

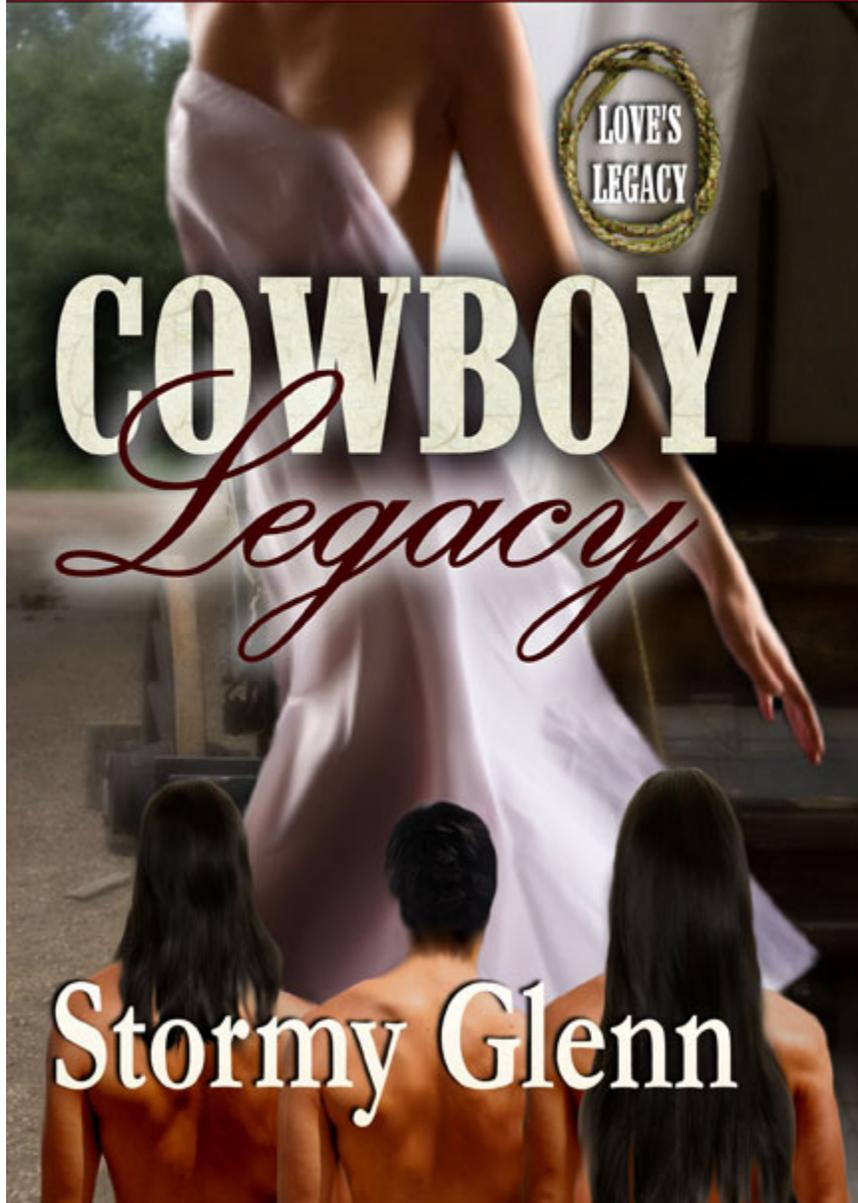
Siren Publishing

Ménage Amour



COWBOY *Legacy*

Stormy Glenn



COWBOY LEGACY

Love's Legacy 1

Stormy Glenn

MENAGE AMOUR



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DEDICATION

Love's Legacy comes in many forms...old letters between lovers, a class ring, even a crumpled old picture of someone's first love. Each memory should be savored, remembered, and never forgotten.

My legacy comes from my grandparents who were married for over fifty-four years and my great-grandparents who were married over seventy-one years.

So, this book is dedicated to them and all of the couples, married or not, who stuck it out, lived through the good times and the bad, and understood that anything worth having, is worth working for.

COWBOY LEGACY

Love's Legacy 1

STORMY GLENN

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Chapter 1

Applegate Valley, Northwest Territory, 1865

Some people called it supernatural. Some people called it sorcery. Some people called it witchcraft. Most people just called it spooky. Nyssa called it natural. It was her legacy, her birthright. As the only daughter of Jolene Dupre, she had inherited the powers of all the Dupre women who had come before her and all the troubles that came with that power. For Nyssa, those troubles seemed to come by the hundreds.

It had been that way for most of Nyssa's twenty-three years. From the mistrust of strangers to the disbelief of those she cared about, Nyssa tended to not have a lot of people in her life. The few times she had tried to get close to someone, it had ended in disaster, usually with them staring at her as if she was a freak.

It didn't take Nyssa long to realize that she was different. From the moment she'd entered the Sisters of Hope Orphanage, after the death of her parents when she was just a toddler, she'd been marked as different. Only people who were different too, could understand how difficult that was.

When people discovered her powers, as they usually did, the stares would begin, followed by the mistrust, then the outright

avoidance and disdain for her presence. In the end, some “upstanding member of society,” usually the community religious leader, would show up on her doorstep and politely ask her to leave, all the while eyeing Nyssa as if she were going to cast a spell on him at any moment or dance naked in the streets. And in the end, she would pack up what meager belongings she had and move on to the next town and the next set of troubles.

Born a child of magic, Nyssa never really fit in. So eventually she decided not to try. She embraced her heritage, reveled in it almost. From the tip of her long, unruly strawberry blond hair and misty moss-colored green eyes to the bottom of her ring-clad toes, she was different.

When others zigged, she zagged. When others conformed, she took great delight in being a contradiction. When others wore hoop skirts and bonnets, she wore simple homespun dresses and long dangling earrings. And when others talked in hushed tones of supernatural happenings, she was usually in the midst of them.

Which did not fully explain why she was riding in a stagecoach through countryside on the way to nowhere in particular, but it was a start.

Nyssa climbed out of the stagecoach onto the dusty ground. She walked across the road to the main stagecoach building, which was probably no bigger than her last abode. Walking into the building, she noticed that only a few people seemed to coming and going. The place was practically vacant.

This was no surprise considering how far into the countryside she actually was. This was the deep countryside. It could have been the moon for all she knew. Nyssa felt totally lost and out of place.

The way people looked at her when she spoke, the moon would have been a good bet. People looked at her like she was from another country. She didn't know if it was the long, sage green calico dress that she wore, or that they already suspected that she was different.

Nyssa set her bags down next to the front door and pulled out the scrap of paper her notes were written on. According to Mr. Jones, someone was supposed to meet her here at the stagecoach station and drive her to Mr. Dupre's home.

Nyssa glanced around the room. It didn't look like anyone was waiting for her, and she stuck out like a sore thumb, so if someone had been looking for her, she would be easy to find. Picking up her small travel bag, she headed out the front door. The sight outside was not much better than the sight inside. While Nyssa loved the rustic feel of everything, it still was very rustic.

She looked around, hoping to find someone, anyone, who might be there for her. There wasn't anyone. In fact, she didn't see another soul. Spying a wooden bench off to one side of the double doors, she headed for it, sat down, and waited.

Nyssa pulled out the letter she had received just three days before, the letter that had led her to the countryside. She stared at it again, wondering if she had misread the words the first ten times she had read it.

Dear Ms. Dupre,

Mr. Albert Dupre gave your name to me. From my understanding, you and Mr. Dupre had been corresponding for some time. Mr. Dupre has become seriously ill and wishes for you to come out west and see him before he dies. He has provided transportation for you as well as room and board. As Mr. Dupre is unable to correspond with you at this time, please refer all queries to my office.

I have taken the liberty of booking passage for you for Thursday the 24th. You will find a stagecoach ticket and travel information included with this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely, Abraham Jones

Jones and Hath, Barristers

Nyssa dropped the letter back in her bag and looked down both directions of the narrow road that was just feet in front of the station.

No wagons, no carriages, not even a horse. Maybe they had forgotten her.

Grabbing her bag, Nyssa walked back into the station and asked the small wiry man behind the counter if a message had been left for her. He shook his head no. Feeling more than a little nervous, Nyssa made her way back outside.

Maybe she should just get back on the stagecoach before it left. She must be crazy to come hundreds of miles to see a man she had never even met. He could be a weird old coot for all she knew.

“He probably can’t even take the time to come and get me. He’s probably sending some shmuck to get me. This is crazy,” Nyssa mumbled to herself.

Nyssa was so drawn into her own thoughts that she jumped when a buckboard wagon came to a stop directly in front of her. The driver pushed his cowboy hat back on his head as he turned to look at her.

She was preparing to turn down some buckaroo who thought she might be easy-pickings when the deep voice of the man who sat there asked her, “Ms. Dupre? Mr. Jones sent me to pick you up and take you to Mr. Dupre’s residence.”

Nyssa stood up and grabbed her bag, walking to the wagon. She eyed the large guy in the seat. Not bad. She certainly wouldn’t kick him out of her bed for eating crackers. He was very easy on the eyes and big as a horse.

He had shoulder-length black hair, smoky gray eyes, darkly tanned skin, and shoulders as wide as the Mississippi. Oh yeah, he was a looker all right. He had thick muscular arms, a chest so broad and rippled that she could see each muscle move under his tight shirt. His faded Kentucky jeans were so tight she wondered if they were cutting off the circulation to his brain.

He was staring at her like he had just won the world’s biggest poker game. She wanted to look her fill, but she was uncomfortable with him looking at her the same way, as if seeing her naked was the

most important thing in the world. Yeah, it was a double standard, and Nyssa knew it.

Nyssa glared at him as she climbed into the front seat, tossed her bag in the back and settled down. She turned to look at the sexy man again. It really was too bad she wasn't looking for a lover. He would fit the bill to a tee.

But then, she knew he would have to speak, and that would not be good. Because Nyssa was pretty sure just by looking at him that he would have a sexy, deep, raspy voice. "Well, Ms. Dupre, welcome to Applegate Valley. Mr. Dupre was unable to come get you, so he asked me to." *Damn! She was right!*

"You apparently know who I am. Who are you?"

"I'm the scalawag!" He chuckled.

"Oh, sorry." *Oops!*

He chuckled again as he snapped the reins and got the wagon moving. "No, you're not."

Nyssa couldn't help but laugh. "No, I'm not." Well, at least he had a sense of humor. She hoped. "I probably shouldn't go around calling you scalawag. Is there something else I can call you?"

"I don't know, scalawag kind of fits right now. But if you're really curious, it's Sheriff Lucas Nash."

The sheriff? Already? Well, hell! That just cut her visit time down to nearly nothing. Experience had taught her that once the local law enforcement was involved, she would soon be on the road to someplace new. She thought she would have a couple of weeks at least before she had to move on.

If it weren't so important for her to meet with Mr. Dupre, she would have told the good sheriff to take her right back to the stagecoach station. Mr. Dupre had been good enough to provide her with an open-ended ticket. She could leave anytime she wanted, headed anywhere within 1,000 miles.

"So," Sheriff Nash began, "how well do you know Mr. Dupre?"

“I’ve never actually met the man.” Well, it was the truth. She had never met him. They had been corresponding for about six months now. Mr. Dupre had contacted her through a newspaper ad Nyssa had placed in the Philadelphia Register concerning her search for her family. They had hit it off and begun writing letters back and forth.

When Mr. Dupre had asked her to come for a visit, how could she say no? He was nearly the only friend she had. Of course, that was because he didn’t really know about her and all of her little—*peculiarities*.

“Do you always go to visit men you’ve never met?” There was a slight tinge of jealousy and disgust in his voice when he asked.

Nyssa rolled her eyes as she stared across the width of the buckboard at the sheriff. “Yes, as a matter of fact, I do. I especially like to make sure that they are rich old men, so I can milk them for all of their money. It’s what I’m good at,” she replied sarcastically.

“Really? And you know that Mr. Dupre is rich because—?”

Jeez! He actually believed that crap? “Are you for real?”

“Oh, I assure you, Ms. Dupre, I am very much for real,” he guaranteed her as he pulled into a long, gated driveway.

Nyssa looked up the driveway to see the biggest Greek Revival-style house she had ever seen. It was huge, at least three stories tall with several large windows in the front. She wondered how many windows were in the back and how many people had to be employed just to clean them all. Yikes!

“This is Mr. Dupre’s house?” she asked, astonished by the sheer size of the place.

“I’d think you would already know that, Ms. Dupre, considering you’re after Mr. Dupre’s money and all. Didn’t you do your research before you agreed to come down here?”

Nyssa snorted. “Oh my gods, are you serious? I thought that at least one person in this little backwater town would have a modicum of intelligence. Guess I was wrong.”

The sheriff pulled the buckboard wagon to a stop in front of the house. He turned to look at Nyssa and gave her a good glare from head to toe. “I’m the sheriff in this little backwater town, Ms. Dupre, something you should really think about before you start insulting my hometown.”

Nyssa had the decency to look a little ashamed of herself, but not much. The good sheriff had been feeding her as much crap as she had been feeding him. She just hated people who made snap judgments based on how she looked.

“Look, Sheriff Nash, I apologize for making fun of your little town. I’m sure it’s a very nice town. However—”

“However, I do believe that Mr. Jones is waiting for us,” the sheriff said as he nodded towards the front steps where Mr. Jones stood, anxiously wringing his hands together.

“Fine.” Nyssa grabbed her bag and climbed down from the wagon, disappointed that the sheriff was being such an ass. She knew he was too good to be true. Great to look at, but the moment he opened his mouth, well, his sexy body started to pale in comparison to his disgusting ideas.

“Ms. Dupre, it’s so good to finally meet you.”

“Mr. Jones, thank you for sending the sheriff to come get me. I had been getting a little worried when no one was there to meet me. Is Mr. Dupre available to see me now? The sheriff said that he was unavailable.”

Mr. Jones quickly looked behind her to the sheriff. “Uh, why don’t you come in and make yourself comfortable? Then we can discuss Mr. Dupre.”

Nyssa could feel the nervous vibe coming off the lawyer as he grabbed her arm to lead her into the house. She could hear the sheriff following them up the steps and through the front door.

Mr. Jones led her down the large entryway to a room off to one side. Nyssa could see that it was a study. He gestured for her to sit down in one of the vacant French Victorian chairs in front of the

massive rosewood desk, while he sat down behind it. The sheriff closed the door and leaned against it, his arms crossed over his chest, his gaze intently searching Nyssa's.

"Ms. Dupre, you know that Mr. Dupre has been ill for some time."

"Well, yes, you mentioned it in your letter to me when Mr. Dupre sent for me." Nyssa looked from the barrister to the sheriff. "What's going on here?"

"Ms. Dupre, I'm sorry to have to inform you of this, but Mr. Dupre has gone missing."

Nyssa just stared at the sheriff, her mind numb for a moment. He was missing? "Are you serious?"

"Oh, he's definitely missing, Ms. Dupre, I can attest to that. My question is why are you here? What business did you have with Mr. Dupre?"

"He was, uh, we were both into genealogy. Mr. Dupre contacted me after finding my ad in the *Philadelphia Register*. We started corresponding after that. A couple of weeks ago, Mr. Jones contacted me on behalf of Mr. Dupre and asked me to come visit before he died."

"What kind of ad?" the sheriff asked.

"I was raised in an orphanage. I've been looking for my family. Mr. Dupre and I shared the same surname," Nyssa replied.

The sheriff looked over at Mr. Jones, his eyebrow cocked up in query. He let out a deep sigh as Mr. Jones nodded. Well, that was one worry off of his mind.

Nyssa saw the look that passed between the two men. They were keeping something from her. She could feel it. And she didn't like the feeling it was giving her. She suddenly felt like she was going to need to leave town in a big hurry.

"Sheriff—" Nyssa began.

The sheriff walked across the room to sit down in the chair next to Nyssa's. He took off his cowboy hat, his hands playing nervously with the brown brim of the Stetson.

"Ms. Dupre—"

"Would you please call me Nyssa? Ms. Dupre was my mother, and she died many years ago. You're making me feel old here."

Sheriff Nash chuckled. "Fair enough. My name is Lucas."

Nyssa nodded at him. "It's nice to meet you, Lucas. Now, would you please tell me whatever it is you need to tell me so I can go?"

"Did Mr. Dupre tell you why he asked you here?"

"No. I assumed it was like he said, because he was ill and he wanted to meet me before he passed away. Why? Is there something I don't know? Is there another reason Mr. Dupre wanted me here?"

She looked quickly over at the sheriff. "You know I wasn't serious when I said I was after his money. I was never after his money. Heck, until we pulled up in front of the house, I didn't even know he had money. He was just a nice old guy that I talked genealogy with. You just made me angry, and I tend to get a bit sarcastic when I get angry."

Lucas chuckled. "Yeah, I can see where that could be a problem. But, no, I didn't assume you were after his money. Mr. Dupre had in fact informed me of your coming arrival a few days ago. I was expecting you."

Nyssa looked at him peculiarly. "If you knew I was coming, why all the questions in the wagon? Just being a *scalawag*?"

Mr. Jones stared at Nyssa in horror. No one called Sheriff Lucas a scalawag—well, no one who wanted to live, anyway. He nearly fell out of his chair when the sheriff started laughing at Nyssa's words.

Lucas thought she was very straightforward and totally adorable. Most people were afraid of him because of his massive size. Few actually stood up to him and let him have it like he was a normal person. At six foot six, very few people looked at him with anything other than apprehension. It was kind of refreshing.

“Not exactly, Nyssa. I just needed to know what you were made of. You didn’t disappoint me.”

“Why?” Nyssa asked, totally confused now.

“I’m sorry to tell you this, but Mr. Dupre did not disappear of his own free will.”

“He was—he was kidnapped? And you think that I—”

“No, no, your whereabouts are well known.” Sheriff Lucas pulled a notepad out of his pocket and flipped it open and began reading from it. “The coachman said you boarded the stagecoach at 9:45am yesterday morning, and at no time did you leave the stagecoach. The station manager here saw you get off the stagecoach at 3:05pm. So your alibi is iron clad.”

Nyssa just stared at Sheriff Lucas, not quite sure what to say to him. He had obviously looked into her whereabouts during the time of Mr. Dupre’s disappearance and thankfully eliminated her as a suspect, hadn’t he?

“Am I a suspect?” she asked hesitantly.

“No, Nyssa, you’re not a suspect. However, I think that your being here does have something to do with Mr. Dupre’s disappearance.”

“But you just said—”

“Who knew you were coming here, Nyssa?”

“Uh, apparently you did.”

“Besides me, Nyssa!”

Nyssa waved her hand a little. “I don’t know. Mr. Dupre knew I was coming, of course, and Mr. Jones. I can’t think of anyone else. Why?”

“No one else? What about your friends and family? Did any of them know you were coming? Associates? Your boss? Anyone you can think of? Your husband?”

“No, I’m not married. No one else knew I was coming here. Why do you want to know?”

“Are you sure? Could anyone have overheard you making plans to come here? What about work? Wouldn’t you have had to make arrangements with your work to take a leave of absence?”

“No, I got—I don’t have a job right now.”

“You got what?”

Nyssa rolled her eyes. “I got fired, okay? Is that what you wanted to hear? I got fired and kicked out of my room at the boarding house. I have no job, no place to live, no friends, and no family. No one knows I’m here. Happy now?”

“No one really knows you’re here? Do you think that was wise? Coming to someplace you’ve never been, to meet a man you’ve never met?” Mr. Jones asked, astounded.

“Oh, please! Anyone trying to mess with me would find themselves with a lot more trouble than they bargained for. Take my word for it. I may be small compared to you, but there is a whole lot more to me than meets the eye.”

“I have no doubt, Nyssa, that you are probably very good at taking care of yourself. You look like you’ve been doing it for awhile. However, I do believe that Mr. Jones has some news for you that may alleviate some of your worries. Mr. Jones?”

Nyssa looked over at Mr. Jones in confusion.

“Ah, yes. You are quite correct, Sheriff.” Mr. Jones flipped open a file that was sitting in front of him on the desk. “Ms. Dupre,” he began to read, “as the only living relative to Mr. Albert Dupre, he has bequeathed to you the Dupre Estate and all that it entails, as well as a sizeable monetary bequest. There are also a few personal items he wished for you to have.”

“What? I don’t understand. I’m not related to Mr. Dupre. Why would he leave me anything? I never even met the man. You must have me confused with someone else.”

“You are Nyssa Ann Dupre, daughter of Jolene Nyssa Dupre, daughter of Margarita Jolene Dupre of the Louisiana Dupre’s? That is correct?” Mr. Jones asked.

Nyssa nodded. “Yes, but what does that—”

“Margarita Dupre never married and had only one child, your mother, Jolene Dupre. Your mother was never legally married to your father, Edward Williams, but was with him until their deaths when you were a toddler. You were their only child. Is this correct?”

“Yes.”

“Margarita Dupre was the only child of Albert Dupre. When Margarita became pregnant while away at boarding school, Albert brought her home and gave her the Dupre Estate, which had belonged to his mother.”

“Good gods, how old was Mr. Dupre?”

“Albert Dupre is 103, quite old. And I assure you, you are related to Mr. Dupre. In fact, you are the only living relative of Mr. Dupre. Mr. Dupre never had any other children. Jolene Dupre was Margarita’s only child, as you were the only child of your parents. You are the last living Dupre besides Mr. Dupre.”

Albert Dupre had been her great-grandfather? Nyssa couldn’t say anything. She was too shocked. She just stared at Mr. Jones like he had suddenly grown two heads. Sheriff Lucas got up and poured her a small drink and started to hand it to her.

She just shook her head, holding her hand up to stop him. “No, thank you. I don’t drink.”

“You might want to start.” He chuckled as he downed the scotch himself. “I know I’ve been thinking about it.”

“I don’t understand any of this. Why would Mr. Dupre leave me anything? Why wouldn’t he tell me we were related? I don’t care about the money. He was the last relative I had. I would have much rather have had him than his money.”

“What about your father’s family?”

“They disowned us years ago, right about the time my parents got pregnant with me. Apparently my father was stepping down in society, so they had a fit. I’ve never met them and don’t care to. My grandparents are alive somewhere back east. Boston, I think.”

“Nice!” Lucas chuckled.

“Not exactly how I would put it, but—”

“So, you basically had no job, no place to live before you came here. Now you have your own home and a nice bank account. Things could be worse, Nyssa.”

“My last living relative was just kidnapped before I could meet him. How much worse do you want things to get?”

“Now Nyssa—” Lucas began.

“Don’t you now Nyssa me, you moron! You’re the sheriff here. Aren’t you supposed to solve crimes? Well, get to solving. Why the hell did someone kidnap Mr. Dupre? What good are you? You’re just standing here.” Nyssa stood to her feet. Her finger stabbed Lucas in the chest as she yelled at him.

Lucas chuckled again. “Feel better?” he asked when she ran out of steam.

Nyssa stared up at Sheriff Lucas for a silent moment, and then she laughed. It started out as a small smirk and quickly worked into a full laugh.

“You’re such an jackass.” She giggled.

Lucas just laughed as he blew her a kiss. Yeah, he liked the idea that she wasn’t afraid of him. It would make it a lot easier when he called on her. And call on her he would. She was too intriguing not to.

“Okay, so what does my being here have to do with Mr. Dupre’s disappearance?” Nyssa finally asked as they both settled down into their chairs once again.

“I’m not exactly sure, Nyssa, but I am positive that the two are related. It’s just too much of a coincidence for them not to be.”

“Why? What could my coming here have to do with anything? No one knew I was coming here except Mr. Dupre, and us.”

“I’m not exactly sure yet. But I will find out.”

“Could someone be upset that Mr. Dupre was giving me the Dupre Estate? This is a pretty fancy house.”

“Oh, Ms. Dupre, this isn’t the Dupre Estate. This is Mr. Dupre’s personal residence. The Dupre Estate is across town. Mr. Dupre’s personal residence, as well as the bulk of his estate, has been bequeathed to the town of Applegate for the purpose of maintaining the town.”

“Oh.” Nyssa ran a trembling hand along her long braid.

“Mr. Dupre’s family was one of the founding families in Applegate Valley. He loved this little town, probably more than anyone did. He wanted to make sure that it kept its little town feel. That was very important to him,” Mr. Jones stated.

The sheriff nodded his head in agreement. “Mr. Dupre set up a fund to help with almost every area of this town. He supports the arts, employment, and even our newest doctors’ clinic. He has been a great benefactor to this town.”

“Could someone want to dirty his name then? Did anyone have a beef against him? I mean, what kind of man is he?” Nyssa asked.

Lucas sat back in his chair as he answered her. “Mr. Dupre is loved by everyone in Applegate, right down to the little children he plays Santa Claus for every year. I can’t think of a single person who has anything against him. He has helped keep this town together.”

“Then why would someone kidnap him? Could it have been a random thing? A robbery?”

“No, nothing was taken.”

“So, basically he was kidnapped because I was coming here, then?”

“Looks that way. Which makes me wonder, could someone have something against you? Some reason that someone didn’t want you to receive your inheritance or make contact with your family again? Does someone have a beef with you, Nyssa?”

Nyssa looked quickly up at the sheriff in surprise, then down at her hands, twisting them together nervously in her lap. Well, that was a loaded question. Did anyone have a beef with her? Just nearly everyone she had ever met.

“You mentioned that you had been fired from your last job and kicked out of your apartment. Care to tell me why, Nyssa?”

“No, not really,” she replied quietly.

“I’m afraid I must insist, Nyssa,” the sheriff directed.

Nyssa shrugged her shoulders. “Let’s just say that my former boss, who was also my landlord—we had a difference of opinion. I decided that it was better if I just left.”

“A difference of opinion?”

“Yeah, he was of the opinion that my job duties included sleeping with him. My opinion was that he could go screw himself, without my assistance. So he fired me and kicked me out of the boarding house. End of story.”

Lucas chuckled. “Yes, I can see where that could cause some problems. But that doesn’t explain why you moved suddenly six months before that. Or the one before that or the one before that. You move around a lot, Nyssa. Have issues with all of your employers and landlords?”

Nyssa stared at the sheriff in surprise and a little bit of anger. He had obviously had her investigated. Why? What exactly was he looking for, and how much had he found out about her? Did he know everything?

“So I move a lot. So what? I’m not wanted by any law enforcement, nor is anyone looking for me. And I don’t have any associates, known or unknown. You have no reason to have me investigated.”

“Actually, I didn’t. Mr. Dupre did. He wanted to know what type of person you were before he invited you here. After he sent the letter to you, he gave me your file and asked me to keep an eye on you. He seemed to be worried that something might happen to you.”

“Could he have known he or Ms. Dupre might be in danger?” Mr. Jones asked.

Lucas just shook his head. "I'm not real sure. He obviously knew something was up, but he never discussed it with me. He just asked me to keep an eye on Nyssa, make sure she stayed out of trouble."

Lucas looked over at Nyssa, an eyebrow raised curiously. "Any reason he should be worried?"

Nyssa had just about had enough of the third degree from the good sheriff of Applegate Valley, no matter how sexy he was. It was time to go because if he were to find out why she had had to move so often, she would just have to leave anyway. Might as well cut out the middleman and just leave now.

Grabbing her bag off the floor, Nyssa stood to her feet. "Look, this really has nothing to do with me. I think it would be best if I just leave and then you can get on with your investigation, Sheriff."

"Aren't you interested in seeing the estate that Mr. Dupre has left for you? It is your family estate. It's been in the Dupre family for two hundred years, and now it all belongs to you. Haven't you ever wanted to set down roots, Nyssa? Have a place all your own?"

Nyssa glared at the sheriff, an overwhelming urge to slap the knowing smirk off his face coming over her. He knew she wanted to see the Dupre Estate, that she really had no place to go from here.

"Besides, the next stagecoach isn't due for another three days. So, unless you have some other sort of transportation, the next town is over a hundred miles north of here. It's quite the walk, Nyssa. Hope you're up for it."

He rose to his feet, placing the brown cowboy hat back on his head. "Of course, if you wanted to stick around for a few days, see the Dupre place, get to know some of our townspeople..." *Like the good sheriff.*

"Fine!" Nyssa sighed deeply. It wasn't like she had any other choice. A hundred miles to the next town? Yeah, walking that far was just what she was looking forward to. She might as well have a horse kick her while she was at it. Both were at the top of her list of *fun things* to do.

“So, now what?” she asked.

Sheriff Lucas chuckled as he walked towards the door, turning to look back at Nyssa, winking at her. “Now I get to take you home.”

Chapter 2

Home? What constituted a home? Nyssa wondered as she sat next to the sheriff as they rode down the road in his buckboard wagon. He was taking her to see the Dupre Estate, her new home.

Her mind had pretty much gone blank with all of the papers Mr. Jones had had her sign before turning over the deed to the Dupre Estate, along with the information on the bank account Mr. Dupre had set up for her.

Twenty-three thousand dollars...that was the amount of money in the bank account Mr. Dupre had set up for her, one thousand dollars for every year since the day of her birth.

According to Mr. Jones, another one thousand dollars would be transferred into her bank account every year on her birthday. With that amount of money, she would never have to work again. She would also never want for anything.

As for the personal belongings that Mr. Dupre wanted her to have, they would be delivered to the Dupre estate as soon as she made arrangements with Mr. Jones. She had to agree to stay and live in Applegate Valley first, and she wasn't ready to make that promise yet.

"This is a great place to live, Nyssa. You really should consider it."

Nyssa looked over at the large man sitting next to her, wondering why he was so insistent that she stay. Besides the kidnapping investigation, what other reason did he have for wanting her to stay?

"Tell me about Applegate Valley. Why should I want to live here?"

The sheriff smiled. “Applegate Valley was settled in the 1600s by a group of people looking for a better life than the oppressive dictatorship of King Louis XIV of France. There were just five families in the beginning. The Dupres, the Renués, the Bernoues, the Valias, and the Francois family.”

Good grief, he sounded like an advertisement. “The Dupres were really one of the founding families? They’ve always been here? And they came from France?”

Lucas nodded. “Yep. Pere Dupre and his wife, plus nine children came here from the Normandy area of France in 1661. It took them awhile to find a place to settle. Apparently they had some issues along the way and were not wanted in several places. No one has ever been able to figure out just exactly why, but there it is.”

Bet I know, Nyssa thought as she gazed over the lush green countryside.

“So, anyway, they settled here in the spring of 1663. Applegate Valley wasn’t established as a town until two years later. By that time, several other families had settled here. While it has stayed relatively small, Applegate Valley has grown in that time to what it is today.”

“And what is it today?”

“Well, we have a population of under six hundred. Town law dictates that no building in town may be over three stories tall, as to keep that *small town* feel. We regularly have town functions in the park in the middle of town, including the spring festival in March, a parade on the 4th of July, the summer festival in June, the fall festival in September, a Halloween party in October, and the winter festival in December. There is also a farmer’s market every weekend.”

“Sounds, cheery.” Nyssa rolled her eyes. *Home sweet home, here we come.*

“Oh, it is. Most everyone attends, and we have a great time. We have a town council that oversees most functions, permits and all that. We are very proud to have a low crime rate.”

“Until now.”

“Yes, until now. In the ten years that I have been with the Applegate Sheriff’s office, including five years as the sheriff, I have never had to investigate a single murder. The last major case I was on was the theft of Mrs. Rosenbaum’s chickens last week.”

“And who stole her chickens?”

“A couple of kids. Wanted to pluck their feathers so that they could build a flying machine with real feathers. Go figure.” He started to chuckle. “You should have seen those poor naked chickens, not a feather between the four of them.”

“And what was their punishment?” Nyssa asked curiously.

“That was the best part. Mrs. Rosenbaum is the schoolmarm. She made the boys clean the entire schoolhouse from top to bottom, including organizing the books. Then she taught them how to build a real flying machine using Galileo’s theory on flight. Damn thing actually flew twenty feet, right through the front window of the schoolhouse.” He laughed, shaking his head at the memory.

“Great, so you live in the perfect little town. That still doesn’t tell me why I should consider living here.”

Lucas turned to look at Nyssa, frowning. “Are you always this sarcastic?”

She just shrugged her shoulders. “It’s a gift.”

“What are you so afraid of? Applegate Valley is a great place. The people here are open and friendly. You’re a Dupre, the granddaughter of Albert Dupre. They would welcome you with open arms.”

“Oh, I’m sure, right up until they ask me to leave,” she mumbled under her breath. She had been through a lot of these small towns. It was always the same. Just when she started to settle in and think that she would be able to stay for once, she was asked to leave.

Oh, hell, she might as well stay for awhile. It wasn’t like she had any other place to be. And one place was as good as another. It would give her the time to decide where she wanted to go next. In the meantime, maybe she could find out a little about her family.

If this was the home of the Dupre family, maybe she could find a little insight into what made her so different from everybody else. That was why she had placed the ad in the *Philadelphia Register* in the first place, to find out about her family.

“Fine,” she finally said, “I’ll stay for a little while, but I’m not making any promises.”

Lucas reached across the wooden seat and grabbed her hand, giving her a small squeeze. “I can promise you, once you get to know this place, the people here, you’re not going to want to leave. Just give us a chance, Nyssa. We may surprise you.”

“Oh, I have no doubt. I’m just worried that you can’t handle my surprises.”

“I can handle any surprises you throw in my direction, Nyssa.”

Nyssa’s eyes widened at the clear message in the sheriff’s words. Hot damn! The sheriff was making a pass at her. Nyssa slid across the seat between them. She carefully lifted her dress and moved over until she was straddling his lap, his hands pressing against her back.

Leaning up, she brushed her lips across the soft edge of Lucas’s ear, feeling the shiver that passed through him. She could feel the hard length of his cock pressed between her legs, hot and throbbing.

“I have a lot of surprises, Sheriff. Are you really sure you can handle them? You’re a mighty big man, but these are some mighty big surprises,” she purred into his ear. She nearly squeaked when Lucas quickly pulled the wagon down a small dirt road and tied the reins around the brake handle.

Lucas grabbed Nyssa by the arms, pulling her up against his chest. One of his hands moved to clench tightly in her hair, the other to the small of her back.

“Try me,” he growled as he lowered his lips to hers. His tongue licked at her upper lip, asking for permission. As soon as her tongue made the tentative foray to touch his, Lucas took over. From there, it was anything but tentative. It was wet, hot, hard as Lucas devoured Nyssa’s lips, exploring, searching, and demanding.

Several moments later, when Lucas finally lifted his head, his eyes were glazed with lust. Both of them were breathing hard and fast. Nyssa lifted her eyes to Lucas's.

"Breathing is way overrated. Kiss me again," she demanded.

"Yes, ma'am." Lucas chuckled as he lowered his lips to Nyssa's again. This time the kiss was slower, deeper, nearly reaching into Nyssa's soul and lighting her up. It was unbelievable, unlike any kiss she had ever received in the past, not that there had been that many.

Her entire sexual history consisted of one relationship four years ago that lasted all of three months and a single one-night stand. A courtesan she was not. But damned if this man didn't make her want to throw all caution to the wind and strip his ass naked.

Nyssa moaned when one of Lucas's large hands moved down her back to grasp her ass, gently squeezing it before moving down to grasp her hips, pushing her against his erection. She leaned back as she reached for the buttons of her dress, unbuttoned each button, slowly, one at a time.

Lucas's breath held in his throat as Nyssa slowly parted the green calico material. Next she unbuttoned her white chemise, revealing her bare breasts to his hungry gaze. He nearly came in his pants when she reached up and pulled at her nipples until they stood up, hard and erect.

Lucas swallowed hard, his hands trembling as he reached out to gently cup each rounded globe in his hands. When each large breast settled fully into his massive hands, Lucas closed his eyes, his head falling back in delight.

"Damn! You're perfect!" He groaned deeply, his voice thick and raspy. Leaning forward, he lifted one nipple to his lips, lavishing it with his tongue, then the other. He heard Nyssa's moan as he gently bit down with his teeth.

"Lucas," Nyssa whispered. Not wanting to be left out, she quickly unbuttoned Lucas's shirt, thankful when he reached down and pulled

the material out of his pants so that she could spread it away from his body.

Her hands landed on his chest, her fingers curling into the light spraying of dark curly hair she found there. Oh yes, there was nothing like a man with a little bit of chest hair. Not too much, but just enough to play with.

It sprinkled across each hard pec, a small trail going down the center of his abdomen to disappear into his tight pants. Well, Nyssa couldn't have that. Reaching down, she pulled his belt loose, then unbuttoned his pants.

As she reached to pull the unbuttoned pants apart, Lucas grabbed her hands, stopping her. Nyssa looked up at him in surprise.

“Nyssa, do you know what you are doing?”

Nyssa smiled at Lucas. “I know what I'm doing, Lucas.”

“Nyssa, if you touch me, I don't know if I can stop myself from having you. Do you understand that?”

She leaned in and swiped her tongue across his lips. “I'm counting on it,” she whispered against his lips. It was like opening the floodgates. There was no stopping Lucas after that. His hands were everywhere, on her breasts, her back, her hips, and her ass.

His lips covered hers, exploring, demanding, taking no prisoners. All Nyssa could do was lay there and gladly accept everything Lucas was doing to her. Her hands clenched on his shoulders just to hold on.

Lucas moved his hands under her long handle skirt, a deep growl coming from his lips when he realized that she only wore her chemise beneath her clothing. His fingers eagerly moved between her thighs to caress her swollen flesh.

Nyssa thought she would pass out when two of Lucas's fingers pushed inside of her tight channel. It felt so good, but she wanted more. She wanted to feel him.

“Lucas, I need you.” She moaned. She reached for his hard cock, but Lucas was one step ahead of her. Grabbing her by the hips, he

lifted her up and slowly lowered her down, watching as he impaled her inch by inch.

When Nyssa was finally settled all of the way on him, they both let out a deep sigh of contentment. Nyssa felt so full, so aching. Lucas could feel every movement of Nyssa's body, every squeeze of her muscles around his throbbing cock.

Nyssa slowly lifted herself up onto her knees, feeling Lucas slide partially out of her, then slammed her body back down, impaling herself yet again. She did this several times, each time trying to get more of him.

"Lucas," she finally begged. "I need more."

Lucas was only too happy to oblige. He pulled Nyssa up against his body, climbed down and moved around the back of the wagon. He yanked the wooden gate open and laid Nyssa down in the bed of the wagon.

He grabbed her by the hips as he rammed into Nyssa. His swift movements shook the wagon on its wheels. He leaned down and took one of her swollen nipples in his mouth, attacking it with his tongue.

Nyssa wrapped her legs around Lucas's broad back, her hands clenching in his hair as Lucas pounded into her, his pace brisk and rapid. Nyssa had never felt anything like it. Lucas was a sexual god!

It was all too much for Nyssa. With a wild scream, she arched her head back and came. Rapture filled her body as she squeezed herself around Lucas. The throbbing as Lucas's cock expanded and exploded sent her into another round of pleasure.

Lucas roared out as he came, shooting into Nyssa's tight channel, her tight muscles milking him for every drop of seed. His body fell over Nyssa's and blanketed her from head to toe as he buried his face in her neck.

Reality came back to Nyssa in degrees. First she noticed the large weight lying on her, pinning her to the bed of the wagon; the fact that Lucas's softening flesh was still inside of her. Finally, she noticed the cold slowly seeping into her body from the night air.

“Lucas,” she whispered as she pushed against his shoulders. “Honey, I’m getting cold.”

With a reluctant groan, Lucas stood up and pulled himself from Nyssa’s body. He lifted her down off the wagon bed and pulled her into a hug against his body. He didn’t seem to really want to let her go. Which was just fine with Nyssa.

Nyssa giggled as she watched Lucas hastily put himself back into his pants, fixing them and tucking his shirt back in. When she went to button her chemise, he pushed her hands out of the way and did it himself, placing a quick kiss on each nipple before closing it.

“Now, that is a damn shame,” he chuckled as he watched her breasts disappear behind her white cotton chemise.

“You can play with them later.” Nyssa giggled as she walked around to climb back into the wagon. Lucas scooted in beside her and grabbed the reins. He quickly shook the reins and got the horses moving. He turned and smiled when Nyssa scooted over to sit next to him.

Lucas began directing the horses down the old dirt road they were on. Out of the corner of his eye, he watched the drowsy woman beside him, curled into his side. Nyssa Dupre had been quite a surprise.

He wasn’t sure what he had expected when Mr. Dupre had asked him to keep an eye on his great-granddaughter, but it certainly wasn’t the ravishing woman beside him. She had taken his breath away the moment he had set eyes on her.

Her long strawberry blonde hair, her beautiful misty moss green eyes, the sexiest body he had ever laid eyes on. Nyssa was one hot lady. And, despite her rough exterior, he had no doubt she was a lady, and all woman.

From to the top of her five foot ten frame to the bottom of her tiny little toes, Nyssa was all woman. She had a beautiful swanlike neck, ample breasts, and a soft swell to her hips. Nothing about her was ordinary. It was all just perfect.

Lucas especially liked the fact that when he held her in his arms, he knew he was holding a woman and not a toothpick. For a man of his size, pickings could oftentimes be slim. Most women were either afraid he would break them or wanted to have him as a prize.

None seemed to want him for him. Not like Nyssa did. She gave him shit, wasn't intimidated by his large size, and gave as good as she got. He could easily see himself falling for her if he wasn't careful. He wondered briefly what his brothers would think of her. Was Nyssa the woman they had been waiting for all of their lives?

"Is it much farther, Lucas?"

"Huh?" he asked, coming out of his deep thoughts.

"Are we almost there? Is it much farther?"

"No, honey, it's just down the road here. The Dupre estate has been vacant for several years, since Margarita Dupre passed away. So, the road out here is a little unused. Mr. Dupre regularly had someone come out and take care of the place, but other than that, I don't think anyone has been here since her death."

"How did she die?" Nyssa asked curiously.

"You know, I'm not really sure. I was away at the time, so I don't remember a lot about it. But, if you're really curious, they might know something down at the Lady's Historical Society. They have a lot of stuff on your family down there."

"Really?"

"Sure, the Dupre's were a founding family. The historical society has a lot of stuff on them. They might even have some actual items from your ancestors. I know that every year there are field trips there from the school. Our history is very important to us."

"That might be interesting."

Nyssa was very noncommittal about anything past the present moment. She was hiding something, something that was a leading force in her life. Lucas wondered why.

"I'll take you down there tomorrow." There was no sense giving her a reason to refuse.

“I guess,” Nyssa replied.

“We’re almost there. If you look, you can just make out the gate ahead of us. The house is just down the driveway from there.”

Nyssa looked forward, seeing an old wooden gate ahead of them. The driveway beyond that was lined with a white fence. At the end of the drive was a huge two-story ranch house. It looked nothing like any of the houses Nyssa had seen back east.

It was made all of natural colored wood, as if the trees had been cut from the very forest around the ranch. It had a large door and several windows along the front of the house, with a covered porch wrapping around the entire house.

“Jeez, what is it with you guys and windows?”

“What?” Lucas turned his head to look at Nyssa in surprise.

“Mr. Dupre’s house, this place, everywhere I’ve been the houses have tons of windows. Is this how you keep everyone working? Cleaning the windows?”

Lucas chuckled. “No, but I’ll take that idea up with the town council.”

“Scalawag.” Nyssa giggled as Lucas brought the wagon to a stop. Nyssa waited until Lucas had jumped down then followed him out his side of the wagon. Her eyes were wide with astonishment as she walked towards the large house.

It was amazing. Built over a hundred years ago and it still looked to be in pristine condition. Mr. Dupre must have put a lot of money into this place to keep it looking so good. She wondered if it was all window dressing or if the foundation of the place was still good.

“Come on, I’ll show you the rest of the place,” Lucas called, holding his hand out for Nyssa. She took a couple of steps closer to Lucas and grabbed his hand, following him when he pulled her towards the front porch of the house.

“Key?” Lucas asked, holding his hand out. Nyssa pulled the key out of her small handbag and handed it to Lucas. He turned and unlocked the door, pushed it open and walked in.

“Well, Nyssa Ann Dupre, welcome home,” he said as Nyssa followed him into the house.

When Nyssa stepped into the house, the hairs on the back of her arms stood up as she felt a strange sensation cross her body. Her eyes widened as she recognized that feeling. There was power here in this house. She knew it with every fiber of her being. Looked like Grandma Dupre might have been just like Nyssa.

“How big is this place?” she asked as she looked up the large winding staircase to one side of the entrance.

“If I remember correctly, there is a root cellar below us. The first floor is opened up into one large room. There’s a kitchen, pantry, study, dining area, water closet, and main sitting area. There’s also a spring room and wash room off the kitchen.”

“Just the first floor?” Nyssa asked, astonished.

“Yeah, it’s big. The master suite is on the first floor as well. It has its own water closet. The second floor has four bedrooms, including a nursery, a water closet, and a sewing room. And, if I’m not mistaken, there’s also a smoke room off the kitchen.”

Nyssa’s mouth fell open as she stared at Lucas in shock. And she was supposed to clean all of this? It would take her a month just to clean one floor.

“Come on, there’s lots to see,” Lucas said as he turned and walked into the room just off to the left of the foyer. Nyssa followed behind him, wondering what in the hell she was going to do with a place this big.

She watched as Lucas walked over to a white sheet and pulled it up, revealing a velvet-covered medallion-back sofa. She walked over and ran her hand over the beautiful dark red fabric. It was a beautiful piece and well cared for.

“Arthur had everything left in the house just as his daughter left it when she died. It’s all yours now, everything here, including the stable out back. There’s nothing there right now, but I’m sure you could get a couple of horses if you wanted.”

Horses? What did she know about horses? She couldn't keep a goat alive. It wasn't that she didn't like animals. In fact, she did, a lot. She just moved so much that it didn't seem fair to keep one. If she decided to stay, maybe she'd think about changing that. Of course, she'd start off with something small, like a dog.

Nyssa followed Lucas through the house, amazed at how well preserved it was, right down to the oil paintings on the walls. If it wasn't for most of the furniture being covered by white cloths, she would expect someone to be living here.

It was like the place had been left just the way it was from the day that her grandmother had died. Nothing was disturbed. It was almost eerie. Nyssa expected to see her grandmother walking down the grand staircase in some long flowing gown, directing servants. It was a little unnerving.

"So, what do you think? Is this a great place or what?" Lucas asked as they walked back down the staircase.

"It's something all right. I'm just not sure it's for me. I'm just one person. What would I do with all of this space? Start a boarding house? Somehow I don't think so. I wouldn't even know what to do with half of these rooms."

"Well, you could—" Lucas stopped in mid-sentence to walk past Nyssa and look out the window. He shook his head and started for the front door. "Come on, I'll introduce you to my brother, Royce."

It was only then that Nyssa noticed the man on horseback riding into the yard. Curious, she followed Lucas out to the front porch. She stopped beside Lucas, feeling his arm come around her shoulders. Okay, that was weird.

But she was glad he was holding on to her a moment later when Royce climbed off his horse. He was just as breathtaking as Lucas. He was a couple of inches shorter than Lucas, but his long, ebony black hair was braided and nearly down to his waist.

As he got closer, Nyssa realized that he had the same smoky gray eyes that Lucas did. Damn! He was just as gorgeous as Lucas was.

Suddenly, all of the fantasies she had ever had about being with more than one man came rushing to her mind.

At Royce's short chuckle, she wished she could sink into the floorboards of the porch. He had to know she was checking him out. Nyssa found it strange considering that not an hour ago, she had been having sex with his brother in the bed of his wagon.

Nyssa mentally shook her head. She really needed to get it together. If she didn't, she would be propositioning both of them.

"Now, what do you have there, brother?"

Nyssa felt herself get wet between her legs at his smooth silky voice. Oh gods, another smooth talker. Just what she needed.

"This here is Nyssa Dupre. She's Albert's great-granddaughter. I was just showing her around. Albert left the old place to her."

"Hmmm, and what do you think of the place, little Nyssa?"

"Uh, Royce, you might want to go easy on the wisecracks. She already called me scalawag."

Nyssa closed her eyes, knowing that her face was burning red. He just had to bring that up, didn't he?

"Really?" Royce said in such a way that Nyssa's eyes flew open to meet his. "Sounds like a woman after my own heart."

Nyssa's eyes widened at the clear invitation written in Royce's eyes. She couldn't believe it. Here she was standing with his brother's arms wrapped around her, and he was making a pass at her? Nyssa didn't know whether to be insulted or intrigued.

Lucas was no help either. He was laughing at the blatant way that Royce was staring at her. He actually seemed amused by it.

"Right now, I think we could all do with some food. I'm going to go rustle something up. If we're lucky, Ian should join us soon, and he'll bring some other stuff along with him. Hopefully, some of Mom's homemade apple pie. Do you like apple pie, Nyssa?" Lucas asked as he turned her in his arms so that he could look down at her.

Nyssa nodded. She loved apple pie. Hell, she just loved food. She would have thought that her not so small waist would have told him

that. She didn't exactly consider herself fat, but she certainly was *healthy*.

"Royce, would you show Nyssa the kitchen and help her find some dishes? I'm sure there's some in there somewhere."

Nyssa didn't like the devilish grin that came over Royce's face at Lucas's words. That grin didn't bode well for her. She watched in shock as Lucas walked off the porch towards his wagon. He was leaving her here?

"Don't worry, pretty Nyssa, I won't do anything you don't want me to do," Royce said as he stepped up to grab her arm and escort her into the house. Nyssa followed behind him. She felt kind of lost and totally confused.

The minute they stepped into the kitchen, Royce turned and picked Nyssa up. He set her down on the countertop and stepped between her legs. His hands moved up to gently cup her face as he tilted her head up and he lowered his lips to hers.

Nyssa was instantly lost in the touch of Royce's lips on hers, the feel of his tongue across hers. Oh gods, he kissed as well as Lucas did. It just wasn't fair to have two men in the same family who kissed this good.

She was so lost in the kiss that it took the feel of Royce's hands against her naked breasts for her to realize that he had unbuttoned her shirt and chemise and pulled them out of the way. Before she could protest, Royce tilted her back over his arm, and his lips left hers to latch onto one of her soft pink nipples.

Nyssa felt a shiver pass through her entire body as Royce nibbled on one hardened nipple with his mouth, then moved over to the other one. It wasn't until she felt his hand move up under her skirt that Nyssa realized what was happening.

"Royce! Gods, Royce, you have to stop." She groaned.

"Why?" Royce asked as he lifted his head to stare down at her. "You're enjoying this. I'm enjoying this. I don't see the problem here."

Nyssa pushed at Royce's shoulders as he bent his head back down to her breasts again. "No, wait, Royce, I can't do this. Hell, I was just with your brother. I can't be with you now. What would Lucas think?"

"Why do you think he gave us a few minutes alone? He's probably out in the wagon right now jerking off thinking about us being together. He prefers to watch, but he felt that we needed this time alone together before we reached that step."

"*What?* He likes to watch? He sent you in here with me so we could have sex? What am I, a doorknob? Everyone gets a turn?" Nyssa yelled as she pushed against Royce's shoulders again.

"No, honey, it's not like that. There will only be the three of us, no one else. I promise."

"What? So you and Lucas get to share me?"

"And Ian."

"Ian? Who the hell is Ian?" Nyssa yelled, shocked.

"Our baby brother. Well, baby brother by five minutes. Lucas is the oldest. He was born first. I was born seven minutes later. Ian was last."

"You're triplets?" *Triplets? Hot damn! Oh, wait, she wasn't supposed to think like that.*

"Yeah, what did you think I meant when I said the three of us?"

"I don't know, me, you, Lucas? I didn't think you meant that three of you were going to share me." Nyssa finally got Royce to let her sit up. She quickly pulled her chemise and shirt back together. "I must be going out of my mind."

She couldn't believe she was actually thinking about it. Three guys wanted to share her? She must be losing it. This just could not be happening to her. Weird things did happen to her, but not this weird. This one really took the cake.

"Look, I need to talk to Lucas."

Royce stared down at Nyssa for several moments, his expression unreadable. Finally, he nodded and lifted Nyssa down to the floor, then stepped back. "I'll just look for the dishes."

Nyssa nodded as she scooted past Royce. Dishes, right! "You do that," she replied as she fled out of the kitchen door towards the front of the house, quickly pulling the edges of her dress together. She ran out the front door towards Lucas's wagon. Her mouth dropped open in shock when she saw what Lucas was doing.

Royce was right. He was leaning up against the side of the wagon and had his cock out of his pants. He was jerking off. She started to say something, to yell at him for treating her like a prostitute, when Lucas arched his back and his head dropped back against the wagon.

His hand started moving faster as he stroked his cock. The head of his long cock looked like it was nearly turning purple. Suddenly, Lucas cried out Nyssa's name, and ropes of white spurted from the top. She had never watched a man masturbate before. It was awesome.

When Lucas's hand fell from his spent cock, Nyssa realized that she stood there just staring at him. With a quick shake of her head, she cleared her throat. She watched as Lucas jerked in surprise and tried to cover his spent cock with his hands.

"Too late, asshole. I already know what you were doing. And even if I hadn't seen it with my own two eyes, Royce was kind enough to explain to me that I have just become the whore of all three of the Nash boys."

"Nyssa—"

"Don't you Nyssa me, jackass. I had sex with you. I never agreed to have sex with your brothers. What? Did you just think that since I put out for one of you, I wouldn't mind putting out for the rest of you? Is that how you really see me, as your own personal sex slave?"

Nyssa couldn't believe she was getting close to tears. She wasn't in love with Lucas, not by a long shot. But she had really liked him. He had been half of the reason she had agreed to stay in this hellhole.

It was karma. It had to be. She had thumbed her nose at too many god-fearing people, and karma was coming back to bite her in the ass. But did it have to bite so hard? Nyssa covered her mouth to keep the rest of her words where they were, in her head, and walked away.

“Nyssa, wait, Nyssa, damn it, Nyssa, wait. I can explain,” Lucas called out.

No, he couldn't. There was no way to explain treating her like a prostitute. Just because she was strange didn't mean it was okay for people to treat her like crap. That didn't mean it didn't happen. But she had thought Lucas was better than that. Guess she was wrong.

There really wasn't any reason to stay. Arthur was missing, the Nash boys thought she was a whore, and she had a house that she would most likely get lost in. The townspeople hadn't come pounding on her door yet, but it was coming.

Leaving now before she got any more involved with anything here, including the Nash boys, was her best option. She could just cut out the middleman and leave now before things started happening and she was asked, politely, to leave.

Nyssa was so deep in her depressive thoughts that she nearly didn't hear the rider coming around the corner and turning down the driveway. She jumped out of the way just as he went past her before coming to a halt.

She watched curiously as a tall man climbed down and walked towards her. The closer he got, the angrier Nyssa became. It was obvious from his height and looks that he was one of the Nash brothers.

“Hey, are you okay?” he asked as he walked towards Nyssa.

“I'm fine. Ian, isn't it?”

He looked surprised. “Yeah, how'd you know?”

Nyssa stared at him, sizing him up. Ian Nash was just as ruggedly handsome as his two brothers, even if his jet-black hair was shorter than theirs. It actually made him look kind of adorable.

“You look a lot like Lucas and Royce, only cuter. I think the shorter hair makes you look more intelligent. I’m hoping that you’re at least smarter than your two brothers.”

“My two—Lucas and Royce? What’d they do now?”

Nyssa started laughing. “So, they get into trouble a lot?”

“Well…” He chuckled.

Nyssa walked up to Ian, tilting her head back to look up into his smoky gray eyes. “Would you do me a favor? Would you kiss me?”

She watched with some amusement as Ian’s eyes widened, his face turning slightly red. “Uh—” Ian began.

“Please?”

“Are you sure?” he asked hesitantly.

“Definitely.” She just needed to know if Ian kissed as good as his brothers did. Then she’d leave—really.

Ian leaned down and wrapped his arms around Nyssa. He lifted her up against his chest as he lowered his lips to hers. Oh yeah, he did kiss as good as his brothers, but softer somehow. Lucas was dominant, taking what he wanted. Royce was consuming. Ian was shy and soft.

“What are you doing?” Ian groaned as Nyssa reached for buttons on his blue jeans.

“Ssshhh, nothing you won’t like, I promise,” Nyssa whispered as she pushed his pants down. His hard cock sprung free from his pants and bounced against his abdomen. She wrapped her hand around his wide girth, surprised at his size. He was big.

Nyssa stroked him a couple of times, smiling when she heard the deep groan coming from Ian. “Do you know how to use this thing, or is it just for show?”

“Huh? What?”

“Ian, do you know how to use this gorgeous cock of yours, or do I need to draw you a picture?”

“I know how to use it. Why would you want to—you want me to make love to you?”

“Why do you look so shocked?”

“Most girls just want to be with my brothers. They don’t usually go after me.”

“Why not? You’re just as handsome as Lucas and Royce. Why wouldn’t I want to be with you?”

Nyssa started to reach for the buttons on Ian’s shirt when he reached up and grabbed her hands. “Please stop.”

“You don’t want to make love to me?” Nyssa asked in surprise. He was actually turning her down? Well, that was different.

“I’d like nothing better than to make love to you, believe me. You’re the sexiest woman I’ve ever met in my life. But I don’t even know who you are. No matter how turned on I am, I can’t just have sex with someone like that.”

Nyssa led her head drop against Ian’s chest as she started to laugh. This was just unreal. First she has sex with Lucas. Then Royce tries to have sex with her, telling her that she’s going to be shared between the three of them. Now, she hits on Ian, and he turns her down.

“Hey, lady, are you okay?” Ian asked after a moment of near hysterical laughter from Nyssa.

“Nyssa, my name is Nyssa.” She laughed.

“You’re Nyssa? You’re the one who—” Ian said in surprise.

“I’m the one who what? Got duped by the Nash brothers? Yeah, that would be me. Guess I can add you to the list too, Ian. Congratulations.”

“No, wait, Nyssa, please,” Ian said as he grabbed her arm to stop her from walking away.

“Why?” Nyssa said as she turned around to face him. “Is there another brother you want me to service before I leave?”

“No, Nyssa. Damn it, they sure fucked this one up. Look, just give me ten minutes, and if you don’t want to stay after that, I’ll take you anywhere you want to go.”

“Really? Anywhere? What if I want to go back to Philadelphia?”

“Philadelphia?” Ian yelled, looking slightly flabbergasted. Finally, he nodded his head. “Okay, fine, I’ll take you to Philadelphia.”

“Fine, you have ten minutes,” Nyssa replied.

Nyssa watched as Ian pulled his pants back up and put his softening cock back inside then buttoned them up. He ran his hand through his hair, pulling at the ends a little. Nyssa could tell that he was agitated.

“Time’s a wasting, Ian,” she reminded him.

“Yeah, I know. I’m just not quite sure how to discuss this with you. I always figured Lucas or Royce would do the explaining, not me.”

“What exactly are you trying to explain?”

“Okay, my mother’s name is Ana Nash. She’s married to my fathers, John, Thomas, and Jack. None of us Nash boys really know which one is our biological father, and we’re okay with that. We had a lot of love growing up.”

“You have three fathers?” Nyssa asked in astonishment.

“Yeah. There are several families here in the valley that are like ours. That’s one of the things we love about our valley. It’s not strange to see a woman walking down the street with two or more husbands. It’s just the way things are here.”

“No kidding? Are you polygamists? Is this some sort of religious thing?”

“No, it’s nothing like that. As for the polygamy thing, my mother is only legally married to one man, John. But she had a ceremony binding her to Thomas and Jack at the same time that she married John.”

“So, what does this have to do with me?”

“John, Thomas, and Jack are brothers, triplets, just like Lucas, Royce, and myself. We always knew that we would share a woman some day, that we would all be married to her. We also knew that she wouldn’t be from this valley. That’s kind of one of the conditions set down by our forefathers. No multiple marriage between any men and

women here in the valley. If we chose to take this arrangement, we had to find someone from outside of the valley.”

“Keeps down on the inbreeding, huh?”

“Yeah, something like that. When Arthur sent for you and showed your picture to Lucas, he knew you were the one for us. He let us know when you got here.”

“And what if I don’t want three men?” Nyssa asked, still astounded by what Ian was telling her. This was considered normal in Applegate Valley?

“It’s nothing we would force on you, Nyssa. You have to want this just as much as we do. But know this, if you accept us we will take care of you for the rest of our lives. You will want for nothing.”

“What about love?”

Ian shrugged his shoulders, his face turning red again. “That can only come with time. We have to get to know each other before deeper feelings can develop. Don’t get me wrong, you’re breathtaking, but for love to take hold—”

Nyssa laughed. “Nice save, Ian.”

“Huh?”

“If you had said that you already loved me, I would have known you were lying. I wouldn’t have believed a word you were saying. I’m still not sure that I do. This is pretty outlandish.”

Ian chuckled. “I realize that. But you need to understand, this was how we were raised. This *is* normal to us. There are probably twenty families in the valley that are like ours, including my parents.”

“And it works? It really works? How? Isn’t there jealousy between the men?”

“No, at least not between my parents. Sure, they have the regular arguments that every married couple has. But there’s no jealousy between my fathers.”

Nyssa just shook her head in wonder. “How is that possible?”

“Mom has a relationship that is different with each one of them. Take John for example. He’s a lot like Lucas, the leader of the family.

He's always making sure we're safe and okay. But he's very dominant. Mom fights with him the most."

"I can see that." Nyssa laughed, thinking of Lucas.

"Thomas isn't so dominant, but he's constantly chasing Mom around the house. I can't tell you how many times I've walked into the room only to find Thomas with his hand up Mom's dress. Now Jack, he's a bit quieter. I think I learned the most from him."

"How so?"

"Jack is a thinker. His favorite thing to do is take Mom outside into the fields at night and watch the night stars. He stays at home with Mom during the day while John and Thomas work the ranch."

"This still doesn't explain why there's no jealousy."

"Okay, at home, Mom has her own room, as do each of my fathers. She can choose to go to their rooms and spend the night with one of them, or they all join her in her room. If she wants time alone, they sleep in their rooms and she sleeps in hers. Although I can't remember the last time Mom slept without at least two of my fathers. They just take turns."

"Take turns? Even for sex?"

"Not all of the time. Sometimes she has sex with all three of them. Other times, it's just one of them. I guess they just do whatever feels good to them. I never really asked much about my parent's sex life."

"Yeah, that could be kind of—"

"Icky?" Ian laughed.

"Yeah, something like that."

Ian watched Nyssa for a moment as she thought about what he had said. Would she agree to try this out, or would she run for the hills? He had really hoped that Royce or Lucas would be explaining this situation to the woman that they chose and not him. He was hopeless at things like this.

"Alright," Nyssa began, "I need to think about this for awhile, okay?"

“Yeah, sure.” Okay, was she serious? Ian was elated that she hadn’t slapped his face and stormed off. If she needed time to think about it, she could have all of the time she needed. He’d wait as long as it took.

“Can you take me back up to the house?”

“Sure, climb on.” Ian lifted Nyssa up onto his horse, then climbed on behind her. He cracked the reins and started down the road towards the Dupre house. Now if he could just keep Lucas and Royce from overwhelming her.

“Thanks, Ian,” Nyssa whispered quietly.

“For what?”

Nyssa started laughing. “For turning me down back there.”

“Oh, sure. Just don’t expect it to happen the next time that you proposition me. Now that you know what the deal is, if you grab my dick again, you’d better be prepared for me to use it.”

“Fair enough.” Nyssa laughed.

Chapter 3

Lucas and Royce sat on the front steps when they rode up in front of the house. They looked dejected, their arms resting on their knees and hands folded together between their legs. Their faces were somber as they watched Ian and Nyssa ride in.

Nyssa eyed them briefly before letting Ian lift her down from the horse. She saw them get to their feet as she walked around the horse. The way their eyes seemed to devour her, Nyssa wondered just how long she was going to be able to deny them.

No one had ever wanted her the way that they seemed to. And to have three gorgeous men longing for her—it was a huge ego boost. It was also a little overwhelming. So much so that she was grateful when Ian walked over and wrapped an arm around her shoulders.

“They won’t bite, I promise,” he leaned down to whisper in her ear. “Believe it or not, they do understand the word *no*.”

“I’m more worried about me biting them,” Nyssa whispered back. Her eyes shot up to his as she suddenly realized what she had said, but Ian just smiled down at her, a small twinkle in his smoky gray eyes.

“Take it as slow as you need to, Nyssa. I promise, none of us will do anything you don’t want us to do,” Ian assured her.

Nyssa gazed up at him for several moments then nodded her head. She let her eyes go to the two strong men who had come to their feet, staring back at her from the steps. “Just so they know that my bite is bigger than my bark.”

Ian couldn’t help laughing at Nyssa’s words. She was such a surprise to him. He had wanted her the moment Lucas had described her to him. When she had come on to him and grabbed his cock, Ian

thought he would lose his mind. It had been all he could do to turn her down.

However, he had been honest with her when he had told her he didn't want to just have sex with anyone. He wanted to have sex with her, but he also wanted to get to know her better before he slept with her. He wanted it to mean something, not just be a way to get his rocks off.

Still, if Nyssa came at him again, he couldn't say he would turn her down. He wanted her too much for that. That one—great—kiss had been enough to make him want more, a lot more. Hell, he wanted to try out every sexual fantasy he had ever had with her.

“You ready?”

Nyssa looked cautiously towards Lucas and Royce. “Not really, but what other choice do I have? The forks are in the house,” she said as she gestured to the saddlebags Ian had in his hands.

Ian laughed as he placed his free hand in the small of Nyssa's back and escorted her into the house. They walked right past Lucas and Royce as if they weren't standing there devouring Nyssa with their eyes.

Inside of the house, Ian led Nyssa into the family dining area. Nyssa sat down in one of the chairs as Ian set the saddlebags on the table and unloaded them. He grabbed four plates, set them around the table, and then sat down himself.

“Well? Dig in,” he said as he reached for one of the small bags of food his mother had supplied. Nyssa had just grabbed for one of the other bags when Royce and Lucas walked into the room. Nyssa sent them a little glare, then turned her attention back to the food.

She loaded several items onto her plate and picked up a set of chopsticks to begin eating. She had taken several bites when she noticed the sudden silence in the room. When she looked up, she found three sets of eyes looking at her curiously.

“What?” she asked nervously. Why were they all staring at her? Did she have something on her face?

“You can eat with chopsticks?” Ian finally asked.

“Sure,” Nyssa said as she shrugged her shoulders. “Can’t you?”

Ian shook his head. “No, I’ve never learned how.”

“Would you like to?” Nyssa asked as she snapped her chopsticks together.

Ian nodded eagerly. “Yes, please.” He was so polite.

Nyssa reached over and moved the chopsticks in Ian’s hand around until he held them properly. “Now, just squeeze them together with your fingers while you pick up the food. Like this,” Nyssa said as she picked up a piece of dried fish.

She took a bite, then looked over at Ian as she chewed. She smiled as she watched him try. He was able to grab the food, but it fell back to the plate before he could get it to his mouth. Nyssa couldn’t help laughing at the distressed look on his face.

“Just keep trying. You’ll get it. It took me awhile to get it too.”

“How did you learn, Nyssa?” Lucas asked from across the table.

Nyssa looked over at him, wary of him. “A few years ago, I worked in a restaurant for a couple of months. One of the waiters taught me,” she said as she shrugged her shoulders as if it were no big deal.

“A couple of months? Why did you leave?” Royce asked.

“Same reason I always leave. I was asked to,” Nyssa replied, then turned her face back down to her food. She tried to ignore the stares from the three brothers as she finished eating, not looking up because she knew she would find them watching her.

When she was all done eating, she picked up her plate and walked to the sink. She rinsed it off and put it in the dish rack, then turned back to look at the brothers. She had to grab the countertop to steady herself when she found them still staring at her. It was unnerving.

“Do you think it’s possible for you to stop staring at me?”

Nyssa couldn’t stop the small bubble of laughter that escaped her lips when all three of them shook their heads. She just rolled her eyes

and walked out of the kitchen. Fine, if they couldn't stop staring at her, she'd remove herself from the scene.

As she walked into the living room, she heard footsteps behind her. She turned her head and saw Lucas, Royce and Ian following her. Well, removing herself certainly seemed to work well. Nyssa placed her hands on her hips and glared at them.

"What is with you guys?" she demanded.

Lucas quickly lowered his gaze, looking at his brown cowboy boots. Royce stuck his hands in his pockets as he raised his eyes to look at the ceiling. Both of them looked a little embarrassed. Ian stepped past his two brothers and reached for Nyssa.

"Did you know that there's a porch swing on the back porch? Would you like to go try it out with me?" he asked as he wrapped an arm around Nyssa's shoulders.

Nyssa took a deep breath, her eyes darting from him to Royce, then Lucas, before she nodded her head. "I guess."

She allowed Ian to guide her outside to the back porch, surprised to see how nice the backyard looked. Directly outside of the back porch was a nice circular stone patio area. Beyond the yard was a small lake.

Nyssa could just picture summers spent with friends in this backyard—if she had any friends. The thought was so depressing, she didn't offer any resistance when Ian pulled her down to sit next to him on the swing. His arms wrapped around her and pulled her close to his body.

As Ian started the swing gently moving, Nyssa watched as Royce and Lucas sat down in chairs off to one side of the swing. They alternated between watching her intently and glaring at Ian.

Nyssa couldn't help the small smile that came to her lips. Lucas and Royce seemed to be upset that Ian had taken the initiative to sit and cuddle with her when they had tried more and been turned down.

“I thought you said there wouldn’t be any jealousy?” Nyssa asked Ian as she turned her head to look up at him. “They don’t seem to be too happy.”

Ian chuckled as he leaned down and placed a small kiss on Nyssa’s head. “They’re just mad because I thought of this first. See, I’m the smart one in the group.”

“Uh huh,” Nyssa said as she tucked her head against Ian’s broad chest. As the swing moved back and forth, the warmth coming from Ian made Nyssa drowsy. She folded her hands together under her head and tucked her legs up under her long dress and closed her eyes. She could feel the soft beat of Ian’s heart as she was gently rocked to sleep.

As Nyssa faded off to sleep, Ian raised his eyes to look over at his brothers. They were again watching Nyssa with deep hunger in their eyes. As they raised their eyes to meet his, a deep questioning look in their eyes, Ian nodded.

He knew what they were asking. They wanted to know if he felt the intense connection to Nyssa that they had. He did. He had known her all of maybe two hours, but now that she was in his arms, he couldn’t imagine being without her.

He had always wondered how it would feel when he met the woman for them. His mother said that the connection between her and her husbands had been instantaneous. She had known the moment she had met them that they were her future.

Ian had the strong feeling that Nyssa was his. There was just something about her that drew him like nothing he had ever experienced before. She fascinated him, intrigued him. He wanted to know everything about her.

He was honest enough with himself to know that he also wanted to make love to her more than almost anything. Nyssa was beautiful. From the look on Lucas’s face earlier, he was sure that she would be a firecracker in bed, too.

Ian couldn't wait to find out. He hadn't been with that many women in his time. They usually seemed to go for his older brothers. Ian knew he was considered attractive, but he was also somewhat of a tenderfoot. His brothers were more the types of men women hungered for, not him.

Looking down at Nyssa's sleeping face, Ian smiled. She looked so peaceful. He hated to wake her up, but he knew she needed to get to bed. Ian turned and lifted Nyssa into his arms, then got to his feet.

As he followed Royce into the house, he wondered at how well she seemed to fit into his arms. It would be nice if she stayed here. Then he could feel her in his arms whenever he wanted to, whenever he felt the need.

Only time would tell if she accepted the three of them. It was a big decision for anyone to make, let alone a woman who had three men wanting her at the same time. Still, Ian could only hope that she made the choice to stay with them.

As Lucas opened the door to the master suite, Ian carried Nyssa in and lay her down on the bed after Royce pulled the covers back. He reached down and pulled her boots off, then looked at her shirt and skirt, wondering if he should do anything about them too. He turned and looked questioningly over his shoulder at Lucas.

His brother just shook his head as he walked over to the bag Nyssa had brought with her. He opened it up and rooted around until he found a clean white nightgown, then closed the bag again and walked towards the bed.

Lucas knew from experience that Nyssa was as naked as the day she was born under her dress and chemise. While he truly didn't mind her sleeping in the nude, Nyssa might. Better to be safe than sorry.

He sat down on the side of the bed and reached for the buttons on her dress, quickly unbuttoning it, then her chemise. He paused and drew in a deep breath, then pushed the material down her arms, baring her breasts to his hungry gaze.

He could hear Royce and Ian gasp behind them as they got a good look at the bounty before them. Nyssa's breasts were glorious, all soft and rounded, the pale pink areolas sprouting nice perky nipples.

It was all Lucas could do not to lean down and swipe his tongue over them before he pulled her nightgown down over them. He almost groaned when they disappeared from his sight, disappointed to cover such a wonderful treasure.

The rest was going to be even harder. He remembered the silky feel of Nyssa's skin when he had made love to her in his wagon. The soft smattering of strawberry blonde curls that topped a place he hoped to visit many, many times in the coming years.

Lucas gently lifted her hips with one hand, then pulled her dress the rest of the way down her waist, then her legs, and dropped it on the floor. He let himself have one quick glance at the hidden treasure at the apex of her thighs before he tucked her legs up under the covers and pulled them up to her chest.

"It's a damn shame to cover all of the beauty up, Lucas," Royce remarked as he looked down at Nyssa over Lucas's shoulder.

Lucas nodded. "I know, but we can't do anything that might scare her away, and certainly not without her permission. You know that..."

"Lucas?" Nyssa whispered quietly.

Lucas instantly turned his gaze back to Nyssa. He leaned down close to her face as she opened her sleepy eyes. "Yeah, baby? I'm right here."

"Stay with me?" she whispered.

"Nyssa—"

"Please? I don't want to be here alone."

Lucas took a deep breath and let it out slowly as he watched Nyssa's eyes close again. Well, hell! He was just afraid that if he stayed, he would want more than she was willing to give. But how was he supposed to say no to her?

"We'll all stay," Royce said as he unbuttoned his shirt.

Ian shrugged his shoulder as he took off his own shirt and carefully hung it over the back of a chair, then pulled a pillow and a blanket off of the bed and walked to the chaise lounge to stretch out.

He tucked the pillow under his head and watched Royce pull his boots off before he stretched out on top of the blankets on one side of Nyssa. Lucas pulled off his own shirt and dropped it on the floor, then his boots before he climbed into the bed on the other side of Nyssa.

“Ian, get the light,” Royce said.

Ian rolled his eyes as he quickly got up and blew out the lard oil lamp before lying back down again. It was going to be a long night.

* * * *

Nyssa woke to the most delicious feeling. She felt safe, which was a weird feeling for her. She hadn't felt safe in many years. She was also warm, warmer than she could ever remember feeling, but it wasn't overpowering.

A solid warmth behind her blanketed the backside of her body. Another solid form warmed her from the front. Opening her eyes, Nyssa could just make out a body lying on its back in front of her through the moonlight that filtered in from the open window.

She reached back with her hand and felt warm bare skin. Long, solid, warm bare skin. As she moved her fingers over the rock-hard muscles, she inhaled deeply when she felt a lone hand move up under her nightgown along her rib cage.

“Turn about is fair play, love,” whispered a deep, raspy voice in her ear. Nyssa turned her head to see Royce smile down at her just as his long fingers reached her breasts and gently pulled on one nipple.

“Royce.” She moaned out as she arched her back, pushing her breast further into the palm of his hand.

“You like that, honey?” He growled into her ear as his tongue came out to softly rim the edge.

Nyssa could only nod her head as Royce moved his other arm underneath her, reaching around to grab her other breasts. As his finger began to gently tug on both of her nipples, Royce pushed his blue jean-clad thigh between her legs until she lifted one and hooked it back over his.

She felt like she was going to pass out when Royce pushed her breasts together and grabbed both of her nipples in one hand, while the other slowly moved down her body to brush against the tight curls below her abdomen.

“What do you want, Nyssa?” Royce asked softly as Nyssa lifted her hips, trying to get Royce to touch her nether regions.

Nyssa let out a gasp when she felt long fingers brush against her soft folds, then sink deep inside of her. But Royce’s fingers still played in her curls. She quickly turned her head to see Lucas grinning at her, his face level with her breasts as he pushed the blankets down to their feet.

She watched with fascination as Royce lifted one of her breasts and held it out to Lucas, who leaned in to wrap his lips around her nipple. He tugged on it gently with his teeth as he ran his tongue over the top.

“Lucas.” She breathed heavily.

He let go of her nipple, much to Nyssa’s disappointment, and scooted up on the bed until he lay down next to her. He grinned at her, his eyes filled with lust. “Now, little Nyssa, we’re going to show you what your nights will be like if you stay with us.”

Lucas and Royce rolled her onto her back. They each grabbed one of her thighs and looped them over their hips. Nyssa was a little embarrassed to be lying there with her legs spread out between them. She started to protest when Lucas grabbed the edge of her nightgown and pulled it up over her head, but it happened so quickly, it was done before she could object.

When she tried to bring her arms down, they each laid their heads down on her, trapping her arms underneath their heads. Nyssa

couldn't believe she wasn't protesting when they both lowered their heads to a breast and their lips tugged on her nipples.

She felt their hands move down her stomach and past her abdomen to caress her thighs, wondering how they seemed to be working in unison. She was still shocked that she allowed any of this to happen, but not so shocked that she wanted it to stop.

Nyssa's head fell back, and she cried out when she felt someone's tongue sweep through her tender folds and press against her. Soft lips wrapped around her most sensitive spot, sucking on it as a tongue rapidly stroked the top.

When her legs started to tremble under the overload of sensation, strong hands moved up from her thighs to hold them in place. Nyssa could only lie there and cry out as the pleasure overwhelmed her. As someone's fingers started to push inside of her, Nyssa's body exploded, drawing a deep cry from her lips.

"That's it, honey, give it to us," Royce whispered as he leaned down and claimed her lips. He thrust his tongue into her mouth and explored, claiming her at the same time. Nyssa wrapped the arm that had been trapped under him in his long black hair and pulled him deeper into the kiss. She felt a sense of deep satisfaction as she heard Royce moan, then lean closer to her.

Her hand clenched harder in his hair, an aching moan escaping her lips, when she felt someone kneel between her legs and lift her hips up before a long hard cock sank deep inside of her.

Nyssa pulled her head away from Royce to look up. She grinned widely when she saw Ian between her thighs. She pulled her arms free from Royce and Lucas to hold them out to him. As Ian leaned down over her, Nyssa wrapped her arms around his shoulders, her legs around his waist.

"Ian," she whispered softly as she tilted her head up for his kiss. Her tongue moved out to connect with his, inviting him in. As Ian kissed her, he moved his hips and thrust into her. He moved slowly at first but began to pump his hips faster with each thrust.

When Ian lifted his head and looked down at her, she knew he wasn't going to last much longer. She moved her hands down his neck to his chest. Her fingers searched for his nipples and gently pulled on them.

The more she tugged, the faster Ian moved. His eyes never left hers as he sank deep into her tight grasp over and over again. "Ian," she whispered again, desperately, as she felt herself move towards her own climax.

Her legs started to tremble again. Suddenly, she felt a hand on each of them, holding them up high beside her chest. The position angled her pelvis up, giving Ian deeper access. Nyssa cried out as he sank deeper on his next thrust, her eyes closed at the exquisite pleasure.

"You like that, don't you, honey?"

Nyssa opened her eyes and turned her head towards the voice. Her smile gave Lucas her answer. Hell, yes, she liked it.

"How about this?" Lucas said as he pushed his hand down between her and Ian to rub against her clit. "Do you like this too?"

As Lucas began to rapidly stroke her, Nyssa went into overload, too overwhelmed to even nod her head. All she could do was arch her head back and open her mouth to let out a loud scream as she exploded.

Nyssa was dimly aware of hearing Ian's voice roar out her name as her muscles tightened down on him like a vice and dragged his release from him. He thrust into her one more time before his body shook with the intensity of his orgasm, his cock pulsing inside of her as he emptied his seed deep into her.

Before Nyssa could even catch her breath, Ian pulled from her and collapsed on the side of the bed, only to be replaced by Royce. He gave her a devilish grin as he grabbed her by the hips and flipped her over onto her stomach. He pulled her back until she knelt before him.

"Now, it's my turn," Royce growled as he thrust into Nyssa with one quick lunge. Royce wasn't gentle like Ian, or even arousing like

Lucas. He was consuming. His thrusts were rapid and untamed. And Nyssa loved every moment of it.

With Royce, a woman could tell that she was being claimed. There was no mistaking the savage thrusts, the primitive growl that came from deep within Royce's chest, or even the hard grasp he had on her hips, holding her right where he wanted her.

Nyssa opened her eyes and looked down when she felt a soft movement against her dangling breast. She opened her mouth to say something when she saw Lucas scoot his body underneath her chest, but the sound was lost in her deep cry as Lucas's lips attacked her nipples.

As his lips alternated between her breasts, his hand moved down to once again stroke against her. With Lucas caressing her, Royce pounding inside of her, Nyssa only had a moment before she screamed again.

The pleasure of what they were doing to her was so intense, she was afraid she was going to pass out this time. But Royce wasn't done with her. He continued to thrust into her, taking her through her orgasm and on to the beginning of the next one.

Lucas didn't stop his stimulation either as he rapidly stroked her slick flesh with his fingers, his lips tugging on her nipples. Nyssa's body was so inflamed, so oversensitive to what they were doing, that she cried out again within moments.

This time, though, Royce joined her as he shouted out her name and filled her with his seed, his hands clenched against her hips. Nyssa started to collapse down on the bed as Royce pulled from her, but Lucas scooted beneath her. His long, thick cock impaled her before she could stop him.

"Lucas." She groaned as he grabbed her hips with his hands and thrust up into her. She wasn't sure how much more of them she could take. She was just grateful that they were only triplets. Any more Nash boys and she wouldn't be able to walk.

“One more, baby, then you can sleep,” Lucas whispered as he smiled up at her.

Nyssa just nodded her head as she pushed herself up into a sitting position so she could look down at him. She could feel him raise his knees behind her back. As big as he was, all she had to do was let him take her. He was strong enough to lift her body up, then slam her back down.

When she heard a slight moan beside her, Nyssa turned her head to see Ian’s eyes trained on her, his hand wrapped around his cock as he stroked himself to the same rhythm that Lucas thrust into her. *Gods, that was hot!*

Nyssa smiled as she looked back down at Lucas. His eyes watched her intently. She moved her hands from Lucas’s chest and slowly stroked up her abdomen to her chest. As she grabbed a breast in each hand, she began to gently massage them, her fingers moving to gently tug on her nipples.

She could hear Ian’s response by the quick groans coming from his lips. Lucas’s grip on her hips tightened, his upward thrust becoming rapid and uncoordinated. Nyssa could see his smoky gray eyes darken even more than they had before.

Even Royce, having come just moments before, started to groan as his hand moved down to stroke his suddenly invigorated cock. *This was fun*, Nyssa thought as she lifted one breast and brought the nipple up so she could swipe her tongue over it.

“Fuck!” Ian yelled out as his cock detonated and streams of white seed covered his hand and stomach.

Nyssa’s grin was wicked as she reached over and scooped some up with her finger. She stuck it into her mouth and licked it clean. She watched with delight as Ian’s eyes widened, then fell closed as he quickly stroked his cock several more times.

She wasn’t done, though, not by a long shot. If these three sexy men thought they were going to rule things in the bedroom because there were more of them, they were in for a big surprise.

One hand on her breasts, alternating between her nipples, Nyssa moved her hand down between her thighs. As she moved them against her wet folds, she purposely brushed them against Lucas's cock as he pounded into her.

As her fingers moved between the folds, caressing the sensitive nub there, she looked back down at Lucas. "Do you like fucking me, Lucas? Do you like thrusting that big cock of yours into me?"

Nyssa could barely contain her laughter as Lucas's eyes widened at her words just before they rolled back into his head. The cords on his neck stood out as Lucas arched his head back and yelled out Nyssa's name. He thrust into her once, twice, then a third time as he filled her with his release.

Before Nyssa could gloat, she was suddenly grabbed from behind, lifted off of Lucas, and tossed onto her back. Royce quickly settled down between her legs. His eyes were apologetic as he filled her again and thrust rapidly into her.

"I'm sorry. You just can't talk like that, Nyssa," he growled as he grabbed her legs and pushed them up over his shoulders. "I can't take it, honey."

As Nyssa grabbed onto Royce's shoulders, he reached down with his hand to fondle her. His fingers moved against her sweet nub almost as fast as he was pounded into her.

Nyssa grinned. "Why? You don't want me to ask if you like fucking me? Don't you like the feeling of me tightening around that big thick cock of yours? You want me to beg for it, Royce? You want me to beg you to fuck me with your big beautiful cock?"

"Nyssa," Royce growled between clenched teeth.

"Make me come, Royce," Nyssa demanded. "Make me scream for you."

"Fuck!" Royce yelled as he increased his rapid penetrations into her tight grip. His fingers gripped her little nub as he quickly stroked the swollen flesh. He bent down and latched onto her nipple and tugged on it with his teeth.

“Royce, oh yeah, Royce, just like that.” Nyssa groaned. She could feel her climax rapidly approaching, seconds away in fact. As she dug her fingernails into Royce’s back, Nyssa dropped her head back and screamed as her orgasm overtook her.

She was so overwhelmed, so deep into the pleasure her body was vibrating with, she barely registered the loud roar that came from Royce, but she could feel him empty himself deep into her womb as his body came down over hers.

Her mind still reeling, Nyssa could only close her eyes as she was carefully lifted and carried into the bathroom. Her body felt dead, but the delicious ache between her legs was telling her that she was very much alive. Every nerve ending in her body was alive.

She opened her eyes and looked up at Lucas as he lowered her into a large porcelain tub of warm water. She just smiled as he grabbed a washcloth and began to gently clean her body. Ian sat behind her. He poured a pitcher of water over her head, then soaped up his hands and sank them into her hair.

“Where’s Royce?” she murmured softly as she looked around for him.

“He’s changing the bedding, honey. No sense in sleeping in the wet spot. They’re all over the bed.” Lucas chuckled as he lifted her leg to run the washcloth down the entire length, then back up. He did the same for the other leg, then reached for her arms.

“Dunk your head, honey,” Ian said from behind her.

Nyssa sank down into the water. She felt Ian’s hands in her hair as he moved it around until all of the soap was out of it. As she pushed herself back up, she saw Lucas stand before her, a large towel in his hands.

“Come on, out you go.”

Nyssa pushed herself to her feet and stepped out of the tub, not missing the swift inhale of breath that came from Ian as he looked at her naked body. She grinned to herself as she stepped into the towel Lucas held out.

She had just taken on all three of them, Royce twice, and Ian was already getting turned on again. If she decided to stick around, she was going to need to eat plenty of vegetables just to keep up with them. These men of hers had huge appetites.

These men of hers—Nyssa didn't realize she had started to think about them as hers until just that moment. What did that mean for her? Was she going to stay? Was she going to accept the unusual relationship they wanted with her? If she did, what would happen when they found out the truth about her?

"Honey? You okay?" Lucas asked as he pulled Nyssa from her deep thoughts. "We didn't hurt you, did we?"

Nyssa shook her head. "No, of course not. I feel great. I'm just tired."

Lucas grinned. "I'll bet. I promise we'll leave you alone at least until the morning."

"Gee, morning, huh? Thanks." Nyssa laughed as she handed the towel back to Lucas and walked into the bedroom. She saw Royce glance up as he put the last feather pillow back onto the bed, smiling when his mouth dropped open.

"Nyssa," He groaned.

"Yes, Royce?" she purred as she climbed onto the bed and crawled across the mattress until she was knelt right in front of him. "Royce?" she asked again when he continued to stare down at her.

Nyssa smiled as she turned and crawled to the top of the bed, pushing the blankets down to her feet. As she settled herself back against the pillows she looked up to see all three of the brothers staring at her—again.

She pushed herself up on her elbows and looked down at the bed, then back up to them, giggling lightly. "I think we need a bigger bed." Nyssa lay back against the pillows. "Now, am I sleeping alone, or do I get company?"

Nyssa could only laugh as three very large bodies catapulted onto the bed. There was some wrestling around as each man tried to get a

place next to Nyssa. Finally, they settled down, Lucas and Royce on each side of her. Ian lay between Nyssa's legs, his head resting on her abdomen.

"I'm not sure this is going to work, Ian." Nyssa giggled down at him. She was surprised by the answering chuckle he gave back to her.

"Trust me, it will work just fine."

Nyssa knew what he was talking about a moment later when he tucked his hand under his head and his fingers came to settle against her swollen folds, his thumb resting just inside of her body.

"Oh! I guess—maybe it will work," she said breathlessly as she felt Ian move his thumb around inside of her, then pressed it against her sensitive flesh. His fingers spread her skin out before closing again, trapping her sweet nub between them.

She heard Lucas chuckle before he blew out the oil lamp on the nightstand. He then scooted down until his head rested on her chest. His lips moved over to suck one nipple into his mouth. A moment later, Royce mirrored him, taking a nipple for himself.

Nyssa just giggled as she wrapped an arm around the shoulders of Lucas and Royce. She wasn't totally sure she was going to get any sleep tonight, but she definitely felt desired. The Nash boys couldn't seem to keep their hands off of her, something she had never experienced before.

As she closed her eyes and started to drift off to sleep again, Nyssa wondered how she had come to be in this position. She had one man on each breast, another with his head on her stomach and his hands deep inside of her, and each of them seemed happy right where they were. How had she gotten so lucky?

Chapter 4

Nyssa was having the most wonderful dream. She felt loved, protected, and wanted. She could also feel several hands move over her body as they softly caressed her. But it was the tongue that gently lavished the slick flesh between her legs that pulled her from her dream.

She came to full wakefulness just in time to cry out as a fierce orgasm began to overtake her body. She lifted her hips, trying to get the fingers pushed inside of her to go deeper, faster. Her hands tightly gripped the hair on the two heads nibbling on her breasts.

“Oooohh,” she cried out as she came, her eyes squeezed tight as her body vibrated with pleasure.

By the time she could open her eyes a few moments later, Lucas, Royce, and Ian were all grinning down at her as they knelt next to her. She smirked as she saw the three hard cocks aimed in her direction.

“I thought you were going to give me until morning.”

“It is morning, baby,” Lucas replied.

Nyssa turned her head to look out the window. It was barely light out. Her eyes wide, she turned to look back at them as she gestured to the window. “You call that morning?”

“We get up early around these parts, honey.” Lucas laughed as he climbed off the bed and reached for his pants. Royce followed right behind them.

Nyssa watched with a little disappointment as Ian also climbed from the bed. “You’re all leaving?”

“Royce and I have to get to work, but don’t worry, Ian will stay with you if you want,” Lucas said as he pulled on his cowboy boots.

She knew she was sounding desperate and needy, but she couldn't help it. They had grown on her in the last few hours, wheedled their way into her heart. "When will you be back?"

"I have to work until five o'clock or so. What about you, Royce?" Lucas asked as he turned to look at his brother.

"I should be done around three, I think," Royce replied. "Will that work for you?" he asked as he knelt on the side of the bed to lean down and kiss Nyssa.

Nyssa wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him back. When he lifted his head, she grinned up at him and softly caressed the side of his face. "Come back soon, and I'll talk dirty to you again," she whispered for his ears alone.

Royce growled down at Nyssa. His smoky gray eyes darkened until they were almost black. "I'll be back for lunch at eleven o'clock. You'd better be naked and waiting for me."

"I'll do better than that. I'll be naked, waiting for you, and on my hands and knees."

Royce glared at Nyssa before he quickly dipped his head to kiss her one more time. Then he stood up and walked out of the room without another word.

Nyssa smiled and turned her gaze towards Lucas. She lifted an eyebrow at him as he crawled across the bed to her. "What about you?"

"Sorry, honey, unlike Royce, my work is not done when I get the chores done. I actually have specific hours that I'm supposed to be at work. But I could come home for lunch."

"Well, Royce is coming home at eleven. What time do you have lunch?"

Lucas chuckled. "Making a schedule already?"

Nyssa could feel her face heat up a little as she shrugged her shoulders. "No, I was just hoping to get time alone with each of you. If our clothes happen to mysteriously come off during that time—" She giggled.

“I’ll be home at one o’clock, how’s that? Will that give you enough time to recover?”

Nyssa laughed. “Just don’t start playing with yourself at eleven. Save it for me.” She was gratified when Lucas turned a little red. She knew that was exactly what he had planned on doing.

“You’re going to be a cruel boss, aren’t you?” Lucas asked as he lowered his head to gently kiss Nyssa’s lips.

“If you’re a good boy, I’ll let you watch during lunch tomorrow when Royce comes home,” Nyssa promised. She giggled when Lucas’s eyes turned dark, and he growled down at her much like Royce had.

It amazed her how fast she had figured out what turned these two men on. Royce liked her to talk dirty while he fucked her, Lucas liked to watch his brothers fuck her. She just had to figure out what tripped Ian’s trigger.

She was pretty sure she had an idea. Ian was gentle. Somehow, she knew he would be a cuddler. Not something she had a problem with. She liked to be held just as much as the next woman. If Ian liked that too, all the better for her.

Nyssa reached up and gently caressed the side of Lucas’s face, then leaned up to kiss him. “Now go to work so you can come home to me.”

Lucas smiled as he climbed from the bed and walked to the door. He cast her one last longing look, then turned and walked out of the room.

After Lucas had left the room, Nyssa turned her gaze to Ian. “Do you have a job to go off to?”

Ian shook his head, his face blushing. “Not a real one. I usually stay home and keep things running.”

“Running things from home is a real job, Ian,” Nyssa said as she turned onto her side and rested her head on her bent arm. “Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise.”

“I guess,” he said quietly. “I also write a little.”

“Why don’t you come back to bed and cuddle with me for a little while? I’m not ready to get up quite yet, and I’m cold.”

Ian immediately rushed across to the bed and crawled under the covers. Nyssa scooted up next to him, wrapped one arm around his chest, and pushed her leg between his. She pressed her head against his chest, just under his chin.

“So, tell me about this writing that you do,” Nyssa asked.

“Nothing specific, just a little here and there. I’ve done a few articles on living in a small town, ranching, things like that. But what I really want to do is be an author,” Ian replied as he wrapped an arm around Nyssa. He gently rubbed her arm with his hand.

“Okay, so if you were going to write the great American novel, what would it be about?”

“A woman living with three men?” Ian laughed.

“Oh, an erotic dime novel then?” Nyssa asked as she rolled over on top of Ian. She folded her hands on his chest and rested her chin on them as she looked down at him. She felt him jump a little when her legs settled against his.

“I, uh—” Ian stammered.

“Maybe I can help you out with your research,” she purred as she spread her legs. She let his cock spring up between her legs, then quickly closed them again so that Ian was trapped between them. If she moved her hips up just a little, the head of his cock brushed against her, arousing her.

“Nyssa.” Ian groaned as his cock pushed against her cleft before sliding past. The more he pushed, the wetter Nyssa became, making her slick and easier to move against. Before long, he held her hips with his hands as he pumped his hips against her.

“I think this would be better.” Nyssa moaned as she moved her hand down to grab Ian’s cock and pull it up under her body. The next time he pushed his hips up, the head of his engorged cock rubbed against her tender spots.

Nyssa couldn't stand it anymore. She separated her legs, placing them on each side of his. As Ian continued to thrust against her, Nyssa arched her back and drew her body up until the head of his cock brushed against her tight entrance.

The moment Ian pushed up, she pressed down, impaling herself on his cock. It happened so fast that Ian was already thrusting up again when she moved. He thrust so deep inside of her, they both let out a long groan.

"Fuck, Nyssa," Ian said, his eyes wild and dark as he gazed up at her.

Nyssa just smiled and sat back on her knees. She grabbed Ian's hands and brought them up to her breasts. "Touch me, Ian," she begged as she used his hands to gently massage her breasts.

Once Ian had taken over, his hands gently squeezing her breasts, Nyssa leaned forward and placed her hands on the mattress beside Ian's head. As her breasts brushed against Ian's face, Nyssa slowly began to thrust her hips against his.

She cried out when Ian turned his head and searched for a nipple with his lips. The fingers on his hand gently pinched her other nipple. "You're really good at this, Ian," she whispered down at him. She laughed when he turned wide eyes up to hers in surprise.

"Really?" he asked as he let go of her nipple.

"Oh yeah." She grinned. "I especially like how well your big cock fits into my tight—"

"Nyssa!" Ian exclaimed.

"What?" Nyssa giggled as she wiggled her hips. She quickly leaned down and pressed her lips against Ian's. Her tongue moved against his before she lifted her head to look down into Ian's dark gray eyes.

"I like the way you love me, all slow and gentle. It makes me feel cared for, cherished."

She felt Ian's hands move down to grab her ass, his hips slowly moving against her as he pushed himself into her tight depths over

and over again. “Yeah? You wouldn’t rather I go faster like Royce or Lucas?”

Nyssa shook her head. “Uh-uh. Rough and fast is all well and good, but sometimes a girl just needs some slow loving,” she assured him.

Ian suddenly rolled Nyssa over onto her back, his large body looming over hers. He reached down with one hand and grabbed her thigh and pulled it up next to his body as he increased the depth of his thrusts. He still kept the same long, slow rhythm.

Nyssa let out a lengthy sigh as she brought her hands up to cup the sides of Ian’s face. Her eyes looked intently into his as he leaned down over her, their noses nearly touching. Nyssa slid her hands past his cheeks to tangle in his hair as she held Ian’s head so he couldn’t look away.

The slow gentle loving from Ian, surprisingly, brought her to orgasm as quickly as Lucas or Royce’s fast fucking. She wanted Ian to see it in her eyes, to see everything she experienced because of him. As she felt herself begin to crest, she gently whispered his name, “Ian.”

Her breathing was quick and shallow as she cried out his name. Her inner muscles tightened around Ian’s pulsing cock, drawing a deep groan from him as he exploded inside of her and filled her with his seed.

“Nyssa.” Ian sighed as he lowered his lips to hers, his eyes still connected. He dropped her leg to bring his hands up, cupping her face as he kissed her. Nyssa moaned at the tenderness of his kiss, her toes curling.

As Ian closed his eyes and rested his forehead against hers, Nyssa wrapped her arms around Ian’s shoulders and gently rubbed his back. She could feel the rapid beat of his heart in his chest as he tried to calm his breathing. It took several moments for both of them to calm down.

Once his heart rate was back to normal, Ian raised his eyes to look down at Nyssa, his smile filled with tenderness and wonderment. “You better decide real soon whether you’re going to stay or not, Nyssa, because I am very afraid that I am falling in love with you. I’d really prefer that you didn’t break my heart.”

Nyssa caressed the side of his face with her fingers. “I promise I’ll do everything not to hurt you, Ian. I just need a little more time. This is all very—unusual for me. I didn’t have three fathers growing up. Hell, I didn’t even have one father growing up.”

“You didn’t have a father? Why not? Wasn’t your mother—“

“My parents were killed when I was very young. I was raised in an orphanage. Hence, no father,” Nyssa supplied quickly.

“That’s okay.” Ian chuckled. “I have three. You can have one of mine.”

“Oh? And how do you think they’ll feel about that?” Nyssa laughed.

“They’re going to love you. In fact, if you want to get your lazy butt out of bed,” Ian said as he sat up and slapped Nyssa on the hip, “we can go meet them, and my mom.”

Nyssa raised an eyebrow at Ian as she watched him crawl from the bed. “Lazy ass? I’ll have you know I had a perfectly good reason for lying around in bed this morning,” she replied as she climbed for the bed and made her way to the bathroom.

She paused briefly in the doorway to look back over her shoulder at Ian. “Of course, if it bothers you so much, next time I’ll let you get up and stay in bed by myself.”

Nyssa laughed and ran as Ian jumped to his feet and chased after her. He caught her just as she stepped into the tub and wrapped his arms around her as he leaned down to kiss her. A moment later, Ian yelled as Nyssa poured a bucket of water over his head, cold water spraying down on him.

“Nyssa!”

Nyssa giggled as she leaned up to kiss him back. “What?”

* * * *

Nyssa stared out at the countryside as Ian drove the buckboard wagon down the road to his parent's ranch. She was honest enough with herself to admit she was nervous about meeting his parents, all of them. It was always nerve wracking *meeting the parents*, even more so when there were three fathers.

Would they like her? If they didn't, would Lucas, Royce, and Ian tell her to go back to where she came from, wherever that was? And, if they did like her, now, what would happen when they found out how strange she was? Would they deny their approval?

"It's going to be okay, baby. They're going to love you, I promise," Ian assured her as he patted her leg.

"That's easy for you to say—you don't have to meet my parents."

"I would have been proud to meet your parents, Nyssa. I'm just sorry that I can't."

Nyssa nodded her head, missing her parents all over again. She had just turned three when they were killed in a carriage accident. She barely remembered them. Every item she had from them had long since been destroyed, lost, or taken away from her by the well-meaning nuns at the orphanage for *her own good*. She only had her memories now.

"This is it," Ian said as he pulled the wagon into a long driveway. "The parents fixed up the loft over the old barn for us boys when we turned eighteen. They figured we needed our own space away from them. Personally, I think they just wanted to get away from us. Three boys in the same house can put a real damper on romance." Ian chuckled as he pulled up in front of a simple two-story farmhouse.

"So, you all still live here?" Nyssa asked as she looked around.

Ian nodded. "Yeah, never had a reason to move away. We all decided that we wanted to stay here and help the parents continue to

run the ranch until we found a home of our own. Where do you think Royce works during the day?"

"Here? Royce is here?" Nyssa asked curiously, looking around for him as if he was going to pop up any moment.

"Well, he should be out in the barn or the field somewhere right about now. Why? Want to go find him?" He chuckled.

Nyssa could feel her face heat up as she shrugged her shoulders. "If we have time."

She could see Ian rolling his eyes as he pulled the brake on the wagon and tied the reins around the handle. He turned to look at her, a wide grin on his face. "We're starting to get under your skin, aren't we?"

Nyssa turned to look at Ian, a small frown on her face. "You're really okay with this? We just got out of bed together and already your pointing me in Royce's direction. That doesn't bother you?"

Ian shook his head, a wide grin on his face. "Nope."

"Even if I kiss him? Or pull him into a stall and fuck his brains out?"

"Nope. I might even join in." He chuckled.

"What about someone else?" Nyssa asked curiously.

"As long as that someone else was Lucas, I'd be fine with it. Anyone but the three of us, and I'd have to kill them."

Ian said it so matter of factly that Nyssa could just stare at him in wonder. "So, as long as I'm only with the three of you, I can be with any of you anytime I want? It's really not going to bother you if you walk into a room and I'm having sex with one of your brothers?"

"Nyssa, how many times do I have to tell you? No, it won't bother me. It won't bother Lucas or Royce either. We've always known that this was the arrangement we wanted. Having grown up like this, we don't know of any other way. Having a one-on-one relationship feels weird to us, not the other way around."

Nyssa shook her head. "This is really going to take some time to wrap my head around, Ian."

Ian leaned over and gently grasped Nyssa by the chin, quickly kissing her on the lips. “Just don’t take too long, Nyssa. I want to know that you belong to me, to us. If you do allow us to have you, I can promise that we will make you very happy.”

Nyssa smiled—she couldn’t help it. Ian was just so adorable. “I know, and I’m trying, Ian.”

Ian looked at her for a moment, then nodded his head. “That’s all I can ask for. Now come on, I can already see my mother watching us out the front window.”

Nyssa gave him a nervous laugh as she climbed down from the wagon. She looked towards the house just in time to see the front curtain fall back into place. Yep, someone was definitely watching them. *Peachy!*

She waited for Ian to walk around the front of the wagon and take her hand before following him into the house. He opened the door and stepped in, calling out as he did. “Mom? It’s Ian. I’ve brought someone for you to meet.”

A moment later, a small dark-haired woman came into the room, a wide smile on her face as she walked up to Ian to hug him. “Ian, it’s good to have you home. I missed you and your brothers at dinner last night.”

Ian hugged his mother back, then lifted his head and gestured to Nyssa. “I know, Mom, but I’m sure you’ll forgive us once you know why we were gone.” He grabbed Nyssa’s hand and pulled her forward. “This is Nyssa Dupre.”

“Dupre? As in Albert Dupre?” Ana Nash asked curiously as she turned her eyes to Nyssa.

“Yes. Nyssa is Albert’s granddaughter.”

“Oh? And how is Albert? I haven’t seen him around in a few days.”

Nyssa looked up to Ian for help. She didn’t know how much she should tell her about Albert’s disappearance. She didn’t know how much Lucas might have told anyone, especially about her.

“Albert’s missing, Mom, but I don’t know if Lucas wants anyone to know at this point. Word is he’s home sick right now, at least until Lucas can figure out what happened to him,” Ian supplied.

“Oh my, missing?” Ana looked at Ian, then turned back to Nyssa, her eyes sympathetic as she reached to take Nyssa’s hand. “You poor dear. If there’s anything I can do, please let me know.”

Nyssa nodded, taking Ana’s hand. Her eyes immediately shot up to hers when she felt a slight electrical shock shoot through her hand, only to find Ana looking back at her curiously.

“Ian, why don’t you go down to the barn and get your fathers. I’m sure they would like to meet Nyssa,” Ana said, never taking her eyes from Nyssa.

“Oh, yeah, sure. I’ll be right back,” Ian replied, a little confused but not willing to go against his mother when she used her *mother voice*. Something was up, but he didn’t have a clue as to what it was.

Ana waited until Ian had left, shutting the door behind him before she let go of Nyssa’s hand and walked into her kitchen to sit down at the small dining table there. Nyssa followed behind her, afraid of what Ana was about to say.

“Please, sit,” Ana said as she gestured to the chair across from her.

Nyssa sat down, her eyes still on Ana. She just knew that Ana was about to tell her to leave her sons alone, to get out of town. She was so sure of it that when Ana began to speak again, she nearly fell out of her chair in shock.

“You really are Jolene Dupre’s daughter, aren’t you?”

Nyssa nodded her head.

“I knew it. You have the same power that she did. She was always the strongest of us but somehow, I think you’ll be stronger than even she was. Having my three boys will help protect you from the others.” Ana seemed so excited. Why?

Nyssa cocked her head to one side, confused. “What on earth are you talking about?”

“Your powers, dear.”

At Nyssa's confused look, Ana shook her head. "Didn't your mother tell you anything about this? Surely she taught you about your legacy?"

"Both of my parents died when I was three years old."

"And now your grandfather is missing? You have had a hard time of it, haven't you?" Nyssa asked as she reached over to pat Nyssa's hands. "Not to worry, my dear, I'll teach you everything you need to know, as will the others."

"Others? What others?" What in the blue blazes was she talking about?

"The others in our coven, dear."

"Coven?" Nyssa whispered. She suddenly felt like she was living in a fantasyland.

Ana shook her head sadly as she patted Nyssa's hand again. "Would you like some iced tea? I think we have a lot to talk about."

Nyssa absently nodded her head, watching as Ana got up and poured two glasses of iced tea and handed her one. "Do you take honey?"

"Uh, yes, if you have it," Nyssa replied. She nearly jumped out of her seat when Ana reached her hand out, and a small porcelain container floated from the counter to her hand. Ana set it on the table in front of her, pulling off the lid.

"How did you do that?" she whispered in awe.

"You can do it too, Nyssa, you just have to learn how," Ana replied as she poured some honey into her tea.

"I can do that? How?"

"I think that maybe I should give you a little history lesson before we get to the how to part, don't you?"

"Okay."

"I am a direct descendent of the Renués family, one of the founders of Applegate Valley, just as you are with the Duprés. Our families came here from France in the late 1600s because of religious prosecution."

“Right, Lucas told me about the families settling here in the valley. What does this have to do with—whatever it is that you just did?”

“All in good time, Nyssa. As I was saying, our families left France to escape religious persecution. We are not—we don’t follow mainstream religions. Oh, we all believe in one true God, but we also believe that there are forces in the universe that are mightier than we are, and we have learned to tap into those forces.”

“Like Satanism?”

“No, no. We believe only in white magic. Many in our coven have special—abilities. Because of this, we tend to stay around here, where we are safe from the outside world. There are those who would try to use us for their own gain or shun us because of what we can do.”

Nyssa nodded her head. “Yeah, I’ve experienced some of that myself.”

Ana nodded. “I’m sure you have. Not many understand the power we have. They are either afraid of us or they want to use us. That’s why we stay in this valley, where it’s safe.”

“How is it safe here? What is so different about Applegate Valley that makes it safe to stay here?”

“Because everyone who lives here knows what we can do, and they keep us safe—everyone.”

“You’re joking,” Nyssa laughed bitterly.

“No. Nyssa, I’m not. The people of Applegate Valley all know what I can do, they know of the powers that I have, and they accept me. Maybe it’s because the families that first settled here were like us, I don’t know. I just know it’s always been this way.”

“But what if someone from outside the valley moves here?”

“Well, first off, no one in the valley would sell to an outsider without a thorough background check and approval by our town council. It’s just not allowed. Besides that, everyone here wants to protect the coven.”

“Why?”

“Nyssa, we’re not bad. We’re healers and herbalists, counselors and diplomats. We help those in the valley. We never use our powers for evil, only good. Because of this, the townspeople trust us.”

“Then how did I get the Dupre Estate? Was I investigated too?”

“Probably, but most likely once Albert knew you were his granddaughter, your acceptance was automatic. As the daughter of Jolene Dupre, he probably knew you would be powerful.”

Nyssa was quiet for several moments as she thought about what Ana was telling her. Finally, she lifted her head to look at Ana curiously. “Did you know my mother?”

“Jolene? Of course. We grew up together,” Ana said as she smiled.

Nyssa stared down at the cup of tea in her hands. “I barely remember her, just a faint image, really. The nuns took everything left from my parents away and destroyed them. I can barely remember what she looked like.”

Ana patted Nyssa’s arm before getting to her feet and leaving the room. A moment later she was back with a large book in her hand, setting it down on the table. She sat down and opened the book up, turning several pages before she pointed to one particular picture.

“There she is. We were seventeen that summer. It was right before she met your father. Oh, he was a handsome man, your father. Jolene was crazy about him from the moment she met him.”

Nyssa looked down at the small oil painting for a while. Tears suddenly came to her eyes as she remembered how her mother looked. Her mother was beautiful. The painting was faded, but Nyssa could still remember the deep auburn color of her mother’s hair.

“You knew my father?” Nyssa asked as she suddenly remembered what Ana had just said.

“Of course. I was supposed to be the maid of honor at their wedding, but they left the valley so suddenly, just two weeks before the wedding. I never saw her again. Do you know why they left?”

Nyssa shook her head. “No, but I’ll bet it had something to do with my father’s parents. They hated the fact that he was marrying my mother. They couldn’t stand her.”

“Oh, that’s too bad. Did they ever get married then?”

“No, but they were together until they died. They even died in the same carriage accident.”

“Oh, honey, I’m sorry. I’m glad they were together, but I’m sorry you lost them so early. If it’s any consolation, Jolene wouldn’t have wanted to be anywhere else but with your father, even if it meant dying. She would have hated leaving you, but she just couldn’t live without your father. It’s often like that for us in the coven.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, when we find the one meant for us, or *ones* as in my case, and yours too, I think, we don’t just marry them, we bond with them. It goes deeper than a normal relationship. It’s more spiritual.”

“I don’t understand,” Nyssa said.

“It’s hard to explain, really, but I do know this: without my husbands—the boys did explain to you that I’m married to three men, didn’t they?”

At Nyssa’s nod and small smile, Ana continued.

“Without my husbands, my life just wouldn’t be the same. It goes deeper than love. I can feel them, know where they are, if they’re safe, hurt, even if they are unhappy. I just know. It helps a lot when dealing with three obstinate men.”

“And you think I will develop this type of relationship with your sons?” Nyssa asked in astonishment.

“If you choose to love them, you will. Oh, it doesn’t happen overnight or anything. It’s more gradual. One day, you’ll just know. It kind of sneaks up on you.” Ana laughed. “But I couldn’t imagine my life without it now.”

Nyssa looked back down at her glass of tea. This all seemed so overwhelming. Ana had basically given her the go ahead to love her

sons, all three of them. She'd said that Nyssa would be accepted in the valley *because* of her strangeness.

She looked up at Ana, a small smile on her face. "Ian said that Royce was here at the ranch. Can you tell me where he is?"

Ana gazed at Nyssa for a moment, then nodded her head. "I believe he's either in the barn or out by the pens. If you just walk out to the barn, I'm sure someone can point you in the right direction."

Nyssa nodded and got to her feet. She walked towards the front door, pausing to look back at Ana. "Thank you for sharing this with me. It was nice to see a picture of my mother again. As for the rest of this, I'll need to think about it for awhile."

Ana nodded. "Of course you will, dear. Anyone would. Just remember, my sons were raised with all of this, three fathers and their mother being a tad strange. They'll be more accepting than you think. Just give them a chance."

Chapter 5

As Nyssa walked outside, she could see a big wooden barn off to one side of the house and walked towards it. She could hear loud noises and yelling coming from the other side of the barn and headed in that direction.

Coming around the barn, she saw several men standing around, some on the outside of a wooden fence, some sitting on top of it. They all seemed to watch something happening inside the fenced area.

Nyssa walked towards the fence. She could see Ian leaning against it, standing next to three older men. They must be his fathers. *His fathers*—now there was a weird statement. Nyssa chuckled to herself at her thoughts. All of this was weird.

As Nyssa walked up to the fence, she could see someone inside riding a bucking horse all around the pen. It wasn't until she stood next to the fence and the horse started in her direction that she realized it was Royce.

Nyssa's heart jumped into her throat as she watched Royce being bucked back and forth. It looked like he was going to go flying through the air any second. She didn't know how he held on.

The next instant, he wasn't. Nyssa watched in horror as Royce sailed through the air right towards the edge of the fence. She just knew he was going to hit it and be horribly injured, if not killed. She couldn't let that happen.

Not thinking, her mind only on saving Royce from being hurt, Nyssa shot her hands out. She pushed the power inside of her through the palms of her hands as she manipulated the air around Royce, levitating him before he could hit the ground.

The silence was deafening as everyone stopped what they were doing and stared at her in shock. Nyssa ignored them. She climbed through the fence and ran towards Royce. She slowly lowered his levitating body to the ground, then fell down beside him. Her hands covered his body as she searched for injuries.

“Oh gods, Royce, are you okay? Do you hurt anywhere?” she quickly asked as she ran her hands down his chest, then his legs, then returned to his face.

“Nyssa?” Royce asked in confusion. “What are you doing here?”

“Ian brought me over to meet your parents.”

“No, I mean in the horse corral. You need to get out of here. There’s an untamed horse in here. He could hurt you,” he said quickly as he started to get to his feet.

“You mean that horse?” Nyssa asked as she pointed across the corral.

As Royce turned his head, his mouth dropped open in shock. He started to say something, then stopped. He tried again, but the words just wouldn’t come out of his mouth. If he said anything, he knew he’d sound like a fool.

The horse he had been breaking in just moments before stood in the middle of the corral. Nothing unusual there. However, he was being levitated a few inches off the ground and not moving. He didn’t even look like he was blinking.

“Is he alive?” Royce asked quietly.

“Of course he is. I would never hurt another living being,” Nyssa said angrily as she climbed to her feet and glared at Royce.

“Uh huh,” Royce answered as he grabbed Nyssa by the arm and dragged her over to the fence, lifting her over into Ian’s arms. He quickly climbed over the fence until he stood in front of Nyssa, his hands on his hips.

“Do you think you could let him go now?”

Nyssa rolled her eyes and waved her hand in the air. Royce watched with astonishment as the horse slowly lowered to the ground.

Then it was like he had suddenly awoken. He jumped and bucked again, running around the corral as if nothing had even happened.

Royce turned his head back to glare down at Nyssa. “Nyssa,” he growled.

“What? Was I just supposed to stand there and watch you get your brains bashed in?” Nyssa yelled back at him. “Well, I don’t think so.”

“Nyssa,” Royce growled again.

“Oh, go soak your head,” Nyssa yelled as she turned away and stomped back towards the house.

Royce watched her leave, a curious expression on his face. *Go soak my—?*

“Nyssa!” Royce shouted as a bucket of water suddenly poured over his head with no help from anyone. As the empty bucket fell down to the ground, Royce wiped his hand over his face to remove the water from his eyes.

Before he knew it, Royce laughed so hard his brother had to hold him up. Nyssa was an unusual woman, that was for sure. She didn’t take shit from anyone, and she sure wasn’t afraid of him or any of his brothers, despite their size.

“Looks like you got yourself a wild one there, Royce. Sure you can handle her?” his father John asked as he walked up and handed him a handkerchief.

“By myself? Hell no. With my brothers, we might have a chance.” He chuckled.

“So, that’s the way it is, huh?” Thomas, Royce’s next father, asked.

Royce nodded as he smiled over at Ian in understanding. “Yeah, I’m pretty sure that Lucas, Ian, and I are toast. Can you blame us? She’s a firecracker.”

“So, why were you so upset with her then?” Jack, Royce’s other father, asked. “She was only trying to keep you from getting hurt. I’d say that is a good thing. It shows that she cares about you.”

Royce shrugged his shoulders, a little embarrassed. “She never told us she could do that. I don’t like that she was hiding something so important from us.”

“Well, it’s not like it comes up in everyday conversation, Royce,” Jack stated.

“I know that, but I would assume that after last night she might have trusted us enough to tell us.”

“Last night?” Thomas asked curiously. “What happened last night?”

“I, uh, well, we, uh—” Royce stammered, feeling even more embarrassed.

“We all spent the night together,” Ian inserted. He chuckled at the blush on Royce’s face.

Thomas raised his eyebrow at Royce. “Oh?”

Royce kicked at the dirt at his feet. He hated it when Thomas used that voice on him. It made him feel like he was ten years old again, caught with his hand in the cookie jar. Of his three fathers, Thomas had always been able to do that to him.

“Yes, sir,” Royce replied.

“All three of you?” Jack asked as he walked over to stand in front of Royce.

“Yes, sir,” he replied again.

“Then what the hell are you doing here, boy? Go get your woman,” John shouted at him. “And don’t forget to apologize,” he yelled as Royce took off after Nyssa.

As he ran, he distantly heard John talking to Ian. “No, you stay here, Ian. Your brother has some groveling to do, and it’s better done without an audience.”

He reached the house just behind Nyssa. He opened the door just as she shut it. Before she could even turn around, he grabbed her and tossed her over his shoulder. Royce waved to his mother as he carried Nyssa right back out the door.

“Royce, put me down!” Nyssa yelled. “Have you lost your mind?”

Royce just patted Nyssa on the ass as he carried her towards the loft that he shared with Lucas and Ian. He was really glad he didn't live in the same house as his parents anymore. It would make things—tacky.

He had every intention of making Nyssa scream by the time he was done with her. Nyssa still screamed as he reached the stairs to the loft. As he began going up the steps, Royce smacked her on the ass again, this time a little harder.

Before he reached the top, he had his hands under her skirt and between her legs, sinking two fingers into her tight entrance. As he opened the door with his other hand, he grinned. Nyssa was making the most wonderful whimpering noises.

He just hoped he could get her to talk dirty to him. He had no idea why it turned him on, but it did. Just one little dirty sentence from Nyssa, and he was as hard as a rock. Two, and he was ready to rip her clothes off. Three, and he was ready to cum in his pants. It drove him crazy.

Royce slammed the door shut and quickly walked towards his bed in the back. Nyssa's cries were getting louder as he ceaselessly thrust his fingers into her. He could feel the wetness of her body increasing with the level of her cries. Nope, he wasn't going to make it to his bed.

He stopped, looking around frantically, his eyes narrowing in on the dining table. Quickly covering the floor between him and the table, Royce laid Nyssa down on her stomach and pushed her skirt up over her hips.

One hand in the middle of her back to hold her still, Royce pulled his fingers from Nyssa and quickly unbuttoned his jeans and pushed them down. He growled as he looked back down at Nyssa.

Nyssa wiggled around, trying to get a hold of the edge of the table. As Royce stepped up to her, her legs spread and bared her tender pink folds to his hungry gaze. She looked delicious. He could

even see the wetness on her soft auburn curls glistening in the light that came through the windows. *Damn!*

Royce dropped to his knees and leaned in to swipe his tongue across her wet folds. He was right, she was delicious. She tasted so sweet, like honey wine. He had to have more. He grabbed Nyssa's legs and spread them apart. He stroked his tongue over Nyssa over and over again, then sank it into her.

Nyssa's legs were stiff at first, but as Royce continued to lick her, they softened and spread on their own. Royce could see her hands clench on the edge of the table out of the corner of his eyes. She gripped the table so hard her fingers were almost white.

Seeing how Nyssa was holding her legs, Royce let them go only to grab her ass cheeks and pull them apart. It opened her right up. He could start at the bottom near her clit and swipe his tongue all the way to the top. He did this over and over again until Nyssa nearly screamed...but not quite.

Royce wanted her to scream. As he moved his tongue up over her sweet spot again, he pushed his finger carefully into her ass. *Damn! I knew she'd like that*, Royce thought as Nyssa screamed and a rush of liquid drenched his lips as she came.

Royce licked her several more times, then got to his feet. He kept his finger in her ass as he thrust deeply into Nyssa, impaling her in one thrust. One hand gripped her hips, the other moved in and out of her ass as Royce began ramming into Nyssa's tight grip.

As slick as she was, he just slid right in, then pulled out again. He did this until her soft cries rose again. As he slid into her again, he pushed another finger into her ass and moved them around as he stretched her out.

The more stretched she was, the less it would hurt, because he had every intention of getting his dick into her ass in the next ten minutes. He just wanted to be sure she enjoyed it as much as he did.

Picking Nyssa up in his arms, Royce walked to a window and opened it up. "Ian, get your ass up here!" he said roughly before he

closed the window back up. He quickly made his way back to the table and laid Nyssa across it.

It was all Royce could do to keep from coming while he waited for Ian to arrive, especially when Nyssa screamed again, her inner muscles tightening down around him as she climaxed again.

The moment he heard Ian pound up the stairs, Royce pulled his fingers from Nyssa's ass and picked her up in his arms, his cock still deep inside of her. He was halfway across the room when the door flew open and Ian stood there, his chest heaving with each breath he took.

“What?”

“Get in here, Nyssa needs both of us,” Royce replied as he carried her to his bed. He watched Ian pull his clothes off as he shut the door and walked across the room. “Lie down on the bed, on your back.”

Once Ian was on the bed, Royce regretfully pulled himself from Nyssa. He settled her over Ian's hips, then kneeled behind her, between Ian's legs. “All right, now, Ian,” Royce directed, waiting until Ian had lifted Nyssa onto his cock.

He smirked at the low groan his brother gave as Nyssa sank down on his cock even as he positioned himself behind her and pushed his cock against her other entrance. “Slowly, baby,” he whispered as he gently pushed in past the first ring.

He paused to give her a chance to adjust to his invasion, then pushed in more. It took several moments before he was seated all of the way in. Once he was, he nearly came without a movement. Nyssa was so damn tight.

“Okay, Ian.” He groaned as he gently thrust into Nyssa. It took a few moments, but eventually he and Ian worked out a thrusting rhythm that worked for both of them. Ian thrust in as Royce pulled out. Royce thrust in as Ian pulled out.

Soon enough, they both thrust rapidly into Nyssa's body. Royce brought his hands around to caress her breasts as he leaned down to

whisper in her ear. “You going to tell me how much you like having my cock in your ass, baby?”

“Oh, gods, Royce.” Nyssa groaned. “Fuck me harder.”

“You have to ask nicely, baby,” Royce replied as he turned his attention down to Ian. He held up one breast up for his review. As he tugged on Nyssa’s nipples, he watched his brother’s eyes darken.

“Doesn’t Nyssa have the most beautiful breasts, Ian? Look how sweet they are, these big pink areolas, these tight little nipples. I remember that they taste pretty good too. You want a taste, Ian? You want one of these tight little nipples in your mouth?”

Royce chuckled as he let go of Nyssa’s nipples. He placed a hand on her back to push her breasts down towards Ian’s waiting mouth. He knew Ian gave them justice when Nyssa cried out again and pushed back with her hips.

“Fuck me harder, Royce, please! I need to feel your hard cock pound into me,” Nyssa cried out.

Oh yeah, that was what he wanted. Royce thrust into Nyssa harder and faster as he brought his hands around to tangle in her soft curls, then pushed down farther to slide against her swollen nub.

His other hands clenched in the hair at the nape of her neck, pulling back as he turned her head. Royce leaned down and scraped his teeth across Nyssa’s neck. He knew he left a small red patch. “The only thing you’re missing now, Nyssa, is a cock in your mouth. Wouldn’t it be great if Lucas was here too? Then you could suck his cock while Ian and I fucked you.”

Royce smirked to himself when Nyssa arched her back and tossed her head back as she let out a loud scream. He could feel the tight muscles in her ass grip him even as she gripped Ian. He could hear his brother cry out as he filled her with his own release.

Only then, as Nyssa collapsed against Ian, did Royce let himself go, releasing into Nyssa’s ass with a fierce roar. He pushed into her one last time, his cock pulsing intensely. Royce pulled free of Nyssa a moment later and rolled to the side of the bed.

He sat there for several moments as his chest heaved. Then he got up and went to the water closet to clean up. Once that was done, he grabbed two clean washcloths and went back into the bedroom to clean Nyssa up, tossing one to Ian at the same time.

Royce dropped the washcloth to the floor and climbed up on the bed. He pulled Nyssa into his arms and pushed her head down to his chest. He leaned his head down and lightly kissed the top of her head, then looked over at his brother.

Ian just stared at him, his eyes still a little dazed. “You know by the end of the day she’s not going to be able to walk, right?”

Royce chuckled. “That’s okay—we’ll just carry her everywhere.”

“Don’t I get a say in this?” Nyssa asked as she raised her head to look up at Royce.

“You could always tell us no, Nyssa,” Royce replied.

“When? Was I supposed to tell you *no* when you tossed me over your shoulder, in front of your mother, I might add? Or when you were sticking your fingers inside of me? Or how about when you had me bent over the table? Was I supposed to tell you *no* then?”

“Should I ask your permission before I do these things?”

“Royce!” Nyssa said tersely as she pushed herself into a sitting position and glared down at Royce’s grinning face.

“What?” he asked innocently.

“Oh, you’re impossible,” Nyssa said as she crossed her arms over her chest.

Royce grabbed Nyssa and pulled her back down to his chest. He buried his face in her hair as he whispered to her, “But you’re going to love us anyway, aren’t you?”

Nyssa was so slow to answer, Royce was afraid he had assumed the wrong thing. Maybe she didn’t want to love him. Maybe she was afraid of what he wanted from her. He knew he wasn’t gentle when it came to sex, but being with Nyssa was just so intense.

“Yes,” Nyssa murmured softly.

Royce barely heard her, but hear her he did. “Don’t worry, Nyssa. We’re going to love you just as much.”

Nyssa ran her hand gently down Royce’s chest before she answered him. “You’d better.”

Chapter 6

Nyssa stared out the window of the study as she waited for her boys to come home. Today was the first day that all three of them had been gone all day long. Lucas had gone to work, of course, and Royce to the ranch. Ian had gone home to help his mother with a few things around the house, leaving Nyssa on her own for the first time since she had arrived.

It was a little strange. It was so quiet that it was almost eerie. Over the last several days, she had gotten used to having at least one of them underfoot. It was usually Ian during the day, Lucas and Royce at night. But it had given her time to get to know each one of them.

Ian truly was sweet. While he exuded masculinity, he was also gentle and caring. He loved to cuddle, always coming up to Nyssa for a quick hug and kiss or just to snuggle. He was also very intelligent. Nyssa was constantly amazed at the knowledge filling his head. She liked nothing more than to curl up with him and listen to him talk about his latest passion or just a thought he had.

With Royce, everything was intense. When he walked into a room, it felt like all of the oxygen had been sucked out of it. When he touched her, Nyssa could think of only him. They didn't tend to spend too much time talking.

Lucas was a little more difficult. Even though she was coming to care deeply for Royce and Ian, Lucas held a special place in her heart. He had been the first. He also pissed her off faster than anyone she had ever met. If she wasn't consumed by kissing him, and he could kiss great, she was usually butting heads with him. He drove her crazy.

Funny thing was, she loved every minute of it. Each of the Nash boys was wiggling their way into her heart, and Nyssa didn't see a way of stopping them, not that she wanted to. Even after finding out that she was *different*, each of them had made her feel loved and accepted.

And that scared Nyssa more than anything she had ever imagined. She was terrified that it would all suddenly stop. She had never had unconditional love before. If she decided to give all of her love to them, she didn't know how she would survive it if they changed their minds.

Nyssa gave a little laugh and turned back to the desk in front of her. She had it bad, and she knew it. She was supposed to go through the stuff in the house to figure out what was here and generally get to know her own home. Instead, she couldn't stop watching out the window for one of the Nash boys to come back to her.

She had found a stack of diaries in a small side table in the master suite sitting room and had decided to read through them. Just as she picked up the first book in the stack, she heard a wagon pull up in the driveway. Nyssa jumped to her feet and ran to the front door, the diaries all but forgotten.

She pulled the door open, a smile on her face as she expected to be greeted by one of her boys. She was momentarily surprised to see a well-dressed man standing there. An older well-dressed man and woman stood just in front of a fancy black brougham carriage.

Nyssa took a cautious step back. Her hand gripped the door handle tightly as the smile fell from her lips. "Can I help you?"

"Hello, I'm trying to locate a young woman named Nyssa Dupre," the younger man said. "I was told she might be living here."

"And you are?"

"My name is Michael Conrad. I represent Mr. and Mrs. Edward Williams II," the man said, indicating the older couple standing by the fancy black carriage. "Mr. and Mrs. Williams are Ms. Dupre's paternal grandparents."

“And why would they be looking for her?” Nyssa asked, filled with apprehension. After all of these years, there was really no reason for her paternal grandparents to be looking for her. They had never been interested when she was a child—why now?

“Mr. and Mrs. Williams have been looking for Ms. Dupre for many years. This is the first time we’ve actually been close to finding her.”

Nyssa let go of the door handle to cross her arms over her chest as she glared at the man. “That still doesn’t answer my question, Mr. Conrad. Why are they looking for their granddaughter now?”

“Please, miss, can you just tell me if Ms. Dupre is here?”

Nyssa stared at the man for several moments, then nodded her head. “I’m Nyssa Dupre.”

She was surprised at the look of astonishment that covered his face before he quickly hid it behind a polite mask of greeting. “It’s nice to finally meet you, Ms. Dupre.”

“Mr. Conrad,” Nyssa said as she nodded her head at him. “Now, tell me why my grandparents are looking for me after all of this time. I’m sure it wouldn’t have been that hard for them to find me before now, especially when I was living in that orphanage. Why now?”

“Uh, well, why don’t I let them explain that to you?” he hedged as he looked back over his shoulder at the couple. They looked hesitant as he motioned to them but came forward anyway, walking slowly up the steps.

“Edward, Frances, I’d like to introduce you to your granddaughter, Nyssa Ann Dupre,” Michael Conrad said as he indicated Nyssa.

Nyssa watched, one eyebrow raised in query as Frances Williams sighed and covered her mouth with her hand, her eyes watered with emotion. Edward Williams looked stiff. Nyssa imagined that he didn’t deal well with any type of emotional display.

He didn’t seem that much different than his wife. Nyssa didn’t think that the surprised and heartfelt emotions that his dear wife

displayed were real. She seemed almost *too* emotional. And it seemed a little forced, as if she didn't usually feel this way.

"Oh, my dear," Frances began, "We've been looking for you for so long."

"Why?" Nyssa asked. She briefly wondered why she didn't feel enthusiastic about meeting her grandparents for the first time. She didn't know for a fact that they had been disdainful of her mother or disowned her father when he decided to marry her. She didn't even know for sure that they hadn't tried to find her for the last twenty years.

But she didn't think they were being all that truthful either. There was just something about them that filled Nyssa with apprehension. Her gut instinct said not to trust them, and she had learned early on to listen to her instincts.

"Because you're our granddaughter, of course," Frances replied as if that was all there was to say on the subject.

"I've been your granddaughter for twenty-three years. Is there a reason you're just looking me up now?" Nyssa asked.

"Didn't Michael explain?" Frances said as she looked over at Michael. "We've been looking for you for years, dear."

"Funny, I spent fifteen years in the same orphanage. You would think that with all of your money, you would have been able to find me. In fact, I know that that the orphanage contacted you during that time, on a few separate occasions. Why didn't you come see me then?"

"Oh, but it wasn't like that, dear, I swear. We were contacted by the orphanage, but not to see you or get you. They were just calling to let us know how you were doing. We asked them to let us know if you needed anything."

"I needed my family," Nyssa stated simply.

"Yes, well, as that may be—" Frances began only to be interrupted by her husband.

“Can we go inside and discuss this like civilized people?” Edward asked.

Nyssa snickered. “Do I actually look civilized to you?”

“Now, Nyssa—” Frances began again.

“I’m sure a little time spent with Frances and we can transform you into a proper young lady that anyone would be proud of. You will find, Nyssa, that your grandmother is a marvel with fashion.”

Nyssa’s eyes widened. “A proper young lady? Are you serious?”

“Well, of course. We can’t have you going around dressed like—like this,” Edward replied, gesturing to Nyssa’s long flowing green skirt and white shirt. “It just wouldn’t be appropriate. What would our friends think? The neighbors?”

“Do you really think I care?” Nyssa didn’t know what was wrong with her. She had never been this rude with someone before, but Edward and Frances Williams just rubbed her wrong way. They seemed to think she was going to be overjoyed that they were finally in her life. *As if!*

“Nyssa, my dear—” Frances began again.

“Now, look, young lady—” Edward began at the same time.

Nyssa just rolled her eyes. This really wasn’t getting them anywhere. While it was somewhat nice to finally meet her grandparents, she didn’t feel all warm and fuzzy about it. In fact, she felt just the opposite. Her apprehension grew by the second.

“No, you look, Edward. You had twenty years to find me. By your own words, most of that time you knew exactly where I was. So, why didn’t you? And why come and find me now? Why do you even care?” Nyssa asked, crossing her arms over her chest again.

“Can we please go inside and discuss this?” Michael asked, reminding Nyssa that he was there and part of this too.

“Who are you? A private investigator?”

“No, of course not. My father was Edward’s business partner. When he passed away six months ago, I took over his part of the

business. Edward was kind enough to ask me along on this little trip,” Michael replied.

Nyssa didn't like the way that Michael looked at her. His eyes raked her body from head to toe, and it felt invasive, as if he were trying to undress her with his eyes. Her boys did the same thing all of the time, but when they did it she was aroused by it. When Michael did it, it made her skin crawl.

“I believe Edward thought we might get to know each other a little better, maybe become friends,” Michael added.

The way that he said *friends* made Nyssa suddenly wish that Lucas, Royce or Ian were there with her. But it also told her one of the reasons why her grandparents had looked her up after all of this time. They wanted to hook her up with Michael.

“I have enough friends, thank you,” Nyssa replied. Again she wished that one of the boys would come home. She didn't quite understand why her grandparents wanted her to be friends with Michael, but damned if she would agree to it.

“Oh, Nyssa, darling, you can never have too many friends,” Michael drawled. “Besides, I have no doubt that we could be very good friends if you would just give me a chance.”

Nyssa plastered a small smile on her face as she shook her head. “No, thank you. My dance card is full.”

She looked past Michael's shoulder as she heard horses ride up behind the fancy black carriage. Her lips twisted with a smirk as she saw her boys climb down from their horses and tie off the reins at the hitching post.

“Well, look, here are my dance partners now,” she drawled as she walked past Michael and her grandparents to greet her three lovers, going first into Royce's arms to give him a kiss, then Ian, and finally, Lucas.

“What is the meaning of this, Nyssa?” Edward called out from the front steps.

Nyssa blew out a deep breath as she nodded towards the three people who stood on the steps. “It seems my grandparents have finally come to find me. I believe they want to turn me into a proper young lady so that I can be more presentable to their friends and neighbors, as well as become very good friends with the son of their business partner, Michael.”

“Oh?” Royce asked as he turned to stare at the people on the porch. “And how do you feel about becoming—friends with Michael?”

Nyssa giggled as she reached for Royce’s hand. “I told them that my dance card was full.”

“Aren’t you going to introduce us, Nyssa?” Frances asked.

Nyssa rolled her eyes. She smiled when Lucas saw her and started to chuckle. She glanced over at her grandparents. “Edward and Frances Williams, I’d like you to meet Lucas, Royce, and Ian Nash, my—”

Nyssa stopped and looked back at her lovers in confusion. “What exactly are you to me? It just seems kind of passé to introduce you as my lovers. Isn’t there a better word for it?”

Royce chuckled. “Lovers, beaux, partners, sex slaves? I’m sure any of them would work, honey, just take your pick. Personally, I prefer sex slave, but—”

“I don’t know, Royce, partner sounds pretty good to me,” Ian added. “It makes our relationship sound more permanent.”

“No, technically speaking, fiancé would be more permanent. Husbands would be even better,” Lucas said firmly. “Barring that, I’d go with boyfriend or lover. Sex slave, while having a certain symmetry, sounds too flighty. It also doesn’t encompass all that we have together.”

“That is true, Lucas,” Ian said as he turned to look at him. “While we do spend a majority of our time in bed with Nyssa, there is more to our relationship than just great sex. Don’t you agree, Nyssa?”

Nyssa couldn't help but laugh at the expressions on the faces of those who stood on her front porch. They looked horrified. Frances looked like she was about to pass out. Edward looked insulted, and Michael looked intrigued.

"I don't know, guys. We do spend an awful lot of our time in bed together. And while I agree with Lucas that sex slave does have a certain symmetry to it, I think I like fiancé better. It does sound more permanent."

Nyssa stifled the laughter that built up inside of her at the sudden silence her words were met with. She felt Royce and Lucas go still beside her. She could see that Ian was just as motionless.

"Do you mean that, Nyssa?" Lucas asked softly.

Nyssa turned to look up at him, a wide smile on her lips. "I wouldn't have said it if I didn't mean it, Lucas. Although we're going to have to discuss which one of you I actually marry legally and which ones I marry in our binding ceremony."

Nyssa was unprepared for their reactions. Royce let out a loud whoop as he grabbed her out of Lucas's arms to swing her around the driveway. He ended by covering Nyssa's lips with his, giving her a long, passionate kiss that Nyssa sank into.

Before she could catch her breath as Royce lifted his head, she was pulled out of his arms and swung into Lucas's. Nyssa tilted her head back and laughed as Lucas twirled her around before letting her feet settle to the ground.

"You won't regret this, Nyssa," Lucas whispered as he lowered his head to give her a kiss just as passionate as the one Royce had given her. Nyssa could feel it all of the way down to her toes.

"Uh hum."

Nyssa reluctantly pulled her lips from Lucas's and turned her head to see Ian standing next to her, looking a little anxious. She gave him a big grin and moved to wrap her arms around his waist.

"My turn?" Ian asked.

“Anytime, honey,” Nyssa whispered back as she stood up on her tiptoes and placed her lips against his. She didn’t know who she had to thank for the great way that the Nash boys kissed, and she wasn’t sure she ever wanted to learn, but they sure could kiss like experts, each and every one of them.

“Nyssa, I demand to know the meaning of this!”

Nyssa turned to see her grandfather standing at the bottom of the steps, an outraged expression on his reddened face. He looked ready to burst.

“It’s simple, really. I just became engaged,” Nyssa replied as she lowered her arms from around Ian’s shoulders to grab his hand. She reached back with her other hand, smiling when she felt a much larger one grasp it. She didn’t know which one of the guys had grabbed her hand, and it didn’t really matter, but one of them had. She could feel a third body press up behind her, letting her know that she was supported and protected.

“To which one?” Edward asked in confusion.

Nyssa couldn’t help but laugh as she answered him. “All of them.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, Nyssa. You can’t marry all of them. It’s not legal,” Frances remarked as she came down the steps to join her husband. “Besides that, it wouldn’t be proper.”

“I never claimed to be proper, Grandmother, and if you had taken the time to get to know me over the last twenty years, you’d know that.” Nyssa laughed.

“Well, I won’t allow it,” Edward huffed. “This is just not acceptable. You’re a Williams, Nyssa, and we do not consort with these—these type of people. I think it would be best if you came home with your grandmother and I, back to Boston where we can instruct you in behaving like a proper young lady.”

Nyssa’s mouth dropped open in astonishment. Was he serious? Edward actually thought he could just command her to come home

with them, and she was supposed to agree with it. On top of that, he wanted her to give up what she had with Lucas, Royce, and Ian?

“You’ve clearly lost your mind if you think I’m going anywhere with you,” Nyssa exclaimed.

“Nyssa, dear,” Frances began as she stretched out her hand as if to placate her, “I understand how this might all be confusing for you, what with you growing up in such terrible surroundings and all. God only knows the type of people you’ve had to associate with, but we really do know what is best for you.”

“Besides, Michael here has been waiting ages to meet you. Why, he came all of the way down from Boston with us just to meet you,” Frances continued.

“Oh?” Nyssa asked. “And is he the type of person a proper young lady would associate with?”

“Well, of course, dear. Michael is from a good family. The Conrads have been in Boston for nearly a hundred years. They are very well established. You couldn’t do better than him, dear. He has a degree from Harvard and belongs to all of the best social circles.”

Nyssa chortled. “The Dupres have been in Applegate Valley for more than two hundred years. I think my ancestors trump Michael’s, even if we didn’t attend a prestigious Ivy League university.”

“I will not have you making fun of your grandmother, Nyssa Ann. She only has your best interests at heart, and I find it very offensive for you to be treating her this way,” Edward barked out as he took a step towards Nyssa and reached for her arm. “Now, you will apologize to your grandmother and give up all of this foolishness. It’s time for us to be heading back to Boston. And in the future, I demand more respect out of you, young lady.”

Lucas immediately stepped in front of Nyssa, his arms crossed over his chest as he glared down at Edward. “I do not believe Nyssa wants to go with you, Gramps. I suggest that you, your wife, and your little friend get back in your fancy little carriage and head your asses back to where you came from. Nyssa stays here.”

“Well, I never—” Frances cried out.

“Now, see here, Mr.—” Edward began.

“Nash, Sheriff Lucas Nash, to be precise. And I can assure you, if you attempt to force Nyssa to leave with you in any way, I will charge you with kidnapping, assault, and any other crime I can think of.”

If Ian hadn't held her up with his arms wrapped around her waist, Nyssa would have fallen flat on her face at the shocked look on Edward's face. It was clear to her that not many people talked back to him.

“I believe that decision should be up to Nyssa, don't you?” Michael said as he stepped forward to join Edward and Frances. “Unless, of course, you refuse to let her answer for herself.”

Nyssa couldn't believe the gall of these people. What part of *I just got engaged* didn't they get? They certainly didn't seem to understand that she had no use for people who hadn't even tried to be a part of her life in the past. Why should she make time for them now?

Nyssa stepped forward to stand next to Lucas. She laid a calming hand on his arm. “Let me, honey,” she said as she looked up at him, then turned to look at her grandparents. “Just so it is perfectly clear to you, I have no desire to return to Boston or anywhere else with you, now or in the future. My life is here with Lucas, Royce, and Ian.”

“But, Nyssa, dear, we're your family, not these—these men,” Frances said. She looked at Lucas, Royce and Ian as if they had just crawled out from under a rock. “We can teach you to be a proper young lady, present you to all of the right people, show you culture, fashion, all of the things young women desire.”

Nyssa shook her head in exasperation. “What part of this don't you understand? I like my life. I have a beautiful home that belonged to my grandmother, three gorgeous men who love and adore me and give me everything I could possibly want. I also have a heritage that goes back over two hundred years. What more could I want?”

She watched with some amusement as Edward reached up and straightened his tie, then grabbed his suit lapels and pulled them

together. “Well, it’s obvious to me that you have no idea what is best for you. Maybe associating with all of this riff raff has affected your mind, much like it did your father, God rest his soul. He was well on his way to being a commanding force in the financial industry, and he gave it all up to be with that—that woman.”

“Careful, Edward, that woman was my mother,” Nyssa warned as she crossed her arms over her chest and glared at her grandfather.

“Yes,” Edward drawled disdainfully, “and I can see that you are just like her.”

“Why, thank you, Edward. That’s the nicest thing you’ve said since you got here.” Nyssa laughed.

“I think maybe it is time for you to be on your way. Nyssa has made it clear that she does not wish to go with you, and you need to respect her wishes,” Lucas said, even as he smiled down at Nyssa.

“This is not the end of this, Sheriff. It is clear to me that Nyssa is unable to make any rational decisions concerning her future. I’m sure it is due to her upbringing as well as her mother’s genetic influence,” Edward said as he started for the carriage. “Come, Frances.”

Nyssa’s eyebrows shot up in surprise as her grandmother immediately fell into step behind her grandfather and followed him to the car. She turned to look at Michael curiously when he didn’t instantly follow them.

“I apologize for Edward’s abrasive behavior, Nyssa. He truly does want what is best for you. It would be to your benefit to listen to what he has to say. And, despite your recent engagement, I would still like the opportunity to get to know you better.”

When Michael lifted Nyssa’s hand and kissed the back of it, she was so shocked, she didn’t think to stop him. She could hear the low growl that came from all three of the men who surrounded her.

“Think about it, Nyssa,” Michael said softly. “We could be good together.” He gave her hand a small little squeeze, then let it go and walked towards the carriage.

Nyssa was speechless as she watched Michael climb into the carriage with her grandparents, then drive down the long driveway. As the carriage drove out of sight, Nyssa turned to look back at her guys to find each one of them staring down at her.

She could tell from the apprehensive looks on their faces that they were worried she would be swayed by Michael's words. Nyssa could feel the wind around her start to blow her hair around as her temper rose.

She dropped her hands down to her hips as she glared at her three lovers. Did they honestly think, even after all of the things she had said to her grandparents, that she would be swayed by the words of some smarmy man dressed in a fancy suit?

As the wind around her began to pick up, leaves and small twigs blew here and there. Nyssa took a step towards Lucas, Royce, and Ian and pointed her finger at them. "If you think for one moment that I would be stupid enough to be effected by the words of that man, then we have bigger problems than I thought!" Nyssa shouted at them.

"Now, Nyssa," Lucas began as he held up his hands and tried to appease her.

"Don't you now Nyssa me, you jackass!" Nyssa yelled. "I just told you I wanted to marry you, and you're doubting me already? What does this say about our future together? Are you always going to doubt what I say?"

"Nyssa, we were just—" Ian began. He stopped quickly when Nyssa turned her gaze to meet his, raising an eyebrow to him as she dared him to keep speaking.

A moment later, she let out a shriek of surprise as Royce picked her up and tossed her over his shoulder. He carried her back into the house without a word.

"Royce!"

"Shut up, Nyssa," Royce growled as he swatted her on the ass. "I think you've shouted at us enough for one day. Now it's time for you to put your mouth to better use."

“Well, that’s what you get for thinking, jackass!” Nyssa barked out as she pinched Royce.

She could hear Lucas and Ian laugh behind them as Royce carried her into the house and towards her bedroom. If she lifted her head, she was sure that she would be able to see the smiles on their faces as they followed.

Nyssa wanted to. She wasn’t really that angry with them, not anymore. She hadn’t been from the moment that Royce had tossed her over his shoulder. But they needed to know that she meant what she said, especially if they were going to have any type of future together.

Letting out a small squeak as she sailed through the air and landed on the mattress, Nyssa glared up at her three men as she bounced a couple of times and came to a stop lying on her back. She pushed herself up onto her elbows and looked at the men who stood at the end of her bed staring back down at her. As rough and masculine as they were, she could see a hint of uncertainty in their eyes.

“Well? Are you going to give me something else to do with my mouth, or do I have to start yelling again?” Nyssa asked, one eyebrow raised in query.

Her words were met with momentarily stunned expressions, and then wide grins as Lucas, Royce, and Ian quickly peeled their clothes off. Nyssa sat where she was. She watched with avid fascination as an abundance of naked flesh was revealed to her hungry eyes.

Her men were gorgeous, every single one of them, but different each in their own way. None of them had much hair on their deeply tanned bodies. Nyssa attributed that to their Native American heritage.

Lucas had just a little across his chest, leading down to a small trail that wrapped around his groin. Royce was a little hairier, most of his pecs covered in dark curly hair. A thicker trail of hair moved down his chest and past his abdomen to his groin.

Ian was the real surprise. His chest was sleek and smooth, not a hair on him right down to his lower abdomen. Right below his

bellybutton, though, a small trail of dark hair began, to end wrapped around the hard cock that jutted from his body.

When they moved towards her, their eyes intent on her, Nyssa dropped back down onto the mattress with a small giggle. No matter what anyone said, she was exactly where she wanted to be.

As Lucas and Royce reached for her, Ian climbed up from the bottom of the bed. Nyssa realized that deciding to marry these three men was probably the best decision she could have ever made. She had a feeling that no matter what, they would do everything in their power to make her a very happily married woman.

Nyssa was quickly stripped of her clothing as rough, callused hands softly caressed every inch of her naked skin. Hungry lips quickly joined in. By the time the last bit of material was pulled from her body, Nyssa whimpered, her skin so sensitive she could feel the very air cross over her body.

Believing that she was headed towards a long bout of foreplay, Nyssa sighed deeply, lying back as she raised her arms over her head in satisfaction. She closed her eyes and savored the feeling of the hard hands that touched her body. She let out a small squeak when she was suddenly flipped over onto her stomach.

Before she could raise her head to figure out what was going on, Lucas scooted under her, lifting her body up to lie over his. Nyssa opened her eyes as she pushed herself up on her hands. As she looked down at Lucas, she was surprised to see the fierce look in his eyes.

“Lucas?” she asked in concern.

Before he could answer her, Nyssa felt a large hand come down across her ass cheeks. “Ouch!” she yelled as she turned her head quickly to see Royce kneeling beside them, his hand raised to deliver another swat.

“Royce!” she yelled as his hand came down again. “What the hell do you think you’re doing?”

“It’s called chastisement, Nyssa,” Royce said as he delivered yet another swat. “Maybe the next time you decide to yell at us, you’ll remember this.”

Nyssa’s eyes widened as she watched Royce prepare to paddle her ass again. She couldn’t believe that he was spanking her. What? Was she two years old? Were they going to ground her next?

Raising her hand to stop him, Nyssa was unprepared when Lucas suddenly lifted her up by her hips and brought her back down, impaling her on his long hard cock just as Royce brought his hand down again. All she could do was cry out as Lucas filled her.

Nyssa’s hands clenched in the bed sheets as Lucas began to thrust his hips up, his hard cock filling her compactly before withdrawing. Then he filled her again. Behind her, she could feel Royce’s hand come down again, but this time, there was a more gentle touch to it, almost like a caress.

As Royce swatted her again, a hand under her chin raised Nyssa’s face to see another hard cock, this one right in front of her mouth. Nyssa glanced up to see Ian before her, a desperate look on his face. Without hesitation, she opened her mouth and swallowed to the root.

As she licked at him, her lips wrapped tightly around his thickness, she felt Ian’s hands clench in her hair, holding her head to him. When he let out a long groan, Nyssa glanced up at him, smiling when she saw his head tilted back, his eyes closed. Guess he enjoyed himself.

Expecting another swat any moment, Nyssa dropped the cock from her mouth and looked back at Royce when it didn’t happen. She found him with his eyes captured by the quick motion of her hips as Lucas continued to thrust up into her. Just out of spite, she wiggled her butt at him. He had spanked her after all.

She was elated when Royce groaned and his hands come out to grab her ass cheeks. He gently squeezed them, then pulled them apart.

“Nyssa.” He groaned softly before his fingers moved to gently stroke across her puckered hole.

“Something you want, Royce?” she asked as she wiggled her ass again. Before she could say more, her head was grabbed and pulled back around, a hard cock butting against her lips. Nyssa smirked, then opened her mouth again, drawing Ian in.

Nyssa had just started to get into things when she felt Royce move from behind her as he climbed off the bed. He was back just as quickly as he had left, a large bottle of lube in his hands.

Nyssa couldn't see it once Royce was back behind her, but she could hear him open the bottle and pour some out on his hands, then drop the bottle on the bed. She inhaled swiftly as the cold liquid was smoothed over her tight entrance. A finger pressed against her before sinking in.

Much to Ian's pleasure, Nyssa moaned around his cock as another finger was pressed into her. She could tell Ian enjoyed himself from the way his hips started to push towards her. His groans grew in their intensity and volume.

The moans that came from below her told Nyssa that Lucas was in pretty much the same condition as Ian. His hands tightened on her hips as his thrusts became faster and more intense.

Nyssa released the cock in her mouth long enough to look back over her shoulder at Royce. “Honey, you'd better get that hard cock of yours in my ass if you want to get in on this,” she said, then turned back to Ian and swallowed his cock once again.

Her words seemed to spur Royce on. He pulled his fingers from her ass and replaced them with his cock. His hands grasped her hips as he slowly sank into her. He waited until she nodded her head before he began to move.

Nyssa was in heaven. Lucas thrust up into her, his hands and lips making love to her breasts. Royce pounded in from behind, his hands tightly grasping her hips. And Ian's hard cock filled her mouth. This was why she was with three men, to be loved in every way at the same time. It filled every fantasy she had ever had...at the very same time.

Just as she thought the pleasure would make her pass out, Nyssa felt herself crest. Her orgasm flowed through her body as she cried out around Ian's cock. The moment her cries vibrated around Ian's thick length, he groaned deeply and filled her mouth with his release.

As Nyssa dropped Ian from her mouth and started to collapse down on Lucas's body, she felt him suddenly stiffen beneath her. A loud roar came from him as his cock pulsed deep inside of her and he filled her with his seed.

"Nyssa!" Royce growled as his cock suddenly thickened inside of her. He thrust into her one last time before he erupted. Nyssa's inner muscles milked him of every last drop he had to give.

As Nyssa lay against Lucas's rapidly rising chest, she could see Ian fall back against the headboard out of the corner of her eyes. She felt Royce pull free of her and fall down onto the bed beside her and Lucas.

Everyone was silent as they waited to regain their breath, the only sound in the room their heavy panting. Finally, Nyssa lifted her head to look down at Lucas, then up at Ian, and over at Royce.

"You were saying something about chastisement?"

Chapter 7

Nyssa stared out at the countryside as they rode towards town. Her mind raced with a combination of excitement and apprehension. The Applegate Valley Fall Festival was in full swing in the middle of town, and they were almost there.

Lucas, Royce, and Ian had insisted that they attend as a family. Nyssa had been against it, voicing her opinions so loudly, Royce had threatened to paddle her ass yet again. Despite her desire for another chastisement session, she had eventually agreed, even if it was under duress.

Nyssa thought all three of them were nuts. She really had no desire to meet the good citizens of Applegate Valley, as accepting as she had been assured that they were. Nyssa wasn't sure if she believed that, at least not fully.

It didn't matter where she had been during her twenty-three years, she had never been fully accepted. Oh sure, it all started out well. Everyone was nice and accepting...right up until the time they asked her to leave town.

Despite what Royce, Lucas, and Ian had said, Nyssa wasn't totally convinced she wasn't headed for the very same situation. People could be cruel, especially people who didn't understand her...which was usually everyone.

Nyssa turned to look over at Royce, and her fingers picked at a small thread in her long skirt. "Royce? Do we really have to do this? Couldn't we just go home and play around a little? Maybe take a nap together?"

A moment later, she rolled her eyes when Royce smiled and reached over to pat her on the leg. "You'll be fine, honey."

"Easy for you to say. You're not the one who's going to be kicked out of town the moment everyone learns I can manipulate air elementals," Nyssa griped.

"Honey, it's not that bad. There are a lot of people who can do things just like that, as well as much more. You won't be the only one. And I can assure you, no one will ask you to leave town. You'll see, Nyssa, the people of Applegate Valley are very accepting. Just give them a chance."

"Yeah, I guess," Nyssa said as she pointed her finger at Royce, "but the first time that anyone gives me any grief, I'm out of here."

"Fair enough." Royce chuckled.

Nyssa turned to stare out at the countryside again. Her apprehension grew the closer to town they got. She just knew things weren't going to go her way. The first time someone learned what she could do, she had no doubt that they were going to turn against her. And then where would she be?

The thought of having to leave Lucas, Royce, and Ian caused a sudden deep pain in her chest. She had meant it when she had told them she wanted to get married. She couldn't imagine a life without them, even after just a couple of weeks with them.

Her boys were everything she had ever imagined in her fantasies and then some. Between the three of them, Nyssa had never felt more loved or accepted. The thought of leaving them was almost more than she could bear.

"Nyssa? Honey? You okay?"

Nyssa turned to look into the back of the wagon at Ian's concerned face, nodding her head. "Yeah, just nervous, I guess."

"Don't be. We'll make sure no one bothers you," he assured Nyssa.

Nyssa smiled and reached back to pat Ian's hand. "I have no doubt of that, love. I just don't like crowds much."

Ian covered Nyssa's hand with his other one and gave it a small squeeze. "We won't let anything happen to you, Nyssa. You belong to us now, and we protect what is ours."

Nyssa wished that she could believe him, but she just didn't. Too many times in the past she had been shunned for being different. She was having a very hard time believing that the good people of Applegate Valley would be any different.

"If you say so, Ian," she said, not wanting him to worry. "Just promise me that you won't leave my side."

"As if!" Royce chuckled. "What good reason would any of us have for leaving the side of the most beautiful woman attending the festival?"

"Especially one we can kiss whenever we want to," Ian added with a laugh.

Nyssa couldn't help but laugh at the lust-filled leer Ian gave her, his eyebrows wiggling up and down mischievously. She couldn't explain why, but that one little beam of delight from Ian made Nyssa feel a lot better.

"Okay, I'll try to not be so nervous." She laughed.

"We're going to have a lot of fun, I promise," Royce chimed in, his voice high pitched and sounding very comical. "Just stick with us, baby, and we'll show you all the best that Applegate Valley has to offer."

Nyssa giggled, looking back towards the front of the wagon as they pulled to a stop across from the large park where the festival was being held. As she looked towards the park, she began to feel like things might not be too bad. The crowd wasn't that big. Surely she could do this?

"Ready?" Royce asked as he climbed down and tied the horses to the hitching post. Nyssa nodded and climbed down from the wagon. Ian jumped out of the back of the wagon and his reached his hand out for hers as he faced the park.

She waited until Royce came around the wagon and took her other hand, then took a deep breath and turned to look at the park. “Okay, let’s do this.”

With Ian and Royce flanking her, Nyssa tried to look happy as she walked into the park. She really hoped that no one could see how nervous she actually was. She’d be so much happier if they could just—

“Royce, Ian, who is this lovely lady?”

Nyssa turned to see a man around their age standing to the side of them. She smiled, hoping it looked friendly.

“Hey, Dean, how’s it going?” Royce asked as he reached out to shake the man’s hand. “Dr. Dean Reynolds, I would like to introduce you to Nyssa Dupre, our fiancée.”

“Oh? Well, I guess this is a celebration then,” Dean said as he reached over to shake Nyssa’s hand. “Dupre? You wouldn’t be related to Albert Dupre, would you?”

Nyssa quickly looked at Royce before nodding her head. Glancing back at the doctor, she smiled. “Yes, Albert is my grandfather.”

“Oh, I’m sorry that he couldn’t make the festival. I don’t think he’s ever missed one, but as his doctor, I thought it was best for him to stay in bed for a few more days. No telling how long he’s going to have this little bug,” the doctor said as he winked at Nyssa.

Nyssa looked at him in confusion. What did he mean that Albert was sick? Albert was missing, kidnapped. He wasn’t sick.

“I don’t think I would be violating patient client confidentiality if I were to tell you I believe he’ll be up and around in a few days,” the doctor continued. “I was just up to the house yesterday with Lucas, and Albert seemed to be doing better even then.”

Nyssa felt like a dunce. She smiled and nodded her head in understanding. “Thank you, doctor. I’ve been very worried about him.”

“Dean, please. We’re all a little informal around here,” Dean replied. “I’ll be stopping by tomorrow to check on him again. I hope to see you there.”

Nyssa nodded again. “That would be nice, doc—uh, Dean. Thank you.”

“Please give your grandfather my best and tell him how much we missed him at the festival,” Dean said, then turned and walked away.

Nyssa waited until the good doctor was several feet away, then kicked Royce in the leg with her foot as she turned to glare up at him. “You could have told me that the doctor was in on this before I made a fool of myself.”

Royce held out his hands in surrender. “I didn’t know, baby, I swear. Lucas must have done this on his own.”

“Done what?” came a deep raspy voice from behind Nyssa.

Nyssa twirled around. She let out a small squeal when she spotted Lucas standing behind her, his arms crossed over his chest. She jumped across the space between them and into his arms. As Lucas lifted her up, she wrapped her legs around his waist, her arms around his neck.

Lucas chuckled as he hugged Nyssa to him, his hands holding her up by her ass. “You know, if the sheriff catches us we could get into trouble for public indecency,” he murmured right before he lowered his lips to hers.

Nyssa giggled against Lucas’s lips before getting into the kiss. Lucas’s lips were soft and warm but insistent and demanding at the same time. No matter what anyone around them thought, Lucas kissed Nyssa for all he was worth, and Nyssa let him.

“Hey, Sheriff.” Royce chuckled as he walked over to them. “You might want to lay off a little. The real law is giving you the evil eye.”

Lucas raised his head and looked around. His face turned slightly red when he spotted his mother standing just a few feet away from them, glaring at him. He grinned and shrugged his shoulders, then lowered Nyssa to stand on her feet.

“Hey, Mom,” he said.

“Lucas,” Ana replied as she nodded at him. “Are you planning on occupying all of this girl’s time, or do I get to show her around a little?”

“Ah, Mom, Nyssa just got here. I was hoping to spend a little time with her before anyone else got a hold of her.” Lucas pouted.

“Aren’t you supposed to be working, Sheriff?”

“Yeah, yeah,” he griped. “I was just taking a small break.”

“Well, you might want to go behind the bandstand and check out what the Olsen boys are up to right about now. Margaret saw them with a handful of firecrackers running in that direction,” Ana said as she pointed off into the distance.

“Man, I can never get a break,” Lucas grumbled as he gave Nyssa a quick kiss and headed off towards the bandstand.

Nyssa let out a small laugh at the pout on Lucas’s face as he walked off, then spun to face her soon to be mother-in-law. “Hi, Ana, where are your shadows?” she asked, referring to the three men who were never far from Ana’s side.

“Oh, they’re around here somewhere. Last time I saw them they were eyeing the pie eating contest,” Ana said as she walked forward. “How are you, Nyssa? My boys taking good care of you?”

Nyssa nodded her head. “Pretty much. Of course, they insisted that I come to this festival when I thought a lazy day spent at home would be better, but there are three of them and only one of me, so...” She laughed.

Ana laughed as she patted Nyssa on the arm. “Oh, honey, you and I are going to have to talk about how to get the upper hand with them. It takes a little bit of training, but I have no doubt that you can have the three of them in hand in no time.”

“Training? I have to go through training to deal with them?” Nyssa asked in confusion.

“Of course not, dear, they do. You have to train them to do what you want, not the other way around,” Ana said as she wrapped a hand

around Nyssa's arm. "Don't worry, Nyssa, I'll tell you everything you need to know to get the boys into shape."

Nyssa couldn't help but laugh at the looks of desperation that covered Royce and Ian's faces. They seemed terrified by their mother's words. Nyssa looked over at Ana, her face serious as she patted her arm. "Do tell, Ana."

She could hear Royce and Ian groan from behind her as her and Ana began walking, Ana talking animatedly. It was almost too funny. Nyssa had no doubt that Ana was going to fill her in on how to keep her head above water while being with three very obstinate, very domineering men. It was wonderful.

As Ana began to expand on her theories concerning domineering men, Nyssa caught a flash of blue out of the corner of her eye. Turning her head, she saw a small boy in a blue shirt climbing in a large tree nearby.

Nyssa tried to keep her attention on what Ana was saying to her, but her gaze kept straying to the small boy as he climbed higher and higher up in the tree. He couldn't have been more than five years old, if that. Nyssa wasn't sure he should be climbing as high up as he was going.

She quickly glanced around, trying to see if anyone was particularly interested in what the small boy was doing, but no one seemed to be any more interested than anyone else. Shouldn't someone be keeping an eye on him? Where were his parents?

Just as she let go of Ana's arm and started to turn towards Royce to ask him to find the child's parents, he slipped and started to fall. Nyssa's heart caught in her throat as she watched his grasp on the tree limb fail and he fell towards the ground.

With only the thought of the boy's safety in her mind, Nyssa stuck out her hands and prayed that her abilities didn't fail her this one time. The young boy seemed to float to the ground like a feather before he landed softly on a patch of dirt at the bottom of the tree.

Nyssa ran towards him, Royce, Ian, and Ana right on her heels. She knelt down next to the boy. Her hands covered his body as she tried to assure herself that he hadn't been hurt. "Are you okay, honey? Do you hurt anywhere?" she asked quickly when she finally looked down at the frightened boy.

"I—I'm f—f—fine," the boy stammered.

"Robby?" Lucas asked as he came up and knelt down next to Nyssa. He reached for the young boy and pulled him onto his lap. "What happened?"

"I was—I was climbing the tree, and then I felled," Robby said in a quiet voice. "I'm not in trouble, am I? I didn't do anything wrong, Sheriff Lucas, I promise. I was just climbing the tree."

"No, Robby, you're not in trouble. I just wanted to know what happened. Why were you so far up in the tree?"

"Dana said I couldn't climb it because I was too small, but I'm not, Sheriff Lucas, I'm not. I climbed almost to the top. I could have touched the clouds. Did you see me? Did you see how high I got?"

Lucas nodded. "I did, and I'm sure that Dana did too, but I need you to do me a favor from now on. I don't want you climbing up that far until at least your seventh birthday. Can you do that for me?" Lucas asked.

"I guess," Robby mumbled as he looked down at his hands, twisting them together in his lap. "But can we not tell Mama about this? She gets real upset when I falls down."

"Robby, I wouldn't be doing my job protecting you if I didn't tell your mother, and that could get me into trouble. Besides, would you feel good about lying to your mother?"

"I guess not. Mama doesn't like me to lie. She says it's bad and I shouldn't do it."

"Well, I believe she's right. You shouldn't lie, but I don't think you're going to have to. I also think she already knows, Robby," Lucas said as he nodded behind where Robby and Nyssa sat.

It was only then that Nyssa noticed the crowd that had formed behind her. Her heart fell as she saw the looks everyone gave her. She'd seen that look before. She quickly got to her feet and backed away as she watched for the tiniest movement in her direction.

She jumped when she backed into a hard body behind her. Before she could turn around, two strong arms encircled her from behind, and a low voice whispered into her ear.

"It's okay, Nyssa, give them a chance," Ian murmured quietly.

Nyssa started to shake her head when a young blonde woman ran up, tears in her eyes. "Robby! Robby!" she exclaimed as she dropped to her knees and wrapped her arms around the small boy who sat in Lucas's lap.

"He's okay, Jenny. He's just had a little scare, but he's okay," Lucas assured the frantic mother. "Robby? Don't you have something to tell your mother?"

"I climbed a tree," Robby said in a small voice.

"And?" Lucas asked.

"And I felled," Robby said after a moment of silence. "But I'm okay, Mama, I swear."

"And?" Lucas asked again.

"And I know I wasn't supposed to climb the tree, but Dana dared me. She said I couldn't climb the tree 'cause I was too small, but I did, Mama, I did climb the tree. I wasn't too small," Robby said quickly.

"And?"

"Ah, do I have to, Sheriff Lucas?"

"Robby..."

"And I promise not to climb any more trees until at least my seventh birthday 'cause Sheriff Lucas said so," Robby finished with a large pout.

Jenny looked up at Lucas, a trembling smile on her lips. "Sheriff, thank you. I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't saved Robby. He's—"

“Sheriff Lucas didn’t save me, Mama, the pretty lady did,” Robby said as he pointed to Nyssa.

Nyssa’s eyes widened as the entire crowd turned to look at her. She started to shake her head again when Jenny stood to her feet and rushed at her. Nyssa was prepared to have to fight the young woman off. When Jenny threw her arms around Nyssa and hugged her, Nyssa didn’t know what to do.

She cautiously raised her arms and wrapped them around the crying mother, patting her gently on the back. Her eyes, however, went to meet Lucas’s.

“Robby’s my only child, and I would just die if anything happened to him,” Jenny said as she released Nyssa and leaned back to look at her. “I don’t know how to thank you, miss—uh, miss—I’m sorry, I don’t know your name.”

“This is our fiancée, Nyssa Dupre,” Royce said with a happy little grin as he stepped over to stand next to Ian and Nyssa.

Jenny looked at him, surprise written all over her face. Nyssa braced herself as she waited for the fallout. She was sure it was coming, especially the way that the crowd had suddenly started looking at her.

“You’re Nyssa?” an older woman asked as she stepped forward.

Nyssa hesitantly nodded her head.

“Oh, my dear, we’ve been waiting so long for you to come home,” she said as she walked up and took Nyssa’s hand. “Why, your grandfather has talked about nothing else for the last year. I’m just sorry he’s not here to introduce us. Is he feeling any better?”

“Uh, yes, Dr. Reynolds said he might be up and around soon,” Nyssa replied in confusion.

“You’re Albert’s granddaughter?” Jenny asked curiously.

“Great-granddaughter, actually. My mother Jolene was his granddaughter,” Nyssa corrected her. She still couldn’t understand why everyone was being so...nice?

“Then you really did save my Robby, didn’t you?”

Nyssa looked at Jenny, then the crowd behind her. This was the moment of truth. She could give Jenny the truth and possibly be outed to the entire town, or she could lie and maybe lose Lucas, Royce, and Ian forever.

“Yes.” Like there had been any choice for her!

“Oh, that’s so wonderful, another soul for our coven. Your grandfather must be so proud,” the older woman said as she clasped her hands together over her chest. “I knew your mother when she was just a child. She had such wonderful abilities. It was such a loss for us when she went away.”

Nyssa’s eyes widened in shock. They were happy that she was here? That she had abilities? Had they lost their ever-loving minds?

“Told you,” Ian whispered into her ear as the crowd began to move towards them, a smile of welcome on every face. Nyssa could only stare in wonder at everyone who stood there to greet her.

“Wait,” Nyssa cried out, “You know about what I can do? And it doesn’t bother you?”

“No, of course not,” the old woman said. “Should it?”

“I’m not trying to be rude here, really, I’m not, but have you lost your ever-loving mind? I can manipulate the element of air, levitate things, and create storms. You don’t find that just a little...strange?” Nyssa asked. She couldn’t believe that everyone knew and accepted what she could do. It just didn’t make sense.

“And?” the old lady said as she began to weave her hands around in the air. “I can manipulate the element of water.”

Nyssa watched with awe and a strange sense of fascination as the woman moved her hands and a bubble of water began to form in her hands.

“On the other hand, I can manipulate earth,” another woman said as she stepped forward and began to wave her hands around in the air. Pretty soon, the dirt by Nyssa’s feet began to vibrate slightly, then rolled towards the woman to settle in a small pile at her feet.

“I hate to say this, Nyssa,” Ana said as she stepped up beside her, “but there’s nothing special about you. Here in Applegate Valley, you’re considered normal.”

* * * *

Nyssa meandered through the festival, nodding here and there to people as she went. She still reeled from the fact the in Applegate Valley, her abilities were nothing special. People actually thought she was normal, whatever normal was.

She couldn’t ever remember feeling that way. For as long as she could remember, she had to hide her abilities from everyone for fear of being ostracized, burned at the stake as a witch, or worse. She had heard some pretty horrid stories in her travels.

Now, not only were the citizens of this town, both those with abilities and those without, accepting her, but she was being told she was normal. Nyssa was a little too overwhelmed to take it all in. It seemed all too good to be true. She kept waiting for the downside.

Being accepted by the townspeople for her strange abilities didn’t even touch on her biggest astonishment...having all three of the Nash boys. It was just as strange as being accepted because of her abilities.

Nyssa was a little scared. Every thing she had ever wanted seemed to be at her very fingertips. She was afraid that it was all a dream and she would wake up to find that she was right back in her nightmare of a life alone.

Or that something would happen to change everyone’s mind.

Nyssa let out a long sigh as she kicked a small pile of leaves at her feet. Maybe she was analyzing things too much. Maybe she should just shut up and enjoy what she had for as long as she had it. Who knows, maybe there was a happy ending at the end of this rainbow.

“Hey, honey, you doing okay?”

Nyssa looked up to see Lucas standing before her. He looked very casual as he crossed his arms over his massive chest and leaned against a tree, but Nyssa could see the concern in his eyes.

She gave a little laugh and nodded her head. “Yeah, I’m okay. Just overanalyzing things again.”

“You really should stop that, you know.” Lucas chuckled as he dropped his arms and stepped forward to press his body against Nyssa’s. His hand came up to gently caress the side of her face as his eyes intently searched hers. “You know I love you, right?”

“Yes, I know, Lucas,” Nyssa whispered back.

“And Royce and Ian love you too.”

Nyssa smiled and nodded her head. “I know. I love you all too.”

“Then stop worrying this to death. We don’t care if the town accepts you. That’s not a deal breaker for us. We accept you just the way you are, and that’s all you need to worry about,” Lucas said.

“All I need to worry about?” Nyssa laughed. “I actually need to worry about you three accepting me? Somehow, I got the impression it was the other way around. I need to accept you three.”

“Well—” Lucas said. He looked a little uncomfortable, especially with the slight red flush that had started to creep up his face.

“After all, it is my body that accepts the three of you into it, not the other way around. So, if anyone was accepting anyone around here, I think it would be me,” Nyssa said. Then her voice dropped down seductively. “Of course, if you didn’t want me to accept your long hard cock into my—”

“Nyssa!” Lucas choked out.

“What?” Nyssa asked as she tried to look innocent.

Lucas chuckled as he lowered his head down to rest against hers. “You’re going to get me fired, woman.”

“Me? Get you fired? And how would I do that?”

“Because it isn’t in the sheriff’s job description to hike his fiancée’s skirt up over her head at the town festival and fuck her until

she can't walk!" Lucas bit out through gritted teeth as he pressed the hard bulge in his pants against Nyssa.

"Ever had sex in a tree?" Nyssa asked as she looked up to the tall tree that stood next to them. "I can pretty much guarantee that you won't fall. I can manipulate air, you know."

"Nyssa!"

Chapter 8

Nyssa settled her tired body back against the tall tree she and Lucas had been standing under several minutes before and closed her eyes. While they hadn't climbed into the tree and had sex, Lucas had been very aggressive when he had attacked her lips as he kissed her.

Nyssa had been a tad bit embarrassed with the wanton way she had eagerly pressed her body against his and pushed into his wandering hands. Only the far off sound of a child's laughter had kept Nyssa from pulling Lucas's hard cock from his pants and giving into their mutual desires.

She had the distinct impression that she would never be able to get enough of any of the Nash boys, no matter how long they were together. And she couldn't be happier about it. Life with them was sure to be an adventure. One she looked forward to with great anticipation.

"Hello, little Nyssa."

Nyssa opened her eyes and glanced up. She was surprised to see that Michael stood next to her. She was unnerved by the hard little glint he had in his eyes. She quickly looked past him to see if her grandparents had accompanied him but couldn't see them.

Nyssa looked back up at Michael, a curious frown on her face. "Hello, Michael. What are you doing here?"

"I've come for you, of course," Michael replied as if she should have known that.

"For me? Why? I told you that I didn't want to go back to Boston," Nyssa said as she started to get to her feet. There was

something about Michael's posture and the strange smirk on his face that made Nyssa very nervous.

"Ah, but see," Michael said as he reached for Nyssa's arm, "I don't remember asking."

Before Nyssa could protest, Michael pulled Nyssa into his arms and pulled her behind the tree and out of sight of anyone who might see them. Nyssa struggled as she tried to get away from Michael. If she could just get her hands free...

Nyssa bent her head forward and sank her teeth into Michael's arm as he wrapped them around her and lifted her off the ground. It probably wasn't the smartest move she could have made.

The next thing Nyssa felt was Michael's fist slamming into the side of her face as he grunted. She let out a small cry that was muffled by the hand that immediately covered her mouth as she sank into darkness.

* * * *

"Hey, Lucas, you seen our girl?" Ian called out when he spotted his brother making his rounds.

Lucas stopped and turned to look over at Ian, a small grin on his face. "Yeah, she's over resting against a tree by the west side of the park."

"Resting?" Ian said with a little chuckle as he caught sight of his brother's slightly red face. "Why does our girl need to rest when she should be enjoying the fall festival?"

"You enjoy the festival your way. Nyssa and I will enjoy it our way." Lucas laughed.

"So, if I wanted to enjoy the festival with Nyssa, I would find her..."

"Under a tree over on the west side of the park," Lucas said. He gave his brother a long look, then shook his head. "Just don't tire her

out too much. I get off duty in a couple of more hours, and I have plans for that girl.”

“Plans?” Ian asked curiously.

“And it’s surprise. You’ll just have to wait and see. I might even let you and Royce join us if you ask real nice.”

Ian chuckled. “Oh, I have no doubt we’ll be joining you, brother. Once I get my hands on Nyssa, I don’t plan on letting her out of my sight for the rest of the day. So anything you have planned will have to include Royce and me as well.”

“Well, if I must,” Lucas replied. He sounded so put upon that Ian couldn’t help but laugh. He knew that Lucas would never deny him or Royce time with Nyssa, so whatever *plans* he had would include the three of them.

Ian started to turn away but stopped and looked back at his older brother. “Hey, Lucas, if you want time alone with Nyssa, you know you just need to say something. Royce and I would make ourselves scarce.”

“I know, Ian, and I appreciate that, but I was just fooling around. I imagine over the next fifty or sixty years we’ll all get plenty of alone time with Nyssa,” Lucas said as he nodded his head. “Now, go keep our girl company until I get off work, and then we can all head back home and really have us a celebration.”

Lucas watched his brother smile, then turn away to go find their fiancée. He shook his head as he began to walk around the park again. Ian was the sweetest of the three Nash boys. He always looked out for them in his own way, making sure that Lucas and Royce were happy and healthy. He was nearly the male equivalent of their mom.

His sweet nature often worried Lucas. He was always afraid some woman would come along and hurt Ian, but Nyssa had chased those worries away the moment she had decided to keep them all. She seemed to need Ian as much as he needed her.

Lucas knew that he and Royce could be domineering at times. There also wasn’t very much gentleness in either of them. Ian was the

perfect counterpart for their more aggressive behavior. Lucas couldn't be more proud to share Nyssa with both his brothers.

She was just such a surprise to him. While he had known that he wanted to share a woman with his brothers from a very early age, he had despaired of ever finding the right one, the one meant only for them.

And Nyssa fit that description to a tee. In the looks department, Nyssa could win any beauty contest on the face of the planet as far as Lucas was concerned. She was perfect. That she enjoyed the more physical side of their relationship so much was also a huge plus. Lucas knew he could make love to her any time he wanted, and he wanted a lot.

But besides that, Nyssa gave Lucas a sense of home. He looked forward to coming home from work every day and hated leaving every morning. The simple act of sitting down at the dining room table for dinner had turned into something he looked forward to with great anticipation.

He didn't even mind the times he had to share her with his brothers, either in the bedroom or out of it. Watching his brothers bring her pleasure and knowing he could join in at any time was almost as good as doing it himself.

While Lucas truly enjoyed making love to Nyssa by himself, he looked forward to the times the three of them could make love to her at the same time. There was just something extra special about those times.

Each day since Nyssa had arrived had been filled with more wonder and love and contentment than he had ever imagined he would feel. He had high hopes that the rest of his life would be much the same way.

"Lucas!"

Lucas turned quickly when he heard his name shouted out to see Ian run in his direction. The worried look on his face made Lucas's heart beat faster in his chest. Something was wrong, terribly wrong.

“What’s wrong?”

“You said Nyssa was resting under a tree on the west side of the park, right? Are you sure it was the west side? I’ve looked everywhere for her and I can’t find her,” Ian said as he ran up to his brother.

“Of course I’m sure. Do you think I don’t know where I left her?” Lucas said as he hurried towards the tree where he had last seen Nyssa. The closer to the tree that he got, the more Lucas started to worry. Nyssa was nowhere in sight.

Lucas ran around the tree and stopped next to Ian. He looked all around them, but he still couldn’t spot her. “I don’t understand. I left her right here,” Lucas said as he gestured to the bottom of the tree.

“Do you think something happened to her? She was pretty upset when everyone found out what she could do. Do you think she went home?” Ian asked anxiously.

Lucas shook his head. “No, she wouldn’t leave without finding one of us. I want you to go find Royce while I look around. Maybe he knows where she is. And find our fathers. I’m going to look around here to see if I can find any sign of her.”

Ian nodded even as he started to run back towards the festival. Lucas looked around once more and then down at the ground where he had left Nyssa. She couldn’t have been gone too long. He had only left her here about thirty minutes ago. There had to be some sign of her.

As Lucas studied the ground around the tree, he realized that there was a sign of Nyssa, just not the sign he wanted. The dirt and leaves had been disturbed as if a struggle had taken place.

Lucas took a brief moment to close his eyes and pray to the powers that be that nothing would happen to the love of his life before he could find her. And find her he would, if it was the last thing he did.

He opened his eyes and stood up. With one last look at the ground, he turned and started back towards the festival. Royce and

Ian, along with their fathers, met him just as he reached the edge of the festival.

“Well?” Lucas asked when he saw Royce.

Royce regretfully shook his head. “Lucas, I was helping Mom set up the picnic basket auction. I haven’t seen Nyssa since Robby fell out of the tree. I think you were the last one to actually see her.”

Lucas nodded his head. “That’s what I thought, but I hoped I was wrong.”

“What do you mean?” Royce asked quietly.

“Nyssa’s missing, and there’re signs of a struggle around the tree. I think that she’s been kidnapped.”

* * * *

Nyssa groaned as she opened her eyes. She tried to lift her hands to cradle her injured face, but they were tied behind her back. As she lay there, memories of what had caused her pain came flashing back.

Michael! Nyssa cried out as she started to struggle against the rope that bound her hands. Terror filled her as she realized that Michael had kidnapped her.

“Ssshhh, Nyssa. You have to be quiet. If they hear you they’ll come in here and find me,” whispered a voice from beside her.

Nyssa turned her head to see an old man sitting next to her. “Albert?”

The old man nodded his head. “While I am glad to finally meet you, Granddaughter,” Albert said as he waved his hand around to encompass the room, “this is not exactly the surroundings I had hoped for.”

“What are you doing here?”

“Same thing as you, I imagine.” He chuckled as he untied Nyssa’s hands.

“Michael kidnapped you too?” Nyssa asked in astonishment.

“Is that his name? Michael?” Albert asked as he reached over and helped Nyssa into a sitting position. “He never gave me his name, but I figured it had something to do with you.”

“Me?”

Albert nodded. “When I started having you investigated, and I am sorry about that, I—”

Nyssa patted Albert’s hand. “That’s all been explained to me, and I understand why you needed to have me investigated, so don’t worry about that. However, I am confused about why Michael would kidnap me...or you.”

“Greed, my dear, good old-fashioned greed.”

“Greed? But I don’t, well, I didn’t have anything before you left me the house and the—but that’s ridiculous. How would he—that just doesn’t make sense, Grandpa,” Nyssa stammered.

“Hmmm, Grandpa. It’s been a long time since I heard that word. Not since your mother was a young child,” Albert mused.

“Does it bother you? I won’t—” Nyssa said hesitantly.

“No, my dear, it’s a welcome term,” Albert said as he patted Nyssa’s leg. “You can call me Grandpa anytime you want to.”

“It’s a little strange for me too. I’ve never had a grandfather before.”

“Yes, you did. You’ve always had a grandfather, and a mother, and a father, and aunts and uncles, and all sorts of other relatives. You just didn’t know where to find us. I assume you’ve settled in nicely to your grandmother’s house?”

Nyssa nodded her head. “Oh yes, it’s beautiful, and I love it. Thank you for giving it to me.”

Albert nodded his head. “Unfortunately, I imagine that it is also a major factor as to why we are in our current predicament.”

“My house? I thought you said it was because of greed?” Nyssa asked in confusion.

“I did, and it is. Your grandmother’s house, and now your house, sits on over 10,000 acres of prime grazing land and forest. The lake

and the river that runs through the property gives you uninterrupted water. You also have water right all the way back up to the spring where it starts, for the next two hundred years.”

Nyssa stared at Albert for several moments as she tried to figure out exactly what that meant. Finally, she shook her head. She didn't get it. “I don't understand. What does that have to do with greed?”

Albert gave Nyssa a small chuckle and pat on the leg. “That's because you're not a rancher, my dear. Water rights are very important. It means you can water your herd for years to come, and no one can block the river and keep you from that water.”

“But I don't have a herd. I don't even have a dog,” Nyssa countered.

“Not now, but I imagine that your boys will eventually want to have their own herd of cattle. Between the amount of land you have, the water rights, and the forested areas, you're sitting on a gold mine.”

“My boys? You know about Lucas, Royce and Ian? But how? I didn't meet them until you had already been kidnapped.”

Albert smiled. “I knew the minute Lucas saw your portrait that he would call on you the minute you arrived. It was in his eyes, Nyssa. He couldn't stop staring at your portrait the entire time he was at my house. And, if he was that obsessed with you, his brothers would be too. The rest was up to you.”

“And you're okay with it? The three of them and me being together?”

“Of course, my dear, that is the way of our valley. It's been that way for generations. True, not everyone does it, and that's okay. However, if that's what you choose, no one in Applegate Valley will look down on you for it.”

Nyssa settled back against the wall as she let out a little laugh. “You have no idea how strange this all is to me. Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't trade Lucas, Royce, or Ian for anything in the world. I don't care if I have to live in sin for the rest of my life to be with them. But this is a little unusual.”

“You’ll get used to it in no time. Now,” Albert said as he got to his feet, “what we need to do now is figure a way out of this mess so that we can get you back to your boys.”

Nyssa looked around the small wooden room they were in. There was a small dirty and cracked window on one side of the room and a wooden door on the other. Besides the dingy single bed she sat on, there was no other furniture in the room, not even a lamp.

“Do you have any idea where we are?” Nyssa asked.

Albert shook his head. “No, but I suspect we’re not too far from town. When the people holding us left this morning, they were back in less than an hour with you. That means we have to be within five miles of town at the most.”

“The people? There’s more than one?”

“I’m not positive, but I believe we are being held by no less than three people. Your Michael may be the ringleader here, but I still have the impression he is answering to someone else. I keep hearing him say he has to report in. That tells me someone else is in charge.”

“He is not my Michael,” Nyssa grunted.

“Figure of speech, my dear. Since you seem to know him, what can you tell me about this Michael?”

Nyssa shook her head. “Not much, really. Except for today when he took me, I’ve only ever met the man once before. Apparently, his father was the business partner to my grandfather on my father’s side of the family. When his father died, Michael took over. End of story.”

“Edward and Frances Williams?”

Nyssa looked at Albert in surprise. “You know them?”

“I know of them, but we’ve never met. Your father told me a lot about them when he was here before you were born. I had the impression that Edward’s money was not always made honestly. Your father didn’t seem to have a very high opinion of him.”

“Well, if Michael’s involved with him, then I would bet he’s just as crooked as Edward.” Nyssa laughed.

“I have no doubt that you are very correct, Nyssa. If you lie down with dogs, my dear, you’re bound to get fleas.”

Nyssa just stared at Albert for several moments, then laughed. “Fleas? Seriously?” Nyssa couldn’t believe her grandfather had just said that. Fleas?

“What else would you expect to get? Cats?”

Nyssa chuckled as she shrugged her shoulders. “I don’t know. More dogs, maybe?”

“You might be right at that.” Albert chuckled.

“Yeah, well, whatever you get, I have no doubt that Michael is one of the worst. That man just gives me the creeps. There’s something about him, something in his eyes when he looks at me that just makes my skin crawl.”

“I imagine it’s you, my dear.” Albert held up his hand to placate Nyssa when she glared over at him. “Don’t get me wrong, it’s nothing that you’ve said or done. But you are the spitting image of your great-grandmother, Sylia, god rest her soul. She was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. Stole my heart the day I met her.”

“So, it’s the way I look?”

“If I were a betting man, I would say that is exactly why Michael has become obsessed with you. Sylia had the same problem. Men just flocked to her. She was never more than cordial with any of them, but if she looked at one man too long, he assumed she was coming on to him. You wouldn’t believe how many men I had to fight off just to keep your great-grandmother safe.”

“What happened to her?”

Albert smiled, but it was a sad smile. “We had a good life together, a long life. After Margarita passed away and then your mother left, it was just too much for her. She passed away in her sleep several years ago.”

“Oh, I’m so sorry, Grandpa,” Nyssa said as she wrapped her arms around his shoulders and gave him a hug. “I wish I had been able to meet her.”

Albert leaned back to look at Nyssa and reached a hand up to brush back the loose hair from her cheek. “She would have loved you. You are so much like her that I’m constantly amazed. She even had your abilities.”

“Abilities? She could manipulate air?” Nyssa asked in astonishment.

Albert nodded as he stepped back. “Oh yes. From what my grandmother told me, the element that you can manipulate is set down for a particular family. The Dupre family manipulates air, for example.”

“Is that why there’re such limits on intermarriages here in the valley?”

“I suspect, but it also has to do with the multiple husband thing the women of Applegate Valley have going on here. Unlike many places in the world, only the women can have more than one spouse. No man may have more than one wife.”

“Really?” Nyssa laughed.

“It’s not like we have women coming out of the woodwork around here, Nyssa. For all of the original families, there has been a tradition of having either triplet sons or a single daughter. Nowhere in our history do we have anything else. At least, not since the original families settled here.”

“Wow, they never told me that,” Nyssa said in surprise. “So that’s why I don’t have any siblings? And Margarita didn’t either?”

Albert nodded. “It’s always been either one girl child or triplet boys. I’m surprised your young men never told you that.”

Nyssa blushed. “We never really got around to talking about having children.”

“Ah, yes, the pre-honeymoon period. I remember it well.” Albert chuckled. “I’m surprised your great-grandmother didn’t go into labor as she walked down the aisle. She was with child by then.”

Nyssa’s hand moved down to cover her abdomen as she felt all of the color drain from her face. “You don’t think—”

“If you’ve been doing what I suspect you’ve been doing, it’s a very real possibility, especially with your three lusty fiancés. They are you fiancés, aren’t they?” Albert asked seriously.

Nyssa started to nod when the door flew open. She jumped and turned to see Michael standing in the doorway, a sadistic grin on his face. Nyssa’s hand moved up to press against her throat as her heart started to pound in her chest.

“I do believe the honor of having Nyssa’s hand in marriage will be all mine.”

Chapter 9

“Any sign of her, Ian?”

Ian turned away from the view out the front window of Nyssa’s house to see his father standing behind him. He shook his head sadly. “No, not yet. Lucas and Royce and a bunch of the other guys are out searching for her right now. I wanted to go with them, but—”

“But someone needed to be here in case she comes home,” Jack replied as he placed his arm around Ian’s shoulders and gave him a little squeeze. “It’s never easy being the one to stay home, Ian, but someone has to do it.”

“I just wish I could be out there searching for her with them.”

“I know, son, but you’re needed here. Do you think I like staying home every day while John and Thomas go out and have adventures? I’d like to ride the range like they do, tame a bucking bronco, go hunting. But your mother needs me here. So, here is where I stay.”

“Do you regret that?”

Jack shook his head. “No, I actually think I got the better deal out of it. John and Thomas go off to work the ranch all day long, and I get to stay home with your mother. I get a lot more one-on-one time with her than they do. You will too. Besides, I got to see you take your first step, hear you say your first word. What more could a husband and father want?”

“I guess. I just can’t help thinking that I should be doing something to help,” Ian complained.

“You are, son. Part of being a husband is knowing when to stay and when to go. Nyssa and your brothers need you to be here right now. What if Nyssa hurt herself and is making her way here right

now? If you're out with your brothers, there would be no one to take care of her."

"You and I both know Nyssa was kidnapped."

"Then help your brothers by figuring out who would want to kidnap her. You're the smart one here, Ian. We all know that. Your brothers may be big and strong, but you have them both beat in the brains department. You're the thinker...think!"

"What the hell am I supposed to think about?" Ian shouted as he pushed away from his father. "How Nyssa's been kidnapped and is most likely being held by some maniac who wants to—" Ian suddenly stopped shouting as a thought shot across his mind.

"Ian?" Jack asked.

"Nyssa's grandparents came to see her the other day. They had a man named Michael with them. They wanted her to go back to Boston with them where they could turn her into a proper young lady. They seemed horrified by how Nyssa had chosen to live her life. They blamed it all on her mother."

Jack stepped forward. "Do you think they could have taken her?"

"I don't know. I mean, they could have, I guess. I would see Michael taking her before her grandparents. They wouldn't want to— to dirty their hands with it, if you know what I mean," Ian said. His hand trembled as he raked it through his short black hair.

Jack nodded his head. "Yeah, I remember when they came to *claim* their son before he married Jolene and how ostentatious they were then. They are definitely from back east, damn tenderfoots. Wouldn't know the ass end of a mule if it kicked them."

"Okay, if we eliminate the grandparents, that leaves Michael. But what reason would he have for taking Nyssa? He knows she's engaged to us. He was there when it happened. Nyssa told him herself that she wasn't going back to Boston."

"So, after coming all this way out here from Boston, they just up and leave because Nyssa said she doesn't want to go? Doesn't that

seem a little too easy to you?” Jack asked as he crossed his arms over his chest.

“So, you’re saying that they might have stayed here and taken Nyssa anyway?”

“Okay, let’s try it like this. If we were to assume that they did stay here and in fact have Nyssa right now, where would they stash her? And it would have to be someplace out of the way, because Ma and Pa Kettle certainly won’t want to be seen with her until they can get her out of town.”

Ian shook his head. “You’d be better off asking Lucas something like that. He knows more about what goes on around here than I do. And I still don’t understand why her grandparents would kidnap her.”

“Ian, now you’re thinking too much,” Jack said with some exasperation. “We don’t know if they took her or not. It could have been anyone, but we need to look into every possibility. If they’re still in town—”

“They would be at the Claremont Hotel,” Ian finished for him.

“It is the nicest place in town,” Jack replied.

“Then what are we waiting for?” Ian asked he headed for the door. “Let’s saddle some horses up and head into town.”

Jack chuckled. “I don’t know, guns, maybe? A posse? The cavalry? Someone who knows how to fight and win?” he asked as he followed Ian out the door.

* * * *

Nyssa stared at Michael as if he had lost his mind. Marry him? She was engaged to Lucas, Royce, and Ian. He knew that. He had been there when it happened. If he thought she was going to give them up for him, he had another thought coming.

“You’re out of your mind, Michael. I’m engaged to Lucas, Royce and Ian. I have no intention of marrying you or anyone else,” Nyssa said firmly.

“Now, see, that’s where you’re wrong, Nyssa, my love,” Michael said as he walked a little further into the room. It was only then that Nyssa caught sight of the two large men standing behind him. “You will marry me or your poor, dear grandfather here will have a terrible accident. You wouldn’t want that to happen, would you, Nyssa?”

“Don’t listen to him, Nyssa. He can’t do anything to me that hasn’t already been done,” Albert yelled.

“I can kill you, old man,” Michael threatened.

“And what? Send me to be with my wife, my daughter? Go ahead, do it. I’ve lived 103 years. I’ve seen wars and conflicts, watched friends and loved ones come and go. I’ve even traveled around the world. You can’t hurt me.”

“Maybe not, but I sure can make you wish you were dead,” Michael growled as he raised his hand and smacked Albert across the face.

Nyssa cried out as she watched her grandfather fall to the floor from the force of the blow. She quickly stepped over to him and knelt down by his side. Her hand went down to wipe the small trickle of blood from Albert’s lips before she glared up at Michael.

“What kind of man are you?” she asked in disgust.

“One you should think twice about crossing. Now get to your feet, Nyssa,” Michael said sternly as he reached for her arm. “We have a wedding to attend.”

Nyssa tried to pull away from Michael, but he was too strong for her as he used his strength to pull her to her feet. She started to struggle when Michael wrapped his arms around her body and leaned in to whisper in her ear.

“I’m looking forward to our wedding night with great anticipation, Nyssa, my love,” Michael said. “I decided the moment I saw you that you were going to be mine. And I always get what I go after, Nyssa.”

Nyssa cringed and tried to pull away from Michael when she felt his tongue lick the edge of her ear. When Michael grabbed the nape of

her neck and forced her face up to his, she glared up at him. “I will never be yours.”

Michael shook Nyssa as he glared down at her. His hand came up to grab her jaw in a tight grip. “I don’t remember giving you a choice, Nyssa,” he growled just before he lowered his lips to hers.

Nyssa tried to pull away again when she felt Michael’s tongue brush against her lips. When she couldn’t pull her mouth away from his, she bit down on his lips. She smiled as she heard Michael cry out in pain.

A moment later, Nyssa was the one who cried out in pain as Michael smacked her across the face with his open hand. “You will learn not to cross me, Nyssa. I am not a man to mess with.”

Michael let go of Nyssa’s face and pulled her towards the door. The two large men who stood there stepped out of the way as Michael pulled her through the doorway. As she was pulled from the room, Nyssa heard her grandfather call after her.

“Remember who you are, Nyssa. You’re a Dupre!”

Nyssa was pulled into the main room and pushed across the room so hard she fell to her knees. As she looked up, she saw another man standing before her, a bible in his hand. At first, Nyssa was afraid. Then she noticed the way his hand trembled and the frightened look on his face.

“Nyssa, my love, I want you to meet Parson Jones. He has been kind enough to come here to marry us. Isn’t that right, Parson Jones?” Michael asked with a sneer. “Parson, I would like to introduce my fiancée, Nyssa Dupre.”

“I, uh, well—” the parson stammered.

Nyssa climbed to her feet, her eyes intent on the parson. She nodded to him. “Parson, are you from Applegate Valley?”

The parson nodded. “Yes, I’m the parson at the Applegate Fellowship. I, uh—this is all very irregular.”

“Parson Jones, Lucas, Royce, and Ian Nash are my fiancés, not this man. He’s—” Nyssa started only to let out another cry as Michael

hit her again. This time, she didn't fall to the ground. Instead, she turned to glare at Michael as she wiped a droplet of blood from her lip. "I'm getting real tired of you hitting me, Michael."

"I told you before, Nyssa. I am not a man to mess with. I will not have my wife talking back to me. You will do what you're told or things will go very badly for you," Michael shouted, looking much like a small child who had been denied some penny candy.

"No, Michael, I am not a woman to mess with," Nyssa began as she took a step towards Michael. "I am a Dupre, and no man tells me what to do. Not Lucas, not Royce, not Ian, and certainly not you!"

By the time Nyssa was done talking, she was nearly shouting. Her long strawberry blonde hair was waving frantically around her head as if a strong wind had just blown through the room. Nyssa's hands were out to her sides, palms up, as she advanced on Michael.

"Wha—what are you doing?" Michael stammered out. He looked nervous and just a little afraid as he backed away from Nyssa towards the front door.

"I've spent my entire life hiding who I am and running from men like you. Well, no more. I am Nyssa Dupre, and believe me when I tell you, Michael, I am the last woman you want to piss off."

Michael and his two goons turned to run for the door, the parson running for the door where Albert was standing. As they did, Nyssa let out a loud laugh and opened herself up to all of her abilities. She let the power flow through her as she embraced the Dupre Legacy.

* * * *

Royce slowed his horse down as he caught sight of the small shack where Edward and Frances Williams had said Nyssa was being held. He heard Lucas and Ian stop their horses beside him.

"Well? Do you think they were telling the truth? Do you think that's where Michael is holding Nyssa?" Ian asked as he looked at the small wooden building.

Before Royce could answer him, the front door of the building, along with the windows, blew off and crashed to the ground. Moments later, there were several screams as three men flew out of the building through the broken door and windows and landed on the ground several feet away.

Royce watched in stunned amazement as Nyssa walked out of the door moments later. Her hands were raised up as she manipulated the air around her. Her hair blew rapidly around her head, and her eyes had taken on a strange eerie glow.

“Nyssa?” Royce asked in shock.

“Oh man, that is one pissed off lady.” Lucas chuckled as he watched Michael and his goons scramble to their feet and start to run away. Seconds later, they were swept up in three small cyclones of wind and tossed through the air.

The three brothers slid off their horses and quickly started in Nyssa’s direction, each one of them with only one thing on their minds...getting to Nyssa. They dodged flying leaves and broken branches as they worked their way through the windstorm Nyssa created.

“Nyssa!” Royce shouted as he reached her side. When she didn’t answer him, he grabbed a hold of her shoulders and turned her towards him. He was a little disturbed by the blank look on her face. She didn’t seem to know it was him. “Nyssa!” he shouted again, shaking her.

“Is she okay?” Lucas asked as he rushed up, Ian right behind him.

Royce shook his head. He had no idea. She seemed to be in some sort of trance. Royce did the only thing he could think of. He leaned in and kissed Nyssa. His arms wrapped around her as he pulled her body up close to his.

At first, he got no response. She didn’t move at all. Just when he was about to give up, Royce felt Nyssa’s lips move against his as her body softened and pressed against him. He felt her hands clench in his shirt as she groaned.

After several moments, Royce heard someone next to him clear his throat. He lifted his head and glanced over to see Lucas standing there, an eyebrow raised in query. He gave him a small grin, then looked back down at Nyssa.

“Hey, honey, you okay now?” he asked softly when he saw that Nyssa’s eyes were clear and back to being mossy green again.

Nyssa drew in a shaky breath as she reached out her hand to touch Royce’s face. “Royce?”

Royce nodded eagerly. “Yeah, honey?”

“You’re here.”

“Of course I am. Where else would I be?” Royce chuckled. “This is where you are.”

“Lucas? Ian?” she asked hesitantly.

“We’re right here, Nyssa,” Lucas answered as he and Ian stepped forward into her view. Their arms wrapped around her back until she stood in the shelter of their arms. All three men surrounded her, Nyssa in the middle.

Nyssa carefully turned and touched each of them on their cheeks as tears started to form in her eyes. “I was so afraid that I would never see you again.”

“Never going to happen, honey. You agreed to marry us, remember? It’s kind of hard to get married without a bride.” Royce chuckled. “Now, we just need to find us a preacher.”

“Parson Jones!” Nyssa suddenly cried out as she pushed herself away from them and ran into the small wooden building.

Lucas, Royce, and Ian ran in after her. They came to a stop when they spotted Parson Jones. He sat in a chair at a rickety old table, while Albert Dupre sat next to him. The two men were swapping a jug of moonshine back and forth between them.

“Albert?” Royce asked in confusion. “Parson Jones?”

“Royce, my boy, how are you? I hear you and your brothers are going to marry my Nyssa. That true, boy?” Albert asked as he looked up at him.

Royce nodded his head in a daze. “Yes, sir.”

“Well, then, no time like the present.” Albert chuckled as he gestured towards the parson. “If we can dig us up some witnesses, then we have everyone we need...the grooms, the bride, and the parson. I, of course, will be giving the bride away.”

Royce glanced over at his brothers for help, but they seemed to be as dazed as he was. Looking towards Nyssa for assistance, Royce was surprised to see a slight blush fill her cheeks. “How do you feel about this, Nyssa?”

Nyssa’s blush increased as she shrugged her shoulders. “I don’t care where or when we get married, as long as we get married. I don’t want to go through something like this again. If I’m married, men like Michael—oh my God, Michael,” Nyssa cried out as she ran towards the door.

Royce, Lucas, and Ian were right behind her. The site that met them stunned them all. The wind had calmed down, but the small cyclones Nyssa had created had carried the men high up into the trees and hung them upside down. Their feet were caught up in the tree branches as they hung there, unable to free themselves.

John, Thomas, and Jack, as well as several other men, stood under the tree looking up at the three dangling men. Nyssa would have been embarrassed if she hadn’t overheard a small chuckle come from one of the men.

“Well, that will teach them not to piss off a Dupre woman. Dumbasses!”

“Uh, Nyssa, do you think you could let them down?” John asked as he looked over at her.

Nyssa could feel the blush that had filled her face moments before rush back as she waved her hands in the air and the three men in the tree fell down to the ground with a loud thud and a few screams.

As she watched Michael sit up and start to struggle as two men tried to tie his hands together, Nyssa felt anger overtake her again.

Before the men could get his hands tied, Nyssa waved her hands again, and Michael lifted into the air.

Nyssa waved her hands again, and Michael's body twirled around until he was hanging upside down several feet off the ground. Nyssa walked over until she stood before him, his face level with hers.

"Why, Michael? Why did you do all of this? Why kidnap me and try to force me to marry you? I love Lucas, Royce, and Ian. Not you," she said quietly.

There was almost complete silence in the small yard as Michael glared at Nyssa, the hatred clear to see in his eyes. "Love? What the hell does marriage have to do with love? I didn't want your love, Nyssa."

"Then what did you want?"

"A warm body!" Michael yelled as he reached for Nyssa.

"Uh, uh, uh," Nyssa admonished as she waved her hands and Michael's body twirled in a circle. "That's not very nice, Michael."

"Okay, okay," Michael cried out as he came to a stop.

"Don't do it again, or hanging upside down will be the least of your problems."

"Alright, alright, I won't do it again," Michael swore.

"Now, tell me why you kidnapped me and tried to force me to marry you," Nyssa demanded as she crossed her arms over her chest.

"I needed the money."

"What money? I don't have any money," Nyssa replied.

"Yes, you do. You're father left you his shares in your grandfather's business, and over the last several years, someone has been quietly buying up shares. They now control over 51 percent of the company."

"And? What does that have to do with me?"

"Edward was able to find out that all of the shares have been purchased in your name. If I married you, I would have control of the company," Michael finished.

“What the hell are you talking about? I don’t own any shares of anything,” Nyssa said.

“Yes, Nyssa, you do,” Albert said quietly as he stepped forward. “Over the last several years, I’ve been buying up the stock in your grandfather’s company and putting it into your name.”

“Why on earth would you do that?” Nyssa asked.

“I can’t prove it, but I believe that Edward Williams had something to do with your parents’ disappearance. I do know he was the reason your parents left Applegate Valley so suddenly, and I wanted to make Edward pay for what he’s done.”

“What do you mean?”

“Edward and Frances came here from Boston a few weeks before your parents were set to get married. From what your father told me, Edward threatened to harm Jolene if your father didn’t leave her and go back to Boston.”

“Oh my God, are you serious?”

Albert nodded. “At first, he was prepared to do that to protect your mother, but she convinced him to stay and fight for what they had together, especially when they had a child on the way. So, in the middle of the night, they left and disappeared.”

“Can you prove any of this, Albert?” Lucas asked.

“No, but I do know that Edward had bounty hunters looking for Nyssa’s father. They’ve come to the valley several times over the years,” Albert replied.

“You mean before my parents died?” Nyssa asked hesitantly.

Albert shook his head. “Since the day they disappeared.”

“But why would they come here after my parents died? They knew I was in an orphanage. They knew where to find me. Until I came to see you, I’ve never set foot in this valley.”

“Uh, that’s not exactly true, Nyssa,” Albert said. “You were born in this valley just as every Dupre has been for the last two hundred years. Your parents came back so that your mother could give birth to

you here in Applegate Valley. They left again when you were just a couple of weeks old.”

“Why did they leave? Why not stay here?” Lucas asked, which was a good thing because Nyssa was too stunned to do anything but stare at Albert in shock. “We could have protected them here in the valley.”

Albert shook his head again. “They didn’t want to draw attention to the others in the valley. Mind you, I didn’t agree with it, but I understood it. They did what they thought was best for everyone.”

“That didn’t save them, though, did it? They still died,” Nyssa cried.

“I’m not totally convinced that they’re dead, Nyssa,” Albert said. “While I heard about the carriage accident through friends, I’ve been unable to find their graves or anyone who witnessed their accident. The only thing I do know is that an old washerwoman dropped you off at that orphanage and told them that your parents died in a carriage accident.”

Nyssa opened her mouth to say something, but no words would come out. She closed her mouth then opened it again, but still, she couldn’t form any words. She was too shocked by what her great-grandfather had said.

“Albert, if you know something—” Lucas began.

“It’s nothing I can put my finger on directly. Just a theory, really. Oh hell, maybe it’s just an old man’s wishes, but I truly don’t think they’re dead. I believe that they’re in hiding and have been for years.”

“You’re—you’re saying that—” Nyssa stammered.

Albert nodded his head. “I believe that your parents are alive.”

Chapter 10

Ian tucked the covers around Nyssa's shoulders, then leaned down to kiss her gently on the forehead. "Get some rest, honey. Lucas, Royce, and I will be right down the hall if you need us, okay?"

When Nyssa didn't answer him, Ian stood up and walked towards the door. He hadn't expected her to answer him anyway. She was still in shock over hearing that her parents might still be alive.

It wasn't every day that someone heard that their parents might still be alive after twenty years of thinking they were dead. Anyone would be in shock. He just wished the anguished look would leave her eyes.

"Ian?"

Ian turned quickly before he reached the door and walked back over to sit on the bed next to Nyssa. "Yeah, honey?"

"Stay with me?" she asked in a hushed tone.

"Always," Ian said as he leaned over to pull his boots off. He set them beside the bed and turned around to lie down next to Nyssa. As gently as he could, Ian wrapped his arm around Nyssa and pulled her body next to his.

"I'm cold, Ian," Nyssa whispered.

"Okay, honey, I'll warm you up." Ian sat up and unbuttoned his shirt. He dropped it on top of his boots and reached for the buttons of his pants. After he pushed them down his legs, he dropped them on top of his shirt.

Ian pulled back the quilt covering Nyssa and climbed beneath it. He wrapped his arms around her again and pulled her next to his body

as he ran his hands up and down her back. He felt a little better when he heard Nyssa sigh and snuggle into his body.

“Is this better, honey?”

“It would be better if I had someone to warm my backside as well.” Nyssa giggled.

Ian couldn't help but chuckle at Nyssa's comment. He opened his mouth and yelled out for his brothers. “Lucas, Royce. Get your asses in here!”

Moments later, he heard the thud of feet running down the hallway, and the door slammed open. He looked up to see Lucas and Royce standing in the doorway, worried looks on both of their faces.

“Nyssa's cold.”

Seemed that was all he needed to say. Without a word spoken between them, Lucas and Royce shut the bedroom door and quickly stripped off their clothes and climbed into bed with them.

They rolled Nyssa onto her back. Royce snuggled up to Nyssa's on one side and wrapped his arms around her as much as he could without dislodging Ian. Lucas climbed in between Nyssa's legs and settled down with his head between her breasts.

Ian had just started to doze off when Nyssa suddenly rolled over to straddle him. She settled with a leg on either side of his body. The apex of her thighs nestled against his instantly interested cock. Her hands rested on either side of his head as she stared down at him.

Without saying a word, Nyssa began to move her body against Ian's. Her silky folds slid against Ian's hardening cock with each movement of her body. “Ian,” Nyssa said as she stared down at him. “I need Ian.”

Nyssa felt Ian lift her up by her hips. The next time that she moved down, she felt Ian's throbbing cock slide against her tender folds before sinking deeply inside of her. As Ian filled her to the brim, Nyssa moaned out her delight.

She felt someone grab her hips and slowly stroke their hands down until they palmed her ass. Looking back over her shoulder,

Nyssa giggled at the hungry look in his eyes. “Want something, Royce?” she whispered as she wiggled her hips.

She laughed again when Royce let out a low growl and crawled between Ian’s legs to kneel behind her. She felt Royce’s fingers move against her, pushing into her tight entrance to ready her for his much larger size.

Nyssa turned to look back down at Ian as she moved her hips again. She pushed down on Ian’s cock, then lifted back and impaled herself on Royce’s fingers, over and over again until she started to become overwhelmed with pleasure.

Just when she thought she was reaching for the stars, Nyssa cried out as Royce pulled his fingers from her ass and quickly replaced them with his cock. She held her breath as he slowly sank into her, filling her to the brim.

A soft noise beside her had Nyssa turning her head to see Lucas lying on the bed next to her. His hand wrapped around his hard cock and his eyes on Nyssa, he swiftly stroked himself. Nyssa laughed as she watched him watching her.

“Like what you see, Lucas?” she murmured to him. “Do you like seeing your brothers push their hard cocks into me? Do you like watching Ian sink his large cock into me? Do you like knowing that Royce is fucking my ass with his cock?”

Nyssa could tell by the way that Lucas’s eyes darkened until they were almost black that he did enjoy watching his brothers fuck her. She could also tell from the way that Royce’s hands tightened on her hips that her words were affecting him as well.

“Fuck me harder, Royce,” Nyssa demanded. “Lucas needs to see you fuck me harder.”

Royce seemed all too happy to oblige as he thrust into Nyssa faster. Nyssa didn’t need to ask Ian to fuck her harder. Every time Royce pulled back, Ian pushed in. When Ian pulled out, Royce pushed in.

Nyssa would have marveled at the expert way that Royce and Ian seemed to work if Lucas hadn't gotten to his knees at that point and pushed his hard cock against her cheek, demanding attention.

A small smile across her lips, Nyssa looked up at Lucas through her eyelashes. "Something you want, Lucas?"

"Nyssa," Lucas growled as he grabbed a large handful of her hair and pulled her face towards his throbbing dick.

Nyssa giggled. "You want me to suck your dick, Lucas? Is that what you want? My tongue running over that nice thick head? My lips wrapped around that big hard cock? Is that what you want, Lucas? You want me to suck your cock while Ian and Royce fuck me?"

Under normal circumstances, Nyssa would have been horrified at the words coming out of her mouth. She sounded worse than a sailor on the *Barbary Coast*. But if nothing else, it aroused her men more than anything she had ever seen.

Ian began to let out small groans as his hips moved faster. Royce's hands had tightened on Nyssa's hips to the point she was sure she was going to have bruises as he thrust into her for everything he was worth.

Nyssa opened her mouth and allowed Lucas to push his cock into her mouth. She did exactly what she had talked about and ran her tongue across the head of Lucas's cock, licking up every last drop of pre-cum that pooled there.

As Lucas began pumping himself into her mouth, Nyssa wrapped her lips tightly around his large girth. As her pleasure started to build, Nyssa began to moan. The small vibrations from this soon had Lucas crying out as he filled her mouth with his release.

As soon as Lucas pulled from Nyssa's mouth and collapsed down on the bed beside them, Nyssa started to cry out as her orgasm took her. Her body trembled as she sank down onto Ian's chest.

The sensation created as Ian and Royce continued to thrust into her kept Nyssa's orgasm going until she thought she would pass out

from too much stimulation. She didn't think it would be a bad way to go.

Nyssa pressed her face against Ian's chest when she heard him cry out below her and felt his hot seed fill her as he came. Moments later, Royce followed right behind him. Nyssa felt him thrust into her once more, deeply, as he erupted inside of her.

As Nyssa lay there on Ian's chest, Royce's head pressed between her shoulder blades, she felt a hand gently caress the side of her face. Nyssa opened her eyes and looked over to see that Lucas was watching her, a small twinkle in his eyes.

"Still cold, honey?" he asked.

"No." Nyssa giggled.

"I should hope the hell not," Royce said as he gently pulled himself from Nyssa and got up to go to the bathroom. He was back a few moments later with a clean washcloth for Nyssa. He rolled Nyssa onto her back and quickly cleaned her up before dropping the washcloth on the floor and lying down beside her.

Nyssa welcomed the silence that followed as she snuggled down into the arms of her lovers. While she had needed the sexual release loving them could bring her, the connection she felt when with Lucas, Royce, and Ian far outweighed any physical pleasure she felt.

The last day had been strange. So many changes had taken place that she wasn't quite sure how to process them all. She wasn't even sure that she could, at least, not at this point. The only real thing she knew for sure was that she loved Lucas, Royce, and Ian and she never wanted to leave their sides.

Maybe that was all that mattered. She loved them, and they loved her. The rest would fall into place as it came, when it came. Nyssa was curled up in bed surrounded by the men who loved and protected her, no matter what.

Still, the changes that had occurred were monumental ones. It wasn't like she had decided to just change her chemise for a clean one. The very foundation of everything she knew and believed had

been vastly changed in the last twenty-four hours. Some of it had changed for the good, some of it not so good.

“Lucas? How soon before the circuit court judge arrives to take Edward and Frances away?” Nyssa asked.

“It shouldn’t be more than a couple of weeks at the most. He comes through about every six weeks during his rounds of the area. I sent a telegraph so he should have a marshal with him to escort them back to the federal prison to await trial.”

Nyssa nodded. Edward and Frances were charged with kidnapping. While they hadn’t done the actual kidnapping, they had paid for it, and that meant they were responsible, or so Lucas had told Nyssa. She didn’t really care. She just wanted them gone.

“What about Michael?”

“No, Michael is a different story. It’s obvious that he’s nuts. He keeps talking about some woman who can manipulate air and hang people upside down from trees and create cyclones with her hands.” Lucas chuckled as he shook his head. “No, I think that the judge will agree with me when I recommend that he be placed in a insane asylum. For his own protection, you understand.”

“Oh, of course.” Nyssa laughed. *Served Michael right!*

“So, I hear we hooked ourselves up to a rich woman?” Royce asked as he pushed himself up against the headboard of the bed. He reached down and grabbed Nyssa by her upper arms and pulled her up to lie against him.

Not to be left alone, Ian and Lucas immediately scooted up to cuddle up against her. Lucas lay down on the opposite side from Royce while Ian snuggled in between her legs and laid his head down on her abdomen.

Nyssa reached down and stroked her hand through Ian’s hair as she answered Royce. “Well, from what Grandpa was telling me on the way home, I’m almost as rich as he is. Once Edward and Michael are found guilty of kidnapping and attempted murder, I’ll inherit everything.”

“And what are you planning on doing with all your money? Travel? A trip back east to buy a new wardrobe? A fancy buggy that you can drive around town?” Royce chuckled.

“Actually, I was thinking my husbands might want to start up a cattle ranch. Then I could be considered a cattle baroness.” Nyssa laughed.

“Nyssa, while that sounds like a great idea, and if that’s what you want to do we’d be happy to help, this isn’t our money. It’s your money,” Lucas replied seriously as he looked down at her.

Nyssa raised her hand up to caress the side of Lucas’s face as she smiled at him. “It’s our money.”

“Nyssa, we don’t—” Lucas began.

“I know you don’t, and that’s one of the things I love about all of you, but if we’re going to have a real marriage, there can’t be any mine and yours. There can only be ours. We share everything already. Why not the money too? Besides, what would I do with all of that money by myself?”

“You could travel,” Ian said.

“No, my traveling days are over. I’ve found where I want to settle down and grow some roots. I can’t imagine a more perfect place to live than here in Applegate Valley. Oh, we might travel a bit here and there, but this will always be home.”

Lucas leaned over and kissed Nyssa on the top of her head as he gave her a little hug. “I think that’s a wonderful idea, honey. However, I do have a suggestion as to how you might use your money, besides becoming a cattle baroness, I mean.”

“Oh?” Nyssa asked as she turned her head to look up at him.

“You could hire a Pinkerton agent to find your parents.”

“A Pinkerton agent?”

“Alan Pinkerton started a private security guard and investigation agency several years back now called the Pinkerton Agency. His company is reported to be one of the best around. I hear that he even

foiled a plot to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln in 1861. He might be able to find your parents.”

Nyssa pushed herself up into a sitting position so that she could look back at Lucas. “Do you think he could really find them? They’ve been gone for so long.”

Lucas shrugged his shoulders. “The only way you could know is if you tried. I would certainly be willing to send a telegraph to them and ask one of their agents to come down this way.”

“Would you? I would really like to see my parents again. I want them to know that it’s okay to come home, that they’re safe now,” Nyssa said as tears filled her eyes.

Lucas nodded as he grabbed Nyssa’s arm and pulled her back down to lie between him and Royce. “I’ll send the telegraph in the morning, okay?”

“Thank you, Lucas.” Nyssa sniffled.

“Speaking of your parents, how is Albert? Did Dr. Reynolds get him settled okay?” Ian asked as he tilted his head back to look up at Nyssa.

Nyssa nodded, laughing. “Yeah, the doc stopped by on his way into town while you were all locking Michael up. He said Grandpa is back to his crotchety old self. He’s already complaining about everyone treating him like some old man.”

“Albert may be old, but I have the feeling he plans on being around for several more years.” Ian chuckled as he turned his head and snuggled it back down against Nyssa’s body.

“I’m not complaining. He and I have a lot of catching up to do,” Nyssa replied. She didn’t know how or why, but she had no doubt that she would have many more years with her great-grandfather. Nyssa wasn’t complaining.

“So, Nyssa Dupre, you caught the bad guy, saved your grandfather, became a very rich woman, and found a home in Applegate Valley where your abilities make you normal. What do you plan to do now?”

“Get married!”

Chapter 11

“If I could get everyone’s attention?” Lucas called out as he stood on the steps of the town park gazebo. Once everyone gave him their attention, he smiled over at his bride of one hour as she sat next to Ian and Royce.

“First, I would like to thank everyone for coming today. While I know that Royce, Ian, and I would have married Nyssa in a shanty wearing a gunny sack, our wedding has been one that will live in our memories until the day we pass from this life and go into the next.”

Lucas smiled at Nyssa again as everyone clapped. She looked stunning in her long silk wedding gown. Albert had insisted on having it made in Paris, France and shipped here just for her. He had to admit that once he had seen Nyssa in the cream-colored gown, he had agreed that it was perfect.

The simple gown had a boat neckline that gave just a hint of the ample treasures beneath. Wide straps held the sleeveless dress on Nyssa’s shoulders, and it fell into waves all the way to the ground below the simple bust and waistline.

With her beautiful strawberry blonde hair piled high on her head and the small string of pearls and teardrop earrings that Albert had given her to wear, Nyssa looked more beautiful than any bride he had ever seen. He knew he’d never forget how beautiful she looked today.

Lucas held up a piece of paper in his hands and waved it around for everyone to see. “Now, I had planned on giving my bride a very nice horse that I had picked out for her as my wedding gift, but I think she will like this more.”

“Does that mean I don’t get the horse?” Nyssa called out with a laugh.

“Oh, I still have plans on giving you your horse; however, this may be of more interest to you. It’s a telegraph from the Alan Pinkerton Agency. It states that Mr. Pinkerton has had several agents searching throughout the country for Nyssa’s parents. He heard back from one yesterday.”

Lucas paused to look over at Nyssa. He nodded towards Royce and Ian and watched as they wrapped their arms around her for support. Once he was assured Nyssa was surrounded by those who loved her as much as he did, he looked back down at the paper in his hands.

“Mr. Pinkerton says that Jolene Dupre and Edward Williams have been located living in San Francisco. They are alive and well and happy that their daughter is safe. Mr. Pinkerton also says that Jolene and Edward should be arriving in Applegate Valley sometime in the next two weeks. They’d be here sooner, but it will take that long for them to pack up all of their belongings so that they can move home for good.”

Hearing the silence in the room, Lucas looked up. He wasn’t sure that there was a dry eye in the house. He turned his head to stare over at Nyssa. He smiled at her as he noted the tears that streamed down her face as she cried softly.

“Your mother and father are coming home, honey,” he said to the applause of the entire gathering. He walked down the steps and quickly made his way over to his bride, gathering her in his arms the moment she was released from his brothers’ arms.

“Thank you, Lucas,” Nyssa whispered.

“You’re more than welcome, honey,” Lucas whispered back as he hugged her close.

Nyssa sniffled and wiped the tears from her eyes. “That was the best wedding present you could have given me. But I still want that horse.” She laughed. “Now, I have a wedding present for you.”

Lucas lifted an eyebrow in curiosity as Nyssa turned to face the crowd of people who had gathered for their wedding and reception. He watched her walk to the steps and go up until she reached the top before turning to face the crowd.

“When I came to Applegate Valley, I had no intention of staying. As far as I knew, I was coming here to meet an old man I had been corresponding with, and then I was going to be on my way.”

Nyssa nodded over at Albert. “Turns out that old man had more in store for me than even I could imagine. He made it possible for me to meet my husbands, Lucas, Royce and Ian. He gave me a home and a family when I’ve never really had one.”

Nyssa had to wait while everyone applauded again. Apparently the citizens of Applegate Valley liked a good speech. Finally, when the noise had quieted down, Nyssa smiled over at her great-grandfather.

“Albert also gave me a legacy that I can be proud of. I am a Dupre—”

“Nash!” Lucas, Royce, and Ian called out at the same time.

Nyssa laughed. “And a Nash. But I am also a child of Applegate Valley. I am accepted here when I’ve been persecuted my entire life for being different. Here, I’m darn near normal, even with three husbands.”

She took a deep breath and let it out slowly. “I don’t know if it is because I was raised outside of this valley or just because I like to be different, but there is one legacy that I am having some difficulty with.”

Nyssa was a little nervous at the silence that met her statement. Her news was going to be unusual for this valley, but she had no doubt that it would be welcome along with any other traditions that she broke.

“It has been a longstanding tradition in the founding families to give birth to either one daughter or three sons. No one quite knows

why this is. It's just been that way since this valley was settled. Being who I am, I've decided to change that little tradition."

Nyssa could see the confused looks on everyone's faces. It almost made her laugh. She knew that none of them, with the exception of Dr. Reynolds and Ana, had a clue what she was up to. She did so love surprises.

"Well, as my wedding present to my husbands, I would like to tell them that Dr. Reynolds has confirmed what I already knew. You'd better get that buggy ready for me, because I doubt I will be riding anytime soon. At least, not until after the babies are born."

There was stunned silence in the room, and then everyone started hooting and hollering. Lucas, Royce, and Ian jumped to their feet and started to run in her direction, but Nyssa held up her hand to stop them.

"Wait, I'm not done. While Dr. Reynolds has confirmed that I am pregnant with triplets, they're not boys." Nyssa laughed as Lucas, Royce, and Ian all but stumbled over themselves as they came to a screeching halt. "According to your mother, our triplets are girls. This is my legacy to you."

THE END

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stormy Glenn believes the only thing sexier than a man in cowboy boots is two, or three, men in cowboy boots. She also believes in love at first sight, soul mates, true love, and happy endings.

When she's not being a mother to her six teenagers or cleaning up after her two 70-pound lap puppies, you can usually find her cuddled in bed with a book in her hand or her laptop, creating the next sexy character for her stories.

Stormy welcomes comments from readers. You can find her web site at www.stormyglenn.com



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