

ELLORA'S CAVE *Moderne*



SEXPLORATIONS

*Legal Briefs*  
**SAHARA KELLY**

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## Legal Briefs

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***SEXPLORATIONS:***

***LEGAL BRIEFS***

**Sahara Kelly**

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## Prologue

"You need to get laid."

Fenella Whitfield *soon-to-be-ex-Banks* looked up from her position on the floor and over the mountain of packing material that threatened to engulf her. "What?"

"I said you need to get laid."

Fenny grinned. "You're funny."

Delilah Jackson lifted an eyebrow. "No I'm not. I'm dead serious." She shifted a little, her legs crossed Indian-style, her body obscured by its own hill of crushed paper.

"No, I mean you're *funny*. You got two little bits of plastic peanut things stuck in your hair. They look like horns." Fenny chuckled. "Which, come to think of it, is appropriate. Stop trying to lure me over to the dark side, you devil. I have a helluva lot more boxes to do yet."

Dee reached for her wine and glared at Fenny over the top of the glass. "Look, my friend. You've spent more than two years working on legally dumping the *ratjerk*. You're hours away from finalizing the deal and coming out of it smelling like roses, which you fully deserve. So now it's time to think about moving on." She took a sip, swallowed and put the glass down, reaching back into the box again. "I mean, *honey*. Look at this."

Fenny sighed as Dee pulled out a lovely piece of art glass wrapped in a nightgown and shook out the garment, holding it up in evident pain. "*This* is what you're wearing to bed?"

"What's wrong with it?"

"It's—it's—" At a loss for words, Dee just shook her head.

"It keeps me warm." Defensive, Fenny knew. But true.

"A man would work better." Dee tossed the offending nightie onto the junk pile.

"I had one. Look how well that worked out. Now I've finally gotten rid of him. Don't want another, thank you." Fenny went back to her box, stacking her new china neatly beside her on the floor.

"I didn't say you needed a husband, Fenny. I said you need to get *laid*."

Fenny wrinkled her nose. "Right. I'll turn into one of those women who can't wait for the ink to dry on the divorce before she goes out and grabs the first thing in pants that looks halfway decent?" She snorted. "I'm not that desperate, thanks."

Dee answered with a shake of her head and a loudly dramatic sigh then delved back into the boxes.

They worked silently for a while, Fenny losing herself in her thoughts as her hands automatically unwrapped things, stacked things and piled things around her.

They were new things. New china, new kitchenware, new pillows—everything new. Nothing much to remind her of the marriage that had fallen apart, the pain she'd endured while it was happening and the regrets that she'd waited so long to cut the final ties.

She'd been a good wife, she knew. She and John had hit it off right away—freshman year in college. John was destined for politics, Fenny was the perfect adjunct. They'd married soon after graduation and John became the youngest congressman to hold a state seat. From there it was only a skip and a jump and a few years to a race for the State senate—and further.

Fenny had campaigned beside him, always quietly smiling, unobtrusive, the perfect political hostess and helpmeet. She'd been happy to have John hog the spotlight, merely nodding when asked about her degree in literature and voicing her support for child literacy bills. She'd done everything asked of her in her own inimitable style.

And when John had won a seat to Congress and suggested they keep the house in Dover for "appearances and convenience", she'd stayed behind while he "got set up" in the nation's capital.

He'd gotten himself set up, all right. The occasional photo of him escorting some aide to a fundraiser – well, it was all part of the deal. He was good-looking, occasionally outspoken on issues and fodder for the press. She was used to it.

When the same young blonde appeared on his arm over and over again, however, she felt it was time to raise the issue. Only to be shot down by one of John's "handlers". She'd be called to his side when the time was right. Apparently the time wasn't yet right for him to present a solid family front to the media. He was doing a lot of good just as he was.

It was – in hindsight – inevitable, Fenny supposed. There was a scandal, there were topless photos taken with a telephoto lens at a private party – and there was John on the phone, crying and yelling at the paparazzi who he insisted had no respect when it came to politicians.

As quietly as she'd done everything else, Fenny drove into Boston, found the highest-priced law firm in the city and walked in, securing herself a lawyer and beginning divorce proceedings that very same day.

John resigned his seat in Congress and accepted a highly paid position with a lobbying firm who apparently thought his notoriety would be an asset.

Fenny was determined to relieve him of every other asset she could think of. Thanks to her attorney, she had. And now, sitting with her best friend in her new waterfront condominium, it was finally behind her. All she had to do was sign one last set of papers and she would be free.

"So I've been thinking."

Dee's voice intruded onto Fenny's reminiscences. "Uh oh."

"Your lawyer. You know, the dishy one?"

"Michael?"

"Yep. Him." Dee waggled her eyebrows. "He's *beef*, baby. Decidedly lickable. He'd be a great place for you to start getting back into some serious physical fun."

Fenny groaned and stretched. "Sweetie, he's at least five or so years younger than me. Probably got women lined up around the block. Successful lawyer? Rich? Good looking?" She shrugged. "I doubt I'd stand a snowball's chance in hell of getting anywhere near his bed."

"Do you find him attractive?"

"I still have a pulse, you know. Of *course* I find him attractive. I'd have to be dead and buried not to find him attractive."

"So go for it." Dee stuffed used packing materials back into a box and pushed it against one wall. "What you got to lose?"

"My self-esteem?"

Dee snorted. "The fact that you still have any left after being married to Congressman Asshole for all those years tells me you're not worrying about it."

"I just...don't know, Dee." Fenny stared out of her window at the boats bobbing gently in the marina. "I'm out of practice."

"Just try something from one of your books. Like you're playing out a seduction scene. God, we *write* this stuff often enough—*doing* it should be a piece of cake."

Fenny laughed. She'd turned to writing during John's long absences, never knowing that her murder mysteries, then her erotic romantic suspense novels would become so successful. Or that she'd meet Dee in front of the romance shelves of a local bookstore six years ago and find not only another author but a friend for life.

"I'll think about it. In the meantime, you planning on hogging that bottle of wine all to yourself?"



## Chapter One

Her heels made no sound as she walked down the carpeted corridor leading to the office of Michael Shannon, Esq., the man who held her future in his hands. Or, more literally, in a thick folder on his desk.

Fenny knew that she was a few strokes of a pen away from being free at last. That the past two years of legal wrangling were about to have the final words written, marking not just the end of a divorce case, but the end of a large chunk of her life.

She breathed in the smell of what she thought to herself as *money*. It was a unique mix of wood polish, expensive carpet freshener and male colognes. For a second she thought she could detect Michael's own fragrance. Something light and masculine with perhaps a hint of the outdoors—she wasn't sure, not being much of an expert when it came to perfume. She just knew what she liked.

Fenny definitely liked the way Michael Shannon smelled.

As a matter of fact, she liked most everything about Michael Shannon. And recently, she'd noticed her body echoing the sentiment. The more time she spent with him, the more attracted to him she'd become, and the more she'd fought against it. He was her lawyer, she was his client. That was it—a professional business relationship, nothing more.

Michael had been everything a lawyer should be. Supportive, informative and dedicated to Fenny's case. If she felt his eyes lingering on her now and again—well, it was probably wishful thinking.

Maybe Dee was right. Maybe she *did* need to get laid.

As she lifted her hand to tap on the polished wood door bearing Michael's nameplate, she blushed. Totally unbidden a vision of Michael Shannon had sprung into her head. He was naked. And God help her, he looked wonderful.

Pausing for a second, Fenny marshaled her recalcitrant brain back into appropriate paths. She was here to perform a legal function, not seduce her lawyer.

Unfortunately.

She shifted her purse more comfortably on her shoulder, straightened her suit jacket and then tapped on the door.

"Come on in."

Ignoring the tiny thrill that the sound of Michael's voice elicited, Fenny lifted her chin and opened the door wide, blinking at the sun streaming through the tall windows. He was rising from his desk, a smile on his face—and yes, looking good enough to eat. Several times.

"Hi, Michael. I hope I'm not late?" Turning away under the pretense of shutting the door, Fenny took a breath and hoped her cheeks weren't too pink.

"Not at all." He walked to her and took her hand, holding it—in her opinion—just a fraction of a second longer than he needed to.

Those eyes! Blue—lovely shades of blue, the kind of blue that changed a little according to the light or perhaps what he was wearing. Today it was a dark grey suit with a surprisingly colorful tie, bringing out the sky-bright shade that ringed his pupils.

Fenny had seen them vary from stormy blue grey to the clear, almost tropical, blue of a sunlit ocean. She wondered if they were ever the same two days running, then simply smiled into them as Michael continued to grin at her.

"Ready?" He squeezed her fingers then finally released her.

"Ready as I'll ever be." She smiled back.

"That's my girl. Here." He led her to the desk and pulled a sheaf of papers toward her. "These are the final settlement papers. All I need you to do today is sign these..." His finger pointed at one stack then drifted to another. "And initial these."

"Okay." Fenny nodded.

"After that's done, we need to get all the documents to the courthouse for official registering and filing. One more signature on *that* paper – and you're a free woman."

Fenny grimaced. "Sheesh."

"I know." Michael chuckled. "Sign here, sign there. It's crazy. Thank God we live in a paperless society, huh?" He pulled out a chair for her as she reached into her purse for her pen.

"Could've fooled me." Fenny scrawled her name on the first of what seemed like a mountain of neatly typed documents. "I hope you understand I'm not going to actually *read* all these."

"No? You trust me?" He leaned on the desk next to her. "I could have slipped something into them..."

"Like what?" She lifted an eyebrow.

"Oh, I don't know. Something about your ex-husband accepting the risk of being castrated if he ever mentions your name? Or no – wait – how about a line item that prohibits him from breathing within five square miles of you?"

"Ouch." Fenny laughed. "That's harsh." She finished signing and leaned back. "Besides, he's in DC now and from the sound of things, he'll be staying there."

"And you're staying here?"

"Yep. Moved into the new condo over the weekend." She leaned forward a little. "It's fabulous, Michael. Terrific view right out over Boston Harbor. I can watch the boats bobbing in the sunshine as I have my coffee. Just perfect."

"You like the ocean."

"I do." She sighed. "The big house in Dover was all well and good, but it wasn't what I'd have chosen for myself." She glanced up at him, meeting his intense gaze. "This condo is exactly what I chose for myself."

His lips curved. "I'm glad. It's time you did something for you, and you alone. As long as you don't mind the fog, or those Nor'easters when they come storming in –"

Fenny shook her head. "I'm going to love them too, I know it. I'll light a fire and watch the waves. Or stare into the fog. I'll never whine." She paused. "Okay, so maybe I'll whine if the fog doesn't lift, but overall? Nope. You won't hear me complain."

"So it was a worthwhile investment in your happiness."

Fenny thought about it. Michael had been cautious in his enthusiasm when she'd announced she wanted to sell the mansion, pointing out that it would only increase in value. But for Fenny, it was part of her past. She wanted it gone, she wanted closure.

She wanted a place that was all hers with no memories that might sneak up on her one night and spoil the new life she had planned for herself.

"Yes. It was absolutely worthwhile. I am finally feeling like a free woman. Like a butterfly shedding a rather restrictive cocoon." She wrinkled her nose. "That's a trite analogy and I apologize. But I think you know what I mean."

His hand brushed her shoulder. "Yeah. I think I do."

"Okay." Fenny stood and put her pen back in her purse. "I'm done."

"Off to spread your wings, Ms Butterfly?" Michael gathered up the paperwork.

"No. Actually I'm off to buy mundane things like cooking pans and peanut butter."

"Ah. The staples of life." He grinned. "Along with toilet paper and chocolate chip cookies."

Fenny couldn't hold in a laugh. "You got it."

The intercom buzzed on Michael's desk and he held up a finger at Fenny as he hit the "answer" button. "Yes?"

"Dr. Singleton on line two, Mr. Shannon."

"Thanks, Deanna. Tell him I'll be right with him."

Fenny put her purse on her shoulder and turned to leave.

"Fenny, wait a sec." Michael followed her as she moved to the door. "I've got to be away for a few days—a deposition in Providence—but I should be able to get the last of your paperwork done by the weekend. How about I drop them over to you

on...Sunday?" He tipped his head to one side as he asked. "Would that be okay with you?"

"You mean at the condo?" She blinked a little. "Well, sure. As long as it's not out of your way. I mean Sunday...day off...don't you have plans or something?"

He shook his head. "Nope. Can't think of anything I'd rather do. You can show me your new saucepans and those boats bobbing on the water in the sunshine."

"Okay." Fenny swallowed. "Can't promise sun though. It's New England."

"Understood." He reached out and casually flicked her cheek with one finger. "Until Sunday."

Perhaps it was her imagination, but his voice seemed lower, a little rougher, hotter maybe. She tried to hold on to her control, but he wasn't making it easy by smiling at her like that. "Yeah thanks. Bye, Michael. I'll see you then."

Fenny managed to leave the office on her own two feet, but it was a close call. As soon as the door closed behind her, a shiver had her trembling and she stopped for a moment, one hand against the wall, waiting for her system to recover.

Had he flirted with her? Was there more to his suggestion of a Sunday visit than just a need to finish up the paperwork?

And what was with the cheek thing? She lifted a hand and brushed her face where the burn of his finger still sizzled. That sizzle had managed to penetrate a lot further than the skin of her face, too. As she tried to walk soberly to the elevators, Fenny knew there was an oddly moist feeling between her legs.

Christ above, she was turned on by the simple glancing touch of a man's hand. She sucked in a breath, hit the button and waited, listening to the thud of her own heartbeat as she forced herself to get a grip.

She wasn't twenty-two anymore. She was a grown woman with her fortieth birthday behind her. Michael was a successful, single attorney who probably hadn't hit

thirty-five yet. And equally probably had a luscious babe on his arm every time he went anywhere.

Fenny told herself sternly she was shooting for the impossible, she should simply enjoy this particular moment, and then move on.

She was still telling herself as she left the building and walked to the parking garage.

Perhaps some time soon the message would get through. In the meantime, her panties were still annoyingly damp, damn them.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Swear to God, Dee. It was like I was a teenager again. Sweaty thighs and all." Fenny glanced up and down the aisles of the bookstore she and Dee were prowling.

"That's my girl." Dee grinned and pulled down a self-help book with a rather provocative cover. "So you don't need this?" She held up the volume with a wicked smirk.

Fenny read the title. *Multiple Orgasms – Come Again?* "Jeez, Dee. Put that *down*."

Dee giggled and returned it to the shelf. "What are we doing here, anyway? We should be in the romance section."

Fenny grimaced. "I was hoping there was something on how to take a mature body and make it sensual and appealing in five minutes or less." She turned toward the physical fitness aisle.

"What the hell are you bitching about?" Dee followed, hands on hips, eyebrows lowered into a frown. "You're frickin' gorgeous, you idiot." She paused. "Besides, that's probably in the cosmetic surgery section. And it takes a helluva lot longer than five minutes, not to mention ninety percent of your 401K."

Fenny sighed and leaned her forehead against a shelf. "What the *fuck* am I doing, Dee? I'm actually contemplating getting naked and having sex with a younger man. A

really good-looking younger man who turns me on in spite of what my brain's telling me."

Dee folded her arms. "You're being a *woman*, honey. Just because your sex life's been crap for the last couple of years, doesn't mean the old woohoo has closed up shop, you know."

"Woohoo?" Fenny lifted an eyebrow.

"We're in public. I try to watch what I say."

"Woohoo?"

"Yeah. Well, best I could do on the spur of the moment." Dee sighed. "Look, Fenny. You're at your sexual peak, or at least near it. What's the problem?"

"Women are supposed to peak sexually in their thirties. I'm sliding down the precipice on the other side. Besides, I'm not sure I ever actually hit any kind of peak. I smacked into the side of the mountain on the way up, then crashed and burned." Fenny shrugged.

"So you're trying to tell me you hate sex?"

"No." Fenny paused. "Well, not exactly."

Dee rolled her eyes and stared at the ceiling. "Then what, *exactly*?"

Fenny tried to sort out the mess of tangled thoughts that choked her brain cells. She was out of her depth here, away from her comfort zone. She was organized, in control and usually able to deal with...with...*stuff*. But until now, *stuff* hadn't involved a hot sexy guy and the possibility of getting naked with him.

"I'm afraid." The words popped out and Fenny realized they were true.

"Afraid of what?"

Dee muttered a curse as a woman walked toward them and leaned in to grab a book on the latest exercise program. "Excuse me."

"No problem."

Fenny grabbed Dee's arm. "C'mon. Coffee. Over there." She nodded at the little café tucked away for the convenience of tired or hungry book buyers.

Following willingly, Dee kept talking as they found a table and ordered cappuccinos. "I do not understand what you're afraid of. Specify. Clarify. Gimme the condensed version." She wiped the table with a napkin, tossed it into the nearby trash and put her cup down with a clatter. "You're the most controlled and competent woman I know. You've dealt with more crap over the last two years than I can begin to imagine and you haven't shot anybody. You've barely broken a sweat. And you've come through it all looking like a lady. Now, all of a sudden, a man comes on to you and you're quaking like the San Andreas fault or something." She paused for breath. "I don't get it."

Fenny calmly sipped her coffee and let Dee get it out of her system. She'd spoken the truth, though. She *was* afraid. There were so many areas opening up in which Fenny had no experience whatsoever. And it was that lack of a foundation, the total absence of anything to use as a guide, that had her running scared.

"Your turn. I'm done." Dee glared at her, folded her arms, closed her mouth—and waited.

"Okay." Fenny took a breath. "Here's the thing. I haven't slept with anyone in over twenty years, other than John. Even then—" She paused. This was difficult for her. "Even then, it wasn't exactly the earth-shattering, bell-ringing, tsunami-crashing-on-the-beach type sex we write about. It was...*okay*. Mostly."

"Go on."

"Then it stopped being okay and became a duty. Then it stopped altogether. I know now it was because John found himself—other interests." Fenny glanced at Dee. "But you and I are both smart enough to know that the message I got was that *I* wasn't appealing any more. That twenty-something tits are cuter than forty-something tits. They're still in Alaska. Mine are heading for the Gulf of Mexico."



Dee darted a quick look down at her own cleavage then back at Fenny. But wisely, she said nothing.

"So all things considered, I have little to no confidence that my body will be attractive to another man, especially when the bra comes off and the panties get stripped away to reveal what we—in the fluidly sensual style of our novels—like to call the *soft curves* of my belly. They're actually a pooch. Or the start of a pooch." She sighed. "Can you imagine how I'd feel if he gets me naked and then says...uh, *gotta go now, doll.*"

Dee's laughter rang out. "You're joking, right? You looked in the mirror lately?"

Fenny shook her head. "I try not to."

"That explains the mascara." Dee was still chuckling.

"What's wrong with my mascara?"

"Nothing, honey. Look." Dee reached across the table and rested her hand on Fenny's. "You're a beautiful woman. You're a natural blonde, you bitch. You're elegant, in great shape and someone *any* man with a lick of commonsense would be extremely glad to get into his bed. You're sexy without pushing it. It's subtle. Something that says *beneath my ladylike exterior there's a fire, dude. Come warm yourself and stoke the flames while you're at it.*"

"Really?"

Dee nodded. "Absolutely. Hell, Fenny. If I swung that way, *I'd* have put the moves on you by now."

"You'd have been disappointed." Fenny absently stirred the dregs of her cappuccino.

"Nah. I'd have known what I was doing. Which is more than can be said of John the ratjerk. Just because sex wasn't the big kaboom with him doesn't mean you're not a sexual person. It just means the spark wasn't there." She grimaced. "And it sounds like

John was the kind of guy who couldn't find a woman's clit with a map and a GPS system."

Fenny started to giggle. "That's a great line."

"Thanks. I used it in chapter seven of my last book, I think."

Fenny bit back a howl of laughter, pressing her napkin to her lips and shaking her head at Dee. "You're a killer, honey. You know that?"

"Yep." Dee stood. "Now come on. Let's go find our novels and turn every one so it's facing out. Gotta keep those sales up, right?"

They were doing just that when a small figure whirled around the corner of a shelf and nearly knocked Fenny over.

"Oh shit. Sorry. God, I'm sorry. Are you okay?"

Fenny nodded and straightened her skirt. "Yes, I'm fine. Are you all right?" She looked at the books scattered across the floor and bent to help pick them up.

The woman had frozen. "Oh my God." She was staring at Dee. "You're Dee Jax, aren't you? Your picture is on the back of your latest western. God I love your cowboys..." Her wide eyes turned to Fenny. "Are you a writer too?"

Fenny usually tried to avoid this sort of conversation. She'd avoided it for the years she'd quietly written in private, keeping her identity hidden lest it damage John's career. Now —*fuck it*.

She nodded. "Hello. I'm Fenella Whitfield, and yes, I'm a writer. F. Whitfield, to be precise."

"Well holy fucking crap." The few books in her arms tumbled back to the floor as she held out her hand. "I'm so pleased to meet you. Both of you."

Fenny took the proffered hand and shook it as the woman sucked in a breath. "I'm I.M. Blue."

## **Chapter Two**

"I.M. Blue." Fenny stared. "I still can't believe it."

They were sitting outside the store on a small bench, enjoying the sunshine.

"Me neither." Dee was wide eyed. "I can't get enough of your books. And Steampunk Suzie? Best comic strip to hit the web in years."

The slender pixie-like figure shrugged and blushed. She'd revealed that her name was Nadine, Nadine Summers. But she invited both Fenny and Dee to call her Dini, which was what her friends called her.

Fenny looked into her limpid blue eyes and sensed something beneath them. How many friends were actually out there who called her Dini?

It had taken mere seconds for the three of them to bypass the social niceties and start chattering like magpies over dropped books and more than a few irate customers trying to get past them.

There was a bond there, realized Fenny. Something specific to writers that clicked into place when they met. Sort of a sisterhood of the traveling plot lines or something. It bypassed the "Where do you live? Do you have kids?" kind of conversation, and went directly to "How's sales? Are you gonna switch genres? My editor wants more sex..." without passing "go" or collecting any money whatsoever.

Fenny was enjoying it enormously.

And so was Dee. "Yeah, Steampunk is a real hoot. I'm not sure I could write it, but you do it with such flair. All those booms and machines..."

"I love my job." Dini laughed. "What else could I possibly do that would allow me to alternately blow things up and then save the world while fucking my brains out?"

Fenny nodded. "Gotcha. I murder people then go have hot sex."

"And I save horses. I ride cowboys instead." Dee looked angelically virtuous. "Just doing my bit for the environment."

"Which is all very well and lots of fun." Fenny glanced at her watch. "But I've really gotta scoot."

"Yeah, prep for that big date tomorrow, huh?" Dee nudged her.

"You have a *date*?" Dini looked fascinated. "That's so cool."

"It's not really a date. It's just my lawyer coming over with the final divorce papers for me to sign."

"Oh." Dini looked unsure. "This is an *I'm sorry* moment? Or a *you rock girl* moment?"

"Definitely *you rock girl*." Dee smiled. "Plus the lawyer is sex on a stick. And I'm betting his legal briefs are full of really good sidebars or whatever they call it."

"Ooooh." Dini grinned. "Go for it, Fenny. Take notes. Research, baby." She wiggled her eyebrows.

"I like you." Dee hugged Dini. "We gotta do lunch or something. Maybe next week. Wine and cheese and sordid details of Fenny's newly reactivated sex life."

"I'd love that. If it's not too much trouble..."

"Hell no, honey." Dee shot a quick look at Fenny. "We writers have to stick together. Nothing we like more than shooting the breeze with our peers."

Fenny gave a slight nod, acknowledging her friend's unspoken question. Dini was a sweetheart. And there was something in her gaze that tugged at Fenny's heartstrings. She was probably in her thirties—maybe—but beneath the cutely bohemian façade, Fenny sensed a woman who might appreciate friendships.

"I'd love that too, Dini. Just don't expect too many details. I doubt anything at all will happen." She swallowed. "Think I should get a hairdo? A new style? I've got time. Maybe I should go for the short and spiky thing. It looks so good on you."

Dini blinked. “Are you *crazy*? With that gorgeous head of hair? Don’t even *think* about it.”

“Thank you.” Dee nodded approvingly. “Leave the hair on your head alone, Fenny. Shave the pits. And the legs. Even the pussy if you want to. But don’t dare cut that hair, okay?”

“The pussy? Really? I’ve thought about that...” Dini’s irrepressible giggle fluttered around the three of them.

“Okay, before we get too far into that topic, I’m outta here.” Fenny dug her car keys out of her purse. “I have more boxes to unpack and a few calls to make.” She turned toward the parking lot. “Dini, get Dee to give you my number. Let’s make a date for next week or something, okay?”

Dee grinned. “Details. I still want details.”

Fenny snorted. “Yeah right. Next week. We’ll see.” She waved and headed for her car. Shave her pussy? Urgh. Probably not. Itchy stubble was not sexy. If she was going to do that it would have to be a full Brazilian wax job.

Of course, Michael might like it—apparently some men went for the bare pussy look. If she called her local spa now—

*Christ almighty.*

Fenny administered a sharp mental slap upside the head. What the hell was she thinking? Michael would probably appear at her door, papers in hand, and then bid her a polite farewell, walking out of her life forever.

*That was reality.*

She started her car and headed back toward her new condo. Of course, reality was one thing. There was nothing to stop her from enjoying a private fantasy now and again.

She smiled all the way home.

\* \* \* \* \*

Several hours later Fenny was no longer smiling. She was tired, aching a little and pretty damn sick of looking at boxes. She stretched, put her hands behind her at the base of her spine and grimaced at the loud click coming from her vertebrae.

However, she'd accomplished a lot of what she'd set out to do that day. Her home was starting to look like a home, not an advertisement for a moving company. There were still a few boxes here and there, but she'd got them where she needed them to be, at least. The books would be unpacked when her shelves were delivered. Her desk was already in position in the smaller bedroom—it would be her study for the time being. The kitchen was a good size, opening out into the living area with nothing but a useful counter separating the two.

Fenny liked the sense of spaciousness, the gleaming white and chrome of the appliances and the pure blue accent pieces she'd selected, in keeping with the coastline scene outside her windows.

She'd drawn the line at lighthouses and shells, but there was a distinctly nautical touch to her color scheme.

The master bedroom was still in a shambles though. It was her fault for custom ordering her one indulgence, a heavy sleigh bed she'd fallen in love with. It would be perfect here though. Fenny could picture herself lying there and staring out over the ocean. Sleeping with the windows open to listen to the soft sounds made by the ocean.

She winced as a ship sounded its horn. Okay, so this wasn't a tropical beach. There would be a few other ocean sounds she'd need to get used to.

Right now, her bed was on the floor. New mattress, new box spring, new cover and some really *sinfully* expensive sheets. All waiting to be housed in the elegant bed frame—if and when it was delivered.

Since there was a bureau and an armoire in the set which had yet to arrive, Fenny's clothing was temporarily scattered about here and there. Her closet contained the stuff

that could go on hangers, but her T-shirts and lingerie were in piles. She'd bundled them away as best she could, always promising that tomorrow she'd sort it all out.

Today, it had been the kitchen that had taken priority. After all, coffee was as essential a part of waking up to face another day as was that first trip to the bathroom. She needed her coffeemaker to take its place in her kitchen and her new life. And she needed to remember where she'd put the coffee scoop.

Hence this moment of physical exhaustion and mental relaxation.

Fenny stared out of the window as a sliver of moon shone on the shimmering waves of Boston Harbor. Night cast a magic spell over the waters, turning them silver then dark again, tricking the eye into thinking they were an illusion. Lights gleamed from one or two big boats tied up at the nearby marina and also from the other condo complexes that had been built to offer residents a tang of sea air with their breakfasts.

Her reflection looked back at her, a pale shadow in the glass of her window. She could open the sliders and step out onto the tiny balcony, but thought better of it. It was low tide. The air wouldn't be quite as fresh as she liked.

She sighed, a deep sigh of contentment. She'd done it. Turned her life onto a new path, free of the lingering memories and regrets that haunted her now and again. She'd had two years to come to terms with John's uncaring infidelity. It no longer hurt—at all.

She'd realized it didn't really hurt that much in the first place, which was a pretty good indicator that her marriage had hit the skids. There were regrets, though. No kids—John hadn't wanted them, preferring to hold off until having a pregnant wife might be useful.

She regretted agreeing to that calculated plan, and regretted she hadn't seen the lack of affection that lay behind such a comment. Of course, John hadn't put it so bluntly. He was nothing if not the consummate politician and he'd snowed her with his quick tongue and clever brain, taking full advantage of her naïveté.

Her degree in English Lit had been the perfect adjunct to his in Political Science. Looking back, Fenny had no regrets about the kind of wife she'd been. She'd given John

everything he asked for in the way of support and encouragement. And asked for little in return.

She'd gotten – what? A public slap in the face when the picture of him fondling his buxom assistant had hit the front pages? And since his hands were down inside her bra he simply couldn't pass that off as an affectionate "gesture" of his respect.

Nope. John had chosen his path. And freed Fenny to pursue hers.

She didn't regret turning to writing either. She had, according to her editor, a definite knack for creating suspenseful stories. And when it was politely suggested she up the heat quotient, Fenny happily slid hotly erotic romantic interludes into her mysteries without a blink. Although it had taken her six months to type the word *nipple* without blushing.

So here she was, teetering on the edge of – of what?

An affair? A quick fuck to take the edge off? Or more? Opening her life to another man within seconds of finally dumping the first one?

She sighed and pulled the tie off her hair, shaking it free and running her hands through it with relief. She had absolutely no clue what would happen tomorrow.

Then she realized if she didn't shave her legs it was unlikely anything would happen at all.

"Eeeek." The squeal followed her as she darted through the bedroom into the small bathroom she'd made her own. Preferring to keep the bigger bathroom for guests, Fenny had settled into this one, enjoying the creamy white tiles, the deep but smaller tub and the ornate half door that kept the shower spray from soaking the floor. It was a strange blend of elegance and practicality.

She filled the tub and blinked. "It's almost a *steampunk* bathroom." She giggled as she stripped and sank into the water with a blissful grin. "Aaaaah. *Vive la steampunk*, Dini."



The legs were smooth now, the skin soft to the touch, the razor set aside. Fenny leaned her head back and gazed at nothing in particular.

Should she shave her pussy?

Slowly one hand slid beneath the bathwater, exploring the now-neatly trimmed tuft of hair. And more.

Fenny felt the shiver as it danced lightly along her nerve endings. How long had it been since she'd masturbated? Since she'd enjoyed an orgasm?

She honestly couldn't remember. There'd always been something, some stress, some business with John, some facet of the divorce or some newly revealed ugliness. Sex had been the farthest thing from her mind as John's unfaithfulness eroded what little sensuality she believed she had. Then she'd come to realize that Michael Shannon was an attractive man and her body was responding to him even if her brain was a few miles behind and slow in catching up.

Her fingers slipped around the folds of her pussy.

Oh good grief. If she gave herself an orgasm now, would she exceed her quota and not be able to have one with Michael? Always supposing things got to that point? And if they didn't, maybe she should do it now and say to hell with it?

Should she do it anyway just to make sure everything still *worked*?

Christ above, she was going to drive herself insane. All because a handsome man had touched her cheek, smiled at her with promise in his eyes and made her wish for—wish for—

Her thighs parted as she slowly stroked herself and her body heated in response.

Oh yeah. Wish for *this*.

Softly, Fenny let her instincts take over. The water lapped around her breasts, a caress of warmth not dissimilar to a man's lips. The cool air whispered around her nipples as they ripened and hardened, puckering rapidly above the bubbles in the tub.

Almost without thinking about it, Fenny's hips shifted a little, moving to meet the fingers that caressed, stroked, pressed and fluttered around all the places that gave her pleasure.

Closing her eyes, she surrendered to the moment, to a celebration of her own femininity, a woman aroused and enclosed in a fragrant sea of bubbles. The water moved against her pussy, a current that mimicked the movements of her hand, softly echoing all the wonderfully exciting things she was doing to herself.

Would Michael do this? Would he know how to touch her? Would he be interested enough to learn?

Her arousal built, steadily and surely, heating things deep inside her that had slumbered for too long. Everything still worked, apparently, just as nature intended. She lifted her free hand out of the water and found a nipple, aching now and thrusting upward, seeking that touch, that pinch that would push her orgasm train further along the tracks to its destination.

It was blissful, almost serene, the crest rising up inside Fenny without a thought or a movement to bar its progress.

When it finally peaked, racking Fenny's spine with delicious bolts of sexual electricity, she gasped aloud, pressing hard on her clit and her pussy as if to hold the sensation inside, to keep it from dissipating too soon, before she'd had the chance to really lose herself beneath the waves of pleasure.

She subsided limply into her cool bathwater. "Well, I'll be damned." She spoke aloud, surprised, exhausted, glowing—all the good stuff that comes from a really fine orgasm. "Looks like my chimes can still ring after all."

She grinned to herself. She was still grinning as she tumbled onto her makeshift bed and pulled the sheets up over her shoulders. "Take that, John—you miserable fucker. I always could do it better myself." She yawned. "And even after all the crap you've put me through...*I still can.*"

## Chapter Three

Michael Shannon was nervous.

His palms were damp, he was sweating a little beneath his T-shirt and he could feel his heart racing as he walked along the quay to Fenny's new condo building. And he was feeling faintly ridiculous.

At thirty-seven, with more than a few years of professional experience before the bench under his belt, he had thought he was prepared for most everything his life could throw at him. Quiet confidence was his trademark, both in his courtroom demeanor and his private life.

But for the past two years, he'd had an itch. That itch had been getting stronger and stronger and it had a name—Fenella Whitfield. Now, thank God, it might be possible to scratch the damn thing before it drove him clean out of his mind.

He'd dated during that time, of course. Escorted half a dozen prominent names to various functions. Avoided sleeping with most of them, taken a couple more to bed and generally played the game according to the rules. He was one of Boston's most eligible bachelors, according to a local magazine, so he had to maintain the image.

But there was nothing serious, nothing that overwhelmed him, nothing that drove thoughts of his clients out of his head. Except for the cool and elegant blonde who haunted his dreams.

He paused for a moment, looking at the three-story condo, admiring the blend of old New England and stylish modernism. The architects had done a damn good job on Adams Wharf. He could see why Fenny found it appealing.

The question was, of course, did she find *him* appealing?

He wished he was more certain. And that was unsettling too, since he'd been pretty successful with women for as long as he could remember. All the way back to Jenny Saunders in high school.

This wasn't high school, but his adrenaline levels were pretty close to those he could clearly recall on the night of his senior prom. He didn't have a corsage or anything else in his hands except a file folder. No briefcase, no suit, just jeans and a casual shirt. Should he have put on something a little more formal?

Fucking Christ, this was about as stupid as it got, and Michael shook his head at himself. If Fenny wasn't interested, so be it. He'd do his best to move on.

If she *was*, however...

The cool breeze off the water riffled his hair and cooled the sweat dappling the back of his neck. He inhaled, loving the salty tang. At least they shared that—a love of the ocean. There seemed to be a lot of common ground, too. They had the same sense of humor, although God knew Fenny hadn't had much to laugh about for that first year.

But she'd relaxed around him eventually, realized he was working on her behalf and in his own way felt as bad about the situation as she did. He'd gone head to head with that Washington law firm, relishing the chance to quietly ensure his client's future well-being.

And take as much from that asshole John Banks as he could. Anyone who'd go for a trophy bimbo over a class act like Fenny deserved to be taken to the cleaners. Michael grinned at himself. He'd done it, too. Gotten a settlement that was far above the original offer. Banks himself had sealed his fate by being arrogant and aggressive, both of which had seriously undermined his lawyers' efforts.

He figured Banks was probably being struck off their client list right about now. And he, Michael Shannon, didn't give a rat's ass, since he was on his way to see if Banks' ex, the delectable and talented Fenny Whitfield, was interested in some activity that wasn't professional at all. In fact, Michael had a few fantasies that might well be illegal in some states.

His cock gave that interested twitch that had come to represent Fenny in Michael's mind. Odd how a purely physical response could elicit such strong mental images, but it did. From the second she'd stalked into the offices of Michael's firm, all sleek, smooth hair and buttoned-up suit, requesting legal representation, he'd known she would be somebody special to him.

He'd taken her case, to the surprise of his partners, whisked her into his office and shut the door. It hadn't been more than fifteen minutes later that he knew he was in trouble. Sitting like a queen in front of his desk, Fenella Whitfield's pose had been calm and controlled. Her eyes, on the other hand, had been screaming the agony she concealed so well.

Michael was a goner. He was her knight from that first meeting, dedicated to her case, determined to slay the dragon haunting her and to putting laughter back in those eyes instead of pain. And also to loosen that hair, unbutton those buttons and make the rest of her limp and sated.

He'd accomplished most of it. She had a very handsome settlement. A new life. She smiled now, a heatedly sensual smile she seemed unaware of. And she blushed too. He could make her blush. He'd been doing so more frequently, first because it charmed him when she did, and now because he knew—okay, hoped—her blushes were indicative of a response to him that had nothing to do with legal briefs and everything to do with the other kind of briefs.

And getting them off each other.

Of course, reading her books helped.

Michael's steps had brought him to the door of her building and he couldn't help but smile at the neat script beneath her buzzer. *F. Whitfield*. Typed in an elegant font, it was all Fenny. Stylish but sensual.

He swallowed and pressed the buzzer, devoutly hoping his jeans wouldn't reveal the fact that—just like the horny teenager he'd been at his senior prom—he was getting a frickin' boner.

\* \* \* \* \*

Fenny jumped at the sound of the buzzer. She was knee deep in boxes, just finishing up the last of the stuff for the smaller bedroom she'd chosen as her office, and still in her Sunday casual wear. Which was a tank top and yoga pants.

She glanced at the clock. "*Oh crap.*" Time had flown faster than she'd realized. Of course, once she'd set up her laptop and plugged into the new Internet provider, there had been stuff to catch up on, which had killed an hour without her realizing it. But she still had time before Michael was due to arrive.

Tugging down her tank, she crossed to the kitchen wall and hit the intercom. "Can I help you?"

"Shannon delivery service. Got a package here for Ms. Fenella Whitfield."

She could hear the laughter in Michael's voice and began to smile even as a mental scream built up in her brain. *I'm not ready yet...*

What was she going to do? Leave him standing outside while she slipped into something more comfortable? Christ above, this was a farce. Any and all of her fantasies vaporized instantly as she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror next to her front door.

The tank top was clean, thank goodness, but very old. Her yoga pants—ditto. She had no underwear beneath any of it, her hair was pushed up into an untidy knot secured by a pencil and her face was as nature intended, not as she'd intended.

*Why didn't I at least put some damn makeup on?*

The buzzer sounded again. "Hey, Fenny. Are you going to let me in, or what?"

"Sorry, Michael. You caught me by surprise." She sighed. So much for *that* little dream. "C'mon in."

She hit the release button that unlocked the main condo door and then stood behind her own front door waiting for him.

Her heart thundered so loudly she almost missed his soft tap, but with a gulp and a forced smile she swung it wide. And blinked.

Instead of the smartly professional attorney she'd expected, a super gorgeous hunk of man was standing there, smiling at her. His jeans were worn white in places—interesting places—his feet bare except for sneakers and his chest filled out a T-shirt that featured a large ocean wave and the words “You’re gonna get WET on this ride”.

His hair was mussed, there was a tiny bit of weekend stubble darkening his chin and cheeks and he smelled of the ocean, fresh air and that essential Michael fragrance.

Fenny could only stare.

“So, can I come in?” He waved the folder at her. “I have the papers. This is it, Fenny. The very last signature.”

She pulled herself together. “I’m so sorry. You caught me by surprise. Time’s flown by today a bit faster than I expected and I’m not really ready for company.” She stepped back. “But if you’re brave enough, sure. Come on in. It’s still a terrible mess.”

“I’m not company.” Michael walked in and looked around him with interest. “I’m your lawyer. At least until this is signed.” He put the folder down on an open bit of counter space. “I like this.” He moved to the large half moon window at the end of the kitchen and looked out over the water. “Nice.”

Fenny nervously chewed her bottom lip. “Um...would you like anything? Coffee? Soda? I have some wine around here someplace but I’m not sure if I’ve unpacked all the glasses yet...”

He shook his head. “Nope. I’m good. Why don’t we get this over with?” He opened the folder. “Got a pen?”

“Sure.” Fenny reached for her head, touched the pencil in her hair and cursed. “Wait a minute.” She rummaged in a nearby box. “Here.”

“Excellent.” Michael was pulling out papers. “Just three places.” He pointed. “Initial here and sign here...and here.”

Fenny moved closer to him, pushing the warm scent of man out of her mind and focusing on the documents. She signed. "There. Done."

Michael heaved a sigh of relief, picked up the papers and put them neatly back into the folder. "Well, that's it. You're a free woman at last." He smiled. "And I'm a free man."

"What?"

"Free to do this." His hand reached for her and stroked the side of her neck. "Free to touch that little spot where your pulse throbs when you feel strongly about something. Did you know that, Fenny?"

She shivered at his touch and the heat in his gaze as he slowly ran a fingertip from her shoulder to her ear and back.

"Michael—I-I—"

"It's every bit as soft as I imagined it would be. And right now it's throbbing like mad."

She gulped down a breath of air. "Look, I don't want you to think I'm one of *those* women, Michael."

He didn't stop stroking her, just smiled gently. "What kind of woman is that?"

"You know." She shifted into his touch. "Newly divorced. Looking for—I'm not on the prowl for a quick roll in the hay."

"Neither am I."

Fenny stared at him, wishing she was better at reading people, wanting to know what lurked behind the heat in his eyes. There was lust there, certainly. Desire—absolutely. But she sensed something more, something deeper than just a need to scratch a physical itch. Or maybe it was a combination of her own wants and fears she saw reflected there.



She couldn't tell, dammit. But those seconds of stillness between them were enough to drain the blood from her brain and make her dizzy. Her thoughts scattered on the wind as his touch overwhelmed what little control she had left.

As if he, too, felt that dynamic "something" between them, he swallowed and stepped away, turning from her and walking into the living room, whistling a little between his teeth as he saw the wall of glass at one end. "Wow. This is one helluva view you've got here. Magnificent."

"It is, isn't it?" Thankful for the chance to gather her thoughts, she moved to his side and stood with him, watching the oceanfront vista spread out before them. The islands of Boston Harbor dotted the skyline, ships steamed in and out, and a flotilla of smaller boats bobbed around, busily doing whatever boats did on a Sunday. Fenny wasn't really sure about any of it, she just knew she loved it and found it endlessly fascinating. "I do love the ocean."

"We share that, for sure. That's why I'm a bit early. I came over by boat."

"Huh?" Fenny blinked. "Did you just say you came by *boat*?"

A strong arm slid around her shoulders and Michael turned her slightly to the right. "See that white one there? The one with the blue canvas?"

Fenny found it tied up amidst a row of other similar boats. She nodded. "Yes?"

"She's mine. I have a place in Gloucester, on the shore. It's small, but it's got its own mooring, which is why I bought it. When the weather's good that's how I commute. Got everything I need at the office in the way of clothes, so now and again I treat myself to a morning commute that isn't filled with exhaust fumes or back-ups on I-95."

"Wow."

"And I love to spend my summer weekends on the water."

Fenny chuckled, aware they were standing very close. "Well, that explains the shirt."

He laughed. But he didn't remove his arm. Just kept it comfortably around her shoulders as they shared the view.

"I think it'll take time to get used to the idea of a lawyer commuting by boat, though."

Michael glanced at her. "Oh, I don't know. It didn't take me long to get used to the idea that I had a client who wrote the most amazingly erotic novels."

## Chapter Four

Fenny froze. “Oh my God.”

His hand caressed her shoulder and toyed with the strap of her tank top. “Took me a while to confirm it, but I picked one up because it sounded interesting. I read it and realized it sounded like *you*. From there—I connected F. Whitfield with my elegantly composed client Fenella Whitfield Banks. Piece of cake.” His fingers curled around her arm and just grazed the side of her breast. “I liked it. I bought a couple more.”

Fenny knew she was blushing. She could feel the heat in her cheeks, although whether it was his words or his touch she wasn’t quite sure. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Nothing at all. I like your books. It was the sheerest accident I made the connection. But I think you should push them more. They’re damn good stories.”

“Thank you.” Fenny took a breath. She wasn’t used to compliments on her writing, since she’d been at pains to conceal her identity for so long. Now she didn’t have to, she realized. It was a heady thought.

“I have a secret too.”

Michael dropped his arm and Fenny felt the loss of his touch like a physical blow. “You do?” She glanced up at him to see him staring out over the water.

“I’m not a divorce attorney.”

“*What?*”

He shrugged. “I’m in corporate law. Acquisitions, mergers, that sort of thing. But when you walked in to our offices that first day—two years ago now, huh? I just *knew* when I saw you that I wanted your case. Surprised a few of the staff, but I couldn’t wait to get going on it.”

"Oh Lord." She laughed. "I remember that day. You came up and introduced yourself and took me into your office. You gave me coffee. And you told me—"

"We'd take the bastard for every penny he had." Michael finished the sentence for her. "I couldn't stop myself. I wanted to kill him right then and there for putting that look into your eyes. You were so calm, but I could see that pain, the agony behind it all. I wanted it gone." He shrugged. "Right from the beginning I knew you were special. That was two years ago."

He took a breath and stepped away from her a little. "It's been hell keeping my hands off you. Maintaining a professional distance from a woman I not only liked, but who appealed to me on a very fundamental level. And then I started reading your books..."

She couldn't look at him right at that moment. "I still can't believe that. You figured out it was me, my stories. It doesn't seem possible." She blinked. "Did somebody put you up to this?"

"What the hell are you talking about?" He closed the small distance between them and put both hands on her shoulders, forcing her around to face him.

"This." Fenny waved arms helplessly. "You. Here. Telling me you're attracted to me. It's unreal."

"Why should it be unreal? I don't understand."

"Jesus, Michael." Fenny swallowed harshly. "I'm nobody special. I'm a divorced woman, over forty at that. I don't see how you—well, look at me."

"I am." His gaze swept over her body, raking her with an intensity that brought her nipples to sudden excited peaks. "You're smart, funny and beautiful. Any man with a pulse would find you attractive. And you're full of secrets."

She shook her head. "You're making me sound like something I'm not."

"I've watched you for two years, Fenny." Michael's fingers tightened on her bare shoulders. "I've seen you cool and collected in court, I've seen you fight back tears

when all that crap about your ex and his girlfriend came out, and I've seen you madder than hell on more than one occasion."

Fenny bit back a wry laugh. "Yeah. Like the day I found out he wanted to keep the convertible. That was the cruelest blow of all. It wasn't that I really loved that car —"

"It was more you didn't want *her* driving it, hmm?"

She blinked. "You really do know me, don't you?" He was right on the money. She hadn't been able to stomach the thought of her car being driven by some busty and probably brainless bimbo.

"Yeah." His voice gentled and his hand moved to cradle her jaw. "It's how I know you won't mind if I do *this* —"

He leaned in and kissed her, tenderly at first, then sliding both hands down her body to her waist and pulling her more forcefully against him.

Yearning for the taste of him, Fenny parted her lips, welcoming his tongue, dancing her own around it and for the first time drinking down his unique flavor. She couldn't get enough.

Her hands crept up and around his neck, angling their heads, encouraging him, kissing him back with every ounce of passion she possessed. A place in her body that had been quiescent for too long awoke and stretched — and flared into life.

She moaned into his mouth, a tiny sound of pleasure that was little more than a sigh. They were pressed together, in front of the windows, the sun beating in on them as they embraced.

Finally she eased away from his face, staring at his eyes, dazzlingly blue as they returned her gaze. "Oh." She licked her lips. "I'd *forgotten*. Forgotten how it feels to be kissed like that."

"Yeah." Michael's voice was harsh. "See? Now I've proved that I know at least one of your secrets. You like to be kissed."

"There can't be a woman out there who wouldn't like that. Not the way you do it, anyway. That's not a secret. I don't have secrets, Michael. I'm not that sort of woman. *Really.*"

His palms lingered, warm on her waist. "Really? You're wrong, Fenny. Your eyes give you away. There's so many secrets lurking in there." He dropped a quick kiss on the tip of her nose. "And there's another thing. Don't forget—I've read your books."

She blinked. "I don't get it."

His grasp tightened a little. "They're your books. Your words—your thoughts. I read them all, Fenny. And I read between the lines as well. You want to know what I found hiding there? What they told me about the real you?"

"What?" Drowning in the heat of his gaze, the question came out as a whisper—all Fenny could manage.

"That you have a fire in you that you've buried deep for too long. That there's more passion inside you than you want to admit. That you're the kind of woman who can get a man hard with just the sound of your voice and the kind of woman who would get wet if I did...*this*—"

With a sudden and unexpected move, Michael grasped the waist of Fenny's pants and jerked them down, falling to his knees and pushing her naked ass against the cool glass of her window.

"Are you wet, Fenny? Are you hot? Because Jesus Christ, I am. I want you, no holds barred, no questions, no pretense here." He grasped the backs of her thighs and jerked them apart. "I want your pussy. Now."

Before Fenny could do more than catch her breath, Michael's face was on her, his mouth hungrily seeking her most intimate places, his tongue probing and delving deeply, stimulating feelings she'd long thought she'd never experience again.

She gasped, her ass plastered to the window, her palms flat out beside her hips, nails scrabbling for something to hold on to but finding nothing but glass. She cried out as Michael found her clit and suckled it. Yes, she was hot. Yes, she was wet.

And by God she wanted this every bit as much as he did.

“Christ, Michael...do you know what you’re doing to me?” Her head rolled from side to side as he fucked her with his tongue.

“Yeah. I’m getting you wet. And ready.” He pulled away a little and blew on the tender swollen folds. “Just think, Fenny. Your ass is naked. Against your living room window. Anyone looking up here from a boat could see you.” He grinned wickedly. “It’s exciting, isn’t it?” One long finger slipped inside her as his thumb traced lazy and arousing circles around her clit.

“Yes, Jesus Christ, yes—”

It was exciting. The cool glass was a counterpoint to Michael’s hot breath. Fenny was caught, trapped in her own desires, blatantly moving her hips in encouragement. She wanted this—she wanted more. He could strip her naked and do her on top of the Prudential Tower if he could make her feel this good while he was doing it.

“You’re a wicked girl, Fenny Whitfield. There’s nothing for it. I’m just gonna have to make you come like this. Bare assed. For all of Boston to see if they’ve a mind to.”

His words added fuel to the flames leaping inside her cunt. She struggled with her pants, wishing to hell they’d rip so she could spread her legs even wider and get more of Michael up against her pussy.

“I-I—” The little voice of reason disappeared as Michael’s hands slid up the backs of her thighs and cupped her ass cheeks, kneading them, pulling on them, playing daringly between them as his mouth moved over her clit.

She was lost. Aching with the beginnings of an orgasm that would not be denied, Fenny reached for her breasts, her nipples hard and needy. They wanted to be touched, squeezed, tugged—sucked.

Beneath her tank top, she fondled them, roughly adding to her arousal even as Michael’s fingers probed the dark cleft of her ass. His tongue laved her clit and all around it with savage strokes, just the right blend of caress and demand, urging her

higher. When his tongue penetrated her once again, she nearly came, but he pulled back, making her sob.

"I want to see you. Look at me, Fenny. Keep your eyes open. Watch my mouth while I suck you. Watch me while I make you come on my face. In my mouth. In my hands..."

"Oh *shit*..."

"Let go, Fenny. Let go—"

Then Michael's voice faded as he dove back into her pussy, targeting her sweet spots, teasing her, bringing her to the very brink again and yet again, but denying her that final release until she was ready to scream.

"Christ, Michael—do it, for God's sake *do it*—"

She was staring at him, her mouth wide, gasping for air. His brilliant blue gaze stayed fixed on her face even though his mouth was sucking her clit. She grabbed him by the hair and hung on, her fingers fisting in the black silk strands.

His shoulders rose as he breathed in, filling his lungs—and then *hummed*.

The vibrations from the sound, coupled with his fingers, his lips and his tongue threw Fenny over the edge—and she cried out, shattering into a million tiny pieces of sunlight around his face as a massive orgasm lifted her off her feet and shook her apart.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Oh yeah, baby. That's the way."

Michael pressed his face hard into Fenny as she spasmed around his fingers, her body taut as a bowstring, her muscles clenching and releasing with orgasmic fervor. He heard her cry out and would have laughed aloud if his mouth hadn't been otherwise occupied.

As she sagged and finally relaxed, he drew back, licking her moisture from his lips and watching her eyes refocus. "That's the Fenny I want. Beautiful. Just beautiful."



"Shit, Michael." She whispered the words, cleared her throat and tried again. "My God."

It was all the applause he needed. "You're welcome. Come on. Let's do it again."

He stood and caught her as she staggered, hobbled by her pants and legs that apparently couldn't decide whether to hold her up or not.

"I don't think I can."

"Sure you can." He helped her kick out of her clothing. "I'd carry you, but to be honest I've got a pain of my own I'm dealing with. And it's getting harder all the time."

He glanced down at himself, toward the place where his jeans weren't fitting him as well as they were supposed to. He was hard as nails, pushing against his fly with a pressure that wouldn't last much longer.

"Come on. In here."

He peered through a doorway to see what was obviously going to be Fenny's office. Her desk was set up, her laptop on one side and boxes of books were opened, ready to go on bookshelves that clearly hadn't arrived yet.

Tugging Fenny behind him, he walked in. The sunshine was more muted here, the window offering a lovely view of the ocean, but a much smaller one than they'd enjoyed in the living room.

"You're going to write in here, aren't you? With the waves outside, pounding eternally, a soundtrack to the hot sweaty sex flying off your keyboard."

"I...er..." Fenny looked confused. "Probably."

"Good." He lifted her off her feet and plonked her bare ass down on her desk. "I'm gonna fuck you right here, sweetheart. So every time you write one of *those* scenes, you'll think of this. Remember this moment."

"Oh." Unresisting, she watched him as he stripped, sighed with relief as his jeans and briefs freed his aching cock, and took a condom from his pocket before kicking all

the clothes away. "Lose the top, Fenny. I want you nude. I want to see your breasts." He met her gaze. "Please?"

She nodded. "Okay."

Without much hesitation, she slipped out of her tank top then sat with her arms to either side of her body, a naked work of art waiting for him to guide her further down this erotically sexual path they were walking.

"Are you okay?" Michael brushed a hand up the inside of one thigh, noting the tiny tremors his touch brought to her limbs and her breath.

"Yes. Dear God yes. But I don't know if I can—I'm kind of tender—"

He smiled. "Of course you are. Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you. But yes, you can. Again."

"I can?"

"Wait and see."

Michael prayed he'd have the self-control to bring her body up to simmer again without going off himself like a horny teenager. He was going to fuck her, without a doubt, but he'd much rather feel her come again, around his cock this time.

"Lean back a bit, Fenny. I've had more erotic fantasies about your breasts than I can remember. Help me make some of them real."

He saw her throat move as she swallowed, but she did as he asked, leaning back on her hands, her breasts jutting away from her body.

He reached for them, stroking softly around them, cupping them in his palms, weighing them, gently mounding them, then pushing them together. "So perfect. So fucking perfect."

"They're not—not perky anymore."

Michael snorted. "And here I thought you were a smart woman. Perky doesn't matter, Fenny. The woman matters. You matter. Your breasts—ah yeah—" He lowered

his head and licked them gently, first one nipple then the other. "Your breasts have tormented me."

"They have?"

"Yep. It got worse when I started reading your books." He watched the rosy peaks contract, beginning to harden as he licked them once more and blew on the moisture, loving the tiny whimper she made when he did it. "I'd read one of your love scenes and I could hear you."

"You could?"

He nodded then delicately suckled one nipple, keeping his touch as light as he could, knowing he had to arouse her again, but more slowly this time. "I heard your voice. I saw you as the heroine and me as the hero. I wanted to do so much to you. Can't tell you how often I had to go take care of myself after those scenes. And when I did, when I masturbated, I was thinking of your breasts, Fenny."

He squeezed them together and ran his tongue along the cleft he'd made. "Do you masturbate, Fenny? Bring yourself to orgasm?"

He glanced up to see her blush. "It's okay. You can tell me. I've got your breasts in my hands. I'm going to put my cock into your cunt soon. We'll be joined as closely as a man and a woman can be. Tell me, Fenny. Do you do it?"

Fenny's eyes slid away from his as she nodded, the color creeping up her cheeks like a rich sunrise.

He chuckled. "Good. You're gonna show me sometime soon."

Her gasp of embarrassment was coupled with a quick look of horror in her eyes. She was coming back to him, coming alive once more, responding to his words—his touches.

Which was a good thing since he was hanging on to his own control by his back teeth and they were starting to ache. He kept up his gentle assault on her breasts,

sucking, licking and dropping kisses on the peaks, then lifting them and running his tongue slowly along the creases beneath.

She moaned. "Michael—do you have any idea what you do to me when you touch me?"

He shook his head, nuzzling her soft skin. "Tell me."

"I—you—I *burn*, Michael. I ache inside. I feel things—Jesus, I don't have the words."

"And I thought *all* writers had the words." He squeezed her breasts together again. "Ever been titty fucked, Fenny?" He caught her surprised blink.

"What's that?"

He moved her breasts as one, keeping them snug against each other. "It's when a man comes by fucking *here*, this tight place between your breasts. It's better when you're lying down, holding them like this, like I'm doing right now." He glanced at her, noting the heated cheeks and the intense curiosity lurking behind her gaze. "I'll be on top of you, pushing my cock into that tiny crack, letting your breasts rub it, pull on it a little, drive me insane until I come. And then I'll let go and shoot my cum over your chest and your neck and maybe even a little into your mouth."

That mouth opened then closed again. "I—uh—"

"Maybe later." He'd let her think about it, see it playing in her mind, turning her on a little with her own imagination.

Unfortunately, while all this was having the desired effect on Fenny, Michael knew it was having a matching and predictable effect on him.

Sadly, he released her breasts and reached for the condom. "I'm gonna fuck you, Fenny. I've waited so long to say those words. I wondered sometimes if I ever would."

Fenny watched him unroll the latex and sheathe himself carefully. "I can't lie, Michael. I've had some thoughts along those lines too."

"I'm glad, honey. Because it's too late to turn back now." He spread her thighs wide. "Lay back."

She lay on her desk, a silk-skinned sensual offering, arms lifting above her head, breasts taut and peaked with hard nipples.

He could smell her heat, a unique scent of flowers, musk and woman. And he was only a man. Knowing she was still sensitive, he slipped his hands to her hips and gently began to guide his cock into her pussy, teasing both of them as he penetrated her, paused, withdrew a little – then pushed forward some more.

"Fuck, this is so good." Sure, his teeth were gritted and his fingers probably leaving marks on her thighs, but it was worth every single second.

She was so hot, so wet and so tight, welcoming his cock with tiny ripples of pleasure, turning his lust from a fire into a white-hot flame licking from his balls to the nape of his neck.

A moan of pleasure was all it took to break Michael's control. She groaned, a sweetly passionate sound of a woman taking a man inside her body. And it was enough.

He thrust, finding himself seated to the balls in the incredible sensation of molten fire moving around him, a living envelope of exquisite bliss and perfect dimensions. Fenny was stretching to accommodate him, he knew, but not because she was small or he was unusually large.

This was more the stretching of a body that had forgotten to work out. The moves were all still there, they were just a bit slower.

And Michael thanked God for it as he pulled out then thrust back again. He kept away from her clit, since he knew it would be tender after her first orgasm. No, this one was for the parts inside her that might still need a little attention.

"Good, Michael. So good." She relaxed into his movements, her hips following his lead, meeting him by lifting off the desk a little.

He slid his palms beneath her ass and raised her a bit more—and there it was. Fenny found herself at the perfect angle for Michael to rub the place he knew would bring her up and over once again.

The startled choke of pleasure told him all he needed to know. It was now. He was doing it. He was fucking Fenny Whitfield and putting an end to two years of impotent yearning.

Unable to do more than watch their bodies join, part and then join again, Michael stared down, seeing his cock slide out, gleaming from her juices, only to slide in again past swollen and reddened pussy lips. Her blonde pubic hair was dappled with moisture, a perfect contrast to the black nest around his cock.

Picking up the pace, his balls swung then tightened and he was fucking her fast now, thrusting with as much force as he could manage, knowing it might be too much—or not enough.

Whatever it was, he couldn't wait any longer. "Fenny..."

Did he speak or just think her name? He didn't know. He was lost in that place where there was only a cock and a willing cunt. A place—special to men—that narrows their focus down to one thing and one thing only.

He vaguely felt her legs tense and twitch around him. He vaguely heard her voice saying something but the roaring of his own blood in his ears drowned it out. He knew her ankles had lifted and locked behind him, but at that moment his spine was about to explode.

And then it did, fireworks shooting through his brain along with massive spasms from his balls and his cock as he emptied himself and orgasmed on a guttural groan of completion.

And to his surprise, Fenny's cunt was echoing the shudders of his cock, milking him, sharply grabbing and releasing his length, sharing his moment. He'd made her come again after all.

Well, wasn't *that* something? When he got his brain back, he'd figure out what it was. But for this moment, he just wanted to come forever inside Fenny Whitfield.

## Chapter Five

"Fucking hell, woman. You've killed me."

Fenny was lying next to Michael on top of an old sleeping bag that he'd found in a convenient box. They'd slithered off her desk, a mess of limp limbs, sweaty bodies and exhaustion, only to collapse on the carpet.

Michael had groaned, looked around and grabbed the softer bag, pulling a few other things down to cover them. Right now she was warm and snuggled next to him, their legs tangled together, ignoring the fact that an antique tablecloth was draped over her thighs, and that Michael was swathed in a pink fluffy afghan.

She couldn't have cared less or felt better. She chuckled at his words. "Funny. You're quite lucid for a dead man."

He turned his head and pressed his lips to her forehead. "I knew you were worth waiting for, Fenny. First time I ever laid eyes on you I said to myself—Shannon, you're going to fuck that woman senseless someday. And it'll be the best you've ever had."

Fenny's fingers ran idly over Michael's hand as it lay casually over her breasts. "Sooo..."

"Do you really need to ask?"

She shook her head. "No. No—I don't need to ask. And for the record, counselor, I have never *ever* been fucked like that. It's never been that good for me. Hell, I didn't know it *could* be like that." She paused and thought about what she'd just said. "I think my novels may have been missing something all this time. A certain depth of experience and sensation."

"Couldn't tell it by me. I spent so much time jerking off to some of those scenes, I swear I was getting calluses." He stretched a little, settling himself more comfortably and pulling her closer against him. "Of course, in my own defense, I knew you. I had a



serious case of unrequited lust going for you. Whenever I read those words, visualized those scenes – you were always in ‘em. So was I.”

He sighed, his chest rising and falling. “And you were my client. Someone I saw on a regular basis, but couldn’t come on to. I couldn’t ask you out to dinner. I couldn’t let you know I got hard when you walked in my office, and stayed hard after you left because I could still smell your perfume. And worst of all? I couldn’t do a damn thing about the way I felt without violating every ethical principal – and *then* some.”

His hand moved a little and cradled her breast, a gentle gesture of sensual affection that would’ve made Fenny purr if she’d had the energy.

“Two years, give or take. Two years of sexual torture. But –” He thumbed her nipple gently. “It was, as I said, worth the wait. Worth every minute of it.”

Fenny sighed. “You’re making me feel guilty, you know. I noticed you, of course. But I couldn’t let myself get interested in you *that* way. There was so much bad crap going on and I couldn’t begin to imagine that anyone would be thinking about me at all. Certainly not like this and certainly not *you*. That would’ve been the stuff of fantasies.” She dropped a light kiss on the nearest bit of his skin she could reach.

“Why not me?” Michael’s head turned a little as he glanced down at her face.

“Hell, Michael. Have you looked in a mirror lately?” She gave an amused snort. “I told a friend the other day that you had to be either in a relationship or gay. You’re handsome enough to make the tabloids, you’re a partner in a successful law firm, not exactly hurting for the luxuries in life...it stands to reason. No matter how attractive I found you, I never in a million years thought you’d be thinking about me the same way.”

He was silent for a moment. “So you’ve been talking to your friends about me, huh?”

She cleared her throat. “The topic did arise. Especially as we got nearer the end of the divorce proceedings.”

“Hmm. Care to share any details?”

Fenny stifled a giggle. "Yeah. She thinks you're lickable."

"Obviously a woman of great perspicacity."

"Obviously. Oh—by the way—" Fenny leaned over and daringly ran her tongue around his flat nipple. "I hope you don't mind but I'll be telling her she was right."

"Mmm. Go ahead. My reputation can always handle some good press. Er, you might want to make it crystal clear about the *not gay* part too." He shifted so that Fenny could caress whatever she wanted.

She put her hand over his heart, pleased by the steady pounding beneath the skin. "You've got a good heart, Michael. A great brain, a strong sense of who you are. And yes, you're the best in the sex department, without a doubt. Now that I've seriously stroked your ego, I should warn you that you're also probably hero material for my next novel."

His chuckle was deep. "Just don't use my real name in case my mother reads it."

Fenny's eyelids drifted lower. "I won't. Never use real names. It's my ethical rule."

"Good to know." Michael's words ended on a yawn.

Tucked in the arms of her new lover, Fenny fell asleep too, only to wake disoriented and alone later in the afternoon. The sun was setting, so she figured she'd napped for at least two hours or so.

A sound distracted her and she turned to see Michael looking out the window and stretching.

He was, as Dee had said, lickable. That dark hair, tousled now from his nap, his well developed shoulders—*mmm*. He'd gotten a tan too, something she hadn't realized in their business meetings together. But now? His ass was white, muscled and bisected by a deep groove that made Fenny's fingers itch to touch it. Above it, his back was a gentle bronze that spoke of weekends on the water with plenty of sunscreen. There were no lines on his arms, but a definite shading of color at the tops of his legs, as if he wore different length shorts on different days.

God, he was a delight to look at. And Fenny realized with a little jolt, she didn't have to look and lust anymore. He was *hers* to do with as she pleased.

Could she? Should she? Would he get turned off if she let him know some of the things she'd like to try with him? Was there any way she could explain to him how a door in her heart and her body had opened with his first kiss and a whole lotta crazy sexual fantasies were about to chew past the barriers she'd erected so long ago?

Something must have caught his attention, because he turned, saw her looking at him, and grinned. "Hey. You're awake."

She shifted and moved her legs experimentally. "Looks like."

Unconcerned by as unimportant a thing as nudity, Michael walked toward her and held out his hand. "How're you feeling?"

She accepted the offer and let him pull her to her feet. "Never better, Michael. Never better."

He stepped closer, just brushing the tips of her breasts with his chest. "Me too."

Something stirred lower down, and she realized his cock was awake as well. "Oooh. Did I do that?"

"You could breathe and do that. When I see you naked? Stand back. I may lose it."

Fenny grinned. "You're so good for my ego."

"You're good for everything." He reached out to cup her cheek then ran his fingers gently down her neck and over her breast. "Every damn nerve in my body goes on red alert at just the thought of doing this." He glanced at her. "Are you sore? I know it's been a while, Fenny. I don't want to rush things here..."

Fenny took a quick mental inventory then shook her head. "Nope. Everything's in good working order. Although..." She wrinkled her nose. "I'm sticky. I think I probably need a shower."

The look on Michael's face was pure wickedness. "I hope you believe in responsible environmental practices."

“As in...?”

His palms slid down and rested on her hips as one eyebrow lifted. “Save water. Shower with a friend.”

Fenny pretended to consider his suggestion for a long minute. Then she caved. “Of course. The dolphins. The rainforest. We have to consider them, right?”

“Absolutely.” Michael’s grin widened into a hotly sensual smile. “Let’s go save the whales.”

\* \* \* \* \*

He was astounded, aroused and charmed, all at once.

Everything he did with Fenny, everything he suggested – the excitement in her eyes touched his heart and her enthusiasm stroked his ego along with other places. For a few lyrical moments, Michael felt more like Prince Charming awakening a sleeping princess than he did a lawyer enjoying a hot time with an equally hot woman.

She was magical, her expressions of curiosity, interest and desire chasing themselves openly across her face. His suggestion they shower together was met with a definite nod, a tug of the hand and before he knew it, they were standing beneath a stream of warm water, naked as jaybirds, looking at each other amidst a sea of lather.

Sure, it smelled girly, but then again, so did Fenny.

She was unabashed when he began to soap her body, lifting her hair from her neck in the most natural of ways when she turned her back to him. Anybody looking at her would think she did this every day.

He knew she didn’t. He knew she was exploring her own sexuality, using him in some ways—ways in which he was more than willing to be used. He felt a responsibility to her, to make her journey a wonderful one, to show her what she was capable of—because he believed she had no idea at all.

She leaned against him with a purr of delight as he reached for her breasts, sliding his fingers over the wet flesh, gently making sure her nipples were aroused and tight,

massaging the fragrant lather into them, then sweeping it away only to do it all over again.

Her hips were moving lasciviously against his cock, but he'd have bet his entire portfolio that she didn't even realize she was doing it. There was a natural sexuality about Fenny, something he'd picked up on his radar the first time she'd smiled at him.

What the hell was going through her ex-husband's brain, he had no idea. Obviously the idiot hadn't known a good thing when he had it in his bed.

Michael knew. He grinned to himself.

"And what are you smiling at?" Fenny tilted her head as she turned around again with a handful of lather and began washing his chest.

"I'm happy. Happy to be here with you, horny as hell and *really* glad I never voted for your ex."

Fenny's laugh echoed through the bathroom. "Honestly?" She paid close attention to his nipples, making him groan. "I never voted for him either."

"You're a wicked girl. I love that about you." Michael rested his hands on her hips as she roamed lower, finding his navel and making sure it wasn't neglected by her investigative fingers.

When two soapy hands dropped beneath and touched him, she glanced up. "Do you mind if I—" She blushed.

"Fenny." Michael sucked in air to lungs that seemed incapable of functioning by themselves at that moment. "I'm delighted by your courtesy. However, I will point out that when naked, most men don't expect to be asked if a beautiful woman can play with their cock."

"Really? I figured it was only polite." She gazed down again with interest. God, when she looked like that, Michael would have given her the world if he could have. His cock was a poor substitute.

"Go for it, babe. It's yours to do with as you will." He braced himself.

“Oh goody.”

Fenny squatted and began a thorough investigation of an organ that was sensitive to every drop of water, every breath of air. If Michael had prided himself on his controlled courtroom presence, it was nothing compared to the control he was exerting at this particular moment.

She let her fingers drift up and down his length, learning him, seeking out his contours, toying in various places that interested her, dabbing her fingertip on the drop of pre-cum oozing from the tiny slit and – angels send him patience – tasting it.

When she put her lips to the very end and kissed him gently, the word “unglued” took on a new meaning. Every nerve ending stood up and did a *paso doble*. And, being Fenny, she followed that up with an unskilled and magnificent blow job.

Gritting his teeth and closing his eyes, Michael hung on as Fenny sucked him, experimenting with different techniques, using her tongue sometimes and her lips at others.

He turned a little so that she wouldn’t be drowned by the shower and let her play. She discovered his balls and touched them with all the caution they deserved, since they were probably more like hand grenades than anything else at this particular instant. She didn’t even have to pull a pin – if she kept doing what she was doing they’d explode without any other detonating device at all.

She soaped her hands again with the liquid silky stuff and ran her fingertips beneath his balls, fascinated at his gasped moan when she found a tiny spot behind them, between his legs.

“Is that your perineum?”

“Huh?” Michael’s brains were scrambled eggs. *Perineum*? What the hell was that?

“You know, that place men are supposed to have that drives them crazy if a woman touches it?”

“Fenny?” It was a squeak.

“What?” She was busily massaging various places.

“Never mind.”

It was his own fault. He’d encouraged her. Opened the door to this—this exquisite torture. Now he’d just have to see if he could survive it.

“This is fun.” She leaned back a little and tilted her head as she observed his straining cock. Once again, she reached for the liquid soap. “Now, let me see—”

Fenny glanced up at him and Michael’s brain blanked at the expression in her eyes. *There* it was—the real Fenny Whitfield. Naughty, sexual, impishly erotic. The woman he’d known lurked beneath the cool exterior had emerged.

Her writing had told him she was intrigued by sex. Her characters let loose and indulged themselves. But he’d sensed there was something missing, or that she was holding back.

Now he knew what it was. She’d never experienced the kind of sex she wrote about. She’d got the facts, the moves and most of the information. But the passion—that had been the only factor lacking. And now—she’d found the key to unlocking her passion. Apparently he had it between his legs.

*Thank you, God and all my guardian angels. And a brief nod to Saint Christopher in case he had anything remotely to do with it.*

Her hair was dark slick coils of silk around her shoulders as she lifted the bottle and squeezed a generous dollop of soap onto her chest, then raised her body and nestled his cock—between her breasts.

With an innocently uncertain blink, she squeezed the mounds together, locking his cock into place. “Oh. That feels—interesting.” Curiously, she moved a little, sliding her flesh over his arousal in a caress that nearly blew his eyebrows off.

“Grglphlmph...” He’d meant to say *yes, it does. I like it a lot. Please continue what you’re doing.* Unfortunately, somewhere along the line, his tongue had decided to go on vacation, his balls had replaced them and he was rendered totally incapable of anything other than a Neolithic grunt.

"I'm not hurting you, am I?"

Fenny lifted her face to his, and the sight of his cock thrusting up between her breasts was nearly enough to send him over the edge. Speech was beyond him, he just shook his head.

"Will you come for me, Michael? I want to feel you come like this." She squeezed and moved again. "Please?"

Hell. He was only mortal and his resistance was washing down the drain with the shower water. What could he do?

He came.

One move, one squeeze of that hot slippery flesh, and he was done. Thrusting his hips into her softness, Michael let go, let his cum spurt out onto Fenny's body, her neck, her chin, let her breasts squeeze his cock as it throbbed, her warmth surround him as he groaned aloud and rode out his orgasm.

When she lowered her chin and opened her mouth to taste his cum, he thought he'd just about die from the sight of it. Branded into his brain, he knew he'd be living for the rest of his life with the sight of her staring at his seed spurting, tongue moving to catch some droplets, arms pressing hard against her breasts, the white mounds tipped by hard rosy nipples enveloping him.

It far surpassed any and every fantasy he'd ever had in his entire life. Sometime, somewhere, he must have done something awesome, because this was a mega-reward, a gift of such magnitude he lacked words to describe it, even if he'd tried.

His ass was clenching hard, his balls tight and throbbing. And he was soaking Fenny Whitfield's face with his cum.

Yep, sometimes life really did turn out pretty fucking spectacular.



## Chapter Six

They lay beside each other on Fenny's bed, inches off the floor, but very content. Their bodies touched here and there—an arm, a knee, toes brushing against toes. It was comfortable, unique and warmed Fenny's heart.

"I hope I didn't shock you." She pushed damp hair away from her face as she asked the question.

"Hell no, honey." Michael sighed and smiled. "That was the ultimate best experience I've ever had in a shower at any time. *Ever.*"

"Really?" She lifted herself and rested her head on her hand, unable to resist the temptation to touch his chest. She couldn't keep her hands off him, apparently. Oh well, as long as he didn't mind. "I'm not sure what came over me."

"I did." He snorted. "With enthusiasm, too, I might add."

"Well, yes, there is that." She grinned. "But shoot, Michael. I'm not that sort of woman. Or at least I didn't think I was. That was porn movie stuff."

Michael turned his head and met her gaze. "We all have things inside us we don't acknowledge, Fenny." He reached out and cupped her face. "Want me to tell you my take on it?"

She nodded. "Yes please."

"Always so polite. Even when you're grabbing my cock you're polite."

Fenny blushed. "One tries."

He chuckled. "This one succeeds." He thought for a moment. "You're an honest woman as well as a polite one. But up until now, you've equated all those things with some image of *ladylike* that hasn't allowed you to be who you really want to be. The sexual woman you *are*."

"You think so?"

"I know so." He settled himself more comfortably and covered her hand with his. "I met you, and then I read your books. There was more repressed heat in those erotic scenes than I'd have believed at first, but as I read more and got to know you better, I could see it. A simmering cauldron inside you that you were determined to keep the lid on, for whatever reason." He shrugged. "You probably had a million good reasons, Fenny, and I'm not criticizing any of them. But all I'm saying is that you shouldn't be surprised to find out that you're as sensual and sexual a woman as they come. Pardon the pun."

He grimaced at his words although Fenny couldn't help a little giggle. "So you think I'm sexual?"

He merely lifted an eyebrow in response.

"I suppose you're right." She considered his words. "I had no idea sex could be like this. All heat and drive and need."

"Well, I will point out that you never had *me* before. Never had the best the Shannon family has to offer at your disposal."

"Of course. That does make all the difference." She punched him gently in the ribs, then leaned over and licked him. God, he tasted wonderful. "But I've also never felt free with a man before, able to *talk* about these things. Never like this. It's as if there's a dam inside me that's vanished. All kinds of lusty things popping up in my head. I want—I want a gazillion orgasms. I want to do terribly awful things to you."

"Like what?" He looked interested.

"Um—I'm not quite sure. Would you perhaps like to do terribly awful things to me?" She snickered at him. "Just to give me someplace to start? A reference point, as it were?"

"Hmm."

His cock was already stirring again as she let her fingers slide from beneath his and trace the fine line of hair from his navel down to his groin. "I don't want to pressure you, of course..."

"If you're hoping for those gazillion orgasms, honey, I may not be up to it. Again, pardon the pun. But I might be able to muster up enough energy for a couple more."

"Really?" Fenny's body ignited at the thought. What the hell was going on with her? Was Michael right? Had she suppressed all this sexual energy for her entire life only to have it unleashed at this particular moment with this particular man?

He lay back, away from her and smiled. "Sit on my face."

Oh God, yeah.

"I'm gonna get you so wet you'll think you're about to melt away into a puddle of lust. Then I'm gonna let you do most of the work. How does that sound?"

Fenny nodded, wide-eyed at the visions running rampant through her brain and screaming with excitement at the same time. "Okay."

He reached for the condoms they'd made sure to put within reach. "You ever try anal sex, Fenny?"

She swallowed. "No. No I haven't. I've written about it, but somehow the idea...well, it hasn't appealed to me." She paused. "Have you?"

He nodded as he sheathed his growing cock. Perhaps their conversation was stirring him up again or perhaps it was her naked breast. She did like the sensation of rubbing her nipples against him, she was discovering. Apparently he liked it too.

"Yeah, a couple of times." He was hardening.

"Why? What is it that makes it different?"

"Is that the woman or the author asking?"

She smiled ruefully. "Would it bother you if I said both?"

"No. Not at all."

"If you like it, we could maybe —"

"Uh uh." Michael shook his head. "Anal is okay. It's tight, different to a woman's vagina. And there's the whole taboo thing. I reckon that plays a role in how people feel about it. But it is *not* something a couple does for giggles."

"It's not?"

"Nope. That's a delicate place, honey. It takes practice, gentleness, a lot of lube and patience, whatever you want to call it. Only a jerk takes a woman and nails her up the ass without a second thought. You can do damage that way."

"Duly noted." Fenny filed the information away in her brain. It corresponded to all the research she'd done on the subject and she was glad she hadn't written very much about it.

"However—" Michael reached for her, pulling her so that she was astride his chest then moving his hands behind her. "There are ways to enjoy some of the sensations."

She heard the rip of another condom package and blinked. "Huh?"

He held up a latex-covered finger. "We can play with the idea if not the act itself." He stared at her steadily. "You game?"

A few years ago, the mere suggestion would have sent the proper and correct Fenella Banks screaming for the nearest nunnery. Never in her wildest imaginings had she considered ending up in this situation—astride a man who qualified as "sex god" and being asked if she'd like him to shove a finger up her ass while he gave her an orgasm.

Fenella Banks is dead. Long live Fenella Whitfield.

"I'm game."

"Then come here." With strong hands, Michael pulled her closer—even closer—until her pussy was inches from his mouth.

Fenny rode his body comfortably, arranging herself in pretty much the way they both wanted. She was stretched wide, everything on display, ready for whatever delights he might have in mind.

She was wet already. Apparently all Michael Shannon had to do was be Michael Shannon. Naked was even better. Her arousal was constantly simmering just beneath the surface.

Their conversation turned up the burner, heating her body and sending prickles of excitement over her skin. The idea of sitting on his face—with the obvious connotation—well, it was more than enough to start her juices running freely.

“Shit, Michael. You turn me on, you know that?”

“I’d hoped,” he answered modestly. “And now I know.”

Daringly Fenny moved to where he wanted her—and where she wanted to be. Right on his mouth.

From this angle, she could look down, watch him, meet his hot gaze as he began to lick. Enthusiastically.

Her plans to observe him, to capture each and every expression and memorize it, went out the window at the first stroke.

It was intimate, erotic and the biggest turn on she could imagine. Actually, she couldn’t have imagined it up until this moment—not even if someone had put a gun to her head. The sensation of his tongue was warm and sensual, but the feeling of being in control, of being able to move until she got that laving caress right where it did the most good? Well, that was beyond belief.

Squirming with pleasure, Fenny held herself above Michael’s mouth and let him play, touching his face, stroking his hair, then pressing down, urging him to penetrate her with his tongue.

She nearly leaped off Michael *and* the bed when a finger began to roam over her buttocks and the dark cleft between them.

“Jesus Christ—”

“Sshh.” Michael calmed her. Or tried to. Since his mouth was in exactly the right place, it didn’t do a damn thing to calm her down. It drove her nuts.

Her hands grabbed Michael's hair and she gasped again at the sensation of pressure both in and around her pussy and—even stranger—on the tight ring of muscles where nerves were apparently having a goddamn party for themselves.

Who knew?

"Relax." Michael's mouth moved, lips shining from her liquids, his cheeks taut now as he threw himself into his work with gusto.

"Yeah, sure." She choked out the words. How did one relax with a mouth like his glued to one's pussy and a finger starting to push gently into one's ass?

A circling twirl of his tongue and any answer Fenny might have formed completely evaporated. He'd learned her body well over the past hours. He'd discovered how much she responded to a hot, hard tongue on one side of her clit.

She moaned, almost collapsing on top of him as her thighs shook with arousal and tension. His finger was inside her ass, moving slowly, teasing, stirring her blood, bringing a whole new dimension to this experience.

"Hold on, honey. Don't move for a moment..."

Michael's body tensed as he slipped from beneath her, keeping that finger where it was and sitting up on the bed. Fenny let her thighs slide down until she was straddling his lap. "Take me inside you."

Wondering if this particular position had made it into the Kama Sutra—if it hadn't, it sure should have—Fenny settled herself between Michael's thighs, her legs around his hips, her pussy stretched wide in readiness.

She moved closer, realizing it wouldn't take much effort to get him where they both wanted him to be.

Cautiously she placed his cock against her sensitive pussy lips, feeling one hand positioning her bottom while the other remained planted inside.

Then he thrust home, with cock and with finger.

Fenny cried out.

They froze, linked in about every way a man and woman could be linked. Fenny's arms flew to Michael's neck and locked around it, her ankles crossed behind him. His legs were her cushion, his cock her instrument of pleasure, and his finger in her anus was driving her completely out of her mind.

With incredible physical grace, Michael began to move. Tiny little shifting thrusts of his hips, not exactly upward and not exactly forward. It was—exactly *right*.

She felt it all the way to her earlobes, this slight abrasion of her clit, the stretching of all the folds between her thighs, the fullness of his cock so deep inside her and always that finger, prolonging whatever sensation he created, adding to it, finding ways to excite and tease her in ways that were completely unfamiliar.

She was a sexual instrument and he was her virtuoso. Together they were making music only they could hear, but it was a symphony for bodies and minds. And Fenny would never poke fun at Zen sex again.

Her nipples chafed against Michael's chest, her clit felt wet and swollen and the rest of her was about to hit high C.

"Michael—Jesus, I'm going to come." She bit out the words on a gasp as Michael held her even more tightly, increasing the friction between them and reducing the amount he had to move.

A wriggle, a twitch—two halting breaths—and it was on her, a growing thing taking over her body, consuming her in slow waves of fire. It built from where they were joined, exploding through her veins, blinding her as the internal shudders became physical shudders.

She felt herself clamping down on Michael's cock and his finger, aware as never before of how her whole body involved itself in the act of orgasm. Her pulse pounded in her ears and her heart thundered, echoed by the rapid breathing of the man holding her in his arms.

She moaned, long and low, a sound of fulfillment and ecstasy. This was – amazing. Incredible. Unique in Fenny’s experiences. It was as if they orgasmed as one, Michael’s cock contracting and swelling inside her, syncopated spasms that fed her own.

Locked together they shared a journey that led to nowhere in particular, but everywhere in the galaxy. Her brain emptied, her body evaporated and there was only the shattering vortex of light that claimed every fiber of her being.

Still clasped in their private universe, Fenny and Michael collapsed together on the bed, drained, exhausted as never before.

This – this *magnificence* she’d just experienced – *this*, realized Fenny, was what she’d never been able to capture in her writing. For the sole reason that she’d never known it existed.

Now she did. And with that interesting thought lingering in her brain, she willingly snuggled into Michael’s waiting embrace and fell asleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

The morning sunlight danced on the water outside Fenny’s office window, blinding her with its brilliance. This view was one of the reasons she’d bought the place and staring at it now, she didn’t regret a single penny.

Her glance dropped to her desk where her laptop was booting up and she reached out to lay a hand on the surface. Hard to believe that she’d actually gotten herself thoroughly and wonderfully fucked – right *here*.

She’d probably never be able to look at her desk again without remembering those moments.

Shifting in her chair, Fenny winced. She didn’t need to look at her desk today to remind herself of what had happened – her thighs were doing that every time she attempted to move. Crawling quietly from the bed had been an exercise in pain management, the shower hadn’t helped much, and although she was psychologically grinning, on a physical level it was more *post-marathon stiffness* than *post-coital glowing*.



Waking up to the sound of Michael's snuffling snores had been a trip—especially for someone used to hearing nothing but her own breathing for several years now. It was...comforting on some levels, unnerving on others. There was the whole "what do I say to him?" deal. She realized she'd never slept with anyone else other than John, and if there was some kind of morning-after etiquette, damned if she knew about it.

Coffee was probably essential, so there was now a pot freshly brewed. She could at least do that much for Michael. So she'd gone about her business and now could turn her attention to her email, all the while keeping one ear cocked for the sound of her lover's awakening.

She grinned over her mug as she clicked through boatloads of spam. Fenny Whitfield had a lover—and a fantastic one, at that. Who'd have thunk it?

The sound of the bathroom door opening and closing told her that her "lover" had arisen from his sound sleep. Or possibly sexually induced stupor. Either was possible, since she'd slept like the dead herself.

Then he was behind her, his hands on her shoulders. "Good morning."

Fenny felt a light kiss on her head as Michael bent over to her. "Good morning, yourself." She spun her chair to look at him.

Tousled and stubbled with a dark beard shadow, wearing only a towel around his hips, Michael Shannon was still a creature from every woman's fantasy. She grinned and licked her lips.

Michael groaned. "Don't, honey. I swear my balls won't stand it right now. I'm seriously thinking of raiding your fridge for a bag of frozen peas." He chuckled. "I've never heard of anyone fucking his cock off, but damn if I didn't come close."

Fenny took a sip of coffee. "Should I be apologizing?"

"Hell, no." Michael looked around. "Coffee in the kitchen, yes?"

"Yep." She nodded.

"You're not only a demon in bed, you make coffee too. Marry me?"

Since the question was tossed over his shoulder as he disappeared in search of a morning restorative, Fenny didn't take it too seriously. There were days when she'd have married the devil himself for a cup of coffee, so she understood the sentiment.

With a sigh she levered herself out of her chair and followed Michael into the kitchen in case he couldn't find the mug she'd left for him on the mostly bare countertop. Fortunately, his vision was working even if other things weren't.

He took a sip and a blissful expression crossed his face as he swallowed. "It's good coffee too. That's a definite proposal there. I could get used to drinking this every morning and not having to make it myself."

"Brat." Fenny grinned at him.

"Sexy." Michael grinned back. "What you got on under there?" He gestured at her snugly wrapped, white towel robe.

"Not much." She cocked an eyebrow. "Wanna see?"

Michael groaned. "You'll kill me yet, woman." He paused. "But I'd die happy. Show me."

Carefully, Fenny walked across the little kitchen, put her cup on the counter and turned, leaning against Michael and reaching up to give him a kiss. "I was hoping you wouldn't call my bluff. Although the spirit is willing, the flesh feels like it just ran the Boston Marathon in under two hours. Or finished third in the roping event at a rodeo. I swear you've worn me to a frazzle, you silver-tongued wizard." She snickered. "And I mean that in the most literal way."

Michael's laugh rumbled through his chest. "I hear you."

"Oh my God." Fenny blinked.

"What?"

"It's Monday. Jeez, Michael. You've got jeans and a T-shirt. You have to go home and change. Or at least go to the office and change or something." She glanced at the clock. "You're going to be late and it's all my fault."

"Shhh."

He pulled her back into his arms and cuddled her. It was really very nice being cuddled first thing in the morning, realized Fenny. She'd missed it. Not that she'd ever really *had* it, but she appreciated it now, for sure.

"Didn't you know? Today is Shannon's Day."

Fenny frowned. "Really? First I've heard of it."

"Well..." Michael leaned back a little with his delightfully wicked grin curving his lips. "On Shannon's Day, you have to celebrate by taking a Shannon out onto the water, feeding him, rubbing suntan lotion all over his body and admiring his boat. A lot. That last one is very important."

"Got it." Fenny watched him with as serious a look as she could manage. "What else?"

"Hmm. Let's see...the Shannon will require a nice lunch of course, something with a light wine, and probably some excellent cheese and fresh bread. You know—the basics."

"Right. The basics." Fenny pretended to write it down on the palm of her hand.

"During Shannon's Day, any interested authors may feel free to observe and note the fine male characteristics of the Shannon they're accompanying, should they be looking for a model for their next hero. That goes without saying."

"I wouldn't dream of saying it."

"And without a doubt, it ends in the traditional way—a night of blindingly incredible sexual magic."

"Mine or yours?"

"Har har." Michael snorted. "As if you had to ask."

Fenny picked up her coffee cup. "After last night I haven't a doubt in the world. I think I'm going to like Shannon's Day. Is it celebrated annually?"

"Oh no. It's celebrated every day, pretty much." Michael paused. "At least the last part is. The first part gets a bit cold in December."

"Duly noted." Fenny nodded. "Seriously, Michael—are you going to take the day off? Can you?"

"Seriously, Fenella, yes. I am. I'm due for a comp day and I want to spend it sailing with you." He dragged her to the window and gestured at his boat, bobbing happily in the morning sun. "How about it?"

"Oh Michael...I don't know—"

"Come with me. Pack your suntan stuff and a tuna sandwich. Leave your bathing suit here. Let the sea wind run through your hair and make love with me on the cushions of my boat. We'll figure out some new and completely un-athletic positions to try so we don't get too tired. There's a quiet little inlet I know just up the coast. You, me, the sunshine and an odd seagull or two. What do you say?"

"I should work—" Fenny stared at Michael as he stood grinning at her, a naked and sexy god in a white towel and beard stubble. Was she frickin' *nuts*?

"Perhaps I do need to do a bit more research, come to think of it..."

"That's my girl." Michael hugged her. "We'll have a wonderful time, tan our bottoms and then come back here for a bit. Unfortunately..." His mouth turned down. "At that point I will have to leave you, but until then? Shannon's Day celebrations await."

Fenny sighed and leaned against him, enjoying the warmth of his body and the wonderfully tangy scent of him. "Michael, I have no idea where we're going with all this, but right at this moment it doesn't seem to matter, does it?"

He shook his head. "Nope."

"It could be nothing more than a fling. It could be a lot more." She shrugged. "But I can say this—right now, for the first time in longer than I can remember, I'm happy." She looked up at him. "Thank you."

Michael brushed his hand softly over her cheek. "Right back at ya, honey. I'm happy too. Now let's go have ourselves a nautically erotic adventure, then you can write about it and take your readers' breath away. Deal?"

Fenny laughed aloud. "Counselor, you've just made yourself a deal." She paused. "Naked on your boat, huh?"

Michael lifted an eyebrow as he smiled down at her. "It'll be a bestseller, baby. Trust me."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Well? Was it a nice boat?"

Nadine leaned forward to ask the question, grabbing a handful of chips as she did so. She, Dee and Fenny were all in Fenny's kitchen, sharing wine, snacks and gossip.

Fenny nodded. "Oh yes. Quite lovely. All sleek and chrome and wooden planks—you know the sort of thing. Pointy end goes forward, blunt end is the back. I'm not good with boats so don't ask me anything technical, but it got us where we wanted to go—and back again—without incident, so as far as I'm concerned it was a nice boat."

Dee chuckled. "Not just the boat, huh?"

"Yeah, c'mon, Fenny. Share?" Dini looked hopeful.

Fenny blushed. "No."

"Spoilsport." Dee pouted. "We want the skinny, my friend. Is he as good in bed as he looks?"

Fenny shrugged. "Can't say." She got up to fetch more chips.

Dee giggled. "Well, from the way you're walkin', I'd say he was every bit as good and then some."

"Dee!" Fenny stared at her, mouth agape. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Dee looked innocent. "Why just that you're walking with the confident gait of a woman in touch with herself. Much more in touch with herself than you were last week."

Dini snorted. "Toss in the fact you're about as bowlegged as an eighty-year-old ranch hand and you'll understand what she's talking about."

Fenny staggered back to her chair and collapsed with laughter. "You guys ought to be ashamed of yourselves."

"Why?" Dee blinked. "We're not the ones who've been indulging in marathon sex sessions and walking funny afterwards."

"That's right." Dini nodded. "Something about which I'm rather pissed off, if you want the truth."

"Horny?" Dee glanced at her.

"Way past that." Dini wrinkled her nose. "My vibrator's about ready to fall apart. I was gonna duct tape it together, but after I gave it a bit of thought, I realized that probably wasn't a good idea."

"Uhh..." Fascinated, Fenny stared at Dini, who looked exactly like a punk pixie in a blue denim corset as she perched on the chair and munched her way through more chips.

"Yeah. Don't do it. Buy a new one, for God's sake." Dee sighed. "A girl has to splurge on something worthwhile now and again. There's a model out there with three thingies on it—supposed to really rock your world, because one of them rotates and another shimmies."

Dini looked intrigued, but before the conversation could go any further down that path, Fenny picked up the wine bottle. "More?"

"Please." Dini pushed her glass forward. "So if you're not going to share the intimate details—which we're upset about, but will excuse since you're a lady and we understand—at least you could give us a synopsis?"

"I'm with Dini on that." Dee sipped her wine. "You don't have to tell us how long it is, just reassure us he knows what to do with it."

Fenny nearly snorted wine through her nose. "Dear God, *Dee*."

"What? I reckon the old saying is true. It's not the size of the wave, it's the motion of the ocean."

Dini laughed, an oddly loud and robust noise that surprised Fenny. It was unexpected coming from a sprite. "Oooh, I *love* that. I gotta make me a note. Suzie's going to *have* to say that soon."

"Well, it's *true*." Dee looked at Dini. "Think about it. Fenny's Michael could be built like an Olympic god with a lightning bolt on the end of his dick, but if he sticks it in her *ear* it ain't gonna do anyone a damn bit of good."

As the laughter died down, Fenny realized she was going to have to say something or these two would never give her a moment's peace. She tapped a teaspoon against her wine glass. "Ahem."

Dee leaned in. "Kiss me, honey."

Fenny pushed her back. "Cut it out. It wasn't that kind of chinky noise. That's for weddings." She grinned. "Although you're cute enough to lay a smooch on if I swung that way."

"Yeah, yeah. Promises promises."

"Okay." Fenny cleared her throat. "Just to keep you two wolves from harassing my door, here's all I'm going to say about me and Michael." She paused for a dramatic moment, sitting as erect as a Sunday school teacher, chin high, faintly smiling.

Then she collapsed and buried her head in her hands. And screamed.

"It's soooooo *fucking awesome*."

A small riot followed her words as Dini jumped up and down, hollering her head off, Dee grabbed a pot from the sink and played an impromptu drum solo on it with a

wooden spoon, and one of Fenny's high-heeled shoes ended up hanging out of the dishwasher.

"Okay, *okay*." Fenny held up her hand to quell the chaos. "It was beyond wonderful." She paused, trying to find words that would express the emotional roller coaster she was soaring on, and not get into details that would make her blush. "We had a wonderful day. Really."

Dee and Dini had quieted and were watching her, hanging on every word.

"Go on."

Fenny frowned at Dee. "Don't expect intimate details. Yes, we had sex on the boat. *Once*. I was wiped out, to be honest, after the night before. And yes, I was a little sore." She felt her face heat with a blush. "Michael seemed to understand. He was so gentle with me. He worried about my shoulders burning in the sun."

"He let you be on top, huh?" Dini waggled her eyebrows.

"He insisted on it." Fenny chuckled. "And I'm glad he did. For future reference, boats have a lot of wood on their floors."

"Decks."

"Whatever." Fenny waved a hand absently and ignored Dini's interruption. "Even being on top doesn't stop that wood from rubbing. My knees are bruised." She sighed. "Plus I worried about other boats. The whole doing-it-out-in-the-open thing. But aside from the sex? I don't know how to explain it. Just an afternoon of sheer pleasure. And that word doesn't come near to explaining how great it felt. Just to sit next to him on the ocean. To talk about whatever we wanted. To laugh at silly stuff together. To be able to reach out and touch him without worrying about a damn thing..."

After an hour of trying to explain bliss in words that didn't cross her personal and private line—a demanding task made more complicated by a really nice Merlot—Fenny leaned back in her chair and blew a lock of hair off her forehead. "So that's it. One hellaciously hot night, a super fabulous day and...and...my thighs are killing me. Since



it's pretty definite that I'm going to be seeing Michael on a regular basis I think I'm going to have to start working out."

"Sounds like you're getting all the workout you need." Dee gave her a quizzical look over her wineglass. "Where you going with it all, Fenny?"

She shrugged. "I mentioned that to Michael. I don't know. He doesn't know. Right now we're just enjoying the hell out of each other. I'm thinking we're probably both a bit leery of getting too intense this early." She sighed. "But I also think we're both pretty certain it's heading that way. The sex is fabulous. Better than I ever could've imagined, but it's not just about the sex, you know? And then there's the whole thing of when he asked me to marry him."

Dee sputtered. "Whaaaa –"

Fenny smirked. "It was right after he found out I could make good coffee."

"Oh well, that explains it." Dini looked nonchalant. "Men love domestic stuff. Especially if they have to do it for themselves most of the time. Guess that's why I'm not seeing anyone at the moment. I don't cook, I utilize nuclear power as represented by my microwave. I can blow up an egg in forty-five seconds." She looked proud.

"Jesus, you scared me, Fenny." Dee put her hand over her heart and fluttered it. "I mean great sex is one thing. Marriage is a whole 'nother kettle of fish."

"Don't have to sell me on that. It's taken me two years to be finished with one of those. I'm free at last to be myself. To live my own life as I want it. I'm in no particular hurry to change that." Fenny stared into her wine. "Truth is? It's all so new and fascinating I'm happy just to let it play out right now, have some fun with Michael and see where it leads. And you wouldn't believe how many ideas I've got for new books." She grinned. "Research pays off, ladies. Keep that in mind."

Dee sighed. "I wish I had time for that kind of research. And the man to go with it. But nooooo. What do I have? Work. Work, work and more work."

Fenny looked sympathetic. "I'm sorry, doll. I'd lend you Michael, but I haven't finished with him yet, and probably won't for a long time to come." She chuckled. "I'm cooking dinner for him this weekend. Chicken cordon bleu."

"Hell. One taste of *that* and it won't be just marriage—he'll get you appointed to the Supreme Court or something." Dini looked impressed.

"Well if he does, could you please revoke the state status of Texas?" Dee pursed her lips in a moue of distaste.

"Texas? What've you got against Texas?"

"She's going to shoot a Texan." Dini nodded sagely, tilting slightly to the left.

"Why? What did he do?"

"With my camera, goof." Dee shook her head at Fenny. "Some big-ass dude with more money than God. Rode into town—probably with one of those cars that's got horns on the radiator—and demanded my boss get the very best photographer in town."

"Oh dear." Fenny could read the signs. Dee didn't like the guy already and she hadn't even met him. "He might be nice, Dee. What's he doing here? Oil or something?"

"Restaurant, I think. Bringing his chain up here and opening one." She sighed. "Wanna bet he's got those damn cowboy boots?"

Dini laughed. "Probably covered in antique silver doodads too. And a ten-gallon hat."

Fenny added her two cents. "Odds are good he's got a twenty-gallon gut hanging over his belt buckle, which is—of course—shaped like the great state of Texas." She paused. "Filthy rich?"

Dee nodded dourly. "Filthy rich. Probably wipes the cow patties off his fancy boots with hundred dollar bills."

"Oh my." Fenny blinked. "Aw, c'mon Dee. How bad can it be?" She giggled, hiccupped and glanced at her empty wine glass.

“Gimme the rest of that wine.” Dee held out her own glass. “And when we run out of wine, we’ll start on that bottle of tequila I bought you last Christmas. Sure looks like I’m gonna need it...”

## **About the Author**

Sahara Kelly was transplanted from old England to New England where she now lives with her husband and teenage son. Making the transition from her historical regency novels to Romantica™ has been surprisingly easy, and now Sahara can't imagine writing anything else. She is dedicated to the premise that everybody should have fantasies.

Sahara welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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