# A Farewell To

Pepper Espinoza

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He grabbed her before she had the chance to pull away, wrapping his arms around her and pushing her back, trapping her against the mattress. "Now I've got you."

Rachel arched her brow. "I'm not trying very hard to get away."

"I want to fuck him."

"Okay."

"I want you to eat out his wife."

"Okay."

"I want to watch him fuck both of you."

"Are these long-held fantasies?"

"Maybe. You've never thought about it?"

She might have been more hesitant to tell David the truth, but she didn't keep anything from Ian. If he asked her a direct question, she would answer. He always deserved that much.

"I've thought about it. I love to think about the two of you. You're both so pretty."

"Don't tell David you think he's pretty. It'll insult his manhood."

"But bending over for you won't?"

Ian winked. "I'll make it so good for him, he won't care about the insult."

"I told him to come in here in fifteen minutes if we didn't come out. I think that means we better get ready for our guests."

"Good. You get naked, I'll get the candles."

"Why is me getting naked always part of your plans?" "Motivation..."

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## BY PEPPER ESPINOZA

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#### A FAREWELL TO ANGELS AN AMBER QUILL PRESS BOOK

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## CHAPTER 1

"I'm just really scared," Jade murmured, her words almost lost beneath the steady beat of the knife cutting through potatoes.

"I know." Rachel didn't need to look at her friend to see the fear on her face. She hadn't looked normal, or happy, since the news came that her husband, David, would be shipping out. She had married David knowing it would be a possibility, but that didn't make the news bearable. That didn't make it hurt less.

"I just keep wondering what I'm going to do if he never comes home, you know?"

"You shouldn't think like that." Rachel snapped her green

beans without breaking the rhythm, but her mind wasn't on the task. "It's not going to do any good and it won't happen."

"But what if it does?"

"Then we'll deal with it when it happens. But it still won't do any good to worry about it now."

"I wish I knew how you could stay so calm. I know you're worried about him, too."

That was an understatement. David had been her best friend since they were twelve, and she couldn't imagine a life without him in it. They had thirteen years of memories between them, including things that they never even shared with their respective spouses. The thought of losing him wasn't unlike the thought of cutting off her own hand, but she couldn't very well say that. She didn't have the right to turn the conversation into one about her fear and loss. Jade was his wife. She needed support.

"Because I know that he's a smart, capable guy. I know that he'd do anything to get back home to his family. I know that this is what he wants."

"He doesn't want to die."

"But he does want to fight for his country. He's always been that way."

"He's romanticized the military. It's not some great and noble duty...it's horrible, bloody killing."

"I think he sees it as both," Rachel pointed out. "Do you need help with those potatoes?"

Jade shook her head. "No, I've got it under control. I think it's the least I can do."

"Because I'm hosting the dinner?"

"You're doing more than that." Jade wiped her eyes with the back of her hand. "God, I am so sniffly today. I'm sorry."

Rachel dropped her green bean and crossed the kitchen. Jade didn't resist when Rachel pulled her into an embrace. Her hair tickled Rachel's jaw, and she was surprisingly warm and soft in her arms.

"Don't apologize. You have the right to be a bit sniffly. God knows, I've done my fair share of crying already."

"I don't know how you're going to put up with me. You're probably going to kick me out after a week, and I wouldn't blame you."

"I'm not going to kick you out. Ian might, though, if we don't get this dinner taken care of."

Jade lifted her head and offered a watery smile. Her blue eyes, which were always charming, were even more endearing when swimming in tears, and the flush of her cheeks just added to her natural beauty. She was only three years younger than David, but sometimes, she seemed much younger than that. But on the other hand, there were times when she had seemed far too mature for her years. She'd pull herself together.

"If you want, I can take care of dinner every night."

Rachel snorted. "We didn't invite you to stay with us so we could turn you into a galley servant."

"I know. I know. It's just..."

"Hey! Ladies! You here?"

Jade's face lit up as soon as she heard David's voice. Her

tears were forgotten. The potatoes were forgotten. It wasn't hard to see why David had fallen for her so hard, and so fast. Rachel couldn't think of anybody more beautiful than Jade when she was happy.

"We're in the kitchen!"

The words were barely out of Jade's mouth when David burst through the door, all smile and long limbs. His hair had already been cropped short, which only served to accentuate his handsome features. When Rachel looked at him, she saw a strange doubling of the goofy kid she had known and the gorgeous man he had become.

He swept Jade up in his arms, spinning around while she squealed and laughed with delight. The only thing that cut off the laughter was his mouth meeting hers in a hard kiss.

"Hey, Rae, you better get out there. Ian says he needs some help," David said.

"Help? With what?"

"I don't know. Something with the boat."

Rachel didn't know if Ian really needed her, or if David just wanted a few private moments with his wife, but either way, Rachel was happy to abandon her vegetables and head out to the garage. Ian was waiting for her at the truck, his dark head bent over the hitch. He was a man of many talents, but brute strength was not one of those.

"Is it stuck?"

"I think it must be."

Rachel smiled. "What about David?"

He lifted his head and smiled, his glasses momentarily

reflecting the yellow light. He wore a pair of thick frames—the ones he didn't mind wearing when he went out fishing or hiking. The ones that she secretly loved, because he had been wearing them on the night they met, and she liked the way they magnified his blue eyes.

"You're cuter than David."

"You think so?"

"A little bit. Stronger, too."

"I doubt I'm stronger. But I'll give it my best shot."

She gripped the crank with both hands and gave it a hard push. For a moment, it refused to turn and she thought David really was the best one for the job. Until it gave a half an inch. And then another half. And then Ian whooped with triumph.

"I knew you could do it."

"It's only possible because of you." She leaned over and kissed him softly. "You're the wind beneath my wings."

"You're such a sap," Ian murmured, before returning the kiss. The caress deepened, their tongues touching off each other, sending warmth down her spine. She loved the way Ian kissed her. He didn't look like somebody who could kiss. He looked like a giant dork. But Ian was good at everything he set his mind to, and kissing wasn't an exception.

"Do that again, and I'm going to forget I'm trying to cook dinner."

She felt rather than saw Ian's smile. "Is that going to be a problem?"

"It is if you want to eat tonight."

"I am a bit hungry."

They both straightened and Ian freed the boat from the truck hitch. The hair on his tan skin momentarily distracted her. She had never thought she would see him quite that shade of brown. When they met, he had been absorbed with computers to the point that she didn't think he spent any real time in the sunshine. That hadn't really changed until David started inviting him on weekly outings.

"It's almost time for food."

He looked past her shoulder. "How's Jade doing?"

"About as well as you'd expect. David?"

"He's put on his brave face. Like he does." Ian looked at the small boat with an undeniable sadness.

"You don't have to stop going out. We can go boating, if you want."

"What? Oh. I know. It's just..."

"Not the same?"

"Yeah. I mean, every time I started to have fun today, I'd think about how we're not going out again. Not for a long time. Maybe not ever again, and..."

"And now you're starting to sound like Jade."

Ian smirked. "With less tears, I hope."

"The night is still young."

"True." He rubbed his hands on his thighs. "Do I have time to shower and make myself presentable?"

"Can you do all your primping in less than thirty minutes?"

"That shouldn't be a problem."

"Then yes, you have time to shower and make yourself

presentable."

Ian stepped over the tongue separating them and wrapped his arm around her waist. "You sure you're okay? It looks like you've put on your brave face, too."

"I'm fine."

"Are you sure, Rae? Because this has been a rough day for everybody."

Even if she wasn't fine, she knew that she couldn't broadcast that fact to the world. Jade was looking to her to figure out how to act. David expected her to be strong. And Ian didn't deserve to see her fall apart over another man, even if the other man was her closest friend. There would be time later to indulge herself in a small breakdown.

"I'm sure. I just want to get everybody through the night."

"Let me know when you're tired of being sure." He kissed the top of her head. "I can take over the responsibility of getting everybody through the night."

"I'll remember the offer. Come on, you. We better get inside or else you won't have the chance to shower."

David and Jade were still huddled in the kitchen when Rachel returned, their foreheads touching, their voices in low murmurs. She didn't interrupt them or try to draw their attention, but David looked up anyway.

"Did he need help with the hitch?"

"Yeah, a bit. Why didn't you help?"

"You know how hot and bothered he gets when you show off how strong you are."

"You're a giver."

David winked at her before turning back to Jade. "I'm going to go get cleaned up. I expect to see you smiling when I get back."

"I will be."

She already was. Which was good to see, though it also reminded Rachel of the hole that'd be left in their lives when David left. Jade turned back to the potatoes and even began to hum a little. It lightened the atmosphere of the kitchen, and Rachel tried to focus on that instead of the seconds that ticked down, bringing them all closer and closer to a farewell nobody wanted to make.

\* \* \*

Breaking bread was an important aspect of every culture, and it was the ritual that tied their relationships together. Rachel and David had solidified their friendship over nightly dinners, when her mother was at work and his father couldn't be bothered to come over for supper. They had taken care of each other, mingling what little money they had with what few skills they possessed to make something edible, something they could share. Rachel had met Ian in a café when there were no seats left and she was weak with hunger. He had offered to share his table, and then his dinner, and then a cab home. David and Ian had bonded over a rich dinner in an expensive restaurant—Rachel hadn't been privy to what happened there, though whatever they had discussed had ended the pointless male posturing between them. David had introduced Rachel to Jade over nachos and beers in their

favorite bar.

Now they all sat around a small, square table to share one more meal. A meal Rachel had spent over two days preparing for. She had tried to include one or two dishes for everybody, though they had such eclectic tastes that it hadn't been easy. Ian's favorite clam chowder recipe. The chocolate truffle recipe Jade adored. The heavy lasagna recipe that David had confessed would always be his favorite, not because it was a great lasagna, but because it was something they had created together.

Ian and David were both in better spirits than their respective wives. Or they were better about faking. Rachel's money would be on the latter. The two men had started as rivals, but now were closer than she ever expected them to be. And Ian's emotions were always close to the surface. Which meant if he was putting on a show for her benefit, the façade would probably crack sooner or later.

The food was accompanied with free-flowing wine. There wasn't technically room in the budget for fine wine, but what was she saving her money for? What was the point of having money if she couldn't even use it on her friends and loved ones? Especially since all three of them would appreciate the extra expense and the difference between wine that was barely drinkable and wine that complimented her food. Even Jade, who hadn't exactly been a oenophile when David met her, smiled with appreciation when she took her first sip.

Rachel might have declared her dinner party a success. Except for its purpose. She didn't want to be successful in

saying goodbye to her best friend. Her best friend who would be leaving for Afghanistan in a little over fifteen hours.

While David kept the conversation rolling, Rachel focused on committing the night to memory. Her first task was to go over the details of David's body one more time, though she knew it almost as well as she knew her own. His dark brown eyes that looked like rich honey in the candlelight. His infectious smile that only faded with the most extreme provocation. The high planes of his face that pointed to his Italian ancestors. The graceful length of his fingers—fingers that could do anything from draw a rose to clean and reassemble a gun in under thirty seconds. The details of David's body were even sharper when placed against the reality of the man she had fallen in love with.

Ian had a shy smile when he was around other people. It flitted across his face like a skittish bird, and then went into hiding again. He owned contacts, but he often opted to hide his eyes behind glasses—though the frames had become thinner and inconspicuous over the years. His hands were also graceful, but in a different way. They could fly across a keyboard faster than Rachel could watch, and they could find the most sensitive areas of her skin, and they could sooth frightened animals and children. David had never outgrown that rough puppy phase. He was always ready to rough house. Ian was far more thoughtful. Even gentle.

Rachel hadn't missed the fact that she had chosen a man who did not remind her of David at all. She didn't think either Ian or David missed that, either.

It wasn't like David hadn't done the same thing. The woman he married had very little in common with Rachel. She was short while Rachel was tall. She had carefully groomed, flowing, blond hair, while Rachel preferred a pixie cut. Jade liked pink nail polish, and Rachel had never paid for a manicure. Jade was *put together*, and there was no other way to describe it. That was the defining characteristic of her life. Except when she was faced with the reality of being alone, separated from the man she adored. And then she and Rachel weren't so different after all.

Once everybody finished stuffing themselves with food, David stood up and began gathering dishes. Rachel jumped to her feet as well, but only to slap his hand away.

"No, you're not going to do that tonight."

"But I always help you clean up."

"You're the guest of honor tonight."

David snorted. "Don't be dumb. You and Jade cooked this, it's only fair that I help you clean it up."

"You should relax with Ian and Jade."

"Rae. Please."

She knew that tone. It was one she didn't want to argue with, because she could never win. David's stubborn streak was so legendary, nobody had believed he would make it through basic training when he decided to join the Air Force. Taking orders was not something he did well.

"Come on, Jade. We can pick out a movie while these two work," Ian suggested.

Jade looked around the table with a concerned frown. "Are

you sure you don't want me to help?"

"It's fine. I'll make David do all the work. It'll be like old times."

Jade nodded, though she still looked concerned, and let Ian take her hand to lead her out of the dining room. David watched her with a slightly bemused smile—the same smile he wore every time he looked at his wife and he thought nobody was paying attention to him.

"I hate to do this to her," he finally said.

Rachel began stacking the dirty plates. "I know."

"But I thought this was the right thing to do."

"I know. She knows that, too. When she married you, she knew what kind of man you were."

"Yeah. I guess so."

They worked in silence as they finished clearing the table, both knowing the steps of this dance well. Except, the dance was different now, and Rachel thought she wasn't the only one who sensed that.

She kept herself together until the kitchen door swished shut behind them, blocking the sounds of the television and any reminders that they weren't alone in the house. Then the tears she didn't dare acknowledge earlier sprang to her eyes. David noticed them. He always noticed when her heart hurt and her emotions threatened to overtake her.

"Hey. Don't, Rae, please."

"I can't help it."

She dropped the plates in the sink, and the sound made her jump. Her skin wanted to crawl off her back. She didn't

resist—couldn't—when David put a hand on her shoulder and spun her into his chest.

"Yes, you can."

"No, I can't. You're going to leave, and there's so much..."

"So much what?"

"So much everything. Why did you have to do this, David?"

"It wasn't to hurt you."

"I know. I know that. I'm just a selfish bitch, but..."

"Hey." He cupped her chin and forced her head back until she was looking into his unwavering brown eyes. "Be careful what you say. That's my best friend you're talking about."

She blinked, hoping it would be enough to wipe away the rest of her tears. But it didn't work, and his face swam in front of her. "I'm sorry. But when I get this upset, that's how I feel."

"You have the right to be a little bit selfish. We both get selfish."

"You're not."

David wiped her cheek with his thumb, catching one of the hot tears. "There's something I want to ask that might make me selfish."

"What? You know you can ask me for anything you need."

He rested his brow against hers. She took a deep breath, catching the mingled scent of garlic and his cologne. It was the same stuff he started wearing when he was sixteen. "I want one night."

"What?" Rachel took a step back. "David, you know we can't. You know we can't."

Instead of looking hurt by her declaration, he smiled. Which was more confusing than reassuring. "I don't just mean the two of us."

"I don't understand. What do you mean?"

"Whatever happens, I don't want to ship out with any regrets. And I want to know what it's like to be with the three people I love more than anything."

"Me and Ian and Jade?"

"Yeah."

"I..." Rachel's gaze darted to the door, a part of her afraid that the other two were standing right there, listening to the whole exchange. "Do you really think Jade and Ian will go along with that?"

"I already asked them."

Now Rachel's mouth fell open. "You talked to both of them before talking to me?"

"Well...yeah. It made more sense that way. I mean, I wouldn't bring it up at all if Jade wouldn't agree to it. And I didn't want to talk to you about it if Ian didn't..."

It made sense, though it didn't quite dull her surprise or annoyance at being the last one to hear David's request. "What did he say?"

"He said that he would like that a lot."

That actually didn't surprise Rachel. While Ian didn't bring up his bisexual tendencies often, she was aware of his past. Far more shocking was David's request. To her

knowledge, he had never been with another man. Did he intend to start now?

"This isn't just a ploy to watch me have sex with your wife, is it?"

David laughed. "No. I know this sounds crazy, but I've been thinking about it for a few months now. Wondering if I should bring it up at all. Wondering why I couldn't stop dreaming about it. It's because I want to be with all three of you. That's it. That's all I want."

"You've never been with a man before, have you? Do you want that, too?"

"Ian said he'd get me through the rough spots."

"Does Jade know that we..."

David inclined his head. "She knows. I try not to keep any secrets from her."

"I guess you thought of everything."

"Is my foresight and diligence going to pay off?"

Rachel arched her brow. "It's all up to me?"

"Say the word, and I'll get back to loading the dishwasher and we can pretend this never happened."

Rachel licked her lips, but her tongue felt like sandpaper. It would be far too easy to agree. Far too easy to imagine the four of them together. She would love to see David's broad frame folded around Ian's lankier figure. She'd love to know how good Jade smelled and how she tasted. She'd love to feel David inside of her again.

"You're sure Jade is fine with this?"

"Jade thinks you're hot. Besides, she knows there's

nothing to be jealous of. But you three...you're the only family I have. I just want to have this memory."

If she had been five years younger, she probably would have agreed as soon as he suggested it. If she had been five years older, she probably wouldn't have even stuck around to hear him out. But now she felt torn in both directions, her body awakening to the image of the four of them together, her mind wary enough to hang back and evaluate the situation. She didn't want David to feel awkward the next morning. She didn't want Jade to be jealous. She didn't want Ian to agree just because he thought that's what she'd want.

"You're making me think the answer is going to be no," David said.

Rachel shook her head. "I'm just trying to..."

"Make everybody happy and anticipate any problems?" "Yes."

David took her arm and pulled her close again. "Don't. Worry about what *you* want. If you want the four of us to be together, say so. If not, then we'll forget I ever said anything. It won't be any fun for any of us if you just say yes to make me happy."

She would have said yes to make him happy. She would have said yes to make Ian and Jade happy. But she knew that if she nodded, it would be mostly for her own benefit. She lifted her chin, meeting his eyes. He must have seen the answer he was looking before, because he caught her chin between his forefinger and his thumb, and kissed her. It was almost a chaste kiss. But it lasted a bit too long. And she felt

the tip of his tongue against the corner of her mouth.

"Let me go talk to Ian. Unless we come out and say otherwise, bring Jade to the bedroom in about fifteen minutes."

David blinked, and then smiled widely. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure."

"Thanks, Rae."

She nodded, and left him to finish loading the dishwasher as she sought out her husband. She found Ian and Jade in the television room, Jade resting her head on his shoulder as they watched the large, flat-screen. There was something about Ian that invited that sort of casual familiarity. He looked like the sort of man who would cuddle and not push for anything beyond that. Of course, Ian was aware of that, and knew how to use it to his advantage, if he wanted to.

As soon as Rachel stepped into the room, they both looked up, as if expecting something. Had the two of them discussed the possibility? Did Jade want to know what Ian looked like naked? Of course, she didn't even have to wonder if Ian wanted to see Jade naked—who wouldn't?

"Ian? I need to talk to you for a minute."

"No problem."

Jade sat up, allowing Ian to jump to his feet. The other woman smiled a bit nervously, but other than that, it wasn't easy to read her. Rachel returned her smile, then led her husband out of the room. Ian waited until they were in the bedroom with the door shut before asking, "So did he talk to you?"

"He did." Rachel perched on the foot of the bed. "He told me everything. How he talked to you and Jade. What he wanted. But I just wanted...to clear everything with you first. I mean, you know that we..."

"I know all about your past. Unless there's something you've left out."

Rachel shook her head. "No, no, nothing like that. Do you want him like that?"

Ian sat down beside her, his hands on his knees. "Honestly? I've been attracted to him since I first met him."

"Oh, I see how it is. You just want me so you can get in my friend's pants."

Ian smiled. "It's not my fault you've got hot friends."

"If it were just the three of us, I wouldn't worry too much, but Jade..."

"I think Jade might surprise you. She wasn't exactly an innocent when she married David."

"She told you this?"

"David told me this."

"Do you two compare notes?"

"On technique and style."

Rachel kissed his cheek.

He grabbed her before she had the chance to pull away, wrapping his arms around her and pushing her back, trapping her against the mattress. "Now I've got you."

Rachel arched her brow. "I'm not trying very hard to get away."

"I want to fuck him."

"Okay."

"I want you to eat out his wife."

"Okay."

"I want to watch him fuck both of you."

"Are these long-held fantasies?"

"Maybe. You've never thought about it?"

She might have been more hesitant to tell David the truth, but she didn't keep anything from Ian. If he asked her a direct question, she would answer. He always deserved that much.

"I've thought about it. I love to think about the two of you. You're both so pretty."

"Don't tell David you think he's pretty. It'll insult his manhood."

"But bending over for you won't?"

Ian winked. "I'll make it so good for him, he won't care about the insult."

"I told him to come in here in fifteen minutes if we didn't come out. I think that means we better get ready for our guests."

"Good. You get naked, I'll get the candles."

"Why is me getting naked always part of your plans?"

"Motivation."

He pressed his mouth to hers, and as soon as his tongue slipped past her lips, she forgot about David and Jade. She forgot about everything except Ian above her and their bed against her back. Her head was spinning by the time Ian broke away, and his eyes were shining, his color high. She waited for another cycle of doubt to hit her, but there was no bad

there. No reason to doubt that they were all going to have the best time of their lives.

## CHAPTER 2

Ian had turned off all the lights and lit about three dozen candles. Rachel had to admit that he succeeded at *romantic* and *intimate*. He had also snuck back into the kitchen for another bottle of wine and four clean glasses. Rachel had set the bottle and glasses on the nightstand, along with a bottle of lube and a fresh box of condoms. She even had edible body paint and a fresh bottle of chocolate sauce, though she wasn't certain they'd have the time or the desire to use either one.

Despite Ian's instructions, she didn't get completely naked. Once she stripped out of her clothes, bra, and panties, she slipped on a sheer nightgown that left very little to the imagination. Ian had on a pair of silk boxers that always made

her want to get on her knees to rub her cheek against the material. She suspected that's why he wore them.

"I think we know how to throw a party," Rachel said, helping Ian toss the throw pillows off the bed. Together they pulled the duvet back, exposing the high quality sheets that felt like heaven against bare skin.

"We're good hosts," Ian agreed.

A soft knock on the door made them both look up. Ian sent her a questioning glance that was more *are you ready to go through with this* than *should I let them in*. Rachel nodded. Maybe it was the lace brushing against her hard nipples and the top of her ass, or maybe it was the sweet candlelight, or maybe the way her mouth still tingled from Ian's kiss, but her earlier doubts were gone. She was ready for this. Ready for Jade and David to share their private space with them.

Rachel positioned herself on the bed just before Ian opened the door. Jade and David stepped into the room and stopped short, both of them with eyes wide and lips parted. For a moment, she feared they would ask just what the hell was happening. Could all of this had been a horrible misunderstanding? Had Jade changed her mind? Were the candles too much?

Before any of her fears were realized, Jade stepped away from her husband, her hands going to the top button on her blouse. Neither of the men moved, and Rachel kept her steady gaze on Jade, watching as she exposed inch after inch of her flawless skin. The candles cast a golden hue on her skin and hair, almost giving her an aura of divinity. In any other

situation, Rachel didn't think she would agree to be put side by side with this gorgeous, and younger, creature. But she knew she didn't have to be self-conscious, even when Jade's bra followed her shirt, exposing two, perfect globes.

Jade shimmied out of her skirt, revealing a surprisingly modest pair of white panties. Instead of removing those as well, she knelt on the foot of the bed and crawled up its length, giving the men a perfect few of her ass, and Rachel a perfect view of her small breasts and dusky nipples.

"Thank you," Jade murmured, her mouth near Rachel's ear.

"You could have given me a warning."

"David made it clear he wanted to talk to you about it."

Rachel cupped the side of Jade's face and tilted her head, moving slowly in case Jade changed her mind. Jade didn't try to meet her half way, but she didn't lean back, either. Rachel didn't know if Jade had ever kissed another woman, but it had been years since Rachel had indulged in a same-sex physical attraction. She wondered if it would be different than she remembered. She wondered if she would enjoy it. Maybe Jade didn't know how to kiss.

As soon as their lips touched, those questions fled Rachel's mind. Jade's mouth was warm and welcoming, softer than she even expected. She still tasted vaguely of their chocolate dessert, with a more biting taste of wine on top of that. The deeper Rachel pushed her tongue, the more Jade opened to her. And she definitely knew how to kiss. Her tongue was light and a bit teasing, and she made the softest sounds of

delight, tiny little moans of pleasure. Rachel wanted to push her to the bed and cover Jade's soft curves with her leaner body, but a small cough reminded her that Ian and David were still in the room.

They both looked up to focus on David, who stood in the middle of the room, still fully dressed. His eyes were so wide, Rachel couldn't help her smile.

"What? You never seen two girls kissing before?"

"Not like that."

"You're still a bit overdressed," Rachel observed.

"Good point."

Three pairs of eyes trained on David as he pulled his T-shirt overhead. Shadows danced across his skin, accentuating rather than disguising his hard muscles. The last time Rachel had seen him like this, his body had only hinted at its future shape. But now he looked delicious, and her appetite for him only grew as he pushed his pants to his feet. His cock was thick with a slight, distinctive curve. His thighs were corded with muscle, and Rachel knew without looking that his ass would be high and tight. He stood in front of the three of them without a trace of shame. She expected him to at least fidget under Ian's heavy gaze, but it didn't seem to bother him at all.

And Ian was not shy about staring. His boxers were pulled tight across his obvious erection. Tight enough that the outline of his cock was plainly visible, including the ridge of his crown. Ian hooked his fingers around the waistband and slowly pushed the underwear down his thighs, making sure to hold David's attention as his own impressive length and heavy

balls came into view.

There were all locked in place, the first and second moves taken care of, but nobody sure about what the third move should be. David's gaze kept darting from Ian to the bed and back again, like he didn't know what he wanted and he wasn't sure what to ask for. Jade didn't seem unsure. Her warm breath brushed across Rachel's neck, and then her lips were skimming over her shoulder. Rachel's stomach tightened at the contact, her nerve endings burning for more.

"Get on the bed."

David jumped at the firm command in Ian's voice, and Rachel bit back her smile. No doubt, David had assumed that he would be the one keeping everybody in hand, directing them to their places, informing them of their roles. But Ian was probably the only one of them with experience in this sort of thing, and after a moment, David nodded, looking more than a little relieved.

"Face me and get on your hands and knees."

The directive gave Rachel and Jade a direct view of his balls, his thick dick brushed across the sheet, and his clenched hole. Jade licked her lips, and Rachel didn't blame her. She wanted to crawl under his body and feel his cock press against her lips and then slide down her throat.

She watched as Ian stood directly in front of them, his cock momentarily blocked by David's head. Ian's long fingers moved through David's short hair, caressing his temples before sliding down his scalp. His touch was very gentle, and Rachel could almost feel those light fingers on her own skin.

David watched with trepidation at first, clearly unsure of what to expect from the other man, but Ian didn't try to rush anything. He soothed him with patient fingers until the tension began to drain from David's shoulder and back. As soon as he closed his eyes, Ian bent at the waist and pressed his mouth to David's.

Rachel's pulse hammered in her ears and Jade gasped beside her. She couldn't imagine what Jade was feeling, but she knew that nothing had ever affected her quite like the sight of Ian thoroughly, and firmly, exploring David's mouth. Was this how they felt when she kissed Jade? Or was this a different feeling? Borne out of the desire for the two most important men in her life to mean just as much to each other? It didn't feel like a purely sexual reaction, like nothing more than basic arousal.

It felt like a completion.

"They're so...beautiful," Jade murmured.

Rachel didn't want to take her attention from the two men, but she needed to see Jade's face. Needed to see that she was transfixed by the sight. Her blue eyes were wide, and her chest rose and fell in quick gasps. She looked back to the two men, her hand slipping between Jade's thighs. She brushed her fingers across Jade's panties, and they were wet with arousal. Rachel hooked her fingers around the waistband and pulled, easing them off her hips.

Ian's mouth grew hungrier, and one of them made a noise high in his throat. It wasn't just a moan. It wasn't just a whimper. It was more. It was a sound that traveled straight to

her clit, making her flesh pulse. Her fingertip scraped over Jade's clit, and the other woman jumped, spreading her legs wider. Rachel didn't need more of an invitation to massage Jade's throbbing flesh, and she touched Jade with just the right amount of pressure. Just enough to make her squirm. Just enough to make her shift her hips, pushing against Rachel's hand, plainly demanding more.

"Just concentrate on them," Rachel said softly as Ian attacked David's mouth once again. A thin line of pre-come caught the sheet, stretching from the material to his hard cock. The sight just made Rachel's mouth water anew, and her fingers move faster.

"Oh God...oh God...oh God..." Each of Jade's gasps made David moan. They echoed each other, building steadily until Rachel's blood ran hot. They had only just begun, and her senses were already overloaded, her pussy clenching and waiting to be filled. She got a modicum of satisfaction out of touching Jade, but ultimately, she was left rubbing her thighs together, aching for friction from anywhere.

Jade curled her fingers in Rachel's hair and forced her head back. She barely had a chance to register it before Jade's mouth clashed with hers. But it wasn't a kiss. Not quite. Rachel muffled her scream, catching it as Jade's clit jerked rapidly against her thumb, as light and as fast as a butterfly's wing.

Ian lifted his head then, and Rachel watched out of the corner of her eye. His lips were swollen, and he already had a slight whisker burn from the stubble on David's chin. The

smile he gave Rachel was enough to make her stomach do a slow flip-flop. It was a knowing and pleased smile, like all of this had been his idea, and he couldn't be happier with the way things were going.

"Let me feel that gorgeous mouth, now," Ian said, his voice rich and inviting. Though he was speaking to David, Rachel felt the impulse to crawl down to the end of the bed herself.

David, however, did not seem to be as entranced with Ian's voice.

"I don't..."

"Are you nervous? Maybe Jade will help you out."

Jade sat up at the sound of her name. A shot of disappointment went through Rachel—she would have been more than happy to help David out in this situation, any way she could.

"What should I do?"

"Get under him and show him by example. Let him know how to use his mouth."

Jade moved slowly, like her limbs were still heavy from the orgasm. She settled with her head toward the foot of the bed, her shoulders between David's knees. Her long hair fanned out around her, and her breasts were pushed up, nipples hard. She wrapped her mouth around David's head, her lips almost as dark as rubies against his cock. David moaned, pushing his length deeper into her mouth.

"Just do what she does," Ian instructed.

Rachel pushed herself to her knees so she could have a

clear view of the two men. David looked over his shoulder, their eyes catching for a moment. His mouth was as swollen as Ian's from the long kisses, and his eyes were wide, his pupils dilated. She had seen him like that once before, but the sight didn't transport her back to their previous encounter. She remained firmly in this room, listening to the soft, sucking sounds Jade made, and Ian's rapid breathing. Despite David's uncertainty about sucking Ian's cock, he didn't look like he wanted to be anywhere else.

"Go on," Rachel murmured, the sound barely making it past her lips. She didn't know how David could even hear her, but he must have, because he turned his head back to Ian and the cock waiting for his attention.

She knew for a fact that David had never been in this situation before. He might have touched another man's cock before. He might have fantasized about what it would feel like to have the thick heat of dick resting on his tongue and stretching his lips. He might have even licked the come from his own hand and wondered how it would feel if somebody shot into his mouth. But Rachel knew that until this moment, that was as far as David had gone.

She was glad that if David was going to do this, he was doing it with a man like Ian. Ian would be careful with his desires. He'd know just how far to push David to make it good without making it too overwhelming. He gripped the base of his shaft and dragged it across David's lips, wetting them with pre-come. His skin glistened in the candlelight, his back and legs already slick with sweat. He looked like a bronze statue,

perfectly sculpted from an ideal instead of a mere mortal.

Ian eased the head of his cock into David's mouth, his whole body shaking at the contact. His length disappeared past David's lips an inch at a time. Rachel held her breath, her mouth watering, her nipples tightening. She couldn't glance away from them—she couldn't even think of anything except the way her best friend looked as he swallowed her husband's long cock.

And swallow it he did. Ian kept his hand on the back of David's skull, holding him in place so he couldn't pull back. He had no choice but to adjust to the alien sensation of a fully erect cock at his throat.

"Just relax. That's right. Don't fight me. Just swallow. Good...good...just like Jade does..."

Mention of the other woman's name drew Rachel's attention downward. Jade had wrapped her arms around David's legs, and she gripped the back of his thighs, holding him tightly as she let him fuck her mouth. Her throat bulged each time he pushed his hips forward, and her eyes were closed, her cheeks hollow. Rachel's gaze traveled down Jade's body, her attention settling on the slick curls between her thighs. Her clit was still full, still throbbing for attention, and her entire body vibrating with desire. She looked back to the two men, committing each detail, from the sweep of David's long lashes to the dark hair on Ian's thighs, to memory.

Rachel straddled Jade, her swollen pussy pressing against Jade's abdomen as she faced Jade's feet. She felt, rather than heard, Jade's moan vibrating through her thighs and clit, then

bent forward. The closer her mouth got to Jade's slick flesh, the more she smelled the other woman's arousal—a musky, sweet scent. The first swipe of her tongue over Jade's clit was light, even delicate. A simple experiment. A successful one, judging from Jade's deep moan. Rachel smiled to herself before using her thumbs to pull back Jade's lips, exposing her entire clit to her mouth, teeth, and tongue.

### **CHAPTER 3**

At that moment, David could not decide which he liked more—having his cock in Jade's throat or sucking on Ian's perfect prick. He had thought about Ian more than once since Rachel introduced the two of them, though he never had the balls to actually make any overtures, even though he suspected they would agree to whatever he suggested. And then he had met Jade, who had given him so much and been everything he could ask for in a wife. David thought marrying her would put his other thoughts to rest, and he would never think about Ian's deceptively perfect body, or the way Rachel wrapped her long legs around his body and held on with everything she had.

But when faced with the reality of his own mortality, he realized he only had one real regret. Not taking a chance. Not being with them. As Ian began to pump his hips, controlling the rhythm as he held David in place, he realized he would have no regrets about this decision. Especially since Jade seemed to be enjoying herself the most out of all four of them. Her constant moans seemed to grow louder and longer, sending waves of sound and pleasure through his body. Her lips were tight around his cock, and every time her throat constricted around his head, it made his arms and legs weak.

He couldn't see Rachel, but he knew that she had her dark head buried between Jade's creamy thighs. He wanted to see that. He wanted to watch as Rachel sucked on Jade's clit, teasing her into higher and higher realms of pleasure until she couldn't take it anymore. But in order to watch the two women, he would have to stop what he was doing. And he couldn't stop what he was doing. Ian wouldn't let him and David didn't want to.

David couldn't compare sucking Ian's cock to anything he had ever experienced. Ian's skin was smooth, like the silk sheets he was kneeling on. And hotter than David had expected. He felt Ian's vein throbbing against his tongue. He smelled the musk of Ian's skin beneath the slightly bitter scent of burning wax. Each time Ian thrust forward, David felt the coarse hairs against his lips and chin. And Ian's heavy balls brushed against David's chin, which made David think about sucking them between his lips and finding out just how Ian would react to that.

David didn't expect to like it this much. He didn't expect to like the weight against his tongue, or the intrusion at the back of his throat. The one thing that didn't surprise him was how much satisfaction he received from Ian's obvious pleasure. One of the best parts of being Ian's friend was being on the receiving end of one of his pleased, larger-than-life smiles. Now David was on the receiving end of his groans and whimpers, each one a testament to his gratification.

Any other time, the hot suction around his own cock would have demanded his whole attention. Jade's mouth was like a little piece of heaven, and when she got her lips around him, she drove him out of his mind. Now he concentrated on mimicking her, swallowing Ian when Jade swallowed him, using his tongue as Jade used hers, hollowing his cheeks when she increased the suction. He had no doubt that treating Ian the way Jade treated him would be more than enough to satisfy Ian's needs. Especially since he wanted to spend the rest of the night fucking her mouth.

Except, Rachel was behind him, and he didn't want to forget that. Not even with Jade beneath him and Ian above him

He didn't know what, exactly, was happening on the other end of the bed, but he did sense Jade's orgasm several seconds before it struck her. He knew the signs without exception. She made a keening noise in the back of her throat, and then she began to tighten, everything, including her mouth, becoming more frantic. Like she was trying to suck his brain out through his cock. Listening to her first climax as Ian kissed him had

been a divine sort of torture—he wanted to be part of that, and he wanted Ian to continue kissing him.

When Jade buckled beneath him, her throat tightening and body shuddering with a long orgasm, David almost lost it. Almost. He managed to stop himself from erupting in her throat, but only just.

"Rachel...get him ready for me."

David pulled himself out of Jade's mouth. He wouldn't be able to handle all three of them touching him at once, especially with her orgasm still echoing through his body. He tried to lift his head as well, but Ian held him tight, his fingers unrelenting. Jade didn't try to catch his erection again, but that didn't mean her mouth and hands weren't busy. She didn't move from between his legs, but she did grip his ass cheeks, pulling them apart to leave him feeling completely exposed.

The first brush of contact was cold. Cold enough to make him jump as a rash of goose bumps spread across the back of his thighs. The lube. It had to be the lube. On the tip of Rachel's finger. She spread the lubricant around his muscle, applying liberal amounts. The second moment of contact was hot. Impossibly hot. Hot enough to make him feel like he was burning from the inside out.

It had to be her tongue.

David moaned around Ian's cock. *Don't stop. Please don't stop.* He hoped he conveyed that. He hoped she understood how much he wanted to feel her mouth. Jade's tongue rasped against his sensitive tip, gathering up the fresh pre-come. Jade's tongue felt much rougher than Rachel's. Rachel was

careful, delicately circling his ring of muscle until David finally became accustomed to the strange sensation—not even a blow job could compare to it. Each time Rachel touched him, the muscles in his stomach clenched, and shocks of pleasure went up his spine.

David's arms were already shaking a little, protesting the fact they needed to support most of his weight, but they almost gave out completely when Rachel slid two fingers into his slick hole. Only Ian's grip kept him in position. The pressure was strange, almost unpleasant, but Rachel gave him time to adjust to this new intrusion. David had to stop moving, his mouth resting near the base of Ian's cock, his eyes closed, his nostrils flaring with each breath. Ian allowed him the chance to rest, and David could fully admit that it was an allowance. Ian was a pretty live-and-let-live guy, but in that situation, in that position, Ian was completely in charge.

Rachel fucked his ass with two fingers, pumping her wrist in a slow, deliberate rhythm. At first, he didn't realize what she was doing. Or why. Not until he shifted backward, pushing against her hand. Wishing for more. As soon as he did, she added a third finger, and he had to pause again to deal with the new width, the fresh burn.

"Does that feel good?" Ian murmured.

David nodded.

"Can you imagine how good it'll feel when it's my cock?" David moaned.

"I'll go slow and easy..." Ian caressed David's face, his touch as gentle as any lover David ever had.

Rachel added a fourth finger and began to move her wrist faster. He froze, his body stiff, the tip of his cock rubbing against Jade's chest. The back of his eyes tingled, as did the tips of his toes, and the skin behind his balls. He didn't know how he could possibly stand Ian's cock, but with each thrust of her fingers, he became more certain he needed to feel the width and the length splitting him open.

David couldn't believe it was happening. He couldn't believe he was this close to a moment he'd barely dared to fantasize about.

"Turn around," Ian said gruffly.

Rachel's hand disappeared first. And then Jade's mouth. With a soft sigh, David released Ian's cock, then crawled to face the opposite direction. Ian slapped a cheek, then pulled at the flesh, his thumb caressing David's stretched hole.

"Rachel did a good job getting you ready for me. I think she should be rewarded. Don't you?"

David caught Rachel's eye. Holding her gaze, he nodded slowly. He was sure he knew what Ian would suggest for her reward, and his cock throbbed at the thought. They might have shared the thought, because her cheeks flushed a dark pink, and her eyes gleamed.

"Do you think you should fuck her?"

David nodded again. It was all he could do.

## **CHAPTER 4**

Rachel was easily the most beautiful person Ian had ever seen. He had thanked every star in the heavens the night he met her, and thanked them again when she agreed to be with him. Her body was perfect, each inch a delectable treat. Her wit was unmatched. Her laughter reminded him of wind chimes. Even as she settled on the bed with her legs hooked over another man's hips, her body open and waiting for him, she was still the most beautiful person Ian had ever seen.

Not that he wasn't attracted to David and Jade. Being enamored with his wife didn't make him blind. He especially wasn't blind to how much David wanted to be fucked, and how much Jade craved contact—any contact. He thought with

a little time and patience, Jade could easily have over a dozen orgasms. If he worked alone. There was no telling how many times the three of them could make her come.

He looked over David's shoulder now, absently stroking his cock as he watched the two women position themselves. At first he thought Jade would straddle Rachel, thus blocking his view, but she seemed to change her mind, choosing to kneel beside Rachel's hip instead. Ian appreciated that, though he never would have voiced an opinion. He wanted to see Rachel's face when David slid his cock into her. He wanted to see Rachel's face when he fucked David. He wanted to see if she would feel it.

Rachel had always been honest with him, even confessing that she and David had shared a physical relationship. He knew that the two of them still harbored a physical attraction for each other, even if they never mentioned it or acted on it. Ian had never been jealous of David, though, because regardless of their history, Rachel had chosen *him*. But now, Ian was choosing to give Rachel and David what they wanted, and every time he looked at Jade, he realized she had made the same decision.

Though the decision had been more than a little selfish, he thought both of them would acknowledge that. He wanted to feel David's magnificent body bent over him. He thought of all those muscles clenching around his cock, and he craved the tight pressure. Especially since he knew David had never been fucked before, and probably never would be again. The fact that David would practically make a gift of himself for Ian

was enough to make him ache.

Ian watched as the tip of David's cock pressed against Rachel's pussy. He had one hand on David's hip, and he used it to guide the other man forward, deeper and deeper. Rachel arched off the bed, her neck dropping back to expose the delicate column of her throat. Jade's breath was getting raspy again, louder than either David or Rachel. Once David was fully sheathed, Ian dropped a kiss on his shoulder, resting his mouth on the taut skin while his attention remained focused on the woman in front of them.

Rachel finally opened her eyes, and her gaze clashed with Ian's. He saw everything he needed to see in her eyes—he saw enough to prompt him to move and seek out his own pleasure. Without releasing David, he gripped the base of his cock and pushed the tip against David's opening. The other man tensed, and Ian felt his muscles quivering—whether in fear or anticipation, Ian didn't know. He stroked David's hip lightly, murmuring soothing words, standing perfectly still until he felt some of the tension ease out of David's larger body.

Ian was able to push the crown into David's body before he had to stop again. He had promised David he would be slow and careful, and he wasn't going to break that promise. Even if the heat was unbelievable and the pressure against the tip of his length was enough to make his eyes roll in the back of his head. Jade caressed David's arm with her long fingers, a light, hypnotic motion that seemed to do the trick.

Ian pushed forward another half-inch.

David caught his breath, and another glance at Rachel's

face proved she felt it, too. The tension. The pleasure.

Another half-inch.

Now the heat was spreading up his groin and down his legs. It had been years since he'd fucked another man, years since he'd experienced the vise-like grip, the unrelenting friction. He bit his tongue to keep from thrusting home.

An inch now, and David was beginning to adjust to his width. He released his breath in a long, shuddering sigh, and that was followed by a simple directive. "Do it."

Ian didn't need to be told twice. He slammed forward, sheathing himself completely, and all three of them moaned simultaneously, with one voice.

"How do I move?" David whispered, his voice tight.

Ian kissed his nape. "Follow my lead."

Rachel wrapped her long legs around both of them, her heels resting against his hips. With a moan, Ian eased out of David's tight channel, but he wasn't so cautious about entering him the second time.

"You okay?" Ian asked.

"Yes. Yes."

"You want more?"

"Yes. Please."

Rachel flexed her legs, holding Ian tightly for a moment before allowing him to pull back. He tried to remain careful, despite David's plea for more, but soon it was too much for him. He was lost in the heat, with only one thought in mind, only one goal. He just wanted to make David feel as good as he did—and he didn't want to stop.

Rachel's shout of bliss finally pierced his fog. She hadn't orgasmed yet, but Jade's hand had disappeared and he knew she was playing with Rachel's clit, adding to the sensations that were already threatening to spiral out of control.

"Oh...God...oh God..." Rachel's words sounded more like pleas than anything else, and Ian knew his wife well enough to know exactly what she wanted.

Without warning, he changed the rhythm, pounding into David's body faster and harder. Forcing David to pound into Rachel at the same tempo. She arched and writhed beneath them, and each time she clenched her pussy, Ian felt it. David was panting and moaning—pleading words and half sentences. He could only imagine what the other man must be feeling, with Rachel's tight body, clenching and fluttering around his sensitive cock, and Ian's length pounding relentlessly into his passage, building more and more friction.

David grabbed the back of Jade's head and yanked her toward him, claiming her mouth in a hard kiss that did nothing to muffle his shouts. Rachel's own voice was climbing higher and higher, a sound that was sweeter than music to Ian.

He wanted to give them both the best orgasms—the best moments—of their lives.

Ian wasn't quite sure what finally set them off. It could have been anything. He could have hit David's prostate. Jade could have scraped her nail over Rachel's clit. Or maybe it was Ian who broke first, who couldn't withstand the combined force of so much pleasure echoing back into his body. But whatever started it, it was like an electrical current passing

through all four of them. An endless feedback loop. Ian felt his cock jerk, felt the pleasure peaking to a point he could barely tolerate, felt his teeth close around the tough sinew of David's shoulder. David's whole body shook, each spasm a clear response to the satisfaction rolling through Rachel's taut frame.

Just when Ian thought it had to be over, Jade moved her hand, applying more friction to Rachel's clit, and the shocks would roll through them again. Ian's muscles screamed for a relief from the tension, but as long as David gripped his cock, clenching in response to Rachel's fresh orgasms, Ian knew he couldn't go anywhere. At one point, through the haze in his vision, he thought he saw Jade smile—knowingly, slyly.

"God...I can't..." Ian was shocked by the sound of his own voice. He was even more shocked when Jade put her finger up to his mouth, smearing Rachel's juices over his lips until he couldn't taste or smell anything except his wife's arousal.

"Please... Please..." Rachel panted.

"Ian has to move first..."

Ian did move, though his legs might as well have been made from gelatin. He managed to pull the condom off before he fell on an empty corner of the bed, but that was all he felt capable of doing. Soon, the mattress dipped as David collapsed forward, his breath as unsteady as Ian's.

"God," Rachel finally said.

Ian's lips felt numb. "I know. Jade, are you..."

"Good. I'm good."

"Good. David?"

"Good."

Ian closed his eyes. "Good, we're all good. I think I need to..."

"Rest?"

"Yeah."

"Rest is good," David murmured.

Ian barely had a chance to voice an agreement before exhaustion and satisfaction overwhelmed him.

## **CHAPTER 5**

At some point in the night, Rachel made her way across the bed to curl into Ian's side. He automatically wrapped his arm around her, holding her close in his sleep. She wanted to let him rest—even before they all made love, Ian had had a long day. But she couldn't stop herself from kissing his mouth and nuzzling his neck.

"What is it?" Ian asked thickly.

"Nothing. I didn't mean to wake you."

"It's fine. Are David and Jade..."

"They're still asleep. Can't you hear David snoring?"

"Oh. Yeah. How are you feeling?"

"Fine."

Ian rested his head against hers. "Still sad?"

"I think I'm going to be sad for awhile. But it's not so bad, now. The four of us will always have tonight...this."

"Is there any way I could convince you to have another night with Jade?"

Rachel snorted. "Why am I not surprised that you asked for that?"

"That's not a no."

"Somebody will have to keep her company when she's miserable and lonely."

Ian chuckled. "You're a true humanitarian."

"I know it. You should go back to sleep."

"So should you."

Rachel shifted her position, moving lower to rest her head against his chest and listen to the steady rhythm of his heart. She hadn't been joking about being there for Jade. Somebody needed to be there for her. Especially since Rachel felt like she had an embarrassment of riches in Ian.

"Think David will be able to look me in the eye in the morning? I might have been a bit more than he bargained for."

"I don't think it'll be a problem," David said, his voice gravelly in the darkness.

"Did we wake you?" Ian asked.

"No. I don't know. I don't think so. I need to go so I leave on time tomorrow, but I don't want to move."

"You don't have to," Rachel assured him. "I'll make sure you're up."

"You're not going to dump cold water on my head, are

you?"

"And ruin my sheets? No way."

"Hey..." David's voice dropped, and Rachel knew the joking was over. "You two know that I love you both, right?"

Rachel wanted to answer, but as soon as she tried, her throat closed up and her eyes burned. She knew if she tried to speak at all, the word would be replaced by a sob. She didn't want to lose him. Not now. And she hated that it was the threat of that loss that had finally pushed the four of them together.

Ian put a comforting hand on Rachel's back and answered in her stead. "We know. You don't have to worry about that."

"And you'll look after Jade?"

"Of course."

"I'm glad she has you two."

The lump in Rachel's throat only grew. But she managed to choke out, "You know we'll be here. We'll always be here."

"I know."

"Now go to sleep. You need to be well rested tomorrow."

"Yes. ma'am."

When she heard the unmistakable sound of David snoring, she buried her face in Ian's chest and let the tears flow silently. He rubbed her back in a slow circle, and she wanted to apologize, but she knew she didn't need to say it and he didn't need to hear it. In the morning, she would be the strong one again, giving Jade a shoulder to lean on. She would make everybody a big breakfast, so they could share one more meal together. She would keep up a light-hearted chatter in the car

as Ian drove them to the airport. She would hug David goodbye, and look on as Ian and David shook hands in an appropriate farewell. She would turn her gaze away respectfully when David said goodbye to his wife.

In the morning, she would be strong again.

At night, she would relive the moment when the four of them shared something greater than she could have even imagined. A connection she couldn't have predicted. When they were all linked by the mutual desire to give pleasure. To give love. That, Rachel knew, had been making love at its most basic level.

And one day, all her strength, and all of the love between them would be rewarded, and David would come home. She knew that, because there couldn't be any other ending to their story.

#### PEPPER ESPINOZA

Pepper Espinoza lives in southern California with her husband and her cats. She has spent the last year working as a full time author, and intends to start graduate school in the fall.

You can learn more about Pepper by visiting her website:

http://www.pepperverse.net

\* \* \*

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The night before Noah Hill left his hometown of Mountain View, he had a drunken sexual tryst with his best friend, Lucas Wesson. Deeply in the closet, Noah is horrified at his behavior, and terrified of what Lucas would think of him. He left the next morning without saying goodbye, and effectively cut off all ties. He returns five years later to help his father, and runs into his old best friend almost as soon as he reaches town. And nothing has changed. He still loves Lucas, and he still can't stand to meet the other man's eyes.

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