



Hart's Heart

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This is a work of fiction. The characters, incidents and dialogues in this book are of the author's imagination and are not to be construed as real. Any resemblance to actual events or persons, living or dead, is completely coincidental.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my husband, Steve.
Thank you for believing in me.

Prologue

Like gossamer threads, pale green wisps of Spanish moss hung from the limbs of majestic pines. Water dripped in a steady cadence from the great canopy, running down time-weathered bark and forming droplets of silvery light on spider webs spun through the branches. The forest floor was littered with decomposing pine needles and moss; lichen and ferns crowded the base of trunks several feet around. Wild mushrooms fought for footing in the moist soil and the bark of every tree, big or small.

High atop a rocky crag and tail, on the far side of Summit Ridge, shrouded in mist and hidden from the eyes of modern man, Castle Hart blended into the surrounding woods. Built of local granite, the castle held fifty-six opulent rooms, designed and decorated by the lord of the manor, Sir Anthony Hart. Each room uniquely its own, in purpose, form, and function. Unless directed to its location, most people would pass by without ever noticing its existence.

Like King Arthur before him, loyal and brave knights protected Lord Hart, his subjects, and the castle. This hidden world, steeped in mystery, where old ways were honored and men controlled all things, was a secret realm created as an escape from a contemporary world. Each citizen of the palace believed the ancient ways somehow held more promise than the current lack of morals plaguing today's society.

This community of lords and ladies, masters and slaves, existed in complete separation and secrecy; where Sir Anthony Hart ruled with the might of his sword and the honor of his word. The world he created and controlled was his to govern as he saw fit.

It was midwinter and the storms had settled into their normal pattern, wind whipping the coast, as clouds raced inland over forests as old as the earth. This time of year palace life was slow, most choosing to stay in the warmth of their chambers until evening arrived. Each eve at seven sharp, a banquet was served in the great hall. This twilight feast was a time when everyone came together for companionship, good food, and to enjoy the pleasures of life.

Chapter One

Lady Elizabeth Cowen had lived at Castle Hart for two years. As first lady to Lord Hart, and a free woman, she was allowed more liberties than most ladies of the court. Her position in the palace permitted her to lead a pampered existence most women might only dream of.

Elizabeth enjoyed all the pleasures available to her. Anthony was a fabulous lover, who put forth great effort to make sure her needs were met. She was permitted to enjoy sexual encounters with unattached free men and knights if she chose. Lord Hart was a broad-minded man, who believed free persons should partake of sex in an open and honest fashion.

Hart also enjoyed the pleasures available to him here at the palace, although he'd never taken a slave, which was his right as lord and master. This arrangement worked wonderfully for Elizabeth because she didn't have to share his affections with another woman. All in all, life here was peaceful; she was loved and cherished.

Elizabeth felt satisfied. She'd had two years of uncomplicated living and happiness, two years of enjoyment and pleasure, two years of peace, until the fateful evening three months ago when Lord Thomas Wolfe returned from a raid. She'd known Wolfe, first knight to Anthony Hart, for a long time. And yet she'd barely really noticed him before. Never observed the way his hair hung over his collar or the deep blue color of his eyes. Never noted the way his mouth turned at the corners in a smile or the laugh lines around his lips. Nor the deep tenor of his voice as he spoke of the trials he'd endured during his raid on another castle, far to the south of this secluded valley they called home.

Anthony spent hours listening to Thomas recant the details of the attack, while Elizabeth sat close by, studying the face of Lord Wolfe. She knew Hart was pleased with the incursion and the capture of several slaves. These women would be trained in the art of a jakara, taught the proper way to enter and greet, the correct way to serve a meal and the intricate steps to the dances performed nightly for the enjoyment and sexual arousal of the audience. The knights also returned with a number of free men and women to join the family here. It had taken several days and many hours of reliving the finer points of the mission before the castle settled back into a normal routine, normal that is for everyone except Elizabeth.

No matter how hard she tried, it was impossible to keep her mind off Thomas Wolfe. She watched him each eve at feast. The way he stroked the breast of his slave girl made her wet and hungry for his touch. The striking way he controlled the conversation after banquet enthralled her. She hung on every word, wishing it were her body he played with absent-mindedly while telling stories to the assembled crowd.

And Lord Anthony Hart was aware of her distraction. It was two weeks after the knights returned in triumph when he finally reminded her, "You have my permission to seek out knights, Elizabeth."

Looking down at the plate in front of her, the food barely touched, she responded, "Yes Milord, I know this."

She felt his finger on her chin, as he gently lifted her head until her eyes met his. “Look at me, Elizabeth. It's been too many days that you've hungered for Wolfe, so why not just get on with it?”

“I can not speak of this here Anthony, not with everyone watching and listening. Please, can it wait until this eve in our chamber?”

She saw the surprise written in his eyes.

“This is not what I think it is.” He paused to take a breath. “Is it?” His eyes bore into hers with such intensity she wanted to run away.

“Milord, please,” she started to say, desperately wondering how to explain to Hart her desire to have more than casual sex with Thomas Wolfe.

“Stop!” His voice rose. “You will get yourself to our chamber and await my pleasure.”

Elizabeth, afraid to do or say more, stood without answering this command. She curtsied deeply, a tear welling in the corner of her eye, as her look implored him to understand. Withdrawing from the great hall, she went directly to the chamber she shared with Anthony Hart to await his arrival.

Chapter Two

Lord Anthony Hart looked down at the crowd assembled around Thomas Wolfe. His first knight was a handsome man and his lady had seemed to realize it recently. Thinking back, he tried to remember when it was she'd started paying more attention to Wolfe. It was shortly after he returned from the raid on Sunshine Valley.

Anthony had been pleased with the raid. Wolfe returned with seven slaves, four freemen and six free women. These new additions to the population of Castle Hart were good for everyone here. More free citizens to work the fields and stores, more slaves to serve the needs of all.

Thinking back, he realized Elizabeth's distraction indeed started within days of Wolfe's return. *What does it mean*, he wondered to himself. *Is it possible she could have deeper feelings for Thomas? Is it possible I might lose my lovely lady to another?* Shaking himself out of his reverie, Lord Hart stood and left the hall.

Two minutes after parting the assemblage, Anthony arrived at the door to his chamber. Pausing a moment in the hall, he gathered his strength to confront the woman he loved. Reaching for the doorknob, he slowly turned it as he pushed the heavy door inward. Entering the room, his gaze scanned until his eyes came to rest on Elizabeth, sitting on the window seat staring out at the midnight sky. He walked over to the casement and placed his hand on her shoulder. "Milady, I think we need to talk."

Looking at him with tears in her eyes, she pleaded, "Oh Anthony, what am I to say? You know I love you."

"Of course, my sweet. I also know your love is not as deep as I had hoped it would be. You've resisted marriage to me for several years. And while I understand your past sexual diversions have been just that, I think something new has surfaced with regard to Lord Wolfe."

"He is a knight. A slave owner! This will never work, even with your consent to pursue it."

Sitting down next to his lady, Anthony wrapped his arms around her and pulled her body close to his. "You cannot fight what you feel for the man Elizabeth and I could never stand in your way, if he will make you happy. 'Tis true he's a knight and slave owner; this, my dear, will be your greatest difficulty. He is unlikely to accept you in his bed as a free woman."

"I will not give up my freedom for any man, Milord; you know this to be true."

"Then I fear you will suffer terribly if you choose to attempt this."

Anthony felt her body stiffen. "You would allow it, Milord?"

"I confess it would be easier to stem the flow of a river, than challenge love. If you believe Lord Wolfe will make you happy, if you think your love for him can grow beyond what you feel for me, who am I to stand in your way? I love you, Elizabeth, and because of my love, I will set you free to follow your heart."

"And what am I to do if he rejects me, Sir?"

Laughing at the sad tone of her voice, Anthony pulled her tighter into his arms. "You, my beautiful lady, will remain in my chamber and bed until such time as you succeed in tempting Lord Wolfe into your web. I will continue to partake of your sweet

and luscious body. You will feast at my table and plot your attack in the safety of knowing I will catch you if your plan fails.”

Her smile was all he needed to assure himself he'd said the right things thus far.

“Elizabeth?”

“Yes, Anthony.”

“If you do succeed, I will not await your return to my bed. You must understand I will take another as my first lady.”

“I understand, Milord.”

“You will always be welcomed back into my arms. However, I will not again ask that you marry me. You will never be more than a sexual diversion, a warm body to slake my thirst.”

She looked into his eyes, a teardrop still shimmering on her lash. “I think I may love him, Anthony. I must find out if 'tis possible he might feel the same for me.”

Anthony released his hold on her and stood, turning to face away from her. “I know,” he stated dryly as he started to walk toward the door. Stopping in the open passageway, he spoke again without turning, “Sleep now, Milady, rest well and dream sweet.” He slipped through the door and headed back to the great hall for a long night of drinking and forgetfulness.

Chapter Three

The blatant sexual overtures of Lady Elizabeth caused great consternation for Thomas, as he felt his tranquil life being turned upside down. The lady took every opportunity to brush against his body and spend time in his company. It was mystifying and disconcerting to have her as his constant companion.

For over a month, Thomas fought the advances of this beautiful woman, made excuses to leave the great hall early and spent extended time away to hunt. Yet every time he returned to his normal pattern, there she was, smiling into his eyes, talking about anything and everything, and most disturbing of all, touching him at each occasion their bodies came close.

Unable to understand the game she was playing, Thomas finally broached the subject with Lord Hart. They had just returned from a ride in the country. The air was crisp with the coming fall. Foliage on trees and bushes had turned brilliant colors as the days grew colder and shorter. Instead of returning to the castle, Thomas invited Anthony to inspect the newly-trimmed vines in the vast gardens.

While hesitant to bring up the subject, Thomas knew he must confront Lord Hart about his lady's behavior of late. Taking a deep breath, he spoke boldly, almost demanding a response with his tone. "Anthony, you must give me guidance with regard to your lady. I fear she has plans to seduce me."

Laughing, Anthony responded, "Oh, my faithful knight, her seducing you is the least of your worries, trust me."

"Milord, you must tell me if this is some kind of joke. I don't like being made the fool!"

Turning serious, Lord Hart moved to sit on a garden bench, while Thomas paced in front of him. "Tis no joke. Elizabeth believes she may have deep feelings for you and is testing the waters, so to speak, to see if perhaps you might have interest in her."

The words hit like a bolt of lightning. His world could be thrown into ruin if her plan succeeded. Pacing quickly back and forth in front of the bench on which Hart sat, he replied, "Anthony, you must realize I did nothing to give the woman such a notion. I would never covet your lady."

"Rest easy my friend. I know this is not of your doing. The lady in question has come to this decision of her own accord and has my approval to proceed with her attempt to win you to her way of thinking."

Stunned, Thomas stopped his pacing, placed a hand on the hilt of the sword hanging at his side, turned and faced Hart. "My God man, you can not be serious. I will have none of her devilment! You must tell her to stop this game."

"Tis not a game, Thomas. Elizabeth fancies herself in love with you. She believes, most likely incorrectly, that you will give up your dominant ways to be with her. Truly she wants to become your lady."

Thomas began to pace again. "This is beyond reason. The woman has no sense of what she is trying to do. To think, first of all, that she would believe I would betray you, my lord." Thomas paused. "What the hell kind of game is she playing?" This last

statement was delivered in a harsh tone, as Thomas kicked at the rocks on the path below his feet, sending a cloud of dust on the wind.

“Calm down, Tom. It's not as dire as all that. Elizabeth will discover you cannot be turned from your authoritarian ways. You will train her in the art of being a jakara, teach her to serve you, enjoy the pleasure of having her naked body available to your touch, and all will be right with the world.”

“Have you lost your mind, Tony? I will not train her, because I will not take her to my bed, either as a free woman or a jakara.”

“Watch yourself, Thomas. Your tone may be justified under the circumstances. However, you have no quarrel with me. I will step aside and give you free reign to proceed with Elizabeth in any way you determine best.”

“You're telling me, you will allow your lady to...”

“Enough!” Hart was standing. “I have said all I care to on this subject. 'Tis in your hands to do as you wish. Either take the lady or don't, it's of no concern to me.”

Bowing at the waist, Thomas replied, “As you wish, Milord.”

“Nothing is as I desire, Thomas. However, I am powerless to stop the coming events, so will simply await the outcome.”

Thomas watched as Lord Hart walked back along the path and disappeared from sight. Turning to sit on the now vacant bench, he stared into the distance and cleared his mind of all thought.

Chapter Four

Here now, over two months since that momentous night, when Hart had given his acquiescence to her request, Lady Elizabeth would finally know if her hunger for Thomas Wolfe would be satisfied.

The light had yet to fade from the sky, as she entered the great hall. It was over four hours before the evening meal would be served, so the hall was empty. Not even the servants stirred yet. She walked slowly to a bench placed in a corner alcove, partly hidden behind a tapestry depicting a hunt. Taking a seat on the bench, she spread her gown around her, the blue and gold velvet flowing to the floor. She had dressed carefully for the evening and arrived early for this meeting with Thomas Wolfe, second-in-command to Anthony Hart.

Earlier in the day, she had not been surprised when Lord Wolfe's slave, Chantelle, delivered the handwritten note telling her the time and place of this meeting. After reading the neatly printed letters, she'd instructed Chantelle to inform her lord she would meet him at the designated time. There was never a doubt in her mind this summons would come and she expected to suffer some discomfort as a result of the events two evenings past.

It happened shortly after the conclusion of the evening feast. The entire court was in attendance, when without warning or her consent, Thomas Wolfe announced his decision to take her as his jakara. Hell, Jakara was just another glorified word for slave in the male-dominated world. He had turned to her and offered his golden collar, a symbol to all that she would from that day forward be forever his.

Stunned by the announcement, in her fury, she'd not only declined his offer, she'd slapped his cheek, shouting for all to hear, "I am a free woman, Sir. How dare you make such an announcement! How dare you offer your collar to me! I bow to no man!"

The outburst, so unlike her, brought the court to silence. Every eye in the hall turned to watch as she pulled herself to full height and stormed from the room. She'd failed to use proper etiquette when addressing Wolfe, and even more grievously, she'd failed to announce her departure to Lord Hart and the assembled court. Anthony had accepted her apology later that evening, had actually done so without demanding punishment. She understood it would not be so with Wolfe and knew this summons was to discuss the error of her ways.

She was willing to accept her punishment, if it was reasonable. She would also attempt to bring peace between Thomas Wolfe and herself. However, she was not willing to take the whipping she felt certain he would demand. Wolfe could petition Lord Hart to force her to the whipping room. However, she was confident her lord would make no such demand.

Although deep in thought when he entered the hall, she knew he had arrived. No longer alone in the room, she felt his heat before her eyes found his body standing tall in the opening of the alcove. His presence registered in every fiber of her being.

"Good eve, Lady Elizabeth." His voice held no emotion as he moved to sit next to her on the bench.

"Good eve, Lord Wolf. I hope you are well."

“Only time will tell, Milady.”

She did not respond to this remark and awaited his next words. Several minutes passed in silence and she became uncomfortable with the quiet.

“Milord, it was you who petitioned for this meeting,” she smiled. “Perchance you have decided it best to forget this past eve and move forward. Or maybe...”

“Silence, woman!” he roared. Standing quickly, he turned to face her. “You have not been given permission to speak. Unless you wish to be banned from the palace, you will hold your tongue until I tell you to speak.”

She stood as well, anger welling from deep within. “You, arrogant bastard. I am not your slave! A little matter you seem to keep forgetting. As for banning me from this palace, what makes you think you have the power to accomplish such a thing?”

“Because, Milady, you have rejected me and I don't take rejection lightly. I'm willing to wait for you to come to your senses and realize you belong at my feet. However, I warn you—do not push too far.”

“I belong at no man's feet and I fear you overestimate your power. Do you really think Lord Hart will allow you to ban me? Anthony and I have been friends and lovers for over two years. The most you can hope for is punishment, which I will agree to in moderation.”

“You dare try to dictate to me?” His voice rose again. “Do not press me, Lady; your language alone has earned you a trip to the dungeon. Fifty lashes on your ass might be just what you need to learn your place.”

“You wouldn't dare!” she screamed, her indignation mounting. “I will never sit at your feet or the feet of any man. I am a free woman, with a will of my own. 'Tis not something I will give up. Ever!” She paused to take a deep breath, gaining control of her tone before continuing. “You could have had my heart, my love, and my body,” she purred. “I would have given it all to you in freedom. Now you will never know the pleasure of my lips, the softness of my body on yours, or the burning desire as your cock and my pussy become one in orgasm.”

As these words escaped her lips, she realized she had gone too far. The mounting rage in his eyes told her to run and yet she stood her ground. Before she could do anything to stem the flow of fury, Thomas Wolfe pulled a small transport device from his vest, and hitting the button, Lady Elizabeth found herself in the dungeon.

She had been stripped of her gown and chained to the wall. Her body lay bare to await his gaze and his whip. Her arms were pinned high over her head, her legs spread wide with chains holding them snug to the wall. She realized, with a sick feeling in the pit of her stomach, she was at his mercy. She had lost control of the situation and no one would come to her rescue.

Even Anthony Hart could not override the dungeon command of his errant knight. The anger of his voice had seeped into her body. For the first time, she became aware of the danger she had placed herself in and fear coursed through her veins. Unwilling to give him the upper hand, she steeled herself to fight.

She waited for him to join her in the room. The moment he released the locks holding her pinned to the wall, she would give him a piece of her mind. Minutes ticked by without his presence. As the time dragged on, she wondered just how long he planned to keep her here. Her limbs became numb as the minutes stretched into hours. And still, he did not come.

Chapter Five

Thomas Wolfe had grown angry and frustrated with the conversation. No woman had ever dared speak to him the way Elizabeth had. Why had he allowed her to continue beyond all reason? She was right about Hart never allowing her to be banned. However, to state it so blatantly was the height of insult.

Maybe he had moved too fast the other evening, offering his collar without first telling her of his intention. Maybe he should have approached the situation differently. And yet, it was she who had been hinting for weeks her desire to make herself available to him. The scene her refusal of his collar made was unforgivable and yet, he really did understand her reluctance to give up her freedom.

Thomas was angry and for several reasons. He was angry with Hart because he felt desire for Lady Elizabeth just as she was: wild, open, honest, and free, free to come and go at her will. It was Anthony's law that all knights remain unmarried and slave owners, as if a man could not be husband and knight at the same time. He'd even asked Hart about it once and was told, "A man cannot serve two masters." As if he would ever allow a wife to become master of him!

He was angry with Elizabeth because she knew his bond with Anthony Hart was one of warriors and not to be taken lightly. He had been willing to let her stay, in spite of her rejection. He'd not demanded she be dragged back into the great hall two nights ago for a public whipping. He had not done many things, which were his right under the circumstances. Most of all, he was angry because all he really wanted to do was take her to his bed and make love to her from now until the end of time.

When she'd called him a bastard, he'd remained calm. Then she dared taunt him with sex talk. It was too much. Thomas was forced to hit the transport button sending her to the dungeon, naked and chained. She must have known it was coming the moment the word orgasm left her mouth.

He'd taken more than any man could be expected to endure. Her words left him no choice. It had taken every ounce of control to fight the urge to grab her, the urge to lock his lips over hers and silence her outburst as he kissed her into submission.

Damn the woman and her refusal to accept him as her lord and master. She wanted to be a part of this world and yet maintain her freedom as if she still belonged to the real world. It did not work that way.

The hours ticked by slowly as Wolfe awaited the evening meal. The great hall slowly filled with servants. Lords and ladies, free men and women, knights and slaves entered through several doorways, taking their places at table according to rank.

Married couples sat closest to the high table. Then the free men and women sat in small groups around the middle of the room. Against the three walls facing the lords' table sat the knights, slaves at their feet. These women collared and chained to their masters' belt, sat naked, eyes downcast as they waited for their masters to give permission. Permission to speak. Permission to come and go. Permission to serve.

Moments before the bells tolled the seven o'clock hour, Wolfe's jakara, Chantelle, arrived. She crawled on hands and knees to his side. Her naked body glistened with oil and her hair was neatly pinned at her neck to prevent it from shielding her nipples.

Arriving at his feet, she kissed his boots, her eyes lowered, as her forehead touched the floor. She spoke the words required to join him: “Good evening, Master, may this girl be granted permission to sit at your feet and serve you this eve?”

“Yes, little one, you may sit at my feet and service my needs. Kneel and greet, my pet, so all those present know you are here to do my bidding.”

Having received instructions to greet, Chantelle knelt and in a clear voice spoke, “Greetings, Milords and Ladies. This girl, jakara to first knight of the realm, Lord Thomas Wolfe, hopes you are well this eve.” Her eyes did not leave the floor. She spoke her words and waited for Wolfe to attach a chain to her collar.

Thomas connected the clasp to the golden links encircling her slender neck, brushing her breast as he did. She was a beautiful woman, her body tempting in all ways. Pulling gently on the chain, he indicated his desire to have her body between his legs. She knelt in front of him, her lips offered for his pleasure, her eyes closed in submission.

His fingers traced around the dark areole surrounding her nipple, before pinching gently to make it hard and defined. “You will serve my dinner, little one, and then I am leaving for a while.” He spoke, as his fingers trailed down her stomach. “You are to await my return, here in the hall.” Looking down at her closed eyes, he brushed her lips with his, as his fingers slid into her pussy, his thumb coming to rest on her clit.

Moving his thumb quickly, he felt her body push down into his hand. His fingers became wet with her juice and he heard the deep rumble of a moan escape her lips. He knew she was close to orgasm, that in a moment her body would start to quiver, and others around him would become more aware of his play. In his frustration, he allowed her to continue moaning. The pull of her muscles on his fingers increased and her mouth opened to scream with release. Thomas stopped his movements and pulled his fingers from her folds. He saw the shock on her face as she realized his intent was to leave her in need.

More harshly than planned, he growled his command. “Go now, without delay, for I am hungry.”

“Yes, master,” she replied, disappointment in her voice, her body still visibly shaking with need.

As he released the leash from her collar, he noticed the confusion pass over her features. Unwilling to discuss the situation with her here in the great hall, he simply waved his hand in the direction of the food tables, indicating it was time for her to go.

Chapter Six

Anthony Hart entered the dining hall at exactly seven. Taking his seat at the high table, his eyes scanned the room looking for Elizabeth. She should already be sitting on his right side. Her perfumed body close, her breasts pressed tightly against the bodice of her gown, nipples covered with soft lace. Her body clothed, yet available to his touch. She should be smiling into his eyes, talking sweetly, trying to tempt him with her feminine wiles. Her legs should be slightly parted, allowing his fingers access to her pussy.

Looking further to his right, he scanned the area around the knights' table reserved for Thomas Wolfe, in the event she had merely lost track of time. She was not there. Growing concerned, a knot forming in the pit of his stomach, he scanned every corner of the great hall to no avail. The dinner hour was passed by ten minutes and still she failed to make her entrance. Raising his hand to silence the crowd, Anthony Hart looked over the faces of his subjects. "My brothers, I fear Lady Elizabeth has come to illness or harm. Please confer with your slaves and find out if any here present know of her whereabouts."

A hushed whisper flowed around the room, as master questioned slave on the possible reasons for Lady Elizabeth's absence. Before any could speak, Thomas Wolfe stood and walked toward the high table. Bowing at the waist to honor his lord, Wolfe waited to be acknowledged.

"Thomas, my faithful knight, tell me what you know of Milady's condition."

"Milord," Wolfe started, "Lady Elizabeth is not ill, nor harmed. Yet!"

"Yet?" Anthony stood, placing his hands on the table in front of him and leaning toward Thomas. "What say you?" Anthony spoke loudly, "I demand you provide me with her location." His fist slamming hard on the tabletop, causing glasses and china to clatter as they bounced from the vibration, punctuated this last order.

"Lady Elizabeth is in the dungeon, Milord. There she will remain until such time as I release her. None will interfere with her punishment; none will intercede on her behalf."

"By what right do you make such demands Wolfe?"

"Milord, our laws allow me to punish any woman, free or slave, who fails to show proper respect. Two nights ago, this assemblage was witness to her disrespect. Today she compounded the situation when she called me a bastard. The lady in question will be taught a lesson she will not soon forget."

"And I am expected to sit back and allow this?"

"Yes!" Thomas lowered his voice. "It was you, Sir, who told me she was to be tamed, trained, and sitting at the feet of a master. Do not now question my methods. You have enjoyed the lady's delights for two years and now, for reasons we both know, you want her gone from your bed. I did not interfere when she belonged to you, did not question when you stated your desire for me to take her. So, yes, Milord, I expect you to allow this. I expect you to ignore her pleas for release and allow me to punish her as I see fit." The tone of Wolfe's voice left no doubt he would allow no intrusion.

Taking a deep breath, Hart nodded his head in agreement. "I will allow this punishment. However, I make one request," he paused. "I would speak to her before you proceed with your plans."

“Of course, Milord. I will release the lock on the transport and await your return. Take all the time you need,” he stated with assurance, “because it will be many days before you lay eyes on the lovely lady again.”

Moving around the table, Anthony approached Wolfe with deliberate steps. Leaning close, his voice very low, Anthony whispered, “Be careful you do not carry the punishment too far. The lady could very well make all your dreams come true or she could crush your heart beyond repair.”

“Of this I am more than aware, Sir,” Thomas stated as he handed the transport keypad to Anthony and stepped back.

Lord Hart looked one last time at Wolfe, then pressed the proper button and disappeared from sight.

Chapter Seven

Her eyes were closed, her features blank of all expression. Anthony stood silently, looking over her nakedness. Every inch of her supple body branded in his mind, forever etched into his soul. He had loved her for years and yet knew she felt less than that for him. He wanted her to love him, had given her everything she ever wanted in the hope her love would grow.

Thomas Wolfe had come between them for reasons he could not completely understand. He knew she tried to fight the desire he stirred: he also knew she could not. He was so attuned to her moods, he knew the moment she started dreaming about Wolfe. It took several days for her to admit her feelings, yet once she did, Anthony decided to let nature take its course.

While he still enjoyed her company and bed, he had released her to follow a relationship with Wolfe. She knew as a free woman she could tempt him to her, although she must always remember Thomas was a knight—he owned slaves. He did not marry. If Elizabeth wanted to be with Thomas, she would have to wear his collar.

Anthony moved closer to her naked body. She did not open her eyes, even though he knew she had to be aware of his presence. She would be expecting Thomas, so Anthony did not speak. He moved to the table and found a blindfold. Moving closer he slipped it over her eyes, effectively keeping her in the dark.

She hung there silently, not a muscle in her body moving. It was as if she had left her body and moved her mind somewhere else. Anthony picked up a riding crop and ran the soft leather over her breast. He was rewarded when a soft moan escaped her lips. The crop trailed down her belly and over her legs down her calf and back up her inner thigh. Anthony could see the beads of sweat pop on her skin as the leather stroked her flesh.

Turning the crop over in his hand, he guided the handle between her legs. She was spread-eagle and hung tightly against the wall, so access was easy. He pushed the leather grip into her folds, coating it with her honey as he slid it inside her pussy.

Moving slowly, he fucked her pussy with the leather-laced handle. Her body responded, muscles grabbing on each upward push. Moans escaped her throat and her head moved from side to side. Anthony watched her face, waited for the moment when her orgasm started. When her lips opened to scream for release, he pulled the crop from between her legs and lifted the blindfold off her eyes.

“You are such a delightful slut, Milady.”

“Anthony!” Elizabeth's voice dripped with surprise.

“You were expecting someone else, love?”

“You know damn well I thought it was Wolfe using that crop on me.”

Anthony laughed. “And you know damn well he would not be fucking you with it my lovely lady. His plan is to beat you with it.”

“You will not allow that, Anthony,” she implored. “Wolfe needs to punish me for disrespecting him, but a beating is not in order.”

“I will do nothing to stop him, Elizabeth. You wanted this; you will have to take him as he is. I told you he would demand a collar around your pretty neck. You did not listen

to me. Now you have pushed him beyond my control. I have agreed to allow the punishment to start after I have some time with you.”

“Milord, you cannot do this. I am still a free woman. I cannot be forced to submit to collaring.”

“That is true. And if he tries to force his collar on you, I will stop him. However, there are many ways for him to convince you to accept his rule, to accept submission to him. I will not interfere with his efforts on this matter.”

A tear escaped her eye. “Anthony, please, you know I want him. I think I might even love him. Do you really think I could ever stay with him if he beats me?”

Anthony moved to wipe the tear from her cheek, his lips moving to cover hers in a deep kiss, his hands moving between her legs to delve into her moisture, stroking her clit as his lips sucked her tongue into his mouth. His finger slid between her lips and pushed up against her G-spot.

Her body responded to his touch, her lips devoured his, and yet her mind was not there, her soul was not there. He used his fingers to fuck her to orgasm, rubbing her clit and G-spot until hot cum exploded from deep inside her. Screams bounced off the dungeon walls as wave after wave of cum flowed from inside her.

Using only his fingers and lips, Hart continued to release orgasm upon orgasm until her body slumped in the chains. Her eyes were closed in exhaustion, her skin was coated in sweat, and the smell of sex surrounded her, as Anthony gave her body a final wistful look.

Moving away from her at last, he spoke softly, “Do not fight him too long, Milady. He has the power to make your body sing with pleasure or sting with pain. The choice is yours.” Anthony looked into her smoldering eyes. “I will always love you, Milady,” he declared as he once again pushed the button on the transport keypad, taking him back to the great hall.

Chapter Eight

The hour was late and the only person remaining in the hall was Thomas Wolfe. He was sitting at a table, his slave Chantelle at his feet. She was naked, kneeling with her ass in the air, Wolfe's handprint visible on the soft skin. Her sobs were audible in the empty hall as she begged for mercy.

"I will behave, master, I promise," she pleaded.

Wolfe's hand once again landed a powerful smack on Chantelle's ass. "You will accept this change in my life without question little one. I will have no green-eyed snake making life miserable. Do you understand?" he demanded as his hand once again connected with flesh.

"Yes, master, this girl will behave. I only want to serve and please you."

"Then get yourself up on this table and make ready to be fucked."

"Yes, master." She scrambled to her feet and moved to lie on the table, her back on the hard surface and her legs spread to allow him access.

Having noticed Hart's return, Thomas turned in his direction. "My Lord, I offer you my jakara, her body, her softness, her submission, for your pleasure. You appear to be in need of release."

Hart bowed at the waist. "You are most kind, Thomas, to offer such a delightful treat. I will be most happy to relieve my cock in her warmth."

Moving aside to allow Hart to see the welcoming, open leg position of his slave girl, Wolfe placed his hand on Chantelle's breast. "Little one, I am offering the use of your pussy to Milord Hart. You will do everything he asks of you and please him. Do you understand?"

Her head moved up and down in agreement with his instructions. Her eyes moved to Hart's face and she smiled to show her willingness to comply with the command. "Yes, master."

Giving her nipple a squeeze, Wolfe motioned for Hart to approach and take possession of the slave.

Moving closer, Hart handed Thomas the keypad and took possession of the chain attached to Chantelle's collar. In a low voice he spoke, "Take care you do not give me reason to regret this decision, Wolfe."

Nodding his head, Thomas replied, "I will love her with all my heart." Having said everything he need say, Thomas slowly walked out of the great hall to leave Hart and Chantelle to continue without him.

Chapter Nine

Anthony stood at the end of the table, Wolfe's jakara laid out before him like a tempting meal. After the two hours he'd spent in the dungeon, bringing Elizabeth to orgasm with his fingers, he needed to feel his cock slamming in and out of a hot pussy. "Are you wet and ready?"

"Yes, Sir, this girl is wet and awaiting your command."

Quickly releasing the buttons on his tunic, he divested himself of it, then reaching inside the opening of his pants, he moved his swollen rod into view. Standing between her wide spread legs, he pulled her vagina open and slid his cock deep. "I'm going to fuck you until dawn," he stated. "You will scream with release and do as you are told."

"Yes, Milord, I will do as you command."

He could hear the satisfaction in her voice, knowing he was giving her pleasure as he pumped his cock in and out of her depth. He could smell her sweetness and feel her wetness on his skin. "I want you to use your hands to hold your breasts together for me," he commanded. When she complied, he lowered his mouth and took both nipples between his lips and sucked.

"Oh, God, yes. Suck them harder, please."

He did as she requested, sucking her nipples into his mouth and holding them tight. His rod slammed hard in and out of her pussy, as her muscles grabbed his cock on each backward stroke. Her hands held her breasts together so he could suck both nipples at once.

"Oh, Anthony, fuck me. Make me cum. Please, make my honey flow."

Not surprised by this change from the submissive tones of a slave to the demanding tones of a woman, Hart realized she was no longer able to be other than she was. At that moment, she was a woman, close to orgasm and in need of release. This was the instant when slave and woman became one, when he as a man could take pleasure in making her lose control of the tightly held belief she was submissive.

"Fuck my pussy," she demanded. "Make me cum."

He happily did as the woman told him. His cock thrust in and out of her hot wet sleeve, pumping so hard he drove to the very back of her vagina. Her screams filled the air around him as hot fluid flowed from deep within her, pouring in waves over his cock, as he continued to drive in and out. Again and again, his fingers rubbed her clit until she was writhing on the table. Deep moans emitted from her chest, his cock never slowing to allow her muscles to relax or her body to recover from the pulsing contractions coursing through her pussy.

"Stop, oh God, stop!" she pleaded with him.

"You dare to issue a command to me?"

Her eyes shot open and he read the fear there. "Na...no, Milord," she stuttered. "This insignificant girl would never dare to issue a command. This girl will submit to whatever you wish. Please, Milord, I would never issue a command."

Her eyes filling with tears as she begged brought a smile to his lips. "Fear not little one, for I only tease you. Truth be told, I prefer a woman to a slave. You will continue to

allow your body to control your voice until such time as I am done fucking you. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Milord."

Anthony was pleased to see her relax back onto the table and once again move her hips in time to his thrusts.

Chapter Ten

Wolfe walked out of the great hall and into the open courtyard. He stood there completely alone. Total silence surrounded him, as his mind attempted to determine his next course of action. His body ached with need and an overwhelming desire to reach the dungeon and partake of the pleasures awaiting him there. His mind wanted to turn back the hands on the clock and return to a moment three days ago, a moment before this mess had started. He'd known she would reject collaring, known it would turn ugly, so why had he pushed her so soon?

“Damn!” he said to no one. “Take back control, you idiot, and make the lady yours.”

Those words spoken aloud to the empty air seemed to bring him out of the trance he was in. Deciding the lady could await his pleasure a while longer, he headed down the stairs. Taking the steps two at a time, he descended to the yard and turned for the stables.

Moments later, a white stallion broke from the corral at a dead run, its rider laying low over the saddle as man and beast thundered out the gates into the valley below. The darkness swallowed them, as they raced for the dunes on the other side of the valley and the pounding surf which lay beyond.

Arriving at the incoming tide, Wolfe pulled up on the reins and slowed to a steady gait. Riding the lip where ocean met sand, he traveled several miles before halting the horse and dismounting. Letting the horse move further up the beach, Thomas stood at the water's edge looking out into the blackness of night. His mind was crowded with mixed feelings, all struggling to surface.

Why had he even started this, gone along with the idea of an alternate reality? His old life, the one before the secrecy of the palace had not been so terrible. He had made good money, invested wisely, and was able to retire to a more peaceful existence at an early age. He could be living it up on a beach in Mexico, or enjoying the slow pace of the Florida Keys. Instead, here he was living day and night at the palace.

He'd been introduced to Anthony Hart over two years ago and after only a few hours they discovered their beliefs were similar. Both had a desire to experience the pleasure of having a submissive woman in their bed. Hart told him of his plans to build the palace. It all seemed so easy. Find a group of men and women who believed in a simpler time, an age when men ruled with an iron fist and women wanted to be cared for, controlled, and dominated.

It had taken several months to find others willing to give up the modern way of life and embrace a new existence. They'd built a community to be proud of and yet, Thomas felt his role as dominant unfulfilling. He wanted a woman to share his life, a woman to be his partner. Oh God! He realized the truth: he wanted a wife.

Turning quickly away from the water, he whistled for his horse. Walking swiftly up the beach to meet the animal's return, Wolfe lifted his foot into the stirrup. Pulling himself into the saddle, he dug his heels into the soft flesh of the horse's side and turned its head in the direction of Castle Hart.

Chapter Eleven

Elizabeth's body was slowly returning to normal. The orgasms left her breathless, her skin tingling from head to toe. Anthony knew where to touch her, how to make her G-spot throb. His fingers worked magic on her clit and the endless waves of orgasms he wrought from deep inside her could overwhelm her senses at times.

Why was it so impossible for her to want him as much as he wanted her? Why did she have to want someone like Wolfe? As her body slowly relaxed, she became aware of her surroundings again. How long had she been here? Why hadn't Wolfe come to mete out his punishment?

Her mind was suddenly alert as she tried to figure out if anyone would notice her absence. Anthony had made it clear he would not step in unless Wolfe tried to force her. He had not said anything about coming to her rescue if Thomas chose to let her hang here in the dungeon for days.

The panic had begun to set in. Her body started shaking with fear and she closed her eyes to take a deep calming breath. Getting a grip on her fear, she sensed his presence close to her body and opened her eyes to find him standing there. His eyes were set hard in his face as he stared at her naked body. His body was only inches from touching hers.

She could smell the sweat and horse on him and her anger returned. "By what right do you send me to this hellhole while you go off riding your fucking horse? I demand you release me at once."

"I will only say this once, lady. Shut your beautiful mouth, as I have no interest in hearing anything you have to say unless 'tis a declaration of your submission to me."

"You, Sir, are a brute and I will not remain here and be subjected to your abuse any longer."

Taking her chin in his hand, Thomas leaned close to her face and in a deep, barely controlled voice responded, "You have pushed me too far, lady, and for that you will pay dearly."

Elizabeth was taken aback by the tone of his voice and the implication of his words. She looked into his eyes for the first time and what she saw there caused overwhelming panic to race across her mind. Her voice shaking, she nonetheless tried to sound calm. "I demand you release me and send me back to the hall."

"Do not fear, Milady, I will release you. Although it will definitely not be tonight, nor do I think it will be tomorrow, and most likely not the next day either. However, you can trust that when I'm finished, when I no longer need to fuck your beautiful body, I will send you back to the great hall."

Reaching toward the objects laying on the table beside him, Thomas picked up a ball gag. Moving to stand in front of Elizabeth, he commanded, "Open your mouth."

"Like h..." she started to say. However, once her lips opened, Thomas pushed the ball between her teeth, pulled the strap around her head and buckled it in place. At last, he had silenced the lady.

Chapter Twelve

Chantelle never realized she issued commands during climax. *Why has Thomas never whipped me for such a great transgression?* No slave could ever order her master to do anything, and yet it seemed as if the height of release made her lose control of her submissive nature.

She was still lying naked on the table as Lord Hart massaged her breasts. Her pussy no longer pulsed from orgasm and she felt wonderfully satisfied. When Wolfe first told her of his plan to offer her to the Lord Hart, she'd been afraid. It was customary for masters to offer the use of a jakara to friends and fellow knights. However, this was the first time in the six months she'd known Thomas that he'd offered her to anyone.

Looking up at Anthony's face, she noticed a smile lighting the corners of his lips. He seemed deep in thought and she was reluctant to speak. Besides, the massage of her breasts felt wonderful and her pussy had finally stopped pulsing from the last climax. Actually, she was ready to feel his cock hitting deep and wondered if she should push things by requesting he join her in nakedness. Looking at the smile on his face, she decided to take a chance. "Milord, may this girl help you remove your clothing?"

"You may, my dear, once we reach my chamber. I believe it will take me several days to discover all the delights your body has to offer, and it will be more comfortable there."

Chantelle was taken aback by this remark. She had never expected to spend days with Lord Hart. "Forgive me my Lord, are you sure my master will not mind if I am missing for several days?"

"Fuck your master and what he wants. You were given to me as a gift and I plan to use you until such time as I'm done. Besides, I believe once Wolfe returns from the dungeon, he will no longer have use for a jakara. Even one as beautiful as you, my dear."

Tears started forming in the corners of Chantelle's eyes at these harsh words. Thomas Wolfe was a knight and a slave owner. He would never give that up for a woman. That is what Lord Hart meant by his remarks, she was sure of it. "You are wrong, sir," she cried. "Thomas will never release the chain that binds me to him. He may take other slaves but I will always be his first and his favorite."

"Believe that if you must, little one. Time will tell and I will be proven right. Do not fear though. As long as you please me, I will keep you at my side. You will be first lady of the great hall, sit at my right side during feast and share my bed. I may offer your body to others from time to time, as is my right. However, you will no longer be naked before all men."

Tears were streaming down Chantelle's cheeks unchecked. "You know I have no right to listen to these words, Milord. My master's collar still rests on my neck. The chain that binds me to his body has only been temporarily removed. You have no right to speak to me of these things."

The slap, landing on the side of her face, took her by surprise. The force of it sent her falling sideways off the table. "Do not tell me what I may and may not speak of in your presence. I am lord and commander of this palace and I will fight to the death anyone who dares to challenge me."

Unable to stop the flow of tears, Chantelle lay sprawled on the floor where she'd landed from the force of his slap. Tears ran freely down her cheek and she found herself unable to speak.

“Pick yourself up, slut, and follow me to my chamber if you know what is best. We will forget this conversation until such time as your master returns and tries to reattach your chain.”

Still unable to stop the tears, Chantelle spoke in barely a whisper. “Yes, Milord, as you say.” She stood on shaky legs and followed Lord Anthony Hart out of the great hall.

Chapter Thirteen

Thomas savored the silence and the gentle curves of the naked body hanging tightly on the wall in front of him. He reached his hand out to stroke her cheek. Trailing his fingers down her face, under her chin, he continued down her neck. At her breast, he made a circle around the areola, and with his finger and thumb pulled the nipple taut.

He could see the fear in her eyes. She was unable to speak because of the ball clamped between her teeth and strapped to her head. She was at his mercy. Her eyes were her only way to communicate at the moment and in them he read fear. "You have pushed me beyond what is acceptable, lady. Now you will pay the price for your boldness."

Thomas picked up a seven-strand whip and lightly brushed it down her body. The goose bumps popped on her skin as the thongs dragged over sensitive flesh. Having reached her lower thigh, he pulled the whip to trace it back along the route until it came to rest on her breast.

"And now, my defiant lady, it is time you feel the force of my dominance. I'm going to move you to the table. If you fight me in any way, you will regret the decision. Do I make myself clear?" He waited for her to nod her head in understanding. She did not move. There was fear and hate mirrored in her eyes as she stared at a point above his head, her feeble attempt to show defiance.

The whip landed on her breast. Each strand issuing a sting, causing a scream to soar from deep inside her throat. Little sound passed the ball tightly wedged in her mouth and tears formed in her eyes. "Do I make myself clear?" he questioned again, his voice tight with suppressed rage. Her head nodded up and down.

Thomas tossed the whip aside and took the transport keypad out of his pocket. Hitting the lock button, the restraints holding her to the wall were suddenly open. He caught her body as it fell forward. Easily taking her into his arms, he carried her to the padded table on the left side of the room and laid her on her stomach.

The table had an opening for her face to rest in, into which he positioned her head. He pulled her arms up above her head and attached them to the top of the table with a leather wristband. He moved to the bottom of the table to secure her feet. "I'm going to leave you a little slack, Elizabeth, so you can struggle all you like. It is sure to be more pleasurable for me if you do." Thomas looked at her backside. Her ass cheeks were smooth and firm. His fingers itched to touch every inch of her skin, to stroke the softness to be found there. Punishment was never what he pictured in his mind when he dreamt of Lady Elizabeth.

Pushing these thoughts from his mind, Thomas picked up a riding crop, slapped it against his palm to let her know he had chosen an instrument of punishment. Taking several other items from the shelf, he moved to the foot of the table.

"Let the punishment begin." He spoke to her, knowing she was unable to respond. "When this eve is over, dear lady, you will have no further doubt of who is master and who is slave."

Chapter Fourteen

Anthony was disgusted with himself. He never enjoyed hitting women; he'd slapped Chantelle out of rage over the state of affairs. Why was she being so reluctant to accept the truth of the situation and her new position in the palace? Swearing under his breath, he moved down the hall to his chamber, Wolfe's beautiful slave two paces behind him. He could still hear her gentle sobs.

He stopped at the door to his chamber, turned to offer his hand to the lady and opened the door. It was customary to allow a woman to enter the chamber first, if she was expected to stay the night. If she was there only as a slave or sex toy, then she would follow her master into the room, many times on her hands and knees.

Lord Hart wanted no doubt in Chantelle's mind she was here, in his chamber, to stay. "After you, Milady."

"Thank you, Milord."

Anthony watched the emotions flicker in her eyes in the two seconds it took for her to respond. He knew she was more than a little confused by this change in his manner. The slap in the great hall would never satisfy as punishment for her bold outburst. At least it would never have satisfied with another.

He followed her into the room closing the door behind him. Moving to her, he quickly took her in his arms and kissed her deeply, his tongue probing over her teeth and cheeks. Wrapping his arms tightly around her waist, he easily lifted her, and slowly carried her to the bed, his lips still locked in the kiss with hers.

When he felt her legs bump the bed frame, he placed her gently on her feet again and broke the seal of their lips. "Now you may remove my clothing, little one. I will stand naked before you and you may decide if my body pleases you."

She did not speak. Her eyes cast at the floor, her hands at her side as she made no attempt to do as he'd asked.

Moving his finger under her chin, he lifted her face until her eyes looked into his. He noted the questions there and realized he would never get the free and open sex he craved if he didn't take time to allay her doubts.

"Chantelle, you are a very smart woman. Surely you can understand that not all men want slaves. Actually, there are men, like me, who prefer a partner in bed to a jakara at their feet. I take pleasure in being waited on in the great hall, I enjoy the delight of having a woman draw my bath; these things I can be dominant about. However, when it comes to making love, I don't want a submissive. I have no desire for a slave. I want a woman. I want you to give me as much pleasure as I give you and I don't want to have to issue a command to get it."

Looking into her eyes as understanding took over, he was surprised to see her smile. "You are a fraud, Milord."

"I disagree, Milady. Here in my chamber, I can be who I truly am. If you are to be my first lady, you must remember this. It will bode ill for you to forget yourself when others are present."

"And you truly believe I will no longer be collared to Lord Wolfe?"

“Tis not a question of believing, my dear. I know for a fact that Lord Wolfe will release you from his side before the week is over.”

“How can you be so sure, Milord?”

“Because, little one, he will be with Lady Elizabeth. You will become my first lady, and Lady Elizabeth will become Lord Wolfe's jakara.”

“But, Milord, Lady Elizabeth will never give up her freedom.”

“Never is a very long time, my dear. Before the week is over, they will have come to an agreement and she will be wearing his collar.”

“I do not believe it, Milord.”

“Your belief is not required my sweet.”

Chapter Fifteen

Elizabeth heard the sound of leather hitting his hand. She knew the pain was about to start. He had her trapped, her arms unable to ward off the whip or crop he planned to use. The fact that he'd left her legs slack did little to assist in this position; she was unable to move more than a few inches one way or the other.

"You, bastard!" she tried to scream. However, no sound could pass the ball between her teeth. She waited for the whipping to start, and was surprised when she felt his fingers pulling her cheeks open and a cold liquid being massaged into her anus. His finger slipped in easily, following the lubricant he was applying. After a few moments, she felt something hard pushing its way inside and she knew he was inserting a butt plug in her ass. It was tight, even with the lube. She could feel it pulling as he pushed it deeper and deeper, until she felt her body shudder as her muscles clamped tight around the hard plastic.

Giving her only seconds to grow accustomed to the object in her anus, he pulled the plug in and out of her asshole. She could feel the moisture in her pussy building as he fucked her anus. Her body started to tingle and she felt the wave start to build. Elizabeth took a shallow breath, her mind concluding he had forsaken the punishment. She relaxed into the growing warmth building as her ass muscles adjusted to the plug sliding in and out.

The small leather lead of the crop hit hard on her delicate skin, bringing her out of a state of pleasure. The sting started at the spot where the leather hit and radiated quickly outward. She could feel the tears flowing freely from her eyes. Her body shook in terror. The butt plug no longer moved in and out: it had been pushed deep and her muscles contracted against it as the next strike landed.

She had never been whipped before. Not as punishment anyway. In the past, it had always been a game she played. Safe words were used, whips were applied lightly, and the outcome was always pleasure and pain in equal amounts. This was nothing like those times with Anthony.

God, why did I push him so far? she screamed in her head. *I cannot take this type of pain.* Her thoughts were cut short by the crop hitting her ass again, the pain twice as searing as the first hits he'd landed. The plug was sucked deep as her muscles fought to contract away from the next blow. Again she tried to speak, to tell him to stop, only to have her tongue stick, her mouth so dry now she felt like she was going to gag.

As the next forceful whack connected, her mind could take the pain no longer. She felt her body becoming slack against the table, her vision faded, and she felt herself slipping into a deep void. She heard the sound of leather hitting skin, yet she felt nothing. The pain no longer registered in her brain. She was floating away from the fear and hurt, away to a safer place. Giving in to the desire for release from the horror she found herself in, Elizabeth slipped into unconsciousness.

Chapter Sixteen

Chantelle was shocked by Anthony's assurance that Wolfe would release her. Thomas had chosen her as his slave the minute she'd arrived at the palace six months ago. He'd told her his plan to take Lady Elizabeth as jakara. However, that didn't mean he would release her. Knights could have up to three slaves if they had the ability to care for them all. Thomas was one of the few knights at Castle Hart to have only one, so it was really not surprising to Chantelle, that after all this time he might wish to take another to his bed.

It was customary for a knight to send his current slaves to other chambers when a new jakara was acquired. This time allowed the new woman to settle in and become familiar with her master and his ways. Chantelle knew all these things, so when Thomas offered her to Lord Hart, it came as no surprise. She had not, however, expected to be taken back to his chambers, or to be told she would be released. This was all too much for her to absorb at one time.

Then slowly she realized her new position in the palace and what this meant for her. No longer would she have to crawl on the floor naked. Never again would she have to kneel and greet after seeking permission to do so. As consort to Lord Hart, she would have freedoms given to no other slave.

Granted she would still be a jakara, but as first lady to Hart, she would be treated differently. He could still demand submission, still offer her body to other men, and yet if she understood his meaning, she would be as a free woman, here in his chambers.

"Milord, may this girl ask you a question?"

"Only if you will drop the 'this girl' crap and talk to me as an equal."

"With pleasure, Sir." Chantelle looked into his eyes before continuing and saw a smile in their depths. "If I understand the situation, you want me to assume the position of your first lady, with all the status and rights that title involves."

"That is correct."

"I will be allowed to wear clothes in the great hall."

"Yes."

"And here in your chamber, I am as a free woman. No submissive behavior required? I can tell you what I want, question you, tell you when something pleases me, or displeases me?"

"As I said earlier, I want a woman in my chambers, not a slave."

"What of Lady Elizabeth?"

"What of her?"

"I was told you have been with her for two years. That is a long time, Milord. What happens when Wolfe tires of her as he has of me?"

"Perhaps you still do not grasp the situation here, my dear. Thomas Wolfe is in love with Lady Elizabeth and she is in love with him. I do not know what type of relationship they will have inside of their chamber. However, I can almost guarantee she will be naked, collared, and very submissive the next time you see her."

"What if Lord Wolfe chooses to marry the lady?"

She watched as Anthony laughed deeply. “My God woman, you can't possibly believe Wolfe would marry her. He is knight, through and through.”

Chantelle thought about this statement for several moments. She couldn't help but doubt Anthony's words; after all, she knew Thomas better than anyone at Castle Hart. Reaching a decision in her own mind, she looked him in the eyes. Standing straight and tall she gave her consent. “I believe I can succeed at this game, Milord,” she smiled. “With pleasure.”

Chapter Seventeen

Thomas knew the moment she slipped into the black void of unconsciousness, and tossed the crop aside in aggravation. He felt certain she would remain in the deep faint for a while. He released the restraints holding her to the table and removed the ball gag from her mouth. Pulling the keypad from his pocket and lifting her in his arms, he hit the correct button to transport them safely to his chamber.

Wolfe carefully laid Lady Elizabeth on the bed, covered her nakedness with a gauzy sheet and sat in a chair close by, to await her awakening. Once again, his mind filled with thoughts of a life outside this secret world, a place where he could take a wife and forever leave this world of male dominance behind.

Was this really the life he craved? Thomas was beginning to wonder if he truly was a dominant. He enjoyed having Chantelle at his beck and call. However, she was unable to stimulate his mind. Her body was soft and supple, always ready to receive his cock. And yet, he craved more. He wanted an equal, a woman to share his life, his passions, and his future.

Looking at her barely concealed body, he wanted nothing more than to apologize to her for the treatment he'd given her. This was unacceptable, for a knight. He was dominant, he was in control, and to show weakness would be to diminish his standing in her eyes.

In his mind, he knew she had rejected his collar, had professed to all assembled that she was free and would never bow to a man. Yet, he still believed this was untrue. He had discovered during his time here in the valley that women wanted to be submissive and men had to rule with an iron fist.

He thought of Chantelle for a moment. She was a true jakara. She knew her place in this world and expected him to take care of her. Her body was always naked, oiled and ready for his pleasure. He'd never had to whip her as he had Elizabeth. He'd applied his hand to her backside at small transgressions, yet he'd never felt a need to apply the whip.

Dropping his face into his hands, Thomas ran his fingers through his shoulder length hair. "What a mess you have created for me, Elizabeth." He spoke in barely audible tones. "All I wanted was to cherish you, make your body sing with mine." He glanced up into her still closed eyes. "I want to love you, keep you safe and you force me to whip you." His voice rose in volume. "Damn you, woman! Why did you have to tempt me?"

He was not expecting her to answer his questions. He knew it would be a while before her mind would allow her to awaken from the safe place it had taken her, away from the pain his whip had delivered, to a warm, soft, place of comfort.

Sudden tiredness besieged him. He stood and removed his clothes, then, as naked as she; he turned out the lights and climbed into the bed. Reaching for her, he carefully pulled her body into the well of his. Resting his head next to hers, he closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Eighteen

Elizabeth awoke slowly. The only thing certain in her mind was that she was no longer in the dungeon. Trying hard to remember what day it was, she moved to sit up and the pain hit like a bolt of lightning. Her first scream involuntary, the sudden pain surprising her, the second scream was louder and full of shock as she realized she was not alone in the bed.

The startled look on Wolfe's face almost made her laugh. Almost. Quickly she pushed herself up from the bed, ignoring the pain in her backside which shot through her with every movement.

"Be still, woman," he commanded.

"Fuck you! You're a brute and I demand you leave my chamber this instant."

"Do not make me regret removing the chains, Milady, they are easy enough to reattach. I said be still. If you wish to be awake, do so quietly, as I have yet to finish sleeping."

"Oh, you, half-witted clod. If you think I'm going to just sit here calmly while you sleep, you've got another think coming."

"Elizabeth!"

The memory of the whip, coming back in full force at the angry tenor of his voice, gave her pause. It would not bode well for her to continue this fight, at least not while he was attempting to sleep. Without another word, she turned to sit by the window. Her breath caught in her throat, realization that she was not in her own chamber hitting her quickly. *Oh God, I'm in his chamber!* This thought was rapidly followed by the comprehension she was still naked.

Looking around the room, she found a large man's shirt hanging on the back of the door. Taking silent steps, she grabbed the shirt and draped it over her body before turning to see if Wolfe was watching her. His eyes bore into hers.

"I like your body unclothed. Remove the shirt so that I may gaze on your nakedness."

"You said your plan was to sleep. I see no reason to sit around here exposed and cold while you snore."

"There is no need for you to be cold; simply return to the bed and I will warm you. Now take off the shirt, Milady."

"I will not. I am not your slave and I do as I please."

His voice was low and controlled, which surprised her. "If I thought you jakara, you'd still be chained to the table in the dungeon. I would have applied smelling salts to revive you, then continued with the whipping, the beating you so richly deserved, until you begged for mercy."

"How do I know you didn't already do so? I have no memory of what happened when you returned to your torture chamber. The pain in my back makes me believe you beat me for days."

"If I had beaten you for days, Milady, you would not now be standing there arguing with me. If I had beaten you for even an hour, you would know what real pain is and

would never dare question my authority again. Perhaps we should return to the dungeon and put this discussion to rest.”

“I will pass on that pleasure, Milord. As you have stated you wish to sleep, and as I assume the door is locked, I will simply sit by the window and watch the sunrise.”

“Very nice thought, Milady. However, I believe you will take off the shirt and return to this bed now. I have no further desire to sleep after this conversation.”

“Don't allow my presence to sway you from slumber, Thomas; I will be fine sitting here.”

His laughter startled her. “You have spent weeks tempting me with your body. You have defied me at every turn for days now. This is what you wanted, Elizabeth. I'm giving in to your desire. I have no craving to dominate you at the moment; I want only to slake my need for release.”

“Perhaps you'd best call for your slave girl then. Unlike you, I have no desire for sex after events of recent days.” Elizabeth pulled the shirt tighter around her body and walked to the window seat. Dropping onto the softly padded bench she gazed out over the landscape. She heard Thomas throw back the bed covering and his feet hit the floor. He was coming for her and fear gripped her body. *Oh God, you idiot! Why did you push him again?* She steeled her nerves to be swept back to the depths of the castle.

Elizabeth was lifted easily off the bench and carried toward the bed. Surprise registered at the fact no silent beam had transported her back to the dungeon. His arms were strong as he held her close to his chest. She could feel the warmth of his skin on hers. His scent filled her nostrils as she breathed deeply in anticipation of his arrival at the bed.

As they reached the edge of the bed, Thomas set her on her feet, grabbed the front of the shirt and ripped it from her frame. Quickly capturing her again, he lifted her high in the air and dumped her onto the soft folds of the bedding. Towering over her, he smiled, his tongue licking his lips in expectation.

Trying hard to avoid his eyes, Elizabeth boldly attempted to forestall his next move. “Sir, I know I have tempted you, I know it was likely my fault you felt compelled to whip me, and I apologize for both. 'Twas a mistake on my part and while I feel somewhat contrite at the moment, I truly have lost all desire to be bedded by you.”

The roar of laughter shook the room. “Sweet Elizabeth, do you honestly believe you can turn me off like a switch? You have done all in your power to put yourself in my bed and now you claim to have lost your yearning for my cock inside you. I hesitate to call you a liar, Milady. However, if the shoe fits...”

Pushing herself to a sitting position, she stared into his eyes. “You drove all desire from my body with your toys and torture, Milord. It is too late for us.”

Moving quickly, Thomas' hands slapped down on the bed next to her as his knee hit the mattress. He climbed into the bed, crawling close over her swiftly retreating body. She was unable to do more than lay back as he moved on top of her. “Thomas, please. This is no longer what I want.”

He didn't seem to hear her as his lips locking over hers made it impossible to continue her protest. She felt his tongue sliding deeply into her mouth as he tried to take control of her mouth. All thoughts of struggle left her mind as she gave in to the warmth of his kiss. She felt his hand go under her head as he lifted her in his arms and shifted her body under him.

Desire exploded within Elizabeth as his tongue ravaged her mouth. Unable to stop, Elizabeth returned his kiss, her arms sliding over his neck; she pulled him onto her body. Allowing the warm skin of his chest to press on her breasts, as his cock bore down on her thigh, he continued to raze her mouth.

His body settled atop hers. As she opened her mouth wider, allowing his tongue deeper access, she tasted his sweetness. Her hands moved to his shoulders, stroking his skin, before raking her fingernails down his spine.

She felt his body shudder as her nails drew circles over his skin. He moved to reposition his cock between her legs, his body lifted slightly to allow his rod to lay flat on her leg as he slid up and down, caressing her inner thigh with his shaft. The kiss deepened as she sucked his tongue into her mouth, her breasts pushed tightly against his chest. Their bodies moved in rhythm, growing hotter with each passing second.

Without hesitation, Elizabeth allowed herself to surrender to the heat he created inside. Her protests died when his fingers trailed down her body to guide his cock into her folds. As his rod slammed deep into her being, Lady Elizabeth Cowen gave herself up to his need.

Chapter Nineteen

The servant quietly left the room, having delivered breakfast to Lord Anthony's suite; there was nothing else to be done at the moment. Chantelle moved from the bed to sit at the table. Although now allowed to wear clothes, she was more comfortable being naked, so she chose to remain nude while they dined.

Anthony exited the dressing room and walked toward her. "You are a beautiful woman, my pet."

"And you are too kind, Milord."

She felt his hand come to rest on her shoulder and turned her face up to meet his descending lips. He tasted so sweet; she wanted to linger with his tongue in her mouth. Anthony, however, released her lips and moved to sit across the table from her.

Lifting a napkin and shaking it once, he dropped it into his lap. Taking the spoon from the serving dish, he scooped large amounts of eggs onto his plate. "I am starving, Milady. I think you successfully sucked all the jizzum from my balls last eve and I need to rebuild my strength before we return to the exploration of each other's sweet spots."

A soft laugh escaped her lips. "I find that hard to believe, Milord. You seem to be voracious, an exceptional lover, and don't even get me started on the way you control your cock."

"You enjoyed yourself then?"

"If all men could do as you did last night, women would spend every waking moment naked, in bed, and panting for them."

Loud, long laughter followed this statement. "You are too kind my dear, now eat."

"Yes, Milord." Chantelle lifted the lid from the bacon server and placed several pieces on his plate before adding some to her own. Once they each had food on their plates, she picked up a fork and took her first bite. After hours of intercourse, the nourishment was needed, so she ate in silence, while Anthony did the same.

The meal finished, Hart pushed his chair back and stood. "I believe a stroll in the garden this morning would be good. Fresh air and a crisp breeze to rejuvenate our bodies. What say you, Milady?"

A pout settled on her lips. "I will need to don clothes then, Milord."

"So, we will send a servant to Wolfe's quarters to gather your things."

"Anthony, I have no clothing for a servant to fetch."

Surprise registered on his face. "None at all?"

"None."

"By God, then you will follow me to Elizabeth's chamber. That lady has more clothing than three women need. You will pick a few items for now, and when we return from our walk the seamstress will be waiting to begin a wardrobe for you."

Like a child anticipating a new toy, Chantelle jumped at the chance to raid Lady Elizabeth's closet. "Are you sure the lady will not mind, Milord?"

"As if it matters to me, Milady. I paid for every item she wears. Therefore it is mine to use or give as I see fit. Do you not agree?"

Unwilling to argue the point with him for fear she would change his mind, Chantelle gave in to her desire for clothes. "I agree."

“Good, then follow me and we will find you something to cover your nakedness.” Smiling, he added, “Temporarily at least.”

Laughing, Chantelle followed Lord Hart out the door and down the hall to Lady Elizabeth's chambers, where they proceeded to spend a great deal of time going through the hundreds of dresses hanging in her closet.

Having decided on several outfits, a servant was dispatched to Anthony's quarters with all but one of the dresses. This final dress now graced the sensual curves of Chantelle as she spun in circles for Lord Hart's approval.

“You look good enough to eat, my pet. Shall we see what delights the garden holds?”

“I am at your command, Milord.”

“As you should be, sweet girl. For now, however, it's walking and talking I have in mind.”

Holding the sides of her new dress, Chantelle curtsied. “Your pleasure is my desire, Milord.” Laughing as Hart took her by the hand, they ran down the hall, and burst out the front door. With bodies close and heads together, they headed to the garden and were not seen again for several hours.

Chapter Twenty

Thomas felt her surrender, as she dragged her long nails down his back and sucked his tongue into her mouth. He allowed her to take control of the moment, his desire for release overpowering his dominant nature.

His cock slid easily into her pussy, wet and warm with nectar. Starting slow, he pumped deep, letting her muscles grab tight, as she moved her hips to help him slide into her depth. He gave up all thought to the feel of his rod encased in her honey.

Their movements became rhythmic, his body sliding up as her hips lifted to meet him. Steadily increasing the dance, he continued to pump his cock in and out. As sweat coated his skin, her moans grew louder.

“Oh yes, harder!” she cried as the heat rose to encase them. “Close, so close.”

Slowly he pushed himself up on his hands, his body at an angle, hovering over her. Looking into her eyes, he watched the soft lines of her face as the orgasm started to take control, the hazy look in her eyes, as her head pulled backwards, lips opened wide, the scream of pleasure rumbling up from deep in her chest, her breath coming in short shallow gasps.

“Cum for me.”

Her muscles grabbed tightly and his cock was held in a vice grip, as she arched her back, slamming her hips up into his driving rod. Pulsing against him tightly, her honey flowed, hot over his shaft. Wave after wave of cum, poured over him, her pussy pulsating as he slowed his movements to a stop. Lowering his mouth to take her lips, he nibbled lightly as she continued to tremble.

She lay beneath him, her body settling into a relaxed dream state. Thomas took the opportunity to study her features: the soft pink of her cheeks, the ruby red of her lips and the soft curls of damp hair lying on her forehead. She was a beautiful woman. Her body was more than tempting; it was made to be fucked.

As he studied her in silence, she opened her eyes to look into his. “More, please.”

“Still issuing commands, my dear?”

“Always. It's in my nature, Thomas. I cannot be submissive. Take me as I am and I will show you the heights of ecstasy. 'Tis all I can offer.”

He moved his hips once again. “Show me, Milady.”

Thomas was surprised by the speed with which she took control. Her body moved quickly as she attempted to roll sideways without losing his cock. Helping to make the transition, he held her as they changed positions. Thomas was now resting on his back, with her body lying on top of his, all accomplished without his shaft leaving her pussy.

“Now Milord, I will show you what it means to have a partner in bed.”

“I am your willing pupil, Elizabeth.”

Pulling her knees up against his sides, she lifted her body straight up off his cock. Allowing only the very tip to remain inside, she held that position for a moment before letting her body slam back down hard. His cock was driven deep into her vagina, still wet from her recent orgasm. He felt it hit hard against her walls, and her muscles, like teeth, seized his rod tightly. He'd heard the expression *Her pussy has teeth*; he'd just never met a woman who had such control of her muscles.

Her body moved in easy strokes. On each descent, his cock was sucked hard against her walls, held there tightly as she pulled up again. The blood started to pound in his cock and he felt himself slipping into a deep void of pleasure. Hot cum moved from his balls, up his shaft, waiting for the moment of release. He was unable to control the mounting need for climax. "What exquisite torture, Milady." He caught his breath, as she slammed down hard to silence him. "Unless you wish to end this quickly, I suggest you stop for a moment. I am losing control."

"Shhh, Milord. It's your cum I want. It's your surrender I need. Cum Thomas, give me everything you have."

"God, woman!" Her voice was hypnotic. Her pussy became tighter; it felt like she was devouring him.

"Now, Thomas, cum for me!"

He heard the scream of her demand and was powerless to do other than as she ordered. Hot jizzum flowed from his cock, coating her pussy and making it harder for her muscles to grab tightly. She continued to ride his cock, eliciting groans of pleasure-pain from him. The pulsing increased as she refused to halt.

"Elizabeth, you're killing me, stop!"

Her movements slowed, rocking back and forth, his rod no longer slid in and out of her hot folds. His cock pumped dry of cum, grew limp inside her.

Chapter Twenty-One

Elizabeth rolled off his chest, allowing his now flaccid cock to slide from between her legs. Hot, sticky cum coated her inner thighs and her pussy still pulsed from the orgasm she achieved at the same time as his. She doubted he was even aware she had cum.

“That was wonderful.”

She turned on her side to face him. Resting her head in her upturned hand, she looked at his closed eyes. “I’m glad you enjoyed it.”

“Pussy with teeth!”

“What?”

“It’s something I heard years ago. There are men who claim some women have pussies with teeth. The way their muscles grab hold of a cock and suck it against their insides. I never knew it was true until now.”

Elizabeth felt the laughter start. She tried to stifle it, only to find that its need for release was almost as strong as when her body wanted an orgasm. “I’ve never heard it described in quite that fashion, Milord. I will have to remember that.”

“Laugh if you like, lady, for the moment I recover it is I who will once again be in control.”

“Perhaps that is the case, Thomas. For now though you will admit you are at my mercy.” She leaned into his body and took his nipple between her teeth. Clamping softly, she started to apply pressure.

“Ouch.”

More pressure.

“Damn it, woman! That is starting to hurt.”

She moved quickly as she took his cock in her hand and pulled, her teeth continued to apply increasing pressure on his nipple. Between clenched teeth, she issued her command, “I suggest you lie very still Lord Wolfe.”

“What is this?” His voice held no humor.

Elizabeth ignored his question as she started to suck his nipple with force. She could feel his body tense, yet knew he would take care as long as she held his rod in her hand. Any sudden movement on his part might cause a great deal of pain. Relishing the control she now had, she released his reddened nipple and looked into his eyes. “Your dominant personality is a ploy, Milord.”

“Release my cock, lady, and we shall see who is dominant.”

“You’re such a fool, Thomas. With one hand and applied pressure, I can keep you still. Do you not agree?”

“Oh I agree that as long as you hold my cock in your hand I will remain motionless. What you need ask yourself, dear lady, is what happens when you let go?”

“I’m sure you will try to punish me for my boldness. Truly though, do you mind such boldness?”

“Truly, do you enjoy taking such risk?” he countered.

Elizabeth relinquished her hold at the same time pushing herself to a sitting position. “If taking a risk achieves my goal, then, yes Sir, I will risk much.”

Following her lead, Wolfe also sat, legs crossed and facing her. “What is your goal, Milady, and why am I part of it?”

“Perhaps you can not conceive of my desire to remain a free woman, someone who shares her life with a partner she loves with all her heart. I want that, Thomas.”

“A partner?”

“Yes, damn it. I am no jakara, to sit meekly at the foot of a man and serve without question, to give over control of my body to a man, even one I may love deeply. I want more.”

“And you have chosen me as the man you want more with?”

“No, I have chosen you as the man I want to explore such a life with. I have no knowledge of whether we are compatible outside the bedroom. I do know that unless you are willing to try on terms of equality, then we have no future at all. If, however, you are willing to take a risk, I think we can achieve new heights of ecstasy in a lasting love.”

“So you would have me give up knighthood and join you as a free man?”

Laughing, Elizabeth felt him starting to yield. “No, Milord, I would have you fight Lord Hart for the right to be both.”

“And you believe Anthony will simply rewrite the laws of the land to please you and me?”

“What I believe, Sir, is that if you never venture to find out, you will never know. I for one think 'tis worth a try.”

She watched as Thomas played with the idea. His face revealed little of his thoughts. However, she remained silent to let him consider her words.

“You win, lady. I will approach Lord Hart on the morrow to discover if there be a way to overcome the rules that govern our lives. If I am successful, we will see where this journey leads us.”

Before Elizabeth could respond to this statement, Thomas had pulled her into his lap and locked his lips over hers. His kissing continued as the cold light of dawn crept up the window to chase away the shadows of night. She molded her body into his, surrendering to the flame, once again building from deep within.

~Hitting X~

Liz looked at the computer screen, a smile on her lips. She slowly pulled the still pulsing vibe from her pussy and took a deep breath. Looking up, she stared into the eyes of the man sitting across the desk from her. “Well, my love, did you enjoy yourself?”

“What was there not to enjoy?”

Laughing, she stretched. “Oh Tony, you enjoy this game too well.”

“I enjoy it all, my dear. The role playing, the control of the palace, the open and honest way our Internet friends embrace the game.”

Liz stood and walked over to where he sat. Spreading her legs, she straddled his lap and lowered her body onto his rock hard cock. “And what of this new development with Wolfe? Am I to play the married woman now?”

“For a time it could be fun. Thomas knows this is all a game and if for some reason he gets too serious about it, we can simply have Lady Elizabeth fade from sight.”

“And in the meantime, you will enjoy playing with Chantelle.”

“Well, of course I have to keep the ladies of Castle Hart happy.”

Laughing deeply, Liz moved her lips close to his. “We can deal with all that tomorrow. Right now, I want my reward.”

Anthony chuckled deeply, placing his hands on her waist. He lifted her body up, her pussy sliding up his rod. “Reward?” he stated as his hands released her to slam down hard on his shaft.

Nodding her head in assent, Elizabeth looked up into his eyes. “I want you to chain me to the bed and fuck my body until I can take no more.”

Anthony Hart happily gave in to his wife's demands.

Logging Off

Thomas Dorn did a shutdown of his Windows system. The flat screen in front of him went black. Pushing his chair back from the desk, he stood and stretched. A smile played lightly on his lips. "Well, that was very satisfying."

"Have you gotten it out of your system?"

Turning to look at his roommate, he smiled. "I do believe I have."

"So we can move on with life, satisfied in the knowledge you would make a terrible dominant?"

The laughter came naturally. "I can't promise I'm completely over the need for control. However, I will say this evening I realized it's a wife I want rather than a slave."

"What of poor Lady Elizabeth?"

"Don't fret your pretty head about her. Even though most people don't know it, Lord Hart and Lady Elizabeth are married in real life. I have a feeling they are enjoying an evening of passion at this very moment."

"Not a bad idea."

"You read my mind, sweetheart. What say we get naked and take this to the bedroom?"

Chantelle laughed as she reached for Tom's hand. "Yeah, like I'm going to get involved with you. I was thinking we could hit the bar and discuss all the ladies I plan to introduce into your life."

"Oh God, not a blind date."

"Don't grouse at me Tom. Just get your coat and let's go have some fun."

Thomas permitted himself to be dragged toward the front door, while in the back of his mind he wondered if his dominant nature would resurface; he knew in his heart he was ready to find a woman to marry. His time at Castle Hart was at an end. He no longer needed to hide within the secret world of a chat room. Letting go of his thoughts, Thomas surrendered to Chantelle and allowed her to start planning his future.

The End

About the Author:

Michelle Hoppe first discovered a love of writing in a high school creative writing class and has been putting pen to paper ever since.

Married to her high school sweetheart and the boy next door for thirty years, she has three children. When asked what gave her the courage to write erotica romance, she smiles softly and says her hubby, who has encouraged her to write whatever she wants.

Several years ago the family moved to a quiet little town nestled at the bottom of the Olympic rain forest in Washington. With beautiful beaches, stately mountains and an abundance of nature, Washington is an ideal location for Michelle to write her novels and poetry.

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