doesn’t love *you*, Dom. It wouldn’t surprise me if the little bitch didn’t come onto Jackson, now that she knows you and I are together again.”

He shook his head. "You lie. Danielle doesn't know Jackson all that well. She just met him last night."

Sable shrugged nonchalantly. "Maybe you're right. But I wonder..." her words hung in the air.

"What? You wonder what?"

Sable moved to his desk and slid her fingers along the edge before answering. "Well, last night Jackson talked nonstop about Danielle during dinner. I swear he nearly bored me to tears."

"So?"

Sable looked up at him then. "He mentioned in passing something about the flare of heat that jolted through him when he kissed Danielle's hand. He also said he knew she felt it, too."

Was this true? Could that have been the reason Danielle jumped up from the table and headed for the ladies' room? He shook his head. No, he didn't believe it. He wouldn't believe that of his brother, nor of Danielle.

Dominick snorted. "That's bull, Sable, and you know it."

"You don't have to believe me, why not go ask Jackson?"

"I believe I'll just do that." He strode to the door and opened it. He really didn't believe Sable but he would warn Jackson off just in case.

Chapter Ten

Danielle was asking the receptionist where she could find Dominick when someone called her name.

“Danielle?”

She turned and found Jackson headed toward her, a welcoming smile on his face. She offered up a smile. “Hello, Jackson.”

He took her hand in his and placed a kiss across the top. “What brings you to Knight Enterprises?”

“I’m here to see Dominick. Is he here?”

Jackson looked toward a closed door then returned his gaze to Danielle. “He’s in a meeting right now. Why don’t you come with me?” He took her hand in his and led her toward a closed door down the hall. Opening the door, he ushered her inside and closed the door.

“Maybe I’d better go.” She made a move to open the door when Jackson’s hand stopped her.

“No, stay.” He smiled. “I don’t think my brother would be too happy if I let you leave before speaking to him.

“Will he be long?”

Jackson let go of her hand. “I don’t think so, but with Sable you never know.”

Danielle stiffened. “Sable,” she cleared her throat. “Sable is here?”

“Yeah, she walked into Dominick’s office as we were leaving. Why?”

No! Her mind screamed. Dominick belongs to me, not to her. Yet, that wasn’t exactly the truth if Sable was to be believed.

“Danielle? Are you all right? Do you need to sit down?”

Danielle shook her head and continued to pace the office floor like a caged animal. She wanted to go find Dominick and Sable and see for herself if they were a couple. If she saw them together she would be able to tell, wouldn’t she? Oh, God! Her mind whirled with scenarios, questions and fears. The biggest one being that she was going to lose the man of her dreams before she truly had a chance to tell him how she felt.

“Jackson, can I ask you something?”

“Sure, anything.” His hands came to rest on her shoulders in a comforting gesture.

“Is Dominick going to marry Sable?” Giant tears rolled down her cheeks as she voiced her question.

Jackson cursed. “Danielle, listen.”

Oh, God! Oh, God! It was true. She couldn’t stand it, couldn’t stand to hear his answer. She twisted away from him running blindly for the door.

“Danielle, where are you going?” Jackson asked from behind her.

“I have to go,” she whispered tearfully. “I don’t want to know.” The dam broke. Tears now ran unchecked down her cheeks, giant sobs shaking her body.

“Aw ... Danielle. Don’t cry.” Jackson pulled her into his embrace and held her against him whispering soft words of comfort. “Please don’t cry. I can’t stand it when a beautiful woman cries.”

Danielle didn't listen, just continued to cry a river of tears. "I love him and he's not even mine to love." She gripped Jackson tighter and cried harder. Danielle was crying so hard that she didn't hear the door open or see the shocked look on Dominick's face as he took in the scene before him.

"What the hell is going on here?"

Danielle squeaked and jerked from Jackson's arms. She wiped furiously at her tear-stained face and tried to smile. "Hello Dominick, I came..."

"Save it. I see what you came here for."

Danielle flinched as though she was physically struck. She stood frozen, trying to understand why he was angry. She was the one who should be angry. He had wine, dined, and bedded her, all the while engaged to another woman.

"Dom, it's not what you think." Jackson cautioned.

"Shut up, Jackson. Stay the hell out of it." He turned to face her once more, the coldness in his eyes scaring her. "You know, I didn't want to believe Sable when she said that you were attracted to my brother."

"What?"

"You heard me." He looked to Jackson then. "And you. I never thought my brother would go after a woman I was involved with." His fists clenched and his jaw tightened. "I told Sable you wouldn't make a move on her, so I came to ask you and when I opened the door..."

"You opened the door and saw what exactly?" Danielle wanted to hear it, needed to hear it from his lips.

He crossed his arms. "I found you in Jackson's arms."

"Yes, you did. You found me crying in Jackson's arms." She walked toward him, anger filling her with each step. "Crying over you because when I finally find the man of my dreams, a man I can love forever, I discover that he's engaged to another woman. You seduced me and bedded me." Now close enough to touch him, she poked him in the chest with each word. "All the while knowing that you were engaged. Do you know how that makes me feel?" Her voice rose. "Like a cheap slut." With those parting words, Danielle fled from Dominick's presence, ignoring Jackson's shouts for her to come back. It wasn't his voice she wanted to hear calling her back, begging her to stay. It was Dominick's.

She reached the elevator just as the doors opened and stepped inside. As she turned around and pressed the button her eyes met Sable's, noting the look of triumph that showed on the other woman's face. The doors slid closed, cocooning Danielle in the tiny box, alone.

"Oh, Dominick," she choked out. "Why did I have to fall in love with you?" She railed at the fates and at herself. By the time the doors opened on the ground floor, Danielle was composed, not a tear in sight.

She made it back to the Café, where she found Trina waiting. Danielle explained what had happened, and then told her day manager she was going home. She left the Café with no real destination in mind—anywhere away from Knight Enterprises and Dominick Knight would do. It came to her then, the perfect place to be alone. The family's beachfront house in Destin. With a renewed sense of purpose, Danielle headed for the beach and solitude.

* * * *

“Why are you just standing there?” Jackson asked. “Go after her.”

Dominick slowly turned and faced his brother. “Why was Danielle alone in here with you?”

Jackson didn’t answer the question. Instead he reiterated his earlier statement. “You need to go after her. Explain what the hell is going on between you and Sable. For God’s sake, you heard what she said. She thinks you used her to get back at Sable.”

“I heard what she said.” Dominick’s voice was low and angry. “Now answer the fucking question. Why were you and Danielle alone in here and why was she in your arms? Were you trying to coax her into your bed? You said last night you wondered how she’d be in bed. Would you like me to tell you firsthand?” He clenched his fists at his sides. He wouldn’t hit his brother. But he sure as hell wanted to.

“That’s enough,” Jackson shouted. “She came here looking for you. I brought her in here to wait for you until you were finished meeting with Sable.” With long, purposeful strides Jackson walked over to the bar and grabbed a beer from the mini-fridge. He unscrewed the cap and took a healthy swallow before turning back to Dominick.

“That woman is so in love with you it’s unreal. She burst into tears when she heard Sable was here. Dammit, Dom, she’s seen the rock Sable’s wearing and, if I had to hazard a guess, I would say your little albatross has been spreading rumors to Danielle.”

Dominick frowned. Had he walked in on an innocent embrace between his brother and Danielle? Shit! Sable had fed him a lie and damn if he hadn’t fallen for it, hook, line, and sinker. He ran his fingers through his hair and sat down in a chair.

“Jackson, what in the hell is wrong with me?” He stretched his long legs negligently before him and stared at the floor.

“You’re in love, big brother, that’s what.” Jackson chuckled. “And after the display I just saw, I would say to a hot tempered woman.”

Dominick’s mouth curved into an unconscious smile as he thought about Danielle going toe-to-toe with him and not backing down. What a woman! And she was his ... or maybe not. His smile faded.

“I’ve got to find her and talk to her.” He stood up. Glancing at his watch, he noticed it was nearing lunchtime, which meant she was probably at the Café. Sparing a glance at Jackson, Dominick headed for the door.

“I’m going to find Danielle. Get Sondrea to reschedule my afternoon meeting.” He didn’t wait for an answer; he knew his brother would do this for him. Just before he left the office Dominick stopped and glanced over his shoulder. “Thanks, Jackson.”

Jackson nodded. “Go on. Go get your woman.” He reached for the phone and buzzed Sondrea.

Dominick hurried down the hallway and made it to the elevator just before Sable reached him. “Dominick, where are you going? I thought we could have a nice leisurely lunch in your office. And afterwards, hot, sweaty sex on that big desk of yours in there,” she said in a silky voice.

“Sable,” Dominick said in a low, menacing voice. “If you don’t get the hell away from me, I won’t be held responsible for my actions.” He turned to face her then. “What you did was underhanded, not to mention downright mean. What has Danielle ever done to you?”

Sable's face turned red with anger. "What has she done to me?" Her voice rose shrilly, gaining attention from those around them. "That little bitch took you away from me, that's what she did."

Dominick's voice was cold with anger when he finally spoke. "Sable, you never had me to begin with. I knew on our first and only date that I didn't want you in my bed. You're a cold-hearted, spoiled little rich girl who thrives on other people's misery."

Sable gasped in outrage. "How dare you speak to me that way."

He laughed nastily. "The truth hurts, doesn't it?" He leaned down until he was close enough for her to hear and no one else. "Now get the hell out of my sight before I tell your daddy all about your little charade."

Sable opened her mouth to speak but with a warning look from him, she closed her mouth, turned around and walked off.

Dominick shifted his stance, waiting impatiently for the elevator to hurry up and arrive. The doors swished open and he hurried inside. He watched the flashing floor numbers count down, each one bringing him one step closer to being on his way to Danielle.

"Baby, please forgive me," he whispered silently. "Don't let me have screwed this up."

The elevator opened and he quickly stepped out. He rushed out the doors of Knight Enterprises and into traffic, nearly getting hit. The Café was only a block away and Danielle didn't have that much of a head start on him. Dominick ran the entire route, barely missing an elderly couple exiting the Café. He pushed open the doors and entered, his eyes immediately scanning the room for Danielle. There was no sign of her but he did find her friend Trina sitting in a booth against the back wall. She would know where Danielle was he was sure of it.

A man on a mission, he strode quickly toward Trina. He'd just reached her table and was about to voice his question when she spoke first.

"I can't believe you would show your sorry ass in here after what you did to Danielle." Trina hissed.

"Where is she? I need to find her ... to explain." He looked around the place and saw a door in the back. "Is that Danielle's office?" He turned to head that way when Trina's voice stopped him.

"She's gone."

He whirled around. "What do you mean gone? Gone where?" A wave of apprehension swept through him, then panic set in. His mind whirled while his thoughts jumbled in his brain. He couldn't think straight. He had to find Danielle.

"Trina, please tell me where she is."

Trina looked him over and then glanced away. "I can't. I promised her."

Dominick's heart thundered in his chest. He wanted to grab Trina and demand the truth from her. It took all his concentration to think, to formulate his questions. He had to keep a level head if he was going to ferret out Danielle's whereabouts. Taking a deep, calming breath he tried again.

"Trina, I need to find Danielle. We had a slight disagreement and I need to rectify the situation."

“A slight disagreement? You call taking my friend to bed while you have another woman wearing your engagement ring a ‘slight disagreement’?” Trina shook her head. “You are one mixed-up man, if that’s what you think.”

His jaw clenched. “I’m not engaged to Sable nor have I ever been. I’ve never even bedded the woman. We went out on one date, but she wasn’t the woman I wanted. She wasn’t the woman I dreamt about every night, who left me aching and wanting. She’s not Danielle.” He all but shouted the words.

“You dreamt about Danielle? When? Before or after meeting her?”

“Before. Why?”

“Hmm ... interesting.” Trina tapped her chin and a smile curved her lips. “Danielle told me about a very hot dream she’s been having.” She looked at Dominick. “She claimed the man was the only one who could satisfy her in bed and out. She also said the man looked just like you.”

Dominick’s eyes widened in shock. “What? Are you saying she’s dreamed of me?”

Trina nodded. “Yep, that’s what I’m saying. It seems that you two are fated to be together or something. Too bad you’re a little to slow on the uptake. Now Danielle is heartbroken and she’s gone.”

Dominick swallowed hard. “Trina, please.” He held out his hands imploring her to help him find Danielle.

“Okay, okay.” She pointed her finger at him. “But if you hurt her again, you’ll have to answer to me. Got it?”

“Yes ma’am. But don’t worry. I won’t ever hurt her again. I love Danielle and I’m going to do my best to prove it to her.”

“Okay, then. Listen up.” Dominick sat down and listened as Trina told him where he could find Danielle. After she was through, he stood up, walked over to her and planted a kiss on her cheek.

“Thank you.” Finally with hope blossoming in his chest, Dominick walked out of the Café in search of the rest of his life. A life he planned to spend with Danielle. All he had to do was convince her of that. Not an easy task considering all the lies Sable had told but still, he wasn’t giving up without a fight. A smile blooming on his lips, Dominick said a little prayer of thanks.

Chapter Eleven

It was late afternoon as Danielle gazed out at the ocean, her heart heavy and sad. A soft sigh escaped her lips as she thought about Dominick and what might have been. She stifled a yawn and glanced once again at the rippling waves, searching for answers. She knew they weren't out there in the water, but it didn't matter. Dominick was out of her life for good. She swallowed hard and bit back the tears threatening to fall. It was over and she wasn't going to dwell on it.

"It's time to get on with my life." Danielle picked up her book and started reading. After a moment or two, her eyes began to droop and the book dropped from her fingers, landing in the sand beside her chair. She leaned her head back and closed her eyes, her last thoughts of Dominick.

Thirty minutes later, Danielle awoke with a seed of hope in her heart. Her dream was of Dominick coming to her and professing his love. If only he was here to do so in person. To hear the words 'I love you' from his lips would be joyous. She wrapped her arms around her knees and hugged them tight to her body, thinking about the dream and its meaning. The sun was setting when she made her decision. It was time to stop running and go fight for her man.

"Yes, that's exactly what I'm going to do. Get ready, Sable, 'cause here I come." She stood up, dusted the sand off her bottom and was picking up her stuff when she heard a voice.

"Danielle, where are you, love?" His baritone voice called out to her in the semi-darkness.

No, it couldn't be. Danielle turned and searched for the man behind the voice. "Dominick, is that you?"

She gasped when he stepped from the shadows thrown by a copse of trees, dressed in nothing but a pair of low-slung jeans and a white T-shirt that showed off his powerful physique. Her mouth watered just looking at him. He continued to walk toward her with a slow, unhurried stride, and stopping a few feet away.

He said nothing, just stood there with his hands stuffed into his pockets, his eyes probing to her very soul. The silence between them echoed along the waves and it was driving her crazy. Why wouldn't he say anything? Why was he here?

"Well?" He quirked his eyebrow questioningly.

Danielle nearly melted. His voice was deep and low, with that sexy purr that she loved so much. Just hearing him caused a ripple of heat to spread through her body.

"Well, what?"

"Why did you run from me?"

She arched a brow. "I didn't run from you. You have a fiancée, remember?" She crossed her arms over her chest. "I won't be the other woman. Not even for you, Dominick."

His arms dropped to his sides and he took a step forward. "Did I ask you to?"

She stiffened momentarily abashed. Embarrassment colored her cheeks heating them until her face was aflame. Oh, God! How could she have been so stupid? She meant nothing to him except for a night of hot sex.

“No,” she responded in a low voice, “you didn’t. I’m sorry—I was mistaken.”

“Oh, you were mistaken, all right!” Suddenly he was there, grabbing her arms and shaking her. “How could you even think I would want another woman? I love you!” His voice was harsh but she wasn’t afraid. She was shocked.

“You love me? I don’t understand.”

“What’s to understand? I. Love. You.” Punctuating his words with kisses, he wrapped his arms around her and she found herself in his embrace. It felt so good to be in his arms again. To feel his heartbeat beneath her cheek, to smell his very masculine scent, a mixture of man and something else.

“Tell me about the dreams, Danielle.”

She jerked in his arms. “What? What dreams?”

He heaved a sigh and his chin rubbed against her hair. “The dreams of me and you together.”

Oh, no! She struggled to break free from his grip, but he was having none of that.

“Oh, no you don’t. I want you right here in my arms. Now tell me about the dreams, Danielle.”

She turned her face into his shirt and in a muffled voice said, “You’ll just laugh at me.”

“No, love, I’m not going to laugh.”

I’ve been having these dreams. Very ... uh...” Her face flushed hotly as she groped for the words.

“Hot? Is that what you’re looking for?”

“Yes ... hot. Anyway, the man in the dreams looks a lot like you and every night, just as he’s about to make love to me, I wake up.” Danielle hid her face against his chest, mortified over what she’d just confessed. What he must think of her.

“Danielle,” he whispered. “Honey, look at me.”

Danielle was horrified. No way was she going to look at him only to see amusement or worse, pity. No she’d just keep her head buried in his chest, thank you very much.

Too bad Dominick didn’t agree. With his finger beneath her chin, Danielle’s face was lifted very gently and she found herself looking into his blue eyes. An easy smile played at the corners of his mouth, making him look even sexier, if that were possible. Gently tugging her body free from his embrace, she wrapped her arms around her waist and stared into the growing darkness. How could she explain to this man without seeming crazy, that her dreams appealed to her more than real life sometimes? That she would much rather live out her fantasies than to live in the harsh world that surrounded her, nearly smothered her in its daily routine? Tears welled up in her eyes and Danielle bit her lip to keep from bursting into tears.

She hadn’t seen him move, but he was there. His thumb caught a tear sliding down her cheek, his eyes warm and sensitive. While she watched he brought his thumb to his lips and licked the tear away. Her breath caught at his action and her body stirred to life once more.

“Shall I tell you a secret, honey?”

She nodded.

He brought his face closer to hers, stopping within an inch of touching her lips. His warm, minty breath caressed her face and she wanted nothing more than to lean across

that space and press her lips to his. But she didn't do that. Instead she waited to hear his secret.

His fingers rubbed against her cheek and his lips kissed a path to her ear. When his whispered words reached her ear, Danielle almost fainted.

"I dream, too. I dream of a beautiful woman writhing beneath me, offering herself to me as I stroke her flesh. A woman whose eyes are charcoal gray and whose lips beckon me to kiss them, taste them, to delve between them and taste the honeyed sweetness inside." His lips placed moist kisses along her sensitive ear, sending a shiver down her spine. Her eyes closed and she tilted her head a bit to give him more room to work his magic.

"Do you know what else?"

"What?" she asked breathlessly.

"The woman looks just like you."

Danielle gasped and opened her eyes. She stared at Dominick in shock. Oh, God! Was he joking? Or could they be sharing the same dreams?

"What are you talking about?"

His masculine hands rubbed up and down her arms in a soothing gesture. "I'm talking about fate, honey. I'm talking about two strangers, dreaming about each other, and then finding each other for real."

He kissed her ear, his tongue darting inside, sending shivers across her skin. "Do you know that people search their whole lives looking for that one person who can fill the empty void inside their soul?"

She nodded although she wasn't really paying attention to his words since his mouth was doing delightful things to her ear and neck. When his teeth scraped across the pulse point in her neck, moisture gathered between her thighs.

"I love you, Danielle. Only you. And, I swear, if it takes the rest of our lives to prove it, then so be it." His lips slowly descended to meet hers in a kiss so sweet, so gentle that it brought tears to her eyes. Her emotions whirled and skidded as he continued to brush his lips over hers in a featherlight kiss. Which was all well and good, but she wanted more. Standing on tiptoes, Danielle licked his lower lip before pulling it between her teeth and giving it a tug. Not hard, but enough so that he got the picture. She wanted a hard, hot kiss that sizzled from the top of her head to the tips of her toes, and everywhere in between.

Dominick drew back, his chest heaving with each breath he took. "I can't take much more. I want you beneath me or over me, I don't care which."

His words were like an aphrodisiac, as visions of sliding down on his shaft and riding him to completion floated through her mind. Yes, her mind cried out. That's what she wanted. With trembling fingers, she tugged the shirt from his jeans and whipped it over his head, tossing it to the sand. She explored his chest, running her palms over his shoulders, down his chest and across his rock hard abs. God, he was gorgeous. His skin was hot to the touch and she couldn't resist touching or tasting. So she leaned forward and licked a path across his chest and nibbled on the little nubbin she found there, drawing a gasp from him.

His hand slid through her hair and around to the back of her head to rest on her neck. With gentle pressure, he let Danielle know where he wanted her mouth and it definitely wasn't his chest. Hunger like she'd never known filled her, drawing her deeper into its

spidery web. She didn't have much experience with oral sex. She'd never wanted to do it before. Yet, the idea of taking Dominick in her mouth and wrapping her tongue around his manhood excited her beyond control.

She licked a path down his tight, flat belly while her hands moved to the waistband of his jeans and toyed with the skin there. His quick, indrawn breath brought a smile to her face and a sense of power. With just a touch this man was putty in her hands. Oh, yeah! This was going to be fun. She popped the snap and slowly slid the zipper down caressing his hardened flesh with the back of her hand.

"Danielle, you're killing me here." His hand tightened on her neck convulsively.

She licked and whirled her tongue around his belly button. "What's a matter? Don't you like it?" She moved lower and kissed the tip of his cock that was peeking through the open jeans. A bead of pre-cum bubbled up and she swiped her tongue over it and moaned. It tasted salty and sweet. She wanted more. She grabbed his jeans and in one fluid motion pushed them down his lean, muscular legs to his ankles.

Sinking to her knees, Danielle grabbed his steely length in her hand and admired the beauty of this man. Eight inches of aroused flesh stood at attention—waiting, begging for her to taste and touch. She ran her hand along the underside and down to his balls, giving them a gentle squeeze before moving back to the tip. Dominick's hands now gripped her hair, the slight pain arousing in a way.

She flicked her tongue around the engorged head before licking down one side and back up the other. It was amazing and arousing to know that she held all the power and it was her choice to make him explode or tease him until he begged. A hard choice, to say the least, and one she wasn't certain she wanted to make.

Danielle opened her mouth and took him all the way in, feeling him bump the back of her throat. She wrapped her hand around the base of his shaft and held him still for her assault. And an assault it was. With measured strokes she sucked his cock hard then gently, hard then gently. She pulled back until just the head was in her mouth, and then she grazed the mushroom head with her teeth. His hiss of pleasure spurred her on.

She reached up with her other hand and stroked his balls, loving how they shifted and tightened in her hand. She could tell he was close by the way his hand gripped her head harder and his hips moved back and forth, pushing his shaft in and out, deeper and deeper. She opened her mouth as wide as it would go, his thrusts becoming shallow and quick.

"Oh, God, baby ... suck me hard. I can't stop," he moaned. "I can't..." Dominick's shout and stiff body told Danielle the very instant he climaxed. Hot semen spurted in her mouth and down her throat as she continued to milk him. A few more strokes and his body relaxed, sated. One last flick of her tongue and his cock slid from her mouth. Danielle sat back on her heels, her thighs wet with her juices, her clit plump and pulsing. She lifted her head and saw Dominick staring down at her, love shining in his bright blue eyes.

The smile he gave her was sensual and full of promise. He crooked a finger at her. "Come here, honey."

Danielle stood on shaking legs and yelped in shock when Dominick moved fast as lightning, scooped her up in his arms and headed for the house.

She wrapped her arms around his neck and toyed with his hair. "I love the way your hair feels, all silky and soft." He stopped in his tracks and lowered his lips to hers in a lingering kiss. It was a few seconds before he released her mouth.

She lowered her thick, dark lashes and whispered, "I thought you were taking me to bed?"

His eyes darkened with hunger. "I love you, Danielle." He started forward again, his pace a bit quicker than before.

"I love you too." Danielle laid her head against his shoulder and smiled in contentment. Could she be any happier than she was right now? Not even in her dreams.

The End

About the Author:

MacKenzie Reed just loves to create characters, put them in sticky situations and watch the sparks fly. Writing has been a life-long dream for MacKenzie, and when she was in high school, she wrote a continuing story and her mother thought it was good. Looking at it now, MacKenzie laughs and says, "What was I thinking?"

She enjoys writing, taking care of her family, and chocolate. A strange list to be sure, but that's the way it goes. Her first title was a short story called "The Magic of Passion" in Liquid Silver Books' "Afternoon Delights" Anthology. Her first novel, also published by LSB, was "Haunting Melody."

She loves to hear from readers! Email her at MacReedWriter@aol.com

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And many, many more!!