

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

Spirit  
Lifter

*Debra Glass*

Naughty  
Nooners

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



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Spirit Lifter

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# ***SPIRIT LIFTER***

**Debra Glass**

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Volkswagen: Volkswagen Aktiengesellschaft

Cougar: Ford Motor Company

## Chapter One

Amy stood in the open doorway to Reed's guesthouse holding the last box of her stuff. Reed found it ironic that his stepsister was on the brink of her romantic life while his had just spiraled down the toilet.

"I hate to leave you like this," she said, shifting the box onto her hip so she could sweep her mass of honey blonde curls out of her face.

"I'll be fine." But in truth, he was anything but fine. His girlfriend, Lane, had packed her bags and left just when he'd thought everything was going great.

*You're not capable of letting anyone in...*

What the hell had she meant by that?

Amy glanced over her shoulder at his thirty-seven-foot Sea Ray hanging in the lift. "Why don't you take your boat out? The sun's about to set. It'd be a nice time for a cruise."

Reed heaved a sigh. The boat *did* need some running time...

"Come on," Amy said. "I have a feeling that's just what you need to get your mind off Lane."

Reed's gaze shifted to Amy's and he studied her blue eyes. Was that knowing hint a hit from his psychic little sister or was she just patronizing him?

They'd been stepsiblings since his mother had married Amy's dad. Reed's own father had skipped out so long ago, Reed didn't have any memory of him other than the time he saw his mom hang up the phone and look wistfully out over the river for a moment before she made the unfeeling announcement, "Well, your father died of a petrified liver out in Arizona."

Reed forced a smile as he shook off the distant memory. "All right, Aim. If it'll make you happy, I'll do it."

Amy's glossy lips stretched into a grin. "Good." Leaning over the box, she gave him a sisterly kiss on the cheek and then she darted up the steep driveway to where her husband, William, waited in their VW van.

True love.

It happened.

Amy had certainly found it.

Shuddering, Reed knew that William would forever make him recall the old plantation house he'd restored—the one in which he'd found a skeleton concealed behind a wall in the cellar. He'd been consumed with the story of the plantation owner's murdered wife and the Native American artist rumored to be her lover. But when William Red Feather's ghost had followed Amy home, Reed had quickly realized he too had been caught up in more than a mystery.

Despite Amy's attempts to shield him from the world of spirits and black magic with which she was all too familiar, Reed had nearly died in that old plantation house. That had been the first time he'd ever seen a ghost—and he hoped the last.

Ghosts...

Even looking at William in the flesh now, and knowing he'd begun his life two centuries prior, dredged up memories of events Reed wished he could forget.

He glanced out over the mesmerizing slate gray waves of the Tennessee River. Amy was right. He did need to get on with his life, and perhaps a cold beer and a slow cruise up to Wilson Dam and back would be just the thing to jumpstart him.

After icing down a six-pack of longnecks and packing them a cooler, he whistled to his three-legged brown Doberman, Tripod, and walked out to the dock.

Tripod eagerly loped down the hill to the pier as Reed hit the switch to lower his boat, *Spirit Lifter*, into the water. The winches groaned under the weight of the big boat.

Reed climbed onto the boat, set his cooler on the deck and unsnapped the protective tarp that covered the helm before tossing it onto the dock. Once the way was cleared, Tripod bounded onto the boat, oblivious to the fact he possessed only one back leg and wasn't supposed to be the agile creature he pretended to be.

As Reed climbed down into the cabin, he couldn't help but remember the last time he'd taken the boat out. Lane had been with him. His gaze drifted toward the master bed nestled in the bow and he tamped down the memories he had of spending sultry Alabama nights on this very boat in Lane's arms.

He flipped the breakers to the generator and turned on the switches to the boat's powerful twin engines. When he punched the CD player, Sarah McLachlan's melodic voice filled his ears. The beautiful music only intensified the empty feeling in his gut. Reed would have tossed the CD overboard but since it was the only one on the boat, he let it play.

"I'm just a glutton for punishment," he said to Tripod, who'd maneuvered the steep steps down into the cabin. After doing his usual sniff search of the galley and captain's quarters, the dog followed Reed back up to the helm.

Reed put the key in the ignition and then punched the engine buttons. *Spirit Lifter* rumbled to life and Tripod barked triumphantly as Reed backed the big cruiser out of the slip and into the river.

Certain no barges or other boats were in his path, Reed cracked open a beer and sat back to enjoy the slow ride up Wilson Lake while Tripod darted back and forth across the back deck, huffing excitedly at the water churned up by the engines.

The Marriott Renaissance Tower loomed beyond the broad expanse of Wilson Dam and Reed avoided thinking about taking Lane to the sky-high rotating restaurant there to enjoy the view and cocktails.

How could he ever get over her when everything reminded him of her? Her strawberry-colored hair. The scent of her perfume. Her pale, freckled skin...

When he'd realized there was a rift between them, he'd tried to talk to her. He'd wanted to work things out.

But she'd said it was too late.

The setting sun cast a rosy glow across the sky that seemed to seep into the water. As Reed sipped his beer, he watched, amazed at how quickly the sun disappeared behind the turning leaves of the trees.

The beauty of this place always left him in awe of the universe and for the first time in days, a sense of peace swept over him.

Reed steered the boat parallel to the nearly mile-long dam, gazing through the spillways at the bass fishermen casting lines among the rocks more than a hundred feet below on the other side. In the 1930s, the Tennessee Valley Authority had dammed the mighty Tennessee River at intervals, creating one of the country's most widely trafficked waterways. The area of the river Reed lived on was known as Wilson Lake. A massive body of water, Wilson Lake boasted a serene expanse of pricey and much sought after properties.

After skirting the length of the massive dam, Reed turned the boat and headed back in the direction he'd come, this time along the north shore of the river.

The shore was much steeper on this side, sprinkled with deep, wide, shadowy coves. Three or four moneyed men in the quaint city of Florence, Alabama, owned most of this land and much of it was still wooded and wild.

Tripod suddenly let out a sharp bark.

"What's up, boy?" Reed asked, looking back to see his dog's piercing gaze trained on one of the coves.

Reed squinted and stared into the evening shadows. The last rays of sun glinted off an object flailing in the water.

A person?



"Holy shit!" Reed exclaimed and bumped up the throttle as he carefully but quickly navigated into the cove.

Tripod barked incessantly and as *Spirit Lifter* approached, Reed saw that a woman was struggling to stay afloat in the murky water.

After killing the engines, he dove into the river and swam as hard as he could toward her. Just as she slipped beneath the surface, he caught her and hauled her back up, holding her around the chest as he worked his way back to the boat.

"Hang on!" he said breathlessly as he tried to hold her afloat with one hand and work the ladder loose with the other.

Finally, it splashed into the water, narrowly missing Reed's head. Finding a toehold, he urged the petite woman onto the deck. She sprawled, coughing and sputtering.

At least she was breathing.

Reed climbed onto the deck and sat to catch his breath. "Are you okay?" he asked.

She managed a nod.

The eerie sense that something wasn't right pervaded Reed. His gaze scanned the recesses of the broad inlet. No one would have swum the several yards it took to reach the middle—in a dress.

She didn't look much over thirty and although she wasn't wearing shoes, a silver heart pendant dangled around her neck.

Her thin cotton dress clung to her body, accentuating her curves in a way that drew Reed's attention to her sexy good looks.

"You would have drowned if I hadn't come along," Reed said, the grave thought stunning him.

The woman pushed herself up and sat.

Reed jerked off his sopping tennis shoes and tossed them onto the passenger deck. "How'd you get way out there anyway?"

She shrugged but glanced nervously back at the cove.

She didn't look drunk or high. Still, something didn't add up. And when she rubbed her ankle, Reed noticed an angry red mark – as if she'd been bound.

Panic surged.

Had someone tried to kill her?

It was too dark to see anyone on shore but Reed knew he'd better hightail it out of the cove before this woman's would-be assailant returned to make sure the job was done.

"Is somebody trying to kill you?" Reed asked pointedly.

Her astonished gaze told him he was right.

At once, Reed scooped her up off the deck and ushered her into the cockpit. He pulled the throttle back and planed the boat out of the inlet toward the middle of the lake.

"What happened to you?" he asked once they were safely well away from the shadowy cove.

"I-I—" she stammered, rubbing her temples. "I'm just glad you came along when you did."

"You're shivering," Reed said before he darted down into the cabin to get a beach towel.

When he returned, she looked up at him with gratitude shining in her eyes. He wrapped the towel around her. "There. That's better."

Tripod stared. He didn't sniff. He didn't try to figure her out. He didn't even bark anymore. He just stared.

"I'm Reed Severin." He sat beside her on the seat.

"I'm Cora," she said and then pressed her bottom lip between her teeth in thought.

Jesus, what had happened to this woman?

He reached into the cooler, retrieved a beer and unscrewed the top before handing it to her. "Maybe this will help."

"Thanks," she said and took a long drink.

Her long, dark hair hung in wet strands around her face and with the thick towel gathered up around her neck, she looked more like a lost little girl than the voluptuous woman she clearly was.

"We need to get you to a hospital," he said.

"No!" she said, seizing his arm.

Reed looked down at her pale hand on his tanned arm and then back up into her eyes.

"Please don't," she said. "Just let me stay with you awhile."

"Sure," he said against his better judgment. "Sure." He swept her into his arms and tried to warm her by rubbing her vigorously. She was probably in shock more than anything else.

He could practically feel the tension melting out of her body. Brushing his cheek against her wet hair, he breathed in the earthy scent of the river mingled with an utterly feminine perfume. Closing her eyes, she nuzzled her face against his chest and Reed held her, listening to the calming sound of Sarah McLachlan's ethereal voice mingled with the gentle lapping of the waves against the hull of *Spirit Lifter*.

She shifted against him and then raised her head so that she looked up into his eyes. In the pale moonlight, he could see her eyes were a jewel shade of green.

His heart skipped a beat because he suddenly, intuitively knew she was going to ask him to kiss her.

And then she did.

"Kiss me," she uttered, even as the fingers of her free hand entwined in his damp hair to draw his head downward.

All rational thought fled as their lips touched, tentatively at first and then he pressed his mouth to hers, his tongue finding its way through the tiny opening she left him.

His cock surged against the confines of his drenched jeans and her hand moved downward, finding him hard. She moaned into his mouth and moved restlessly against him.

Dragging her lips from his, she looked breathlessly into his eyes. "Fuck me, Reed. I need you."

## Chapter Two

A voice in the back of Reed's head whispered that he was in danger but his body quickly squelched any reticence. So much frustration and hurt and confusion had built up in him since Lane had left, he was incapable of coherent thought.

"Please," Cora whispered, her full lips forming a luscious pout that made Reed want to kiss her again.

"I've gotta get the boat tied up first," Reed said, pushing up the throttle to speed toward his pier.

Tripod lay uncharacteristically quiet, still staring warily at Cora as Reed pulled the boat alongside his pier and then tossed the bumpers over before tying *Spirit Lifter* to the moorings.

He'd hoped common sense would prevail during his tasks and that he'd do the right thing by driving Cora straight to the hospital—but it did not.

Instead, he grabbed two more beers in one hand he took Cora by the other to lead her down into the luxurious cabin.

At one time, Reed had considered renting out his house on the lake and simply living on the *Spirit Lifter*. The cabin and master stateroom could comfortably sleep up to eight people and, with the boat's well-appointed galley, two televisions, shower, head and spacious master bedroom, Reed could have easily resided on it.

He watched with pride as Cora's gaze scanned the kitchen area and then the sumptuous leather sofa that could be converted into a bed for two.

"Nice boat," she mused aloud.

"It's all I'd ever need," Reed said, drawing her into his arms. In the light, he could see just how beautiful she really was. Creamy skin. Dark, wavy hair that hung well past her shoulders. Small breasts just the perfect size and shape for nuzzling.

Immediately, she undid his belt and then unfastened his jeans. Reed inhaled sharply as she reached down his pants and took his turgid cock in her hand.

Her eyes widened momentarily and then she dropped to her knees, pulling and tugging his jeans down his legs. Without hesitation, she engulfed his cock between her lips, sucking frantically as if she couldn't get enough of him.

The rocking of the boat forced Reed to plant a hand on the low ceiling of the cabin. Looking down, he watched the woman he'd rescued from certain death only moments ago as she sucked his cock. The sight was so erotic all he could think about was how good it felt and how much he wanted to feel her from the inside out.

"Damn, baby," he muttered as she flicked her tongue along the sensitive underside and then around the head.

Her lashes fluttered open and she tilted her head back just far enough to gaze up at him as she lolled her tongue around his shaft.

Too long...

It'd been too damn long.

She took her beer and drank half the bottle before setting it down and going back to sucking him. Her mouth was cool but heated up fast as she worked, the powerful muscles in her jaw and throat tugging him sensuously with rhythmic ferocity.

Reed guzzled his own beer, rocking his hips toward her mouth, fighting the urge to come down this sexy stranger's throat. He'd never done this kind of thing with a girl he didn't know. He wasn't the kind of guy who racked up one-night stands.

But this was different. *She* was different.

Intuitively, he sensed Cora's mutual erotic need. It was as if they shared some sort of intertwined sexual destiny.

And now it was her turn.

After raking a strand of hair off her forehead, he shifted his hips. She looked at him, anticipation apparent in her eyes.

"Your turn," he said huskily as he coaxed her onto the sofa.

The way her eyes drank him in made him feel as if he were suddenly the only man in the world as he stripped off his wet T-shirt and kicked his jeans and boxers off. "Let's get you out of those wet clothes," he told her as he helped her wriggle her dress up and over her head.

No bra.

Reed's breath caught.

Her little cotton panties with flowers made him ache to see the prize inside. Dropping to his knees, he worked his fingers under the elastic band and Cora lifted her hips as he pulled them down and off.

Her thatch had been neatly trimmed into the perfect little landing strip but her pussy lips were as smooth as her creamy thighs. Reed grabbed his own cock and worked it as he lowered his lips to one diamond-hard nipple.

Her sudden intake of breath told Reed he was doing everything right. After laving her other breast, he kissed his way down her slender torso before rocking back just far enough to soak up the sight of her hot pink clit peeping from between the plump bare folds.

He suddenly wanted to know everything about Cora, but right now his body was urging him to spread her soft thighs. The folds of her pussy parted like a piece of succulent fruit, revealing the glistening, delectable center.

Reed noticed his hand was trembling as his palm skimmed her thigh. He brushed her clit with the pad of his thumb and she jolted.

"Eat me," she whispered, spreading her legs even wider. "Eat my pussy, Reed."

Feeling intoxicated even though he'd only drunk a couple of beers, Reed shouldered between her legs and breathed in the fragrance of sweet, sexy pussy. He pressed a kiss to the center. Cora arched and gasped.

Eager to please her, Reed teased the tip of his tongue through the folds, flicking her clit and then tickling down to her tasty opening. Her body reacted and she squirmed, holding his head, trying to pull him closer, trying to shift so that his mouth focused on her clit.

Just the encouragement he wanted...

He loved a woman who wasn't afraid to let a man know how to please her.

Desire thrumming through his veins, he fastened his mouth on the hardening bud, suckling, tantalizing, opening his lips to blow hot breath on her and then closing to nibble and tickle.

When he pushed his index finger into her hot channel, she cried out, bucking toward him. Her sheath clenched and Reed continued his pleasurable assault, knowing she was on the edge.

And then a low moan escaped her lips, her body went rigid and her fingers dug into his hair. "Oh God, yes! Oh Reed..."

Reed's heart was pounding when she finally went limp. Lifting his head, he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "Do you want to...? I have condoms."

A slow smile claimed her lush mouth and that was all the incentive Reed needed to take her hand and guide her into the captain's quarters. The circular bed with its headboard framed with mirrors took up the entire bow of the boat—and there was plenty of room for hot sex.

Reed pulled open a drawer and withdrew a couple of condoms. He didn't need the lube. She was already good and wet.

"This is crazy," she muttered.



Disappointment flooded him but he was ever the gentleman with a woman and her sexuality. "Do you want to stop?"

Her gaze warmed as it moved down his body and lifted to his eyes once more. "No. I want this. I need to feel you inside me."

Reed knew exactly how she felt. The tension melted out of him as he ripped open the condom package. Together they climbed onto the bed and when Reed lay on his back, Cora took the condom from him and rolled it onto his erection.

The boat rocked gently as she straddled him and then reached between them to insert his cock head into her cunt. Her lashes fluttered shut as she sighed and sank onto his shaft.

She was so beautiful and her body felt so damn good, all Reed could do was watch her as she began to move, slowly at first and then faster and faster until groin slapped groin.

He gripped her hips and guided her as her pace continued to increase. Heat radiated from her pussy and, even through the condom, he could feel the tight suction. Planting her hands on either side of his head, she leaned forward, arching, still riding him, her hair sweeping down to tickle his nose and chin as she fucked him.

Reed watched her face. Her eyes turned a dark jade and her breaths came in short, sharp pants through her full lips. Suddenly, her hips locked and instead of riding him, she began to grind, rubbing her clit furiously against him.

Her breaths were replaced with passion-filled whimpers and Reed instinctively knew Cora was about to come.

"Come for me, baby," he cooed, his body reacting of its own volition.

Her pussy tightened around him and she went rigid as a low moan escaped her lips. Reed gripped her hips, arching into her, pumping—and then, "Oh fuck...I'm coming!"

Something electric gathered in his scrotum and then exploded outward through his body until he was unaware of anything except Cora's spasms, milking his cock of every last drop he had to offer. His spine bowed—but when he fell back on the bed and opened his eyes, Cora was gone.

Vanished.

Disappeared.

"What the —" Reed sat up so fast the blood rushed out of his head. "Cora?"

Where could she have gone so quickly?

His gaze moved down his own body to where his cock still stood at attention, the glistening, cum-filled condom clinging stubbornly to the shaft.

As he crawled off the bed, he discarded the condom in a nearby wastebasket. "Cora!" he called as he moved through the cabin.

Tripod lay in view on the deck, looking like a canine version of the Sphinx.

"Did you see Cora?" Reed asked the dog as if Tripod could answer.

The Doberman cocked his head to the side.

Still naked, Reed climbed up the steps to the helm and looked out over the desolate boat. He peered into the darkness, craning to see up the hill toward his house.

A cold chill crawled up his spine. What if she'd fallen in?

Reed clambered to the edge of the boat and squinted as his gaze swept the water. For the most part, it was shallow enough for a person to stand here. "Cora!" he called but there was only the sound of the waves gently lapping the boat and the low rumble of a barge slicing through the water a half-mile out, in the middle of Wilson Lake.

Reed scratched his head. A tumult of sensation roiled in his body. Bewilderment, sexual satisfaction, fear—all vying for prominence.

He considered calling the police. Someone had definitely tried to hurt that woman.

After climbing back down into the cabin, he found his discarded clothes and pulled on his jeans. He could put *Spirit Lifter* back into the boatlift later. Right now he had to make a phone call.

Tripod followed him onto the dock and then up the hill to his house. When he went inside the television was blaring. Empty beer bottles and chip bags littered the room and with fresh eyes, he saw how Lane's leaving had really hit him hard.

Blowing out a sigh, he reached for the phone—but the woman's image on the TV screen caught his attention.

His blood ran cold.

It was Cora.

A newswoman sympathetically reported, "The Florence woman whose body was discovered in the Tennessee River yesterday has been identified as Cora Miller. As of yet, the death is being investigated as a suicide."

Reed swallowed thickly—still tasting a ghost's kiss on his lips.

\* \* \* \* \*

Reed tossed his cell phone across the room. Repeated attempts to call his psychic sister had only frustrated him. No doubt, she was already in the Caribbean, where she and William had gone to meet Amy's friend, Gwen. She'd warned him she wouldn't have any cell service.

A chill crawled up his spine. He'd had sex with a beautiful, sexy, alluring...*ghost!*

How could his life ever be normal again after this?

The newscaster had said the death was being investigated as a suicide... An ugly image of the rope burn on Cora's ankle assailed him.

She'd been murdered. Reed knew it in his gut. But what could he do about it? Call the cops? They'd just think he was a loony.

He inhaled.

There was only one thing to do. He had to go back to the spot where he'd fished her out of the water. He had to find her again. And he had to find out who'd killed her.

After sprinting down the hill, he climbed onto *Spirit Lifter* and untied the lines. Tripod leaped and made an ugly three-legged landing on the deck. Claws scrambling, he recovered and eagerly joined Reed at the helm.

Heart hammering, Reed fired up the twin engines and planed out as he crossed Wilson Lake.

As well as he knew the waters around his home, it was difficult in the dark to tell one cove from another. He switched on the spotlight and turned the knob, directing the powerful beam across the murky recesses of the inlets.

Nothing.

This was crazy. He'd imagined it all. There was no ghost.

Then the hair on the back of his neck prickled.

"Reed?"

Reed whirled to find Cora, wet and dripping, standing on *Spirit Lifter's* deck.

He gulped. Looking at her now, he wondered why he hadn't noticed it before. Even in the dark, there was an ethereal glow about her and an almost watercolor paleness to her face, her clothes, her hair.

Reed's cock stirred in his jeans and he fought the urge to sweep her into his arms and carry her down into the cabin again—despite the fact he knew she should not be standing there.

And then his heart turned over. Hard.

Did Cora know she was dead?

"You came back for me," she said.

He nodded as he moved toward her, watching her in wary fascination. "Why'd you leave?"

Biting her bottom lip, she glanced toward the cove. "I needed you to know what I am."

Chills consumed Reed as he approached her. This close, he could clearly see now that she was not a flesh and blood woman—that she was, indeed, a ghost.

He swallowed thickly and then, tentatively, lifted his hand to touch her face. Cool electricity radiated from her being but when his hand made contact, he felt soft, dewy skin.

Cora closed her eyes and pressed her cheek more fully into his palm.

Reed shook.

"You didn't kill yourself." It was a statement, not a question.

"No," she whispered, her lashes sweeping open as her gaze lifted to his.

"You want me to tell the cops who killed you?" Reed asked.

Cora nodded.

Reed searched her eyes and was overcome with the sensation that there was something far more to why Cora's spirit had found him. "Why me?"

The hint of a smile tugged at her lips as she brushed her fingertips over his heart. "Because you let me in, Reed."

As she spoke, she took the one step that closed the distance between them. Her cool fingers moved up his back and threaded into the hair at the nape of his neck. The reality that she was a ghost fled and Reed succumbed to the desire raging in his body.

Dragging her against him, Reed sought her mouth with his, his tongue pushing between her open lips. He kissed her with a need that surprised him and when she rocked her hips against his body, he responded.

A wild mix of relief and desire surged as she undid his jeans and reached inside to take his pulsating cock in her hand. He inhaled through his teeth, his hands moving over her body, lingering in turn to caress her shoulders, slender waist, full breasts and hips.

"I want to fuck you so bad, it hurts," he said huskily, cupping her warm pussy through her wet dress.

Her passion-clouded gaze found his again and that was all the impetus he needed to haul her into his arms and drag her down to the deck. She cried out as he pushed up her skirt, jerked her panties down her legs and plunged his hard cock into her tight, wet sheath.

This time, there was no tenderness.

There was only need and desire and something else Reed could not venture to name.

Cradling her head in one hand and sliding the other under the soft curve of Cora's ass, Reed surged into her again and again.

Cora groaned and entwined her arms and legs around him, fighting him, holding him, encouraging him and welcoming the onslaught all at the same time.

What was it about her? Why had all his barriers melted away in the arms of this spirit who was more alive than any mortal woman with whom Reed had ever been?

Breathlessly, he slowed his pace, lifting off her just far enough to look into her eyes.

"I wish I'd known you when I was alive," she whispered.

He brushed his lips against hers, drawing her bottom lip between his to suck it gently. "Stay with me," he said, slanting his head to trace the necklace she wore with kisses.

"I can't," she said. "Not after tonight. You have your life and...I know there's more for me beyond this...this physical life."

Reed shifted so that his cock penetrated her to the hilt. Her body rose with a deep breath of bliss and then her lips parted as he moved sensuously against her clit.

"Don't stop," she gasped. Her legs flew open wider. Her palms gripped his buttocks and she arched upward. "Don't stop," she mewled again.

On the verge of ecstasy, she was beautiful, glowing, her face consumed with pleasure. She was about to come and Reed struggled to maintain his steady, slow grind. Every fiber of his being urged him to pin her to the deck and pummel her pussy until she screamed and until he found release—but he didn't.

This was for Cora. This was for her.

Intuitively, Reed knew this was the last time Cora would know physical pleasure. The revelation stunned and flooded with him a sense of empathy he did not, until now, know he possessed.

Her breath left her lungs in a rush and then she tensed. He felt her spasms from the inside out, felt her nails dig into his backside and the muscles in her legs clamp down around him.

Just the thought that he had given her this pleasure sent him spiraling within and then exploding.

This time, he clung to her.

He wasn't about to let her go.

Not yet.

His lips claimed hers while his cock still pulsated in her warm sheath from his intense orgasm. A whimper escaped her mouth and he lifted his head and gazed into her eyes.

"I don't have much longer," she said.

Reed swallowed. His gut tightened. "What do I need to know? Tell me what to do, Cora."

"My employer, Terri Lowe, hired a man to kill me," she said as she caressed Reed's jaw.

Reed squeezed his eyes shut and fought the lump that welled his throat.

Cora continued. "She'd been stealing money she won for her clients for years and when I caught it on the books and threatened to report her, she hired a man to...to make me disappear."

"She had you killed to keep from getting disbarred?" Reed was incredulous.

Cora nodded "I need you to tell the police you saw his car parked at the hill at the top of the cove."

Reed nodded as Cora briefly described the car

"It was a grayish blue, eighties model Cougar with a Blount County tag. I'm sure there's DNA evidence," she said. "And Reed, Terri left a paper trail. It won't be hard for the cops to prove."

"I won't rest until they're both in jail," Reed said, meaning it.

"Thank you, Reed." A tear seeped out of the corner of Cora's eye and trailed down, disappearing into her hairline. Arching her neck, she lifted her chin to kiss him sweetly. "I will see you again one day."

"When?"

"Many years from now," she said and smiled—before light consumed her into nothingness.

Shaken, Reed sat and blinked.

Now everything seemed suddenly clear. He understood why Lane had told him he did not possess the ability to let anyone in.

He knew what had just happened with Cora should have left him terrified—but it did not. Instead, he felt as if he would burst from the doubtless knowledge she was all right on The Other Side.

From the knowledge he would, one day, see her again.

He glanced at Tripod who lay at the helm. The dog snorted and then his brown-eyed gaze fixed curiously on the deck. Reed followed the dog's gaze to discover Cora's



heart pendant. A little smile tugged at his mouth. Scooping it into his hand, he lifted it to his lips and pressed a kiss to the cold silver.

He blew out a sigh and then stood. The boat had floated toward Wilson Dam but still, it was only a short cruise back to his house where he intended to make two phone calls.

The first one would be to the Florence Police Department.

The second would be to Lane.

## **About the Author**

Debra Glass' previous experience as a medium inspired her interest in writing Alabama ghost stories, although she's also got a passion for spine-tingling paranormal romance. Since 2002, Debra has written several books on regional folklore and has had numerous articles published in Fate Magazine and various Civil War magazines.

Now she's writing steamy erotic romance and dabbling in the paranormal with her Phantom Lovers series which features passionate and sexy ghosts who are guaranteed to keep you up at night!

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

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