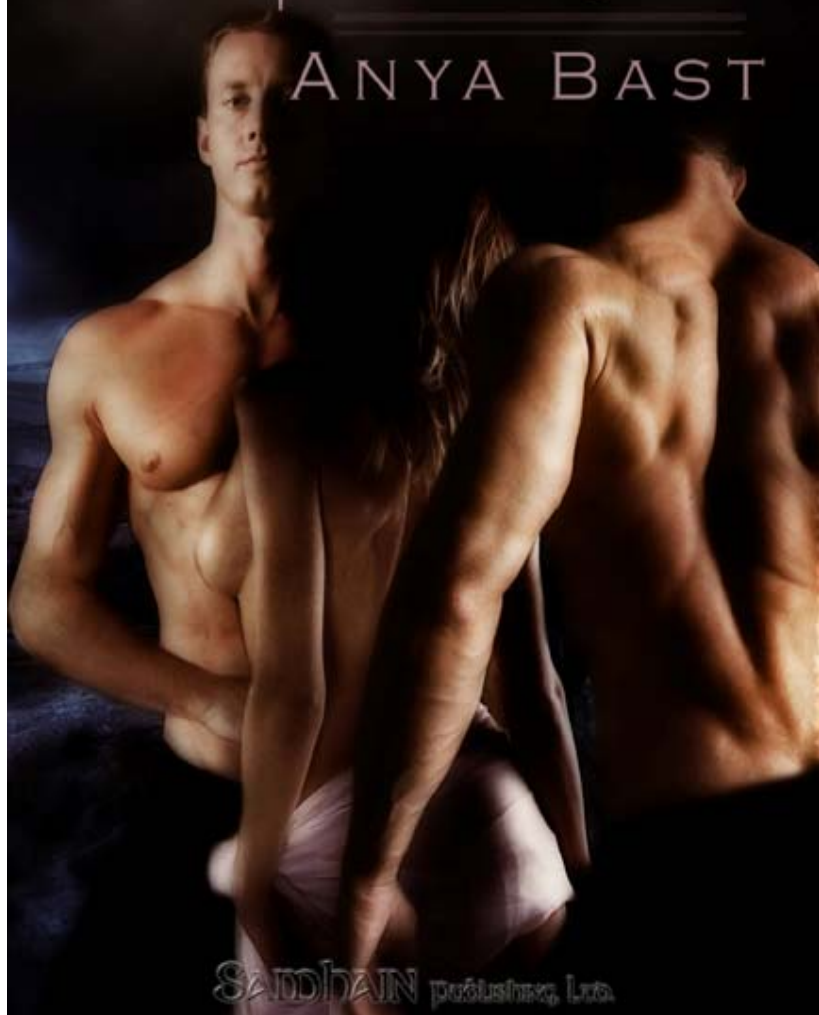


Taken

ANYA BAST



Siddhain publishing, Ltd.

**eBooks are *not* transferable.
They cannot be sold, shared or given away as it is an infringement on the
copyright of this work.**

This book is a work of fiction. The names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the writer's imagination or have been used fictitiously and are not to be construed as real. Any resemblance to persons, living or dead, actual events, locale or organizations is entirely coincidental.

Samhain Publishing, Ltd.
577 Mulberry Street, Suite 1520
Macon GA 31201

Taken
Copyright © 2009 by Anya Bast
ISBN: 978-1-60504-378-4
Edited by Angela James
Cover by Natalie Winters

All Rights Are Reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

First Samhain Publishing, Ltd. electronic publication: February 2009
www.samhainpublishing.com

Taken

Anya Bast

Dedication

Dedicated to all the incredible readers of my novels, without whom I couldn't follow my dreams. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Thanks to Angela James, too, for being a first class editor.

Chapter One

When she'd been standing in line for her non-fat latte that morning, Anne had never expected to be running for her life only moments later.

Latte long since splattered on the sidewalk, Anne careened around the corner of a random alley, scraping her bare arm on the corner of a brick building in the process. She stifled a cry of pain and nearly collided with a banged-up silver trash can, nimbly dodged the object, and then leaped over a puddle of dank, cold water on the pavement.

She'd exited the coffee shop near her office and was headed to her car when a man had approached her. Only once he'd grown near enough, she hadn't been sure he was a *man* at all. Male maybe, but not human male. Her mind had tripped over itself for a moment as she tried to make sense of that. The thing, whatever it was, had insinuated itself in a menacing fashion between her and her car. When she'd run, he'd chased her.

Her high heels already long gone, the only sound she made was the almost imperceptible slap of feet to concrete and

her regulated breathing. She'd been on the track team in high school. She could outrun this *thing*...whatever it was that chased her. Behind her, footsteps sounded. It was gaining on her.

Correction, *maybe* she could outrun it.

Squashing that deadly flicker of uncertainty, she pushed herself faster. Anne vaulted over two abandoned pallets and stumbled on her landing. Expensive material tore as her skirt ripped up the seam. Designer clothing simply wasn't made for this kind of abuse, curse it. At least now that her skirt was split she could run faster.

At the end of the alley, she turned a corner, catching a glimpse of her pursuer out of the corner of her eye. He, it, *whatever* was on her tail and quickly catching up to her. Her heart thumped harder...from fear, pure and simple, not from physical exertion.

Out of the darkness, a hand reached out and snagged her arm. Anne screamed in spite of herself—a full, open-mouthed screech of terror that could've been heard in a five-block radius if this hadn't been the commercial part of town and it hadn't been six in the morning. Strong arms closed around her, and Anne fought with every ounce of strength she had. The grip only tightened, squeezing her air passage closed. Her head swam, her vision dotted.

“Sleep.” Rough male voice. Low and commanding. Scary.

Her head dropped as if on his order and exhaustion dragged her under as though she lay tucked into her own bed after a long night out and she was safe... *No*. Her head jerked up as she fought the impulse. If she slept, she lost control. She couldn't...*couldn't*... Her head lolled to the side, so tired.

“Sleep,” came the voice again, this time more gentle. “You’re safe now.”

Her pursuer came around the corner of the alley and she had the utter horror of seeing him again. “Frankenstein,” she whispered. Tall, green. Thick shoulders and square head. This guy couldn't be human, he just couldn't.

“Sleep.”

The pull toward slumber increased; made an offer she couldn't refuse. Right before her eyelids slid shut, she saw another man step out in a menacing fashion right in front of the man/it/whatever.

She slept.

“You frightened her.”

Caleb looked up from where he stood at Anne's bedside and regarded Van, his best friend and, right now, his bane. “It

was your fault the Guardian was chasing her at all. You're the one who wanted to wait to contact her. We waited too long."

Van stared down at the woman, *their woman*, his long multi-shaded blond hair falling into his face. "I had no way to know that the Guardians would have located her so quickly."

"We did what we had to do to keep her safe. Now we will have to pick up the pieces when she awakes."

"This could have gone smoother."

"But it didn't. The important thing now is to help her become acclimated to her new life with us."

In fact, he couldn't wait to get Anne home with them. He'd spent the last three weeks in this place and he'd had enough. He missed Valencia, missed the colorful lands, the wonderful food and his own, comfortable home. Earth was far from charming, though it did have Anne, which meant it was good in some ways.

Caleb shifted his gaze back to Anne, from whom it had hardly budged since they'd brought her to their hotel room. She looked so fragile, so different from the few Harmon females that remained. This had been done numerous times before, but, now, looking at this tiny, breakable Earth woman, he wasn't sure how. Her body was of average size for her kind, not especially slender, but she still seemed fragile.

Her dark brown hair spread over the pillow like the wing of a glossy bird. Dark eyelashes swept down over pale cheeks.

Her face was oval-shaped and pretty, though in an ordinary way. Her lips were full and pouty, and Caleb was sure the Earthian's Christian heaven lay between them. Soon enough he would find out. She'd been on her way into her office and wore the remnants of a burgundy skirt that was now split almost all the way up her thigh, revealing a lickable swath of creamy skin. Her filmy matching blouse was torn and dirty and she'd lost both her shoes. Never fear, soon she'd be outfitted like the princess she was, *their* princess.

Every morning for many mornings they'd followed her to work, but today...so had the Guardian.

"How will we tell her?" Van pushed a hand through his hair and glanced at him. "Our way breaks all their ways. Normally human women only take one lover at a time. One husband. So infrequently will a human female bind herself to two men at the same time for always. The relationships that are like that here are considered outside the bounds of normality. How will she ever come to accept us *both*?" Open challenge passed over his face but was gone in a moment.

They'd had time to come to terms with having to share her. It wasn't the Harmon way normally, but circumstances had forced them into it. And even though they'd been best friends from childhood, it was still difficult. Even more difficult to be in the same room with the woman the oracle had found for them, their perfect match. The scent of her alone

was an aphrodisiac and they'd both gone a long time without a sexual partner.

"I don't—"

Anne lunged across the bed, grabbed the phone and smashed it into the side of Caleb's face. Pain exploded through his head—along with utter surprise—and he staggered back, catching himself on a nearby chair before he ended up on his ass on the floor.

Caleb heard Van restraining the woman, but she was screaming at him and fighting him tooth and nail. She sounded like a wild animal. Good thing the walls were soundproofed. He put a hand to his head and thought for a moment about mischieving her mind the way he had in the alley when he'd made her sleep, but that seemed wrong somehow. It took away her choice.

Which was stupid, since they were about to take away *all* Anne's choices. The survival of their species depended on it. It didn't make him feel any less guilty, though.

"Calm!" he commanded, manipulating her emotions just a little bit, just enough to break the worst of her panic. "*Calm, Anne.*"

He raised his reeling head, blinked blood out of his eyes and saw Anne go still in Van's arms. Van breathed heavily and his arms were scratched and bloody. He moved her back onto the bed, where she sat placidly.

Van turned once he'd settled Anne into her place, and got them both a couple damp towels to wipe up the blood she'd drawn from them. "She's a fighter," Van said under his breath, tossing him the towel. "She'll not go meekly."

That was apparent.

Caleb pressed the towel to his forehead, wincing, and walked over to kneel by her. He put his hand on her knee and sent her nice, calming vibes. "We're not going to hurt you, Anne Michaels, I promise you. You don't need to fight us."

"Who are you?" Fear flickered in the depths of her green eyes. "What are you speaking and why can I understand it? What am *I* speaking for fuck's sake and how am I speaking it?"

"We are speaking Valencian. You can understand it and speak it because it's in your blood. I am Caleb Verona and that is Van Childress. We've come from far away, looking for you. We're here to protect you."

She shook her head. "Protect me from what?"

The superficial tweak he'd given her emotions was wearing off. He just hoped her violent outburst was finished now. He had a splitting headache from taking a phone to the forehead. "Do you remember what happened in the alley? Do you remember"—what had she called the Guardian? Oh, yes—"Frankenstein?"

Terror glimmered in the depths of her eyes and he braced himself in case she bolted for the door. “Yes.”

“Those creatures want to hurt you, Anne. They want to kill you. We’re here to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

“I remember that you”—she looked at Van—“You fought that thing, didn’t you?”

Van inclined his head a degree. “I killed it before it could kill you.”

She shifted on the bed, confusion marring her face. She rubbed her hand over her eyes. “Look, I’m tired. I need a shower. I just want to go home. I don’t know what’s going on or who you guys are, but I can’t stay here any longer.” She stood and walked toward the door.

Caleb was on her in an instant. “We can’t allow you to leave.”

She jerked her arm away. “Excuse me? Do you know who I am? Do you know that I’m an attorney, buddy? I know the law from here and back again and I could have you strung up by noon.”

Van stepped toward her. “It’s already noon.”

“It’s already...” She glanced out the small opening of the curtained window where bright sunlight filtered in. “Okay, by twilight, then.” She glanced at the floor, looking lost. “I was unconscious for that long?”

“We know who you are, Anne Elizabeth Michaels. We know everything there is to know about you.”

She made a scoffing sound and turned toward him. “Oh yeah?” She raised an eyebrow. “Who was my twelfth grade art teacher?”

He searched the memory bank that contained all the info he’d memorized about her. “Mr. Youngers.”

She gaped.

“We know that you graduated University at the top of your class and are the youngest partner in your law firm. We know that you love to pick the chocolate chunks out of your Chunky Monkey ice cream but leave the nuts, your favorite music is the blues, and you want to go to Italy, China, and Australia but you never take time off from work to do it. When you were nine you thought you saw a ghost in your attic, but didn’t tell anyone because you were afraid they would think you were crazy.”

She blanched. “Who *are* you?” Then louder, “Have you been keeping me under surveillance or something?” She frowned. “But—”

“But there’s no way we could know some of those things, is there? Not unless we’d planted a listening device inside your head.”

Anne swayed on her feet. Caleb caught her and eased her into a chair.

Valencian? All of a sudden she was speaking and understanding some bizarre language because it was in her blood? None of this made any sense at all.

She pressed her fingertips to her forehead, trying to stop her swirling thoughts. How she *should* be reacting to this frightening situation currently warred with how she *wanted* to react. As hard as her mind tried to rectify the schism, she couldn't do it.

Maybe she just needed sleep. Maybe if she fell to sleep and woke up, this would all turn out to be a dream.

Anne glanced up between her fingers at the two men who currently stared at her like she was some five-course meal and they were starving. It was damned disconcerting. Even more disconcerting was she felt like she knew them and not just superficially. From the time her initial panic had subsided—that had been right after she'd scratched up the blondish one's arms—a familiarity with these two men had firmly settled in. It was as though she'd known them from childhood, like this was a friendly reunion instead of abduction.

Logically, she *knew* she should fight them to the death. The problem was she didn't truly fear them.

Because, in truth, they felt like long lost lovers even though she'd never seen them before in her life.

Van, the one standing behind Caleb, was very tall and built strong and lean. His hair was long, about to his shoulders, and three different colors as far as she could discern, all varying shades of blond. His eyes were a rare light blue and his face was...well, male model gorgeous. The best part was that she had his DNA under her fingernails now. If tomorrow someone found her dead body, at least this guy might get caught.

God, that was a horrible thought.

Caleb was similar in height and build, though perhaps a bit more muscular. His hair was thick and short, about to his collar, and a rich, deep brown. His eyes matched his hair. Caleb was not as “pretty” as Van through the face, but he was no less attractive. They were both serious, prime specimens of beefcake. She almost felt bad about that nasty looking gash to the head she’d given him...*almost*.

She held out a shaking hand. “Start from the beginning and tell me everything.” She might as well hear it, even if she wasn’t inclined to believe it.

Caleb sat on the edge of the bed. “We come from a land very far from yours. It’s called Valencia on the world of Harmon. For millennia our people have been at war with neighboring countries and we have fended them off. But around a century ago, our primary enemies, the Guardians, began to use a form of bio warfare on us that we were not

prepared to combat and engineered our people to produce male offspring ninety-nine percent of the time—”

She held up a hand. “Whoa, hold it right there. What kind of drugs are you taking?”

Caleb looked at Van.

“I told you this wouldn’t work,” said Van, and then fixed his blue gaze on Anne. “None of this fits in your reality. There is no possible way you will ever believe that we are not from this world, but another, and that you share the blood of our people in some minute quantity, enough that it was determined at your birth that you are suitable for Van and I, and that our couplings will create daughters instead of sons.”

Anne shot from her seat. She’d been kidnapped by two men who were completely off their rockers. Bat shit crazy, hunky men! How, oh, how, had she gotten herself into this entanglement? And why did the hot ones all have stuff wrong with them, like insanity?

Realization dawned. “Oh, wait! I get it! This is some kind of hidden camera thing, isn’t it? Bob from acquisitions and mergers probably set this up, huh? The Frankenstein guy chasing me and-and you big, luscious, hunky guys bringing me here?” She turned on the ball of one dirty, bare foot. “Where’s the camera?”

Van spoke low to Caleb and Caleb nodded. Van turned to her. “We didn’t want this to happen this way. We meant to

ease you into this slowly and decrease your shock. The Guardians have ruined that opportunity and the only way to make you see the truth is to take you back to our land and show you.”

“What?”

Caleb moved his hand and a sliver of silver light shimmered in the air to her left.

Anne sprang back so fast, she knocked her chair backward. “What the hell is that?” The sliver of light grew brighter and larger. She backed further away, bumping into the nightstand behind her.

“It’s all right, Anne,” said Van, coming toward her.

“All right? What the hell is that thing?” She pointed at the sliver. “*That* is not all right.”

“It’s a doorway. It won’t hurt you, I swear. We would never allow anything to happen to you.” He reached for her and pulled her into his arms. In shock at the thing in front of her that shouldn’t be, *couldn’t* be, she allowed it.

The three of them stepped through the doorway. Light blinded her for a moment and Van shielded her eyes, tucking her face against his throat. Her skin prickled and then cool air hit her flesh. He set her on her feet and she opened her eyes.

“Oh my God.” Her mind stuttered, sputtered and then restarted like a fussy lawnmower engine. She didn’t know how many more shocks she could take. Spread before her was

a field of tall grasses in hues of deepest green, lightest lavender and softest red and scattered through with bright yellow flowers. Huge trees rose along the edges, all looking like Californian redwoods. A perfect breeze blew, making the grass ripple like water and the leaves to gently move in the trees.

“Wah.” It was all she could manage. She wavered a little on her feet and strong arms braced her.

She could do this, she *could*. She’d survived her stepfather, right? Yes, she had. She’d made her way through law school, right? Yes, again. She’d clawed her way to the top of her firm in seven years flat. Uh, huh.

Okay, she was strong. She could take an alien world, too.

Caleb touched her shoulder in a way he probably thought was reassuring. “Welcome home.”

“Home? *Home?*” She whirled on him. Right now she couldn’t deal with what had just happened. She couldn’t even comprehend where she was. It felt better to deal with this man and his offenses. She took two steps forward and poked her finger into the center of his very hard, unyielding chest. “You send me back right now, Caleb. Wave your magic wand or whatever, make that silver doorway thing come back and put me through it. I don’t have time for this-this...whatever *this* is. I have work to do. I have a trial to prepare for. I have a career, goddamn it! I have a life!”

Caleb gently clasped her hand in his. Sadness tinged his eyes. “I can’t send you back, *cara*. The Guardians know you’re our match and can bear us females. They’ll kill you the first opportunity they have. Your fate has changed now and there’s no going back.”

For the second time in twenty-four hours, let alone in her life, Anne Elizabeth Michaels fainted.

Chapter Two

She awoke in softness. Smiling a little, she snuggled into the decadently comfortable bedding and sighed. It had just been a dream. She was in her bed, at home, safe and sound.

A man's distant voice filtered through to her and her eyes opened.

She lay in a huge bed, swathed in soft golden blankets and laying against a heap of pillows. Above her, the bed was adorned with more golden draperies. A fire burned in a fireplace across from her and more vibrantly colored pillows lay on the floor of the room. Where there were no pillows she saw the floor was made of fine wood.

Not a dream. Unless...she was still *in* the dream. A lucid dream, maybe? Those seemed pretty real. She pinched herself hard and swallowed her yelp.

God, maybe she was in a coma or something? Cold fear ripped through her. What if she was mired in some deep part of her brain, imagining all this, while her prone body lay in a hospital bed somewhere?

She pushed that unwelcome thought far, *far* away.

Sound came from the adjacent room. The door was open a bit and she could see shadows moving around through the slit. She pushed the blankets back and slid from the soft, sinfully comfortable bed and saw that someone had dressed her in a pair of fitted white cotton pants, matching slippers and a green oversized top.

Oh great, the hunky crazy guys had seen her naked. If only she'd used her treadmill for something other than a clothes rack, damn it. The outrage that they'd actually dared undress her came a distant second to her vanity.

She stepped to the door and pushed it open. Van was sitting on a round beige couch, his arm thrown up over the back. Correction, his one hundred percent perfectly flawless, healed arm. His gaze was cast downward.

Caleb walked into the room via a door on the other side of the large room. He started to say something, but halted when he saw her. The injury she'd inflicted on his head with the phone was also healed. "Anne."

Van shot up from his seat and turned to face her.

She glanced around at what appeared to be a living room. The room was circular with many doors leading off it. The couch was also circular, curling around a large marble table. An enormous fireplace stood along one wall. Artwork and small tables with objects were scattered throughout the area. It was softly lit by lights inset into the ceiling, and the floor was

also bare wood. It was a comfortable room, automatically putting one at ease. It had, in a word, good energy.

“Where am I?” she asked sharply of Caleb.

“You are in my home, in the land of Valencia, on the world of Harmon.”

She blinked. “Okaaay.”

“More importantly, you are safe.”

Why did it bother her that she believed him? She squinted at his forehead and took a step forward, trying to see in the dim light. Yes... “Your forehead, his arm, they’re healed.”

Caleb nodded. “Harmons heal faster than humans. It’s a part of our biological make up. We age much slower than humans too, as a natural result of living on this world. You will too.”

She blinked again and sat.

“Do you want something to eat?” Van asked. “We have some food for you, if you’d like.”

Her stomach lurched at the thought. She suppressed a gag and held up a hand. “Please, no. Do you have water, maybe?”

Caleb disappeared and returned with a glass of water for her. She took a sip and nearly died of happiness at the perfectly cool, sweet taste of it. “So, you guys are Harmons, huh? Not human.” Had she really just said that...and been serious?

Caleb sat near her. He seemed to be more the talker out of the two of them. “So are you, well, a little bit, anyway. Humans and Harmons have interbred some over the ages. Our species are totally compatible. Our worlds are not so different, either.”

Oh hell, why not go with it? She was in a damned coma, anyway. She’d created this world in her subconscious. “I beg to differ. Our grass is green...*only* green.”

He nodded. “The light spectrum is just a little different here.”

She set her glass on the table in front of her. “Hmmm...so you guys are aliens, then?” She split her fingers—making a separation between her middle and ring finger. “Nano, nano?”

Caleb frowned for a moment, and then smiled. “Ah, you’re making an obscure reference to an old television situation comedy, aren’t you?”

She rolled her eyes and crossed her arms over her chest. “Okay, so here’s the deal. I have established that I am not dreaming, but I could be in a coma. So, if I am in a coma, who are you guys? Are you some manifestations of my subconscious, maybe? Symbols of some deep-seated fears or...uh...*desires* that I’m harboring. Are you gatekeepers to my conscious mind and do I need to deal with you two in order to wake up?”

Caleb stared blankly. “Anne, I don’t understand. You’re not in a coma, you’re here, with us. You bear a little Harmon blood in your DNA. That’s how our oracle found you in your world. You’re our perfect match, Van and mine—”

“I heard this before. I’m not buying it.” She made a sound of frustration. “I just want to go home! Can’t you just send me back? I don’t want to be your match, no matter how gorgeous you are. I don’t want a passel of kids. I want my work, that’s all, just my work. Everyone will be missing me by now. They’ll have called the police and filed a missing person’s report—”

Caleb shook his head. “No, don’t worry about that.”

“Don’t worry about that? How can I not?”

Van eased over to her on the couch. She could feel his body heat. It was...disconcerting. “That life you had is now over. It isn’t our doing though, Anne, you must comprehend. It’s the Guardians. They’ve been rooting out and destroying all human females with Harmon blood. If you go back to Earth, you will die. Don’t you understand?”

She shot up from the couch. “No, I don’t understand any of this!”

Caleb stood and walked to her. He touched her arm, and then pulled her against him. Despite everything, her body reacted to his closeness. She enjoyed the heat of his body, the scent of him and the sound of his beating heart.

God, despite everything, she wanted him. How could that be? She should be trying to kill him, but she just...didn't have the will.

He threaded his fingers through her hair and kissed her temple. She suppressed the urge to sigh. "Our people have practically been wiped off the face of Harmon. They have targeted the females of our race, that means you, too, even though you don't reside here." He cupped her face in his hands and forced her to look at him. "You were located by our oracle as a perfect genetic match for Van and me A perfect match in *every* way, as partners...for life. You will bear us daughters, which we need in order to continue our species."

"So I'm just some-some brood mare to you?"

"No." The word came forcefully, from Van of the few utterances.

"No," repeated Caleb. "You are our...wife or mate or whatever term humans use for a sexual and romantic match. A match with respect, caring and honor. And please understand that even if our oracle had not located you and we had not found you in your world, the Guardians would have. They would have hunted you down and exterminated you, Anne."

"What if I don't believe you?" she whispered.

He shrugged. "In time, you will. This truth does not require your belief. In time circumstances will prove the situation you are in." He paused. "If we'd had a choice, Anne,

we would not have ripped you away from all that you knew this way.”

She only sighed. Her brain was overloaded and she couldn't process anything more. “I don't know—”

Caleb tipped her chin up and kissed her. It was a chaste kiss, closed-mouthed. It still set every nerve in her body flaring to glorious life. His lips brushed across hers slowly, as if savoring the taste of her. Then the kiss became a little more demanding. He flicked his tongue against her lips and she parted for him. His tongue slid easily into her mouth to rub against her tongue. He tasted of coffee. Pleasure seared up her spine and made her pussy feel hot and achy.

Then she was being pulled from one heaven and immersed in another. Van eased her from Caleb's grip and enveloped her in his arms. Her lips still tingling and swollen from Caleb's attention, Van sealed his mouth over hers and took her in a passionate, near bruising kiss that made her knees go weak. Where Caleb had been seductive and soft, Van was overwhelming and purely sexual. Van skated his mouth over hers, nipping at her lower lip leisurely and dragging it between his teeth. At some point she couldn't stand anymore and hung onto his shoulders in order to keep her balance. Moisture gushed between her thighs and her nipples grew hard.

Caleb drew her from Van. Through a passionate daze, she saw a look of challenge pass over Van's handsome face for a moment.

Challenge? For *her*? For ordinary Anne Elizabeth Michaels?

Two gorgeous men, fit for the cover of any magazine, wanted to fight over *her*? Anne decided then that if she really were in a coma and was dreaming all this, it wasn't all that bad. Maybe she should just stay here.

Caleb took her hand and placed it to his groin. There, beneath the fabric of his pants, his cock felt hard as steel. Van took her other hand and placed it on his cock, so she stood sandwiched between the two men, feeling their hard, luscious lengths against both her palms.

Her eyes widened and her mind stuttered for a moment. Tentatively, she rubbed both of them and was rewarded with two deep groans of pleasure. *Thank you, subconscious! Thank you!*

Caleb pulled her back against him and kissed just under her earlobe. She closed her eyes and sighed. "We want you, Anne. We both want you very badly," he murmured.

Her eyes flew open and she took a step back. "You mean both of you? At the same time?" It wasn't that the thought was abhorrent. On the contrary, it was simply...*foreign*. She'd

never even considered the possibility of two men at once before. Hell, she'd never even known it was possible.

"We have talked this over, Caleb and I," said Van. "We decided, if it's agreeable to you that, at first, anyway, any sexual contact should be between the three of us together. This will cut down on ill feelings and jealousy between Caleb and I."

She sat abruptly on the couch. *Two men at once.*

Caleb took a step toward her. "Our men are not traditionally meant to share their mates. It has become a necessity because of our circumstance. Perhaps later on, when our relationships have become more fully cemented and we are each sure of the other's affection, Van and I can have encounters with you without the other being present."

She frowned. "You're talking like I intend to stay here. You're speaking as if I've decided I wish to marry you both or something." She shook her head. "I don't enjoy such presumption."

Caleb shared a long look with Van that made Anne frown even harder. Then Caleb held out a hand. "Come. You've had an eventful morning. I shouldn't be adding to your stress right now. If you're not hungry, perhaps we can give you a tour of our town? We're both eager to show you it."

She stared at his hand for a long moment, intending to say no. However, if she could get out of this house, maybe she'd

have a shot at getting away from Caleb and Van and returning to that field they'd popped into. Maybe from there, she could find a portal or whatever home...if she truly was in another dimension as they professed. Or perhaps that was some magical location that would pop her out of her coma, if she was in one. She had no idea what was going on, all she knew was, as appealing and attractive as Van and Caleb were, she couldn't stay here with them. She needed to get back to her life and her career...pronto.

Anne reached up, took Caleb's warm hand and allowed him to help her to stand. "I'm not hungry, thank you, but I'd love a tour of my new surroundings."

He smiled broadly and she couldn't help but smile back. What was it about these men that called to her? She felt so good around them, so at ease. Could it actually be a result of some chemical and genetic compatibility? She shook her head at her fancifulness and, after she'd dressed in a pair of tan pants and a blue sweater they provided her, allowed Caleb and Van to lead her from the house.

She caught her breath as soon as they stepped from the front door. Outside was a nest of small, domed houses. Narrow cobblestone pathways led to various doorways and connected to a broader walkway. All the yards were surrounded by waist-high picket fences and flowers and plants of every possible color bloomed throughout.

“It’s beautiful,” she breathed.

Caleb fell into step beside her. “This is one of the residential areas. There are approximately ten thousand people in Valencia. There are only about one hundred thousand Harmons left,” he finished sadly. “The Guardians have achieved progress toward their goal of wiping us out admirably.”

“But they haven’t succeeded yet,” Van added in a harsh voice.

They started down the broad pathway, toward a busier area she could see in the distance. “Why do the Guardians hate the Harmons so?”

“It was started as a war over land hundreds of years ago. We fought each other for resources in the beginning. The Guardians consider us an inferior race, unfit to take up space here on Harmon. Our ways are different from theirs. We look different. Our religion is different, our language... They fear us. They want only to be surrounded with what they are familiar with.”

She nodded. “We have these problems on Earth too.”

Caleb took her hand. She was surprised at how easily she allowed it. “It is a common difficulty of all evolving peoples.”

“I wish people would just hurry up and evolve already so we could all live without the hatred and ignorance.”

Caleb laughed. “I do too.”

“How is it that the Guardians have not discovered this place and destroyed it?”

Van came up on her opposite side and took her other hand. Her hands fit into theirs so perfectly that it made her breath catch. It felt natural...perfect. It felt like something she'd done every day of her life for years...and wanted to keep doing for years to come.

“This place is very far up in the mountains,” answered Van. “It's hidden from the Guardians through metaphysical means. They are working on a way through, but it is not likely they will be able to reach us anytime soon.”

“Their focus is on annihilating our women, in any case,” Caleb added.

Anne cleared her throat nervously. “That's comforting.”

Van squeezed her hand. “They will not touch you, Anne. They would have to go through us and all of Valencia to get to you. You are precious to us.”

“Because I'm a brood mare.”

Caleb stopped and turned her to face him “*No*. Because you are our mate.” He actually looked a little pissed. “Please stop saying that.” He abruptly led her on.

At the end of the walkway was a large open area. It looked like the town's square. Along the open, grassy area was a line of quaint looking stores, all built with warm-looking multi-colored stones and matching fabric awnings.

People, all men, roamed the streets. They all did a double take when they saw her.

“It’s beautiful.” She frowned, glancing around at the men. “Are all Harmon males gorgeous?”

Caleb laughed. “I think that from the looks you’re getting, that they think you’re gorgeous.”

She snorted. “Clearly you’re suffering a shortage of women here.”

“Well, we are,” Van put in with a laugh. “However to a Harmon, human women are still exceptionally attractive.”

“There are some human women here who were also located by our oracles and brought here by their mates. I will introduce you to them soon. They will help you find your bearings.”

“Thank you.”

They headed down the street, allowing Anne to stop and stare into windows when she chose. Finally they came to another open square with residential areas that branched out from the sides. A large white, official building caught her eye. She walked toward it. “What’s that?”

“That’s our Building of Legal Administration.”

“Building of Legal Administration? You mean like your courthouse?”

Caleb stepped up beside her. “More or less. Our legal system isn’t identical to yours, but it’s the same general idea. Would you like to visit the building?”

She nodded. “That would be very interesting.”

It turned out that the legal process in Valencia wasn’t that much different than on Earth. There were policemen of a sort, though they didn’t wear uniforms. There was a prison, but it wasn’t all that filled. Criminal law was not big in Valencia simply because there weren’t many criminals. Divorce law, similarly, was nearly nonexistent because there weren’t very many men with mates. But there were other disputes of a legal nature that needed settling—land ownership issues, business partnerships, and intellectual property for starters.

She talked at length with a charming older Valencian man named Anton, who served as a chief legal aide, about the system through which such disputes were settled. Caleb and Van followed her, exploring the surroundings and talking at length with Anton. They didn’t seem all that engrossed in the topic, but were patient and allowed her to stay as long as she wished.

When they finally exited the building, the sun was going down in the horizon, painting the town in rosy hues. She stopped on the front steps and took in a lungful of the fresh air. “That was interesting.”

Caleb walked down the stairs with her. “I’m glad you enjoyed it. I heard Anton say you could come back whenever you wanted and I think you should.”

A little of her enthusiasm faded along with the slight smile she wore. In her fascination with the legal process of Valencia, she’d forgotten her situation for a time. She glanced toward the edge of town, where the tree line began. Was that the edge of the forest where they’d appeared earlier that day? She glanced at the other edge of town, where another tree line began. Or was it there? She sighed, knowing that the entire town was circled by forest.

“I’m hungry,” she said in resignation. Escape was for a time when she had more information at her disposal. Haring off into some alien forest without a clue in which direction to head or what to do when she got there would not be a smart move. “Can we go back to the house and have something to eat?”

“Of course.” Caleb took her hand and led her through the square. Van followed. “I’m not surprised you’re hungry. It’s probably been nearly twenty-four hours since you’ve last eaten.”

They made their way back to the house amid the curious stares of many Valencian males and a few females. After seeing the Valencian females, she wasn’t sure what made

human women more attractive. They all looked beautiful to her.

Once inside the house, they settled into the kitchen and Van served them up bowls of the best soup she'd ever tasted, filled with flavorful vegetables, and some chewy, delicious bread and creamy cheese.

"I apologize," said Van from over a spoonful. "I'm not the best cook. Neither is Caleb."

"Well, don't look at me," she said with a smile. "I can barely make toast. However, this soup is fantastic."

Van grinned and a dimple popped out on his cheek. "Thank you. I'm very happy it pleases you. That's my first goal in this lifetime."

Gah.

She glanced around the large kitchen so she didn't slobber into her soup staring at Van. It looked a lot like any kitchen one might find on earth, with the exception of the ceiling, which was domed. A fire burned in a corner fireplace. They seemed big on wood burning fireplaces here. She turned to Caleb, who sat on her opposite side. "Whose house is this?"

"This is Van's house. It's bigger than mine, so we thought it the logical place to set up housekeeping."

She choked on her swallow of soup. Both men patted her back until she could speak again. "Not so fast, boys. Nobody's

setting up housekeeping around here...well, unless it's you and Van alone."

Caleb glanced at Van and frowned. "I enjoy Van's company, but I don't find him attractive in a sexual way."

"Nor I you," said Van quickly.

Anne stifled a laugh. "But the men around here must hook up sometimes, right? I mean with so few women..."

Caleb set his spoon on the table near his bowl "They do. Of course, there are other ways."

"Other ways?"

"Caleb means there are houses where you can go to be with women who are not mated," Van put in.

"Oh, like whorehouses?"

"A little like that." Caleb nodded. "They are women who have no genetic mating disposition to any Valencian males. There are not many of them. The work they do is considered sacred and they are like queens in our world. They are not regarded badly in our culture as they are on Earth."

She nodded. "Very interesting. I find your entire culture fascinating."

Caleb smiled and a hank of his dark hair fell across his forehead. Anne quelled the urge to push it back and fisted her hands in her lap. "I'm glad."

"What is it that you do anyway, for a profession, I mean?"

“Van is an architect, a very successful one. I am a doctor.”

Her eyebrows rose. Goodness, if her mother had been alive to hear that Anne had somehow snagged an architect *and* a doctor, she would have jumped up and down in total bliss. “Really? Now, that is *very* interesting. What kind of buildings do you design, Van, and what sort of medicine do you do, Caleb?”

Van took her hand and kissed the back of it. She blinked twice rapidly and swallowed hard at the feel of his sensual lips on her flesh. He gazed at her with hooded eyes. “I design most anything anyone wishes of me. Mostly, I do residences. I designed this one, of course.”

“It’s beautiful.”

“Not as beautiful as you.”

She felt her cheeks heat. “What a line. I bet you say that to all the human women.”

He grinned. “No, only my mate.”

Caleb nuzzled her cheek and her heart beat faster. “And I am a surgeon.”

Gulp. That meant he was good with his hands, right?

“But neither of us are working now,” Caleb murmured. “We’re taking time off to seduce you.”

“Oh.”

Van put his hand on her knee and something low in her gut warmed. “Would you enjoy a bath now, sweet Anne?”

“I would love one.”

Van’s hand moved up an inch. “May we bathe you?”

Her mouth went dry. “Uh...”

Caleb leaned in close to her other side. “If it’s too soon for intimacy, you simply have to say so.”

Anne swallowed hard, trying to process a sudden overload of thoughts and emotions. Here she was confronted with two of the most unimaginably attractive men she’d ever seen in her life and they both wished to make love to her. Where was the downside? Where was it? She knew it was around here someplace... She racked her brain. Oh, yeah! They wanted to get her pregnant. That was definitely a downside.

Caleb pushed her hair off her shoulder and kissed her neck. She closed her eyes and sighed. What had she been thinking about again? Oh, yes, pregnancy. Of course, she was well past her time of the month to ovulate. There was little risk she would conceive.

“I’ve never been with two men before,” she said finally in a shaky voice. “I’m a little worried about...I don’t know...uhm...the logistics.”

Chapter Three

Van gave a low, throaty laugh that gave her goose bumps. “It’s something Caleb and I have done often, shared a woman. You’re different, of course, more meaningful to us. All the same, we will take the lead. And once we’ve started”—he raised his hand another inch, until his index finger touched her cunt—“you won’t be worried about the *logistics* anymore. Just leave that to us.”

Gah part two. Her mind stuttered for a moment before she could form a coherent thought. Okay, so where was the downside again? It was...er, *where?*

“Uh, okay.”

Van gave her a slow, sure smile that made her feel warm and a little achy.

Caleb leaned in and kissed her earlobe. “In the bedroom where you woke up, there is a door leading to the bathroom. Stay here, finish your meal, then go there in about five minutes.” Van and Caleb slid from their seats and left the kitchen.

Oh God, what was she doing? Had she seriously just agreed to have sex with the two men who'd abducted her that very morning? What the hell was going on in her head? Was she completely hormone blinded? If she was, could she be blamed? She shook her head and stared out the kitchen window at the perfectly idyllic scene beyond it. Right now, she was alone. If she wanted, she could get up, leave the house and walk out into the forest. Of course, then she had a host of other problems. What alien creatures lurked in those surrounding trees? Where was the portal anyway?

Was there even a portal at all?

And, by the way, what healthy, unattached, red-blooded woman with a positive attitude about sex let an opportunity like this slide past? It's not like she would be betraying someone she'd left behind. Her career had dominated everything in recent years, though she had been dating fairly steadily. She was just...picky. A man had to be really special in order to compete with her first love—the law. She hadn't met any man yet who had challenged that primary passion of hers.

So why not play?

Portal or no portal, coma or no coma, she was not going to allow this opportunity to pass her by. She pushed her bowl away, stood and walked into the bedroom where she'd awoken. Candles lit the round room, casting a rosy, flickering

glow over the satin bedclothes of the large, round-shaped bed she'd slept in. A fire burned merrily in the hearth.

The bathroom was large with fluffy rugs covering the tiled floor. A huge bathtub took up one corner. The warm water within softly circulated with the help of gentle jets. Caleb and Van were nowhere to be seen, but surely they had been the ones to fill the tub.

She shed her clothes and laid them over a chair in the corner, near a standing shower. There was a black hair clip on the counter and she twisted her long hair up and secured it so it wouldn't get wet. Then she walked up the steps to the tub and sank into the welcoming water. Anne couldn't stifle the deep groan of pleasure that issued from her throat as the heat entered her muscles and relaxed them.

She had just rested on one of the ledges circling the inside of the tub when Van entered the room wearing only a towel. Caleb followed soon after, also dressed in only a towel. The light in the room was dim, but she traced each of their chests, shoulders and arms with her gaze in the time it took them to cross the room and reach the bathtub. Caleb was leanly muscular and smooth of chest, whereas Van possessed a smattering of golden hair. Both of them had broad shoulders, narrow hips and washboard abs. Both of them were any woman's fantasy fodder.

Van whipped his towel off and slid into the water. She got only a glimpse of his cock, nestled in a tangle of gold hair, sculpted thighs and a curved, perfect ass. Caleb entered the water more slowly, dropped his towel at the edge and sliding down into the water. It gave her a chance to check him out fully. She loved what she saw.

This moment, with the gazes of these two men on her so hungrily, made up for much of the hardship and stress she had endured throughout the day.

“Do you like the water?” Caleb asked, as he eased to one side of her.

“It’s incredible. It’s different in some subtle way from the water I’m used to.”

Van moved to her other side. He pushed a few escaped wet tendrils from her hair clip over her shoulder and studied her face for a moment before speaking. “It is naturally cleansing water. You do not need soap. Also, it has minerals in it that will relax your body and help you sleep, *cara*. You will need extra sleep for a while after having gone through the portal. It’s a sort of inter-dimensional jet lag.”

“Uh, huh.” Her thoughts were miles away from the bath water.

Both men leaned in at the same time to kiss along her throat and nibble under her ear lobe. Her breath caught in her throat and her body began to tingle. In unison, their hands

moved over her body. Van touched her breasts and Caleb slid his hand up her thigh under the water.

“I-I thought you guys wanted to bathe me.”

Van gave a throaty laugh. “We’ll get around to it...eventually.” He played with her nipple, gently brushing his fingers across it until it responded and hardened. “Tell us you don’t like this. I dare you,” he murmured.

“Uh. It’s true I feel very good around you both. I feel safe and not at all self-conscious and very, *very* horny.”

Caleb took her hand and placed it on his erect cock. “It’s the chemistry between us. You’re not the only one feeling it.”

She closed her fingers around him and pumped. Caleb let out a groan that made her cunt pulse with pleasure. He forced her mouth to his for a possessive kiss.

At the same time, Van slid his hand down from her breast to her stomach and then to her thighs. Gently, he urged them apart and slipped up to touch her. Her breath hissed out of her, heating Caleb’s mouth, and she shivered despite the warmth of the water. Van found her clit and rubbed. It responded instantly to his touch, growing swollen and exquisitely sensitive.

Caleb sealed his mouth over hers once more and also slid his hand between her thighs. While Van stroked her clit, Caleb found the entrance to her cunt and slid one, then two fingers inside her. She moaned against his tongue, feeling the stretch

of her most intimate muscles as her body adjusted to his invasion. Having both their hands on her at one time was beyond delicious. Van seemed to know just how to touch her, just how to tease her clit to the edge of orgasm. Caleb eased his fingers in and out of her in a perfect rhythm. It was almost as if the two men were communicating in some way to make sure they timed their movements in the best way to drive her crazy.

Caleb kissed from her mouth and down her throat, while Van turned her head and took up where Caleb had left off. As was the case earlier, Van's kiss was more aggressive than Caleb's, a little more penetrating and dominating. His tongue tangled with hers, hot and sweet, as her body tensed. They pushed her further to the edge of a powerful orgasm. Pleasure skittered through her body and tingled up her spine, growing more and more intense until it crested and ecstasy exploded over her body.

Her body tensed and shuddered against theirs. Van murmured her name against her lips as the muscles of her cunt pulsed around Caleb's thrusting fingers. Her climax was long and intense, one of the best she could ever remember having in her life. It left her feeling relaxed, sated and limp.

"Come, *cara*," Van murmured. "Come stand for us so that we can bathe you."

They helped her to stand in the center of the tub. The deep water reached her breasts. Van and Caleb rubbed her from head to toe, to wash her. Their hands were sure and strong and the more they touched her in the warm water, the more relaxed she felt.

Van eased her back into his arms and kissed her temple. Her fingers curled around his hard cock and pumped until he groaned deep in his throat. The sound vibrated through her. “You are beautiful, Anne. Never have I seen a woman as gorgeous as you.”

She turned in his arms and kissed him, pinning him to the wall behind him. “Thank you, you flatterer, you.”

“He means it,” said Caleb, pressing his body against hers from behind. “And he speaks for me.” Without warning, Caleb pulled her into his arms and lifted her.

She squealed in surprise and laughed as he carried her out of the tub and set her down on one of the fluffy rugs on the bathroom floor. Van followed and grabbed a towel. Together, he and Caleb dried her. “I feel like a princess.”

Caleb laughed and pulled the hair clip from the mass of hair on the top of her head. The mass slid down her shoulders. “You’re more like a queen, our queen.”

She glanced in the large mirror they faced, watching the gods—one dark, one light—and herself in the middle being cosseted by both of them. They were both still hard, their

cocks long, strong and wide. She had an urge to take them both into her mouth, against her tongue, and after that, deep into her cunt. Anne staggered to the side and Caleb caught her. She was so very relaxed and warm, perhaps from the bath water.

Van slid a soft nightgown over her head and after they'd dried themselves and slipped on something that looked a lot like boxer shorts but were a bit more fitted, they led her out into the bedroom and put her in bed. Van slid the blankets over her and kissed her lingeringly before straightening. Then Caleb also leaned down and kissed her. "Sleep well, my queen."

Her eyelids felt heavy. "You're leaving? That's all? I thought—"

"We just said *bathe, cara*. Although we couldn't completely keep our hands off you."

"But—" God, she was so sleepy...

Van smoothed her hair away from her face while Caleb went around the room and snuffed out the candles. "We don't want to push you, Anne. As much as our bodies crave yours, we don't want to take things too fast and frighten you. We've already made many mistakes in this courtship. The bath water will make you sleep."

"Mmm." Her eyelids fluttered shut. "That was tricky..."

But they'd already left the room and shut the door.

*

A glittering deep blue and green ocean spread before her, shimmering under a sky strewn with more stars than she'd ever seen in her life. There were more stars than sky, it seemed. A full moon hung ripe and luminous amongst them all, making the water seem to glow.

For an entire minute or more she stood in the sand and gaped while Caleb and Van bustled around on the beach near her. When the shock of the beauty of the place wore off—who knew that excessive beauty could cause shock?—she blinked a couple of times and began to once again pay attention to her surroundings.

Van and Caleb had spread out a thick blue blanket. Upon it was a feast of different kinds of delicious Harmon food and drink. Both men had wandered down to the water's edge. Slipping off her sandals, she joined them.

She eyed the gorgeous, glittering water lapping at the sand. "Is it safe to step into?" She wasn't going to put a toe into that alien ocean until she was certain it wasn't going to harm her.

"Completely." Van sounded surprised at the question, though she thought it was a totally reasonable one. "We wouldn't bring you here if there was a chance you'd be hurt."

Well, that was true. She believed him on that score, perhaps beyond reason. It was just one more example of the sort of supernatural bond she seemed to share with them, erasing all unfamiliarity and strangeness between the three of them.

How did she know she wouldn't come to harm while they were near? She just did. It was that unexplainable.

She eased her foot into the water and found it warm and soft, extra soothing like her bath water. "Maybe it's not immediately dangerous, but I can see how someone might fall asleep in it and drown."

Caleb laughed. "If you want to go in for a swim, we'll make sure that doesn't happen."

"I don't have a swimsuit."

Van pulled off his shirt and threw it to the beach. All her thought processes stopped for a moment under the influence of *yummy chest*. Van was saying something about the beach being deserted and so they could go in without suits.

Soon, both men were unclothed and two delicious male derrières disappeared into the surf.

She chewed her lip for a moment. *Oh, hell, why not?*

She stripped her clothes off and sent them into the heap to join theirs, then she waded into the water after them. It was lovely—silky and warm. It was like being immersed nude in a

sea of liquid satin. Her knees went weak at the sensory experience.

And Van was there to catch her.

His long and lean body brushed against hers in the water, legs tangling. Then Caleb was there on her other side—almost possessively—and she was between them. Her breath caught and her body came to attention. As many times as she had proof of it, she could not get used to the idea that these two men desired her so much.

Her hands found both of their shoulders. She was unwilling to accidentally show more attention to one over the other. Together they waded further into the water. When she thought she was all right on her own, she pushed away from them both and dove beneath the surface, letting go for a moment and floating—immersing herself in the unique experience.

In that one moment, floating effortlessly in a sea of dreams and loved by two wonderful men, she knew perfect and complete contentment—*bliss*. It was the first time in her busy life when she could ever remember feeling that way. She wondered what her life might be like if she immersed herself in moments more often—if she didn't work so hard, if she developed other aspects of her life.

Then Van was pulling her out of the water, into his arms and was kissing her until she was breathless, his body against hers, his cock hard and long and wide against her inner thigh.

When Van was gone, Caleb replaced him, his tongue sliding against hers over and over until she wanted to scream from the lust she had for both of them. She reached down, searching for his cock, wanting to touch him and give him as much pleasure as she felt in his arms, but he pulled away from her.

“Please, don’t. If you touch us we won’t be able to control ourselves and it’s not yet time for that.” He pushed away and dove under the water.

Together they swam, floated, dove and played in the waves like otters until her fingers and toes were prune and her heart was filled with more carefree joy than she could ever recall experiencing.

Finally, laughing, they rose from the waves and dried themselves with the towels the men had packed with the dinner. They dressed and sat on the blue blanket to eat their meal. She spent several minutes trying to discover the secrets of a container much like Tupperware that seemed to keep the contents warm from absolutely no external source that she could see.

“Here, taste this.” Caleb held up a forkful of something that looked a lot like cranberries.

She took it and closed her mouth against the flavor. Sweet and smooth, it was nothing like the Earth food it resembled. It was like a bite of cheesecake with all the trimmings. “I would gain a hundred pounds living here.”

Caleb laughed. “This is actually a vegetable. It’s good for you and very nutritious. It’s not fattening at all.”

“Now I know I’m dreaming,” she muttered.

They ate their meal, talking about various Harmon foods, and the oceans, forests and mountains in Van and Caleb’s world. They avoided the topic of her return to Earth and she was happy to let it slip away, if only for a little while. She enjoyed their company and didn’t want to think about being parted from them.

Even though that thought came with surprise and was irrational as all hell, she couldn’t deny the truth behind it.

In fact, perhaps against her better judgment she let the issue slide for an entire week. She considered it a vacation. A vacation from good sense, perhaps. Either way, she put the issue on hold and enjoyed Van and Caleb.

In that week they explored the woods and showed her plants and animals like she’d never seen on Earth, they attended a play put on by the local theater company, and visited shops and bookstores. Life here was not unlike life on Earth, though everything seemed just a little off, a little bit odd.

Caleb bought several Harmon classic novels for her to enjoy—in English, a language that everyone spoke here owing to their dependence on Earth females for mating—so part of her day and evening was spent reading them. She supposed she should learn their native language a bit more thoroughly if she was going to stay here.

Except she wasn't going to stay here.

They never again touched her sexually. They might kiss her once in a while, hold her hand or give her backrubs. Occasionally one of them might brush very close to her, so close she could smell their skin and the heat of their bodies made her knees weak, but they never initiated anything beyond that.

It was a pity, but she was grateful for the chance to get to know them without sex being involved.

“Tell me what your families are like,” she asked one night in front of a roaring fire in the living room. They were sipping cups of *saiy*, a hot drink the equivalent of herbal tea. Van had put music on that was not unlike classical music in composition, though the instruments they used were different, giving it a unique sound.

Caleb set his cup on the table and leaned back against the cushions. “I am an only child. My mother was Earth-born, as was Van's. She is still alive. When you're ready, I would love to have you meet both our mothers. I think they could help

you become acclimated to our way of life and you would all have something in common.”

She sat up straight when he revealed their mothers were Earth-born. Seeing them was definitely something she wanted to do. “Do they live far from here?”

“Unfortunately, they do. They live in a city many miles from here and to get there we must cross Guardian territory. Once you accept us as your mates, we will make that complicated journey.”

She slumped back in her chair. Then she’d never meet them.

“I have two brothers,” Van said, drawing her attention to him. “Neither are mated nor does it appear mates can be found for them. They live far from here and they’re both very jealous of me. Despite that, we remain close. What about your family?”

Her lips twitched. “You know about my family, I’m sure. You know everything about me.”

Caleb leaned forward, a concerned look on his face at her tone. “We’d like you tell us in your words. Paper research is no substitute for face-to-face communication and the emotion contained therein.” He paused. “Let us know you, Anne.”

She shrugged and sighed. “I really have no family left. I was an only child. My father died when I was young and my mother raised me. When I was in college, my mother died

from bone cancer.” Her voice caught a little on the last sentence. It had happened so fast that she’d been in shock for months afterward. She still grieved the loss of her mother, even years afterward, and thinking of her made tears prick her eyes.

“You have no cousins, grandparents, aunts or uncles?”

“I do, but they’re scattered all over the country—the U.S., I mean. We’ve never been close, so after my mom died...” She trailed off. “So, you see, that’s why I throw myself into my work. It’s all I really have and I love it.”

“Except now you have us,” Van added softly. “If we’re lucky, you’ll love us too.”

*

“So now that you’ve had a taste of what it could be between us sexually, what do you think?” Caleb asked, rubbing his thumb over her palm.

Gods, he wanted her so much his cock ached from the mere pout of her lips. Never in his life had he ever wanted a woman this much. To hold themselves away from her was difficult, for himself and for Van, but she was far from ready for the level of commitment they would need from her for their first coupling.

“I think it would be great for a night or two,” she replied, proving his point. “I’m not very inhibited sexually, so I say, bring it on.”

“I’m glad you are eager to lie with us. However, it is necessary that there is some preparation you must undergo beforehand.”

“Preparation?”

He nodded.

“Like...school?”

“Well, sort of.” In actuality, it was designed to keep her sated sexually while he and Van worked on winning her heart, mind, and commitment. It was also designed to ready her body for the tribulations of taking two men at the same time.

“I do not want her to go!” bellowed Van from across the room.

“She must,” Caleb answered. “You *know* she must.” Van was more the jealous type and while the men at the training facility would not couple with her physically, they would bring her pleasure.

“Wait a minute.” She glanced from Van to Caleb. “Now I’m starting to get worried. What is this place, exactly?”

“It’s not far from here. You say you are not afraid of things sexual?”

She nodded.

Caleb grinned. “Then trust me that you will enjoy this place.”

She pursed her lips “The strange thing is...I do trust you, Caleb. I trust both you and Van.” She shook her head. “It’s the strangest thing. I mean...” She trailed off, wonder lighting her beautiful eyes.

Caleb smiled. “You trust us because you’re meant to be with us, Anne. You were made for us, right down to your very DNA. So your personality—all that surface stuff shaped by your upbringing and your culture—is telling you not to trust us, but deeper down you know you can.”

She nodded. “That’s what it feels like.”

“Trust the deeper voice, Anne.”

Her eyes shifted to gaze beyond him, her slight smile fading. No, she wasn’t quite ready yet.

It took a little gentle persuading, but eventually he and Van got Anne ready to go. They made the short walk to the facility and entered the plush, classy surroundings. Van grumbled the whole way over about leaving their woman to the care of others, but Caleb understood that this could be beneficial to their relationship in the long run.

Caleb didn’t like it either, though.

The facility had been made for just such eventualities as they now found themselves in. Sometimes mates were taken from other worlds, as Anne had been. Sometimes things were

so alien and moved so fast, that the mate could not gain a handle on the moment. Time was needed to foster a relationship, while still appeasing the mate sexually. It did not help to satisfy the other two parties, but that would simply be the cost he and Van would have to pay. Eventually their investment in displeasure would bring dividends in erotic bliss and abiding love.

Anne gasped at the fancy furniture of the receiving room. “What is this place?”

A man appeared at the doorway. He was tall, broad of shoulder and filled out muscularly. He was one of the few men born with a genetic defect that meant his manhood did not function. They were well suited for this job since the only way they gained sexual pleasure was by giving it to others. They never took mates and seemed happy enough to serve in this well-paid position, but the mates of those left here did not have to worry about their loved one being taken advantage of.

“This is Lock,” Caleb said to Anne. “He is going to take care of you while you reside here for the next week.”

She turned to him. “A whole week?”

Van took a step toward her. “Yes, my love.”

She flashed him an annoyed look at the words *my love*, yet there was turmoil on her pretty face. “A week? I’ll—I’ll miss you too much.”

Caleb smiled. That reaction was good. They were off to a favorable start. Hopefully by the end of the week Anne would come to feel the bonds they shared. She would be yearning for their presence. “We will be visiting you, dear Anne. We don’t plan to leave you here and not return for a week.”

She glanced at Lock, who gave her a reassuring smile. “I won’t hurt you,” he said. “Anything but.” He held out a hand.

Anne glanced back at Caleb with concern written on her face.

“Do you trust us? You said that deep down, you do.”

She nodded.

“Then go with Lock, do as he says and enjoy yourself. We will return tomorrow to visit you.” He leaned forward, took her into his arms and laid a long, lingering kiss to her lips.

“Mmmmm, that’s nice, Caleb. No, take me home with you and Van. I promise I’ll be all you want and more.”

He smiled against her lips. “You already are, my love. But you need to stay here for now, all right?”

Van came and took her from his arms. Caleb ground his teeth at the action. He and Caleb still had to work on *sharing*.

“I will miss you,” Van murmured against Anne’s cheek.

“You too,” she surprised both of them by answering. “I will miss you both too, but if you want me to do this, I will.”

Van released her reluctantly and they left her to Lock and his tender, erotic mercies.

Anne watched Caleb and Van leave with a lump rising in her throat. How stupid! She'd only known them for a little over a week and it wasn't sane that she should already miss their presence. Yet, she did.

And she *did* trust them. After all, they'd saved her life. If they said she would be all right here, she believed them.

Oh, hell, who was she fooling? She was about a heartbeat away from falling in love with both of them. Maybe she already had just a little bit.

Her gaze swung to fasten on the hulking male in the doorway. What a bizarre experience all this was. Lock was good looking, at least. He had not a stitch of hair on his head, but his face was handsome enough to make the baldness work. He was naked from the waist up revealing a gorgeous chest any man on Earth (and, she supposed, this planet) would love to possess. He wore no shoes, either, only leather sandals.

Lock held out his hand. "Come with me now."

She stepped to him and put her hand in his. "What will we do?" She pulled her hand away. "I won't have sex with you." She only wanted to have sex with Van or Caleb, no one else.

"I'm unable to perform that way. In any case, Van and Caleb would kill me if I tried. First, you will take off those

clothes and put on something else. They offend me. Then, I will make you come. Often.”

Anne almost swallowed her tongue. “Uhm?”

He led her to a circular bedroom, not unlike the one at Caleb and Van’s house. On the bed lay a gauzy see-through garment that would barely keep her warm. Lock pointed to it. “You will wear that. Please change now.”

“Aren’t you going to give me any privacy?”

He grinned, showing even, white teeth. “By this week’s end I will know every inch of your body intimately. I will have explored it with my tongue, teeth, lips, fingers and various sex toys. Let us dispense with modesty immediately.”

She put a hand to her hip. “Why not your cock?”

Lock unsnapped his pants and dropped them. His equipment was small and shriveled. “I was not made to love women that way. Instead I gain sexual pleasure from giving it to others.”

She stared and took a moment to collect her thoughts before answering. “Oh. Uhm. I have to say, I don’t feel attracted to you at all. It’s not because of your cock. That’s not it at all. I just don’t feel attracted to any males at all these days but Van and Caleb. So I don’t know how this will work. I don’t think I can become excited by you.”

“That’s natural. Of course you only feel attracted to your mates. The trouble is your attraction right now is only a

physical one. For your first joining with them, there must also be emotional attraction. Otherwise the three of you are doomed and the mate seal will never be realized. You are developing an emotional bond with them now, but it's not to the point where all three of you can produce a mate seal. While you three work on that aspect of your relationship, it's my job to make your body ready to accept the love of two men at once."

"Mate seal?"

"The three of you must desire to be together not only on a physical level, but an emotional one too. That deep connection is what will trigger the psychic link between you and seal the mate bond."

She blinked. "That's all news to me."

"And it was my job to give it to you. Now, I know you are not attracted to me, but there are ways around that. Please, undress now, I am impatient to pleasure you and thus pleasure myself." He did his pants up once more.

Anne hesitated, but why not go with it? This was her delusional coma or whatever, so why not? She stripped her clothes off and donned the outfit while Lock watched.

There were strategic snaps at the breasts and at her cunt. God.

Lock's gaze raked over her. "You're beautiful. Van and Caleb are lucky men."

“If they’re so lucky, why’d they give me to you?”

“As I said, my job is to ready your body for the love of two men at once while you develop an emotional bond strong enough to Van and Caleb to produce a mate seal. Your job is to fall in love with your mates. My job is prepare you physically to accept their love for you as it will be shown in a sexual way.”

She stared.

“Have you not considered the ramifications of having two men love you, Anne? Two cocks to fill you? Oftentimes at the same time?”

“I’ve, uh, fantasized about it.”

He held out his hand. “Good, we will start there then.”

“Are there other women here?”

“Not at the moment. It is rare for our kind to find mates, let alone mates who come from other worlds. You’re my first in a long time.” He gazed at her. “I’m anxious to begin.”

He led her from the room, down a corridor and into another room with many different cushioned platforms at various inclines, and a seat with stirrups that looked far too much like something at her OB/GYN to be arousing.

While she gawked, Lock poured something from a pitcher on a nearby table and handed it to her.

“Wow. This is like something out of a dominatrix’s lair.”

Lock only grinned wolfishly. “Do you enjoy being restrained?”

“The one time I was, yes, I enjoyed it.”

A boyfriend had insisted and she’d agreed reluctantly. Turned out it really flipped one of her switches. Too bad the boyfriend, overall, hadn’t.

“Good.” He pointed at the cup she held. “Drink that, please.”

She eyed it. “What is it?”

“Only a very mild relaxant. It will help loosen your muscles and your mind for what is to come.”

She raised her eyebrow. “I thought *I* was to come?”

He grinned. “Oh, you are.”

Anne downed the cup. The liquid tasted like water, innocuous enough, but it rushed through her system like pure warmth. Her legs went weak and she caught Lock before she fell, dropping the cup to the floor. Her cunt tingled and went damp with sudden moisture and she had to stop herself from plunging her hands between her thighs to make herself come.

“It also helps as an aphrodisiac.”

“Now you tell me.”

“You require this for the entire week, as mated individuals only respond sexually to their mates. I am not your mate, so we had to find a way to get around that block. You will find a pitcher in your bedroom and you must consume it

regularly. The ingredient will also be in your food.” He pointed to an inclined cushion. “Now. There, please, face down.”

On shaking legs, cunt sensitive as though she’d been fingered by Van and Caleb both for the last hour, she made her way to the cushion and lay down.

Caleb and Van...her body ached for them.

Lock pulled her so that her cunt and ass hung off the end of the inclined cushion, then secured her wrists and ankles to padded cuffs she hadn’t noticed on her first perusal. He dragged his fingers over her heated cunt through the garment and Anne moaned.

“You see? You were not aroused for me earlier, but now you would beg me to fuck you, no?”

“No.” Her answer came swiftly. “There are only two cocks in this world, or mine, that I want.”

He chuckled. “Ah, that is good. You may be further along than Caleb presumed.” He rubbed her clit and pleasure tingled through her. “A pity you do not want me because you have a beautiful pussy and I would if I could.”

“Touch me bare,” she pleaded. “Please.”

He unsnapped the fabric and revealed her naked cunt to the cool air of the room. “I plan to do so much more than touch it, Anne.”

He stroked her clit with his thumb and forefinger, milking the small, sensitive bit of flesh up until the point of orgasm and then stepping away. Tears pricked her eyes.

He did something she couldn't see as he spoke. "I have no cock, but Van and Caleb both do. If either of them were here to see you now, your cunt bared this way, hanging over the edge of this recliner, swollen and aroused, begging to be fucked they would not be able to restrain themselves. They would each take you in turn, until you came so hard you'd pass out."

Anne's hands fisted. "I want them so much."

"I know. As they want you. In a week, perhaps you will have them."

He rubbed something warm and wet on her pussy and over her anus. "What's that?" She couldn't find it in her to be overly concerned. She supposed she'd expected him to touch her ass.

"Lubricant. I am going to show you what it is to take two men at once."

He pressed a hard object covered with some sort of softer material to her cunt. A dildo. She had to stop herself from pushing at it, trying to force it inside her. She was desperate to be fucked by something, if it could not be Van or Caleb.

"Yes, there you go. Take it all the way." His voice had grown heavy. "I love to watch the way your cunt spreads as I

push it inside you, how your lips swallow it.” He pulled it out and pushed it back it in.

Anne moaned and writhed as much as she could. She had no stimulus to her clit and she desperately wanted it. If he so much as touched her clit now, she’d come hard as a rocket into space.

“I don’t want you to orgasm yet, Anne. I have more to do to you.” To emphasize just how much, he pressed another dildo, this one much smaller, to her anus and teased the nerves around it.

She gasped, but quickly relaxed under the waves of erotic pleasure that Lock exerted over her body. He pressed the smaller object into her ass, stretching her muscles, and she let out a long, slow breath. The further he went, the more her rear end stretched. It caused a not unpleasant mix of pleasure and just the slightest bit of pain. All the while, he thrust the dildo in and out of her cunt, ensuring that he kept her suspended in a state of erotic bliss while he worked the smaller toy into her ass.

Once she was completely filled, Anne gripped the edges of the recliner and panted. Her body rode the fine, quavering edge of a climax. It would not take much to tip her over the edge. He worked both toys in and out of her, causing the sensations of having both her orifices filled to blend together

in one long buzz of absolute pleasure that tingled through her body and stole her thought.

“Close your eyes and imagine it’s Van and Caleb who fill you, Anne,” Lock purred. “Soon it will be their cocks that ride you this way, their breath on your skin, their gentle, soft words teasing your ear, their bodies rubbing against yours—”

The thought of it was too much. Anne’s spine arched as she came hard the muscles of her cunt squeezing and releasing as she orgasmed on the toys.

“Ah.” Lock chuckled. “The mere mention of them send you right over the edge, I see.”

The waves of her climax passed and Lock freed her from the erotic torture. She lay panting, her eyes closed, missing Van and Caleb. She wanted them, wanted—no, she *needed* them. She wasn’t sure she could do this for an entire week. Her body still tingled from the image of both men touching her. Her heart ached from their absence. Silly, stupid, premature, maybe...but all true.

The door burst open and Van filled the frame. “I’m taking her back.”

Chapter Four

“Van!” Caleb’s voice came from behind him. “Don’t do this.”

“Too late.” Van stalked to her and scooped her into his arms. Then he turned to Lock. “I apologize for this, but I can’t abide the thought of anyone but myself or Caleb touching her.”

Lock smiled. “I understand.”

“Van, you’re making a mistake,” growled Caleb. “I don’t like it either but—”

“Quiet,” Van roared at him. His tone made even Anne jump. “I cannot allow it, Caleb.” He turned and stormed from the room.

Luckily Caleb had the forethought to grab a blanket from the room. He threw it over her a second before Van kicked the doors of the building open and strode out into the daylight with her still in his arms.

Van’s expression stormy and Caleb mute, they walked back to the house and entered. Van carried her to the living room and sank down on the couch with her still in his arms.

Now she was draped across his lap, her head on his shoulder. Snuggling against him, she sighed. She had no inclination to leave.

Caleb paced in front of them, his handsome face pinched with irritation.

“Peace, Caleb.” Van’s voice rumbled through his chest and into Anne. “You’re happy I retrieved her. Admit it.”

Caleb stopped and stared. “You’re going against tradition, Van. We keep messing up more and more with her.”

“I’m in the room, you know,” she murmured. Lifting her head, she looked at Caleb. “Don’t talk about me like I’m not here. How about you ask me how *I* feel about Van coming to get me?”

Caleb fixed his gaze on her. “Go ahead, tell us.”

She rested her head on Van’s shoulder and saw Caleb’s face tighten in displeasure. Caleb seemed to have it all together most of the time where sharing her with Van was concerned, but his face right now showed clearly he wasn’t completely jealousy-free.

“I didn’t feel violated by what Lock did to me, but if it hadn’t been for the concoction he had me drink and the image I held in my mind of you two, I never would have enjoyed it.” She paused. “I would rather be here with you, Caleb. I’m very happy Van came for me.”

Caleb regarded her silently for a moment, then shifted. “Do you understand why you were there?”

She nodded. “I figure the unspoken reason was to make me miss you two and force me into realizing just how much I care for you both. Mission accomplished. The other reason was functional, to get my body ready for the act of taking you both...at the same time.”

“Yes.”

She lifted her head and held Caleb’s gaze steadily. “I’d rather be readied by you two.”

His whole body tightened and shook slightly. He glanced away, color rising from his neck to his face. Anne was sure it wasn’t embarrassment, it was suppressed desire. What gave it away? The cock pressing against the fabric of his jeans for starters. “It was also to keep you sated sexually while your emotions for us grow. Having you here and being unable to bed you is very taxing on Van and I.”

She moved away from Van, careful to keep the blanket over her. Right now they didn’t need a flash of her bare pussy. “Okay, I’ll be good. I swear. No tempting you while my emotions grow.” Her feelings for the two men were already flourishing. Too fast for her tastes, but she had no control over them, it seemed. They were blossoming without her consent.

“By merely breathing, you tempt us.” Caleb’s eyes flashed.

“Well, I can’t stop breathing.”

Van pulled her back onto his lap, so she straddled him. Her cunt rubbed against his thigh and she let out a shuddering breath. The blanket fell open, revealing her breasts and their hardened nipples. She took a moment to collect herself and then said, “Van, this isn’t helping.”

His gaze roved her naked breasts. “It’s helping me a lot.” His voice came out in a low rumble.

She licked her lips nervously. “We can’t have sex until you guys feel I’m ready for the emotional bonding, right? So I should go get dressed, like, in a *habit* or something, and stay far away from you both if I’m not going to stay with Lock. I shouldn’t be here, naked and in your lap.”

“Woman, I’m not an adolescent. I have more control than you’re giving me credit for.” Van’s eyes were dark, the pupils wide in his arousal. He pulled her to him and kissed her softly, while he slid a hand between her thighs and stroked her clit.

She whimpered against his lips as her need, already poignant, grew stronger. “Van.”

“Just let me.”

He slid two fingers deep into her cunt and her muscles tensed around them. Pressing his palm against her clit, he commanded her roughly, “Ride them.”

Anne grasped the back of the couch and moved her hips up and down, driving his fingers in and out of her cunt. Her

inner muscles rippled and pulsed as pleasure spread throughout her sex.

Caleb sat near Van and placed his hand down in front of Van's palm to rub her clit. As she moved, he touched her expertly, applying just the right amount of pressure to make her come.

"I want you both so much," she gasped as it rolled over her, swamping her thought processes and stealing her thoughts. She moaned both their names in turn, imagining them all in bed together, skin sliding against skin, mouth to mouth.

"Ah, Anne," murmured Van, pulling her down to him for a kiss. "So do we."

*

A knock sounded at the front door, drawing Anne from her bedroom. She'd taken a bath and dressed in a pair of loose-fitting cotton pants and a soft long-sleeved shirt. Her hair was now dry and twisted on the top of her head and secured. Both Van and Caleb had said they preferred her without makeup and since she'd never really liked wearing the stuff, she'd given it up.

Van opened the door in the living room and Anton, the chief legal aide in Valencia, stood at the front door.

Anne peered at him as Caleb opened it and admitted him to Van's living room. It was the middle of the afternoon. That morning, Anne had taken a bath and gotten dressed while Caleb and Van ran errands and took care of things around the house. Tonight Caleb was preparing dinner. They'd both insisted she relax. It was nice. It was like having two hunky, caring, houseboys at the beck of her sexual call.

"Hello, Anne!" Anton greeted.

"Anton, so nice to see you again." She held out her hand but he just stared at it blankly. *Okaaaay*, maybe they didn't shake hands here in Valencia. She lowered it sheepishly. "Can we get you something to drink?" God, she was acting like she really lived here.

He shook his head. "No, thank you, I'm in kind of a rush, actually. I stopped by because I wanted to ask you to dinner." He nodded at Van. "Van and Caleb, too, as long as they wouldn't be too bored with the topic."

She raised her eyebrows. "And that topic would be?"

"I would like to know about your system of law where you come from. There are some problems with the process here in Valencia and I thought maybe a little outside perspective may help us to streamline things."

Her lips twisted. "Well, frankly, the process could use a little tweaking where I come from too, but I would be glad to help you if I can." She glanced at Caleb, who stood in the

kitchen doorway. “He is fixing dinner tonight, but perhaps tomorrow evening would work?”

“That would be fine.” He smiled. “Thank you so much.”

“Not a problem. I’m looking forward to it, actually.”

He turned toward the door. “Until tomorrow.” He paused and looked back at her. “Do you think, after you’ve had time to adjust to life here in Valencia, that you might want work in the area of law again?”

Anne considered him, the possibilities swirling through her mind. A totally new system of law? One that she could help to mold? A light sensation filled her chest and she smiled. “I would.”

God, what was she saying? She had no plans to stay here. How ridiculous! If on the off chance this wasn’t a self-created delusion she was in, she would find a way to get home. Van and Caleb were lovely—perfect in just about every way she could count—but she had an established life back home. A career. Friends, if not family.

Well, *actually*, all her friends were at the firm. She really didn’t see them outside the office. Hmmm. In that case, were they *friends* or just colleagues?

Wow, she’d never realized just how wrapped up in her career her life had been. She really didn’t have much of a life beyond it.

That was kind of sad, really.

She didn't really have a lot to hold her to Earth. The more she thought about it, the more she realized it.

"Good," said Anton, a broad smile enveloping his face. "That's very good news, indeed."

They spent the rest of the late afternoon in the kitchen, watching Caleb cook. The more he chopped, stirred and measured, the nicer the food smells in the room became.

Caleb made a dish of tender slices of spiced meat on a bed of savory grain that filled her mouth with flavor. On the side were long pieces of an orange vegetable with a sweet, tangy taste that Anne couldn't get enough of. For dessert Caleb had baked a plate of small custard-like cakes. To go with it all was a bottle of soft, sweet wine made from a common fruit that grew in Valencia.

By the time dinner was finished, it was late into the night. They'd spent most of the time talking, laughing and enjoying each other's company.

Anne couldn't remember the last time she'd had such a pleasant evening or enjoyed the company so much. "I'll miss you when I go back to Earth," she murmured.

Both men stiffened.

"Look, I'm growing to care for you both and it's true that this place has a lot to offer someone like me, who doesn't have much to hold her anywhere. However, Earth is my home." She paused, pursed her lips and stumbled on. "I miss it."

Caleb looked to Van. “Clearly, she has a long way to go.”

“Yes,” answered Van in a colorless voice. His gaze bore holes into her.

“Don’t talk about me like I’m not here.”

Caleb’s gaze shifted to her. “You’re not here.” He stood and headed toward the door. “If you were fully here, you would see how much we both love you and would love us equally in return.”

Anne stared after him, pleasurable evening ruined. He was hurt and she’d done it. God, that felt terrible. She studied her hands, folded in her lap, while Van began to clear the table.

It hurt because she *did* love Caleb, just as she loved Van.

*

Van watched Anne exit her room. Her long, dark hair was sleep tousled around her face and shoulders and she looked still drowsy from what was hopefully a night of deep rest. It would take a while for her to acclimate to the subtle differences of Valencia. The air was different, the water, the sunlight—all of it was close to what she had experienced on Earth, but was just a little off in intangible ways. When he and Caleb had gone Earth-side to watch her, it had taken them two weeks to acclimate.

He hoped that Anne gave up the fight she was clearly having with her urge to return home. Van could understand it, of course, they were asking so much of her. To trade love and companionship—a family and, hopefully, children—for her career.

Women where she came from often had both, and neither he nor Caleb wanted to make her choose. The hitch in this case was that she wouldn't survive Earth-side. For Anne to choose her career over them was to choose death. The Guardians would find her on Earth easily and exterminate her.

But perhaps she could have a career in her chosen profession *here*. He and Caleb hoped so. They both knew Anton was eager to have her consultation and perhaps she could learn their system of law and become a barrister here in Valencia.

Anne could have everything she wanted, if she would just let go of the death grip she had on her past. Van knew it was hard and he was trying to give her room to come to the realization on her own...but patience wasn't his most highly developed skill.

Watching her the way he and Caleb had before the Guardian had found her had been rough. *But this...* Having her so near them, touching them, having the scent of her around them all day long and clinging to them at night, having her here and not being able to make love to her was like torture.

Yet, they needed to take things slowly. She was everything to them and they didn't want to push her away.

"Van," she greeted him in a sleepy morning voice.

"Did you sleep well?"

She nodded. "Whatever was in that bath water really knocks me out every night. Is that stuff in the tap water too?"

He shook his head. "No. There's a mineral in the tap water that invigorates you very subtly."

"Interesting." She glanced toward the room that Caleb had chosen for his bedroom—ah, so she'd been paying attention. "Where's Caleb?"

"He had to go in to work for an emergency. We are both on...leave, that's how you say it, isn't it?" She nodded. "But since Caleb is one of the best surgeons in Valencia, he may be called in for special cases from time to time."

"That makes sense." She sat on the couch and smoothed her thin nightgown over her thighs. He could make out the pucker of her nipples through the material and the memory of how they felt came flooding back. "You know, sometimes I have emergencies too. Jobs in my law firm that only I can handle." A note of wistfulness had crept into her tone.

He sat near her. "I'm sorry, Anne. Caleb and I are both very sorry that this needs to happen this way. If we'd had a choice—"

She held up a hand to stop the flow of his words. “I know, I know. You don’t have to say it again. My life is in danger because of genetics, basically.”

“Basically, yes.”

“And you guys saved my life...and then claimed it.”

“Anne, no. It’s not that way. You have complete freedom here. You’re not a slave to us.”

She raised her eyebrows suggestively. “Unless I want to be from time to time?”

He laughed. He loved her sense of humor. It shone at the most unexpected of times. “I doubt that Caleb or myself would dislike such a scenario.”

“Didn’t think so.” She paused. “I do feel for you both,” she continued softly. “Van...I think I’ve come to care very much for you and Caleb both.”

Something in his chest lifted and broke free of its moorings. He tried not to jump on her and kiss her all over. “That’s good you’ve come to realize that, Anne.”

She lifted her head and smiled at him. “It is. I think maybe...maybe, I could even want to...stay here...with you, make a new life. I was up all night thinking about it.”

“Those are just about the best words I’ve ever heard.” Van returned her smile and suppressed an urge to do a dance. If only Caleb had been here to hear that. He licked his lips and

forced himself not to push her harder. “Would you like some coffee? Perhaps a little breakfast?”

She nodded. “Sounds good.”

Soon he was pouring her a cup of “coffee”, the kind of hot morning drink that most resembled it anyway. It was actually a heavy, dark tea called *maas* that had something a bit like caffeine in it. She’d declined a hot breakfast in favor of a muffin with elgin berries and sat at the table nibbling at it. “So, how long have you known Caleb? Didn’t you say you’ve been friends since childhood?”

He poured himself a cup of *maas* too and sat back in his chair. “That’s right. We grew up near each other and have been friends since we were small. We attended all the same schools up until what you call college. At that time we took different paths and we lost touch for a long time.” He paused. “And then we were summoned by the oracle...about you.”

She took a long drink of the *maas* and closed her eyes. “That’s yummy. It tastes chocolatey.”

He nodded. “Yes.”

“Okay, so tell me about this oracle person.”

“It is actually a government agency that we refer to as ‘the oracle’. They keep extensive records of all births and bloodlines in Valencia and are constantly checking and cross-checking for compatible males and females. They also analyze genetics and make assumptions about which pairings will

result in the greatest chance of the female conceiving girl children.”

“So the oracle somehow located me and made a match between the three of us?”

He nodded. “They knew about you for some time, but they took a long time to find a suitable match for you. When they finally did, they found two. It’s not uncommon in these times for that to happen. If two suitable matches are found, they’re both mated. There have been a few instances of even three being found.”

“Three? My God. Don’t you all have a problem with jealousy? How does that work? And how can one woman or man handle the attention of three others all of the time? Two, I can see, maybe...but three...” She trailed off, staring into her cup of *maas*.

“It’s our way here. I’m not saying there aren’t bumps in the road. As you’ve seen even Caleb and I struggle with jealousy issues and we’re the best of friends, not strangers as so many of the mates start out. It’s just something to be dealt with. I think most are just so happy to be mated that they’re willing to cope with complications of multiple partner relationships.”

“Okay, so what happened after you were notified?”

“First Caleb and I were reunited. We’d been friends in our younger years, but drifted apart after University.” He smiled.

“It was nice to find out that Caleb was the other male. This has been a hard situation, but it was made easier because he is such a good friend. Then we had to go and find you.”

“But the Guardian found me first.”

The smile faded from his lips. “That was my fault. We knew the Guardians would be trying to locate you. The oracle is not the only organization that has access to the genetic records. Caleb felt that we should make contact with you quickly because of that, but I wanted to wait. I wanted to watch over you, study you, make sure we both knew you as well as we could before we initiated our first meeting. If I had not wanted to wait so long, you never would have been put in harm’s way.”

She reached across the table and covered his hand with hers. “While the fact you guys were stalk—er...studying me for so long is a little creepy, I think the fact that you wanted to wait until you felt you truly knew me is magnificent, actually.”

He squeezed her hand. “I regret it.” He frowned. “What is stalk?”

She colored. “Stalking is when someone follows someone else around, watches them. On my world a stalker usually threatens the stalkee in some way and you and Caleb never did that. You saved my life, in fact.”

“So we are not stalkers?”

She laughed. “No, not in the true sense of the term.”

She stared into his eyes and they both fell into a silence. He couldn’t resist her another moment. Ultimately, Van knew it was all right with Caleb if he touched Anne without him being present. It was Van who had the bulk of the jealousy problem, a wrinkle in his psyche he was going to have to smooth soon. Knowing Caleb would be all right with it, he leaned in and kissed her.

She pressed her lips to his and parted them, allowing him to slide his tongue within and taste her sweet mouth. Soon she broke the kiss, set her forehead to his and licked her lips. “What is it about you and Caleb that makes me want you both so much? What is it that makes me feel so good around you?”

“I wish I could make you believe what we have said.”

She bit her bottom lip. Then, after a moment, slid from her chair and settled down on his lap. The curve of her ass settled nicely over his groin...and gave him an instant hard-on. “Maybe you’re making me believe it faster than you think,” she murmured a moment before she kissed him again.

His hand traveled to her thigh, up her hip and settled on the inward nip of her waist. His fingers itched to explore other, sweeter spots and he had to quell the urge to simply swipe all the dishes away with his arm and take her right there on the tabletop. He couldn’t do that without his friend’s presence—

not for the first time. For the first time, they all needed to be together.

He contented himself with dragging the hemline of her nightgown up her legs. It made her shiver in his arms when he got a little too zealous and ripped the fabric. He'd buy her more. He'd buy her as many as she wanted.

Once her nightgown was to her waist, he lifted her and repositioned her so that she straddled his lap. The heat from her sex bled through the material of his pants and hit his cock. It made him half insane with need. His hands explored her pert breasts with their perfect, hard, suckable little nipples, her sweetly curved ass and hips. In his imagination, he slid his cock into her hot, tight slit and her muscles clenched sweetly around his shaft. His balls tightened from the mere thought.

She whimpered deep in her throat and ground herself down against him. "Van," she murmured. "Please..."

Ah, he wanted to take her so badly. "We can't—" He broke off and cursed under his breath. "We can't make love without Caleb, Anne, and we can't make love before you're completely ready."

"Van, I—"

Van reached around Anne, shoved every dish to the floor and lifted her on top of the smooth, cleared surface. "But I can still touch you, tease you...taste you." He spread her thighs

and held them apart, baring her luscious cunt to his gaze and tongue, then lowered his mouth to her heat.

Anne moaned as Van skated his tongue over her folds and swollen clit. He delved between her labia and then deep within her, making her squirm with pleasure on the tabletop. “Van, please, *God*, you have a wicked tongue.”

Chapter Five

He licked her clit, which had pulled from its hood and plumped with sweet need. With the very tip of his tongue, he teased her there while he slid a finger deep inside her cunt, feeling the hot, slick clasp of it close around, then added a second to stretch her.

Her hips moved on the table, up and down, as though she looked for something to fuck her. It made him go just a little crazy to know he couldn't. He tightened the grip he had on one of her thighs, holding her down so she couldn't move. Van wished Caleb were here to help him pleasure her. Then he gave her cunt what it craved—gliding his fingers in and out of her fast and hard while he laved her clit over and over.

“Van, I’m going to come,” she breathed. “Don’t stop!”

Never.

Van made a hungry, needy sound in the back of his throat and pushed her toward a climax.

Anne shuddered as an orgasm overwhelmed her. He rode her through it, never stopping, drawing out every last moment of ecstasy from her body that he could.

Anne went limp on the table, all the tension leached from her body in the aftermath of her climax. Breathing heavily, she lay for a moment staring up at the smooth cream-colored ceiling of the kitchen. When she could move again, she sat up and pulled Van to her, hooking her legs around his waist and kissing him deeply. He speared his fingers into her hair and kissed her back, sliding his tongue between her lips and allowing her to taste herself just a little.

She pushed off the table and forced him back, her torn nightgown falling back into place around her body. Van let her lead him into the living room, where he sat on the couch, their lips and tongues still touching as much as possible while they moved.

Her fingers found the button and zipper of his pants and began undoing them. His hands caught hers and held. “No,” he breathed. “That’s dangerous.”

She looked into his eyes and emotion welled. It was undeniable what she felt right now, not only for Van but for Caleb. How she wished Caleb were here right now. “I want this with you, Van, with you and Caleb. I’m ready to do this with both of you.” She shook her head and laughed, realizing the truth of her words. Just saying them made her feel lighter. “We’ll figure out the rest afterward.”

Van smiled. “Do you understand what you’re saying, Anne? If you agree to bond with us, you’ll be tying your life to ours forever...and to Valencia.”

“I can never go back to my life on Earth anyway, right, Van? The Guardians will find me and kill me if I do that. Here I have two men that I love and who love me back, two men I would be happy to spend the rest of my days with. That’s not much of a choice.”

Van’s smile faded. “You need to be totally certain, Anne. Your words make me happy beyond imagination, but I don’t want your decision to be impulsive or come from a state of heightened hormones.”

“I know what I’m saying.” She raised an eyebrow. “But you’re right about my hormones being heightened.”

Not saying a word, she kissed him on the mouth. He sank his fingers into her hair and kissed her back needfully, making a growling sound in the back of his throat. Then she broke the kiss and worked her way down his body, running her lips over his throat, pushing his shirt up and skimming them over his washboard abs, until she was kneeling on the floor in front of him. In a moment, she had his pants unbuttoned and unzipped. This time she wouldn’t be deterred. She wanted to give him as much pleasure as he’d given her.

She pulled his cock free and suppressed a gasp of wonder. It was a cock, like any other—wide and long and beautiful in

an innately male kind of way—but it was *Van's* cock and that made it extra gorgeous.

Van shuddered when she closed her hand around it and pumped the foreskin down and then back up. She watched, fascinated. All the men she'd ever been with had been circumcised. Anne dipped her head, licked the smooth crown, then sucked the whole thing into her mouth. Her name hissed between his lips and he buried his fingers in her hair. She worked him in and out of her mouth, enjoying every little noise he made, every tensing of his muscles. She tongued his shaft, suckled the smooth head, and teased the sensitive glans.

"Anne," he rasped and grabbed the cushions on the couch, letting out a low groan as she worked him past her lips, pulled his shaft out and sucked it in again. Allowing her tongue to play along the length of him, concentrated on the small sensitive ridge of nerves just under the head that she knew would drive him crazy.

Every shudder, every groan made Anne content. She pushed him harder and faster, wanting nothing more than to make him spill on her tongue. It wasn't long before she got her wish. His fingers tightened in her hair and he cried her name as he climaxed.

"Well, Van, I see you wasted no time."

Anne jerked and turned to see Caleb leaning against the doorway of the kitchen, watching them.

“Caleb...” Van said, his gaze fixed on Anne’s face.

“It’s all right. I’ve been here for a while and I heard pretty much everything.”

“Voyeur,” said Anne with a grin.

“Maybe a little.” He studied her face. “Are you sure you’re ready for this?”

She nodded.

Caleb’s eyes went dark, the pupils dilating in his arousal. He took a step toward her. “You know that you’ll be forever linking your life with ours, right? Forever, Anne. It’s like marriage.”

Anne rose and met him in the center of the room. Caleb’s gaze burned her with its intensity. She could see how much he wanted her to agree to this, but his logical, rational side wanted to ensure it was the best thing for them all before she did.

He and Van were so balanced in this way. Caleb always thought before he acted, placing cognition above emotion. Van was most impulsive, allowing his emotions to lead. Anne loved those qualities in each of them and she loved how they seemed to complete each other—two halves of a luscious, wonderful whole.

Anne lowered her gaze for a moment, to Caleb’s saliva-inducing chest. Parting her lips just a little, she raised her head

and made sure all of her love for him and all of her lust shone clearly in her eyes. “Yes, I’m sure, Caleb.”

His breath caught and a slow, almost wicked smile spread across his mouth. “That’s good, Anne. Really, really good.”

“I thought it would please you.”

“I can think of other things right now that would please me too.” His voice was low, rough. His gaze, hungry, roved her form. Caleb was tired of waiting and the look in his eyes promised erotic delights to come.

Oh, this was the part of Caleb she’d suspected lurked under the surface. Anne was very happy to see him.

He slipped a hand around her waist, pressed his hand to the small of her back and dragged her up against his chest while he lowered his mouth to hers. Caleb slid his lips over hers slowly, sending shivers up her spine. After a few moments of that gentle torture, he parted her lips and eased his tongue within to stroke against her tongue. Her eyes closed and her breath caught in her throat. Suddenly she’d gone boneless. Caleb kissed better than any man she’d ever known.

Caleb broke the kiss as the powerful rush of sensation still held her body in thrall. He ripped the flimsy material of her nightgown apart in the front. She gasped in surprise, but he didn’t seem to notice. Caleb’s gaze was centered completely on her bared breasts.

It seemed all males had certain interests in common, no matter the dimension.

Then Caleb lowered his head and took one of her hardened nipples into his mouth and began to tease the other between his fingertips and the thought left her. *All* her thoughts left her for a moment. Her back arched and she breathed his name, her fingers finding gentle purchase in his hair.

Caleb raised his head for a moment and said, “Are you okay with this, Van?”

“For now.” His voice came out rough. “You take her and I’ll watch, Caleb. It’s only fair.”

Caleb’s grin grew a shade more wicked. He kept his gaze on Anne’s face. “Of course not, Van, we’ll both take her.”

Something inside Anne’s mind melted.

Caleb turned her to face Van and drew the rest of her nightgown off, letting it fall to the floor. Van ate her nude body up with his gaze and her temperature rose. In the moment before Caleb began touching her, she noticed that she didn’t feel self-conscious at all in front of either of these men. Standing naked in the light of day in front of anyone else would have made her nervous. With Caleb and Van she just felt beautiful.

Caleb spread his palm on her abdomen and dragged it down over her mound and between her thighs. Cupping one of

her breasts with his free hand, he stroked her clit until the bud swelled and became sensitive. From the couch, Van eyed her hungrily. Desire curled through her stomach at the knowledge that both these men wanted her. How deliciously and wonderfully incredible.

Then Caleb shifted downward, filling her cunt with two fingers at once and Anne completely lost her train of thought. Her whole reality became the slow stroke of her intimate flesh and the way her clit throbbed with the rising tide of her pleasure. He eased them in and out of her, urging her thighs wider apart for Van's viewing pleasure.

With his free hand he held her breast, rolling her nipple between his thumb and forefinger. The combination of sensations, having Caleb touch her this way and Van's heavy, desirous gaze on her—all of it made her knees weak. Van pushed away from the couch and came to kneel at her feet. Caleb removed his hand and allowed Van to grasp her hips and pull her forward, his tongue snaking between her thighs to lave over her clit.

If she'd thought her knees had felt weak before, having Caleb's strong body behind her and Van kneeling in front of her with his tongue on her pussy practically collapsed them. Caleb eased her down to the carpet and disappeared while Van yanked her toward him an inch and settled his mouth between her legs again. His tongue slicked over her folds and around

her aching bud. She squirmed on the floor and moaned, while he held her down and sucked on her clit, bringing her to the edge of climax and then drawing back, letting the power of it build.

Caleb returned and leaned over her, slipping his tongue within her mouth to stroke against hers. Her fingers found his shirt and pulled, wanting nothing more than to have his smooth, warm body against hers. Together they got his clothes off and she pushed up, falling upon Van to get his garments off too. While she pulled at Van's clothing, Caleb kissed along her shoulder and down her back, his hands roving over her breasts and delving to touch her between her thighs.

Her mouth found Van's and she kissed him deeply as he pressed his well-muscled body to her chest even as Caleb braced her from behind. Was this heaven she'd fallen into? A lazy, lusty, pleasurable haze settled over her body and mind.

She leaned down and sucked Caleb's cock into her mouth, making him gasp her name in surprise. Behind her, Van popped the top on a bottle of something Caleb had brought back with him and smeared some of it on his cock. From the corner of her eye, she watched his big hand work it into his shaft from base to tip. She grew hotter and damper at the mere thought of his cock entering her.

And then before she knew it, she was on her back with Van looming above her like some feral animal.

“Wait!” she gasped. “Protection.”

“*Cara*, I would never impregnate you without your consent,” Van said, and then pushed inside her.

“Oh...oh, Van,” she breathed. The way he stretched her was incredible. He entered her carefully, holding her hips and pushing in one impressive wide inch at a time, until she felt full, possessed, dominated.

At the same time Van fed her his erection, Caleb’s dark head worked over her breasts, stimulating each one so skillfully she thought she could come from that alone. The combination of sensations, having two men so focused on her pleasure, was the single most erotic encounter of Anne’s life.

The look on Van’s face was brutally needy, yet he took care in entering her, feeding his thick cock to her inch by careful inch. Her heart pounded as he filled her, her lips parted and her gaze steady with his. Physically, it was exquisite. Van was thick and long and touched every aching, wanting part of her cunt and satisfied it.

More than that, having the man—one of two—she cared so deeply for become a part of her... Overall, it felt *right*. As if this was the only place in the world—whichever one—she was supposed to be. As if these two men were made for her and she for them.

Van tipped his head back and groaned. “Perfect.”

Exactly.

Her eyes went moist and she fought the stupid urge to cry. Somehow she thought Van might take that reaction the wrong way. Instead she reached up and cupped his cheek. “I love you.”

Van took her hand and kissed her palm as he hilted inside her, making her gasp and let out a little laugh. “I love you too.”

Van held her hips, withdrew and pushed back in. Anne saw stars, then fireworks as he did it again, slowly. Steadily, he picked up the pace of his thrusts. On every inward movement, the head of his cock brushed her G-spot, sending an extra jolt of pleasure through her body. Soon he’d set up a fast and hard rhythm that drove everything from her mind but the pleasure of it.

“How does she feel?” Caleb asked in a low, rough voice. He watched his friend’s cock slide in and out of her.

“Hot, tight, sweet and soft as silk.”

Caleb turned his heavy-lidded gaze to Anne’s face. “And how does Van feel inside you?”

Guh. She couldn’t even speak. She forced out her answer. “Hot, hard. He fills me so full.”

Van placed his hands under her knees and pushed them toward her head, elevating and tipping her pelvis so she could see his big cock thrusting in and out of her cunt, could see how the shaft glistened with her cream with every outward

motion. Caleb touched her clit as Van fucked her harder and faster, his cock finding and stimulating every inch of the deepest part of her pussy.

Caleb moved from her breasts and slipped his hand between her and Van's pelvises. With deft fingers, he massaged her clit, pressed and rotated, manipulating the bundle of nerves until a climax roared through her body, making her twist and cry out their names.

Both their gazes were centered on her face, watching her expression as she came apart in a second powerful climax. Ecstasy took her over and ruled her body and mind for a long time as Caleb kept stroking her clit, petting it steadily while Van pounded piston-like into her. It seemed like one orgasm flowed into another. Her body thrummed and tingled and stole her breath.

Right when her orgasm was easing, Van withdrew without having come, and allowed Caleb to mount her. His cock slid in, stretching her a little bit more than Van and forcing her body to adjust to his greater girth. Caleb came down over her body, his gaze catching and holding hers for a breathtaking moment before his mouth descended on hers and his cock slid in and out of her body.

"I love you too," she whispered.

"I know."

Caleb pulled her up while he was still buried deep inside her and wrapped his arms around her. He kissed her face all over, her forehead, her cheeks, her lips. Then he moved to her neck and kissed there too. There was an emotional component to the way her held her and scattered kisses over her skin that made her feel loved and safe.

Van sank down on the floor behind her and kissed her bare shoulder and neck as his hands played over her body. With Caleb covering her front, his cock buried deep within her, and Van behind, she was sandwiched between their two bodies. In that moment, she fully gave herself over to it. She was cherished and protected.

In this moment she knew, *knew*, that despite everything, in their arms was where she belonged.

Caleb leaned back, pulling her with him so she was in cowgirl position. Bracing her feet on the carpet, she rose up and then sank back down on his cock, taking him to the base. Caleb's breath hissed between his teeth and he closed his eyes.

Van slid a warm, broad hand down her spine and inserted it between the cheeks of her ass. There he massaged a dollop of lubricant across her entrance, making all the nerves there jump to glorious life. Her body tensed; she knew what was coming and the prospect both excited her and scared the hell out of her.

“Shh,” said Van, laying a trail of kisses across her shoulder. “We’ll take it slow.”

He pushed a finger within her rear, then two, widening her enough for his cock. Caleb instructed her to remain motionless while he jabbed his cock in and out of her cunt, his strong thigh muscles working beneath her, as Van slowly fucked her from behind with his fingers. The combination of sensation nearly blew her mind, curling through her body with mind-numbing pleasure. She couldn’t imagine what it would be like to take his cock there.

Then he repositioned her, the smooth head of his shaft pressing against her opening, and she realized she’d soon find out. He pushed his well-lubricated cock in a little and the ring of muscles stretched. It felt good, so, *so* good, yet the pleasure was accompanied by a tang of pain. Panic shot through her.

Her breath caught. “Van—”

“It’s all right, my love. You’re aroused and very relaxed. You’ll stretch enough to take me.”

Another inch. And another. Caleb found her clit and stroked it as Van worked his way into her, mixing the slight discomfort with so much pleasure as to render it non-existent.

Van let out a slow breath once he was seated to the base of him. “Gods, you feel good, Anne.” He pulled out and thrust back.

Anne's breath hissed between her teeth at the ecstasy of the long, slow movements he made. The pain was still there, just the barest hint to make the pleasure all the sweeter.

Then Caleb began to move faster and she thought her head would explode. The two sensations blended together in one long, everlasting hum of carnal bliss. She couldn't differentiate the feel of either of them, and so it was as if the two became one. Together, the three of them were joined.

They moved like one being, not knowing where one ended and the other began. Anne's orgasm teased her with its promise, flirting with her body, until it caught and exploded through her body. Her head fell back on a cry. Both Caleb and Van came too, their shouts filling the room.

Warmth enveloped her, a tingling sensation engulfing her body and rocketing through her veins. Just as her climax was spurting to a halt, it flared back to life, even more powerfully. Joined, all of them felt it. It raced through all three of their bodies like energy through a circuit, binding them heart, body and soul.

Mate seal.

When the powerful force that held them in thrall finally released them, Anne collapsed on Caleb. Van withdrew from her and curled next to them on the floor, panting. Both of them scattered kisses over her face, shoulders and neck. All of them murmured how much they loved each other.

After several minutes of recovery time, Van picked her up and carried her to the bathroom, where they all bathed. Then they curled up into the big bed and slept. Occasionally, she would awake to find Van or Caleb between her thighs, laving her pussy with their skillful tongues, or slowly and easily fucking her to yet another climax. Anne had lost count of how many she'd enjoyed. She knew she'd be sore from their ardent attentions, but she could hardly complain.

She'd found her mates for life, *both* of them.

*

Anne glanced at one of the ten files on her desk at the Valencian Administration of Law office. About a week after her dinner with Anton, he'd offered her a position there. Knowing that she'd hit the jackpot with Van and Caleb and having made peace with her new life in Valencia, she'd accepted. It was a challenging job and she enjoyed it for that very reason. Even here she had a career to grow, but this situation was even better than the one she'd had on Earth since she had Van and Caleb to go home to every night.

She had a life, people to love and love her back, and she had a future.

Van had even offered to stay at home with any children they might have. How cool of him was that? Of course, any

possibility of children was a while away. They were all still growing used to sharing their lives together.

Anton stuck his head into her office. “You should go home, Anne. It’s late. Your men are probably wondering where you are. The work will still be here in the morning.”

Some habits were hard to break.

Anne covered a yawn with her hand. “Yes, I’m done. I’ll be headed home in about five minutes.”

Anton smiled. “It’s good to have you here. Your expertise has been very valuable to us.”

“It’s great to be here, Anton. This job is twice as interesting as the one I had on Earth.” She considered the file in front of her and frowned. “Which is probably why I’m *here* instead of at home with two hunks I call husbands. Am I crazy?”

Anton laughed. “Don’t work too hard. I’ll see you in the morning.”

After a few minutes, Anne switched off the light and headed out into the square. It was dark and the full moon hung swollen in the sky. Van and Caleb had offered to meet her, but since she hadn’t known when she’d be wrapping things up she’d told them not to come. It wasn’t a long walk, it was a beautiful night, and Valencia was largely crime free.

She started down the path toward the house, the night birds tweeting in the trees around her. Other than that, it was silent.

Except for the footsteps behind her.

Anne stopped, shivers going up her spine. Then she shrugged and continued on. It was silly to think she was in any danger here. It was probably someone else who'd worked late tonight. Apparently, there were way too many horror stories stuffed inside her subconscious mind.

The footsteps grew closer, gaining on her.

Anne hurried, every suspense film with the same scenario suddenly flitting through her mind.

Something stepped out from the darkened corner up ahead. She stopped short and stared. Hulking shoulders, brutal set to the body. He stepped forward, into the moonlight. *Frankenstein.*

Oh God, the Guardians had found her!

She whirled to run, only to see another one blocking her way. She turned, ducked between two buildings, and headed straight for the forested area that surrounded the Valencian town. She remembered quite well the goal of the Guardians—kill all the mates so the Harmons couldn't reproduce.

Her feet pounded on the cobblestone street. It gave way to gravel, and then to grass. She plunged into the tree line and

past it, into the clearing. The Guardians chased her, silently, stealthily.

And Caleb and Van? Were they okay? Had the Guardians—

No. She couldn't allow her mind to go there. She just had to concentrate on an escape.

In the distance was a shimmering in the air. Anne recognized this area as the one she'd first arrived in. Did that mean the shimmering was a doorway? She altered her course to go around it, but some force pulled at her clothes and hair, sucking her nearer and nearer.

In panic, Anne cried out. What was happening? Why was the doorway pulling her in like it had a tractor beam?

With the Guardians closing in behind her and the shimmering area sucking at the front of her, she was rapidly running out of options. Her life, idyllic for such a short amount of time, had suddenly transformed into a nightmare.

The doorway gave one horrendous pull and she was flying across the grass and being dragged through the weeds...right for it.

Chapter Six

Soon someone was lifting her. Strong, hard, warm arms.
“Van? Caleb?”

“Hey, relax. You’re safe now.” It was a foreign voice.

Her eyelids flickered open to glimpse a police officer.
“What happened?” She struggled to sit up and noticed right away she was covered with a scratchy gray blanket. Underneath that...she was naked. She gasped.

“Calm down.”

“What the hell is going on?”

“We were hoping you could tell us that. Someone called to let us know you were here, lying in this alley—”

“Naked?”

He nodded. She racked her brain. The Guardian had been chasing her and she’d run into the fields. The portal had been there and it had pulled her through...that’s all she could remember.

Where had her clothes gone?

An ambulance siren whined in the distance, growing closer.

“What’s your name? Do you remember what happened?”

She shook her head, unable to answer.

“Someone who works at the coffee shop down the block saw you drop your cup outside on the walk and run like someone was chasing you. Was someone chasing you?”

“*What?* When-when was that?”

The policeman blinked. “When was what? When did the employee at the coffee shop see you run away after you bought your coffee?”

Her teeth chattered and she shivered. All she could do was nod, afraid of his answer.

“Yesterday morning. You’ve been missing for twenty-four hours, give or take.”

Only a day? What? At least four weeks had passed since she’d met Van and Caleb.

“There’s an ambulance coming to take you to the hospital for a full examination.”

To see if she’d been raped.

She closed her eyes as tears welled. God, what was going on? Had it all really been a dream? Had she’d been attacked in some horrific way and slipped into a delusion to survive it?

Anne let a sob escape her. Were Van and Caleb just figments of her imagination?

Sorrow clenched her chest until she couldn’t breathe. Sadness dredged itself from the very bottom of her being.

Dark, bitter, suffocating sludge. *Grief*. She knew the emotion well.

Anne hardly noticed it when the paramedics led her to the ambulance.

Anne rested her head on the back of her couch and stared out the window. Rain dribbled down the glass, the scene fitting her mood. A cup of tea lay forgotten and cold on the coffee table and the house had grown dark and still. She hadn't troubled herself to move from her spot on the couch for several hours and twilight had fallen.

They had found no evidence of rape. She didn't have a bruise on her, in fact. She could remember nothing of what happened to her and she didn't breathe a word of Van and Caleb. They would think she was crazy and she wasn't so sure she wasn't.

Because if Van and Caleb had been real, if there really had been a portal and a different dimension, why hadn't they come for her?

It had been three days.

Anne touched her lips where they'd kissed her. Yet, she knew they couldn't have only been figments of her

imagination. They'd been too real...she'd loved them so much. She *did* love them so much.

But it made sense that it had been a delusion. Really, portals and different dimensions? Handsome, hunky dream men who only had eyes for her? Sign her up for the funny farm. The most plausible explanation was that she'd been assaulted in some way and in order to cope, she'd gone into some self-created fantasy world.

Surely, that was the case.

Her firm had given her some time to recuperate and she was grateful. It seemed she didn't have the drive to work as hard as she'd had before.

She shook her head. Who was she fooling? She'd give up all her cases, her home, her career, all the pretty things her salary had bought her—all of it—only for another few moments with Van and Caleb.

At some point she fell asleep, only to be awoken by a pounding on the door. She jerked awake and listened for a moment, fear rocketing through her. A vision of the green monster—the Guardian—who'd chased her either through her delusion or not, sprung into her mind's eye.

Anne shook her head, rose, and went to the door. Beyond the rain-rivuleted pane of glass in the front door, she glimpsed two sodden figures.

Two.

She stopped short in the hallway. It could be anyone. Could be policemen coming to give her an update or ask her more questions, could be coworkers come to check up on her. Could be Mormons on their mission. Anyone was more likely than two hunky, beautiful men come from another dimension to claim her as their mate.

The thing was, she knew it was Van and Caleb. *Knew* it with everything she was.

Anne ran down the hallway and threw the door open. On the steps stood the two men of her deepest desire and strongest love. Her face felt ready to break she was smiling so hard.

“Anne,” said Caleb with a smile.

She threw herself out into the rain and into their arms. They caught and kissed her over and over, each taking turns. Anne nuzzled Van’s cheek. “I thought you two really were just part of my fevered imagination there for a bit. I ended up back here, no clothes, hardly any passage of time—”

“Ah. We should have told you that time moves differently on Earth than it does on Harmon,” murmured Van. “One Earth day is approximately a month’s time on Harmon.”

Caleb took her from Van and kissed her. “And your clothes, well, they would have burned up when you went through the portal in this direction.”

Van came up behind her and kissed her shoulder. “Shall we make them disappear again, Caleb?”

“Mmm.” Caleb pulled her back into the house and Van slammed the door shut with his foot.

“What about the Guardian?” she asked breathlessly in between kisses.

“There was a battle,” murmured Van. “They found a way through the barriers. That’s why it took us so long to come back to you. We fought for months, but it’s over now. We won. We’re safe for the time being.”

“Come back to us,” whispered Caleb. “Come back, Anne.”

“My heart is yours, my body, my soul. I will come back with you, Caleb and Van. I love you both so much.” Her voice broke with emotion on the words.

Caleb smiled. “I’m so glad you finally figured that out. Now, let’s get back to those clothes...”

About the Author

Anya Bast is the author of numerous works of romantic fiction, mostly all paranormal and mostly all scorching hot. She lives in the country with her husband, daughter, eight cats, a dog, and an odd assortment of rescued animals.

Somewhat reclusive by nature, she can be drawn out with a good bottle of red wine, classic movies, or good music. When she's not writing, she can be found trying to grow organic vegetables, shopping in thrift stores for that perfect piece of clothing, or dreaming about travel to some faraway country.

She loves to hear from readers. Contact her via her web site www.anyabast.com

Her destiny rests in their hands...

Very Much Alive

© 2009 Dana Marie Bell

True Destiny, Book 1

Kiran Tate and Logan Saeter have been on the run from Oliver Grimm for so long they've forgotten what it's like to be free. Ending Grimm's power games won't be easy, but this time they have an ace in the hole. PI Jordan Grey, Guardian Investigation's resident hot shot—and Grimm's step-granddaughter.

Jordan Grey has her doubts when Logan and Kir show up in her office with a tall tale of how her step-grandfather has framed them for murder. And to top it all off, they're claiming that they're really the ancient Norse gods Loki and Baldur, and that Grimm is Odin!

When the two lovers see the sexy detective for the first time, stopping Grimm suddenly takes a back seat to seducing her into their arms. But Grimm never rests, and when his anger spills over onto Jordan, it sets them all on a collision course with a destiny that will rock their world...

Warning: This book contains explicit sex, graphic language, some violence, and hot male/male/female action. In fact, it could be considered a religious experience.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Very Much Alive:

Kir closed the door behind himself and Logan after having seen Jordan onto the elevator. He sighed and closed his eyes tightly, completely mortified.

Fuck. Logan saw my reaction to Jordan.

The knowing gleam in his lover's eyes did not bode well for the coming conversation.

So it was with some surprise he felt Logan gently push his hand into his hair, pulling Kir's mouth to his own. The kiss was a languid stroking of tongues, not the usual kiss Logan gave. Logan usually preferred hot, heavy kisses, full of passion and the promise of sex. This one was the kind of kiss Kir preferred. Soft, sweet, and full of the love they both felt.

"I love you, you know that, right?"

Kir focused on Logan's face. "No more than I love you."

"We need to talk."

Kir closed his eyes again, not wanting to see the pain in Logan's.

"Hey."

He sighed and moved past Logan's body and into the living room. Dejected, he sat on the sofa, his head in his hands. "I'm so sorry."

"For what? The fact that you're attracted to Jordan?"

Kir groaned.

“Kir.” He looked up, surprised to see the understanding on Logan’s face. “Me, too.”

He felt a surprising flash of jealousy at that, but wasn’t sure if it was for Logan or Jordan. *Not good...or very good?* “You want her, too?”

“Don’t sound so surprised. She’s a hell of a woman.”

Kir found himself nodding his agreement. “She took everything we threw at her in stride.”

“If I was her I would have kicked our asses out of my office, gone and had a few drinks, then convinced myself it never happened right after I called to have the carpet replaced.”

“So what do we do about it?”

They stared into each other’s faces, reading the promises they’d long ago made to each other and the new, sudden *want* they both felt. No matter how startlingly strong, there was no way Kir would act on it if it meant losing Logan.

Logan was his everything.

Kir reached out first, cupping Logan’s cheek. “I would *never* do anything to hurt you, Logan.”

“Ditto.” Logan’s face was flushed with pleasure, that demonic grin of his once again gracing his features.

“So, what do we do?”

He watched Logan slouch down onto the floor at his feet, resting his head against Kir's knees with a contented sigh.

"The way I see it, we have two options."

"Those are?" Kir's heart rate picked up. He began absently stroking that fiery hair, wondering if Logan was thinking what he was thinking.

"Option one: we walk away from her once this is all over."

No!

The instant denial raced through his body, causing him to jump. *What the fuck?* He *never* had that reaction to losing anyone or anything...other than Logan.

It didn't help that Logan started to chuckle. "Thought so."

"Option two?"

His heart was in his throat right up until Logan looked up at him with a leer. "Don't you just love the French?"

Kir blinked. "Huh?"

"They come up with words for the most amazing concepts."

"Like?" Kir drawled. He was pretty sure now he knew where Logan was going, but he wanted confirmation before he said anything.

"Ménage a trois. It has such a sexy ring to it, doesn't it?"

“*Permanent ménage?*” The words had left his mouth before he even realized the significance of what he was saying. Something about Jordan just...felt *right*.

Logan’s expression turned serious. “I’m not sure yet.” He shook his head, smirking. “But tell me you aren’t already a little in love with her, and I’ll call you a liar. I mean, damn. She’s got a smart mouth, hot body, bodacious ass, and she’s clever as all hell. And she wants *both* of us.”

Kir opened his mouth to say the words and found them stuck in his throat. “Damn.”

“Ditto.”

“How the hell did *that* happen?”

“I don’t know, but it did.” Logan was frowning again, this time in confusion. “It’s like we’ve found something we didn’t even know was missing. But if you asked, I would walk away from this. You know that.” For the first time, Kir saw Logan’s uncertainty peek through, reminding him of the broken man Loki had been after Baldur freed him from the mountain. The reckless youth he was had been burned away by the snake’s acid, leaving behind a damaged man who tossed and turned at night, screaming denials as he relived everything over and over again. It had taken Kir a long time to ease his lover’s torment. He also knew their relationship was the foundation the now confident, cocky man who was *still* inclined to take risks stood on.

Which was why he'd been so upset about his reaction to Jordan. But knowing that Logan felt the same eased that guilt.

Kir thought about taking Jordan and making her theirs. Thanks to Logan's ability to shift genders as well as shape, Kir had been happily bisexual for centuries now. He'd felt no need to go outside the relationship when Logan could, literally, be everything and anything he needed. Logan, on the other hand, hadn't been able to explore that side of himself with Kir, since Kir couldn't change his shape. He knew that sometimes Logan longed for soft, scented flesh, rounded breasts and bellies, all of the things he'd given up when he'd pledged himself to Kir. But Logan, for all his wild youth and unhappy marriage, hadn't cheated on him once. And not once, through all of the long centuries, had either of them had the urge to add a third to their relationship.

Now, with the advent of one small, half-human woman, all of that was about to change. He could give the touch of a female back to his lover, *and* have them both for himself. He thought back to the odd feeling he'd had on the beach, that something was about to happen that would change them, and felt that sensation once more before it settled into a comfortable purr.

He saw the relief on Logan's face as he nodded his acceptance.

Jordan was theirs. Now they just had to seduce her to them.

If the tube's a-rockin', don't come a-knockin'...

Close Encounters

© 2009 B.H. Dark

Odilia is a nice planet. The sky is purple, the grass is yellow, the property prices aren't that bad. But reproduction is painful, solitary, and asexual. Which is why the Odilians find the recently discovered "X-rated" disks from Earth so fascinating. And why the money-making scheme they're hatching is so brilliant.

The plan is simple: abduct four Earthlings and juice them up on a heady pheromone cocktail. Then plop them in a variety of titillating holographic scenarios and market the results as reality entertainment—for vast profits.

The four chosen humans are strangers to each other, but not to life's disappointments. Leandros, a lounge singer who's never committed to anything longer than an Elvis medley. Eve, an interior designer who's living a life much more beige than bold. Beau, a laid-back car mechanic who wants more from life than oil changes. And Cassandra, an innocent debutante who's learned most of her sexual know-how from self-help books.

As unwilling—okay, sort of willing—stars of the Odilians' budding intergalactic porn empire, the four of them

consider their options. Relax and enjoy the ride? Try to escape?

How about fall in love?

Warning: This book contains voyeuristic aliens, hologram cowboy orgies, big dildoes, disco, and gratuitous use of the word “baby”.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Close Encounters:

“Oh my.”

Cassandra blinked and stared around her. Somehow, she was in a perfectly square room, sitting on a heart-shaped bed. Thick red shag carpeting covered the floor and walls. And there was a...

A mirror on the ceiling?

She wasn't at home. This was most definitely not Foxborough, Connecticut. People in Foxborough didn't tend to go for red heart-shaped furniture.

Was it real? She gingerly touched the satiny bedspread. It felt real. She got up and looked through the open door, which led to a rather lavish tile and chrome bathroom with a heart-shaped tub. That looked real, too. Tacky, but real.

Unless this was a particularly lifelike dream. She'd had some very lifelike dreams lately, dreams where when she woke up she had to lie in bed and catch her breath for a few minutes before she could remember where she was and who

she was. Dreams that were populated by strange, shadowy people, and weirdly intense feelings.

This could be one of those dreams. Except it appeared that she was alone.

Experimentally, she gave herself a hard pinch on the arm. It hurt.

“Wake up,” she told herself. Nothing happened.

“I’m Cassandra Mary Elliot, of 46 Maple Street, Foxborough, Connecticut, USA,” she said aloud. Her voice sounded flat, its loudness absorbed by the shag carpeting. “I’m twenty-one years old, and I am probably dreaming right now.”

Well, she knew who she was, anyway. That was a step up. Unless she wasn’t really Cassandra Elliot of Maple Street, Foxborough, and she was only dreaming that she knew who she was.

Cassandra shook her head. It didn’t do to think too much in dreams. She’d read a book about it recently. You should relax and enjoy and forget about logic and reality.

That decided, she sat down on the heart-shaped bed and looked around her. There was something weird about this room, besides the fact that nobody in Foxborough would be seen dead in somewhere like this, and that she shouldn’t be here either. She couldn’t quite put her finger on it, though.

Instead, she tried to remember what her last waking thought had been. She’d read that sometimes when you fell

asleep your brain kept on going over what you had been thinking about and your dreams reflected that.

But the last thing she could remember was sitting in her bedroom, at her desk, half-heartedly studying because she couldn't sleep. Cassandra looked down at herself; she was wearing her cream satin nightgown and her green Chinese silk bathrobe. Well, she hadn't been wearing that before. She'd been in flannel pajamas. And there was no way on Earth that she would be wearing this outfit in somebody else's bedroom; she practically blushed every time she put it on in her own bedroom, where nobody could see her.

So she must be dreaming. It was good she'd got that settled, anyway.

"Hey, hi there."

A deep voice, slow and drawly and masculine.

Cassandra's head shot up. And immediately she knew what had been weird about the room on top of its general weirdness, because there was an open door in the room and there hadn't been any doors before except for the one leading to the bathroom.

But now there was a door open in the wall across from her. And a man standing in it.

Cassandra scrambled further onto the bed, as if it would give her protection. The man was tall and strong-looking. He had long straight brown hair that tumbled over his shoulders

and a goatee around his mouth. And he was wearing—this got worse and worse—faded jeans, a black leather jacket, and a black T-shirt that had some rock band's name printed on it.

“Who are you?” She couldn't keep the fear out of her voice.

The man regarded her evenly. “My name's Beauregard B. Bryson, but you might as well call me Beau because everyone does. Is this your place?”

“I—I'm not sure. If it's my dream, I guess it's my place. But it's a little strange.”

Beau nodded, slowly. “Yeah. Well, I'm glad I'm not the only one who feels like they're having an acid flashback.” He stepped forward and Cassandra retreated a little further back on the bed. It might be her dream, but she wasn't so sure that he wasn't a psycho rapist. She'd seen a photograph of a psycho rapist one time in the newspaper and she was pretty certain he'd been wearing a leather jacket and a rock band T-shirt. It might even have been the same rock band he was wearing.

Instead of leaping onto the bed and raping her, he held out his hand. “Guess we'd better get to know each other if we're dreaming together.”

His hand was big. The nails were short and his fingers looked pink and scrubbed. Cassandra took his hand and shook it as if it were the tail of a rabid raccoon she thought was

going to spin around and bite her at any moment. Despite her fear, it felt warm and welcoming.

Beau smiled. "What's your name?"

If it was a dream, it probably wouldn't do any harm. "Cassandra."

"Hi there, Cassandra." He sat down on the bed beside her. Cassie tried not to breathe too much, but she couldn't help noticing that he smelled of soap and something minty, like gum. "Do you think we should go have a look around this place and see where the hell we are?"

"I don't know." Something occurred to her. "How did you make the door happen?"

As soon as she said it she realized it was a bizarre question, but Beau just nodded and shrugged. "Dunno," he said. "I thought of there being a door and there it was, and there you were."

"That's weird."

"Yup."

"Maybe it's just a coincidence."

"Maybe."

"Do you remember how you got here?"

"Nope. Last thing I remember I'd just beat my brother at poker and I was watching a rerun of *Wheel of Fortune*. That's why I thought it was a flashback. The spinning lights can do that to ya."

Cassandra nodded, though she wasn't sure what he was talking about. "Maybe you're right, we should go and look around and figure out where we are."

"Can't hurt," Beau said amiably. He stood up and offered her his hand again, presumably to help her off the bed. Flustered, she ignored it and slid off the bed by herself. Her bathrobe rode up her legs and she tugged it back down before she stood up. When she looked at him, Beau's gaze was on her bare legs where she'd just covered them, and she blushed.

"Uh," he said, and ran his hand through his long brown hair. "I guess we'd better start with that door." He went to it, still open in the carpeted wall, and waited for her to join him.

Well, if he was going to rape her, it seemed like he'd have done it when they were sitting on the bed together. And really she might as well see what this dream was all about before she woke up. She joined him at the door and they walked out into the corridor together.

It looked like a hotel corridor: long, papered in beige, with sunken lighting and tastefully patterned carpet. Soft music piped in. They walked down the hallway in silence, their footfalls muffled by the carpet. Beau's legs were much longer than Cassandra's, but he walked slowly to keep pace with her, and she could smell the clean scent of his hair.

The hallway ended in a single white door. It had a gold handle.

“I guess this is it,” Beau said and he reached out and twisted the knob. Even though Cassandra knew this wasn’t real, she still held her breath with trepidation as he opened the door.

The vast room beyond was lit with a dim blue light. It seemed to be coming from a large transparent blue tube in the centre of the room that stretched from the floor upwards toward a distant ceiling. The walls of the room were invisible, shadowy and too far away to perceive.

“Cool,” said Beau appreciatively and he stepped inside the room. Cassandra followed him, looking down at their shadows, cast long by the light from the hallway behind them.

And then their shadows disappeared along with the light.

Cassandra whirled around. There was nothing behind them but darkness. The door was gone.

“Beau—” she started.

She felt his hand curl around hers. She blinked, and tensed, and the world dissolved around her and then reformed.

They were inside the blue tube. She held out her hand and knocked on the wall of it. It felt like some kind of strong, thick glass. There wasn’t a light source; the walls themselves seemed to be glowing.

“What’s going on?” she asked. Beau was close beside her. The tube wasn’t that wide, but there was enough room for them to stand and move around a little bit.

“Beats me.”

There was a noise, something like a vent opening, and a rush of air. She felt something warm whoosh over her skin and breathed in a smell that seemed familiar somehow. Appealing, exciting.

Heat flushed through her body. But it wasn't like any heat she'd ever felt before—not like the warmth from sunshine, or an open fire. It came from deep inside her and radiated from her center into her limbs, making her fingers tingle, her breasts feel heavy, her belly melting, sending a pure sizzling lightning bolt between her legs.

“Oh my,” she gasped.

She heard a deep growly sound from next to her and realized it was Beau. She felt Beau like a magnet beside her. She could hear his breathing, hear his heart, feel him warm and big and alive beside her, and she suddenly felt more hungry than she'd ever been in her life.

But not hungry for food. Hungry for him. For Beau.

She turned to look at him and God, he looked good. Tall and strong and handsome. There was a dark light in his blue eyes.

He looked as ravenous as she was.

His tongue moistened his lips and her gaze stuck on his mouth. His lips were full, his tongue pink and wet, and there

was nothing in the world she wanted to do more than to kiss him.

She *had* to kiss him. She didn't care if he was a stranger, or that she didn't know where they were. She licked her own lips and imagined tasting him there already. It was maddening, tempting, irresistible.

She stepped forward and he met her halfway, wrapping his arms around her and pulling her tight against his hard body. When their mouths met it sent another shock down her spine, and she actually felt her crotch dampen, felt the lips of her sex swell inside her underwear.

She would have blushed if it didn't feel so wonderful. Her nipples were hard and rubbed against him through the layers of silk she wore, begging for his touch.

His lips were soft and warm, and right away they opened, coaxing hers open too. His tongue traced her lips and dipped inside her mouth, filling her with his masculine taste, and Cassie knew that this wasn't all she wanted.

She wanted him. All of him. Inside her. His hands on her naked skin, his—his penis. Inside her vagina.

This time, she did blush.

"What's happening?" she whispered, between kisses. Normally she wouldn't talk and kiss at the same time. But she didn't seem to be able to stop, even to find out what was going on. His mouth was too delicious and his body too exciting.

“I don’t know,” he murmured back to her. His voice vibrated against her chest where she was pressed against him, and his facial hair tickled her chin. “But I like it.”

Should she like it, too? She couldn’t be sure; her body’s demands were too strong. She couldn’t stop to think. She didn’t want to. She groaned and pressed herself against him still closer, sucking his tongue into her mouth and biting on his lower lip. She grabbed the front of his leather jacket and pulled him to her as hard as she could, arching her body up into his.

She heard Beau moan and then she felt his hands pushing at her robe, then on her breasts through her nightgown. His fingers tweaked her nipples and she cried out, unprepared for the sensations that zinged the entire length of her body.

“Dang,” he muttered roughly and with a single, swift movement he grasped the neck of her nightie and ripped it open to her waist.

“What are you—” She barely had time to gasp half the question before his lips were at her breast, sucking her nipple deep into his hot mouth, his hand clamped around her.

“Oh!” she squealed as pleasure bolted through her. She looked down and saw the top of Beau’s head, his shiny, long hair. She could see his mouth on her, feel the rasp of his beard against her sensitive skin. His hand was dark against the creamy skin of her breast. The sight of his lips on her and the

feeling of his tongue and teeth urgently suckling her, were incredibly erotic.

And I just met him five minutes ago, she thought.

“This dream is amazing,” she gasped.

“It is,” Beau breathed, and he moved to her other breast. This time she could feel the air cooling her wet left nipple as he attacked her right one, and it was as if he was licking both of them at once.

She’d never known it would be so exquisite. But it wasn’t enough. Cassandra’s hands itched to touch Beau. She had a sudden flash of imagining what it would be like to hold his hot, hard rod in the palm of her hand.

She knew what a penis looked like, of course. She’d seen pictures and movies and read descriptions; this was the twenty-first century, after all.

But she’d never before imagined the feeling of one so much that she could actually *feel* it, hot and throbbing and alive in her hand. There would be hair at the base of it. Would it be coarse, like the hair between her own legs, or would it be soft and silky, like the hair on Beau’s head? She let her hand drop to the top of his head and tangled her fingers in the strands.

She pulled him up to kiss her again and this time she was the one who thrust her tongue inside his mouth, her whose hands were fumbling with his clothes. She tried to undo his

belt buckle but the angle was unfamiliar, and she tugged without any result.

“Let me do it,” Beau mumbled, and he took one of his hands away from her breasts, the other one still squeezing her. With a deft movement he unfastened his jeans and kicked them and his boxers down his legs, and his cock leapt into her hand.

Even with all her anticipation she was unprepared for how he felt: his length, his girth, his hardness and the softness of his skin. Beau groaned and pushed his penis into the tunnel of her palm. She squeezed him experimentally.

“Darlin’, that feels so good.” He pushed against her, and she stroked him. She should stop, look down, experience this moment fully. She shouldn’t rush this. She—she shouldn’t be doing this in the first place.

He was so big. So strange, so new.

She wanted him inside her. Penetrating her. *Fucking* her.

Another melting wave of lust shot through her. Cassandra raised her leg and wrapped it around his hip. His firm thigh rubbed against her pussy through her underwear and she nearly cried out in pleasure. Who knew this would be so amazing?

“Jesus, Cassie,” he growled into her ear. He grabbed her ass with both hands and slammed her up against the wall of the tube. She barely had time to gasp with shock and desire

before he'd torn off her underwear like he'd torn her nightgown and she felt the hot head of his dick between her legs, probing at her entrance.

"Please," she whimpered. "Now. F—fuck me."

This was some dream. There was no way on Earth she would say those words aloud in real life. Or that she would dig her nails into a man's ass, driving him forward, into her.

With an inarticulate cry Beau thrust forward, plunging his cock into her up to the hilt.

Pain blossomed inside her and she screamed, surprised and shocked and thrilled. Even as she panted in a breath the pain had turned to pure, burning pleasure.

And yet Beau had stopped. She turned wide eyes to his face and saw him, jaw clenched, sweat sheening his face with the effort of his restraint.

"Are you all right?" he gritted.

"More," she answered him.

"I don't want to—"

She clenched her legs around him. And other muscles, inner muscles she'd never felt before.

"I want you to," she said.

He let out a strangled groan and began pumping into her wildly. Every thrust rubbed her even hotter. She could hear the wet sound of him sliding in and out of her. The desperate sound of them kissing each other. The tube was full of a scent

she'd never smelled before, something musky and enticing, the smell of sex.

She loved it.

Beau tilted her hips and she felt him stretching her in another way, felt the hard ridge of his cock rubbing against a spot deep up inside her, and his groin and abdomen grinding a spot outside of her, and everything was suddenly *much much better*, incredible as it seemed. He pounded into her, long and strong and relentless, his breath coming in short sharp gasps. Every movement was more pleasurable than the last.

"Oh hell Cassie, you're so wet and tight," Beau muttered against her, never slackening the hard, even pace of his thrusts. "Come. Please come, I need to feel you."

Come where? she thought dazedly, until some far-flung rational part of her mind said *Oh, he means have an orgasm*. No sooner had she thought it than the fringes of her mind began to melt and blur and her body began to tremble.

She couldn't bear it. *Stop. Don't stop*. Cassandra arched back against the blue glass tube and closed her eyes and thrashed her head back and forth. This wasn't like the orgasms she'd had before, from her fingers, centered on her clitoris. This was everywhere, burning every inch of her skin and swelling through her whole body and mind. She dug her nails even deeper into Beau's flesh and felt her body slamming into orbit, out of control, faster, too fast.

She screamed. Her body convulsed around him.

Beau roared and thrust into her one last time, powerfully enough to drive her hips hard against the tube. The tube shuddered and Beau jerked inside her. She felt a jet of heat and saw him grimace with pleasure.

He held her there, pinned against the glass wall, for several moments while they both just breathed.

Samhain Publishing, Ltd.

It's all about the story...

Action/Adventure

Fantasy

Historical

Horror

Mainstream

Mystery/Suspense

Non-Fiction

Paranormal

Red Hots!

Romance

Science Fiction

Western

Young Adult

www.samhainpublishing.com