

Changeling Press

Vashti Valant

*Dr. Jacobs
and*

Mr. Hyde

Dr. Jacobs and Mr. Hyde

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Hyde's Syndrome: A contagious neurological disease in males, transmitted through the bloodstream, which causes periodic episodes of extreme sexual behavior, including dominance, obsession and prolonged arousal. Physical symptoms of the active period may include genital engorgement and enhanced muscular strength.

What happens when good boys go bad?

Dr. Chris Jacobs is the kind of man that mother always hoped Xandra would marry: sweet, honest, hard working and as tenderhearted as a teddy bear. He's been Xandra's best friend for years. Too bad she feels no desire for him.

The man who excites her passionate surrender isn't nice at all, but a stranger in a black mask who dominates her forcefully as his sex slave. Yet, as much as Xandra yearns to submit to the stranger in black, she fears he might go too far. She turns to her trusted best friend, Chris Jacobs, to protect her.

But the good Dr. Jacobs has a secret...

Prologue

Send. She stared at her screen.

I can't believe I sent that email, she thought. Compulsively, she reopened her Sent mail and re-read it. *Come stalk me. I dare you.*

She didn't even know his name.

Chapter One

The man in the black ski mask must have been lurking inside the atrium to Xandra's apartment for over an hour. He had probably slipped in with one of the other tenants. She knew he hadn't come in with her.

Xandra hadn't seen him right away. He'd hidden in the shadowed recess beneath the stairwell. The apartment had been converted from an old Victorian tenement, and there were ample inconvenient nooks, pointless overhangs and recessed niches. An ornate iron balustrade, waist high, partitioned the section of the atrium set aside for the mailboxes. Xandra often bruised herself on this monstrosity when she tried to reach her mail in a rush, so she'd focused on maneuvering around the rail. Her tiny mailbox, as usual, spewed a trash can's worth of advertisements, fliers, 0% interest rate loan offers (no matter what your credit!), sweepstakes she may have already won and other junk as soon as she opened it.

It was as Xandra had struggled to sort out the junk from her water and electric bills that the man in black slid unnoticed behind her and grabbed her.

She'd had only the briefest glimpse of a powerfully built man swathed all in black and had no time to react. He melded a number of acts into one smooth, relentless motion. With one hand, he snapped a gag into her mouth and latched it behind her head, while simultaneously imprisoned both of her wrists in succession and cuffed them behind her back. A second after she had already been bound, she belatedly began to thrash in an effort to escape. The gag turned her yelp of surprise into an inarticulate gargle.

Since her hands had already been incapacitated, her captor felt free to let his own rove. Two large, warm masculine hands slithered under her T-shirt. Without bothering to unfasten her strapless bra, he wrenched down the lacy cups covering her breasts,

forcing them to spill over the underwire and into his waiting hands. He closed his fists around the spheres of flesh, causing her to moan into the gag again.

She tried to kick him but he stood behind her with the damn iron rail between them -- she had no leverage.

"Every time you defy me, you will be punished," he said. He yanked her pants -- jogging sweats -- down to her calves, effectively tangling her legs together. Her cotton briefs followed in a tight roll. The T-shirt went next, over her head and down her arms, to re-enforce the handcuffs on her wrists. He unsnapped the bra and tossed it aside with a disdainful gesture.

He had her naked now, or worse than naked, exposed and bound by her own clothes about her arms and legs.

He heaved her up by her tits and tipped her back over the rail. The iron edge bit into her buttocks, but her position lacked the stability of being seated upon the rail. Instead, her whole body acted like a seesaw on a fulcrum, and her captor controlled her balance. He torqued her breasts as if they were his steering wheel. If she squirmed too much, he lifted her by her nipples until she arched her back and sobbed. She stopped kicking, stopped struggling. He had control.

He waited for her to still, for her to accept her powerlessness. Then he leaned down to whisper in her ear, "You dared me, Alexandra. You don't know me, but I know you. I'm not here to hurt you. I'm here to fulfill your darkest fantasies."

God, he had a sexy voice. But what did he know of her darkest fantasies? She shivered. Just because she masturbated to the vision of a stranger in black taking her by force didn't mean she wanted to live it. But then why had she joined the BDSM site and dared one of the doms to come to her?

She tried to say that he couldn't fuck her in a public place, but the gag thwarted her. The tears staining her cheeks would have to speak for her. What if one of the other tenants happened across them and called the police? Apparently he had no compunction about fucking her right here in the public atrium of the apartment building.

His manipulations of her nipples changed. He sifted the buds between his forefingers and thumbs. The nipples, already sensitive from his tugging torture, hardened further. Xandra could feel heat pool between her thighs as well as in her swollen breasts. She almost had to thank the gag. It muffled her groan of arousal.

As the pleasure mounted, nothing could hide her squirms of delight. What was he doing to her? How did his fingers manage to combine just the magic amount of pinching and pressure, rubbing and rolling, to make her breasts throb in his hands?

Her captor bent her farther back over the bar. Xandra's stomach dropped and she panicked, but his grip on her remained firm. He guided her head down between his legs. Her hair brushed the floor. On the other side of the metal rail, her toes strained to touch as well, for balance.

Black leather pants. She might have guessed.

"I'm going to remove the gag," he said. "You are not to speak."

The gag disappeared. Xandra sputtered for breath. He cradled her head in his palms. "How did you --"

He put his finger over her lips. "Every time you disobey me, you will be punished." He had no shame. With no care for being caught, he unfastened his pants and pulled out an immense, dark red cock. "Lick," he said. "Lick it, Alexandra."

Tiny darts of her tongue found the looming cock. A rumble of pleasure shuddered through him. Strangely, the evidence of her power over him gave Xandra an illicit thrill.

"Harder."

She would have done it even without the command. The harder and longer she made the strokes of her tongue, the longer and harder his cock grew -- and the more ragged his breathing. The balance of power had shifted, subtly, and Xandra began to realize that she had him in as vulnerable a position as he had her.

Arching her neck to reach, she sucked his balls into her mouth. She lowered her teeth around them just hard enough for him to feel the threat of a vicious bite. His whole body tensed. She could feel it.

"If you do, you'll pay," he said. He didn't sound worried. Excited, rather. "Go ahead. Give me an excuse to punish you, Alexandra, to punish you as you richly deserve."

Her heartbeat stuttered. Maybe biting him wouldn't be a good idea. She didn't dare dwell on what else he might mean by punish. She bathed his balls with special care not to involve her teeth. It was probably the most obsequious apology she had ever given, for all that she pleaded for his forgiveness without words. From his self-satisfied growl, he interpreted the message. Apology accepted.

She still planned to escape him. Better though, she decided, to keep him off-guard until she had a real opportunity. She returned to licking the underside of his cock.

"Yes, Alexandra, lick it," he said, the low words rough with desire. "Ah, Alexandra."

She wondered how he knew her name. The site was supposed to vet its members, but had it given that information to him? She loved how her name rolled out in his deep voice.

"You're ready now," he said. "Take it in your mouth."

"Just tell me first how --"

He thrust himself into her mouth. Xandra held no credentials in giving head. She'd certainly never attempted it from this angle, upside down and backward. His cock plowed her throat. If she started to gag, he pulled out a bit, but as soon as she recovered, his cock drilled back into her distended mouth.

A peculiar sensation tingled through Xandra. Not arousal in the usual sense. None of her sexual organs experienced direct titillation from this position. If anything, she felt off balance, awkward, helpless and used. He worked her brutally, solely for his own pleasure. Yet, exactly the knowledge that he had total control of her body and would exploit her as he saw fit excited her in some paradoxical way.

She expected him to come in her mouth. He did not. Instead, she felt the tang of pre-cum on the tip of her tongue as he withdrew his cock.

Xandra felt dizzy from leaning back so far. She hoped he would allow her to sit up, but no such luck. The new game he had in mind brought her no relief from her indelicate position. The flat of his hand smacked down hard on one of her breasts. She cried out, a puff of heat and air and sound muffled by the tight hole above her. Another smack followed on the other breast. Xandra realized that since his thighs now clamped her head in place, he could let his hands loose on the rest of her.

"Every time you disobey, you will be punished," he said, twisting her nipple hard as he spoke. He levitated the first breast by the nipple, cruelly stretching it, and then compounded the strain with another forceful smack against the tender underside of the tit. He subjected the other breast to the same treatment. He kept alternating the twist-yank-smack until her breasts burned in aroused agony.

His hips moved, drawing her head with them. He had her breasts squeezed together in his hands, and this allowed him to force his cock into the cleavage between them. While his cock fucked her breasts, his fingers primped her nipples.

Then one of his hands moved while the other continued to rein the breasts in place. She felt him grope her mound, crudely at first, but in her heightened state even that brutish fumble against her labia almost caused her to orgasm. Swiftly, his fingers found their rhythm. Her nether lips were parted and his fingers located her aching clit, which they at once tortured with a rain of jabs and tugs.

Xandra was no virgin, but through ten years of nominally active sex life, which included a high school sweetheart, a college sweetheart, a roommate with benefits and a summer fling, she'd never experienced an orgasm.

The Big O was about to hit her big time.

Her whole body buckled hard against the rail. She was going to come... she was going to come as she had never come in her life...

"Tell me you'll let me into your apartment now, Alexandra," said her captor. "Tell me, or tell me to walk away right now." She couldn't speak. How could she speak? There were no words for this. "Tell me yes, you want me, or tell me no." He

stopped his ministrations... and smacked her clit. It exploded with sensation. And when his fingers began to pinch and rub it again, oh, God...

"Tell me yes or I stop now and walk away forever!"

"Yes!" she shouted into his butt hole. "Yes! Yes! Yes!"

His fingers doubled their pace, and drove her over the edge into the realm of mindless bliss she had heard of but never visited. He squeezed his thighs to stifle her scream against his anus while he continued to plunge her breasts over and over with his cock. As the bliss from her own orgasm ebbed into delightful echoes of shuddering pleasure, she felt his climax in the bunching of his leg muscles, and the clenching of his fists over her breasts. Then warm cum spurted across her tummy and tits.

Dizziness bemused her when he first righted her onto her feet.

"Give me the key to your apartment," he demanded.

"It's in my purse." Why had she told him that? She stood there, still naked and bound, though on her feet, staring at him in wonderment more than fright. A black turtleneck, black leather pants, and of course, the black ski mask, that's what he wore. He tucked his cock back into his pants and pierced her with two intense blue eyes -- all she could see of his real face.

He rummaged through her purse and found the key. "You're well on your way to becoming my sex slave," he said matter-of-factly. "But you did defy me at first, and several times again when I gave you a direct order. You must be punished for that."

Sex slave? Was he insane? But she was even more insane, to be begging him for release, to offer him the key to her apartment.

He advanced, she retreated. He caught her easily and forced her around the other side of the balustrade and back over the damned iron rail. This time, however, her stomach rested on the rail, and he bent her fully double. Her fanny faced the foyer and the staircase; her head draped over the side of the rail nearest the mailboxes. He unlocked the handcuffs, but replaced them with black silk scarves, which he used to bind her hands to the iron posts on the rail. With a kick, he spread her legs as far as they would go, considering her jogging sweats and panties still pooled around her ankles,

and he tied her calves with black silk scarves to the posts as well. A final black scarf covered her eyes, blinding her. Then he replaced the gag.

In theory, Xandra thought the scarves should have been easier to break than the handcuffs, but in practice, the more she tried to yank her limbs free, the tighter the silk knotted.

"And still you defy me," her captor said sadly. "That will add another three strokes to your punishment."

Three strokes? Of what? She trembled. Blind, bound and gagged, what could she do to protect herself? Three strokes added to what?

Whatever it was, it hurt.

She screamed into the gag. The next blow followed on the first: a sting, a narrow sting, as if from a whip or a crop, though even in her shock she could tell it didn't draw blood. He counted as he whipped her. "...three... four... five... for defying me at the first. Five more for your disobedience during our session..." He counted out those strikes too. Her buttocks wagged helplessly back and forth under the blows. "And three added onto the total for resisting your just punishment."

Snap! She sobbed for mercy. No one, not even her tormentor, could hear her.

Snap! She could not bear it. She would die.

Snap! Please, oh, please let that be the last.

It was. And then -- oh, what a strange and unexpected tenderness -- he soothed her flaming buttocks with some kind of cool, cool cream. He bent over her and kissed the base of her spine. "You will meet me again. And service me again, slave."

Still blinded, she couldn't see what he did next, although she heard him patter about the atrium, fiddling with equipment of some kind. A paper rustled. Then a breeze from an opening door fanned her aching butt cheeks and tickled her exposed pussy. The door clicked shut. He was gone.

Chapter Two

He was gone, but Xandra remained tied up. She couldn't believe her captor had left her bound to the rail in the public atrium of her own apartment. Whoever found her would see her in this humiliating position, with her pants down around her knees, and her sex and pink butt cheeks thrust upward for everyone entering the building to gawk at. She would almost rather not be found.

The door to the atrium opened. A rush of cold air brushed her bare parts, telling her that late afternoon sunshine had indeed given way to early evening chill. She couldn't see who'd entered. Xandra fumed with mortification. But her humiliation wasn't complete until she heard an all too familiar voice.

"Xandra! My God!" A man with a sure stride hurried to her. Of all the people to see her like this, why did it have to be Chris? And yet, at the same time, she'd never been happier to hear his voice in her life. He made no sly remarks at her expense; he didn't take advantage of her abasement; and he wasted no time in applying a Swiss army knife to the black silk scarves that imprisoned her. "Are you okay?"

She fell into his arms, weeping. "Oh, Jesus, Chris, thank God you're here."

* * *

Upstairs, in the safety of her apartment, after she'd used her emergency key to enter, Xandra told Chris everything the man in black had done to her. She admitted she'd signed up for the, um, service, but was too embarrassed to confess how she'd reacted to his domination with a secret thrill.

Chris pulled her into a hug against his broad chest. There was nothing sexual about his touch. That was the great thing about Chris Jacobs. Despite his Christopher Reeve-as-Superman good looks, he was the least sex-crazed guy Xandra knew. Maybe he didn't even have a sex drive. He must have been part teddy bear, she often reflected.

Sweet, always there for you, a girl's best friend, a man who put no pressure on you to put out, Dr. Chris Jacobs was the consummate gentleman and the kind of man her mother had always hoped Xandra would marry.

Xandra had to admit that Chris would make perfect husband material. When it came to material factors, he swept the Oscars. He had a marvelous job -- not merely a MD, Chris worked as a highly respected research doctor for the CDC -- a superb credit rating, and a beautiful house in a classy neighborhood. Even more importantly, he had a good heart. He loved children and dogs. He kept his promises. He was active in his church. He cooked his mom a five-course brunch every Mother's Day, for God's sake. Chris would have been the kind of husband who never forgot to bring you flowers on your anniversary.

Unfortunately, the same thing that qualified him to be a perfect best friend disqualified him as a soul mate as far as Xandra was concerned. She felt no passion for him. Maybe Chris wasn't to blame. Xandra was the one who hankered for bad boys. A man willing to rough her up in the bedroom, just enough to add spice, but not to the point of abuse, that was the kind of man she craved. Unfortunately, in her past pursuit of such men, she'd discovered it was hard to find a man who understood the difference between dominating her in the bedroom and trying to control her whole life, including her career, her friendships and her dreams.

You dared me, Alexandra. You don't know me, but I know you. I'm not here to hurt you. I'm here to fulfill your darkest fantasies. The man in black's words echoed her mind. How right he had been. He'd brought her most hidden fantasies to life, even to the whipping he'd subjected her to at the end. Would she ever see him again? The thought made her shiver with anticipation.

Was she insane? To be looking forward to their next meeting, when she should be terrified of the man? Wasn't the stalker in black the embodiment of all the worst elements of her most abusive lovers from the past? What was wrong with her that she wanted to run to him, not away from him?

Xandra sighed into Chris' chest. He stroked her hair, murmuring sweet nothings of comfort, as if to a child. "We should call the police, Xandra," he said quietly.

She stiffened. "No. I can't. I told you. I invited him."

"I don't care." Chris pulled back, his hands on her shoulders, to look her in the face. His blue eyes made her think of the stalker's two bright blue eyes peering out of the black mask. Xandra had to turn her head away. "The man deserves to be in jail for what he did to you." Contempt and a deeper emotion, fiercer than she was used to hearing from gentle Chris, infused his words. "He deserves worse than prison. He deserves to die like a dog."

"I want to take a shower before I do anything else," Xandra procrastinated. The stalker's cum had dried on her naked body.

"That's the last thing you should do. The police may be able to get a DNA sample from his, err, effluent."

"I'm not going to call the police."

"Xandra, you have to."

"Have to?" She stood. "You aren't going to tell me what I have to do, Chris Jacobs."

"It's the right thing to do," he backpedaled. He wrung his hands together in his lap. "Xandra, what if this monster comes after you again? You said he took the key to your apartment."

"I said I gave him one."

"Xandra --"

"Look, Chris, can you just respect my decision? It's my decision." His lips thinned, but he surrendered, as she'd known he would -- as he always did. "A shower," Xandra repeated firmly.

After Chris had untied her, she had pulled her tee and sweats back on. She wriggled back out of the T-shirt and pants now, not bothering to hide from Chris. They had been on enough camping trips together by now that she had nothing to conceal,

and it wasn't as if it turned him on or anything. Usually, he would politely avert his gaze for propriety's sake.

Today, he didn't. His gaze stayed glued on her while she undressed. This break from routine surprised her until Chris spoke. "You should let me put something on those bruises. Those welts on your gluteus maximus... and your wrists are red."

That he analyzed her with a doctor's agenda aggravated Xandra for some reason. "It's nothing." She hurried to the bathroom and turned on the hot water.

Xandra spent more than forty minutes in the shower. When she emerged, wrapped in a terrycloth robe, it didn't surprise her to find that Chris had cooked dinner. "I hope spaghetti is okay."

"Oh, you wonderful man. I'm starved."

They ate mostly in silence. Chris, Xandra presumed, still moped over the fact that she'd refused to call the police. Unnervingly, he kept staring at her cleavage.

"Now what?" she asked.

"He left fingermarks," Chris said, subdued.

Xandra glanced down. The pallid skin of her breasts did bear rosy imprints suspiciously the size of clutching fingers. Xandra blushed, and pulled the robe tighter over her bosom.

"You're not even going to go to a hospital, are you?" Chris asked.

"No."

"Xandra."

"Look, Dr. Jacobs, if you want to give me an exam yourself, that's fine. But I'm not going to a hospital."

"After dinner, then. Let me look at you."

"Fine." Yet, Xandra sensed that something else plagued him. He kept poking at his food, darting furtive looks at her, and shifting in his chair. "Chris, I'll be fine. Honest. I had a scare, that's all. Please stop worrying."

"Xandra, there's something I think you deserve to know." A sweat broke out on his brow. He mopped it with his napkin. "That is, there's something I need to tell you."

"Chris?" This nervousness bothered her more than him being overprotective. "Chris, you're my rock. Don't fall apart on me now, of all times, baby. I need you."

Her words steeled him. He squared his shoulders and tightened his jaw. "You know I'll always be there for you, Xandra."

"I do know it." She touched his hand across the table. "You're my best friend. What is it you think I need to know?"

"You know I work for the Center for Disease Control," he began awkwardly.

"Ah, Chris? It's me, Xandra, not an alien from Mars. Of course I know where you work."

"Well, we see signs of new epidemics before most people hear about it in the news. There's a bad one out there, Xandra. Never seen anything like it before. We don't know how bad in terms of pandemic danger, but for those men it hits -- the victims have all been male, so far -- it's an ugly one."

"That's terrible," Xandra said, wondering what this had to do with her.

"Have you heard of Kluver-Bucy Syndrome?"

"No."

"Erotomania?"

"No."

"What they have in common is that both disorders are defects of sexual interaction. An erotomaniac, for instance, may believe, against all evidence to the contrary, that some particular person is in love with him. Those kooks who stalk movie stars often suffer from erotomania.

"Kluver-Bucy Syndrome is more generalized. The cortical area of the temporal lobe is damaged, causing inhibitory signals to the ventromedial nucleus in the hypothalamus to cease. The result is that the patient tries either to eat everything in sight -- or to, err, make love to it. In one famous case, a man was arrested trying to screw a sidewalk."

"Creepy."

"Kluver-Bucy Syndrome is a neurological condition caused by damage or deterioration. It's not contagious but this new disease we're seeing -- it is contagious."

"And it has the same symptoms?"

"No. Worse." Chris paused. "There are some theories that if men didn't have a conscience to stop them, they would all, by nature, be rapists. This disease is called Hyde's Syndrome. After the fictional character. You know, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. It causes men, ordinary men, to lose their inhibitions and become insatiable sexual predators."

Finally, Xandra saw where this was going. "You think he may have had this syndrome."

Chris' face contorted in agony. "It's... a possibility."

"I told you, I contacted him through a very reputable club."

"Another reason the investigators dubbed the disease Hyde's Syndrome is that it only manifests periodically. The rest of the time the original personality is in control. However, as time goes on, the uninhibited personality might control the person's behavior more and more often."

"Does the person's face change? As in the fiction book?"

"Not the person's face, no. There are a few, ahem, physiological changes, only noticeable if the patient is undressed, but mostly just the brain chemistry changes. That makes such a man all the more dangerous, because you can never know."

"Whoa, back up a step. What physiological changes are only noticeable if the patient is undressed?"

"The changes in brain chemistry act like hyper-steroids on the body. The muscles bulk up and increase in strength."

"Like the Hulk."

"Not quite so obvious. It doesn't rip shirts."

"And no green skin, I suppose."

"This isn't a joke, Xandra."

"I'm not laughing. Are there any other noticeable effects -- under the clothes or whatever?" Chris' whole face flushed redder than the spaghetti sauce. He mumbled something into his plate. "I didn't catch that."

"There seems to be an enlarging effect on the genitalia," he said, still crimson.

A flashback hit her of the stalker's oversized member plunging into her mouth, then plowing her breasts. She felt a blush to match Chris' suffuse her face. She'd never seen a cock that size before, but apparently that didn't mean she hadn't met the man in the past. The stalker had called her by her given name, Alexandra, but not her nickname. Xandra. Could he be a man she knew, one of her exes, for example, or had he just researched her? Surely if she'd met him before she would have recognized that sexy, gravelly voice.

"Do you want me to leave, Xandra?" Chris asked quietly. "If so, I'll understand."

"Leave? Why would I want you to leave?"

"Well." He stared at her with tortured blue eyes. "What if I..."

Xandra burst out laughing. "You? A sexual predator? Ah, no offence, Chris, but I can't even imagine you as sexual, never mind an insatiable sexual predator." His mouth twisted. "Oh!" Xandra smacked her cheek with her hand. "I've hurt you. You know I have a condo in my mouth just for my foot. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to imply you weren't a real man or anything. I just --"

"Quit while you're ahead, Xandra." Chris winced. "I still haven't forgotten the time you set me up on a blind date with a gay man."

It had been the first time she'd witnessed him lose his temper. Not only had he shouted at her, he hadn't spoken to her for days afterward. "Well, you'd told me you had no interest in dating women, so --"

"Never mind, Xandra." Chris shoved back his chair. He cleared the empty dinner plates, rinsed the sauce from them and placed them in the dishwasher of her studio apartment kitchenette. "Take some pillows and lie down on your stomach on the rug so I can take a look at those welts."

Xandra felt strangely self-conscious once she'd doffed the terrycloth robe and stretched out naked on the deep pile rug. *It's just Chris*, she reminded herself. His talk about mysterious diseases and predators had spooked her, that was all.

He brought over a bag and knelt beside her. In a moment, she felt his gentle hands on her skin. Chris had administered first aid to Xandra before, but never had he touched her in such intimate places. The welts on her *derrière* tingled and came alive as he traced them with his fingertips. She smothered a whimper in the rug.

He froze. "Does it hurt?"

Hurt? It felt delicious. Erotic and tantalizing. But she could never say that.

"Xandra?"

"No," she managed to blurt. "No, it doesn't hurt."

"The skin is not broken. It may be sore for several days."

Xandra would not have described it that way. To her, it felt as though the whipping had lifted her flesh to another dimension of sensitivity. The least stimulation made her pussy wet, even Chris' mild, medicinal caresses.

Xandra wished she'd never agreed to this exam. It would be the final humiliation if she played the wanton before her best friend. A nice man like Chris could never understand. He might forgive her, because that was his nature, but secretly she'd disgust him forever after.

Something cool and creamy touched her. She jumped. "It's just a lotion to ease the pain," he said.

The problem was that the stalker had used something similar on her, right after he'd whipped her. Face down on the rug, Xandra felt as though her captor had her in his power all over again. Fear coursed through her, but also arousal. In her befuddled mind, Chris' hands merged with the stalker's hands, massaging her, kneading her, owning her. She moaned and lifted her hips into his hands. Her thighs parted as if of their own accord.

"Xandra, don't be alarmed," Chris spoke in low, soft voice, almost hypnotic. "I'd like to rub this everywhere he bruised you..."

Hand on each of her hips, he lifted her rear into the air, almost doggie style, except her face remained against the pillow on the floor. Chris reached under her torso and scooped her breasts into a languorous swirl of cream. He administered slow, circular motions around and around each breast, taking several minutes before his inward reaching spiral touched her nipples. His hands left her at that agonizing point, only to return with fresh dollops of cold cream. Pleasure shot through her as he rubbed over and around her nipples, slowly, oh, so slowly.

His hand retreated again. She stifled her disappointment. "Tell me if you begin to feel tense or afraid," he said behind her.

Xandra had never felt more relaxed in her life. His hands, slick with more cream, glided over the folds of her pussy. Her labia and clit received the same unhurried massage her breasts had just enjoyed. He made no special effort to highlight her clit, but his hands stroked the nodule of flesh with each languid pass up and down the slant of her crease. Nothing could have been more different from the flicker-fast jabs the stalker had used to push her to orgasm this afternoon. And yet... and yet... the sensation built in her, a heat pooled between her thighs, infinitely more gradual, but strong, as strong as before.

This climax did not make her scream; it silenced her with inarticulate wonder. She clenched the pillow between her teeth and strove not to shut her thighs, not to let Chris know the terrible, glorious impact his innocent ministrations had on her. She feared he could tell, for the shudder of her orgasm vibrated through every muscle in her body. But he only kept up his slow strokes up and down her pussy, as if he hadn't noticed anything.

Her flesh could bear no more. She wrenched herself from his grasp and rolled over on the rug. Her hair tossed across her face and the floor, and she stared at him wildly. To have come at his hands! It frightened and bewildered her in a way that her wanton surrender to a total stranger had not. "Go home," she rasped. "Go home, Chris."

"Xandra." He reached for her with a hurt puppy-dog look on his face. "If I hurt you or frightened you..."

"Just go home!" She shut her eyes. "I don't know what I feel. I just need to be alone!"

"I'm going," he said at once. He gathered his things quickly. At the front door, he paused. "If anything happens -- or even if it doesn't -- you can call me. Anytime. Day or night. I'll be there for you, Xandra. I hope you know that." He shut the door quietly behind him on his way out.

She locked it.

Chapter Three

Her hands and legs were spread-eagled, a limb to each post, a chain holding each wrist and ankle taut. She'd been blindfolded and gagged as well. Her lover in black had returned, in her dreams, just as she had dreamed every night for the past two weeks...

"Wake up, Alexandra." She heard that impossibly deep and raspy voice. She stirred. She didn't want to wake up. She didn't want the dream to end. The words rolled over her nude body again, "Wake up."

Then, with a start, she did wake up fully... and found she still couldn't see.

She *had* been blindfolded. She *had* been gagged. She *had* been chained. She was naked. It wasn't a dream. The stalker *had* returned. He'd bound her in her sleep, and now, by the sound of it, he stood at the foot of her bed, gazing down at her naked and helpless body.

After two weeks, Xandra had stopped expecting him. She'd also refused to see Chris. She went to work, jogged, and forced herself to maintain her daily routine as though nothing at all unusual had befallen her. Xandra refused to let one encounter with a psycho alter her lifestyle.

And yet, she'd dreamed of him every night.

Now that he was here, Xandra suddenly remembered to fear him. Why had she not changed her lock? What about him made her inclined to trust his underlying good intentions, despite all evidence he was a crazed sex fiend, and according to Chris, probably suffering from a contagious neurological disease? Once again, he had her powerless and at his mercy; this time she had no one to blame but herself.

Although she already knew it would do her no good, Xandra thrashed in her chains and screamed against the gag. From his low, lusty chuckle, she knew she'd only succeeded in flinging her breasts and hips up and down for him in a vulgar show.

"Are you happy to see me, Alexandra?" he asked in amusement.

I can't see anything, you bastard.

What time was it? She sensed early morning, around the usual time she awakened, not the middle of the night or late in the day. She had to shower and dress for work. Several important clients had appointments with her today; she couldn't blow them off. Not that she supposed a Dom like him cared about her career. No, men like that hated powerful women. Their whole kick was in dragging strong women down. Damn him, and damn herself for craving his touch. She couldn't afford to throw away her whole career, her whole life, in exchange for being his sex toy -- no matter how much a part of her wanted to surrender to just that fate...

"I'm here to remind you that I own you, body and soul," he said, echoing her thoughts. "You are my slave. I won't let you forget it, even when I can't be near to discipline you. Your body must feel the impact of my touch long after my hands have left your flesh. I fear it has been too long since our first session. Your buttocks are no longer pink from my attentions."

Oh, God, she thought with a shiver of fear and anticipation. *He's going to whip me again.*

However, he found new ways to take her off-guard. This time, she felt the bed depress, a hint he'd seated himself over her. Cupping her breast in his hand, he lowered something to her bare skin and began to rub.

Ow! The gag absorbed her protest. He buffed the tender flesh with sandpaper. He scoured all around the quivering sphere. Xandra squirmed and tried to wrest herself free of the chafing. It felt like a cat's tongue, gentle yet abrasive at the same time. It tickled, it hurt, it taunted. At the meeting of sandpaper and nipple, all the conflicting forms of traction intensified. Xandra arched her back and wailed into the gag.

Her captor lavished the same meticulous care on abrading the other breast and nipple with the sandpaper. By the time he'd satisfied himself with his rubdown, her breasts felt scuffed raw. He tested them. The tiniest flick of his fingernail caused her

nipple to stiffen and her whole breast to shudder in reaction. His deep chuckle of approval rumbled over her.

Xandra predicted he wouldn't be content with scouring just her breasts, a prediction borne out when he unchained her ankles and re-shackled her feet folded back over her head, so that her ankles were attached by chains to the same bedposts as her wrists. This debased position proffered both her buttocks and her pussy to his convenience. He took advantage of the access to scour her ass cheeks.

Here he applied rougher, faster sweeps of the sandpaper than he had to her breasts. Obviously, he intended to polish her cheeks pink, as pink and tender as if he had whipped her. When her buttocks began to throb with heat in his grasp, he tested the result with a series of spanks delivered with an open palm. The smacks descended with force, and against her already excoriated flesh, they felt like explosions. Xandra sobbed. Both blindfold and gag were soaked from her tears. But that was not all that had grown wet. Her cunt ached for the same treatment. The third time would hit the charm...

To graze her layered folds, her captor gentled his daubs with the sandpaper, even softer strokes than he'd applied her breasts. The slickness of her pussy also reduced the friction to a mere tormenting buzz rather than a burn. But when the biting surface brushed her clit, nothing could stop her from bucking and howling like an injured beast.

For all that, it was not enough. He roughened her clit enough to drive her into a frenzy, then stopped before she could climax. He left the bed. Xandra could only wait, chained in the same degrading position, wait and wonder what perversity he had in store for her next.

When it came, it was long, hard and sleek. A dildo... a huge dildo. He slid it into her wet and ready pussy. Despite her wetness, because of the dildo's size, he had to jiggle it in carefully, but he did so with relentless patience, until he had shoved the monster in to the hilt. The flap on the rim of the dildo formed a paw-like shape that

extended a claw directly over her clit. A metal ring was fixed to the claw. Both ring and claw tip nudged against her clit when she moved.

He released her legs from over her head and allowed her to rest them on the bed, but her arms remained bound to the posts. Her captor strung a slender chain through the ring against her clit and lifted both halves of the chain up to her breasts. Metal teeth nipped at her nipple. Xandra squealed and tried to escape the bite.

"If you defy me, you will be punished," he said ominously.

She stilled, panting in fear. Another clamp enclosed her other nipple. Chains draped from the clamps over her breasts and down her belly, all the way to the ring over her clit. A final piece completed the outfit, such as it was: a chain that encircled her waist and then creased her butt cheeks to connect the dildo from the anal side.

Her captor unlashed her from the bed and dragged her by the chains on her nipples where he wanted her to go. She stumbled after him. Any misstep resulted in agony to her breasts, but it was difficult to follow his lead as she was still blindfolded and gagged. Crossing the room felt as perilous as a trek across the Himalayas.

Rug changed to cold tile under her bare feet; they had reached the kitchenette at last. Here he made her kneel on the floor. Though he ungagged her, he also shackled her wrists to her ankles. Paper rustled. A delicious smell tantalized her. Sausages. Croissants. Fruit. Coffee. He had brought breakfast.

"Slave, open your mouth."

Xandra licked her lips, afraid again. Her stomach growled, yet she didn't know what he planned. Would he let her eat, or was the food there just to taunt her? Maybe he intended to stuff another one of his obscene toys into her mouth when she least expected it.

"That's your second infraction," he said. He pinched her jaw, forcing her mouth open. A melon ball popped in. Xandra automatically bit down on the juicy piece of cantaloupe. A drizzle of sweetness trickled out the corner of her mouth.

Hot breath brushed her cheek. His mouth neared hers. He lapped the juice from her chin and sealed the strangely tender gesture with a kiss just as tender -- just a light

press of his lips to her skin. Xandra drew in her breath. It was the most intimate thing he'd done to her out of all their games.

After that, her fear vanished. She opened her mouth when he asked and accepted spoonfuls of fruit, bread and meat from his hand. He also gave her sips of coffee with the caution that the liquid was hot. Again, Xandra was touched.

Breakfast did not distract him entirely from his program for her, however. As soon as she'd finished her meal, he reminded her of her two "infractions." He unshackled her wrists from her ankles and pulled her to her feet. He bent her over the kitchen table, her belly and metal-pinched breasts pressing into the cold laminate.

"If you cry out, the punishment will be doubled for each sound," he said. "Do you need the gag?"

Amazingly, she considered it. "No."

He spanked her with his open hand as he had on the bed. By now the abrasion from the sandpaper had waned, but instead she had to deal with the impact his blows had on the huge dildo pumping her insides. Every clap of his hand seemed to drive it deeper into her. Xandra clenched her teeth to keep from yelping, tears streaking her face.

"Alexandra, my poor little slave," he cooed. He lifted her from the table and stroked her face. "You've been very good, my dear. You were born to be a slave. You were born to belong to me. You realize it too. Otherwise you would have reported me to the police and changed your lock. You knew I'd come back, didn't you?"

Head lowered in embarrassment, she nodded.

"Do you know why I came for you? For you and only you?"

She shook her head.

"All the time I was in "prison," I watched you from afar. For years I yearned to dominate you as I'm doing now. To bend you to my will, to taste you, tame you and fuck you at my whim. But you were beyond my reach. Now that I've escaped, I have finally taken what rightfully belongs to me. I should have claimed you long ago."

His confession chilled her rather than charmed her. "You're an escaped convict?"

"No questions." He turned harsh, perhaps sensing he'd revealed too much. He gripped her arm roughly and manhandled her back across the carpet. He unshackled her hands, but warned her, "Don't move, unless you want further punishment. Which, for myself, I would not mind, but we're running late as it is."

Late? Another frisson of fear traversed her spine. Late for what? She'd resigned herself to being used as his sex toy all day, and perhaps all night. Somehow she'd convinced herself that after that he'd disappear again, and she could return to her normal life. Missing the appointments with her clients would cost her dearly, but she might be able to make up some plausible excuse for standing them up without so much as a courtesy call... It didn't matter, because she'd been deluding herself all along. She had a history of self-delusion, Xandra reminded herself bitterly. Hadn't all her previous relationships been disasters exactly because she refused to see the true nature of the men she dated?

This had to be the lowest she'd ever fallen. The man was a stalker, an escaped convict, for God's sake. If she thought she could trust him to be the domineering yet essentially noble lover of her dreams, she was as whacked as the women who tried to marry serial killers on death row.

He returned from some activity across the room. "Put this on," he ordered.

What now? she wondered. As if nipple clamps chained to a dildo weren't degrading enough. To her surprise, he handed her a chemise, silk blouse and suit skirt. When she'd finished dressing herself, he helped her into the matching jacket. Her business clothes felt distinctly unnatural over the clamps and chains.

He knew it damn well. "All through the day, you will feel your breasts and cunt bearing the force of my claim on you. You will remember that no matter what else you are, no matter what face you show to others, under it all, you are my slave."

He didn't wait for her reply. He dragged her by the arm again, this time to the bathroom. "Wash your face. Put on your make-up. Paint on the false confidence you display so convincingly to the outside world. But never forget I know what you really are -- a frightened girl who wants to be mastered, controlled and protected. When you

take off the blindfold, you will see a timer on the vanity counter. Do not leave this bathroom, or even open the door, until that timer reaches zero.”

The bathroom door snicked shut.

Xandra whipped off the blindfold. The bathroom light stabbed her eyes. It took her a moment to adjust her focus, then she searched for the timer he’d mentioned. Talk of timers made her think of bombs, especially on the tail of her concerns over his criminal background. But the timer was no more than that, her own kitchen timer used for clocking boiling artichokes, nothing sinister. The digital display ticked down from ten minutes.

She considered disobeying him and sneaking a peek outside the bathroom door, but she didn’t entertain the idea for long. This respite she must assume to be temporary. He could be waiting outside the door, ready to punish her again. Besides, she had to pee.

It wasn’t easy to perform her bodily functions around the dildo and chain outfit, but it wasn’t impossible. While she was at it, she tried to figure out how to remove the dildo and clamps. To her dismay, she found the chains keeping the dildo in place were secured with a tiny lock. She would have removed the nipple clamps if she’d been able to fathom how to unscrew the complex clamp, but her efforts to experiment resulted in too much pain to continue. She re-buttoned her blouse. A glance at the timer told her she had four minutes left. She hurriedly washed her face and applied her make-up. She glanced longingly at the shower, but didn’t dare. Maybe this evening her captor would let her bathe.

Maybe he would bathe her himself. Her cheeks burned and her pussy clenched at the thought.

Nine, eight, seven... three, two, one... Zero. Xandra opened the bathroom door. He hadn’t told her she must replace the blindfold, so she hadn’t.

The apartment was empty.

What did she feel? Relief -- or disappointment?

No wonder he hadn't ordered her to put the blindfold back on. The timer also made sense now. He'd wanted to give himself time to make his getaway. His last instructions, she realized, indicated that he expected her to go about her day, including to work, as if everything were normal. Only he and she would know about the toys he had wrapped around her body under her sedate charcoal-gray business suit. She touched her breasts through her blouse. Her nipples tingled in their tiny prisons.

* * *

All through the day, Xandra shifted behind her desk, burning with awareness of the artificial cock stretching her and the clamps jangling on her tits. Somehow, she managed to project her usual image as a coolly professional financial advisor. The meetings with her clients proceeded without a hitch. She relished the delicious sense of sharing an intimate secret with her lover, even as she met with dull, silver-haired men or answered her work email. She felt as though he were right beside her, exchanging a knowing smile with her.

Her mystery lover had exhibited the perfect union of mastery and mercy. He'd forced her to kneel on the floor to accept tidbits from his hand like a pet, yet he'd leaned down to kiss the stickiness from her chin in so tender a gesture. He'd spanked her with his open palm for her slightest impudence, yet taken care not to make her late for work. He'd frightened her out of her wits by awakening her in chains this morning, yet set her free again -- albeit wearing the sign of his ownership.

He must have plans to see her again soon. He'd want to remove the dildo himself, she was sure. Perhaps tonight... Excitement bubbled up in her. She couldn't wait.

I could fall in love with this man, she realized. And I don't even know his name. The idea brought her up short. *That's lunacy, girl,* she told herself. Bad enough she had surrendered her body to him. But risk her heart? No. She drew the line at that. She'd been hurt too badly in the past to make that mistake again. And the men who'd abused her trust in the past hadn't even been escaped convicts.

Only one man had never betrayed her. True, he didn't melt her body into a pool of wanton need, but he'd held her in his arms as she'd sobbed over the losers who had mistreated her. She wasn't in love with him, but she loved him as a friend. She trusted him.

He'd helped her through all her previous breakups. This situation was much more dangerous in some ways, but not that different in other ways. She knew she could count on her best friend to watch out for her. Even though she'd treated him badly over the past two weeks, telling him she didn't want to see him without explaining the real reason -- her own confusion about whether she wanted to see her stalker again -- Xandra knew he wouldn't hold a grudge. It wasn't his way.

She picked up the phone and dialed. "Hello? Chris? I need you."

Chapter Four

Chris met her in the parking lot at the local greasy spoon, one with excellent pies. Xandra needed pie to strengthen her nerves, the more decadent and calorie-packed the better. It should have chocolate syrup and whipped cream. Besides, she didn't dare return to her own apartment. The stalker might be waiting there. Although she'd made up her mind -- she could not, could not, maintain an on-going, intimate relationship with someone from a BDSM club -- she still didn't have the heart to tell him to his face. She knew she had to steel herself first, or she'd melt in his arms again.

The waitress brought them two forks, but Chris didn't touch the pie. "What's going on, Xandra?"

"Before I say anything, you have to promise that you'll abide by my decisions on this matter," Xandra said nervously. "And that you won't judge me. I already know I'm an idiot. I don't need to be reminded of it again."

"You've changed your mind and finally decided to go the police," he said flatly. His hands fisted on the table before he deliberately relaxed them, palms down. "Yes, I'll abide by that, if that's your decision."

"Just the opposite. Look, I know it's hard for you to believe, but I don't think he's a bad man."

Chris glanced around the restaurant to make a quick confirmation that no one paid them any attention. Then he reached across the table and slipped his hand into Xandra's suit jacket.

"What the hell..." Xandra demanded. His hand pressed down over her breast. The nipple clamp and dangling chain clearly could be felt through her slip and silk blouse. The jogging of the clamp and the warmth of his hand made her nipples swell and her breasts tingle. Xandra blushed furiously. "Chris, please."

He withdrew his hand. His face showed no hint of his reaction. "What he does to you, this stalker, this Dom, it turns you on, doesn't it, Xandra?"

"Oh, God." She buried her face in her hands. "Do I disgust you?" He didn't answer. Xandra looked up from her hands. Chris' whole body had gone rigid, and his face as hard as a stone. He stared at her with a bleak look in his eye that she'd never seen. "I do disgust you," Xandra whispered. She started to rise from the table.

Chris grabbed her wrist. "Don't go, Xandra." He shuddered and released an explosive breath. "You don't disgust me. Please, sit. It's me, your buddy, Chris. You can tell me anything. Remember?"

"Yes." She sat back down in the booth. The faux leather seat squeaked under her buttocks as she shifted to try and find a comfortable position around the dildo cleaving her. She blushed again when she thought about Chris discovering that.

"People can't help their sexual preferences." Chris sounded as though he were trying to convince himself as much as reassure her. "But I don't understand why you called me. He's the one you've decided you want, despite everything he's done to you. *Because* of everything he's done to you."

"I've decided I can't let him find me a third time. I must never see him again."

"What?" Blue eyes blinked at her in surprise.

"I found out he's an escaped convict. Yes, he excites me, Chris. I'm ashamed to admit it, but there it is. But I've had it with bad boys. I won't go through that again. And this situation... It's too frightening, even for me. The problem is, he knows where I live, he has the key to my apartment. Even if I change the lock, I think he would just break in. I need a safe place to stay where he can't find me. And I don't want to be alone. Can I stay with you?"

"With me? You want to stay with me?"

"If it's too much of an imposition --"

"It's the last thing I expected you to ask, that's all." He frowned. "I don't get it. This man turns you on, but you don't want to see him again either. You think you can just hide from him forever?"

"He'll forget about me once I'm not around."

Chris looked at her gravely. "I don't think so, Xandra. No man could forget a woman like you."

"What's that supposed to mean?" She bristled. "Is there something wrong with me?"

"You're very beautiful, Xandra." Her jaw dropped. He had never used that tone with her before -- worshipful and yearning. "A bit insecure," he added dryly, in a more Chris-typical way. "But beautiful. Too inclined to over think and over plan minutia, and then make a major life decision with no more than five seconds consideration, but --"

"Okay, okay, I get the idea."

"Of course you can come stay at my house, Xandra, if that's what you want," Chris said seriously. "I have to be honest, I don't know if I can protect you from your... lover, but I swear to you, I will try."

* * *

Dr. Chris Jacobs lived alone in a four-bedroom, three-bath, restored Dutch Colonial, which sat on nearly two acres of emerald lawn in a posh neighborhood. The backyard included a rose garden around a pergola and a full-sized outdoor basketball court. The stately but spartan rooms inside, however, begged for more furnishings. Chris claimed that work left him no time for the matter.

Belying that excuse, in contrast to the rest of the downstairs, the media room, the gym and especially the kitchen had been lovingly equipped with every gadget known to man. As a hobby, Chris liked to cook gourmet meals for his friends. The bedrooms upstairs were also nicely appointed, but only because Xandra had dragged him shopping for decent drapes and bedspreads one weekend.

"You know where the guest room is," Chris said. He paused. "Do you want me to stop by your apartment and pick up some of your things?"

"No." She didn't want the stalker to see Chris. "If I need to, I'll go buy new clothes."

Although Xandra teased Chris about his sparsely furnished house, the truth was she didn't have much in her apartment either. Except for a bit of indulgence in the clothing and shoe department, she handled her money frugally, preferring to invest most of her discretionary income. By now, she had a comfortable portfolio.

"Well, you have a toothbrush here," he said. "Is there anything else you need before I start dinner? That is, if you still have any appetite left after all that pie."

"Actually..." Xandra hated this. She knew her face must have reddened again. "Yes, I need your help with something." He waited. "The, uhm." She gestured to the general area of her chest. "I don't know how to remove it." A slight smile curled his lip, and he lifted an eyebrow. "Please don't laugh at me, Chris. I'm embarrassed enough as it is."

"I'm sorry," he said at once. "Shall we go upstairs?"

They closed the drapes in the guest bedroom. Then Xandra took off her suit jacket and skirt awkwardly. She unbuttoned her silk blouse. Down to her chemise, she hesitated. Once she might have changed unselfconsciously in the same room as Chris, but that wasn't the same as stripping and standing before him naked except for titty-clamps and chains. Worse yet, ever since he'd made her come while massaging her on her living room floor two weeks ago, she'd felt strangely shy of him. To buy time, she unpinned her hair and ran her fingers through to loosen it over her shoulders.

He didn't hurry her. She took a deep breath and let the chemise puddle on the floor. She stepped out of it and stood before Chris, naked, blushing and jingling with chains.

Chris drew in a sharp gasp. "God, Xandra." He sounded strained.

Xandra guessed he was horrified by the realization that the chains from her nipples dangled all the way to the dildo ring between her legs. Her blush spread.

"Let me... look at this," he said unevenly. He placed his hands on her bare breasts. Gently, he tugged the nipple clamps this way and that to examine the mechanism. Xandra groaned and lifted her chest to him. Chris trailed his fingers down her belly along the chain links, until he reached the ring over her clit. The motion of

prodding the ring also stimulated her clit. Xandra swayed on her feet. She stifled a mew of pleasure. "You'd, ah, better lie back on the bed. And spread your legs."

Xandra shut her eyes. "This is so embarrassing." But she lay on her back, as he had suggested, with her knees bent over the edge of the bed. After another moment in which she struggled with her mortification, she spread her thighs. Chris rattled the dildo as far as he could against the chains fore and aft that secured it in her. Xandra felt the motion reverberate all the way up to her cervix. The dildo's claw scraped to and fro against her clit. Her hips twitched.

Please don't let Chris make me come again.

"The belt around your waist has a lock," Chris said. "I'll need to get a bolt cutter. Don't move."

She waited on the bed, thighs spread, for him to return. It washed over her again, the strange feeling that a man commanded her. She luxuriated in the feeling. She couldn't tell to whom she felt surrendered -- to Chris or to the stalker?

Chris returned with the bolt cutter. He stood between Xandra's legs and looked down at her. He positioned the bolt cutter against the chain around her waist and began to work it back and forth. The dildo claw agitated against her clit again. Xandra clenched her teeth, trying her best to ignore the building sensation. Her thighs started to close.

Chris forced her legs apart again. The feel of his strong hands on the inside of her thighs almost pushed her over the edge. "I'm almost done."

He finished cutting the belt off before she could come. She should have been glad, but it was difficult to remember that when her whole body tingled with unfulfilled need. She felt his hands inside her thighs again. He tugged at the dildo, slowly withdrawing it from her pussy. With a sigh, Xandra started to sit up.

"No. Don't move." Chris pushed her back down on the bed. "I'm going to insert some cream to soothe you." *What?* A dollop of cold lotion touched her labia. She jumped. "Shhhh. Lie still," he murmured.

He slipped two of his fingers, coated with cream, into her pussy. He massaged her cunt with long, slow strokes. Meanwhile his other hand rubbed sensuously against her clit.

Ohmigod.

"Just like last time," he said.

Last time he'd "soothed" her, she had made a fool of herself by nearly biting apart her pillow with the force of her orgasm. This time, she lay on her back face up while he stood between her legs, looking down at her. How would she hide her orgasm if he made her come again? And how could she stand the humiliation of writhing in orgasm under Chris' well-meant ministrations?

"Chris, stop." He kept rubbing. Desire half-lidded his eyes and he stared down at her shuddering, naked body with open lust on his face. He knew he was going to make her come. He knew exactly what he was doing. He wanted her. But she didn't deserve a man like Chris. She didn't deserve to feel this good. "Chris, stop," she repeated.

She prayed he wouldn't heed her. She felt she had to tell him to stop, even though that was the last thing she really wanted. She hoped just this once, he wouldn't listen. That he would make her come, and then unzip his pants and plunge his cock into her and fuck her until she screamed.

Was it possible? Did she want Chris to fuck her?

Yes.

He was her best friend, but he was also more. She'd thought she could never feel any passion for him. Oh, how wrong she'd been. Right now she wanted to feel his cock claiming her more than she'd ever wanted any other man.

No! What was she thinking? If they had sex, their friendship would be ruined. She'd lose him forever, just for a few seconds of bliss. "No!" she shouted, sitting up and pushing him away.

Chris stumbled back. A cascade of different emotions flashed across his face: confusion, anger, embarrassment, apology, shame. Without a word, he turned on his heel and left the room.

Xandra curled up into a ball on the bed and cried.

Chapter Five

She finally dressed and went in search of him. She found him in the gym, shirtless, seated in the black chair of one of the stations, hoisting weights. Sweat trickled down his pecs and abs. "Chris..."

"I don't want to talk about it, Xandra." He wouldn't even turn to look at her, keeping his concentration focused on a spot on the far wall.

Xandra bit her lip. She didn't know what to say, although she knew she ought to say something. She wished things could be as easy between them as they always had been. God, she'd made a mess of everything, hadn't she? "I think we need to talk about it."

Chris blew a raspberry and eased back the weights. He still wouldn't look at her, though he sat up and leaned forward on the black leather gym chair. "Look, I'm sorry. You came here for protection against a sexual predator, and instead of providing a safe place for you, I made a pass at you. I was out of line. The thing is, I don't think I can do this anymore. Maybe you need to find another place to stay."

That was the last thing Xandra wanted to hear. "Chris, don't be like that."

"I'm not made of stone, Xandra." He glanced up, his face agonized. "It's been hard enough watching you throw yourself at losers all these years while you treat me like an old mop, useful for nothing except cleaning up the messes they leave in your life. How do you think I feel knowing that you find more pleasure in the touch of a stranger who stalks you and ties you up than you do with me?"

Xandra was stunned. "I never knew you felt that way."

"Of course not. You never see me at all."

"That's not true. You're my best friend. I just don't want to ruin that with sex. If it didn't work out..."

He looked at her for a long moment. He blew out another explosive breath. "You're right. You're right. I'd rather have you as a friend than nothing at all. Besides, it's obvious that sexually I can't give you what you want."

Her face heated. *That's not true*, she wanted to say. *If only you wouldn't give up so easily*. She couldn't force the words out though, not when they'd just come so close to mending their friendship. That was the most important thing. "So are we okay?" She strove for a tentative smile. "Still friends?"

"Yeah." He tried to replicate her smile but the twist of his lips looked more bittersweet than happy. "Yeah, Xandra, we're still friends."

Just as Xandra exhaled in relief, she caught sight of a shadow moving in the garden outside. French doors opened from the gym onto the garden. She stiffened. Surely it couldn't be...

"Xandra? What's wrong?"

"I'm not sure. I thought I saw something." She shivered. "I must be getting paranoid." *It couldn't be the man in black. He couldn't have followed me here.*

Chris frowned. "You're shaking." He stood and walked toward her, his back to the French doors. This time the silhouette in the glass was unmistakable. A man all in black, including a black ski mask, lifted his arm. He smashed the glass with the butt of a gun.

Xandra screamed.

The next instant, the stalker burst through the shattered door.

Run, her mind screamed. *Call the police.*

The stalker reached her before she could coerce her aching limbs to answer her mind's scream. He yanked her up by one arm and shoved her up against the wall. Something about him had changed. He'd never been so brutal with her before. He seemed colder, harder, meaner. She hadn't feared him before, yet now she did. There was an edge to him she'd not sensed in their previous encounters.

"Leave her alone, you asshole!" Chris shouted. He took advantage of the stalker's momentary distraction to pummel the stalker in the face with a few good punches.

But the stalker outweighed and outbulked Chris. Recovering from the blows, and without releasing his grip on Xandra's arm, he rained down one-handed bitch-slaps with the gun on Chris. Chris buckled beneath the onslaught. Utterly relentless, the stalker forced Chris to his knees and smacked him with the butt of the gun so hard across the jaw that Chris fell to the floor. Then the stalker smashed Xandra back into the wall and commenced to wrench off her clothes. The poor blouse and skirt she'd worn to work were never going to be wearable again.

"Please," Xandra said, peering into the stalker's brown eyes, trying to re-establish the paradoxical sense of trust she had felt in his presence before. *Brown eyes?* She could have sworn they'd been blue. "Don't hurt Chris. I'll do whatever you want."

"I'll do whatever I want, and the good Dr. Jacobs will watch." He laughed. Even his voice sounded off, Xandra thought. Deep and gravelly yes, but with a slightly different timbre. Or was it just the hint of hysteria present now that had not been there before, making it sound strange? "And when I'm done," the stalker said as he waved his gun in her face, "I'll kill you both."

This wasn't a game of pleasurable domination. It certainly wasn't one of Xandra's fantasies. He meant it. *Oh, Chris, I'm so sorry I dragged you into this.* She couldn't stand the thought of his death, and all because of her own stupidity and misplaced trust. Why had she never seen it before? Why had she endangered the one person she cared most about in the world?

She *was* in love with Chris Jacobs, she realized. And now, because of her, the nicest man in the world might die at the hands of a depraved sexual psychotic.

"I said, leave her alone." Chris lifted himself from the ground. His voice had deepened, his muscles bulged and a feral gleam raged in his eyes. It was Chris and yet more than Chris. It was the Hulk without the green skin.

The stalker swung around to aim the gun at Chris. "Watch out!" cried Xandra.

Chris barreled forward and tackled the stalker in an attempt to wrest the gun from his hands. He half succeeded. The stalker lost his grip on the gun, and the weapon clanged and rolled across the stone tile floor of the gym room. Too engrossed in their conflict to retrieve it, the men wrestled hand to hand. The stalker grabbed a fistful of cords from one of the gym machines and tried to choke Chris. Chris roared like a wild animal and ducked out of the noose. Both men yanked on the cords in a vicious tug-of-war.

The cords snapped like a packet of firecrackers. Five hundred pounds in barbells slid down the rail and landed over the stalker's chest. Given his superhuman strength, the weight did not crush him to death as it might have another man, but it knocked him unconscious and pinned him in place. Chris-the-Hulk now turned the full brunt of his attention to Xandra.

"Chris?" she said uncertainly.

"I'm finally free of that *prison* called 'Chris,'" he said with a demonic grin. His icy blue eyes and lowered voice fit what she remembered of the stalker who had come to her apartment. "I'm finally free to do what I've always wanted to do to you, Alexandra."

He advanced on her. Xandra, self-conscious of her semi-undress, clutched at the feeble shreds left of her clothing. "You have Hyde's Syndrome."

Chris bent and picked up the gun off the tile floor. "You finally figured it out."

"It was you before... not this other man." She gestured to the stalker trapped beneath the weights.

"His name was Stephen Paige. An ordinary guy, until he contracted Hyde's Syndrome." Chris laughed inappropriately. "He escaped the hold in our research facility. Tried to rape Harriet, one of our scientists. I interfered. He was too strong for me -- back then, when I was weakling Chris -- and escaped, but not before he scratched me and infected me with the disease. It was shortly after I developed the symptoms of the syndrome that I joined the BDSM club you belong to so I could finally fuck you for the first time."

"Why me?" asked Xandra. "Why didn't you just try to rape the first woman you saw, like Stephen there?"

Chris looked at her with burning eyes. "I only wanted you, Xandra. Always you. Only you."

"Chris."

"And then you came to nice Chris for protection from me. Oh, that was rich." He loomed over her. He had the gun in one hand and stroked her hair with the other. "You can't protect yourself from me, Alexandra. No matter where you go, I'll follow you. Unlike the Chris you know, I can't repress my hunger for you. I can't be your good little boy. I can only be your master." He bent and kissed her fiercely. She felt something cold and metallic press into her hand. "This is the only way you'll be safe from me."

He had given her the gun -- aimed at him. "No." She tried not to panic. "Chris, no."

"I can't control myself. I don't want to become another Stephen Paige. I'd rather die than endanger you, Xandra."

"There has to be another way."

"We're looking for a cure at the lab. I've offered myself as a guinea pig but I was a fool to think I could control it long enough to test the antidote."

"There's an antidote? Where is it?"

He laughed again. "The fridge. But I'd rather die than take it. If I take it, I won't be the man you want anymore." His arm around her tightened. "I won't lose you, Xandra. I won't go back to being the nice Chris you despise. The only choice is death."

"Chris, that's the syndrome talking. You're not rational right now. I'm not going to discuss this further with you until you take that antidote." Xandra squirmed free and ran to the refrigerator.

"I said *no*," he shouted.

He pursued her. She spun around, lifted the gun, and fired.

* * *

The police and paramedics finally left, taking the body of Stephen Paige with them.

Firing all the bullets in the gun hadn't helped the state of the French doors, but it had induced the neighbors to call the police. And it had distracted Chris long enough for Xandra to find the syringe in the refrigerator and plunge it into his biceps, all the while praying she was doing the right thing. His overblown "Rocky" physique had subsided back into the more normal, fit body of the Chris she knew. He'd given her a bleak look and wouldn't talk to her. Then the police were there; they each had to give their statements and there had been no time for personal recriminations. That would come now.

"I guess I could go home to my apartment now," Xandra said.

"I guess you could," Chris said neutrally.

"The antidote worked."

"So it would seem." He still wouldn't look at her.

"Chris." She held up a diamond ring she'd found in the fridge in the same plastic box with the syringe. "What's this?"

"The other choice."

"I don't understand."

Chris paced the room. He toyed with the yellow Do-Not-Cross tape dangling across his gym room. "I had to make a choice. Take the antidote or take you. He -- my other self -- was going to give you that ring when the time was right. I knew you wouldn't accept it from me."

Xandra closed her fingers around the ring. "Chris, when you were... your other self... you said something. You said you had always wanted to do those things, as Chris, but didn't dare. Was that true?"

"Yes," he said curtly.

"But even, um, under the influence, you made it clear you would still never hurt me. So the syndrome kind of acted like super-alcohol, releasing inhibitions. But even

without it your instinct was to give me pleasure -- and protect me, even from yourself if you had to."

He finally glanced at her. "What's your point?"

Xandra sighed. She set the ring down on the table. "My point? I guess there is no point. If you're the kind of man who needs a drug or a syndrome to go after what he wants most in life, then you're right, you're not the man for me. It's too bad, because it almost seemed for a while there that you were the man who could be my master by night and my best friend by day."

She stood and gave him one last lingering look. *Stop me, Chris. Don't let me walk out of here.* He stood as well. *Yes! Stop me! Don't let me leave. Don't make me leave...*

"I don't think we should see each other anymore," Chris said quietly. "I love you too much to be just your friend."

"And I love you too much to be just your friend." Xandra blinked away her tears. "So there we have it. We should never see each other again."

"That's right."

Xandra walked toward the front door. She felt like every step opened up another thousand-mile chasm between her and Chris. Then, just as her hand touched the handle of the front door, she heard forceful steps close the distance.

His hand fell over hers, stopping her from opening the door. "Just one problem," he said. "I distinctly gave you an order, as your master, to shoot me, and you disobeyed. I think I'm going to have to punish you for that. In fact, I think it's going to take a whole lifetime to punish you for that."

He captured her other hand as well and slipped the ring onto her finger. "Now go upstairs, take off all your clothes and stand with your hands behind your neck until I come for you. You're about to get spanked. And that's just the start of your punishment."

Xandra smiled up at him through her tears of joy. "Yes, Master."

She started to head upstairs, but when she passed the broken glass all over the floor, she decided she couldn't just leave it. "I'll just sweep up, first."

"I want a sex slave, not a housekeeper. We'll take care of that later. For now, I want your ass under my hand." She grinned as she began to sweep, anticipating the rest of the night. "You just don't listen, do you?" Chris said. "You're definitely going to have to be taught."

"It won't take a minute..." she began. He snatched the broom from her hand and threw her over his shoulder in a fireman's hold. "Chris!"

"It's 'Master,' remember?"

"I know, but..."

"The only butt I'm interested in right now is this one." He smacked her ass. He carried her to the bedroom and tossed her on the bed. "Take off your clothes and lean over the bed with your ass facing me."

For a moment she wanted to laugh. This was Chris, after all. Now that she knew, could she really play these games with him? She'd thought of him as just her harmless best friend for so long, could they really recapture the wicked passion they'd shared when she hadn't known his true identity?

For a moment, doubt flickered in his blue eyes and she knew he wondered the same thing. She twisted the ring on her finger. "Maybe this isn't going to work."

"And maybe you're just afraid of happy endings." He loomed over her, and since she still hadn't stripped as he'd commanded, pulled off her clothes himself. With deft strength, he flipped her over.

She didn't see where he got the handcuffs from, but it must have been from nearby -- under the bed? -- because without leaving her unguarded, he found two pairs and handcuffed her to the bedposts as she knelt on the floor facing the bed.

"If you're really so interested in cleaning up, I have just the thing." He opened the mirrored closet, revealing an assortment of naughty toys and costumes. One of them was a French Maid dress with an expensive looking leather-handled feather duster. He picked out the feather duster and began to tap it against her buttocks with the feathered end. The clean stiff feathers delivered a surprisingly forceful blow, but

what set her squirming were the soft ends of the feathers tickling at her pussy each time.

"You need a much more thorough spanking than that, but there will be time later. Right now, I have to touch you." He murmured this almost to himself. Though his voice was not as deep as when she'd thought of him as her "stalker," it sounded deeper and rougher than usual.

His bare hand clapped against her ass took her by surprise and she jumped in the cuffs. Behind her, he chuckled throatily and continued to spank her with his large, warm hand until she felt her buttocks heat. Then his hands moved up under her body, over her belly, and onto her breasts. She felt his breath against her neck, in her hair, as he pinched her nipples between his fingertips. He drew a shuddering breath of need.

Cool air whispered against her skin while he stepped back to remove his clothes. Then he knelt over her from behind and thrust into her pussy. Strong, even strokes of his cock brought her to a peak of excitement, which tipped over into orgasm when he reached around and pressed down on her clit as he moved inside her.

She assumed, because he pulled out, that he must have had an orgasm at the same time as she. However, when he uncuffed her and pulled her to her feet, she saw that his cock was still hard and red.

Chris stretched her out on her back the length of the bed, this time using the bedpost cuffs to restrain her ankles. He stood at the foot of the bed and picked up the feather duster again. Briefly, he wiped off the handle and lubed it up. It was a clean, hard plastic stick with a smooth knob at the top. He flashed her a sinful smile before he extended the black leather handle and slid it between her thighs, into her cunt.

She gasped at the sensation of the smooth knob and long handle entering her pussy. Chris controlled the gliding in and out strokes of the duster, fucked her like a long, slender cock. The sensation made her itch to touch her clit, but he had no intention of letting her pleasure herself. When her hands fluttered toward her belly, he snapped, "Hands over your head, slave." So she grabbed the headboard instead and shut her eyes. "Open your eyes, slave. I want you to see and believe who your master is."

Xandra opened her eyes to see him prowl onto the bed, his muscular body poised over hers. He continued to move the feather duster handle in and out of her. She watched as he lowered his head to her pussy to lick her clit.

“Oh Jesus,” she cried, biting her lip to prevent herself from screaming with pleasure. He made her come again, and then again and again, like a waterfall of orgasms spilling onto another.

The slender handle withdrew and Chris slid his own thick, throbbing cock into its place. Yet the feather duster was between them, forced down over her clit by the weight of his body, so that every time he thrust into her, the pressure moved over her clit. He rode her to one final, shattering orgasm.

A long dreamy time later, she realized she was still cuffed to the bed. She wiggled her toes and snuggled closer to him. “Are you going to let me go soon?”

He kissed the top of her head. “Never.”

Vashti Valant

Vashti Valant has been a mermaid, a forklift operator, a humanitarian aid volunteer and a homeless shelter counselor. She has yet to try her hand at bioengineering, a stint in the space station, or international espionage, although these activities are on her to-do list. She is married to a love machine, and with him has created an adorable cyborg baby named after a Norse god. She now writes full time.