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Sex Symphony

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Madison Blake

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Juilliard: Juilliard School

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Chapter One

The closed door shut out the cacophony of shouts from reporters and rabid fans.

Running a hand through his hair, Kyle Montgomery eased his body onto the soft cushions of the sofa in his hotel suite and breathed a huge sigh of relief. He rolled his head back onto the headrest and closed his eyes.

Thank God for his personal team of bodyguards and the hotel's security people. He didn't know how he would've been able to escape unscathed otherwise. He certainly hadn't expected the crush of people to turn up at the press conference. After all, he was a concert violinist, not some punk singer or boy band. Who'd have thought teenage girls would go for classical music? Certainly not him.

The soft shuffling of feet warned him that someone approached.

"Tired?" Firm, masculine fingers dug into the knotted muscles of his shoulders. Even through his shirt, he could already feel the tension lessening as Grant worked his magic hands on his body.

"Remind me to tell my secretary not to schedule a press conference right before the performance. I didn't know what I was thinking when I agreed to this one." Kyle sighed in bliss and rolled his head forward to allow Grant more access to the knotted muscles on his shoulders.

"I noticed you've not been yourself since we arrived last night."

It didn't surprise Kyle that Grant was aware of his edginess. His lover was a very observant person, when not engrossed in his music. "I don't understand it either. No matter what I do, there's this low buzz of nervous energy running through me in a never-ending cycle. At first, I thought it was just nerves for the performance tonight but I think it's more than that - "

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Grant's hands stilled where they cupped the sides of his neck. "Maybe because you're home – for the first time in many years – "

"Home is where you are," Kyle interrupted harshly.

"You know what I mean," Grant said in a quiet voice.

Damn. The tension flowed back into Kyle's body, making previously tense muscles even tenser. He abruptly went to stand but Grant's hands tightened and pressed down onto a hard spot at the base of his neck. "I gotta go prepare -"

"I'm sorry. Relax." Grant's voice was meant to mollify and to soothe but Kyle couldn't get past the sudden anger that sprang up at the mention of the past. Despite his best efforts to keep his mind occupied with inconsequential things, Kyle found his memory walls had weakened and ugly shouting scenes from the past leaked through to remind him that his heart wasn't as hardened as he thought. "Empty your mind... You feel the slight breeze blowing across the calm, blue waters of the lake. You hear the light, chirrupy sounds of the birds, the soft rustle of the leaves from the trees —"

"It's not working," Kyle said through gritted teeth, his whole body more tense than ever. He felt as though he was about to explode. He cursed. "I shouldn't have come, should've left this god-forsaken city out of the tour—"

The light touch of Grant's lips on his nape silenced him. Kyle sat still, his nerves wound so tightly that any movement from him would entail hauling Grant to the carpeted floor and having his wicked way with him. As it was, knowing where Grant was leading was causing his heartbeat to triple in rhythm.

Grant slid his hands down his arms in a sensuous gliding movement and pulled his shirt free from his trousers, slowly, erotically, drawing out the moment as long as he could. The smooth rasp of his shirt against his sensitized skin was arousing Kyle as much as Grant's touch and causing his cock to stir.

A short laugh burst out from him. "Damn. What the hell are you doing, Grant? You're stringing me tighter than I was before you started giving me the massage."

"You may be tense now but you'll be super-relaxed later on."

The heat of Grant's palms against his naked skin was more than he could bear. Grant's flesh burned into his as the other man slid his hands from Kyle's stomach in a slow, excruciating upward journey past his ribs and his chest, before retreating back to take his nipples between two hard fingers. Kyle's body arched involuntarily and a ragged sigh escaped his lips as his nipples were rubbed and pinched and teased. Heat streaked from the taut buds through his entire body and ended at his groin, causing his semi-flaccid cock to harden into awareness.

"I want to kiss you," Grant muttered against his neck.

"What's stopping you—" The rest of Kyle's words were lost as Grant took his lips in an upside-down kiss. Kyle responded with avid eagerness to the kiss, moaning as he welcomed the wet intrusion of his lover's tongue into his mouth. He could hardly believe he'd survived the entire day without even a glimpse of Grant. Much as he needed to practice for tonight's concert, he didn't have to hole himself up for hours on end, did he?

Grant tasted faintly of wine and smelled familiarly of home. Kyle craved the latter the most. When he'd first met Grant three years before, he could never have guessed that he'd associate Grant with home but in fact, Grant was the only home Kyle had known since then and the only home he'd ever need.

Kyle's hands burrowed into Grant's thick hair to pull his head closer as their kiss turned urgent with desperate hunger. Grant's tugs on his nipples caused a kind of painpleasure to coil in his groin but it wasn't enough anymore. He wanted them both naked on the bed. He wanted to feel the hot press of his lover's body against his. He wanted Grant's mouth on his skin, on his cock and he wanted to fuck his lover's tight ass. He wanted —

Rap, rap, rap.

They sprang apart, startled and guilty color stained their cheeks.

Grant ran his hands down his jeans and walked with quick, jerky steps to sit in the armchair. Jumping up from the sofa, Kyle made a huge effort not to stare at the bulge

between Grant's thighs and instead, paced the floor and ran his hand through his hair in a nervous gesture while he tried to regain his breathing. He cursed beneath his breath at the poor timing of whoever it was at the door. His and Grant's relationship wasn't secret but he wasn't about to provide fodder for the public's titillation. No matter how famous he became, his private life was private. Period.

The knock sounded again at the door.

"Come in," he called.

His secretary, Marcia, opened the door a mere crack and slipped inside. He was able to catch a glimpse of the rabid reporters being held back by his security team, who'd formed a human barricade a few feet away. "Kyle, are you all right?" She shuddered. "It's a madhouse out there. I don't recall that the reporters were this tenacious in the other cities you've performed in."

"They weren't his hometown," Grant said succinctly.

Marcia's bright blue eyes widened in surprise. "Oh, now that makes sense." She turned to him. "Sorry, boss, I'd forgotten you were originally from here. If I'd remembered, I would've asked to book a larger venue for -"

"Marcia, were you looking for me for any specific matter?" Kyle cut in. Thank God she hadn't-chosen a bigger place for the conference, that was-or he'd have been facing a stampede earlier. He'd thought he would go unnoticed in a city the size of Los Angeles but apparently, reporters have long memories, especially when it concerned one of the scions of L.A.'s wealthiest families.

His secretary looked taken aback by his brusque tone. "No, I just wanted to make sure you're okay."

Not for the first time, Kyle was reminded of just how different Marcia was from other secretaries. For one, she treated him more like a son who needed mothering than a boss. Maybe her being close to fifty instead of twenty-five was one of the reasons.

"Thank you, I'm fine. Why don't you get some rest before dinner? Things will soon become hectic, especially after the performance."

She nodded. "Fine, you get some rest too. I'll call for room service to serve dinner around...six?"

"Okay. Thanks, Marcia."

He followed her to the door and, as soon as she was out, locked it. He turned around and ran a lazy, admiring gaze over Grant, who was stripping out of his clothes. An impish grin graced Kyle's lips as he decided to tease his lover, though he couldn't help but eye Grant's rampant erection. Heat curled in his belly and tightened his groin. The tension that had lain dormant with Marcia's interruption reared up again and claimed his body. "You might need to play with yourself, Grant, because I was thinking to run through my music one more time before the performance tonight."

Grant shrugged as he folded his clothes and left them in a neat pile on the sofa. "All right, as long as you let me stay in the room and try my best to distract you."

Grant's seeming indifference aroused him more than he cared to admit and his words caused naughty images to dance through Kyle's head, his favorite being the picture of Grant kneeling in between his legs and sucking his aching cock while he played his violin. Desire pulsed through him, hot and heavy. The vision aroused him so much he abruptly decided he wanted to play it through.

"Right." Kyle strode toward the next room, which they'd converted into a place for him to practice for the concert and for Grant to compose his music. They'd called it the music room, for want of a better name. Kyle snatched up his violin, stood in front of the stand which contained the music sheets, though he knew every damn note by heart and started to play. He pretended to be absorbed in the music but all his senses were attuned to Grant's slow arrival into the room and the audible click of the door as it swung shut behind him.

Kyle jumped, startled, when Grant pressed a hot kiss on his exposed neck and it was all he could do to continue playing. Grant pressed against him from behind, his heat searing through the silk of Kyle's button-down shirt. His hands slipped around Kyle's waist and drew him back so that their bodies squashed intimately together.

Kyle's knees almost buckled from the realization that Grant was rubbing his hard cock against Kyle's cloth-covered ass. His fingers pressed the string down so hard on the fingerboard that he feared the string would snap.

"I missed you," Grant whispered in his ear. "This whole day, while I composed, I kept thinking about you and remembering how good we were in bed last night. And remembering that made me so hard I couldn't concentrate. I kept wondering when you'd come back to the suite, when we could kiss and make love again—"

Kyle hit a wrong note.

"Is that the best you can do after a whole day of practicing?" Grant teased, peppering Kyle's throat with small, biting kisses. "Maybe it's from too much practice, in which case, maybe you should put that violin down—"

"And maybe you should shut up and kiss me," Kyle interrupted raggedly. He set the instrument down carefully, then whirled around and ground his mouth down on Grant's, their tongues immediately flicking out to tease and torment the other. He had thought he could withstand Grant's teasing forays on his body but he'd been wrong. One touch and he'd been ready to combust and coupling that with Grant's sexy talk he was a goner.

They kissed like they'd been separated for years instead of hours, with desperation, with urgency, their hands flying all over the other's body, caressing, stroking, gliding, inciting each other to fever-pitch excitement. Soon Kyle lost all his clothes and he uttered a harsh groan against Grant's mouth when the latter held him in his large, capable hand.

Grant rubbed his hand over Kyle's rampant cock with slow, stirring strokes and Kyle could swear he hardened even further. Desire boiled up in him like hot lava, spiking him toward a near explosion. He ached with need. He wanted to bury his cock in Grant's ass, to feel his lover's muscles close around him like a tight glove, squeezing and pushing him toward the edge of insanity.

Kyle pushed away from him. "No. I'll lose it...if you keep that up."

"So lose it." Grant's eyes glowed with molten blue heat, lust making his cheeks ruddy. "How do you want it, in my mouth or ass?"

How the hell had he lucked out with such a generous and considerate lover like Grant?

"Ass."

Grant ran to his music table and rummaged in the drawer. "Here, catch."

"You're well-prepared," Kyle commented wryly, as he put on the condom. His cock jerked at the sight of Grant's ass cheeks, where he knelt on the floor and turned his bottom in the air. Yet by far the most beautiful sight was the reddish pucker of his butt hole. Kyle's hand trembled as he placed the lube into the hole and squeezed.

A moment later, Kyle threw the tube to one side. Following his urge, he leaned down and rubbed his tongue across Grant's butt cheeks before he straightened and, positioning his cock at the entrance, he rammed in, unable to wait any longer. He slid in easily, aided by the lubricant and both cried out at the exquisite sensation of the full contact, especially Kyle whose aching cock was sheathed tight in his lover's heat.

Excruciating heat surrounded him, impelling him to action and the rising tension in his belly intensified the urge. Hands on Grant's hips, Kyle moved with strong, jerky motions before settling into a fast, forceful rhythm, his rigid cock pistoning in and out of Grant's beautiful ass. He looked down between their bodies and, coupled with Grant's harsh moans, the erotic sight pushed him to a faster tempo. He was so stoked that a few thrusts was all it took for him to explode, his mind blank and only the rapture spreading across his body filled his thoughts.

Several seconds later, Kyle roused himself from where he'd collapsed across Grant's back, breathing hard and fully satiated. He withdrew and disposed of the condom. When he returned, he was treated to the beautiful sight of Grant lying on the carpeted floor and stroking his cock, his eyes closed and an intense expression of concentration on his face.

Feeling guilty, Kyle dropped down beside him and took over the hand job, his mouth coming down on Grant's and engaging him in a passionate kiss. Grant's ardent response caused him to increase the intensity and speed of his strokes and his tongue delved into Grant's mouth and mimicked the motions and rhythm of his hand. He could never get enough of kissing Grant. Who was he kidding? He could never get enough of Grant. Period. Whether it was kissing or fucking or exchanging ideas about things or just practicing their music together, he looked forward to each opportunity to create more memories with Grant.

Kyle decreased the speed of his strokes as he came up for breath. He wanted to take Grant's cock in his mouth but he'd hold off for a while and raise the anticipation. The thought caused a shiver of excitement and expectation to run through his body.

"Damn it, Kyle," Grant growled. "What the hell are you doing? I was *sooo* near..." His words choked off into a strangled gasp as Kyle dipped his head to graze Grant's nipples with his tongue. The sensation caused Grant to moan harshly and his cock to tighten even more. Pleased with his response, Kyle played and teased Grant's turgid nipples for several more seconds and rolled the hard buds in his mouth. With Grant, he'd learned that giving pleasure was the same as receiving pleasure. Damn, he was becoming hard again but he ignored it. Grant deserved all his attention.

Soon, Grant's beautiful, rigid length was sliding in and out of his mouth. Kyle's sigh of bliss was trapped in his throat as his mouth filled with cock. He couldn't imagine anything he wanted more, unless it was his ass stuffed with cock, Grant's cock. He didn't even need to do anything, just hold his head still and his mouth open while Grant, his cock hot and pulsing, fucked his mouth as the need claimed him. Kyle caressed the base of Grant's cock and his balls were so tense that Kyle knew Grant was going to erupt soon. He just might lose it together with his lover, his own cock now so hard and painful that he knew one touch was all it would take. Grant moaned and groaned with exertion as he pumped his hips with a steady rhythm, accelerating with every push.

The pressure was getting to Kyle too and though he tried to keep his hands on Grant's body, one hand traveled helplessly across the distance and wrapped around his own cock. Bliss. After a fumbling attempt, his strokes followed Grant's faithfully and his mind was blank of anything but the pleasure invading his body from the direction of his mouth and his groin. Kyle knew the exact moment when the tension spiraled and peaked, dragging them both over the edge of the cliff.

"Oh my God. Kyle, Kyle, Kyle..." Grant shouted Kyle's name in a crescendo as his cum gushed into Kyle's mouth. Grant's hips bucked and writhed as he let go and his orgasm enhanced the waves of release washing over Kyle.

Kyle moaned as his pleasure was doubled, even tripled and his cum spattered onto the carpet.

When they were both through with shuddering from their intense rapture, Kyle collapsed weakly on the carpet beside his lover, satiation and languor seeping into his bones. *Now* he was relaxed. He would definitely recommend sex – twice – for uptight musicians before a performance. If he only knew back then, when he was performing onstage for the first time, then maybe he wouldn't have been so tense during the entire concert.

He was so lost in thoughts it was a while before he realized that sex hadn't worked. Shocked, he jerked to a sitting position. Making love may have released the stress for a while but now, the nervous humming energy was back, invading every pore in his body and twisting his nerves into a tightrope.

"Whazzup?" Grant asked lazily.

"It's back," Kyle said dazedly, then groaned. "Grant, what's happening to me?"

Grant hugged him tight. "We'll figure it out, don't worry. Now why don't we go take a shower together? It's almost time."

"Okay." Grant was right. They had to discover what was wrong with him but they'd do it later, when they had more time. As it was, Marcia's room-service dinner would be arriving at their door soon.

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As he stood up, his gaze fell on the heirloom violin he'd taken with him the night he fled from his home. He always brought it with him wherever he went and he always unpacked the instrument and set it up on its stand beside his performance violin, because he believed that instruments needed to breathe, like humans. And now, this particular device was breathing, the fingerboard glowing with a luminous, golden color.

"Damn," he swore softly. He had seen the violin in such a state once—the night he'd met Grant Thornton and his life had changed forever.

"What is it?"

"Look."

Grant turned and he swore. "Does it mean what I think it means?"

"Yes, she's here, in this very city." Excitement grew in him and Kyle didn't even mind the rippling energy that tore through him anymore. He should've been able to identify it immediately, having already experienced it once before but he blamed his distraction on being back in his hometown. Now he had mixed feelings about being back. "How do you like having another mate, Grant?"

Grant was silent for so long Kyle grew nervous. "I don't know," he finally admitted. "I had you alone to myself for so long, I-I don't know if I could share you."

"You knew this was coming, Grant," Kyle reminded him gently. He'd tried to prepare Grant for this day ever since the day the other man had agreed to be his mate. But he guessed Grant's reaction was understandable, as he'd only known about it for these three years, while Kyle had known about it from birth, had even anticipated its coming.

"I know. It still doesn't make it any easier, now that the time seems to be upon me-us."

"I won't love you any less, Grant."

"I know," Grant responded in a quiet voice. He pointed to his head. "Here, I know that, but here," he placed a hand over the general location of his heart, "I have a hard time being convinced."

"Grant," Kyle said helplessly. He knew this was a battle he couldn't fight for Grant but he would do his best to make sure Grant was in no doubt of his feelings for him, even when *she* arrived on the scene.

He knew the person to make up their threesome would be female, because the triads in his family had always been of mixed gender. If he was with a woman now instead of Grant, then the third could be either male or female. Just like the way it was with Gramps, when he first met Gram, then Lydia.

"How will we find her, with the city so big?" Grant's question drew him out of his thoughts. Kyle loved that despite Grant's doubts and insecurity, Grant was willing to put his brains into finding her.

"I don't know." Kyle frowned. "I suppose, schedule as many private gigs as possible. One thing I'm certain of, I'm not leaving L.A. until I find her."

Chapter Two

"You're really gonna love this, Chelsea," Harold enthused as he led her to their seats in the theater. When he'd first badgered her into attending the concert with him, she hadn't been surprised to find that her younger brother had bought two of the best seats in the house—somewhere near the center and about ten rows from the stage—given his love for music.

"So you keep telling me."

She hadn't wanted to be here, hadn't had anything to do with music for close to five years now. At first, she'd stayed away to cope with the pain and the guilt and then, after she had dealt with her grief, staying away had become habit and it had been easier to float along than to fight against the tide. But no matter what she did, the guilt would never go away.

"I mean, man, to have Kyle Montgomery, the greatest violinist in the world to perform here is...is..." He threw his hands up in the air as his voice trailed away in speechlessness, obviously unable to find the words to describe his awe and excitement.

"I daresay this Kyle needs to earn a living, which is why he's on tour." She had deliberately kept herself out of the music world for so long that she didn't even recognize the name. Kyle Montgomery. He must be a newly discovered child prodigy. "Is he really that good?" she asked doubtfully. Only a few people were able to get her brother to go into raptures like this.

"The best." He finally stopped walking and checked the seat number with the tickets in his hand. All around them, chattering ladies in formal dress and men in their equally suave attire milled in the theater as they chatted in groups or hunted for their seats. "Here we are."

She shrugged as she dropped into her seat. "Even so, he's doing this because he needs to earn a living."

Harold took his seat before sending her an evil glance. "Not everyone is as filthy rich as you, but even you still go to work."

"As do you," she retorted. Then she sighed. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to bicker with you. It's just that..." She dropped her glance to the program booklet in her hand as the familiar pain streaked through her.

"I know." Harold's hand covered hers. "I'm sorry I had to force you to come with me tonight but you have to come back to the land of the living, sis. I can't stand around and watch you mourn yourself into an early grave anymore." He squeezed. "I rather miss the sister who eternally had a sparkle in her eyes and could see things through rose-colored glasses. I wonder where she went." He mused, then asked, "What do you think would make her come back?"

I don't know. Pain compressed her heart and for a moment, it was hard to breathe. *I don't think she's coming back*.

Tears choked her throat and she pulled her hand away. To compose herself, she opened the booklet and found herself staring into a compelling, enigmatic face. For the first time in five years, she felt a tug of attraction. He wasn't handsome with the kind of regular features that make young girls swoon but there was something there, something in his face that made her feel she wouldn't ever grow tired of staring at him. Maybe it was the stamp of character and strong personality on his face that had captivated her, or the crooked nose that kept his face interesting but whatever it was, she was acting like a girl with her first crush.

She forced herself to glance away from the photo and her gaze landed on the caption.

Kyle Montgomery.

She was wrong. He wasn't a boy wonder but a man, a man who had sparked her interest without even trying.

She felt a small chip in the wall she'd built and solidified for five long years. She shut the booklet with an angry snap and focused on her earlier fury at her brother, for laying a guilt trip on her so that she was obligated to come when she'd rather be in the office, going over her boss's last-minute instructions for the meeting tomorrow.

Half an hour later, when Kyle Montgomery walked onto the stage, she realized the picture hadn't captured everything about the man. Like the fact that he walked with an innate grace that made her think of sex, or that he oozed blatant sensuality. His total visual impact stunned her starved senses but it was when he lifted the violin to his chin that he looked so incredibly sexy she felt an almost alien throb in her pussy.

Her breathing quickened and she leaned forward to get a better look at him. God, she hadn't felt anything remotely sexual in a very long time. There was an instant flash of guilt, however, he started playing and the music made her forget everything but the beauty of the sounds filling her ears and the image of the man drawing the enchanting notes from the instrument.

The music slipped through the crack in her wall and bathed her soul with startling brilliance and fiery hunger. From the first note, she craved for more and the lilting sound filled her, transported her to a place where there was nothing but the beautiful music and the lovely imagery it conveyed.

She didn't know how much time had passed, or how long she sat in that position, riveted, her mind blank, knowing nothing but the mesmerizing sounds that had lifted her soul, when the applause all around her shook her out of her trance.

"Didn't I tell you he's great?" Harold beamed at her and clapped enthusiastically.

"Yeah, great," she agreed faintly, her hands coming together slowly. Her gaze followed Kyle Montgomery's movement on the stage as he exchanged his violin for another one on the stand behind him.

The second violin was smaller than the first and the fingerboard flashed golden under the lights. There was a hushed silence from the audience in the brief second

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when he lifted the instrument to his shoulder, then the sweetest, most wondrous sounds she'd ever heard floated toward her.

The first note hit her like a sexual cannonball, because desire started stirring in her and built up in tempo and strength with each measure that he played. The composition was something she'd never heard before but she was enthralled by the beauty of its haunting melody and each rousing note pushed her higher and deeper into heat until she was a mass of burning lust. Nothing like this had happened to her before but her confusion was pushed aside as her body made its demands known and she could do nothing but flow with the music, riding the crescendos until she reached a sexual peak she'd never experienced before. She wanted—no, needed—to feel the firm, solid pounding of a hard cock, driving into her with force and power, over and over, until she screamed from the strength of her release. She needed the heat of a man's skin against hers, the unyielding weight of his body on hers, his mouth on her breasts, her mouth, every inch of her body—

She gasped and jerked out of the images in her mind with the applause that rang in her ears. *What had just happened*? Her nipples were hard, her pussy was wet and her skin was tingling with fevered anticipation. She cast a panicked look around, wondering if anyone shared her momentary lapse into insanity.

Unfortunately, everyone around her seemed very normal, as they shouted encouragement and the whole theater thundered in appreciation at the masterful playing of Kyle Montgomery, who bowed and smiled at the audience...and who seemed to be looking for someone, though he was being very surreptitious about it.

Was he looking for her?

Before the thought could fade away, Chelsea shook her head in denial, trembling. Lust still rode high in her veins, so she wasn't sure if she was trembling at the thought of being the object of a man's passionate regard again or because the lust was demanding to be satisfied. The yearning seemed to have intensified, because she was finding it hard to breathe or to think and her whole attention was on the desire surging

through her in a never-ending circle. She wanted—she needed—she couldn't stand it anymore. She needed to have release—*soon!*—or she'd grab the man sitting on her right side and have it out with him, stranger or no stranger.

She turned to her left and tugged on Harold's arm desperately. "Please, let's go."

Her younger brother looked at her askance. "But we're barely halfway through the performance—"

"If you drive me home now, you can still come back in time to catch most of it," she said through gritted teeth. "Please...I can't take it anymore." She didn't manage to catch the sob that slipped out of her throat, which was a good thing, because it was probably the main reason that caused Harold to usher her out of the theater, his brows tight with concern.

Chelsea couldn't remember the drive back, lost in the swirling desire that pooled in her body. Once they were standing outside her apartment door, she did surface long enough to assure Harold that she would be fine. He left, after casting several doubtful looks at her and offering to stay with her.

The moment she locked the door behind her, she flew to her bedroom and stripped off her clothes on the way. She fumbled in the bedside drawer for the dildo that hadn't seen the light of day or night for five years, jumped into bed and rammed the stick into her pussy. It slid in easily. She was so wet. She sobbed and her body arched into a bow at the exquisite feeling of being filled and stretched.

It's been so long... So long...

She pumped the dildo in and out of her pussy with a trembling hand, the other clenched tight on her bedsheet. Sweat ran in rivulets down her face but the sweet pressure within was building. She gasped and doubled her efforts. In, out. In, out. The hard staff pressed in, filling her. An image flashed into her mind—Kyle Montgomery staring down at her with lust in his eyes, then his dark head between her pale thighs, his skillful tongue buried in her pussy.

Out of nowhere, she exploded. She burst into jerky movements, screaming as the orgasm hit her and she rolled with it, satisfying the clawing hunger within, yet she still writhed, holding the erotic image in her mind. She wanted to prolong the release as long as she could, because she didn't think she would have another quite like it.

Moments later, she lay on the bed trying to catch her breath, stunned. What had just happened? How could she suddenly have had a sexual episode when she hadn't been remotely interested in sex for such a long time?

Maybe the abstinence had built up over the years and prompted her to seek a release just then. She snorted in disbelief. Why tonight of all nights? Why tonight when she attended the concert?

Maybe the music was the catalyst, the sexual stimulus. Ha. First time she'd ever heard of music as an aphrodisiac. Her eyes narrowed. Now that she thought about it, she remembered that she had felt desire when she was still in the theater...when Kyle Montgomery had changed his violin!

A moment later, she shook her head. Still boneless, she remained on the bed and her head rolled from side to side on the pillow. Ridiculous. The violin couldn't have anything to do with her masturbating just now. More likely, it was that attractive as the devil and sexy as sin Kyle Montgomery's fault. Somehow, he'd touched her far beyond any man since David had –

Guilt threaded through the sexual satisfaction still seeping through her veins.

Thank goodness she had seen the last of Kyle Montgomery, because she was never going to attend any more of his concerts, no matter what blackmail Harold resorted to.

* * * * *

Kyle grappled with the doorknob to his dressing room as screaming fans tried to snatch hold of his arms, his legs, his clothes while his team of security people did their best to extricate and protect him. He had a sense of déjà vu when he finally closed the door behind him and leaned against it, eyes closed and panting. He knew that a lot of

those girls out there – girls who could emit ear-splitting shrieks which could shatter eardrums – didn't know a jot of classical music. With sudden insight and without conceit, he knew that they were *there* because of him, groupies who wanted a piece of him...all right, who wanted to have sex with him, who wanted to be able to say that they'd been laid by Kyle Montgomery.

A sudden thought occurred to him. Was *she* a groupie? Was she one of those eardrum-popping girls out there? He shuddered. God, he hoped not. But what if she was?

"What the heck are you waiting for?" Grant's raspy, urgent voice made Kyle snap his eyes open. "Take off your clothes—never mind." Grant was gloriously naked, his rigid cock pointing toward his stomach and Kyle felt an immediate answering response in his groin. Grant's desperate hands fumbled with the snap and zipper of Kyle's trousers, until finally with a growl of frustration as he pulled hard, the clothing gave way and Grant pushed them unceremoniously down Kyle's hips. Grant's eager mouth latched on to Kyle's rampant cock, sucking and nipping with furious abandon.

The fevered lust, which Kyle had battled and banked into submission during his onstage performance, escaped with a howl and battered him, causing him to lay helpless under its assault. Kyle gave in to the urge and he pumped his hips and fucked the heated wetness of Grant's mouth. Two deep thrusts and he spilled himself.

Before he could recover his breath, Kyle found himself on his knees on the floor, his ass cheeks spread wide open by Grant's hands. Then blankness, as all he could think and feel was the exquisite sensation of Grant's thick cock in his ass, thrusting hard, plunging deep, in a hard, fast rhythm that had him arching his back and crying out with a guttural shout. Grant held him about the waist, keeping him in place as he drove into him over and over, making Kyle's cock hard and pulsing and aching again. The fact that Grant could last this long made Kyle believe that his lover had relieved himself earlier but the intense desire that was wrought by the violin could only be satisfied by making love with his life mate. He and Grant were life mates, fated and mated for life and soon, they would be truly complete when *she* joined them –

Intense pleasure streaked through Kyle and his anal muscles contracted and clamped around Grant's cock and Grant orgasmed after one last powerful thrust. His lover's cries of rapture propelled him onward and his own release swamped him a few seconds later.

They lay on the carpeted floor, entwined as they caught their breath. Grant pulled out from him, turned him around and kissed him with deep affection. They murmured tender sweet nothings to each other as they cuddled in the aftermath and Grant's caressing strokes on his shoulder caused love to surge up in his breast.

"I love you," Kyle murmured against Grant's exposed neck. He was satisfied and sleepy and too lazy to move.

"I love you t—" Grant was cut off by the loud rapping on the door, which rose over the girlish shrieking din.

Irritation at the interruption welled up in him. "Ignore it."

Grant grimaced. "Rather hard to ignore that insistent pounding." He sighed. "Better see who it is and what he wants. I'll bet you that it's Marcia." He stood up and went to put on his clothes.

Kyle adjusted his own clothing, shouting, "Yes?"

"Kyle, it's me." Marcia. Grant raised his eyebrows at him. "Open up."

"Couldn't it wait until we get back to the hotel?"

"No. Quick, open this damn door." The knob rattled. "Your screaming fans –"

"Oh, for heaven's sake!" Kyle muttered. After hooking the snap of his trousers in place, he strode toward the door and turned the knob. "What's so urgent that —" He fell silent and stood motionless, arrested, at the sight of the tall man who appeared instead of Marcia and who shut the door firmly behind the visitor. Kyle shouldn't have been surprised to see him, should've known he would come.

The man faced him and smiled, his eyes crinkling. "Kyle. Looking good, little brother. Your music has improved as well. I'm impressed."

"Jase." Emotion overcame him and he couldn't speak at all. He took one small, necessary step and clasped the brother he hadn't seen in seven years in his arms. Years ago, when he was still living at home, he and Jason had been very close. Jason was his big brother, protecting him whenever and whatever way he could. He had been one of the things Kyle had missed, all these years that he had been on the road. When they broke apart, he could swear that Jason was as affected as he.

Jason cleared his throat and looked around the room. His gaze landed on Grant and a slow smile creased his lips. "You must be the famous composer, Grant Thornton." Jason crossed the room and held out his hand. "Your music is unbelievable." Kyle saw the stunned expression on Grant's face, before it was erased and he was accepting Jason's handshake and praises graciously. Kyle was pleased to see his lover keeping his aplomb at Jason's next words. "My deepest gratitude for taking care of my brother."

"My pleasure." The words were said with so much sincerity and heat that Jason looked away, a hint of red darkening his cheeks.

"So, bro, I see you've become very proficient with *the* violin." Jason grinned ruefully. "Have you found your woman yet?"

"Soon, I hope." A feral, predatory smile came involuntarily to his lips.

"Hmmm... Make it quick. I'm itching for the chance to find my own life mates."

"No one in your life yet, Jase?"

His brother shrugged. "No one special. I'm beginning to think I wouldn't find them without the violin, so I'm politely requesting you to return the heirloom once you've found her." He grinned again, sheepishly this time. "Though I may need you to come play for me, since I've been too busy working to learn my music."

A startled and hearty laugh escaped Kyle's lips. "Anytime, Jase. You only need to say the word." Kyle had taken the heirloom only because he had needed a violin for school and he couldn't afford to waste what minimal amount of money he had then. He'd always meant to return the heirloom, because although he could borrow and use it, it belonged to Jason. Well, it would when their father passed away.

There was something in the way Jason seemed to be bracing himself and Kyle had a premonition of what he was going to say next. If he could stop the words, he would but Jason was already speaking. "Come home, Kyle. It's time. Grant would be welcome as well-"

"No." Kyle hated himself for being abrupt, when all he wanted to do was to reestablish the ties he had with his brother but he couldn't face or even think of his father without the hurt spreading throughout his body. "We can get together and talk about the business or music or relationships but don't mention one word about home or...*him* to me," he gritted out through clenched teeth.

He didn't know how tense he had become until Grant came over to stand beside him and placed a soothing hand on his shoulder.

"He's dying, Kyle—" Jason started to say.

"I don't care," Kyle bit out. And he didn't, not when he thought of the things his father had done to him. But Jason's words had jolted him, making him remember that his father was getting on in years. How old would he be now? Sixty-nine? Seventy? That wasn't so old. How could he be dying? Was this a trick to get Kyle to go home? Kyle stared at his older brother's blank, shuttered face and suddenly became angry for him. "My God, Jase, how could you do it? After he took everything away from you, still you care for him—"

"He's dying," Jason said simply.

Kyle shut his eyes, so that he wouldn't see the compassion in his brother's eyes. Jason's soft heart was both his strength and his weakness. "I don't care," he repeated stubbornly, ignoring both Grant's squeeze on his shoulder and the sudden emotion that filled him. "I'm not going back there. Ever."

He heard Jason mutter something unintelligible beneath his breath. "I'm giving you a day or two to think things over -"

"I won't change my mind, no matter how much time you give me." He opened his eyes and stared at Jason, so that his brother would know he was serious. "Months or years or centuries, my answer's the same."

Jason pushed away from the table he'd been leaning against. "I don't think he has that long, Kyle. He might not be...here when you come back -"

"Jase..." he said warningly. Enough was enough.

"You both need closure," was Jason's quiet reply, before he changed the subject. "So, how long will you be here? The papers said tomorrow night's your last performance."

"I'm extending my stay here indefinitely. But not because of *him*," Kyle added harshly when he saw the brief flash of hope that raced across Jason's face.

"Foolish me, to think otherwise," Jason returned dryly. "Are you done here? How about we go for a drink? You too, Grant."

As was his habit, Kyle exchanged a glance with Grant but he knew his mate wouldn't mind getting to know his family. In fact, Grant had been urging him to contact Jason for months now, once Grant had known that Kyle missed his big brother, but he'd kept putting it off, though he hadn't known why at that time. Now he knew. Because it put him into contact with the one person – make that two – that he didn't want to see or hear about. Ever. Funny that Jason didn't mention their mother.

"Sure." Kyle didn't have to force a smile to his lips as he clapped his brother on the shoulder. "Let's go."

Chapter Three

Chelsea plunged two fingers into her soaking-wet pussy and pumped with short, urgent strokes. The pressure in her belly tightened with each pass of her fingers against the walls of her channel and she could feel her inner muscles starting to clamp around her fingers.

Soon, soon...

The promised ecstasy just beyond her reach, she renewed her efforts, relishing the squishing sounds that emerged with each pump. With her other hand, she pinched and squeezed the hard nub that was her clit.

The orgasm blindsided her, hitting her with the speed of a rocket being shot into space. She bit down on her lip to contain her whimpers of pleasure as she rode the crests and waves of her release.

She slumped against the wall as languor stole into her veins but before she could do more than take three breaths, someone pounded on the door.

"Chelsea, are you done?"

"Give me a minute." She pushed away from the wall with a strength she didn't feel, shuffled the few paces to the sink and washed her hands. Taking several paper towels from the dispenser in front of her, she dried her hands and mopped up the beads of sweat that had collected on her face and neck. Bracing her hands on the sink, she lifted her head and stared into her eyes reflected in the mirror. Her bewildered, yet satiated expression looked back at her.

What was happening to her? Ever since the concert last week, she'd been plagued by rising desire every couple of hours that demanded satisfaction, except when she was sleeping. She'd tried to ignore it, exert her will over it, distract her mind—and body with something else but the lust that ran wild through her body commanded her

attention. She'd spent more hours in the ladies' room this week than she'd ever done in a whole month. Lily, her close friend at the office, was becoming concerned that Chelsea might be coming down with something and kept urging her to see a doctor. As if. A sex therapist would be more appropriate. Of course, at home it was easier. She'd just jump into her bed and let her dildo plumb her depths. After each highly explosive orgasm, she'd thought that was it, only to be proven wrong a few hours later.

God, how long was she supposed to endure this? Although she enjoyed each journey into rapture—and she seemed to be making up for the lack of it during the last five years—the need to have a sexual release at inopportune times was becoming irritating. In the office, on the road, in public transport—it didn't matter where. Her body didn't understand that some places were just...inconvenient. She'd had to wield extreme strength of will over her body to avoid embarrassing herself, then at the first opportunity, she'd dash into a private place to relieve herself.

Like this latest episode. She and Lily were enjoying themselves at the company's annual dinner and dance held at the Marriott Hotel when the insidious desire had struck again. She'd had to hide out at the ladies' room. When she'd noticed that the one-room toilet for disabled people was unoccupied, she'd jumped into it, knowing she'd need the bigger space.

"Chelsea?"

"Coming." She repaired her makeup with light touches and surveyed herself in the mirror. When she was satisfied, she put the powder case and lipstick back into her small purse.

"Are you okay?" Lily asked and through the door, Chelsea could hear that she was worried.

"Yes." She took several deep breaths and eyed herself in the mirror one more time. She adjusted her conservative black dress and fluffed her brown hair so that it wouldn't appear limp.

"All right. Not that I'm hurrying you but I think the guest of honor is going to arrive any time now."

Chelsea could imagine Lily biting down on her lip, torn between her curiosity to see the ultra-secret-and-very-important guest and concern for her friend. As for her, Chelsea wished she could skip out and go home but her boss, Adrian Greene, who was the CEO, had made her promise to stay until he could give her the surprise he'd planned for her.

Finally satisfied with her appearance, Chelsea pasted a smile on her lips, grabbed her purse and stepped out of the room. "C'mon, let's go."

They arrived back at the ballroom in time to join the rest of their colleagues in welcoming the guest of honor with thundering applause. It would seem they had missed the introduction and now, they couldn't even get a glimpse of the all-important guest as their colleagues were all standing and blocking their view.

"Sorry," Chelsea apologized.

But Lily just smiled, shook her head and said, "Never mind. I'm sure we'll see who it is when he goes on stage later on. Mr. Greene is sure to give him an award or something. C'mon, let's go find our seats."

Millennium Advertising Agency's annual dinner and dance party was usually held at a prestigious hotel involving a sit-down dinner, a live band to accommodate music requests and community dancing at the end of the meal. Chelsea had left midway through the meal in past years and she expected this year to be no different. Until she remembered Adrian's yet undelivered surprise.

A moment later, she gave an inward shrug. No matter, he'd just have to give it to her on Monday then.

She had just sat down with Lily at an empty table when Grace, one of Adrian's junior secretaries, came puffing up. "Chelsea...there you are. Mr. Greene's...looking for you. He wants you...to sit with him at his table."

Damn. She didn't think she'd be able to sneak away during the meal if that was the case.

Lily squealed. "Oh, you lucky girl, you. You'll get to see the guest of honor up close and personal. Tell me all about it on Monday, okay?"

"You can go in my place, if you want," Chelsea said, half joking.

"Oh no," Grace butted in, a concerned frown between her brows. "Mr. Greene specifically said you, Chelsea, and no one else."

Sigh. Was she ever that young and earnest when she first joined the company? At times, like right now, she felt a hundred times older. Chelsea sent the younger woman a reassuring smile. "Just joking. Lead the way, Grace." She squeezed Lily's arm and turned to follow Grace as they wended their way past laughing and excitedly chattering people, each step drawing her inexorably forward to the tables nearest the stage, where the bigwigs of the company were all seated. Along the way, she exchanged greetings with colleagues she came in contact with in the course of her work, and over the heads of seated people, she spotted the tall form of her boss, whose thick, brown hair gleamed under the bright yellow light of the chandelier.

He was standing, conversing with a man. Her gaze shifted to the stranger...

She sucked in a sharp breath, shocked. Her steps automatically slowed. Of all people, she never expected to meet *him* here.

Kyle Montgomery.

Even across the short distance separating them, his face was magnetically compelling. She stared at him, riveted and for the life of her, she couldn't tear her gaze away. He laughed, flashing white, even teeth and his casual glance flicked past her before it slowly returned and rested on her face, an arrested expression in his. The loud chattering noise and the subdued playing of the live band receded. There was nothing but this man and the web of music he was weaving around her –

"Chelsea." Adrian's voice broke the spell and she snapped back to the ballroom, unsurprised to find that her heart was beating fast and unnaturally loudly. "There you are. Come and meet your surprise." He gave a hearty laugh at the startled look she threw at him. "Kyle Montgomery, violinist extraordinaire. He's been compared to Beethoven but I'm sure you know about that, since you're an avid fan of classical music." He smiled fondly down at her as he laid a hand on the small of her back and she was very grateful for the support, because a fine tremor was rising from deep within her body and she didn't know why. "Kyle, this is Chelsea White, my very capable personal assistant."

From somewhere, Chelsea summoned a professional smile as she offered her hand. "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Montgomery."

His grasp was warm and firm, increasing her trembling. She only hoped he wouldn't notice it. "Kyle, please." Something flashed in his eyes as he looked at her, before he turned and gestured to the man beside him. "Grant Thornton, a man who expresses himself fabulously in the music he creates."

Chelsea followed the movement of Kyle Montgomery's hand and found herself poleaxed for the second time that night. *So this is the man who composes the beautiful music Kyle Montgomery plays,* she thought dazedly. *He's the real genius. What's happening to me? Is it possible to be attracted to two men at the same time?*

For there was no doubting the strong tug at her senses at the sight of him. Kyle Montgomery might be compelling but Grant Thornton was no slouch. He wore his confidence and authority like a silent, powerful cloak, demanding equal attention from his audience. He was almost the same height as Kyle Montgomery and she had to tilt her head back a bit to look at him. Grant Thornton's piercing blue eyes seemed to look right into her soul and she felt herself stripped bare, all her secrets lying in a pool at her feet. She shivered and tore her gaze away, stumbling backward several steps. How much did he see?

"Chelsea?" Adrian's voice came as though from afar. "Are you okay?"

She looked up in the direction of his voice, though she didn't really see him. "No, I-"

"It's those heels, isn't it?" Adrian asked sympathetically. "I've never seen you wear them before." He helped her solicitously into a high-backed cushioned chair, chuckled and shook his head ruefully. He cast an indulgent glance at the only other woman sitting at the table, his best friend, Shelli Madison, before saying, "I really don't understand why you women want to punish yourselves by wearing those ridiculous..."

Chelsea tuned him out and focused on her breathing. *Get a grip on yourself*, she admonished herself. Only a few more hours and it would be over. She'd just have to get through this night and she needn't see them again after this. Obviously, Adrian just wanted her to help him entertain them, aside from thinking that she'd be pleased to meet a famous musician. He'd known of her fascination with music, as she'd started working for the agency soon after David had passed away, working first for Adrian's father, then for him when the elder Mr. Greene retired three years before. She was hired as the assistant to the elder Mr. Greene's personal assistant, then she worked her way up until Adrian had promoted her to be his personal assistant two years before.

"Chelsea – may I call you Chelsea?" Grant Thornton sat on her right side, with Kyle Montgomery on her left and he was presently engaged in a discussion with Adrian.

"You don't seem to need my permission," she returned dryly. She mentally braced herself before glancing up but it didn't seem to do any good. His rakish good looks, so at odds with her vision of a bookish composer, stunned her beleaguered senses once again.

He nodded, mouth unsmiling. "I just thought I'd ask, being polite and all." His cool blue eyes continued to assess her. "How long have you been working for Adrian Greene?"

None of your business. But because she was still reeling from her visceral reaction to him, she murmured automatically, "Three years."

"And what exactly is the nature of your relationship?"

"He's my boss," she answered, confused with his question.

He snorted in derision. "I'm not a three-year-old that you think to fool, Chelsea. Why don't you be straight with me? Anybody can see that you're more than a boss and his staff."

"What?" Indignation swept through her. Was he implying what she thought he was?

"Oh, come now, Chelsea White," he said impatiently, "there's no need to act coy. Women have been known to use all the wiles they possess to climb the corporate ladder."

Her hand itched to wipe the censorious look on his face but the grim reminder that he was one of her boss's esteemed guests stayed her hand. With great difficulty. She had to resort to clenching her fists in her lap to prevent them from connecting with his face.

"And I'm sure you've known a great many women to come to that conclusion," she said icily, sure that her eyes were flashing daggers at him.

"How beautiful you look, Chelsea, with anger riding high on your face." His remark was made in such an objective manner that he removed all impression of complimenting her. "But you aren't answering my question. I assume then that you *are* one of them. I'd advise you to break it off."

"What?" She couldn't believe what she was hearing. He was getting more and more preposterous.

"Break it off with Adrian Greene, if you know what's good for you." His words were said in a quiet voice and she would've thought he was crazy were it not for the cold precision of his demand. And it was a demand, an order.

She had the distinct feeling this man disliked her but on what grounds she didn't know. They'd met not ten minutes ago, unless they'd crossed paths before and she'd somehow, unintentionally, offended him. Well, bully for him. Aside from good looks, a man had to have something else to capture her attention permanently. She was tempted

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to ignore him but she couldn't let him besmear her boss's reputation without making an attempt to clear things up.

"One piece of advice for you, Mr. Thornton. Be sure of your facts before you accuse anyone, or you're liable to be sued for slander," she whispered furiously, not wanting anyone to hear their exchange. To do so, she had to lean close to him, closer than she'd like and the spicy scent of his cologne and something she couldn't identify drifted toward her.

He leaned back against his seat, his pose arrogant and sure. "Oh, you mean I was wrong?" He managed to convey a wealth of doubt in those few words.

"Adrian Greene is my boss and my friend, that's all," she said stiffly. "Whether you believe it or not is up to you."

"Really? Then I suppose it's normal for a boss to go to great lengths as to invite a well-known musician just to surprise his employee? A *friend* who touched you intimately?" he sneered.

For a moment, she was bewildered. Then she remembered Adrian's hand on her back. At that time, she'd been grateful but she couldn't have known that other people would've seen it differently. Then again, it was but a light touch, meant to bring her into the circle of their conversation.

"You're reading a lot into a simple action, Mr. Thornton. As to Adrian's reasons for inviting Mr. Montgomery and yourself, I really have no idea. Now if you'll excuse me, I have had enough of being insulted." She stood up, intending to have a word with her boss before she left, as was polite. However, before she'd taken one step, Adrian was at her side.

"Chelsea, don't tell me you're leaving."

She smiled up at him and noted his anxious green eyes. "Then I won't. You'll just see my back retreating farther with each step into the distance." Actually, she had an inkling of the reason for Adrian's concern for her and the effort he expended into providing her with the surprise but she didn't see the need to share it with the uncouth stranger who'd offended her with his vile and unfounded accusations.

"Surely, you're not leaving before you've heard me play, Ms. White."

She'd judiciously avoided looking at Kyle Montgomery, who'd come to stand beside her boss but when Kyle spoke up, she'd no choice but to glance at him. She'd tried to brace herself against being overwhelmed by his magnetic presence but it didn't do any good. One look into his steel-gray eyes and she was captured. Her brain stopped functioning, her anger evaporated like mist into the air and she had difficulty sucking in air.

"Yes, Chelsea. Stay for a while," Adrian coaxed.

The same message was echoed in Kyle's heavy-lidded gaze and she found herself nodding her head. "Yes."

"Great." A big smile spread across Adrian's face before he turned to the other man. "Kyle, why don't you go up the stage and play your newest piece? I'll get the emcee to give you an introduction."

"That's fine." Kyle smiled at her. "Why don't you sit down?"

She moved to comply and her gaze was caught by the golden glint of his violin, when he took it from the case standing beside his chair. She released a sharp intake of breath at the beautiful instrument. It was exquisitely made, with a golden fingerboard and wood that shone with love and care.

Beside her, Grant Thornton had also stood up. "Kyle, are you sure?" he asked urgently.

Kyle gazed back at him steadily. "Yes."

Now that Kyle's focus was on something other than her, Chelsea found she could breathe and her mind could function again. She thought it odd that Grant would be so distraught over something that Kyle had been doing for several years now. Or were they talking about a different matter? There was something going on between the two

men, some undercurrent of tension that sizzled between them that it seemed only she was able to pick up on. She glanced around and sure enough, Shelli Madison was deep in conversation with Ethan Hunter.

"But...but..." Grant sputtered, seemingly unable to find the words he wanted. "I thought we agreed last night's performance would be the last time."

Kyle's warm, gray orbs rested on her face, caressing and it seemed they were the only two people in the world. "I spoke too soon. I think we might yet find what we're looking for."

"Here?" As though from a far distance, she heard Grant's voice filled with dismay, then he muttered, "Fine but we're going upstairs immediately after you come down off the stage."

Chelsea caught her breath as Kyle reached out a hand and gently brushed his thumb over her cheek. "You know what to do, Grant."

A moment's silence full of rich meaning she couldn't comprehend, then Grant's voice, thick with disbelief. "You think it's her?"

Kyle hesitated. "Maybe. Watch over her." Then he whirled around and strode up onto the stage.

Chelsea collapsed back against her seat, drained. What was that all about? The conversation between the men confused her but more bewildering was the effect Kyle had on her. Every time she looked at him, especially when he was looking back or like right now, when he touched her, the focus of her world appeared to narrow to just him and her. There was only one time when her whole being had been consumed totally by one man and when he had left this world five years ago, she'd never thought she'd feel anything remotely like it ever again.

But it seemed she had.

What did that mean?

She shivered and the shiver intensified when her ears caught the first, pure note that trilled from the direction of the stage. She glanced up and she was caught much the same way as she had been a week ago at the concert.

Kyle looked magnificently...male, even cradling the violin as he did. Sinfully seductive. Blatantly sensual. He looked straight at her as he played and across the short distance, she imagined his gaze blazing with lust and need. The same desires that were running through her veins at this moment, making her wet and throbbing. Her nipples hardened and pushed against the soft cloth of her dress, the tight buds sensitive and aching horribly. The ache intensified with each note that poured from Kyle's skillful hands and lust and yearning crashed within her in violent waves. She shook from the maelstrom raging within, her pussy pulsing with urgency and she had the insane urge to rush the stage, tear his clothes from him, impale herself upon him and ride him until this crazy longing was satisfied. She had the nasty feeling that in another few moments she wouldn't be able to control her actions.

What was happening to her? Through the lust-soaked haze enveloping her, she realized that whatever she was experiencing now felt vaguely familiar...

Someone touched her arm and she cried out, her skin so sensitized lust rippled through her at the contact. Grant was staring at her, his eyes wild, his nostrils flaring and a deep flush staining his cheeks. "You feel it too?"

She didn't pretend to misunderstood what he was asking. "Yes."

"My God," he breathed, his blue eyes glittering. "It's really you."

"Wha—" She cried out as another swell of desire rose up in her.

"Listen to me. Make some excuse—ladies' room or whatever—and wait for me outside the door—"

"No—" Even with the lust interfering with her senses, she still remembered he disliked her without reason and because of that, she didn't like him either. She certainly wasn't going anywhere with him—

"It's for your own good," he rasped urgently as he leaned close to her. "For all our sakes."

"Doesn't everybody – "

"No – Yes, some –" He broke off. "I'll explain later. Now go."

"I don't—" She stopped in mid-sentence as lust hit her hard, causing her to jerk slightly in her seat. At the back of her mind, she noted that it coincided with the crescendo in Kyle's music.

"Look," Grant said in a rough whisper. "This thing that's pulsing in you? There's only one way to make it go away and you won't get it by masturbating the whole night long or having sex with countless men. It'll come back to haunt you again and again, each time more intense, until you won't care where you are, who you're doing it with, how you're doing it, as long as you can scratch the itch."

If she didn't trust him, at least she believed he knew what she was going through because he described all that she had been experiencing, in detail.

"But if you come with me, we can make it go away. *Kyle* can make it go away..."

Kyle. She clung to his name and nodded.

Chapter Four

Grant ushered her toward the bank of elevators, careful to touch her only at the small of her back through her gown but even that was enough to burn his fingers. Her nearness was intoxicating him—her heat, her scent. Every time he breathed, a slight flowery fragrance drifted into his nostrils, drugging him. Bad enough that the violin had unleashed an unholy lust within him for her but damn, he was fully aware that he was attracted to her.

Big-time attraction. Electrifying and magnetic, even without the influence of the violin. That air of mysterious sadness around her only added to her appeal. From the look on Kyle's face when they were introduced, he was captivated as well. His young lover kept on turning his head to stare at her the entire time he was conversing with Greene.

Which was good, since she appeared to be their mate. He hadn't expected to be attracted but if he was, this whole triad business was going to be easier for him. He'd had time in the past week to get used to the idea of a woman in their lives but still, sharing Kyle with another person wasn't going to be easy for him. However, if Grant could also develop a warm relationship with the woman, then they'd have a good three-way relationship, a win-win situation for all.

But at the moment, he didn't know her and from what he had seen of her, she looked to be the type who slept her way up the corporate ladder. He remembered with distaste the familiar way Greene had put his arm around her and the lengths to which Greene had gone to invite Kyle to perform at tonight's party. The sour feeling Grant had experienced earlier came back to haunt him, even as he wondered for the hundredth time if Chelsea was still sleeping with Greene. He knew he should've sweet-

talked her, tried to make her like them more but thinking about her with Greene pissed him off, made him so angry he saw red.

Which was why he had been unforgivably rude, accusing her of sleeping with her boss and even suggesting that she break it off. He had to admire her guts, however, for lying blatantly about it, even acting outraged that he should think such a thing of her.

He still believed she was trouble, that if they let her into their lives, she was bound to come between them. He'd seen the way she had looked at Kyle, hunger, passion and possession stamped on her face. He thought he'd seen wariness and pain in the depths of her doe-brown eyes but he was sure he was wrong. What could a woman like her know of pain, unless it was the pain of not having a hard cock between her thighs?

As a result of these thoughts, he was a big mess of contradictions. He was attracted to her, yet he didn't like her, couldn't approve of her method for corporate advancement. He wanted her—shit, Kyle wanted her—yet Grant was afraid—so very afraid—that she would take Kyle away from him one day.

It was a possibility he couldn't bear thinking about.

But the violin had "spoken". It had pointed to Chelsea as "the one" and there was nothing he could do to change that fact.

* * * * *

She trembled from head to toe, glad that Grant didn't make any attempt to touch her, because it was all she could do to hold in the tremendous lust that was fast overwhelming her. He stood with his rigid back to her, his legs spread wide in a solid stance and his hands clenched in tight fists at his side. Once, she found herself reaching out without conscious thought toward his broad back, her fingers itching to slide up under his shirt and press against his heated flesh.

Smooth skin...sensuous...seductive...

She almost moaned aloud. The slight sound that managed to emerge from her throat snapped her out of the haze and she was horrified to note that her fingers were

only centimeters away from touching him. She snatched her hand back and held it tightly in her other one, close to her chest. She closed her eyes and leaned against the back wall of the elevator.

What the hell was happening to her?

She couldn't remember what excuse she had given the other people at her table. She could only recall dimly that she had jerked to her feet, grateful that her limbs were still able to support her, despite the desire weakening them. She had lurched from the room in an unsteady shuffle, smiling at the people who called out to her but not stopping for fear she'd collapse to the floor in a writhing mass of yearning. She had sobbed with relief when she reached the wide double doors of the ballroom. She had waited outside along the corridor, clinging to Grant's promise that Kyle would be along in a short while.

She couldn't find it in her to be shocked that she would soon be having sex with a virtual stranger. She just wanted this terrible need within her to go away so that she could go back to her life, no matter how dull and boring and sexless it was. At least that kind of life was her choice, whereas this...this shameless need for sex came out of nowhere and was thrust upon her. Perhaps she had reached the limit of abstinence with five years of it and her body was now rebelling...

Oh, stop hedging, Chelsea! Just admit it. You're attracted to Kyle Montgomery, that's why you're not shocked at the prospect of having sex with him. For the first time in five years, you're wildly attracted to someone and you want to hit the sack with him. Over and over and over...

At first, she had wanted to wait for Kyle outside the ballroom but Grant tried to convince her to go to the suite. When the yearning hit her again and threatened to send her to her knees, she had no choice but to agree. She had also been soaking wet, her cream dripping so much that she could feel rivulets coursing their way down her thighs and she had been afraid she would make a mess on the carpet. No, she was embarrassed that people would know *she* was the one who'd made the mess and how.

"Follow me." Grant's brusque tone jerked her out of her thoughts and she hurried after him out of the elevator and into the corridor where the floor was lined with a burgundy carpet so plush and thick she couldn't hear their footsteps.

He paused to talk with some burly men in dark blue clothes before continuing on his way and turning right at the corner.

She hadn't noticed earlier but Grant Thornton was a very sexy man, with broad shoulders tapering down to narrow hips and long, powerful legs. Despite the obvious haste in his stride, he moved with a sinuous grace that drew her eyes. Once again, she found her lustful gaze roving over his back as she watched the interplay of his muscles beneath the thin cotton of his formal shirt.

She stumbled as one of her shoes caught on a snag in the carpet and she pitched forward, her startled cry not enough warning for Grant to turn around and catch her. She fell against his half-turned body, her forward momentum bringing him to the floor with her, her pride cushioned by his body and the sling of her small party bag sliding down to rest in the crook of her elbow. But the contact was too much for her lustheightened senses.

She was immediately aware of the hardness of his muscles beneath her and the furnace-like heat of his body, which emanated through his shirt. Her soft, sensitive breasts were crushed against his chest and the friction sent her into spasms. Acting on instinct, she rubbed her body against his so that she could experience the pleasurable sensations once again. She tugged urgently at his shirt, pulling the tails from inside his waistband and sliding her hands up his naked flesh, her mind faintly registering the bunching of his muscles at her touch.

He was hot...heat personified...burning, scorching her...

She nuzzled her nose against the strong, brown column of his throat, inhaling his manly scent and her teeth nipped at his skin, her tongue licking the salt from his skin. Yummy! The man was positively delicious –

Twin vises clamped around her arms and she was hauled bodily away from him. She mewled a protest and found herself being shaken.

"Damn it, Chelsea," Grant roared. She opened her eyes and stared down into his face, deeply etched with fury and lines of tension and...something else. Did she dare think it was lust she saw there? "Control yourself!"

She suddenly realized where they were. Appalled at her momentary insanity, she clawed at the hands holding her a few centimeters above his body and scrambled off as soon as she was released. What had come over her? She didn't want Grant, did she? She wanted Kyle, was attracted to Kyle. Grant was a despicable person with a dirty mind who accused her without proof. She wouldn't want a person like that, would she?

He dusted himself off and glared at her before turning and striding away.

Her throbbing body answered her question.

Yes, she did. Her pulsing pussy thought his glower very sexy and she wanted his disapproving mouth against her core. She had this naughty desire to see him in all his naked glory, to lick her way up from his feet to his thighs, to take his cock into her mouth and to pleasure him with all the skill she had in her.

Shocked at her thoughts, she remained standing where she was, her gaze fixed on him, her purse dangling from her arm. She watched as he stopped at a door a few feet away from her, inserted a key into the lock, then turned to her and growled, "Are you going to stand there all night?"

She hurried toward him but before she could reach him, he'd disappeared inside the door. She caught the door before it closed and slipped inside, the door clicking shut behind her.

The suite was decorated in gold and white, the furnishings were classy and elegant and she saw that she was in the sitting room and that Grant's virile body was disappearing through the door on her far right. Catching even a glimpse of him was enough to fire up the desire that had momentarily been knocked back by his earlier words. Lust returned in full force, bringing her to her knees. The sling of her purse slid

off her arm and the bag fell to the floor. A keening cry escaped her as she wrapped her hands around herself, willing her body to cool down but images of Grant's sexy swagger flashed through her mind and her nose filled with his scent. Her hands ached to glide against his smooth, silken flesh again.

Her nipples hardened painfully, tightly and she brushed her thumbs over them, moaning as she teased them to further prominence through the satin cloth of her gown. She sobbed. Not enough, not enough. Not enough to assuage the hunger between her thighs, not enough to satisfy the intense longing that was rising in her –

She was drowning with overpowering need and sinking under the onslaught of lust. With a scream of frustration, she pushed the bodice of her sleeveless gown down to her waist and filled her hands with her hungry breasts. She squeezed and massaged them, rolled and pinched her nipples until sharp, shooting pains lanced through her body.

She panted. More...more...more –

"Chelsea, do you want anything to drink—" She opened her eyes and turned her head to see Grant staring at her with stark desire in his piercing blue eyes, the lust turning them a darker color. He cursed and whirled around.

"No—" She scrambled to her feet and ran toward him. She lifted up his shirt and pressed her breasts against the naked flesh of his back. She moaned with the pleasure, with satisfaction at the contact. She held him tightly around the waist as she rubbed her body against his, over and over.

She wanted this. No, more than this. Her hands dipped lower, over his waistband and cupped his cock through his trousers. A thrill shot through her, causing her pussy to clench with anticipation. He was hard and throbbing –

"No," he said through gritted teeth, his hand clamping about hers and dragging it bodily away from his cock. He turned around and held her at arm's length. "Think, Chelsea. Do you really desire me, the man who just insulted you? Or is it just your body talking, driven as it was by the magic?" His eyes glittered and there was a certain coldness that stopped her yearning efforts to get closer. "If we do have sex, will you still like me when your brain is clearer, when it's not confused by lust? Or will you despise me?" He leaned closer. "Don't do anything you might regret."

"Why are you doing this?" she sobbed. His hands on her arms were affecting her in the strangest way. His grip was firm, yes, and he wasn't hurting her but she found pleasure in his touch. It was as if he was caressing her, stroking her, because her nipples were pebbling even more and they pointed toward him, begging for his hands, his mouth. She writhed in his arms. "Touch me, Grant. Please...touch me, kiss me..."

His lips twisted. "You don't know what you're saying."

"I need you. Please," she whispered, her hands reaching for him.

"We'll wait for Kyle-"

"I can't wait –"

"Oh yes, you can." He stooped and picked her up. Startled by his sudden move, she shrieked and looped her arms around his neck, bringing her so close to him that his spicy scent filled her nose. She couldn't resist. She nuzzled his neck and rained desperate kisses on his throat. Then he was lowering her, placing her down on a soft surface and turning to go but she grabbed his hand. She didn't know why he disliked her so but she wanted to do whatever she could to change it. She didn't know why she wanted to make him like her but that was how she felt. Indecision flitted across his face. "Please," she begged. Faintly, she registered that she was on a bed and the sheets were cool on her naked back but it wasn't enough to soothe the burning of her body, the flames of which were firing hotter, brighter, until she had the peculiar sense of being consumed by the fire. "You don't know...you don't understand..." She arched her body and she noted with satisfaction that his eyes followed the movement of her swaying breasts. She cried out with deep, hungry longing as the image of his blond head between her breasts filled her mind.

"I do," he said almost gently. "But you need Kyle, not me." His face was inscrutable as he sat down on the bed beside her. "Why don't we take off your clothes, so that when he gets here, you'll be ready? Would you like that?"

Yes, yes! Anything to feel his hands on her.

"Please..." The word came out soft and seductive, alluring and enticing as the voice of the sirens that had tried to lure Odysseus to his death.

He took a deep breath, as though he was about to face the gallows and needed fortification. "Right. Let's get the zipper so that we can slide the dress off you..." He frowned as he patted her along the waist, searching for the cold metal. He ran a finger up her side, carefully keeping his gaze away from her heaving bosom. Even though he was touching her through the cloth, his unintentional caresses were having a sensual effect on her. Her pulse skittered and her breathing quickened. Need blossomed in her, deeper, more intense, so tangible she could touch it.

Finally, he found the zipper, which was located on her right side. He had to stretch out the material, so that he could pull the tab down. The action made his right hand hover near her bare breast, making her nipple hard and aching once again. She moaned and her body arched up and the brief contact of his skin against her nipple escalated the want boiling in her.

He jerked away, muttering and his clumsy fingers snatched the tab in an angry downward movement. His impersonal hands lifted her hips and dragged her dress and panties down in one swift action until she was left with nothing but her heels. She brought her knees up in what she knew was a very sexy pose, planted her heels on the bed and widened her legs, baring her intimate parts to his gaze. Blood pumped boiling hot in her veins when she saw that he couldn't look away from her pussy, which she knew was thoroughly wet and glistening with evidence of her arousal. Tension stretched between them, taut and strained. "I want you, Grant."

"No..." he breathed, though he continued staring.

She saw the huge bulge between his legs and knew he was lying. The thought of touching his cock made her mouth water and she reached up and caressed his cock through his trousers...

And that was how Kyle found them.

Chapter Five

"I see that Grant has been taking good care of you," Kyle's amused voice came from the direction of the doorway.

Grant jerked away from her, at the same time that her face turned toward Kyle. No, Grant hadn't taken care of her in the way Kyle was implying but Grant did keep his hands away from her, knowing their initial mutual feelings of dislike. In that, he did take care of her and she was pleasantly surprised to note that he had a positive trait after all—aside from his delicious body, that was. Trustworthy. An honorable man. She *could* learn to like him, especially as her body was already one step ahead of her on that. A faint shock slashed through her as she realized she wanted both men and not consecutively but at the same time, filling her with their cocks—

"Took you long enough," Grant muttered rather loudly, leaving her with the disquieting thought he didn't really like her at all.

"You seem to be enjoying it well enough." Kyle smirked as he put down the two violin cases on the small table beside the armchair and walked toward them. "Though I would've thought you'd have dropped all your clothes by now." He started shedding his clothes as he walked and by the time he reached Grant, who was standing by the bed, he was thoroughly naked. Chelsea couldn't help but moan at the sight of his huge, bobbing cock and her pussy pulsed and throbbed with the need to be filled. Her breath hitched in her throat and she stared and stared so that it was a while before she noticed that his cock wasn't coming any nearer. Reluctantly, she lifted her gaze and she received her next shock for the night.

A dazed thought filtered through her brain.

The two men were lovers.

They were kissing with the long familiarity of lovers and Kyle was stripping Grant of his clothes with quick, economical actions. Grant was rubbing and fondling Kyle's cock in such a way that made her want to join them. She was about to stand up when Kyle pushed away from the other man.

"Later," he rasped. "We need to bond first."

Disappointment flickered across Grant's face and, through her sex-soaked brain, she suddenly realized the reason for his dislike. Then she couldn't think anymore as Kyle turned his megawatt smile on her. He sat down on the bed beside her, much like Grant had done a few minutes ago. Her eyes followed his movement and for the life of her, she couldn't tear her gaze away.

"You're so beautiful." Kyle grazed her bottom lip with his thumb. Acting on instinct, she darted her tongue out to lick at the fat digit and when his steel-gray eyes turned darker than the murky ocean depths, she was emboldened and sucked his thumb into her mouth. Though the lust that burned in her longed for him to pound her wet pussy with his thick cock, she exerted her will over her baser needs and continued with her deliberate movement of alternately licking and sucking his thumb, heightening the tension between them, telling him with her actions what she wanted to do to his cock. She saw the knowledge in his eyes, in the quickening of his breath, in the sudden involuntary jerking of his rigid shaft.

He moved without warning and his mouth covered hers, his tongue thrusting into her mouth with intense need. She was surrounded by him—his heat, his scent, his utter maleness. His hands roamed over her breasts, tugging at her nipples and teasing them into further tightness. Then another pair of hands was caressing her calves, her thighs, higher...higher, until they tangled in the thick curls covering her pussy. She arched, her cry smothered by Kyle's mouth.

She was swimming in sensations—stroking hands on her naked skin, devouring lips on hers, someone's harsh breathing and heat...heat like that of the noonday sun, no,

much hotter, scorching, flaming, incinerating her, bursting on her like an exploding bomb.

She tore her mouth away. "I need..." she gasped.

Grant brushed over her clit—once, twice and she broke into a million tiny pieces. The tension, which had building up within her for the past hour, shattered and washed over her in overwhelming waves of rapture that she hadn't experienced before. Grant continued teasing her clit and she writhed with sensuous abandon on the bed, her keening cry ripping the air as her orgasm went on and on. She almost missed Kyle's rough voice rasping out, "Condom." She did know she missed Grant's skillful fingers but even that was forgotten as a hard, thick cock pushed its way into her slick pussy.

The pressure, which had ebbed with her release but not totally gone, tightened as Kyle slammed his way in and buried himself to the hilt in her. He didn't give her time to get accustomed to his presence but as though a demon was driving him, he plunged and withdrew in a frenzy of motions that underscored his desperation, echoing the same hungry need within her to reach for the pinnacle that she'd just experienced.

There was a sense of...rightness at having his cock driving into her. This was what she had been waiting for all week, when she had masturbated herself in a screaming rush but there had always been something missing, some deeper satisfaction she'd wanted to reach but couldn't.

He loomed over her, a huge and dark presence. His taut straining body, the frowning concentration on his face and his relentless thrusts all served to feed the swell of lust and need growing in her. She wrapped her legs around his hips and hung on as he rode her with urgency rather than finesse and before long, they were exploding, combusting into an orgasm that was even more intense than the previous one. Her head whirled and darkness encroached as a result of the vigorous release but shockingly, she wasn't through yet. Desire still sang in her veins, pushing away the darkness, making her feel more alive and tingling than before.

Kyle went to move as though to pull out of her and she tightened her hold on his arms. "No..." she protested, writhing and clenching her pussy to keep him there.

He stroked her damp forehead with a gentle hand and a tender expression on his face. The breath was knocked out of her at the sight, especially when he smiled with much the same look in his eyes. "I know what you're feeling. I've gone through the same thing before. Actually, Grant has too," he amended, "and don't worry, it'll go away as soon as we've fed it enough."

She didn't understand what he was saying. She only knew she needed his cock again, needed to feel him pounding into her with hard, fast strokes, need –

"But now, it's Grant's turn to be in you. You do like Grant, don't you?"

The desire intensified. Yes, she did like Grant. She'd never been the type to play around and it bewildered her that she should want another man so soon after one man had just been in her but yes, she wanted Grant. She wanted him with the same fierce need and lust that she felt for Kyle. A purring sound escaped her that Kyle interpreted as assent, because he laughed. "Good."

Grant took his place above her and she saw the same uncertainty mingled with desire in his piercing blue eyes but he was careful and deliberately slow as he eased into her, so slow that she shivered from the erotic sensation of his cock rubbing against her inner walls. The breath stuck in her throat. He was as thick as Kyle and her pussy, which hadn't been filled with a fat cock for so long, stretched and creamed with pleasure.

She forgot about everything but anticipating the enjoyable ride ahead. She locked her legs around Grant's waist and clenched her hands around the bedspread when he started moving, slow and easy at first, then faster with each succeeding stroke as he seemed caught up in whatever was swirling in her for the past hour. He closed his eyes and threw his head back, his face scrunched tight as he drove into her, slapping her clit with his body as he pounded her. Kyle's skilful tongue on her breast heightened the sensations and tightened the pressure and when he sucked on her nipple, she let go of

the tiniest bit of control she had left and writhed and wriggled on the bed, slave only to the towering release crashing down upon her.

She screamed out her massive orgasm, which continued to come in rolling waves when Grant didn't stop thrusting into her.

"Ah God," Grant said in a rough, tortured voice as he pushed into her yet one more time, "you're so tight you're killing me."

"But you love it." Kyle lifted his head to say raggedly before he resumed showering attention on her other, thus far neglected, breast.

"Yes..." Grant breathed. With an answering shout, he surged into her once, twice, thrice before pulling out and collapsing beside her on the bed.

She'd never been so thoroughly pleasured. Three orgasms in the space of about twenty minutes — not that she'd been watching the time, so she wasn't sure. Then, when languor and satiation were running through her veins and making her sleepy, a man was still pleasuring her, sucking her nipples and laving over her globes as though it was the first time he'd seen a woman's breasts. There was certainly something to be said about having two men in bed with her...

Two men in bed with her! What was she thinking? Even in her younger days, she'd never been so wild as to have sex with two men simultaneously.

She forced the sleepy feelings away and pushed at Kyle. He lifted his head and frowned down at her. "What?" Then he grinned. "You want more? I'm afraid you'll have to wait a bit for us to recover."

Conceited pig. She longed to smack the smug look off his face. Without deigning to reply, she scrambled off the bed and began hunting for her clothes. She spied her gown on the floor beside the bed and snatched it up, only to discover that part of it was firmly lodged under Kyle's foot. She tugged at it firmly, then turned to glare at him when he wouldn't oblige her by lifting his foot.

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He lifted an inquiring brow. "Are you so obsessive-compulsive? Even Grant, for all his neatness, hasn't gotten up from the bed to fold our clothes. Couldn't you wait until morning before you start tidying things up?"

"I'm leaving and I need my clothes," she said shortly.

"That is absolutely the wrong thing to say," Grant quipped from the other side of the bed.

"You weren't so eager to leave a few minutes ago," Kyle pointed out.

A deep flush stained her cheeks and she straightened to her full height, hoping to intimidate him. However, her posture caused her breasts to thrust out proudly, consequently drawing Kyle's gaze to them. Her nipples ached and her breasts grew heavy. She ignored them and tried to follow her train of thought. "Look, I don't know what came over me but— What?" Kyle said something so softly that she thought she'd misheard.

"We do," Kyle repeated.

"We do what?" she asked, perplexed.

"We know what happened to you."

"You do? How?"

"The same thing that happened to us."

He knew what had happened to her because it had also happened to them? What was this? A collective sex attack?

She suddenly knew what he was about and felt sick. She hadn't thought that he'd be that kind of guy, the kind who would say anything for free sex. He looked upright and honorable—no, that was Grant. Oh what the hell. "Look, I'm not some thrill-seeking groupie. So we had sex and as crazy as this may sound, I don't know what possessed me to do it. I don't normally have sex with strangers I just met. And just for the record, thanks for using condoms. But I'm not looking for a repeat experience. The night's still young and I'm sure you'll be able to find some young woman who'll be

ecstatic to play the night away with you." She knew she was babbling but she was scared. She didn't know what was happening to her all week or why her libido had suddenly shot up in the past few days. Was this the culmination then—sex with total strangers? Would she find herself in the same situation on a weekly basis? The thought was daunting. "So if you could just lift your foot there so I can get into my dress, the earlier I leave you, then the sooner you'll be able to find—"

She stumbled backward, her fist full of fabric, when Kyle suddenly stood and strode across the room. Elated at her victory, she began pulling the dress over her head and was so engrossed in the task that she barely heard Grant's dismayed, "Not that again," or realized what it meant. It was only when the first pure notes of the violin reached her ears, coupled with the sudden onslaught of lust, that she knew the reason for Grant's exclamation. But by then, it was too late.

The dress chafed against her suddenly sensitive skin, her sex hormones revved up again and her pussy dripped with lust. The newly awakened beast in her howled long and loud to be satisfied. She struggled out of her dress as the music weaved around her, its crescendos increasing her desire, rising in a tight spiral until she felt she was about to burst. She lunged across the bed at Grant, who barely had time to throw away the used rubber and was sheathing another on his cock, a wild look on his sex-reddened face, when she reached him and impaled herself on his cock.

The feral sex-crazed beast in her cried out at the fullness of their joining. With Grant's hands at her hips, she undulated to the music that was soaking her skin and stirring her lust, writhing and rolling her hips in a way designed to bring them both the utmost pleasure. She didn't know where she'd learned to make such moves. The images had flashed in her mind just then and she had instinctively followed, thus discovering she had an innate grace for the dance of love, something she hadn't known about herself.

Through half-lidded eyes, she observed Grant's passion-darkened eyes, which were focused on her breasts, his delicious pink tongue peeking out of his mouth to lick at his

lips. She felt powerful and mighty, that she could so reduce the Grant who despised her to such a state, the Grant who was eagerly surging his iron-hard cock into her pussy, who couldn't seem to get enough of her. Her breath hitched as he hit a particularly sensitive spot, causing her to spasm and her pussy to tighten around him. She leaned down in her forward movement and offered her pale breasts to Grant, then laughed as she pulled back so that Grant's efforts to capture her breasts in his mouth was thwarted.

She was Woman engaged in the age-old dance of teasing her Man.

Grant growled and hauled her to him, his mouth latching on to one rose-tipped nipple. She gasped and made a soft yearning cry, his sucking motion burning a direct path to her pussy, which clenched hard around his cock.

Kyle pushed her down from behind and it was only then that she realized the music had stopped. The outward music, that was, because within her, the music still played on. He lubed her ass and before she could say anything, his rubber-encased hard cock was pushing into her hole. He moved into her bit by bit, one inch at a time, and she reminded herself to relax and open for him. She sensed his urgency, the magicenhanced lust having also taken up residence in her bloodstream. Imbued with the same desperate hunger, she pushed her hips back and took his entire engorged length within her, and a cry ripped out of her throat.

The sensation that coursed through her was unlike anything she'd ever experienced before. Somehow, she felt fuller, more complete. The beast demanded that she move. It wanted to be fed. She obeyed and after letting loose a soft expletive, Kyle started withdrawing from and pistoning into her. Beneath her, Grant sucked harder on her breast and thrust his cock into and out of her passage in a strangely uncoordinated rhythm that told her this was the first time they'd shared a woman.

Their cocks rubbed against each other inside her body, separated only by a thin wall of cells and the sensation made her insane. They rubbed, stroked, chafed. Combined with the burning lust that had flamed within her from the first sounds of the violin, she followed the urges of her body and writhed and rolled her hips. The tension

within her mounted as the men stepped up the rhythm, their movements quick and hard as they drove and plunged, conquering and plundering her depths, until the pressure snapped and she was flying, soaring as wave after wave of overwhelming release crashed down on her. She was so lost in her own orgasm that she barely heard Kyle's and Grant's own cries of pleasure.

Kyle pulled out of her and rolled to one side and she could hear him breathing heavily, while Grant's own breath rang harshly in her ear and his heart pounded erratically beneath her. The scent of sex permeated the room and still, the blood boiled in her veins.

She wanted more.

And she got it.

* * * * *

Chelsea disentangled herself from the masculine limbs that were entwined with hers. She almost didn't want to move, as her body was so sated and boneless that she needed to exert more effort than usual just to lift her hand. She had never thought she was the multiorgasmic kind of woman but tonight, the two men had proven her wrong. They had brought her to height after height of pleasure, letting up only when fatigue claimed their bodies and they had no choice but to stop and rest. The air was still replete with the smell of sex when Chelsea had decided she needed some answers before she went crazy.

Grant groaned when she removed his arm from her stomach and it thudded to the bed. "God, woman, where do you get your energy?"

She ignored him and forced herself to sit up, her back against the headboard. "I want some answers." She jabbed her fingers at two muscled shoulders when the men didn't even lift up their heads at her statement. She couldn't help noticing that they were nicely muscled shoulders too, with the right amount of bulk that sent her libido

into overdrive. Yeah, she remembered how they had looked in their shirts, their broad shoulders filling the clothes nicely.

She pulled herself up short. What was she doing, allowing herself to be distracted like that? She needed answers!

Annoyed at herself, she poked harder. "C'mon, answer me. Why does *that violin* affect me like this?" She remembered how her mind had clicked and jumped to a conclusion when she'd heard the violin and simultaneously felt the lust welling up in her. She knew she was right in this but damn if she knew why. She'd been around musical instruments all her life but this was the first time that a violin—or any instrument, for that matter—had affected her in such a way.

His face buried in the covers, Grant muttered something she couldn't understand. But apparently, Kyle did, because he heaved a deep sigh and rolled over. Her eyes were immediately drawn to his cock, which though now flaccid, was still a good size. She jerked her gaze away when she felt her insides melting and her pussy clenching with need. How could she still want him after their many couplings?

She looked down to see him staring back at her expectantly. Apparently, he'd said something when she was distracted by his cock. "Sorry, could you repeat that?"

She could see that he was trying to suppress his grin and he succeeded. Almost. "I said, I'll tell you what you want to know, if you'll stay for dinner and -"

"And more sex?" she snapped before she could stop herself.

"If you like." He was grinning openly now. "But actually, I was going to say, if you'll stay for dinner and later on, no matter how late it is, if you didn't want to stay overnight, Grant and I will take you home. I don't know about you, but we were distracted before dinner could arrive earlier at the party and after all the sex, I'm hungry. And if I am, Grant is too." He turned serious. "This isn't just sex, Chelsea. We may have started that way but we want to get to know you better." He moved to a sitting position and faced her, then continued more softly, "But of course, we'd like it much more if you'll stay with us for the weekend."

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Would you? Both of you? The thought immediately flashed through her mind and her gaze landed on Grant, who remained lying steadfastly on his stomach, his face against the bedcovers.

"What if I don't agree?" she stalled, hating it when someone boxed her into a corner.

Kyle shrugged. "Then you'll have to remain in suspense the rest of your life."

And it was his I-don't-care-what-you-do attitude plus her damnable curiosity that propelled her into agreeing, when about an hour earlier, all she wanted to do was get away from these strangers and go home. Well, she supposed that in the most intimate sense, they weren't strangers anymore, not really, except that she didn't know anything about them. "Fine," she bit out. "Are you cooking or calling room service?"

He uncoiled to the floor. "Room service, of course. Anything you fancy?"

"As long as it's edible, I'm fine."

"Grant?"

"Anything."

He looked about, searching for something, before saying, "Darn, I think I took the cordless into the other room. Don't get up. I'll be back soon."

Silence and awkwardness descended upon the room the moment the door clicked shut behind Kyle. Chelsea expected it, especially in light of the enlightenment she had about Grant. Avoiding his gaze, not that he'd lifted his head from where he'd buried his face among the covers, she left the bed, saw her bedraggled gown and put it on. She felt better with her clothes on and though certain parts of her were so deliciously sore she just wanted to lie in bed, she opted to sit on the vanity stool. The tension in the room was so thick by then that she could've scratched it with her nail.

"You don't have to worry, Grant," she said abruptly, before the thought was even completed in her mind. "I'm not going to take Kyle away from you." Grant lifted his head and stared at her with glacial eyes, then sat up and snorted. "As if you could." He began hunting around the room for his clothes.

Chelsea felt her face burn. This wasn't turning out right. When would she learn to process her thoughts through her brain before blurting them out? "I'm sorry, that was terribly presumptuous of me. In any case, I'll be gone after dinner. I just want some answers."

He tugged on his pants and covered his sexy butt. He didn't bother to put on his shirt and she tried hard not to stare at his chest, though her eyes were drawn like magnets. "That's what they all say."

She gave up. There was no use convincing someone who didn't want to be convinced. Then again, maybe she wasn't able to persuade him because she herself *wasn't* convinced.

Chapter Six

Kyle had only taken two steps back to the bedroom when the doorbell rang. He turned around, frowning. Would room service be that quick?

He opened the door. He should've known.

"Jason, not that I don't welcome you but the timing is not good." He shook his head regretfully. "Not right now."

His brother ran a leisurely eye down his body. "I can see that," he said dryly.

Oops. Kyle had forgotten about his nudity. Not that he felt embarrassed, because hell, they used to go skinny-dipping in the pool together in the summer, all those summers before he'd left home for good.

However, Jason didn't leave like Kyle thought he would. Instead, he stepped into the room and shut the door behind him. "Look, Kyle, I realize you need your alone time with Grant but surely, you can spare one or two hours. I've been waiting for you to call me all this week but you never did -"

Kyle suddenly knew what Jason came here for. He'd pushed it to the back of his mind, like some unwanted parcel sitting at the rear of the shelf, hidden behind large boxes and forgotten. He'd had a lot on his mind this week, the foremost of which was finding Chelsea and... Okay, hell, he hadn't wanted to think about Jason's request. Now he laughed humorlessly. "That should tell you something."

"Damn it, Kyle." Jason was tense and strung tight, his face a mask of barely suppressed anger. "I understand why you're feeling this way but *he's dying*. Would it be too much to grant him some peace? You may not know it but he's felt terrible since you ran away and he deeply regretted his actions and harsh words. Nothing was the same at home -"

"Then why has he never come looking for me?" Kyle asked icily, his hands fisted at his side. Once more, he was eighteen, young and optimistic, yet a few words from his father had caused searing hurt to spread throughout his heart and the pain of betrayal spurred him to leave home, to pursue his love of music with his own two hands. "You knew I'd gone to Juilliard but for four years, did anyone come to see me or call me or even write me a letter, an email? He with his tons of secretaries could've instructed one of them to drop me a note or send me something on my birthday, just to show me he cared, that the family remembered. But did he? No." His voice was cold and emotionless, at odds with the turbulent emotions roiling within him. "So to hell with him. I don't want a father like him."

"Is this what you really want, Kyle?" Jason's voice was anguished. "You have to put aside your anger, Kyle, because this may be the last time you'll see him. Mother's already gone -"

No. His world tilted for a moment, then righted. "Mother...gone?" he croaked.

Jason closed his eyes. "I'm sorry. I never meant to blurt it out just like that." He opened his eyes again and Kyle could see that his brother's green eyes—so like their mother's—were bright with sadness. "Yes, she died about a year after you left. Breast cancer. By the time the doctors discovered it, she was already in the final stages—"

"It doesn't matter," Kyle said roughly. And he tried to convince himself that it didn't. After all, she didn't believe in him when it counted, did she? She had been dead to him the moment he stepped out of their house. So what was this bitter pang of some indefinable emotion that was making his nose itchy? "She hadn't been my mother from the day she told me to give up my gift, my dreams. I don't care if she's dead or —"

A gasp from behind told him that Chelsea was standing in the open doorway, drawn out no doubt by their voices. Even in his fury, he hoped to hell that she was decently covered. He didn't want to have to gouge his brother's eyes out for ogling his woman.

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As expected, Jason's gaze lifted, then he sneered. "So this is what you'd rather do? Have mindless sex with groupies? When will you grow up, Ky-"

He broke off when Kyle's fist connected with his jaw and Jason staggered and fell back against the door. Chelsea let out a startled shriek. Kyle advanced in a threatening manner, his face locked in a scowl.

"She is *not* a groupie," he growled into Jason's grimacing face. He didn't have to say more, because from the flash of understanding in his eyes, Jason understood what he wasn't saying.

"I see." Jason nodded, straightening and rubbing his jaw. "My apologies."

"You owe Chelsea one as well." Kyle jerked his head behind him.

"Chelsea, is it?" Jason looked past Kyle's shoulder. "Chelsea, I'm sorry for jumping to conclusions."

"It's okay," she answered hastily as she picked up her bag from the floor. "I was just leaving anyway."

No! Heart thundering, Kyle caught hold of her arm. "You promised to stay for dinner, remember?" He attempted a smile, though panic was rearing within him.

She looked wildly about, as though she'd rather be anywhere than here. For some reason, that hurt. "I-"

Jason took a step toward them. "Please, Chelsea, please don't let me change your plans. You wouldn't want Kyle's and my relationship to deteriorate further, would you?"

Jason was appealing to her conscience and good nature, even laying a slight guilt trip and while Kyle wouldn't normally approve of his tactics, where Chelsea was concerned, he didn't care. All he wanted to do was to keep her by his side.

When Adrian had introduced them, he had been bowled over by the attraction that sizzled between them. He'd gone hard just from shaking her hand and he'd hoped that she was the one, because he didn't know what to do if the magic had another woman in

mind. The moment he saw her leave the room, with Grant following close behind, he'd sighed in mingled relief and lust.

Perhaps he should've thanked Jason instead of decking him, because Adrian Greene was Jason's friend and business associate, and he'd extended Kyle the invitation to the company dinner on the strength of Kyle being Jason's younger brother.

Chelsea was nodding reluctantly. "All right."

"Great." A relieved smile creased Jason's face. "I hope to see you again sometime." He turned to face Kyle. "I'll talk to you tomorrow."

"Monday," he returned firmly.

"Fine." Jason nodded once toward Grant and left.

* * * * *

Chelsea forked a steamed broccoli floret into her mouth. "You were going to tell me about the violin."

Soon after Jason had left, room service delivered their dinner. They were lucky that the hotel provided twenty-four-hour service, considering that it was already around midnight when Kyle had placed their order. She didn't know of any other hotel that provided 'round-the-clock food service, but maybe Kyle's famous reputation was responsible for the privilege.

Famished, no one spoke a word as they dug into their food but Chelsea's mind was moving a gazillion miles a minute. This damn curiosity of hers was going to be her downfall. Even as her mind tried to wrap itself around the concept of the violin's magic, she speculated on the situation of the Montgomery family. What had happened to make Kyle hate his father so much? For it was obvious that Kyle had strong negative feelings, given that he wouldn't budge even when the old man was near death's door. Or his mother? And she could sense, even if Kyle's brother could not, that Kyle was hurting. He was still hurting after all this time and it was the pain that was making him lash out, pride that was keeping him from his father's bedside.

Which was none of her business. She had stayed for one reason and one reason only and after she learned the truth, she was leaving, just as she'd told Grant. She wasn't a liar, as he'd find out.

Although they did make her feel more alive than she'd ever felt in—well, in years. And she wasn't just referring to the physical aspect. Thus far, there had only been one man who had been able to make her feel that way—David.

Instantly, guilt rose up and killed her appetite. David. Oh God, how could she have forgotten him? Shame filled her and she pushed her plate away.

Kyle noticed. "What's the matter? Food not to your liking?"

"I'm full," she said abruptly. She tried not to stare at his naked chest, as all he had bothered to put on were his trousers. He and Grant both. The room reeked of testosterone and she wasn't entirely immune. "You were going to tell me about the violin."

"Right." He sighed and put down his fork. "Okay, before I go into it, promise me you won't freak out. Or if you do, you'll talk to me."

"Fine," she returned impatiently.

"The violin is a family heirloom – "

"I gathered that," she said dryly. "Tell me how it's connected to the lust I've been experiencing."

He smiled. "You're smart, for deducing so quickly that the violin had something to do with it."

She shrugged. "It wasn't hard."

"As I said, you're smart." He downed the rest of his wine. "When my ancestor acquired the violin in 1829, he hadn't known what he was in for. It was his son who discovered that the violin possessed magic. Whenever it was played by a Montgomery, he would feel this lust take hold of him, as long as his true mate was in the room.

Naturally, his mate would also feel it. But if not, then..." Kyle held up his hands, palms up. "Zip. Nada." He looked at her closely. "Are you freaked out yet?"

"Noooo." She was still digesting the information. If what Kyle said was true, it was unbelievable, totally out of this world, something like out of those fantasy books that Harold loved to read. Fascinating. "Go on."

"In time, the violin was used to find the Montgomery's true mate and only sex with the true mates would diminish the lust inspired by the violin. Else -"

"The lust would be banked but never gone," she finished slowly, remembering her own experience, which tied in with what Kyle was relating. "It just kept coming back."

"Precisely." Kyle nodded definitively, while Grant just kept on shoveling food into his mouth. Kyle leaned back in his seat. "I must say, you're taking this quite well."

She nodded absently, her mind awhirl with the wonder and the possibilities. "What's causing the lust?"

"We think it's the fingerboard. I'm sure you've noticed how different it is from a normal violin's."

"Yes, it caught my eye that night at your concert. It seemed to..." She tried to search for the right word but couldn't think of anything really appropriate. "I guess you could say it glowed."

"Luminescent."

"More than that, as if it has a life of its own." Interesting, how the violin was used by the Montgomerys to find their mates – Mates. Did he mean – Her gaze swiveled from the wall to Kyle with horror at the ramifications. "Did you say mate? Does that mean that I – that you – " She couldn't help the panic in her voice. Fucking the night away was one thing but a mate? Something squeezed her heart so tightly she could barely breathe. She didn't think she could bear to open her heart and risk the pain of losing someone again. She couldn't, she just couldn't.

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A mask of surprise settled over Kyle's face. "Oh, you mean you hadn't caught on? Yes, you're my true mate. Life mate. With Grant. That's why you needed us both to make love to you for the magic lust to dissipate."

Life mate? Who the hell used that term these days? Marriage? Shit.

Chelsea stood up so abruptly the chair fell back. "The hell you say. You're bullshitting me so that...so that... I don't know what the hell you're thinking but I don't buy any of that crap." She strode toward the sofa to get her purse. "You know, Kyle, you're so attractive you could get any woman you want. You really don't have to resort to such a low-down trick." Thank goodness she'd already put on her gown. "I'm leaving."

"Damn." Kyle came after her, caught her arm and whirled her around. "I knew I shouldn't have said that —"

"But you did," she returned shrilly, "and you can't take it back."

He frowned as he caught hold of her shoulders. "Chelsea, calm down. What's the matter?"

"What's the matter?" she shouted back. "You're what's the matter. How dare you come waltzing into my life, cause me to have sex with total strangers and then tell me that I'm your life mate? I don't even know you existed two weeks ago!"

"I'm sorry," he said helplessly. "I never expected to find you here of all places either and I wanted to break the news to you slowly but things never seemed to go according to plan." His lips twisted in a wry smile. "C'mon, Chelsea, keep an open mind. Not everything in this world could be explained by science—"

"So you're basing your future on the whim of a violin? An inanimate object?" she stormed. "What happened to free will? What if you don't desire the woman or the man the violin chooses for you, or vice versa? What happens then? Do you let her go or do you tie her to you against her will? And you know what?" She continued her tirade, heating to her argument. "That's why you need the violin, isn't it? So that both parties would *want* to have sex with each other, *need it* in fact and then you can dump the whole life mate thing on her." A blinding realization hit her. "That's what you did a while ago, when I wanted to leave. You played the violin and then I was so filled with lust the only thing I wanted then was to have sex with you and Grant and -"

"You're so way off on a tangent," Kyle said, his face white with shock. "Why would I want to do that when, as you said, I could get any woman I want?"

"How do I know?" she shot back. "You must be one of those perverts who get their kicks out of -"

"Enough!" Grant roared, striding over to stand in front of them. "There's one way to prove your theory's wrong."

"What's that?" she asked, though she didn't want to know. She just wanted to leave, to go home, curl up on her bed and not think for a year.

"We'll have sex again, this time *without* the influence of the violin." His lips were drawn in a stern, implacable line. "If we can make you cry out in orgasm, then you have to accept that the violin *doesn't enforce* its will on people. It just confirms the choice that you would've made, if left to your own devices."

If Kyle had been the one to issue the challenge, she wouldn't have risen up to it, because she knew all too well that Kyle was attracted to her. But Grant... Now that man had issues. "If *you* can make me cry out in orgasm."

Grant was already shaking his head. "Oh no, you don't."

"Then I'm right." She smiled triumphantly. She knew a man of integrity such as Grant would never be able to set aside his dislike of her to do anything with her, much less have intimate relations with her on a voluntary basis.

"Fine," Grant snapped.

He managed to surprise her but she wasn't beaten yet. "Three times."

"What three times?"

"Three consecutive orgasms." See if he didn't puke by then.

"No."

She knew he wouldn't agree, even as she was disarmed by the slight disappointment that filled her at his response.

"I refuse to leave Kyle out of this."

"What?" She was the one startled this time.

He sent her a sharp, lethal smile. "Kyle is as much in this as I am. To fulfill your condition, I'll give you your first orgasm but Kyle will be in the room watching us. For the second and third, he'll join us. I promise to deliver on the orgasms. Come now, you're not backing out on your own challenge, are you?" he asked mockingly.

"Fine," she retorted, goaded as much by his taunt as by her own curiosity. She lifted her chin and her eyes flashed retribution.

He cupped her chin, his thumb caressing her cheek. "How beautiful you are, with anger riding high on your face," he murmured, just before his head dipped and his lips claimed hers. There was no gentleness in the kiss. Instead, it was hard and rough with passion, with anger, with possession. It touched something deep inside her, because she was in the same turbulent emotional state. It called to her, urging her to respond, to connect with a kindred soul.

But she kept her lips stubbornly closed and her hands at her sides. She hadn't expected Grant to call her bluff. Given his intense dislike of her, she'd assumed that he would breathe a sigh of relief, tell her that there was no way he could fulfill her threeorgasm demand and send her on her way.

The quality of his kiss changed, gentled, became coaxing and persuasive. He traced the seam of her lips with his tongue and cajoled her to open. He drew the strap of her gown down one shoulder and cupped her breast, kneading slowly and his thumb thrummed over her nipple, drawing the turgid bud even tighter. Her breast felt heavy and achy.

Traitor! There was nothing she could do about her body's responses but she was damned if she would open her mouth to him. At least, she could control that one small part of her body –

He bit down sharply on her bottom lip, causing her to yelp and he immediately took advantage, his tongue darting into her mouth and grazing hers. He pulled out just as she snapped her teeth together. She could feel his mouth curving in a smile, then he ran his tongue over and over her sore lip, soothing and calming the slight sting.

He lifted his head and smiled down at her. "Feel better?" he crooned. "Don't act so indifferent, Chelsea, and you'll enjoy this more. Why fight this when you wanted it too? Ah, I forget, you're out to prove that you don't feel desire for me outside the violin." He drew the other strap down her shoulder and pulled the bodice down to the waist. His eyes dilated as he drank in the sight. "Lovely." He cupped her other breast and her nipple peaked and thrust toward him, begging for his touch. "See how your body responds? You want this too." He pushed his hands together and her breasts lifted, as though in offering to him. His nostrils flared and he dipped his head, his tongue flicking out to swirl around her nipple.

She almost sighed, almost thrust her hands into his thick blond hair and pressed him close. From several feet away, Kyle had shrugged out of his own clothes and was watching them, a curiously intense expression on his face as he stroked his cock with leisurely movements.

Was he jealous? No, she couldn't see any hint of it. He was just...watching them, absorbed in what she and Grant were doing.

And damn it, he was turning her on, they were both turning her on. She could feel the wetness in her pussy, the languorous slide of her cream down her channel to pool at her groin and she shuddered.

Why did she have the feeling her challenge had backfired on her? She wasn't going down without a fight though. "Don't tell me you want this, Grant?" she taunted.

"Want this?" A bark of laughter left him as he lifted his head. She almost wished she hadn't spoken. "I'll let you decide. Later."

Ha, she knew it. He couldn't get an erection from touching her. No doubt he planned for Kyle to stroke him or something so that he'd be up. "Coward."

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His piercing blue eyes glittered, turned molten with heat. "We'll see who you're calling a coward." He stepped back from her and disposed of his trousers. Before she could even move, he'd found the zipper at her waist and let the gown flow to the floor. Then he pressed himself closed to her, his lower body grinding into her abdomen.

His heat flooded her, surrounding her with its intensity, so much so that she moaned. His scent filled her nostrils – musky and utterly male. Naked flesh slid against naked flesh and there was no mistaking the iron hardness that pushed against her stomach. So, despite his dislike, she aroused him as well.

Her head spun with the knowledge and even as she exhilarated in her power over him, she was lost.

"Does that answer your question?"

He didn't give her time to answer, instead claiming her lips for a brutal, punishing kiss, as though making her suffer for the effect she had on him. Anger still riding high in her veins, she responded like for like, meeting kiss for kiss, stabbing his tongue with her own, dueling for supremacy. She ran her hands over his backside in urgent caress, feeling the rippling muscles beneath her fingers, acknowledging the strength inherent in them and recognizing the desperation of his strokes over her own body, as though he was running from some private demons. His cock was hot and heavy and his hips mimicked the mating rhythm, causing her cream to drip down her thigh.

His fingers delved into her pussy, causing her to cry out at the erotic slide. "Yes," he murmured against her lips.

Her blood thrummed with need and she didn't even think of protesting. If she was honest, she'd admit that she wanted this too. No, more than want. Need. She needed to have sex with him like she needed to breathe, to eat, to survive.

He abruptly swung her into his arms and carried her to bed. He swiftly sheathed himself, moved into position between her legs and surged into her, burying himself to the hilt. She gasped at the fantastic feeling of being filled, his cock so thick and hard

within her, stretching her. She felt the insidious tension low in her belly, the insistent urge to move –

"Your first orgasm, coming up."

She snapped her eyes open at the gratingly cheerful tone. "I hate you. Move!"

To her frustration and surprise, he held himself still for a moment, then threw his head back and laughed. "You never say or do the expected, do you, Chelsea?"

"Wouldn't want you to get bored," she said, smiling sweetly at him. She clasped her legs around his waist. "Now move."

He started slowly and gently, each withdrawal and push into her channel an exquisite torture on her senses. He couldn't be hurried, no matter the relentless pounding of her feet on his lower back. In the end, he grasped her legs and held them high above her and he slid deeper into her, deeper, deeper each time until he almost touched her womb. Her breath hitched in her throat and unaccountably, tears pricked her eyes. She didn't feel like they were having sex—more like *making love*—and the unpredictability of his actions moved her and melted her anger. She looped her arms around his neck and drew him down for a kiss, which was as tender and unhurried as his rhythm. He rocked her, his pace increasing only slightly, until the tension in her belly dissipated into the calm billow of release, much like the way the waves lapped upon the shore. Still, she shuddered and bucked in Grant's arms, her inner muscles clasping his cock like a vise.

When she came to, she realized he was still hard within her and that tears were rolling down her cheeks. He wiped them off her cheeks with his thumbs. "Tears, Chelsea?"

Without waiting for a reply, he bent his head and nuzzled her breast, then laved and swirled his tongue around one pointed nipple, beginning the delicious torment once again. Even without the magic of the violin, she could feel the desire rising up in her and since he hadn't had his release, he was still thick and hard within her, maybe

even harder. *So, this thing between us is real. Or at least for now, the desire for each other is real.* She was dizzy with the implications.

Kyle kissed the rest of her tears away. "Poor Chelsea, you're flummoxed, aren't you?" It would appear that Kyle was no fool. His eyes were sharp and his brain sharper. He kneaded her breast with his hand gently and teased her nipple lightly. "Don't think, darling, just enjoy." And he took her nipple in his mouth and sucked.

She sucked in her breath at the double assault and trembled and for the rest of the night, the men drowned her in sensations — their lips and teeth and hands stroking and fondling her to fever pitch, the sounds of their gusty moans and groans, the decadent scent of sex in the air and the vigorous creaking of the bed. She had never been so debauched, yet it had felt right to be there, to be sandwiched between Kyle and Grant as their cocks pushed into her, one in her pussy and the other in her ass. They filled her, then thrust in counterpoint, the rhythm slow at first, then building up to mirror the tension percolating in her belly. They drove into her with short, fast strokes, rubbing against her inner walls in a scintillating erotic dance, their breathing sounding harsh in the quiet stillness of the room, their sweaty bodies over her and beneath her, moving, plunging with force, with strength, with vigor. She strained and snapped, bucking and writhing with uncontrollable, jerky movements.

She sobbed and screamed as her orgasm rolled over her in waves, high billowing waves that crashed down on her. They propelled her higher each time she came down, pushing into her tight pussy, past the clamping muscles, until first Grant, then Kyle shuddered and exploded into their rubbers, each driving into her for one last, prolonged thrust.

Grant withdrew his cock from her pussy and flopped onto the bed beside Kyle, gasping. Chelsea lay with her back on Kyle's chest, breathing heavily, boneless and satiated and she decided she didn't want to move, ever. Kyle slid an arm across her stomach, anchoring her, his breath puffing in her ear as he asked, "Ready...for the third orgasm?"

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Chelsea yawned, her body sore and aching. Muscles she didn't know she had were now introducing themselves to her with painful clarity. The men had made love to her and caused her to come once more to fulfill the bet, then they'd all slept. Sometime in the night, they had awakened and made love again. Two or three times she had merely lain on the bed and watched Kyle and Grant make love to each other, their incredibly graceful movements and lustful passion for each other making her hot and bothered and longing to join them. However, she restrained herself and allowed them their time together, knowing they'd turn to her soon enough. As it was, she'd lost count of the number of times they'd had sex in the past night.

"Good morning, sleepyhead," Kyle said indulgently.

She opened her eyes to see him looking down at her with a tender expression.

"How are you feeling?"

"Sore."

He winced. "Sorry."

"I'm not used to the activity."

"We aren't either." His eyes twinkled. "When I first met Grant, we used to have these all-night sex marathons but not lately. Then you came and I bet we're going to be having them again. At least for the next few months, I think. I certainly never expected to find the third in our triad when I'm only twenty-five."

"Triad?" she asked cautiously. She suddenly remembered the conversation last night, something about life mates and a sizzle of panic shot through her. No, she wasn't ready for this. They'd only just met. How could Kyle be talking about forever?

Something in her tone must have alerted him, because a wary expression crossed his face. "Yes. Grant and I are not looking for a fling, Chelsea, a woman to amuse us while we're in the city."

"You mentioned 'life mates' last night."

He grimaced. "Forget I said that. Look, Grant and I can be here in the city as long as we want. Let's take this slowly -"

"Tell me."

He sighed and rolled onto his back. "Ever since the violin came into our family, the pairings for the members of the family have been two males and one female or two females and one male. My grandfather had two women and my father has a woman—my mother—and a male partner—Uncle Tate." His lips twisted. "Uncle Tate passed away when I was fifteen and, well, it seems Mom has died too. With regard to the triad, we expected the same of me, my brother Jason and my sister Sarah. Thus far, I've found Grant." He gazed at her with such deep intensity in his eyes that her heart lurched. "Then you came."

She was already shaking her head before he finished speaking and she sat up, running a trembling hand through her hair. "Just because your parents and grandparents are involved in triads doesn't mean that you - "

"It's the truth, Chelsea. It happened in my family for several generations." He reached for her and she shrank away but he only took her hands in his. Even that was too much, because lust seared through her and she wanted him again. And the most confounding thing was, there was no violin she could blame the lust on. She wanted to drown in his gaze, in his strength and she wanted his hard pounding within her, his and Grant's, over and over until they washed away the loneliness and emptiness of the past five years. "You are my true mate, mine and Grant's and we are yours. We aren't complete without each other."

"No, you're wrong...I can't..."

"Why not? What are you afraid of, Chelsea? Tell me and I'll—"

Something inside her snapped at the way he was crowding her, both literally and figuratively. She twisted away from him and bounded out of the bed. "You'll what? What can you do when you're also scared, Kyle? What are you afraid of? Why won't you go see your father? You're lucky that you still have him with you, that you can still

talk to him, tell him you love him and forgive him...allow him to die in peace..." She didn't know she was crying until she dashed away the tears from her cheeks. "David...my David... We had an argument the day he died. I sent him away without telling him I loved him, that I was sorry." Her face contorted and her body doubled over with the pain that slashed through her. "I didn't even have the chance to talk to him at the hospital. He died with my angry words ringing in his ears..." She shook a finger at him, eyes flashing despite the tears, despite the growing redness of Kyle's face. "So don't ask me about being afraid, Kyle Montgomery. You're not even man enough to face your fears, your past and the man on his deathbed who's even now waiting for you to talk to him—"

"You don't know what he's done to me—" Kyle started angrily.

"And I don't want to know," she cut in. "Because you're right, I can never understand the pain of what you've gone through, just as you can never understand mine. Not even your brother, even though he may have seen what your father did to you." She wiped the rest of the tears away as she sobered. The pain of David's death still burned in her but she would relive it later, when she was alone in her place, lying on the bed that had been hers and David's. For now, she just wanted Kyle to see something that she'd learned. "We may comfort you, empathize with you, give you advice but in the end, it's your situation with your father and only you know what can give you closure. Because whether you realize it or not, it *is* hanging over you, Kyle, and you'll never have peace as long as you don't resolve it. While you can still resolve it. I don't want you to have regrets, just as I have done these last five years." She released a mirthless laugh. "You thought you've been living in pain and hell these few years but if you let this chance slip away, I guarantee that it is then you will know just what hell is really like."

She whirled around to confront Grant, who had sat up on the bed and was watching her with deep, speculative eyes. "And you. You're so insecure it's a wonder

you haven't choked on it yet. Don't you know you can't hold the air with your hand by making a fist? Think about it."

She laughed, another mirthless sound that grated on her ears. "I don't believe this. Two dysfunctional people with so much emotional baggage in a relationship that's just begging to explode. And you still want one more such person to join you?" She laughed so hard tears ran down her cheeks. "Thanks but no thanks. I don't want to be buried alive yet."

She put on her gown with shaking fingers, picked up her purse and left, knowing that Kyle wouldn't follow her because she'd left him with a lot of things to think about and knowing that Grant wouldn't because he wouldn't.

* * * * *

What the hell? What right did she have to talk to him that way? Afraid? He wasn't afraid of anything. She was the one who was scared up to her gills by the powerful sex, by what they could have and she was denying it and pushing the attention to him.

He was no coward!

The bow twanged among the strings and the resulting loud noise emphasized his words. He played on, nothing on his mind but the thoughts that went 'round and 'round in his head for goodness knew how many times in the past several hours—no, days.

He was fully justified in his anger toward his parents. They abandoned him, withdrew their support when it was what he, as a young boy of eighteen, needed the most. And their worst crime was in wanting him to give up his gift, when giving it up meant he was denying his very essence, the very core of who he was. They just wanted him to be their puppet, to obey their orders, subject to their every whim. No, he wouldn't be like Jason, he didn't want to be like Jason, not then, not now, not ever.

But did he fail? No, he had been right to pursue his gift, because he hadn't turned out to be some dime store musician. He, Kyle Montgomery, was hailed as one of the

foremost violinists in the world and he was at the peak of his career and would likely stay there for several more years. If he hadn't broken free, he might never have met Grant, his soul mate. He might not have met her!

Several arpeggios burst out from the violin, thunderous and dramatic, though a bit unsteady.

Closure? Funny how both Jason and Chelsea had decided that he needed one. Well, he didn't because he already had one. The moment his parents started harping about giving up music school, his heart started to close, little by little. The day they talked about his going into the family business, his inner ears started to close until he could tune them out. The day he left home was the final closure, when he swore that he was going to make it on his own, that he wasn't going to be dependent on them, that he was going back to L.A. only when the world recognized his name – not as the scion of the wealthy hotel chain but as a musician, a violinist, a name he had earned on his own.

And he had achieved what he had set out to do, gotten more than he had ever dreamed of having. No, he didn't need them.

Except for that question. Why had they been so adamant about him going into the business, so much so that they wanted him to give up his music? It was not for lack of a successor because Jason had already been browbeaten into learning the ropes by working as their father's right-hand man and Sarah had shown more of a penchant for business than music. The question had puzzled him no end these past seven years, it had burned and eaten into his soul and if getting an answer to it meant a closure of some sort, then fine, he'd go see the old man.

He jerked the bow across the strings in surprise and the violin made a loud, discordant sound. Did he actually decide he was going to visit his father? Now that he had made the choice, a certain peace filled him. He realized he wasn't as restless or disturbed as he had been a few minutes ago. Heck, even a week ago. In fact, since arriving in the city.

Hmmm. There was more to Chelsea than he thought. More than a beautiful face and a delightful body. He remembered her sad eyes and wondered if she really meant what she had said. But she was right in that he was carrying a lot of baggage with him, in fact, seven years of baggage. He decided it was time to offload some of it.

Chapter Seven

"I was wrong," Grant said bluntly as soon as Kyle came out of the music room, from where he'd closeted himself for the last two days. Every day, from the early hours of the morning until late in the night, Grant had been treated to loud, wild, discordant music that he believed was a reflection of the chaotic situation of Kyle's thoughts and emotions. He was only grateful that Kyle used an ordinary violin and not the special one.

"About what?" Kyle asked mildly. He was rumpled and fatigued, with a dark stubble on his normally clean-shaven chin but he had never looked more delicious to Grant. More than anything, he'd wanted to share in Kyle's pain, be in the room with him as he worked out his anger and frustrations but he knew Chelsea was right. There were some demons that a person had to face alone and all he could do for Kyle was to be there for him and reassure him that he wasn't alone. Not now, not ever again.

Kyle looked so weary battling his demons that Grant couldn't resist giving him a comforting hug. A moment later, Kyle's mouth pressed against his and the resulting kiss was all about love. It was slow and sweet, savoring and showering affection, giving and taking solace.

"I love you," Kyle murmured against his neck.

"I love you too," Grant replied, his throat thick with emotion. "And I was wrong about Chelsea."

Kyle drew back, a puzzled frown on his face. "Wrong about Chelsea? What do you mean? I wasn't aware you had any opinion about her."

"I had been prepared to hate her even before I met her," he confessed. He couldn't bear to see the censure he was sure to come into Kyle's eyes, so he turned away and paced the sitting room. "You know I wasn't really keen on having a third person in our

relationship, because I was afraid she would come between us and ultimately take you away from me." He held up a hand to stop Kyle's protests. "Irrational, I know but that's how I felt. I had only ever been part of a couple, Kyle. I don't know how the relationship operates when it's three in the group."

"It operates in much the same way," Kyle said quietly. "Only there's one more person to love and be loved by."

"I understand that now. The sex that night was amazing, not that it wasn't wonderful with you but—" Grant stumbled over his words trying to explain what he meant and not wanting Kyle to misunderstand.

He shouldn't have worried.

A soft smile lit up Kyle's face. "It was more. I was there, Grant, I understand."

"Yeah, feeling your cock rub against mine was both heaven and torture." Just thinking about it caused his cock to swell and thicken. He needed desperately to get back to the topic before he was severely distracted. "But we're not talking about that."

"No," Kyle agreed, his eyes twinkling.

Grant cleared his throat. "So when I met Chelsea, I was prepared to dislike her, especially when I saw how familiar Greene was with her. I accused her of sleeping with the boss to get to where she is right now."

"You did what?" Kyle shouted, shocked, then he whooped and dissolved into laughter.

"What's so funny?" Grant asked, irritated.

"First of all, Adrian noted my interest in her when we were introduced and he warned me that I might be disappointed because apparently, Chelsea's got a reputation in the company as the 'Ice Queen'."

"Which we know she wasn't."

Kyle nodded. "Far from it. She just needs the right men—us—and of course, a little magic. But I think she needs time to come to grips with the concept of the triad and life mates."

"I think she's also scared about something."

"I wish we knew what." Kyle sighed. "Secondly, do you remember the other two people sitting at our table—Shelli and Ethan?"

"Vaguely." Grant couldn't recall their faces but he did remember that the two had spent the entire time in conversation with one another, making him think they must be a courting couple. Oh yes, he did wonder what top-level positions they held in the company to garner them the privilege of sitting at the same table with the CEO and his honored guests.

"They're both Adrian's lovers."

"Oh."

"Yes. Oh." Kyle was both unsympathetic and amused.

"I guess I should stop putting my big foot into my mouth," Grant said sheepishly. He'd wronged Chelsea again. Horribly.

"Yeah, you'll feel more comfortable that way too," Kyle said dryly.

"But why the special treatment? I got the impression Greene invited you because of her."

Kyle frowned. "I don't know why you'd feel that way but Adrian had known me since we were kids. In fact, all four of them—Jason, Adrian, Ethan and Shelli—grew up together."

A speculative thought struck him. "Do you think they're your brother's mates?"

"Couldn't be, they'd be a quad then, not a triad," Kyle said with certainty.

"There couldn't be any deviation?"

Kyle shook his head slowly. "There hasn't been any so far. Anyway," he continued a tad impatiently, "there's no use speculating. We'll know when Jason finally meets his

match. Or matches, I should say. Back to the topic, Adrian invited me because he heard that I was back and the timing just happened to coincide with his company's party. Maybe he thought he'd give his employees a special treat."

"Maybe," Grant replied, though he doubted it. He didn't know why he felt strongly about it but short of asking Greene, there wasn't any way they could confirm his instincts. Provided Greene told them the truth too, of course. He changed the topic. "When you left us to call room service, Chelsea assured me that she would not be in a position to take you away, because she'd be gone after dinner. I didn't believe her then, because I thought it was just her ploy."

"But she's really gone."

There was such bleakness in Kyle's eyes that Grant hurt. He moved to hug the younger man. "We'll get her back," he promised fiercely. "We'll do everything in our power to convince her she needs us in her life, even if you have to play that damn violin every time."

A reluctant laugh was wrung from Kyle's throat, even as he returned Grant's embrace. "Thank you. You don't know how good it felt to hear you say that."

"I know." Grant stroked Kyle's back in comfort and reassurance. "You're not alone anymore, Kyle. Even if Chelsea won't have us, you'll always have me."

"Yeah, I suppose you do know," Kyle said in a choked voice.

"And her comment about the air?" This was hard for him to say but Kyle needed to hear this, to know that he had battled his own demons and emerged triumphant. "She's right. If I hold on to you too tightly, you might feel constrained and you'd want out, effectively driving you toward the one thing that I feared most would happen. But that's not going to happen, is it, because you've got a heart big enough to love both of us. And...and..." He swallowed hard, buried his face in Kyle's neck and breathed in, gathering strength. Kyle hugged him tighter. A few moments later, he rested his chin on Kyle's shoulder. "I realized that the problem is with me, rather than you. I didn't trust you enough, I didn't trust our love enough but I'm going to work on it—"

"We'll work on it together," Kyle interrupted fiercely.

Grant didn't know what to say. No words could describe the overwhelming emotion welling up in him. Finally, he settled for, "I love you so very much." He was toasty warm, both inside and out.

"Me too." Kyle breathed deeply.

Grant stroked his back, feeling Kyle's muscles ripple under his fingertips. He desperately wanted to make love with Kyle as an expression of the culmination of the emotions swirling between them but at the same time, he was also content to stand wrapped in Kyle's arms, just enjoying his presence and being together. He turned his head and started placing little kisses on Kyle's throat, from which sexy little moans were released. Damn but the man smelled good. Devoid of the usual fragrance of his cologne, his scent was uniquely Kyle, which filled Grant's nostrils and surrounded him. His cock hardened and pulsed, aching.

Then Kyle dropped his bomb. "I'm going to see my father."

"What?" Startled, Grant dropped his arms and stepped back, the better to see him. For the first time since he'd known Kyle, the latter had referred to the old man as his "father". And instead of the usual anger and constipated fury on his face at the mention of his family, Kyle was calm and resigned to the prospect of a visit. Yes, this visit was long overdue.

"You heard me."

"Do you want me to come with you?"

Kyle hesitated, then shook his head. "No need. This is something between me and him."

"Your brother will be so pleased."

"Yes, wouldn't he?"

"I'm glad Chelsea came into our lives." Grant grinned. "There's something to be said for having a woman in the relationship." The moment he said the words, he knew

he believed them to be true. And his fear that Chelsea would snatch Kyle away from him was dealt with forever.

"But we can't go to her yet."

"No." He knew what Kyle was thinking. Kyle wanted to fulfill what she hadn't been able to do—to say a final goodbye to a loved one and make peace with him before he went away forever. Only then, armed with this gift, would he feel that he could face her again. "Have you called Jason yet? I staved him off yesterday when he called to demand why you hadn't called as promised but I think he's going to call again before today is over."

Kyle grinned wickedly. "I think I'll surprise my big brother instead."

* * * * *

Kyle stood at the gate of the home he hadn't seen in a long time, his heart quaking and his palms sweaty. He wasn't ready for this, he wasn't – Why the hell was he so nervous about this? The old man was the one who should be, as he had a lot to answer for!

Riding on the wave of adrenaline that rushed through him, he lifted his hand and pressed the doorbell, jerking his hand away as soon as he felt the button give way under the pressure of his finger. He ran his palms down the sides of his jeans. Did he press hard enough? Did the people inside hear the bell? Or should he press again?

Before he could do anything, the door opened to reveal Jason's relieved face. "Thanks for coming." The two men hugged for a brief moment.

"What, playing truant from work?" Kyle joked to ease the tension.

"I stay home sometimes, especially when Dad's feeling poorly." Jason gripped his arm so tightly Kyle winced. "Are you ready?"

He nodded, his eyes already avidly looking around the interior of the home he hadn't seen in seven years. Though the exterior hadn't changed much—except for a

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fresh coat of paint – his hungry gaze noted the little changes that were imprinted on the different rooms.

The sofas in the living room were still the same red brocade but the low coffee table now sported a vase of fresh blooms and a stack of magazines. The phone on the side table had been replaced by a newer, cordless model and a breakfast table had been added on the balcony. Sarah's college graduation photo was added to the collection of pictures that decorated the wall beside the grand piano but there was a rather conspicuous empty space right in the center of the collage of pictures.

"That's for your graduation pic," Jason said quietly as his gaze followed Kyle's. "Dad saved the spot for you."

A searing sensation lingered in the vicinity of his chest and his throat burned.

Why then? Why did you want me to give up my dream? Why try to prevent me from going to music school? And why did you never come for me, look for me, write to me?

Jason led the way inside to a room to the left. "We converted the downstairs study to his bedroom, when Dad grew too weak to climb the stairs. He's awake now but he tires easily." Jason hesitated with his hand on the knob. "I wish you could have a long visit but—"

"It's fine, Jase."

"You could stay over and have lots of short visits –"

"I'll think about it."

Jason opened his mouth to say more, then he closed it and nodded. He opened the door and gestured him inside. Kyle stepped into the darkened room and for a moment, when the door closed behind him and he realized Jason wasn't with him, he panicked. Then an eager, quavery voice came from the middle of the narrow bed located on the far side of the room. "Jase? Did you...talk to Kyle...again? Is he...coming...to see me...today?"

Kyle had thought his heart, where his father was concerned, was made of stone but he discovered he was wrong. His throat worked but he couldn't seem to speak.

"He didn't come." The resigned disappointment in his father's voice caused the walls of hatred and indifference Kyle had built around his heart to melt. "It's all right." His father moved feebly on the bed. "Somehow...I guessed," his voice faded to a whisper.

Kyle couldn't bear it. He'd come to crow and demand justice but in the end, he was the one beaten, defeated. He hurt, yet it was a good kind of hurt—releasing. That he was loved when he thought he wasn't. He rushed over to his father's bedside, sat down on the vacant chair and took one frail hand in his. "D-Dad." He stumbled over the word, his voice rusty.

"Kyle?" His father's voice brightened. "Is that...really you?" He'd initially been facing the curtained window but the moment Kyle had spoken, his father turned his head toward him and tried to sit up.

"No." Kyle made him lie back down, not wanting him to expend energy he should be using toward getting well.

His father held his hand in a grip that was surprisingly strong. "You...came back."

"Yes." In the dim light, Kyle saw a husk of the once robust and vigorous man that his father was and was shocked. "Dad, what happened? Jason said you're sick but I didn't realize it's so serious..."

"Ask him...later. Want to...tell you...how proud we are...your mom and I...of you."

Kyle couldn't help the words from pushing past his throat and tumbling out of his mouth. "But you didn't want me to study music. You pushed me to go into business." His voice dropped to a whisper, "You never came to see me or even called me. I was like...dead."

His father closed his eyes and for a moment, Kyle thought he'd tired and fallen asleep. Then he opened his eyes and Kyle saw moisture in them.

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"We were wrong," his father whispered. "You hadn't shown...much talent then...and we thought...you wouldn't...amount to anything. Better for you...to be in the business – "

"My talent grew under excellent teachers – teachers you never bothered to hire for me when I was young," Kyle said bitterly.

"You showed no interest...when you were young."

With a start, Kyle realized his father was right and as an adult, he could now see the logic behind his parents' actions. He had been more interested in computer games and roughhousing with his brother and neighborhood friends when he was a little boy. But the violin had called to him at puberty, especially the heirloom violin with the golden fingerboard that was locked behind a glass cabinet. Even then, his interest had been desultory, as he halfheartedly changed an elective in school to a beginners' music course that introduced students to different musical instruments. Somehow, the piano, guitar, violin, et cetera in school looked very ordinary and no wonder his interest wasn't captured.

It was when he happened to chance upon the key to the glass cabinet and he took out the heirloom violin and just played a few simple chords that his thirst and hunger for music had grown. He had tried to get by with music lessons in school or researching music theory on the internet but it hadn't been enough. By then, he was a senior in high school and he decided to go to music school.

On hindsight, he realized that his choice had come as a shock to his parents and they had thought it was a whim, so they had resolved to save him from himself, thinking they knew what was best for him. True, he hadn't shown much talent then, because it had been in music school that his talent had flourished, aided no doubt by the magic of the heirloom violin.

So he had run away, taking the violin with him as well as a few changes of clothes and whatever money he had in the bank.

"All right, fine," Kyle said abruptly. "But when you discovered that I had run away, that I had gone to Juilliard, why didn't you come after me then? Why didn't you even call me, check on me, *see if I was really there*?" For the eighteen-year-old boy that he had been back then, their silence had been the thing that had galled him the most. That they hadn't been worried about him, hadn't confirmed to make sure he was at the school instead of lying on some roadside ditch, bruised and bloody.

"We knew...the dean called us."

"Dean Morris?" Kyle was astonished.

"Shortly thereafter, your mom...became sick...and we had to...take care of her. She didn't want...you to worry, so we didn't...tell you." His father's breathing had become more and more labored as he became excited and wanted to tell the whole story faster. "By the time we decided...to call you, it was...too late. She'd already died."

Silent tears fell unheeded down Kyle's cheeks. So much misunderstanding and heartbreak that could've been avoided if they had communicated more, if they had stopped assuming so much about each other. This time, he didn't put all the blame on his parents or even Jason. He knew he shared the blame, if not the biggest part.

So many "if onlys". If only he had disclosed to his family his growing interest in music. If only he had sat down to talk with his parents and convinced them that he was serious about his music and about going to music school, then they might not have discounted his decision that easily.

He suddenly noticed that his father's hand had gone slack. Sudden fear touched his heart. "Dad?"

"He's asleep." Apparently, while he'd been lost in thought, Jason had come into the room and was standing beside him. "When I didn't hear any sound coming from the room, I came in to check." He paused while Kyle tucked their father's hand under the blanket. "He's very proud of you, Kyle, both he and Mom. They were always bragging about you to their friends—hell, who am I kidding?" A wry note entered Jason's voice. "They bragged about you to anyone who'd listen, of your courage to pursue your

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dream. When Mom realized she was about to die, she didn't want us to call you, because she was afraid the news would interfere with your concentration and - " Jason drew a deep breath as his voice cracked. "And she wanted to be supportive. She said that she regretted not supporting you that time and if by not calling you home no matter how much she wanted to was how she could show her support, that she believed in you, then -" A sob tore through Jason's narrative. "Then that was what she'd do. She had a picture of you at her bedside table and she died looking at you."

Jason drew in a deep breath before he continued, "We never called you but we kept track of your progress. Dad maintains a scrapbook of clippings—from newspapers, magazines, internet articles—of your tours, interviews, awards, everything. He has all your recordings and he even buys stacks of your CDs to give to friends. We also know about Grant and Dad was highly impressed with Grant's compositions, calling them 'evocative, haunting, brilliant'. But of course, no one compared to his son—"

By this time, Kyle's throat was burning and searing with so many unshed tears and his heart was full of regrets. He fell to his knees and gently touched his father's arm. "Dad, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. Forgive me..."

Kyle felt Jason's hand on his hand, brushing back his hair lightly. "He forgave you a long time ago, when he called Dean Morris and asked him to expect you and to look out for you."

Chapter Eight

Chelsea buried herself in work. At first, she did it because she didn't want to think about Kyle and Grant and how they had made her feel. She missed them. Hard to believe as she'd known them for only one night but she did. She missed the way they made her feel about herself—desirable and sexy. Yes, she lusted after them but what she felt was more than sex. That last time they'd made love, there had been some sort of bonding, a connection of souls, in the initial anger and then later on, in the tenderness of the moments. And for the first time in a long while, she was alive, every cell in her body alert, awake and singing with joy, every nerve and synapse celebrating the return of life. Everything she saw had more color, more vibrancy, even the air brimmed with energy. Even guilt over David hadn't changed her new perception.

But guilt *had* eventually set in.

How could she be enjoying herself when it was her fault that David had died without knowing how much she loved him? That he died with her angry words in his ears? Or that he died at all?

And wasn't it funny that now, five years later, she couldn't even remember what the hell they were arguing about that morning?

Oh, if only she'd kept her mouth shut!

If she was facing her fears bravely, she'd admit that she was scared. Terrified. She sensed that Kyle and Grant could come to mean much more to her than just casual sex partners but she was afraid of the pain of letting them in. And what if David's fate befell one of them? She didn't think she could bear to go through the whole experience again.

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Then the need to escape her thoughts propelled her toward work. When she had completed all her tasks, she asked the senior secretary if she could help with anything. She even approached her boss for more work.

Adrian had laughed. "I'm paying you too much, is it?"

She shrugged. "I have nothing more to do and I'm bored. Instead of wasting the next three hours twiddling my thumbs, why don't you give me something so that I can be productive?"

"All right." He pushed a stack of folders at her. "Give me a summary of each of their proposals by tomorrow."

She had snatched up the pile with alacrity and was about to leave his office when he called out, "Oh, by the way, did you enjoy Kyle Montgomery's music?"

"Y-yes." She turned around cautiously, wondering if his remark held a deeper meaning. "What about you?"

"Oh, Shelli and Ethan and I enjoyed it very much too, thank you." There was a definite twinkle in his eyes, before it disappeared when he adopted a compassionate expression. "I know how much you love music, Chelsea, and how you gave it up when your husband died. My father has always doted on you and he's forever telling me to tell you that he believes it's time for you to stop mourning. I know it's hard when a loved one passes away but I hoped that hearing Kyle's music would remind you that there's still beauty in life, if you would but open yourself to it."

Chelsea swallowed the boulder that had lodged in her throat, moved beyond words. "You...you invited Kyle for me?"

He shrugged and grinned easily. "It was what my father would've wanted. I know Kyle from way back and he happened to be in town, so it was no big deal."

So her suspicions were on the mark. "Still, thank you. I'll...uh, I'll go do the summaries now." She escaped before the tears could fall and she didn't know if she was crying because she was touched by the Greene family's gesture or because it had been a

week since she'd walked out on them and there had been no sign of Kyle or Grant and no call from them either.

Perhaps they only had sex in mind that night, after all. Mindless, nonstop sex induced by powerful magic from the violin.

Where did she get off thinking they'd come after her? She'd made it very clear that she wanted nothing to do with them anymore. Famous and influential men like them could find women anywhere. They didn't even need to work and women fell at their feet. Why then would they expend the effort and energy to look for her when they could have what they wanted at the snap of their fingers?

No, they weren't coming, no matter how much she wanted them to. Hell, she *wanted* them, yet thoughts of David would drift into her mind and she couldn't help but feel that she was somehow betraying his memory.

She was torn, confused, ambivalent.

And so, the need to forget them drove her to keep on working even after she left the office. At home, she cleaned her small apartment twice over every night before she fell on her bed into an exhausted sleep.

That Saturday evening, she was cooking dinner when the doorbell rang. She hated it when her heart started racing. Could it be— But no, they didn't know her address. Her heart plummeted.

Still, she couldn't help the sliver of hope that beat in her breast when she made her way to the living room and her disappointment was complete when she opened the door. "What are you doing here?"

Her brother held up a basket of fruit. "You didn't think I'd forget, did you?"

"No, I suppose not. Come in." Harold had adored his older brother-in-law, so he would've remembered to commemorate the latter's death anniversary.

"How are you doing?" Harold asked as he followed her into the kitchen.

She gave the soup a final stir, then turned off the burner. "The same. Dinner will be ready in a short while. It's just clam chowder."

"It's fine." He went to the cupboard and took out the soup bowls. "It was David's favorite, wasn't it?"

"Mine too," she retorted.

"Can you honestly tell me that you didn't cook it because of David?"

"No," she admitted. "I thought it was appropriate." Although she hadn't wanted to cook in the first place, as she didn't have any appetite, the way it had been the past few days. But she had forced herself when she remembered it was for David.

He placed the bowls on the counter and held her hands. "It's been five years, sis. I thought you'd grieve less as the years passed and time healed your wounds. But you're sadder tonight than I'd ever seen you. I'm - "

"I am?" Chelsea was startled.

"What?"

"Sadder, you said."

"Yes." He frowned. "There's this melancholy air about you and you're also thinner since I last saw you two weeks ago. Have you been eating?"

"Yes."

"I don't think you are. What about these bags under your eyes? I'm worried about you."

She hadn't been able to sleep much either. Her thoughts were full of Kyle and Grant and surprisingly, David.

"Chelsea, David's heart would break if he saw you like this. He wouldn't have wanted you to grieve for him so long."

All the emotional turmoil she'd gone through the past week overwhelmed her and she lashed out, "How do you know?"

"Because David was like me. We would've wanted our loved one to go on living a happy and fulfilling life after we're—"

"Even if it's my fault that he died?" She hadn't intended to say that, it had just come blurting out.

He stared at her in dismay. "Oh Chelsea, that's what's been eating you up, hasn't it? How could you think it's your fault? It was an accident, something you had no control over."

"But if we hadn't quarreled, he might have paid more attention to driving than—"

"Believe me, if he was mad, then he hadn't been angry for long. He -"

"What do you mean?"

Harold turned away from her and sat down at the kitchen table. "That morning, I called him on his cell to ask about the tickets for some concert. He was calm and cheerful, then he confessed that you had quarreled and that after he'd cooled down, he realized that you were right and he was at fault. He even—"

"What did we quarrel about?"

"Huh? I have no idea. I didn't ask, because it wasn't any of my business. You mean you didn't know?"

"I've forgotten," she confessed.

"Then it wasn't important. What's crucial is that he told me he was going to do something special to make amends for his fault and for the quarrel." He paused and continued softly, "He'd already forgiven you, Chel, for whatever it was. You shouldn't feel guilt or think you're betraying him if you're happy or meet other men, because you wouldn't be true to his memory then. David had a big heart, Chel, he would've wanted you to be happy."

How could she have forgotten that generous heart? It was the reason she had fallen in love with him.

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Tears welled up and she sobbed — for the life snuffed out so young, for the love they had shared, the beautiful memories they had made together and for the precious gift of absolution that Harold had just given her.

Harold held her as she cried and when her tears dwindled, he wiped away the stray drops with his thumbs. "So, if you're serious about anyone, give me a call and I'll look him over for you. Gotta make sure he deserves you," he joked.

She cracked a smile. "Sure. I may have two for you soon." She wasn't about to let them go without a fight. She'd help Kyle make peace with his dad and she'd do her best to convince Grant that Kyle belonged not just to one but to both of them.

His eyes widened. "Making up for lost time with a vengeance, huh?"

Oh, if he only knew. She suddenly remembered the concert and realized Harold would be so thrilled if he knew one of the men she was talking about was his idol Kyle Montgomery. "That's all you're going to say?"

"Go for it, sis." He hugged her tightly. "Whatever makes you happy."

After dinner, which was consumed over happy reminiscences of experiences they'd had with David, Harold left to pick up his girl for their date. Chelsea yawned as she stacked the dishwasher, realizing that she hadn't slept well in the past few days. Well, she was going to bed just as soon as she piled the last dish into the machine. The moment she did so, however, the doorbell rang. *Harold probably forgot something*, she thought with wry amusement. She pushed the "start" button to begin the wash, then made her way to the living room.

She opened the door and was greeted by a large bouquet of flowers, held by someone who was hiding behind the blossoms. She couldn't identify all the flowers but she thought she recognized some roses, jasmine, dahlias, tulips and – oh, her favorite – lilies. The combined scent was pleasant, though not overpowering.

"Yes, you're looking for?"

Warm, steel-gray eyes peeked at her from around the bouquet. Her heart skipped a beat and she was drawn again by his magnetism. "Hi, Chelsea," Kyle greeted, then he said sheepishly, "I didn't know what your favorite is, so I bought three of each."

Three? Was there some hidden meaning behind the number? I love you? Three persons in the relationship? Where was Grant?

"Can I come in?"

She hadn't realized she was just staring at him until he spoke. "Oh yes, of course. I'm sorry." She opened the door wider. "And thank you for the lovely flowers."

Only by edging in sideways was Kyle able to cross the threshold with the flowers. Once he was safely in the hall, she looked for Grant, who she thought would enter after Kyle but he was nowhere to be seen. Kyle didn't seem complete without Grant. Feeling a little let down, she closed the door. She directed him to stay in the living room, while she went to the kitchen and unearthed her biggest vase from the cupboard and filled it a quarter of the way with water. When she went back to the living room, she fiddled with the flowers as she arranged them in the vase on the coffee table. "If you'd come earlier, you could've joined my brother and me for dinner." She leaned forward and inhaled appreciatively.

"Thank you," he said, his voice serious.

She concentrated on the flowers, noting with dismay that the whole bunch wouldn't fit into the vase. She had no choice but to lay the rest on the table. Maybe she could pick up more vases tomorrow.

"Why won't you look at me?"

"I'm busy with the flowers."

"You are not now," he pointed out. "You're deliberately avoiding me."

"Don't be ridiculous." She tried to raise her eyes but they wouldn't look past his chin. Somehow, she felt unaccountably shy.

Sex Symphony

He cupped her chin and gently raised her head until she was looking into his gray eyes. She could drown in the tender expression in them. "There, that's better." He smiled. "Don't you think so?"

"No," she whispered. This was worse than being physically naked. Her soul was bared to his gaze and he could read anything and everything from her eyes. She wanted to ask where Grant was but the words that came out were, "I thought you weren't coming." She blushed.

"Of course we were, that was never in doubt." He caressed her cheek with his thumb and she had the insane urge to press her cheek against his palm and rub like a cat. "But Grant and I decided that you aren't used to the idea of a triad, so we decided that I should court you first and get acquainted, then—"

"That's ridiculous!"

The hopeful expression on his face died and his hand dropped to his side.

She was confused by his reaction.

"Oh. In that case... I guess... I guess I should...leave. Goodbye," he choked and turned to go.

She caught his arm. "Wait."

"It's no use, Chelsea. I can't leave Grant. If you can't accept both of us –"

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"You want to choose either Grant or me in your life and we can't have that—" he said angrily.

"Then I choose both! Is that acceptable?" she shouted in order to be heard, heaving like a sedentary person who'd suddenly taken up jogging as a hobby.

"Perfectly!" he shouted back.

Simultaneously, they both realized what their conversation meant and foolish grins appeared on their faces. Then the grins faded and they simply stared at each other. Chelsea's heart was beating so fast and so loudly she thought she must surely faint.

Kyle's gaze roved all over her face and he ran a gentle finger down her cheek. He smiled faintly, a lopsided smile that was endearing and cute. "You'd better open the door. Grant's waiting outside."

Wordlessly, she went toward the door again and Grant was indeed waiting on her doorstep. She opened the door wider and he stepped in. "That was fast. I thought I would have to wait another hour. But the ice cream would've melted by then, so we're good. Hi, Chelsea." He handed her a plastic bag and when she peeked, she saw that the flavor he brought was Neapolitan.

She began to laugh. "Was the number three a conscious choice?" She had her answer when the men glanced at each other and smiled sheepishly. Amid chuckles, she stored the ice cream in the freezer.

"We were trying for a message," Grant explained earnestly and she realized they'd followed her into the kitchen. "Three in a relationship *can* work, Chelsea. We might need to work harder at understanding and communication but if we work at it together, we might make more of a success of it than most couple marriages."

She was still scared of the long-term nature of the relationship they were proposing, terrified of the possible pitfalls and heartaches that were sure to come down the road but the past week had taught her that she was miserable and hurting without them. Why not take a chance and grab a few days, months, years of happiness with them when she could? She remembered the happy reminiscences of David she'd had with Harold earlier in the evening. She realized that even if David was gone, he would continue to live on in her memories, their happy times together shining perpetually in her heart. By hiding away, she was doing herself an injustice by depriving herself – and also Kyle and Grant – of whatever happiness she could find with them.

The realization was freeing and she could hear the shackles around her heart clanking open.

"When did you change your mind, Grant?" she asked him squarely. If they were to make this work, they needed to be open and honest about things and that meant not mincing words that might be misunderstood.

"When you proved yourself to me," he answered candidly enough. "I'm man enough to know when I'm wrong and admit it and I owe you big-time apology for not believing you and for being rude to you." He spread his hands helplessly. "I have no reason for my actions except that I'm a man in love and I saw you as a threat to all that I hold dear. The attraction I felt for you complicated things and made me confused, plus I believed you were a selfish, social vamp who would use sex to climb the corporate ladder. I hated to see you get your claws into Kyle, but at the same time I was insanely jealous of Greene. Do I make sense?"

"Not really," she said regretfully, "but I think I understand." Bubbling warmth was spreading throughout her body as she realized she was wrong to think he didn't like her. Not only did he like her but he was attracted to her, just as Kyle was.

How did a woman like her get so lucky and twice – no, thrice – in one lifetime?

"I may still have occasional bouts of jealousy now and then," Grant continued sheepishly, "so both you and Kyle are honor-bound to help me get over them."

"And we'll take it slowly," Kyle promised. "We guessed that you haven't been with a man since your...David died -"

"He *was* my husband," she said slowly, "but he's gone now and my brother was right in that he wouldn't want me to grieve for him this long." Tears filled her eyes as she finally spoke the fact that she'd unconsciously known even before Harold had voiced it, the truth that rang from her heart. "I'd told you that I didn't want to be buried alive but the truth was, I had been buried alive these five years. I was just going through everything by rote but the day I met you, both of you—and this may sound cheesy but it's true—colors started filling in all the dark and empty spaces within me."

Grant gripped her hand tightly.

"Just so you don't misunderstand, we aren't looking to replace David in your heart, because we can't, because he and Grant and I are three totally different people." Kyle looked at her with stark honesty and sincerity as he took her other hand. "But since David can't be here with you, we hope that you'll allow Grant and me to be there for you, whatever you may need, however long that may be."

She stared down at their joined hands and felt that somehow David approved. A certain sense of well-being filled her.

"But we'll still take it slowly," Kyle reiterated. "That means a proper courtship, flowers and chocolates and all the works and no sex until you're ready." He continued more quietly, "I have to thank you too for goading me to see my father. You're right, I needed the closure."

"I'm glad," she said simply. He would tell her more when he was ready. She suddenly felt her eyes getting heavy and her mind becoming groggy. She yawned. Not a delicate, ladylike yawn but a big, fat, opening-her-whole-mouth yawn. "Oops, sorry."

"You're tired."

"I haven't been sleeping well this week," she confessed, yawning again.

"We should get going then and let you rest," Grant started to say. "We'll just help you check that all the windows are closed and then we'll -"

"Why don't you stay the night?"

Both men stared at her.

"Are you sure?" Grant asked cautiously, his eyes bright.

"Yes, we won't be doing anything but sleep, will we?" she asked innocently, hiding her yawn behind her hand.

Kyle went red and Grant said, "Oh, sleep, yes, of course." They followed her into the hallway and looked around the small apartment. "Where's your spare bedroom located?" Kyle asked, scratching his head.

Sex Symphony

"No spare, I'm afraid." She shook her head regretfully, eyes almost half-closed. "We'd all have to bunk in together."

This time, they gaped at her. "You want us two in bed with you?" Grant asked, incredulous.

"Unless you'd like to sleep on the hard, marble floor..." Finally, she laughed and it was a good feeling—being free to laugh and take joy in it. "I so enjoy teasing you. C'mon, we're adults and I'm one sleepy woman. We'll all keep our clothes on and we'll just sleep. My king-sized bed is just right for the three of us." She turned and padded toward her bedroom, which was located off the dining area. "After you lock the door and check the windows, come and join me. But first..." She whirled around and ran to them. "I need a kiss very badly." She drew to a halt when Grant's piercing blue eyes flared bright with lust and the intensity in Kyle's steel-gray ones deepened until his eyes turned black.

She suddenly couldn't breathe. She realized that they were serious when they'd decided to take things slowly and they'd banked the fires of their need and hunger but her request had unleashed the tigers and they were ready to pounce.

Grant stalked and his walk reminded her of the graceful slink of the predator cat toward his prey. Kyle prowled, his body taut and sleek with tension and she was very aware of the growing bulge between his thighs.

She couldn't think, couldn't move, could only wait until Grant reached her first and drew her gently into his arms. His mouth, when it touched hers, was cool and firm but his kiss burned a searing trail from her lips to her groin. Her pussy clenched as she returned the pressure and they kissed hungrily, passionately. She couldn't get enough of him, as though it had been more than a week—a month, a year—since she'd last kissed him. She inhaled his scent and felt it brand itself indelibly in her soul. His heat surrounded her, stoking the flame inside her and when she felt she was about to explode, he broke off the kiss, breathing heavily and turning her around to face Kyle.

But Grant didn't relinquish her. He continued nuzzling the back of her neck as Kyle cupped her chin—he was so hot—and his head dipped. His dark eyes blazed, her heart raced with anticipation, her lips tingled but nothing could've prepared her for the taste of his lips, his mouth.

Sweet...

She moaned as their tongues dueled, stroked, stabbed in playful teasing. His tongue retreated and hers followed, tasting the heated flavor of his mouth, sipping his essence and finally capturing and sucking his tongue –

Kyle broke away with a gasp and staggered backward.

She opened her eyes and made a sound of protest, her hands unconsciously reaching out for him. Grant molded himself to her back and she could feel the hardness of his body and the harder quality of his arousal. Her nipples puckered in response and chafed against her shirt, his hands trailing a slow path from her waist up her midriff, up, up, up to her breasts –

"If we don't stop now, we'll never be able to," Kyle rasped in a tortured voice.

Grant jerked his hands away and strode a few paces away and in her weakened knees condition, Chelsea had to support herself against the wall or she would've fallen into a heap onto the floor. *Don't stop, oh please don't stop,* she was very tempted to say but before she could voice out her thoughts, Kyle held her hand and supported her, careful not to get too close so that no part of their bodies, except their hands, touched. "C'mon, Chelsea, let's get you to bed," he said gently. "You need sleep and we don't want you to do anything you might regret in the morning."

I won't regret this, she wanted to protest and she was sure that she wouldn't but perhaps not tonight, not on the anniversary of David's death. She also wasn't sleepy anymore, the kisses had shocked her system into waking up very fast.

Still, she allowed him to lead her to the bedroom, where she took off her shirt and shorts and slipped into her black lace nightgown. Admittedly, it was a sexy thing designed to drive a man wild and it didn't cover much except for the vital areas but she didn't want to search for David's pajamas. After their explosive kisses, she was feeling wild enough, daring enough to tease the guys further. She thought she was too wide awake to sleep but as soon as her head hit the pillow, she was off into dreamland.

Chapter Nine

The men were true to their words. In the days that followed, they flirted and teased her but they never made serious passes, they kept their hands to themselves and gave her quick pecks on the cheek at the end of the night. They sent her a bouquet of fresh flowers every day, together with her favorite chocolates or a teddy bear or a heartshaped balloon. She never thought men could be this romantic...or mushy. God, a heart-shaped balloon? Her cheeks had flared with color when her colleagues erupted into wolf whistles the moment the delivery boy had entered with the gift.

After work, Kyle and Grant would take her out to dinner, usually at an expensive restaurant and they'd enjoy the food, the wine and the conversation, especially the ones on music. Chelsea also enjoyed their company. Just being with them made her heart beat faster with exhilaration and her body hum with anticipation.

"Kyle, have I told you that I absolutely love your music?" Chelsea gushed, although she promised herself she wouldn't act like a mooning teenager talking to her idol boy band. "The way you draw the music out from the violin is pure magic. How do you do that?"

Kyle winked. "It's a secret."

"You're talking about the heirloom violin, I presume?" Grant waggled his eyebrows meaningfully.

"You're just jealous because she didn't praise your composition," Kyle joked.

"I am not!"

"Are too."

"But you really have to admit how extraordinary Kyle is," she said, deliberately stepping up the fire. Teasing Grant was so much fun, especially when she and Kyle teamed up together. "Pure talent. He has such flair, such skill, such..." she sighed. "It's no wonder he has lots of screaming female fans." She looked around. "Speaking of which, why aren't we being ambushed?"

"Ah...what you're seeing is the power of hidden bodyguards," Kyle said.

"The privileges of the rich and famous."

Grant was scowling. "That's all you're saying?"

"Is there anything more to say?" she asked innocently. "Oh yes..." She gazed at him speculatively.

He leaned forward eagerly. "Yes?"

"I'd forgotten that the media has also dubbed Kyle the 'violinist extraordinaire'. I can understand the moniker. He's simply amazing." She placed a hand at her breast. "I can't believe I'm dining with him, or even dating him."

She sneaked a peek over at Kyle to see him trying to suppress his laughter, barely succeeding. Meanwhile, Grant acted haughty and snooty and turned his body slightly away from her. "Fine but I feel compelled to warn you, girl, that you're drooling."

"Drool has been known to make an inedible meal tasty," she drawled.

A reluctant smile tugged at the corner of his mouth before it disappeared.

"Ha! I saw that, Grant Thornton. What a faker," she said, mock-disgusted. "Before you sulk any further, I'd like to tell you that you're good too. No, way better than good. Orgasmically excellent! How do you think such inspiring music could flow out of Kyle's violin? If the composition sucks, there's no way even a violinist of Kyle's caliber could've pulled it off."

"You'd be surprised," Grant muttered, before he did a double take. "Did you just say 'orgasmically excellent'?" He grinned. "I like that." He repeated it again for good measure, "Orgasmically excellent."

Chelsea rolled her eyes. Men. So easy to stroke their fragile egos.

"What about you?" Kyle asked after he took a sip of his wine. "Do you like music?"

"I've carried on a love affair with music all my life," she admitted, her gaze on the wineglass in her hand. "At an early age, my mother sent me for private piano lessons. They cost a bundle but she had the dream that I'd be a famous concert pianist someday and my piano teacher abetted that dream by telling her that I had the most talent among all her students."

Grant frowned. "How come I don't remember seeing a piano in your apartment?"

"I gave it away." She paused a beat, then continued, "When David died." Funny, saying his name didn't hurt anymore. The feelings of guilt and betrayal that had usually accompanied his name or thoughts of him didn't come either. The most she felt was fond remembrance, especially of the good memories she had of him.

"Oh."

Silence for a full three seconds, then Kyle asked, "So, did you fulfill your mother's dream?"

Chelsea snorted. "Hardly. I'm a lowly PA these days, in case you'd forgotten."

"But you had the most talent?" Kyle persisted.

She smiled, remembering those days. "The second most, probably."

"Who was the first?"

"David."

"So that's how you met." Grant's voice was meticulously neutral.

"Yes, we were seven then." Her thoughts turned inward and she recalled that they would have lunch together after lessons before heading for home and as a result, they had become fast friends and their mothers as well. "He was a sweet, gentle boy and he grew up into a nice, sensitive man who—"

"Who loved you very much," Kyle finished quietly.

"Yes." She blinked away the sudden tears. "*He* became a world-renowned concert pianist and like you, Kyle, he was extraordinary. The piano keys obeyed his every instruction and he could play such music as to make you weep. As for me, I was quite

content to make a home for him. But even though I bowed out of the music scene, I didn't totally give up my music. I still practiced my piano at home and I gave private piano lessons on weekends, mainly out of boredom. I became a personal assistant first to the elder Mr. Greene then to Adrian Greene after...David died. It was my father who called in the favor and found me the job. He was worried that I would waste my life away. I couldn't face music then— Ha!" She gave a bitter laugh, remembering those dark days. "I didn't want anything to do with music, I didn't want to do anything but sit in a corner, cry and think about David, think about what I should have done so that he'd still be alive." She was startled out of her memories by a warm clasp on her hands. Both Kyle and Grant had taken hold of one limb and sympathy shone from their faces. She felt like crying all over again, because she was struck by how right this felt—both Kyle and Grant here with her, comforting her in her sad memories. She drew in a deep, cleansing breath. "Your first concert here was also my first in five years. Harold, my brother, dragged me to it—"

"Hooray for him," Grant muttered.

"He's also a very big fan of yours, by the way," she said with a pointed glance at Kyle.

"Just say the word. I'm more than happy to meet him, I'll even give a private performance for him if he likes," Kyle said teasingly.

"He'll fall at your feet in gratitude."

"He brought you to me," he said simply. Then with a glance at Grant, he amended, "To us. We should be the ones to fall at his feet."

And just like that, he captured her heart.

To lighten up the atmosphere, she took back her hands, turned toward Grant and asked, "What about you? Any skeletons in your closet?"

"My family doesn't tend toward bony structures," he drawled.

She stared at him, then burst into laughter. Though she'd experienced Grant's sense of humor many times over the past several days, she still hadn't quite gotten used to it. She glanced over at Kyle, who was grinning. "No, seriously."

Grant shrugged. "Normal, run-of-the-mill family. All except one sister are musically inclined, so it was great fun growing up with siblings who are interested in different types of instruments, as a result of which, being the youngest, I got to dabble a bit here and there but as I grew up, I settled down to learning the violin. There's just something stately and grand about the music the violin makes that drew me. But composition is my first love, so I found a way to connect the two. That's my life in a nutshell." The corner of his eyes crinkled. "So as you can see, there are no skeletons whatsoever in my closet."

She leaned toward him, fascinated. Everything about the two of them interested her. She'd learned that Kyle's favorite food was pizza and Grant's was hamburger. Food junkies, the both of them, so it was no wonder they got along so well. "When did you meet? How did you meet?"

Grant glanced at Kyle, the expression on his face softening. "It was about three and a half years ago, when Kyle was twenty-two and I was twenty-seven. He'd just performed to a standing ovation hours earlier and I attended the post-concert party with my then-girlfriend, who was a fan and who conveniently knew one of the organizers."

"Oh," she rolled out the sound into three syllables, sensing a story.

"Yeah, I'm sure you can imagine." Grant grinned sheepishly. "I couldn't understand the attraction I felt for Kyle and for a long time, I fought it. But I was fighting a losing battle and within three months, I gave up and broke up with my girlfriend."

She smirked. "At least you lasted three months." It was hard to think of Grant with a woman but she supposed he had to be bisexual, Kyle as well, or else neither man would have wanted to touch her. She turned serious as a thought occurred to her. "So, um, Kyle, if your family is famous for triads, why didn't you just join Grant and his girl? Why break them up?"

Kyle frowned but Grant spoke up before he could. "Wait. Kyle didn't break us up. We were already on the verge of breaking, mainly because she wanted better things, things that were far more costly than I could afford back then -"

"Damn fool woman," she muttered.

"Thank you." Grant paused. "Anyway, back then, I hadn't wanted to let the relationship go without a fight, so I held on. Sometime during my struggles, I woke up and realized she wasn't the woman for me, that if we had ever fallen in love, well, the feeling wasn't there any longer. So by mutual consent, we went our separate ways and moved on."

"When you became famous, did she, you know, want you back?"

"Yeah, not in so many words but I told her I wasn't available anymore."

"He was my saving grace," Kyle put in. "I was young, impressionable and on top of the world and he grounded me."

There was such love in his face as he looked at Grant that Chelsea almost wanted to turn away, embarrassed at intruding in their privacy. Then he turned that gaze on her and the breath lodged in her throat. Only once had a man stared at her that way and when David had died, she'd thought she'd never find another. And here, she thought dazedly, two men were sending that same look her way.

Sometimes, in the dead of the night when her mind was too alert and busy replaying their conversations or the memory of their heated glances, she would marvel once again at how lucky she was to have captured two of the world's most eligible and talented hunks. She had noticed how female heads turned whenever they walked into the room, how calculating feminine gazes would measure each man from head to foot and subsequent desire burned in the depths of their eyes. She even had one pair of jealous orbs shooting daggers at her. As if!

Kyle had also started to open up to her, telling her of his reconciliation with his father and bringing her to his home to meet his parent. The old man was delighted to see her, even bringing out the photo albums to show her Kyle's childhood pictures, complete with amusing anecdotes. She learned that Kyle and Grant had moved out of the hotel into Kyle's home, because he wanted to spend more time with his father, who could only remain awake for a short period each time. She saw how Kyle was very careful and caring with his father. How he treated the old man with respect and affection and he was so very different from the young man who had initially emanated such hate and disgust that her heart moved, especially after Kyle had shared with her his story.

"What happened to your dad, Kyle?" They stepped out of the room quietly, not wanting to disturb the old man who had fallen asleep in the middle of a story.

"Bone cancer," he replied succinctly. "He's in a lot of pain and his pain meds make him sleepy."

She touched his arm in sympathy. "I'm sorry."

"I am too." They moved into the living room, where they sat side by side on the sofa. "I'm sorry I wasn't here sooner, sorry I couldn't see past my own misguided feelings, sorry..." He dropped his head onto his open hands. "Hell, sorry for a lot of things."

"Hey, don't feel this way. At least you got this chance to talk with him, be with him, show him you love him."

"Yeah, I owe you one."

She laid her head on his shoulder and hugged him and they stayed that way for some time, not saying anything but just being with each other.

With each conversation, with each new thing she learned about both Kyle and Grant, she was in great danger of falling in love with them. Yet, even as she had that thought, she knew it was too late, she was *already* in love with them. When her brother had first brought her to the concert and she'd been mesmerized by the magnetic

personality that was Kyle, she had already started on the path to love, though she had fought every step of the way. And when she'd met Grant at her company's dinner and dance, she'd been caught by his authoritative presence and his stunning blue eyes that made her think of open clear skies and beautiful summer days. She was attracted to him despite his rudeness and accusation and the moment she'd realized the reason for his behavior, compassion and empathy had filled her. His perseverance to deal with his irrational jealousy also earned her admiration.

Grant's suspicious voice snapped her out of her musings. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

"What?" They were having dinner at Grant's favorite restaurant when she had her epiphany.

"Like you want to eat me." For a moment, fire flared from deep in his blue eyes, then he looked pointedly at her plate. "I'll have you know I'm not on the menu, especially as you haven't finished your salmon yet."

She was so ready—more than ready—to deepen their relationship, to bring it to another level and she was going to enjoy telling them so. She ducked her head, feigning shyness. "But what if..." She licked her lips and glanced up, in time to see Grant's gaze fixated on her mouth, which tingled, as though he'd physically caressed it. "What if you're on the menu? What if I had ordered you this evening? What do you want me to do?" At the same time, she touched his thigh with her hand under the table and his leg jerked, his eyes grew wild.

"Chelsea..." he said in a warning tone.

She turned and leaned toward Kyle, noting that his gaze dipped to the cleavage revealed by her v-necked blouse. She hadn't deliberately worn this particular blouse tonight but she hoped he got a very enticing sight. "What about you, Kyle? How would you answer my questions?" Her right hand caressed his thigh, the way her other hand was doing to Grant and she sighed at the sensation of two hard thighs between her hands. Her pussy clenched with longing, as the image of the time she was sandwiched

between the two of them flashed into her mind. She decided she was silly for having waited this long, as it was obvious as the freckles on her nose that she'd wanted them from the first moment she'd laid eyes on them. However, just like them, she had issues to wade through and she hadn't been ready then, but now, the timing was right.

Kyle made a strangled sound and his fork clattered to the plate.

"Kyle?" she encouraged, then encouraged him more by stroking higher up his thigh, higher and higher up his taut limb until her nails scraped against his cock through his trousers. Her breath hitched. God, he was so hot and hard. She wanted to tear off his clothes, lift up her skirt and impale herself on him.

His hand clamped about her wrist and lifted it the few inches off his body. "What the hell are you doing, Chelsea?" he growled. "Do you know the consequences of your actions?"

"Hell, yes," she answered his last question, annoyed. "And for two grown men, both of you are so dense. What do you think I'm doing?"

"If you're doing to him what you're doing to me, I don't think it's fair of you to arouse us both to fever pitch and leave us hanging at the end of the night," Grant shot back, though he didn't remove her hand, which was traveling dangerously close to his cock.

Her body tingled and her blood surged with anticipation. "I promise I'll be fair," she said huskily, her hand wrapping around his rigid shaft, rubbing slowly, oh-so slowly and she watched as his breathing quickened and his nostrils flared.

Kyle's sharp intake of breath told her he understood her meaning. Moments later, Grant's eyes widened. "Let's get out of here," he muttered. He threw his napkin down on the plate and raised his hand for the bill.

Chelsea had never been hustled out of a restaurant so fast as at that moment. The moment they stepped out of the restaurant, Chelsea breathed in the fresh night air and laughed, elated and excited and free.

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"You ought to be punished, young lady," Grant muttered, looking at her as though he couldn't believe the vamp she'd turned into.

"Oooh." She shivered in anticipation. "I can't wait. Make it a good one, something I can't forget, okay?"

Kyle stared at her from Grant's side. "Somehow I don't think that's the appropriate reaction." He and Grant exchanged a glance and the heated look Kyle turned on her afterward made her shiver even more, this time with longing. "But yeah, we'll make it good. You ought to be properly put in your place, to make sure you don't step out of line again."

His stern tone and his promise stayed with her throughout the ride home and she found out just how good they intended to make their vow. As soon as they arrived at her apartment, they locked the door and hurried her into the bedroom, dispensing with her clothes along the way. Her naked back hit the cool cotton sheets of her bed and she protested, "Hey, you're not in proper attire."

Both men were still wearing their trousers, although their broad shoulders and ripped chests were gloriously bare and luscious. She itched to run her hands over those muscles and feel them ripple under her fingers. At her comment, they glanced at each other.

"We aren't?" Grant knelt on the floor beside her head, while Kyle took up the position at the foot of the bed.

"No," she answered breathlessly, because Kyle had taken hold of her foot and was kissing her ankle, while his free hand rubbed up and down her leg. She had never thought of her ankle as particularly erogenous but he was arousing her and making her wet.

"Does it matter?" Grant asked again before he blocked out the light and captured her lips with his own.

She guessed it didn't matter as she moaned her satisfaction. He licked and traced her mouth from corner to corner, before his tongue delved into her mouth and her heat

level went up a notch. She was surrounded by his scent and his taste. He kissed her like he'd never kissed her before, sampling her flavor, then coming back for more...and more. His kiss was erotic and seductive and she could willingly drown in it, in him. One hand cupped her breast, shaping, molding, squeezing. She arched and gave a little cry that was swallowed by his mouth and her nipples puckered into tiny rosebuds that ached. Grant strummed his thumb over the turgid point and teased it into further prominence. Shafts of heat shot from her breast to her pussy and she could feel her juices flowing, gushing out.

Meanwhile, Kyle was working his way up her legs and he was now kissing her soft inner thighs. "Damn, I can smell you," he growled, before he cupped her buttocks with his hands, lifted and planted his face in her pussy.

She shrieked, the sound muffled against Grant's mouth and bucked a little. His hair tickled her thighs but it felt good and she wished he could stay like that forever. His tongue was doing marvelous things to her pussy, sliding in and out her folds, lapping, licking, stroking her clit, over and over, over and over...

The tension pounded in her, escalating when Grant broke the kiss and captured a rosy bead in his mouth and sucked for all he was worth, while his other hand teased her neglected nipple into submission. Heat rose with each swipe of Kyle's wonderful tongue and each mobile motion of Grant's mouth and the skillful tweaking of his hand...

She bucked and writhed –

And then nothing. She flopped back onto the bed, unfulfilled, her breasts aching and heavy, her pussy empty and wanting. "What the fuck!"

Kyle knelt on the bed between her thighs, smacked his lips and said, "Damn, you taste good."

She stared at them, frustrated. "Don't tell me you're just going to leave me like this!"

"Oh no, we aren't," Grant assured her, his hand coming back to knead her breast.

"I was so close!"

"We know, sweetheart." Grant bent his head and the torment began all over again.

Chelsea suddenly knew her lovers' devious punishment and she cursed and moaned and gasped and then cursed them again. She didn't know how many more times the men brought her to the peak with their hands and mouth and lips, then withdrew, only to return and continue the torture. At times, they spanked her buttocks and the sharp pain splintered through her, heightening the elusive pleasure and deepening the swirling pressure. She was lost in the explosive sensations they coaxed from her body and she arched and bucked and writhed, her body aching, taut with tension, tight as a string as they left her teetering on the edge, hovering on the brink, never getting her release—

"Oh God, please!" she sobbed, her body so sensitized just one touch from either of them sent her shaking. "I'm sorry, I won't tease you anymore... God, just fuck me, fuck me! I can't take this...I can't take this anymore—" She ended in a strangled cry as Kyle wrapped his tongue around her clit and sucked, while Grant did the same with her swollen nipples.

She shuddered and, with a loud unending scream, she exploded into jerky, uncontrolled movements, pressing her pussy against Kyle's face and holding Grant's head against her breasts. She fell from the edge of the chasm and there was nothing to hold her up but wave after wave of fiery rolling rapture, which slammed into her with the force of a cannonball, intensifying and prolonging the pleasure. She lost count of the number of orgasms that raked her body—but her body had never been so satiated—before she drifted on a cloud of languorous satisfaction and she was content to just float. She was sweaty and her hair was plastered to her skull but she felt oh-so feminine and sexy. The sheets under her back weren't cotton anymore but silk and they slid sensuously against her damp skin.

She tasted herself on Kyle's lips when he moved up to kiss her and the combination of their scents drove her wild and aroused her when she thought herself exhausted and

dead to anything but sleep and rest. He kissed her slowly and thoroughly, cupping her chin and sucking her upper lip.

Desire stole through her, heavy and enticing. She couldn't believe she wanted him again this soon but her pussy pulsed, aching and empty.

As though in answer to her thoughts, a rigid cock sought the entrance to her pussy and inched forward, bit by bit until he was fully embedded in her. *Grant*. He felt so amazing and breathtaking that she released a teary sob. She had the odd sensation that not only were their bodies joining but their souls as well.

"God, you feel so good." Grant sighed, his hips pumping a little and her inner muscles clamped around him. She could stay like this forever. His warm hands caressed her thighs.

She clasped her legs around his waist, then broke her kiss with Kyle. "I want you too," she implored Kyle, telling him with words and with her eyes that she wanted the three of them to come together.

Kyle made short work of the rest of his clothes and in another moment, he was astride her and, before she could ask him what he was about, pointed his rigid, eager cock toward her mouth. Up close, the purple mushroom head of his cock looked yummy and she lost her breath. He rubbed his cock head across her lips in slow motion and she moaned, her pussy clenching around Grant's cock.

"Open your mouth, sweetie," Kyle said harshly and the naked possession in his gray eyes claimed her, branded her as his.

Holding his gaze, she complied and a moment later, his cock slid into her mouth, steel wrapped in hot velvet. She moaned again at the sensual movement and her tongue licked and teased him while her hand reached up to caress his balls and the base of his cock in tandem with her mouth. Desire snaked through her, as wild and intense as the lust inspired by the violin, perhaps more, as a palpable hunger for them rendered her breathless and aching for them. Grant marked her with his rhythm, his cock pushing in and out of her channel with excruciating slowness so that she felt every ridge and bump of his shaft and Kyle followed suit, his gaze on her face as he thrust and withdrew from her mouth. She pulled him closer with her hand on his buttocks and she closed her eyes to concentrate on the sensations—the soft, squishing sounds as they thrust and withdrew, the iron-hard rods fucking her mouth and pussy, the harsh breathing, the creaking of the bed, the scent of sex and the increasing swirling tide of lust and pressure rising in her, heightened by the men's faster rhythm. Grant's lower body slapped against her clit, the pain and the pleasure mingling, coagulating, coiling tighter with each plunge, each push.

She rolled her hips, thinking to add a variety to Grant's thrust and exploded, the new sensation serving as the trigger to sink her into an orgasm so deep and so full that she couldn't stop shaking, her pussy clamping around Grant mercilessly and her mouth opened and she screamed her release.

Kyle pumped his cock with fierce strokes and came at the same time as Grant, exploding onto the bedspread.

They lay replete side by side on her king-sized bed, too tired to do anything but hold one another. Chelsea basked in the warm, comforting silence, contentment sliding over her like a cloak. A woman could get used to being the center of attention of two hot males and she bet that even if she didn't wrap a blanket around her body at night, she'd never be cold with one guy on each side of her.

"Do you admit then that what we have is real?" Grant asked from her left side.

She opened one eye to scowl at him. "Do we really need to talk?"

Both men laughed. "Not really," Grant replied, "but it's a question you have to answer sometime and I thought that since you initiated this lovemaking session, it's a good time to ask."

She opened her other eye, all levity gone from her face. "Yes, I'm convinced that we do have something real and solid."

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He closed his eyes in relief. "And we're just going to get better," he said earnestly. "We'll continue to take it slowly, Chelsea, one day at a time."

She knew what he was saying. They weren't going to mention the matter of life mates or marriage again, until she was ready. A piercing sweetness filled her.

"Just being with you, like this, is enough," Kyle said from her other side. She heard the unspoken words. *For now*.

"Thank you," she said haltingly, overcome with emotion. "I like...being with you too. I love you...both of you."

"Really?"

The urge to declare her feelings had come on the spur of the moment but she didn't regret it when she saw the overwhelming joy on Kyle's face. Grant was more subdued but he was also grinning and she imagined she saw a sheen of mist in his eyes.

"How could I not? Your flowers and chocolates bowled me over." She tried for levity to diffuse the heavy atmosphere and managed a smile. "Not to mention, I love making all those women jealous when I walk into the restaurants with you both on my arms."

"What women?"

"What are you talking about?"

Could it be real that they never even noticed the women who devoured them with their eyes and cast envious looks at her?

"Never mind."

"By the way," Kyle said, his fingers idly playing with her hair. "I've officially returned the heirloom violin to Jason. It's his, after all."

"Speaking of the violin, when are you leaving on the rest of your tour?" The violin wasn't important but Kyle and Grant were. With their demanding schedules as musicians and her work as PA to Adrian, she didn't know how their lives could mesh.

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Kyle eyed her consideringly. "I don't mind telling you that after L.A., I have two more concert stops to go. However, I had to postpone them, as it was imperative that we find you, then that reunion with my dad happened. And then I didn't want to leave him as we had a lot to talk about, so many misunderstandings to clear up." He caressed her cheek. "Then Grant and I had to court you as well, which means spending time with you, being in the same city with you. Thus far, my manager believes that my fans have been feeding on this news and are satisfied temporarily, but he also said that the concert dates couldn't be postponed indefinitely. As it happened, I was going to tell you tonight that Grant and I are leaving in a few days to complete my obligations, but after that, Grant and I will come back here and make L.A. our base."

"But – "

He gently closed her mouth. "No buts. My family is here, you are here." He spared a glance at Grant before continuing, "Grant and I have already decided. Even if you have any protests, I'm afraid you'll be seriously outvoted." His eyes twinkled.

"What about Grant's family?"

"See? I told you she'd want to take on the world," Grant said teasingly, picking up her hand and sliding one finger into the crease between her thumb and forefinger and caressing lightly. His erotic touch was distracting her, causing desire to streak through her system. "Sweetie, Kyle's dad is sick, that's the major factor. As for my family, we can always travel back east to visit with them. Maybe during the holidays, when they're sure to be there. As musicians based in different parts of the country, my siblings aren't usually at home either." The tone of his voice became lower as he continued, "As Kyle said once to me, home is where you are, where you both are."

"Fair enough." Her voice trembled as Kyle swept his hand up her abdomen and cupped her breast. "Can we stop talking now? Because I think I need you again, both of you."

"For as long as you need us, we're here."

About the Author

Madison Blake is a firm believer in love and happy endings. That's why she loves stories wherein the characters go through adversities to emerge victorious in the end. An eternal optimist, she always tries to see the positive side in every negative situation, the silver lining in every dark cloud, so to speak. She has gone through a lot of failures and disappointments in life, but there is one thing she would never give up on: the fulfillment of her dream, which is to be a multi-published and award-winning author.

Holding a day job means that she doesn't get much time to write, so Madison tries to cram her free time with as much writing as she can. Even so, she would make time to read her favorite genre (romance), especially when she's experiencing writer's block. She loves to read and write about strong heroines, and she's on the eternal quest for the powerful, attractive, mysterious, yummy hero, the kind of man who'll make you sigh and say, "He's the one."

The author welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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