



Ellora's Cave

*Quickies*  
*Brandi Michaels*  
**Decoy**

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Warning:

The following material contains strong sexual content meant for mature readers. Decoy has been rated NC17, erotic, by three individual reviewers. We strongly suggest storing this electronic file in a place where young readers not meant to view this ebook are unlikely to happen upon it. That said, enjoy...

## Chapter 1

Melanie had never been so frightened in her life. Her muscles and bones had turned to mush and her nerves quivered from fear. She felt a trickle of sweat running down the center of her back and wondered how she'd gotten herself into such a jam. As a conservative, middle class working girl, her life was normally uneventful and too boring for words.

Even though she worked as an office assistant at the local police department, her job was routine and fairly monotonous. Her personal life had been equally dull until Detective Dominick Roarke joined the force a few months ago. Sparks had flown between them from the first meeting, but they both had a lot of emotional baggage and neither wanted to risk involvement.

Melanie had never been lucky in love. The last time her heart had been broken, she'd sworn off men, especially the strong, silent type. Rumor had it that a bitter divorce in Dominick's past had made him equally wary.

Their attraction for each other had been steadily escalating over the past few weeks, yet they'd managed to resist temptation. Then some madman had kidnapped Roarke, and she'd volunteered to act as a decoy to find him.

As the viselike grip on her arms tightened, nearly cutting off her circulation, she fought for composure. Gagged and blindfolded, she couldn't see her abductors, but each of them had a beefy hand wrapped around her upper arms. They forced her to walk between them, reminding her of twin marble columns: very big, very strong and completely unyielding.

When they'd grabbed her from her car, she'd pretended to fight them, but all she'd accomplished was losing her shoes. They'd roughly ushered her into a building and then an elevator. Now they were dragging her to a penthouse apartment. She'd figured out that much by the plush carpeting, the classical music in the elevator, and the unique smell of wealth all around her.

A door opened, she was tugged inside, and then it closed with a firm click. The carpet was even softer and thicker under her bare feet. The smell of the room was a curious mix of leather and sweat. Melanie sensed the presence of more people. Her captors tightened their grip, bringing her to a halt between their massive bodies. She got the impression she was being presented to someone or several someones. Hopefully it was the same someone who held Roarke captive.

"Miss Brannington, "" said a deep masculine voice.

She turned her head to her right, following the sound of the cultured, slightly accented voice. She recognized it as belonging to Dwight Clayburn, a very wealthy hotelier who frequently made the local

news. He was currently under investigation by the local authorities for the disappearance of his wife.

“How nice of you to join us, “” he continued smoothly. “Detective Roarke and I are thrilled to have your company. Aren’t we, dDetective?”

Melanie strained to hear a response, desperately hoping that the police lieutenant’s ploy had worked and that she’d been led to Roarke.

When no response was made, Clayburn’sClayburn’s tone grew censorious. “Come now, dDetective, don’t be shy. Miss Branningon has gone to a lot of trouble to find you. The least you can do is say hello.”

The unmistakable thud of a man being hit in the head made Melanie’s stomach roll. She tensed even more, wondering how badly Roarke was hurt. He’d confiscated a video that proved Clayburn had killed his wife. After reporting it to the lieutenant, he’d stashed the tape for safekeeping while he responded to another police emergency. Then Clayburn had kidnapped him in an effort to recover the damning evidence.

The hotelier was obviously willing to face additional charges of kidnapping and assault to get the tape. Her abduction proved that he hadn’t been successful in prying information from Roarke. Melanie knew the Clayburn planned to use her to get information from him. She just didn’t know how he intended to use her. She hoped the electronic homing device hidden in a temporary filling would lead a rescue team to them before she found out.

“Speak to Miss Branningon,” Clayburn insisted in an edgier, tightly restrained tone.

Roarke gave her a low, rough warning. “Don’t do anything he says.”

Relief washed through Melanie at the deep, commanding sound of his voice. Her heart leapt with joy, knowing he was alive and so close. She turned her attention forward, realizing he was seated a few feet in front of her. She wanted to see him and touch him and make sure he was all right, but the blindfold didn’t allow her even a glimmer of light.

Her breath caught in her throat, her pulse pounding in her ears as she realized just how much he meant to her and, simultaneously, that she would do anything to keep him alive.

“Roarke?” She cried his name, but the thick gag in her mouth muffled the sound and added to her frustration.

Clayburn answered for him. “He’s fine, Miss Branningon, and happy to see you, I’m sure. He has a video of mine, but he’s refusing to tell me where it’s hidden. I thought we might make our own little video of the two of you. Then maybe his renowned chivalry will convince him to swap with me. Don’t

you think that's a good idea? You can nod your reply."

When she didn't move, one of the goons grasped a handful of her hair. She stifled a groan as he gave it a rough tug and snapped her head backward.

"Leave her alone!" growled Roarke.

Her hair was released, and she shook her head, the tangle of spiraling curls falling back to her shoulders. Her scalp stung, but at least she'd learned that Roarke wasn't blindfolded. He could see her even if she couldn't see him. She didn't know if that was good or bad, but the blindness was totally unnerving.

"If you hurt her, Clayburn, I'll cut your heart out and stuff it down your throat!"

Taunting laughter followed the harsh threat.

"You're not in much of a position to threaten, dDetective. It seems I have the upper hand, but never let it be said that I'm not a gentlemen. I don't intend to hurt Miss Branningon. In fact, I'm going to do her a favor. My informants at the police department say she has the hots for you, but you haven't been very accommodating. So I'm going to give her something you've been slow to offer: some long-denied sexual satisfaction."

Melanie stiffened at the veiled threat behind Clayburn's smooth talk. A violent tremor shot through her as the horrible thought of gang-rape flashed through her mind. Roarke swore profusely, his tone dark and dangerous, but his warnings fell on deaf ears. Clayburn just chuckled.

"Remove her gag," he ordered. "It's time to get this video rolling. The blindfold will have to stay, but it'll add a hint of mystery to the film."

As soon as the cloth was removed, Melanie licked her lips and swallowed hard. Her mouth was dry and sore. She wanted to rub her hands over her lips to wipe away the feel of the offensive cloth, but the hands on her arms were like vises. They didn't give an inch.

"I think the first thing we need to do is make Miss Branningon a little more comfortable, boys. Help her out of her clothes."

"No!" Melanie tried to scream, but her throat was dry and the sound was little more than a squeak. Her arms were practically numb, but she jerked her shoulders in an effort to twist out of their reach. She had to hold them off somehow until the rescue team could get here. Her feet were bare, but since they were supporting most her weight, she tried to kick their shins.

They quickly and easily overpowered her. Each man caught one of her legs between his own and effectively pinned her in place.

She heard Roarke swear viciously again, and then he warned her not to fight them. It would only make things worse, and she didn't have a chance against their combined strength.

Clayburn chuckled and complimented him on the logic of his thinking.

It was evident that any response they made heightened the madman's pleasure. Roarke stopped yelling, and she went still. Whatever Clayburn had planned, they'd survive it together.

The next thing Melanie knew, a big hand was grasping the front of her dress, ripping it from her body. She stood trembling in her bra and panties, spread eagle and on display. Goosebumps shivered over her from a combination of fear and cool air rushing over her warm bare flesh. Heat flooded her cheeks at the thought of Roarke and these strangers seeing her this way. Even worse, she could feel the erections of both thugs prodding her thighs.

"Such a lovely body," Clayburn admired.

He'd let his goons rip off her dress, but now he'd moved closer. He was so close that Melanie could smell the sweet scent of alcohol on his breath and the strong scent of some expensive cologne. She shuddered in revulsion.

"Too perfect to keep hidden. Right, dDetective?"

A couple slices with the knife and her bra fell from to the floor. Her nipples tightened and heat suffused her body. She cursed her pale, redhead's complexion and its tendency to blush scarlet. Hot and trembling with humiliation, Melanie's instincts were to cover her nudity, but she was utterly defenseless. Having Roarke witness her humiliation made it even more horrible, especially as the goons kept rubbing their erections against her flesh. When she thought it couldn't get much worse, Clayburn continued his one-sided dialogue.

"What nice round breasts and fat, responsive nipples you have, my dear. Don't you think so, dDetective? Look how dark and rosy they are and how they pout for us."

She felt the cool edge of steel touching the tip of each nipple and went rigid with fear.

To Melanie, he said, "Roarke had a little accident and one side of his face is swollen. He can't see you as clearly as he'd like, but I can assure you he appreciates your beauty. He's buck-naked and quite the stud. The sight of you has his cock standing at stiff attention. It'll make for excellent footage."

The mental image he created made Melanie's blood run hot. Roarke was a ruggedly handsome, hard-muscled man with a washboard stomach, lean hips and strong thighs. She'd often wondered about his other assets and had fantasized about seeing him in the nude. Knowing that the sight of her, however flawed, could arouse him was equally arousing to her. She felt her breasts swelling and

nipples tingling.

Clayburn moved aside, mumbling about getting his video camera. Then she heard him adjusting switches and felt the heat of a bright light skimming over her body.

“Okay, boys, why don’t you plump up those breasts a little for the camera?”

“No! Don’t touch me!” Melanie screamed. The suggestion had her twisting her torso and tugging at her arms and legs. She heard Roarke’s roar of fury and a violent thudding from his side of the room, but neither of them could do a thing to stop the big, beefy hands from fondling her breasts. Each of the goons rubbed their rough fingers over her nipples, plucking and teasing them to tightness. More panic swirled through her at the sound and feel of their increased arousal.

“You’ll pay for this, Clayburn!” Roarke continued to bellow in rage. “You’re a fucking coward!”

“I wasn’t going to use the clamps on those tender titties, but now that you’ve offended me, Roarke, I think they’ll add charm to the video,” said Clayburn.

Melanie relaxed slightly as the calloused hands left her, but gasped in shock as they replaced their fingers with nipple clamps. The tiny metal teeth bit into her skin and the pain was so sharp, it stole her breath. Body quivering, she bit her lip to keep from screaming again.

“Now let’s see if she’s a natural redhead.”

They eased their grip on her thighs, but kept her legs spread and quickly cut off her panties, leaving her totally naked and exposed. Cool air teased her flesh, offering unexpected and unwelcome pleasure. She’d never felt more vulnerable in her life. Embarrassed by her body’s reaction, she got angrier. Fury bubbled through her, making her want to yell and fight and do bodily harm to Clayburn and his muscular thugs. She knew Roarke’s notorious temper had to be well past boiling point, too.

“Spread them for the camera boys.”

Then the henchmen wrapped their sweaty hands around each of her thighs, spreading them wide. Rage washed over her in a tidal wave of heat. Sheer instinct had her struggling against them, but her puny efforts didn’t even slow them down. Their grip was hard and inflexible. All she accomplished was making her breasts bounce wantonly and her nipples sting enough to bring tears to her eyes.

She felt the added heat of the camera lights and knew Clayburn was scouring every inch of her body with the lens. Not wanting to do anything to enhance his enjoyment, she forced herself to hold absolutely still and stop showing any reaction. Breathing deeply so that she wouldn’t hyperventilate, she silently screamed for the police to get here soon.



When she'd calmed down a little, she realized that Roarke was quiet now, too. She hoped that meant he'd come to the same conclusion.

"Bring her over to lover boy. Let him get a close-up view of that lovely snatch."

Melanie was lifted and carried a few steps. Then her bare feet were placed on the smooth, hard skin. She knew instinctively that it was Roarke's. Warmth sizzled from him, making her toes curl and heat dance up her legs. She realized from the slope of his body that his arms were tied behind his back.

"Drape her knees over his shoulders."

If her heart pounded any harder, Melanie thought it would surely explode. She stiffened as her legs slid over his slick flesh.

"Easy, Bbaby, it'll be all right."

Roarke's low, crooning tone soothed her, as did his nearness. She could smell him now, the first familiar reaction she'd had since she'd been abducted. His scent permeated her panic and she felt her body slowly respond to the feel of him. The shock of having herself naked and touching his bare skin slowly gave way to a flood of different reactions. She could tell by his shallow breathing that he was fighting a whole host of conflicting emotions, too.

They'd been so careful these past few months. Careful not to date, not to be alone for too long, not to touch each other or risk triggering the passion that simmered between them. They'd kept their desires fiercely under control, but now all that caution seemed to be backfiring. Melanie wanted his arms around her. Wanted him to hold her and kiss her and reassure her.

The vice-like grip on her thighs eased and the bulk of her weight was dropped onto his broad shoulders. Skin slid over naked skin and heightened the tension. The two goons still supported her with their hold on her arms, but they shifted to either side of the chair where Roarke was bound.

She felt the heat of his breath between her legs and shuddered . shuddered. He pressed a soft kiss on the inside of her thigh. Maybe he meant it to be reassuring, but it made fire arc to the core of her.

"Roarke!" she couldn't stifle her reaction to his intimate caress.

"You have to trust me, Mel," he whispered gruffly.

"She'd better not trust you, dDetective. She'd be wise to realize you have a raging hard- on," snarled Clayburn. "My wife found herself a big stud like you and swore he ruined her for any other man, but she won't be bragging about it anymore!"

Melanie shuddered at his crudeness, but wondered how much truth there was in his words. Roarke countered the warning by spreading more soft kisses on her thighs. Moisture pool between her legs; and

she knew he could smell her arousal.

“You can do better than sissy kisses,” Clayburn insisted, “I want more action.”

Melanie sensed that he was zooming closer with his camera and lights. She hated the darkness that forced her to rely on her other overloaded senses. She tried to clench her thighs protectively, but that meant clamping her legs more tightly around Roarke’s head. He moaned and mumbled an apology for the intimacy being forced on her.

Then his face was thrust between her legs with unnecessary force. She knew one of the goons had shoved his head, but that didn’t stop her from gasping at the exquisite feel of his hot mouth. She felt the flick of his tongue at her pubic lips, and knew that he’d stopped fighting the desire. Her breath got trapped in her lungs as he licked the sensitive flesh in tentative exploration. When she threw her head back and moaned, he kissed her with increasing eagerness.

“Faster and harder, Roarke,” urged Clayburn. “Make her scream or I’ll let my men take their turn at making her scream.”

Melanie was dimly aware of his latest threat, but then Clayburn and his men were shoved out of her thoughts by Roarke’s mouth. He found her most sensitive nub of nerves and latched on to it, sucking greedily. Shards of hot sensation spiraled upward through her body, stealing what was left of her breath. Her fingers and toes curled, her back arching as she wantonly wriggled against him.

“Whimpering isn’t good enough. Make her scream!”

Melanie hadn’t realized she was whimpering, but she abruptly stopped even though Roarke’s mouth kept devouring her. She never reached orgasm quickly or easily, but when he continued to milk her clitoris, she thrashed against him, writhing with mindless pleasure. She tried to hold back, tried to catch her breath and clear her mind, but he wouldn’t allow it. Soon she was screaming his name as he drove her over the edge.

“Grab his balls so he doesn’t come with her. Hard enough to clamp him, but not kill the erection.” Clayburn spat the order and one of his men obeyed.

All the strength drained from Melanie’s body and she went limp. Clayburn’s cruel command echoed hollowly in her ears, and then she both heard and felt Roarke’s low groan. She wished she could do something to help him but her whole body had turned liquid. The goons’ grip on her arms was all that kept her from falling into a heap on the floor.

“Not bad. Not bad at all,” said Clayburn. “If the dDetective doesn’t cough up my video, I might decide to go into the porno business with this little gem. Better yet, I’ll bet the guys down at the police

station would love to get a look at it. Now all we need is a good, hard fuck for a finale. I just can't decide if I want a twosome or a little gang action. Maybe one and then the other."

*Where the hell was Lieutenant Talbot and his rescue team?* Melanie wondered frantically, going tense again. Her arms were numb. Her nipples ached and every inch of her body still throbbed from Roarke's wickedly talented mouth. She couldn't stand much more. Her thighs tightened reflexively around his neck, and he placed another soothing kiss on her thigh.

His chest heaved, his breathing was ragged, and she knew he'd been just as deeply affected by their forced intimacy. She desperately wanted to see him, yet she perversely didn't know how she'd ever face him again. What they'd shared, however coerced, was the best sex she'd ever known.

"Now that Roarke's all primed and ready, I think it's time to let his little woman ride that big cock. Help her boys."

Melanie felt herself being lifted again; her legs spread wider and then draped over the cool, smooth arms of a metal chair. She shifted her weight and fell forward, but the pressure on the nipple clamps caused her to cry out in pain.

The goons pulled her back a little, and she felt Roarke's mouth at her breasts. He grasped the clamp from her left breast and spit it on the floor. She yelped, her nipple stinging as blood rushed into it. He repeated the process with her right breast and then slowly bathed each with the stroke of his hot, wet tongue. He continually changed the rhythm of his caresses, alternately licking and nipping and sucking until Melanie's body was strung tight with need again.

"Suck those nipples. Now that the clamps have done their work, you need to suck them hard. Drag them deep into your mouth. Then maybe I'll let you bury that cock deep into something tight and wet."

Roarke grasped a nipple with his lips and gently sucked on her, using his tongue to soothe the bruised and tender flesh. Melanie couldn't restrain a moan. She shivered, feeling the pressure build again in her belly. She clenched her vaginal muscles and tried not to give any sign of her renewed arousal, but her hips were instinctively arching, seeking his hard flesh.

"Let go of her arms."

The henchmen immediately obeyed, releasing her abruptly and throwing her off balance. She grasped Roarke by the shoulders, clutching the smooth, hard flesh. Her arms stung as the flow of blood returned, but she managed to cling to him. She pressed her chest against his and fought for composure, her weight supported by the arms of the chair. The first thing she did when feeling returned to her arms was reach for the blindfold.

“Leave it on or I’ll kill you.”

A tremor ripped through Melanie. She didn’t doubt him for a minute. Is that what he intended for Roarke once he’d gotten what he wanted? She couldn’t bear the thought. From the instant she’d learned he was missing, she’d regretted every minute they’d wasted with their emotional wariness. She wanted a second chance.

Leaning against him, she welcomed the feel of his face pressed between her breasts. They were both panting for breath. Despite all of Clayburn’s evil manipulations, both bodies were thoroughly aroused. Roarke continued to nuzzle her nipples with barely restrained hunger.

When his hot mouth moved to the curve of her throat, a shudder racked Melanie’s body. She dipped her head, searching blindly for the mouth that had offered her so much pleasure, badly needing the emotional connection. His lips latched onto hers with savage hunger. Then he was thrusting his tongue deep while simultaneously arching his hips as much as possible. She felt his penis jabbing her bottom and involuntarily wiggled against it.

*Where was their backup?*

“Now Miss Branningon, it’s time for you to do your part. You’re the cowgirl in my film and he’s the rogue stallion. Ram your lovely self down hard on that cock.”

“Easy, it’ll be all right,” Roarke whispered, sensing her increasing alarm and trying to calm her. “You must know how bad I want you. I’ve been aching for weeks. Block them out and pretend we’re alone. Pretend we’re acting out a wicked fantasy. “

Melanie focused on the two of them. She inhaled deeply, smelling Roarke, his arousal and her own. She clung to his neck and slowly shifted lower. Her over-sensitized nipples brushed the tight curls of his chest, making them tight and achy again.

Then she lowered herself another inch or so until she felt his penis brushing against her vagina. Roarke inhaled roughly at the contact and she tried to ease down over him but grew frustrated. She couldn’t reach him with her legs dangling over the arms of the chair. It took some shifting for her to untangle herself and get repositioned. As she lowered herself, he lifted his hips the distance it took to make the first thrust.

Despite her wetness, the process was agonizingly slow. Damn, but he was thick and hard. She quivered with raw need, feeling impaled by his steely strength. They were both breathing in rasping pants by the time he had filled her to the hilt. She held perfectly still, adjusting to the size and feel of him.

“Enough foreplay,” growled Clayburn. “We’re wasting time. I want more heavy action in this video. How else will it be worth my trouble?”

Melanie heard his words, but they were distance rumbles of sound. Her pulse thudded in her ears, drowning out everything but the sound of her own labored breathing. Blood scorched a fire through her veins and pulsed heavily where her body joined with Roarke’s. He made a wild sound of need, squirming beneath her, and she responded by pumping herself up and down on his straining flesh.

Despite their limited maneuverability, their passion swiftly reached a fever pitch. Flesh pounded flesh with his rock-hard shaft ramming into her until they were raging out of control, coming explosively, their bodies shuddering in long, hard climax.

On a wild cry of satisfaction, she collapsed against him, relaxing her death grip on his shoulders and fighting for breath. Their chests heaved, their sweat-slick flesh trembling in the aftermath of an incredible release. Clayburn shouted his satisfaction, calling it wrap. He switched off the camera and ordered his goons to grab Melanie.

She tensed again and felt renewed tension ripple through Roarke. Then someone started pounding at the door.

“Police! Open up!”

Clayburn swore violently. “Out the side way,” he instructed his men. “Forget the woman,” he added as they headed toward the opposite side of the room.

“Open the door or we’ll knock it down,” threatened Lieutenant Talbot.

Never had a voice been so welcome. The instant Clayburn left the room, Melanie jerked off the bandana they’d used to blindfold her. She blinked as her eyes adjusted to the light as gunshots were fired at the lock on the hallway door.

“Get behind the chair.”

She knew Roarke would shield her as much as possible, but there was little she could do for him. Still, she dropped the bandana in his lap in case any female officers had accompanied the lieutenant.

In another instant, the door crashed open and police officers, weapons drawn, rushed into the room.

“The side door,” Roarke told them.

“We’ve got it covered from both ends,” said Lieutenant Talbot. He summed up the situation in a heartbeat, shrugging off his sport jacket as he motioned a couple officers toward the side entrance and told the others to stay in the hallway. He quickly moved towards them and offered his jacket to

Melanie.

While she was shoving her arms into the sleeves, he was freeing Roarke from his bonds. “Clayburn has a video,” Roarke explained, rubbing his arms as circulation returned. “Nobody sees it. If anybody so much as touches it, I’ll destroy the other video and refuse to cooperate.”

He and the lieutenant exchanged long, hard stares, but then Talbot nodded.

“Your word of honor,” insisted Roarke.

“You’ve got it.”

Another officer supplied a shirt, and Roarke tied it around his waist. He should have looked ridiculous, but he looked like a pagan warrior, all hard and muscled and fierce. His dark hair was tousled, his body bruised and his blue eyes burning with anger. He made a move toward Melanie, but then the side door reopened. Four police officers had Clayburn and his goons surrounded and handcuffed.

“Take the two flunkies out to the paddy wagon,” ordered Talbot. “Smith and Larson, stand guard in the hallway until we’re ready to take Clayburn.”

As the officers left the room, he took possession of the camera.

“That’s evidence. You’re sworn to protect it and me,” snapped Clayburn, smirking, yet wary.

“Accidents happen,” countered the lieutenant.

Talbot opened the camera and let the video slide to the floor. Then he stomped on it several times.

“I didn’t touch it, but I think the film’s exposed and destroyed,” he assured Roarke. “That satisfy you?”

“I want five minutes,” Roarke replied on a low, feral growl.

Melanie had seen him angry before, but never as coldly, dangerously furious as he looked at the minute. He was literally vibrating with it. So he glanced at Clayburn, saw him begin to sweat and she smiled.

“You’ve got it,” said Talbot, “but keep it neat and don’t kill him, or I’ll have to throw you in jail.”

Roarke merely nodded, his total attention focused on his quarry. The lieutenant ushered Melanie from the room. She stood quietly in the hall and listened to the sound of flesh pounding flesh, wondering idly how Clayburn liked being defenseless and brutalized. After a few minutes, she heard him sobbing, then begging. She didn’t know exactly how Roarke was meeting out punishment, but neither did she care.

## Chapter 2

It was well after midnight when Roarke pulled his car to a stop in front of Melanie's apartment building. They'd showered and borrowed clean clothes at the precinct. Then they'd given their statements. He'd produced the video of Clayburn filming his wife's death, and hoped the slime ball's fondness for filmmaking would lead him straight to death row.

Melanie had cooperated fully, but she'd only spoken when necessary. She hadn't looked him directly in the eyes since they'd been rescued. She'd agreed to let him drive her home, but hadn't said a word during the ten-minute ride. Now the silence between them seemed especially loud. He didn't know what to say or how to make things right with her. He'd never forgive himself or the lieutenant for causing her so much shame and embarrassment, even though the sex had been so incredible his gut tightened every time he let his thoughts drift to her responsiveness.

On top of it all, he ached to have her in his arms, to sink into her body and lose himself in her sensual warmth. He got hard just thinking about it; and had needed to guard his thoughts all evening or and hide an erection. For months he'd fantasized about making love to her, but nothing could compare to the reality, even under the bizarre circumstances. The sight of her naked and trembling had sent his blood pounding in his loins. No way could he have resisted her once she was close enough to feel, smell and taste.

Now he wondered if she hated him for not having more control, hated him for not keeping her safe from harm or just hated the fact that she'd met him.

"Thanks for the ride," she said softly, reaching for the handle.

"I'll walk you to the door."

When she didn't argue, he climbed from the car and moved to her side.

A tension filled silence continued as they crossed the sidewalk and entered the building. The hallway was empty and dimly lit. Melanie moved to the second door on the right, and inserted her key in the lock. When she turned to say goodnight, Roarke moved closer, forcing her to look up at him. Her face was pale, the creamy skin at the corner of her eyes still red and irritated from the blindfold. He clenched his hands in anger. It just wouldn't quit eating at him.

"You're still angry," she whispered, her lips trembling slightly.

"No. Yes," he contradicted himself, wanting only honesty between them. "I'm damned pissed about the whole situation. But not at you. Never at you," he argued gruffly, sinking a hand into her dark

auburn hair. The feel brought a mental image of the same beautiful, springy curls at the apex of her thighs. His body tightened at the memory.

He cupped her head in his hands and stroked a thumb over her cheek. When she didn't shift from his touch, it encouraged him to continue. "We need to talk."

Her tongue flicked out to moisten her lips, and she swallowed nervously. The small sexy actions made his muscles coil tighter.

"It might be better if we talk another time. We're both feeling a little raw tonight," she reminded.

He hesitated, wondering if she really wanted him gone. If so, why hadn't she refused his offer of a ride?

"You're not afraid of me, are you, Mel?" He caressed her neck, loving the feel of her soft, warm flesh. "I know I can be a brute, and I lost my temper a couple times, but I didn't mean to scare you."

He'd pounded Clayton to a pulp, mashed his balls, and then raged like a madman at Talbot for getting Melanie involved. She probably thought he was a raving maniac. The lingering anger that pulsed in his gut was directed at himself, not her.

"I think you had plenty of reason to vent," she said, a slight smile curving her lips.

For the first time in hours, he saw her eyes light with amusement.

"And maybe it's wicked of me," she added, "but I'm glad you gave Clayburn back a little of his own medicine. The penal system will be too lenient."

Relief flooded over him. "Does that mean I'm forgiven?"

He watched her brows crease in a frown. "Why do you think you need my forgiveness?" she asked.

His laugh was harsh. "Let me count the ways — one, our attraction for each other got you hurt and humiliated; two, I couldn't protect you from Clayburn and his henchmen; three, I couldn't control my desire for you even though I knew you didn't want forced sex." He paused briefly before deciding to be completely honest and go for broke. "And four, I still want you so bad that I ache with it."

Melanie's big green eyes widened in surprise. Her breathing grew a little shallow as her gaze locked with his. He felt a new, sharper tension invade her body, and shifted closer, pressing his chest against hers until he felt the soft fullness of her breasts crushed against him. Swallowing a moan, he remembered her braless state. The knowledge had been driving him crazy every since they'd donned their borrowed clothes. He wanted his hands on her breasts and plenty of time to enjoy them. He wanted to feel the silky skin he'd only felt and tasted with his mouth, but first he had to know she



wanted it just as much.

“You still want me?” she whispered. “I thought you'd hate me after today. I knew you'd be furious about me acting as a decoy, but I was so worried about you.” She sighed deeply before continuing in a near-whisper. “Then we were forced to have sex even though you've made it clear you don't want to get involved with me.”

“I've changed my mind about that,” he told her, leaning down to brush a kiss across her lips. They were as soft and luscious as he'd thought earlier. He nibbled gently, and then flicked a tongue over the bruised corners. Only a fool would have resisted her so long. He was a fool for not making every minute count. If she'd have him, he intended to correct that mistake.

When she returned his tentative caress, he clutched her head tighter and deepened the kiss. Thrusting his tongue into her mouth, he explored every inch of the hot, sweet space. Then she caught it and began to cautiously suck him.

He went up in flames. “Invite me inside,” he pleaded roughly, rocking his hips against hers so that she could feel what she was doing to him.

In response, she grabbed his hand, tugged him through her door and then slammed it shut behind them. Once inside, she didn't bother with lights, but turned more fully into his arms and lifted her face to his again. Roarke grasped her head in both hands and devoured her mouth. When she moaned, he remembered her tenderness and eased the pressure. His own mouth was sore, but he was too hungry to care.

“Tell me you want me as much as I want you.”

“I want you more.”

“Tell me you want me right here and now.”

“Right here and now,” she agreed, reaching for the buttons of his shirt and tugging them from the holes.

He didn't need any further encouragement. Her borrowed dress was made out of some knit material. Grabbing the hem, he pulled it up her body and over her head, baring her firm, round breasts. He moaned, grasping her by the waist and lifting her until he could take a taut nipple into his mouth. She cried out when he began to suckle, and he remembered the clamps. Using his tongue, he worshiped each breast, licking and blowing on them until her breathing grew erratic. She clutched fists full of his hair, urging him to suck harder and deeper. He happily complied until she was writhing in his arms.

He wanted them both naked, but first he eased her slowly down his body until her feet touched the floor again. She wrapped her arms around his neck while he hauled her closer. Her breasts felt smooth and full as they pressed against his chest; the nipples poking him and making his blood run hotter. Their kisses grew more feverish, their bodies bumping and rubbing against each other with a passion that was rapidly escalating out of control.

Melanie's hands were impatient as they tugged his shirt from the waistband of his pants. Roarke ripped it open and tossed it aside, then drew her back into his arms and tight against his body.

"Help me," Roarke groaned thrusting his erection against the softness of her stomach.

Melanie wiggled out of her panties and then reached for his zipper. He'd decided against borrowed underwear, so his cock sprung out, engorged and throbbing. When he felt her eager hands caressing him, he groaned low and long.

"Now!" he shouted, pressing her against the door and lifting her legs around his waist. Melanie rocked against him, coaxing with her hungry movements. Pausing momentarily, he regained some control and reminded himself not to be too rough.

He took a deep, steadying breath and probed her warmth. She was dripping wet and more than ready, so he plunged into her in with one strong, sure stroke until she couldn't take any more of him. Then he lifted her hips, angling her so that he could push even deeper. Her murmurs of encouragement made him throb so hard he could barely stand. When they were locked as tight as possible, he heard her breath hitch and he shuddered convulsively.

"Damn, you're so tight and wet and hot," he praised gruffly. "You don't know how many times I've dreamed of this. Having myself buried deep inside of you. I've wanted it since the first time I laid eyes on you, but I don't want to hurt you."

Melanie locked her legs tighter around his waist. "You won't hurt me. Take me hard. I need it hard and fast.

She nipped at his lip. His mouth was bruised and tender, but the pain sharpened his awareness.

"This time I'll do all the work," he swore hoarsely, remembering how she'd rocked against him earlier in the day.

He started slow, but quickly lost control when her vaginal muscles started to milk him with hard urgency. His breathing shattered, his pulse pounding in his ears and his cock as the pressure built to a thundering peak. When Melanie clung tighter and returned his thrusts with increasing ardor, his control splintered. He rammed into her until she was screaming with climax. He felt the pressure building and

seconds later, felt his release burning and pumping into her in white-hot spurts.

Drained, legs weak and shaky, he sagged against her. The wall supported most of their weight while they gasped for air. They stayed pressed together, sweaty and sated, for several minutes. When he could breathe again, he found her mouth with his own and shared a long, deep kiss. They kissed until strength returned. He allowed her to slide down the length of him until she stood in the circle of his arms.

Then Melanie took him by the hand and led him slowly through the darkened apartment. His eyes had adjusted enough to dodge furniture and realize that they were passing through the living room and bedroom. She paused inside the bathroom and switched on a light.

“Shower?” she asked shyly. He loved the blush that stole over her fair skin. Loved the tousled, well-loved look of her. But he hadn't even begun to love her well enough.

“Do I get to bathe you?”

Her breathing faltered, her eyes going wide, but she nodded slowly in agreement. “If you want.”

“Oh, I want. I want all that you're willing to give.”

She gave him a sexy grin. “That might be an awful lot.”

He returned her grin, following her into the small shower stall as she adjusted the water setting to a warm spray. Then he backed her into a corner and grabbed a bar of soap. When his hands were full of thick lather, he began a slow, thorough exploration of her body.

He started at her neck, leaning in to kiss the pulse that throbbed erratically under her fair skin. She tasted hot and salty and delicious. After he'd soaped her arms, he made her lift them so that he could have freer access to her breasts. He smoothed the lather over them in slow, adoring circles, cupping and molding the satiny flesh until he could no longer resist plucking the nipples.

They were fat and sassy, beading into tight knots, tempting him even more. He let the spray wipe away the soap and then latched onto her right nipple with his mouth while plucking the left with his fingers. She dropped her hands and locked them in his hair, clutching tightly as he slowly assuaged his need to caress every inch of her.

When her legs shifted restlessly and her hips started to gyrate, he dropped to his knees. Clutching her tight buttocks, he pressed more kisses down her stomach. His fingers kneaded the firm flesh, skimming the crease between them and pulling her closer. Then he brought a hand around to burrow into the thatch of curls between her legs. He found her clit with his thumb and rubbed it vigorously.

“Roarke!” cried Melanie, the sound of her escalating passion stroking his to a fever pitch. He

wanted to give her more pleasure than she'd ever known.

He felt her fingers tangling in his hair, her grip tightening with each new caress.

He kissed her hipbone and slid a finger into her welcoming heat. She moaned again, her fingers gripping his hair tighter. He used a second finger to drive her higher, loving the sound of her panting moans. Her hips undulated and she begged on short, harsh sobs. Then he worked his hand harder and faster until she was stiffening, and locking her thighs against him, shuddering with release.

Her legs buckled, and he eased her onto the narrow bench seat. Her head fell backward against the tiles, her eyes closed. Roarke smiled at her loveliness. His heart clenched at how exquisite she looked. His cock, already hard, got harder and throbbed insistently. He wanted her again.

Steam filled the stall, water spraying everywhere. He lathered his hands again and then gently washed the rest of her body, focusing on the soft nest of curls and the sweet cunt that had to be getting sore. He'd guessed she wasn't very experienced when they'd had forced sex and she was probably tender. He'd been keeping close tabs on her and knew she hadn't dated anyone seriously since they met. The thought made him throb harder.

By the time he'd finished soaping and rinsing her legs, her eyes were open and she stared at him with a wicked gleam in her eyes.

"My turn," she murmured throatily.

She rose from the bench and shifted their positions until he was sitting and she was on her knees between his legs. Roarke groaned low and long as she took his cock into her hands and started doing her own exploration. She massaged his balls, and he slammed his head back against the tiles, every muscle in his body wired with tension.

She continued her intimate massage while locking her other hand around his cock and pumping him with increasing strength. He couldn't believe she had him primed and ready to explode again, but when her mouth surrounded his sizzling flesh, he howled with pleasure. He felt the familiar heat running down his spine. The harder she sucked, the hotter the blood seared him. He tightened his buttocks and thighs, trying to hold back, but she wouldn't allow it. She licked and sucked and bit him until he boiled over with release, spewing hot juice until he was totally drained.

Depleted, Roarke couldn't move a muscle for several minutes. In the meantime, Melanie tenderly bathed him. Their steamy cocoon was gradually vanishing, but the cooler water felt good on his overheated flesh. He let it run over his body while she climbed from the shower and dried herself. When the strength returned to his legs, he got out and dried. Then hHe swept her into his arms and

carried her into the bedroom. She pulled back the covers and they slid into bed. It smelled of her and he inhaled deeply, more content that he'd felt in years. He cradled her soft, naked body next to his own, exhausted but replete.

\* \* \* \* \*

Melanie didn't know how long they slept, but the sun was peaking through the curtains the next time she woke. The room was still dark and it took a minute for her to orient herself. She was curled spoon fashion into the warm, hard body of a very big, very aroused male. As soon as she started to stir, she felt hot lips and sharp teeth on the nape of her neck.

Roarke.

Sexy, insatiable, incredible Roarke.

How had she ever lived without his kind of loving? Would she ever get enough? Just the feel of him had moisture collecting between her legs and the low throb of desire pulsing deep inside her.

She moaned as he wrapped his arms around her, grasping a breast in each hand. He cupped them, rubbing and rolling the flesh, plucking her nipples all the time he kept nibbling on her neck. Tension sung through her body, making her tremble with need. She felt his thick erection prodding her from behind and grew even wetter.

Lifting her leg, she laid it over his thigh and invited him inside, then sucked in a breath when he plunged deep. How could she have forgotten how big and hard he was? She was sore, but the pleasure of being filled and stretched by such masculine hardness quickly overcame all other sensation. The instant he entered her, she began to rock her hips backward, begging for faster, deeper penetration.

Roarke swiftly accommodated her, pumping in and out with piston-like speed until they were both gasping and straining. When they needed to be even closer, he rolled her onto her stomach. Mounting her, he rode her hard, pounding into her with relentless force. As her climax hit, she stiffened, her vaginal muscles clenching around him, dragging a long, low groan from Roarke as he sank into her one last time and found his own release.

They collapsed together with his heavy bulk pressing Melanie deeply into the mattress, but she didn't mind at all. She welcomed his heavy weight, feeling enveloped by his big, hard body.

When his chest stop heaving, he raised himself on forearms and burrowed his face under her hair. In her ear, he whispered gruffly. "Clayburn was right about one thing."

She tensed a little, startled at the mention of their nemesis. Then she managed to squeak out a question.

“What was he right about?”

Roarke blew in her ear, teasing her with his warm breath. “I want to ruin you for any other man. I want to love you so well and so often that you never think about another man.”

Joy surged through her at the mention of the word “often.” It meant he wanted more than a one-night stand. Often could mean a serious relationship. Panic swiftly followed the joy. Did she want more? Could she survive more? She'd been hurt so badly in the past, past and the last few days had proven how much she could be wounded if she let herself fall any deeper in love with this man.

“You ask a lot,” she said in a voice that shook with emotion.

“I need a lot.” With those words, he rolled off her body and turned her so that they were facing each other.

“Of sex?” She felt herself blushing, but held his gaze.

“Oh, yeah,” he swore. “My need is bigger than you can imagine, but I want a lot more than that.”

“Like what?”

His eyes darkened, his expression tight as he answered in a gruff voice. “Like your body, your heart and maybe even your soul.”

Melanie closed her eyes against the stark need on his face. She wanted him with the same intensity. So much so that it frightened her.

“What are you willing to give in return?”

“Definitely my body,” he teased, trying to lighten the tone. He cupped her chin and stroked her cheek with his thumb. “My heart's been yours for a while already, and I think you stole my soul yesterday.”

Her eyes widened, her gaze scouring his features. He wasn't the type of man who gave of himself lightly. She was awed by the depth of his feelings and his willingness to share them. Hope fluttered wildly in her chest. Grasping his hand, she brought it to her mouth and placed a kiss in his palm, then used her tongue to caress it more.

He went still and sucked in a ragged breath. “Woman, you unman me with the slightest touch.”

Melanie laughed softly and glanced downward. His penis was twitching into life again. Her heated glance brought it to full arousal.

“You don't look unmanned.”

“Damn, you're a witch,” he charged. “I thought you'd milked me dry, but obviously Buford still

has some life in him.”

*“Buford?”*

Roarke wrapped a fist around his penis. “That’s what I call this guy. He likes you a lot.”

“I’ve gotten quite fond of him, too,” she said, tongue in cheek.

“Enough to give him exclusive rights?” Roarke’s tone was low and coaxing.

Melanie dragged her fascinated gaze from the sight of him holding his own penis. She looked him in the eyes again, and knew she was lost. She loved him too much to deny him anything. Not that she planned to tell him that.

“I think I can live with an exclusive agreement if you’re willing to do the same.”

“I like the sound of that,” he ground out roughly. “But I want more.”

She licked her lips. “Body, heart and soul?”

He nodded in agreement, and then added, “Vows, rings and you permanently sharing my bed.”

Marriage! Melanie’s chest rose and fell in agitation. He wanted marriage. It scared the hell out of her.

“No need to freak out on me,” he said, his expression wry. “I don’t mean today or tomorrow. I just wanted you to know exactly where I stand. I’d like your promise to think about it.” With that, he cupped her breast and began playing with her nipple, temporarily distracting her.

Her body starting humming with renewed desire. S he couldn’t believe how easily he aroused her, but she couldn’t afford to be sidetracked. Knowing him, there wouldn’t be many chances to discuss his deepest emotions.

“There’s no doubt in your mind?” she asked.

“I know it won’t be easy. I’m a cop. You know the risks. You experienced the worst of them yesterday. “ His voice went low and gruff. “I’m also the jealous sort, so we’ll have to deal with that,” he warned, and then brushed a kiss over her lips, pulling her closer so that he could rub his chest against her naked breasts. “Damn, you make me so hot so fast that my head spins.”

Melanie caught her breath, then gasped aloud as the broad head of his penis poked her in the belly. Passion sparked, flooding her with heat at just the thought of having him deep inside her again.

“You’re distracting me. How am I supposed to think straight when you’re touching me like that?” she challenged, grabbing his head in both hands and pulling his mouth down to hers for a kiss.

He responded with a hard, demanding pressure that pressed her head back to the pillow. Then he

was sliding down her body to suckle a rapidly hardening nipple.

“Don't think, just feel.”

She could feel him all right. Every hard inch of him against every inch of her. Their bodies were made for each other, a perfect fit. She wondered if they'd ever get enough of each other.

“Guess what I just realized,” she said on a gasp as he plucked at one nipple with his teeth and tongue while he rolled the other between his fingers.

“What's that?” he asked, sliding a hand between her legs, his touch making her writhe and arch her back.

“We've had sex every way but the most conventional.”

“I'm fixin' to correct that,” he promised. Pressing his palms on her thighs, he opened them wide, and then stared at her mound for so long that she felt herself dripping with desire.

“So pretty,” he insisted, then lifted his gaze to hold hers.

The sincerity in his quietly spoken words, make her heart trip. Her stomach muscles clenched and hot desire shot to her core.

Next, he slid over her, positioning his stiff, erect penis into her wet heat. Holding himself rigid, he stared into her eyes. “Tell me you love me,” he demanded. “I want to hear it when I sink into you.”

Melanie studied the tension in his features, the raw, primitive need in his expression. Her hands and toes curled into the sheet and her body restlessly rocked beneath his. Her breathing was ragged as he gently prodded her with short, teasing thrusts. She wanted him more than her next breath. Wanted him now, tomorrow and the day after that.

Forever. So long, yet not nearly long enough.

“I love you...”

He was thrusting into her before the last word left her mouth, and she arched her back to take all of him as hard and fast as he needed to take her. His mouth slammed onto hers at the same time, his body shuddering with pent up emotion. “I...love...you...too,.” he rasped, plunging deeper with each forceful word.

Melanie lifted her hips; rocking against him and feeling the tension build with each powerful penetration. She wanted to make it last, wanted to keep him inside her forever, but too quickly he had her rushing toward climax. She ground herself against him, clutching his tight buttocks as the first fierce wave hit. It slammed through her body, making her shudder and quake, then go limp.



Roarke refused to let her settle for one orgasm. He grabbed her hips and tilted her higher and closer, pounding into her with unrelenting strength. He pumped into her with feverish passion. Melanie screamed as the second orgasm hit her, stealing what was left of her breath.

He wasn't finished yet.

“Mine! You're mine!” he shouted possessively, grinding his body against her in one final thrust that sent them both over the edge.

Roarke wrapped his arms around Melanie as they collapsed in sated exhaustion. Within minutes they were asleep, cocooned in their own special world and dreaming of a future filled with love.

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