

## Going Commando

# By Catherine Chernow

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#### Chapter One

"Gooooooood Morning Long Island! Do you know what today is? It's National No Undies Day!"

Shyra Lawrence's eyes popped open when she heard the DJ from her favorite radio station. Snuggling under the bedcovers, her fuzzy brain tried to make sense of the announcer's comments.

She drifted back into deep sleep, her fingers seeking, anxious to find her naked clit. Shyra dreamed of a tall man, well built, long dark hair brushing his shoulders. Stroking the little pearl of sensitive flesh between her legs, her body throbbed with need when she imagined his large hand replacing hers.

Her alarm went off again, its annoying screech enough to set her teeth on edge. Rolling over, she hit the reset button, her ears attuned to the announcer.

"Today's the day you shed that annoying underwear—guys, get rid of those boxers and ladies forget the thong. It's time for everyone to go commando!"

As she padded to the bathroom, the cool breeze from the air conditioner swirled up her legs, caressing her thighs. Thoughts of her stodgy boss came to mind...what would he think if he knew it was *his* fingers she imagined touching her? Her clit pulsed. Shyra sat down on the bathroom floor, the cool tiles providing a welcome feeling on her bottom. Moistening her index and middle fingers with the tip of her tongue, she shoved her hand down her panties and stroked, the delicious pulsing sensation growing each time her fingers skimmed her labia.

Derek Grayson, her boss, did this; he made her come this way—in an explosion of feeling.

Shyra's face flamed, her body flushing all over.

If only Derek wasn't such a damned prig!

Rising from the bathroom floor, she made quick work of her morning routine, opting to forego her panties.

It felt strange, yet free. One less piece of laundry to wash; if she did this for a week, just think of the time and effort she'd save...

Bull.

She wanted Derek to notice!

She had tried everything she could think of to get him to ask her out. Damn, but she wanted to get laid by Derek in the worst way, but he wasn't biting.

She walked to the kitchen, where she poured herself a cup of steaming java and sat down at her laptop. There was an email from her best friend, Donna.

Did you hear? Today's National No Underwear Day. I'm going commando – how about you? Forget the underpants, the thongs (hell...those always ride up MY butt anyway...lol).

Shyra frowned and sipped her coffee. Donna did have a point. Shyra was forever tugging her thong out of her ass, too.

She sighed, placing the mug down next to her laptop. Thoughts of Derek intruded. He was the head of Gray's Bounty Hunters, and served as the muscle... Shyra was the sweet-talker, or 'good cop'. The one who got the girlfriend or wife or other family members to tell them where the 'skips' were hiding out.

She spent the next few minutes checking her other emails when she remembered she never replied to Donna's email. Frowning, she glanced at all the emails in her message box, but couldn't find Donna's original message. Had she deleted it? She checked her 'deleted mail,' but didn't see Donna's message there, either.

Damn! She glanced at her watch. If she didn't hurry and move her butt, she'd be late for work again.

Shyra used her address book and composed a new email message to Donna:

Yeah, I'm going commando, too! My ass is going to be as naked as the day I was born.

No more tugging on that thong. No more annoying panties. I just had a wax, so I might even turn myself on! LOL. Maybe I'll catch you later for a drink or something and we can swap 'no

underwear' stories. Bye! Xoxoxoxoxox

She hit the 'send' key then got up from the table. Grabbing her equipment—handcuffs, mace, and pistol—and attaching them to her belt.

Time to get to work.

And see Derek.

Now, if only he'd see her.

"Fat chance of that," she muttered as she battled the traffic on the expressway.

Her shoulders slumped. She slowed her car to a stop.

"He doesn't even know I exist," she muttered.

She heard the DJ on the radio. "So, doctor Jurgenson, you're saying that there are medical benefits to 'going commando?""

"Why yes. Particularly for women. Vaginal health is one reason. That's why the 'jeans patch' is helpful. It provides a safe, irritant free lining in lieu of underwear for those women who choose not to wear any..."

#### HONK!

Shyra blinked, realizing she was so caught up in the radio show that the cars in front of her started moving.

She grinned at her irritated fellow drivers. "Don't get your panties in a snit."

Today would be the day... No panty lines. No annoying thongs.

Maybe Derek would notice.

Yeah right.

"When pigs fly," she muttered as traffic came to a dead halt twenty minutes later.

She sighed. Time to call Gray's Bounty Hunters and let them know she'd be late—again.

It was going to be another loooooooooooooooo day.

\* \* \* \*

Mike Grayson poked his head into his brother's office a few minutes later.

"Shyra's stuck in traffic. She'll be here in a little while."

Derek didn't look up from his computer screen. "That's the second time this week," he grumbled.

Mike walked into Derek's office and plunked his tall frame into a chair. "Hell, bro, why don't you just ask her out instead of grumbling and muttering every time I say her name?"

Derek pinned Mike with a hard stare. "I'll thank you, *little* bro, to keep your nose out of my business."

Mike smiled. "I think you and Shyra should just get it on. She's nice. Smart, attractive..."

Derek sighed. "Why don't you start an advice column for the lovelorn?"

Mike grinned, unrepentant. He leaned back in the chair, cradling the back of his head in his hands. "Your boys love Shyra. They light up like candles when she's around them – and I'd even baby-sit when you take her out."

"Which reminds me," Derek said, his frown changing into a full-fledged scowl. "The last time you babysat, you kept my boys up too late, fed them too much ice cream, let them play too many video games..."

Dropping his hands, Mike leaned forward in his chair. "They're only young once, bro, let 'em have some fun."

"They have plenty of fun. They're involved in soccer, basketball—all kinds of activities."

Mike shook his head. "I'm not saying you aren't doing right by them, it's just that,
well—"

Derek raised one brow. "Go on. You've never been at a loss for words."

"Stop punishing them for what Gail did. She walked out, yeah, but you should stop taking it out on the boys."

Derek frowned. "How am I punishing them?"

"A part of you died when Gail walked out. It's never come back, just like she'll never come back. I think the boys feel like you're taking it out on *them*. You're not there for them emotionally."

"What are you? A damned shrink?" Derek sneered.

But deep inside, he knew Mike was right: it was a repeat of their childhood. Derek's mother had walked out on him, Mike, and their sister, Jen. Gail had walked out on him. He had enough on his plate raising Mike and Jen almost single-handedly while his father worked, and now he had to do it again. With his own kids.

"Don't make the same mistakes Dad made. Be a real father to those boys."

He gave Mike a dark look. "I'll try to keep that in mind. Now, if you wouldn't mind filling me in on the latest bounty, I'd really appreciate it."

Shoving his hands in his pockets, Mike said. "Lloyd Mender, heir to his family's plastics fortune, tried and convicted of raping and murdering several women, has taken off for Mexico. The bounty's one million dollars."

Derek fingered the scar on his cheek. "Forget it." He waved a hand in the air. "I don't care if the bounty on his head is *twenty* million dollars."

Mike took his hands from his pockets. Leaning his palms on Derek's desk, he replied, "We could do this. We could get Mender." He rose to his full height and folded his arms across his chest. "What if it was our sister, Jen, he had raped and murdered...or Shyra? The bastard shouldn't be allowed to get away with it."

"The last time I chased a felon in Mexico, I almost died, and so did my partner. It's not worth it."

"A million bucks! Split between you, me, Shyra and Jen, that's a cool two hundred and fifty thousand each. That's no chump change."

"It's out of the question. Bounty hunting is illegal in Mexico."

"And that's *exactly* why that scum is there."

"He's psychotic."

"He's a murderer." Mike's voice was hard. "He needs his ass hauled back to the U.S. where he can stand trial and get some good old American justice."

"Forget it."

Mike sighed. "Derek—"

"Case closed." Derek replied.

Mike blew out a breath. "One bounty, with all that money, means no more chasing after these half-ass skip druggies and wife beaters."

Derek raised a brow. "Keep in mind: slow and steady wins the race. The more skips we catch, the more our reputation grows."

"Catching Mender could put us on the map."

"Slow and steady gets us on the map."

Mike ran a hand through his hair. "I'm tired of being the goddamned turtle in this race!" Derek laughed. "Better to be the turtle. He wins in the end."

He glanced at his watch. Where in hell was Shyra?

Somehow, the day just didn't seem to start unless Shyra was there. He enjoyed watching Shyra work her magic. She had a knack, a way of drawing out the skips by talking with their wives or girlfriends, sometimes even their parents. Shyra got them to cooperate, and they always got their bounty without a hitch.

Ah hell...why don't you just admit that you want to sleep with her? That some days, looking at her beautiful face, her luscious figure and that long dark curly hair was almost painful?

Maybe he should just do what Mike said, and ask her out.

Yeah, right.

"I'll go see what Jen's working on." Mike walked out. He glanced back at Derek. "And stop thinking about Shyra."

"Smart ass," Derek grumbled, then glanced at the emails on his computer screen.

Narrowing his eyes, he noticed there was one from Shyra.

He opened the email and read:

Yeah, I'm going commando, too! No more undies for me. My ass is going to be as naked as the day I was born..."

"Holy shit!" Derek shot up from his chair, banging his head on the desk lamp. "Son of a bitch," he mumbled, rubbing his forehead.

He plunked down in his chair again and re-read Shyra's email.

Holy mother of God...

His dick stood at attention when he imagined Shyra standing in front of him, lifting one of her flirty skirts, showing him her bare ass...

He'd bend her over his desk and take her, but not until she straddled his lap and...

"Morning, boss!"

Shyra walked in and placed a container of coffee on his desk.

He stared at it.

She frowned. "Look, I know I'm late again, but I didn't think there'd be any traffic. Its summer, for Christ sake, I mean... it's summer. Thought everyone would be on vacation—" She angled her head. "What's wrong?"

Derek cleared his throat.

Play it cool, play dumb. Maybe she meant to send that email to someone else, a boyfriend or...

A spurt of unwanted jealousy tore through Derek.

No way in hell was he going to let her show off her bare ass and pussy to anyone but him!

All these damned months, he'd kept his distance, knowing that if he said one word to her about the things he wanted to do to her, she'd probably sue him for sexual harassment.

Fuck.

Yeah, well, that's what he'd like to do...

"Derek, are you okay?"

Shyra walked around the desk and stood in front of him. She wore a pair of skin tight, black pants and a snug, black t-shirt that showed off her very nicely shaped size forty double 'D' tits. He glanced at her ample hips, trying to discern any panty-lines.

He was insane!

"I uh, received this email from you this morning."

Her brow furrowed. "What email?"

A minute went by, and then the email popped out of the printer. "Here." He handed it to her.

Her eyes widened as she read, the color draining from her face.

"I was impressed by your, um, new method—this 'going commando.' Do you think we'll catch more felons that way?" He wondered if he sounded as stupid to her as he did to his own ears.

"I-I have to sit down."

She walked away and eased her body into a nearby chair.

He got up and walked over to the front of the desk. Leaning a hip against it, he folded his arms across his chest. "So do you think it will work?" He asked.

She frowned, some of the color returning to her face. "Do I think what will work?"

"Your new method. Going commando."

Shyra opened her mouth then closed it. "Do you mean to tell me that you have no idea what 'going commando' means?"

"Suppose you explain it to me, Shyra."

She nodded, turning white as a sheet.

#### Chapter Two

Her heart raced like a runaway train, her pulse skittering out of control. How could she have been so careless? *DGrayson* and *Dbarnard* were next to each other in her address book, but she had never mixed them up before.

Of all the times to start!

Shyra glanced at Derek's tall form, clad entirely in black - his usual uniform. Damn, but he was sexy. She narrowed her eyes, peeking surreptitiously at his crotch – his cock stood at attention...

My ass, he doesn't know what 'going commando' means!

She blew out a breath and crossed her legs. Smoothing an imaginary wrinkle from her pants, she decided it was time to take the reigns and get what she wanted...

Derek.

"Would you like me to show you?" she asked, her voice a soft purr.

Derek unfolded his arms. "What?"

"Show you. What 'going commando' means."

"I... uh." He cleared his throat again.

A muscle flexed in his nicely sculpted jaw.

"I'm not sure if, well... you're going to show me?" He raised both of his dark brows.

Shyra stood and walked over to shut his office door, locking it.

"What are you doing?" he growled. Fire leaped into his sherry-colored eyes.

She strolled close to him, her eyes never leaving his, then grabbed his hand and placed it on her hip. He sucked in a breath. She slid his palm across her hip, and down her left butt cheek. Shyra felt him tremble.

"I'm going commando," she said softly. "No panties, not even a thong."

His hand tightened on her ass.

"Feel how smooth," she whispered. "How tight my ass is. Derek... I want you."

He growled low in his throat. Bending her back over one arm, he kissed the breath from her lungs, delving inside her mouth with his tongue. The kiss was like a hot, moist brand...

He slowed the kiss, his mouth a gentle, sensual caress against hers.

A knock on his office door brought the kiss to a halt.

Shyra pulled away, but not before she saw his eyes. They were filled with golden fire, a promise of more to come.

She smiled and walked out of his office, her body humming with need, her mind filled with Derek.

\* \* \* \*

Later that morning, Shyra, Derek, Mike, and the two other bounty hunters Derek employed waited for their latest 'skip' outside the Fairview Apartments downtown.

Derek and the team made their way inside the building to Charlie's apartment—his last known address—while Charlie-the-druggie's ex-girlfriend waited in a car, her baby sleeping peacefully in a car seat in the back.

"You're positive he's in the apartment, Susie?" Shyra asked her.

"He's there. I spoke to him about ten minutes ago."

Leaning into the open door of Susie's second-hand, beat-up car, she asked, "You're not shittin' me, are you? You said you were over him, I'd hate to think you tipped him off, Susiegirl."

"H-he's there. I swear he is."

Just then, a young man wearing droopy jean shorts and a turned around baseball cap came out the front door of the apartment building.

"Is that him?" Shyra whispered under her breath.

Susie paled. "It is, but I swear, I didn't say anything to him."

Shyra turned and spoke into her cell phone. "Derek, Sanchez just walked out the front of the apartment building."

"Keep an eye on him," he growled into the phone. "We're coming back down." "Will do."

Sanchez approached. "What gives?"

Susie gave him a thin smile. "Hi Charlie. Th-this is my friend, Shyra."

He looked Shyra up and down, his glassy eyes taking her measure.

He's high as a kite...

Charlie narrowed his eyes. "Yo, how come I never met you before?"

Shyra leaned against the car, assuming a relaxed stance. "Susie and I met a couple of months ago."

"You were in jail, Charlie. Shyra helped me with the baby."

"Yeah, well, nice meetin' you!"

He took off down the street.

"Fuck!" Shyra tore after him.

She flipped open her cell phone and two-wayed Derek. "He's running! I've got him covered."

"Goddamn it, just stay put, Shyra!"

"I can't." She panted as she ran, never taking her eyes off Sanchez. "The girlfriend tipped him off and now he's getting away!"

She flipped the cell phone closed and picked up her pace, her feet flying across the pavement.

\* \* \* \*

Meanwhile, Derek, Mike, and the rest of the team rode the elevator down. When they got outside, they spotted the girlfriend, ready to pull away from the apartment building.

Hanging onto the car, Mike stopped her, making her pull the car back to the curb.

He dragged her from the car, the baby screaming in the back.

"Where is he?" he ground out.

She pointed a shaking finger. "Th-that way."

Derek cursed under his breath, fear clogging his throat. His cell phone rang.

"I've got him! Almost there, Derek, he's—"

The connection went dead.

"Move it!" he shouted to Mike and their companions.

Derek's heart was in this throat.

If Sanchez hurt one hair of curly hair on Shyra's head, he'd kill him, and wouldn't bat an eye.

#### Chapter Three

"You prick!" Shyra got up from the sidewalk, her knees wobbly.

She thanked her lucky stars she didn't hit her head on the cement when Sanchez pushed her to the ground. Her knees and hands felt raw; they hurt like a son of a bitch.

"Goddamn it, stop!" She screamed.

Sanchez continued his trek, dodging cars as he sprinted across the street.

Fueled by anger and adrenaline, Shyra pursued him. She flew across the street; grateful the traffic passed, and eventually caught up to Sanchez. When she was about two feet away, she took a flying leap and jumped on his back, tackling him to the ground.

A few moments later, Derek showed up with Mike and the other bounty hunters.

Derek pushed her away then hauled Sanchez to his feet.

"The fucking bastard knocked me down," Shyra told him.

Derek's eyes blazed. He lifted Sanchez by his shirt. They were nose-to-nose. "You're an asshole, Sanchez." He shook him. "We're never going to forget this."

Mike slapped his handcuffs on Sanchez. He glanced at Shyra. "You okay?"

She looked down at the ripped knees of her pants. "A few scrapes."

Derek released Sanchez. "Get him to the police station. I want to talk to Shyra... alone."

Mike nodded. The other bounty hunters clapped Shyra on the back. One shook her hand. They all murmured words of praise and 'good job.'

They hustled Sanchez into the car, and drove off.

Shyra turned to face Derek. He was leaning against his SUV, ankles crossed, his arms folded across his chest.

His dark sunglasses concealed his eyes.

She was grateful for small favors.

Derek helped her into his truck, his eyes straying to her scraped palms and the holes in the knees of her pants. She reached for the seatbelt, but he beat her to it, drawing it gently across her chest.

"I need to know if I should take you to the hospital." His voice was soft but it had an edgy, tension-filled tone.

She shook her head. "I-I'm fine, really, just... where are we going?"

He braced one booted foot on the running board, snapping her seat belt into place. "We could have our little 'chat' back at the office, or at my house. The choice is yours. However," he continued, his foot still on the running board, one hand on his thigh, the other on his hip. "You'll be mighty embarrassed if we talk at the office."

She angled her chin. No way would she cower in front of him!

"Your house is fine."

He nodded, shutting the door, its slam like the peal of a death toll.

Derek never removed his sunglasses when he was angry.

It was a ploy he used with the felons they hauled in, and now, apparently, he was using it on her.

They rode in silence for the twenty minutes it took Derek to meander through the traffic. When they pulled up in his driveway, Shyra got out, her legs shaky.

Derek placed his palm against the small of her back and guided her, or rather, herded her up the driveway to the front door of his ranch-style home.

He unlocked the door and punched in his security code while Shyra stepped into the blessed coolness. She made a beeline for one of the chairs in the den, her legs giving out.

Derek walked past her, disappearing down a hallway. He came back a few moments later with cotton balls, gauze, peroxide, and a bottle of brandy. He placed everything on a table next to her chair.

Shyra trembled violently, her breath hitching.

"I-I'm freezing." She grabbed hold of her upper arms, running her palms up and down in an attempt to warm her body.

Derek strode over to the thermostat. The air conditioner stopped blowing immediately.

He walked back over and squatted down in front of her chair. Removing his sunglasses, she got a good look at his face, set in tight, angry lines.

"Derek, look, I—"

"Save it." His tone was clipped. He reached for her right pant leg, rolling it up from the ankle, stopping about midway. "Your adrenaline rush is wearing off. That's why you're cold." His voice held no warmth, either.

He rose to his full height, his dark hair brushing lean, fit shoulders.

She wanted to lay her head against one of them and cry. Shyra never got weepy, but now that's all she wanted to do. She watched as he uncapped the brandy bottle, handing it to her. Sipping it carefully, lest it burn her throat, she reveled in the warmth that filled her.

"Take off your pants." His voice sounded gruff.

"I...what?" She just stared at him, her mouth open.

He grabbed the bottle, placing it on the table then tapped her chin with his index finger. "I said, take off your pants. If you don't, I'll have to pull your pants legs over your knees. I don't want to hurt you."

He was doing that already, she thought sullenly, by speaking to her in that harsh, clipped tone.

She had dreamed of removing her pants and showing Derek the sensual treat between her legs, but now...

"Well?" he asked.

She sighed. Sometimes, life played the most ironic tricks.

She rose to her feet, and unzipped her pants, tugging them down her hips, thighs and legs. Her trousers lay draped around her ankles, a pool of black material at her feet.

Derek caught her around the waist while she stepped out of them.

"Are you satisfied?" She choked back a sob, pushing away from his embrace.

Damn, but she wouldn't cry in front of him.

"Satisfied?" He shook his head. "Right now, I'm battling an urge to haul you over my lap and spank the daylights out of you."

She tried for some levity, in part to distract herself from his heated gaze... and his anger.

"How about you do that later, when you're not so mad? It might be fun."

"Fun?" He thundered. The glasses in the cabinet across the room shook.

Shyra backed away from him.

"Do you call what happened this morning... fun?" He advanced.

She backed up. "I call it doing my job."

Oh, this really sucks! Arguing with him while she was half naked...

Then again, if she played her cards right, she could definitely sway the balance of power.

He kept walking toward her. Shyra took off and darted behind the chair.

"Sit down." He pointed to the chair.

"Say, 'please." She folded her arms across her chest.

"Please," he growled back.

She scooted into the chair.

Derek reached for the cotton balls and peroxide, his eyes looking everywhere but at her smoothly shaven mound.

Shyra tried to hide her smile when she opened her legs to give him a better view.

"Fuck," he mumbled as he bathed her scraped knees with the moist wad of cotton.

"My thought, exactly."

"Shyra." He swabbed her right knee. "I mean it, if you don't stop, I'm going to beat your ass."

She leaned back in the chair, grinning, the brandy making her head spin. "I didn't know you were into such kinky stuff."

"And I didn't know", he reached for a clean cotton ball, wetting it with the peroxide, "that you were so goddamned stupid as to go after a convicted felon by yourself. A druggie, for chrissake!" He reached for her hands, turning them palm side up, and then bathed them with the peroxide.

She shook her head. "I thought it would sting."

He glanced up, his face softening. "I'm glad it doesn't."

She blew out a breath, tears clogging her throat when she heard his tender tone.

He reached for the gauze. She stopped him, placing her hand over his. "I-I don't want

gauze. I want... to talk."

Derek rose to his feet. "Get your pants on."

She lifted her legs onto the chair, scooting further back so that she could sit Indian style.

"What in hell are you doing?"

"I'm not budging from this chair until you listen to me."

He turned around, hands on his hips. "Get your pants on."

"No, I'm celebrating National No Undies Day, remember? I'm going commando."

Leaning down, he caged her into the chair, his hands braced on the arms. He gritted his teeth. "Don't push me, Shyra."

"That's exactly what I'm trying to do! Push you. To your limits. I want you to stop denying that you want me."

His eyes widened. "Is that what that little stunt you pulled with Sanchez was about? To get my attention?"

"No." She clenched her jaw, grabbing his hand, placing it between her legs. "This is to get your attention."

His eyes smoldered. A muscle in his jaw twitched, but he didn't remove his hand from between her legs.

"I did my job this morning, Derek." Her voice was barely above a whisper.

His fingers gently stroked her pussy.

Shyra's eyes nearly rolled back in her head.

"You could have gotten killed." His voice sounded rough, strained. "Me, Mike and the rest of the team are the muscle... *you're* the brains, the sweet talker."

She purred as his fingers toyed with her clit. "Is that sweet enough for you?"

He pulled his hand away. "I'm taking you home."

She grabbed his arm, feeling bereft.

"One time, that's all I'm asking, Derek. Make love to me just this once, and then it'll be out of our systems."

His tanned face flushed bright red, his breathing ragged.

In one swift movement, he reached down, lifting her in his arms.

He strode down the hallway.

Shyra clung to him for dear life, turning her head so he wouldn't see her satisfied smile.

\* \* \* \*

Derek stripped out of his clothes, popping the buttons of his shirt as he tore it from his body. He'd never wanted anything more in his life than he wanted Shyra.

He managed to help her take off her shirt. His hands shook while he unfastened her bra, watching her full breasts spill into his hands. Taking each one into his mouth, he paid them homage, tenderly kissing the tops, working his way down to her brown-tipped nipples, which he laved with the tip of his tongue.

Shyra moaned, arching her back, shoving her ample breasts into his waiting mouth. She was a tantalizing mix of toughness, sensitivity, humor, and light. When he was around her, he felt as though bright sunshine poured into his empty soul.

Shyra lifted her legs, planting her feet firmly on the mattress.

"Eat me." She crooned in his ear. "Make me your lunch."

He laughed. "My pleasure."

Derek trailed his mouth down Shyra's belly, stopping just above her smooth shaven mound. He rested his lips on her pubic bone, sliding the tip of his tongue across it, just enough to graze across the top of her clit.

Shyra squirmed, grinding her backside into the mattress.

"More, lick me more."

He smiled. "Slow and steady wins the race."

"Screw that," she moaned, grabbing handfuls of his hair. "I've dreamed of this, Derek. I want your mouth on my pussy, now."

Chuckling, he replied. "My, my, aren't we insatiable."

She lifted her head. "You've got lots of time to make up for."

He raised a brow. "Oh really?" Derek slid beside her. Cupping the side of his head with his hand, he stretched out his legs, purposely bumping hers.

"What are you waiting for?" she asked.

He smiled. "For you to tell me how much I've got to make up for."

She reached out to pull his head down to her thighs, but he stopped her.

"Show me how much I have to do."

"Huh?" She blinked, brushing some hair from her eyes.

"You show me what you want me to do to you."

"I—" Her eyes widened then a sly grin lit her beautiful, wide face. "Okaaaaaaaay, Mr. Smarty pants. But you can't touch me. You'll just have to watch."

He nodded, anticipation coursing through him. Every nerve ending in Derek's body felt as though it were a little flame.

Shyra sat up and rolled to her knees. Flipping her long curly hair over one shoulder, she reached down between her legs and stroked the little pearl of flesh between her thighs.

Moistening the fingers of her other hand, she toyed with her breasts, cupping them, sliding the pad of her thumb across each one.

Derek could hardly contain himself. He sat on the bed, mesmerized by her sensual actions, and by the way her breasts gleamed in the soft light.

Resting her weight on one hand behind her hip, her clit lay swollen and fully exposed to his eyes. She stroked it once, twice, three times...

Her low moan was almost his undoing.

She let go of her clit long enough to rise up on her knees and pass her hands over her breasts. Then she got on all fours and turned around, exposing her nicely rounded bottom.

He was so hot and bothered he wanted to take her right then and there, his promise not to touch her making him want her even more.

She wiggled her fanny then spread her legs. He gazed between her thighs and watched her reach down, where she fingered her labia.

Shyra threw her head back. "Oh my God, Derek, please take me now. Hard!"

He didn't have to be told twice. Derek took her from behind, inserting his cock inside her. She was hot, wet and tight. He moaned as he pumped into her, bringing them both to climax, his big body shuddering when he came inside her.

Derek didn't pull out. He held onto her.

"Did you come?" he whispered against her ear.

She ground her backside against him. "Yes, and I want to again."

He chuckled. "Give me a minute to recoup."

"You've got thirty seconds."

He slapped her bottom.

"Twenty."

That earned her another smack.

His shaft grew, the feeling exquisite torture as the walls of her channel spasmed around him. He pushed in, then out, his rhythm even and slow.

"I like it hard and fast."

"This time," he murmured next to her ear. "It's going to be slow... and you're going to like it."

He watched her entire body flush.

She tossed her head over her shoulder. "Don't think you can give me orders."

He ground his hips against her, driving into her further... then pulling out slowly.

She moaned. "Hurry," she intoned. "More. Harder!"

He leaned down and smacked her right butt cheek.

"Oooooooooo God, Derek! That feels..."

SMACK!

"Wonderful." She purred.

She bucked against him, but he held her, reaching around to caress her clit with the tips of his index and middle fingers.

"Derek!" she screamed his name, collapsing on the bed.

Derek slid up to rest beside her, pulling her close. He kissed her nose, her eyelids, her cheeks...

Soon, they both fell asleep, the only sound the ticking of the clock.

Derek drifted into slumber, realizing Shyra was wrong.

Once wasn't enough. Twice wasn't, either.

He didn't think he could ever get enough of her.

#### Chapter Four

The next morning, Shyra entered the offices of Derek Grayson Bounty Hunters.

Her dark glasses firmly in place, she hoped like hell that it would hide the dark circles under her eyes. She didn't get a wink of sleep the previous night. Before Derek's boys returned home, he whisked her off to her house, where she spent the remainder of the day 'recuperating' as per Derek's orders...

And thinking about him.

One time—that's all she had wanted or needed with Derek—but that one time had fueled her desire for a whole lot more.

She'd always been tough. Her youth had been a chaotic mess of going from place to place with a mother who claimed she was a 'free spirit.'

Yeah, right...

Damn, but she wasn't supposed to form an attachment to Derek. She was to scratch her sexual itch, and get him out of her system.

She'd not only had his cock burrowed deep, she'd had - him. Their frenzied coupling had awakened some deep-seated need...

Permanence.

She wanted to stop running, to stop going from place to place. Emotionally, she had done that, too, telling herself that's the way she liked her life: free. That's why she shed her panties, to feel liberated, to catch Derek and reel him in and get what she wanted from him.

Trouble was she wanted more.

"'Morning!" Jen's cheery voice greeted her. She reached out and grabbed Shyra's hand.

"I'm so glad you're all right. Derek, Mike and the rest of the team told me what happened."

"Thanks."

Jen lowered her voice. "I think Derek's really proud of you, even though he won't come

right out and say it. But I know he was so concerned about you."

Shyra blushed to the roots of her hair, thinking of how Derek showed his 'concern.'

"We made the bounty. Ten thousand dollars—not bad for a morning's work."

Yeah, thanks to me...and it's about time he realized that!

His office door swung open.

Derek nodded in her direction.

"I want to talk to you." Shyra pitched her voice low. "Now."

Derek ushered her inside his office. He closed the door, then pulled her into his arms and kissed her.

"Talking is the last thing," he fused his mouth with hers, his breathing ragged. "That I want to do right now." He ran a hand across her hip, trailing it across her bottom. "No panties again," he grinned a wicked smile.

She responded to his touch, kissing him back. He sank into a chair, with her cradled in his lap. She didn't feel like a tall, big woman when she surrendered to Derek's heated kiss. He couldn't seem to stop, fusing his mouth with hers repeatedly.

He lifted her skirt, running his hand up her thigh. Shyra moaned into his mouth, wrapping her arms around his neck, burrowing deeper, the way she wanted his fingers inside her.

Derek's hand roamed in a sensual search while his mouth feasted on hers. The backs of his knuckles skimmed the inside of her thighs then he stroked her clit, the tip of his index finger gently massaging her little nubbin. She squirmed in his lap, opening her legs wider. He wrapped a hand around her bottom, tugging her closer. Shyra straddled his thighs, unzipping his pants to free his cock, placing it inside her opening.

Derek gripped her hips while she rode him, wiggling her bottom against his thighs each time she slid down his cock. She shut her eyes, enjoying the sensation the tip of his stiff dick wrought against her pussy. A deep, delicious, throbbing sensation built between her legs, then she felt like a million shooting stars exploded inside her body. She opened her mouth to shout his name, but he grabbed her face between his hands and kissed her, stifling her cry of pleasure. With one final thrust, he buried his cock deep, spilling himself in her channel.

She slumped against him, feeling his warm, wet essence seep out. He wrapped his arms

around her waist, kissing the side of her neck. Moments later, he helped her from his lap. Shyra stood on shaky legs, watching while he rose from the chair and zipped his pants. He grabbed some tissues off his desk, and wiped his seed from between her legs. Shyra leaned against him, her body spent.

Derek chuckled. "This is all I could think about after I dropped you off yesterday." *BANG!* 

Her eyes snapped open when Derek's office door swung back on its hinges, the door hitting the wall.

A woman walked in, followed closely by Jen.

"Derek, I'm sorry, she wouldn't listen, she--" Jen's eyes widened, then she hid her smile.

Shyra scrambled to adjust her skirt, pulling it down over her thighs, but not before the woman standing in Derek's office snapped Shyra's picture with her cell phone.

The woman sneered as the flash went off. "My, my...we could label this photo 'Father of the Year Screws His Employee.'

Jen's smile fled.

That's what Shyra wanted to do, too, she wanted to run, but her feet wouldn't move.

"Goddamn it, Gail, get out of here!" Derek thundered.

The woman nodded towards Shyra. "Jen said you were in a meeting with one of your employees. I'd say it was a doozy."

Derek ran a hand through his hair.

Shyra attempted a hasty exit, but the woman's hand shot out, latching onto Shyra's arm. "Don't go, honey, stay and hear what I have to say. I'm sure Derek has told you all about me – I'm his ex-wife."

So, this was those two sweet boys' mother...what a bitch!

"How about I don't bring up this little afternoon delight with one of your employees if you do me one tiny little favor?"

Derek's eyes narrowed. "What do you want?" he growled.

"The boys."

His dark brows shot up. "Over my dead body."

"Oh come on, Derek. I begged you before for custody, but your lawyer--"

"Painted a true picture of what you really are, Gail. A lousy mother and a crappy human being." He folded his arms across his chest. "Are you sober now? Clean? Which husband are you on now? Is it Number Four or Five?"

She angled her chin. "I want the boys, and I've got the money," she grinned a nasty smile, holding up her cell phone, "and now the evidence to prove what a shit you really are."

"You'll never take my boys."

Those were the last words Shyra heard as she flew out of Derek's office.

\* \* \* \*

Derek got rid of Gail, but not the ache he felt in his heart each time he thought of Shyra's pale face.

"Where's Shyra?" he asked Jen, his eyes darting everywhere.

She cradled the phone near her ear then he watched Jen press the 'hold' button.

"I think you had better take this call."

"Damn it, where'd she go?"

"Derek, it's the police."

His heart pounded as he took the receiver from Jen's outstretched hands. He listened, nodding his head, his hand shaking.

He needed this new dilemma like he needed another hole in his head.

"Derek," Jen asked, taking the phone from his hand. "What's wrong?"

"That skip we took in this morning bragged to his jail buddies that all he wants to do is get Shyra."

Jen shook her head. "So he's talking big, threatening, I--"

Derek sighed. "He ran. They don't know how he got out of jail, but he's out."

"Oh my God!" Jen's hand flew to her throat.

"I've got to find Shyra.

\* \* \* \*

Shyra opened her front door on Derek's third knock.

"Can I come in?"

She ushered him inside, closing the door behind him.

"We need to talk."

She folded her arms across her chest. "Go ahead."

He looked around. "I think you should take off a few days, go away for awhile."

Her face fell.

Derek itched to tell her about the drugged up skip and his threat to get Shyra, but gazing at her pale face, he thought otherwise. He didn't want her frightened, and after this morning's crap with his ex-wife, she didn't need to be burdened with anything else.

"So, I'm to take the blame for what happened in your office this morning?"

"I...huh?"

She narrowed her eyes and took a step towards him. "Is this your way of firing me?"

"I'm not firing you, I'm only suggesting—"

"That I crawl away somewhere and hide until this all blows over?"

He blew out a breath. .

"Yeah, that's what I'm suggesting. My ex can be...well let's just say, stay out of her radar."

She took another step towards him. "I'll just go ahead and take that job I've been offered by Jarwyn Bounty Hunters."

Jarwyn! His rival.

"My ass, you will. Just stay put here, Shyra, until—"

"Until you settle things with your ex?"

He ran a hand through his hair, dropping it to his side. "Yeah, 'til I settle things with Gail."

"Screw you, Derek." Her eyes held tears.

Damn!

She swiped her eyes with the backs of her fingers. Then she angled her chin. "Jarwyn's been after me for awhile. I guess this is the perfect time to take him up on his offer."

"You're not going anywhere," he growled.

She raised one dark brow, tossing some of her long dark curls over her shoulder. "I won't

take the fall for this crap with your ex. I'm not going to hide away here. I'll work for Jarwyn; he'll appreciate my talent for bringing in skips. You certainly don't."

He reached out, drawing her towards him, lifting her skirt. "I appreciate you, Shyra, more than you can ever know." He ran his hand up the inside of her thigh. "And you will not take Jarwyn's offer."

She shuddered in response. "Yes, I will."

"You'll miss this," he squeezed her bottom cheek.

Her thighs quivered, her breathing rapid.

"Not a bit."

"Liar."

This time, her body trembled.

He lifted her shirt, releasing her bra. Shyra's breasts spilled into his hands. He ran his thumbs across the peaks, feeling them swell.

Her head fell back.

"That's all you care about," she moaned into his mouth, but she didn't push him away.

"No," he shook his head. "That's not all I care about."

\* \* \* \*

A slow smile lit Shyra's face. Her heart felt light. "Me?" Her pussy throbbed at the thought. "You really care about me?"

Derek answered by fusing his mouth with hers, kissing her so hard, her head spun. His hand dipped lower, skimming her belly, her hip, settling there. She could feel the racing beat of his heart.

"Going commando?" he whispered.

She nodded against his chest, inhaling his clean, crisp fragrance, the scent of him igniting her senses.

He lifted her skirt, riding his hand up her bare bottom. Sliding his hand across her hip, his fingers skimmed her pussy. Shyra's knees buckled, but he kept a firm grip on her.

"Wrap your legs around my waist," he whispered in her ear.

She did as he asked, her body throbbing with need.

Shyra heard him unzip his pants. Then he entered her in one smooth stroke, the tip of his penis sliding across her swollen clit. Backing her up against the wall, Derek pounded into her with such intensity, Shyra couldn't catch her breath. With each stroke of his cock, her body bucked and shook.

"Derek!" she shouted as her orgasm coursed through her body.

He thrust into her one last time, throwing his head back when he came.

Derek rested his forehead against hers. Easing out, he waited until her feet touched the floor, then scooped her up in his arms.

"Where's your bedroom?" he panted.

"That way," she pointed down the hall.

Once inside her bedroom he stripped his clothes, then hers. Settling his big body next to hers on the bed, he took her in his arms and kissed the side of her neck, his lips trailing upwards to skim across her cheek.

Rolling her over onto her back, Derek settled his body between her thighs. Shyra lifted her feet from the mattress, wrapping her legs around his waist.

He thrust into her.

"You won't wear me down." She smiled, stroking her hand across his cheek.

He gave her a wicked grin as he thrust inside her. "We'll just see about that."

She angled her chin while he rode her. "I can hold out."

He laughed. "Oh yeah, right. Sure."

Her temper ignited. "You won't make me come."

"You're going to come so hard, you're going to pass out."

When he shoved his cock back inside, her clit swelled and throbbed. Her eyes nearly rolled back in her head.

Damn him!

She met his strokes, thrust for thrust, her hips moving in time to his.

"Let's see how long you can hold out," she told him.

His eyes darkened to a deep bronze.

She reached around and grabbed hold of his butt cheeks.

"That's not fair." He countered by leaning down and sucking on her right nipple.

She could feel the tug on her breast in her womanly center, between her legs.

Shyra reached down and fondled his balls, her fingers trailing over the rough skin on his sac.

His breathing quickened.

He raised one dark brow. "Now who's playing dirty?" He shuddered when she tickled his balls.

A slow smile spread across her face.

He thrust forward. She matched it with a downward stroke, feeling the tip of his penis slide up against her clit.

Now, *she* trembled.

"Bitch," he muttered in her ear, grinding his hips against hers.

"Bastard," she whispered back, reaching up to stroke his chin.

They orgasmed together; her body fusing with his in one great, final thrust. Shyra's world shattered into a thousand bright twinkling lights.

Her eyes rolled, but she fought the sensation.

Derek leaned down and kissed her, a smile lighting his face. "Looks like I won."

Shyra fell asleep against his warm body; the sound of Derek's deep breathing the last thing she heard.

\* \* \* \*

She woke around noon, gathering her clothes.

Derek reached out, trailing a finger down her left breast. "Where are you going?" his voice was deep, husky.

"Back to work."

He lifted his head from the pillow. "To Jarwyn?"

She grinned. "No, silly," she leaned over and kissed his dick. "To you. I thought about this, Derek. I won't let your ex-wife blackmail me. She can show that picture to whoever she wants. I really don't care."

"But I do."

"Derek, don't give in to her."

He sat up, the sheet sleeping from his muscled chest. Shyra's bud quivered at the sight. When he swung his long legs from the bed, she got a good look at his cock...

No distractions! Be tough.

Right.

She dressed quickly, watching him do the same.

He turned to face her. "Shyra, this isn't about Gail, this is about—"

She angled her head. "What?"

"I-I don't, I mean..." He sighed. "Let's just say, it's about my boys. I don't want her to hurt my boys by fighting with Gail. They like you. I don't want them embarrassed if Gail makes that photo of you public." A muscle twitched in his cheek. Then he turned, not meeting her gaze.

For just one second, she thought he was lying.

"I love your boys, Derek. I love—"

This time, his dark eyes roamed over her, causing her blood to heat.

"Don't let her break us up."

He thrust his shirt over his head, sliding it down his chest. Tucking it into his pants, he replied. "I won't, that's why I want you to stay here for a few days. Or better yet, just take a little vacation." He sat on the bed, pushing his feet into his boots. "You've got vacation time saved up, right?"

Her eyes stung. Tears clogged her throat. "Screw that."

It was her father all over again...pushing her away...abandoning her.

"Get out of here, Derek."

"Shyra, please," he begged. "I-it's not what you think, it's—"

"You don't give a rat's ass about me."

\* \* \* \*

Days went by.

Shyra missed Derek.

She also missed working at Gray's Bounty Hunters. How could she go back there after she lied to Derek about receiving an offer from Jarwyn?

She'd bounce back, she always did. Hell, why not contact Jarwyn Bounty Hunters? They'd probably hire her in a flash...

Shyra was tired of rebounding.

When she threw away her panties, she didn't realize she threw away her freedom. Now, Derek enslaved all of her—her body, her thoughts...

Her heart.

It was just too bad he trampled it. That's what she got for hooking up with a guy with so much damned baggage. An ex-wife, kids, a brother and sister he still supported...

Oh hell, she wanted to be part of all of it, the good and the bad.

Shyra walked out of her front door that morning, determined to seek out Derek.

She'd tell him the truth about Jarwyn, she'd tell him...

Shyra felt the tip of a knife press against the bare skin of her midriff.

"Move and your dead."

\* \* \* \*

Derek sipped his coffee while he watched Shyra's front door through his binoculars. Hunched down in the driver's seat of the SUV, he downed another swallow of java, the taste bitter.

Everything tasted like shit, lately.

Ever since Shyra walked out of his life.

"Saw Frank Jarwyn the other day at the coffee shop downtown."

At the mention of Jarwyn's name, Derek gritted his teeth.

Mike shook his head. "My brother, the idiot."

Derek narrowed his eyes. "Just what in hell is that supposed to mean?"

"Just what I said. You're an idiot. Shyra's not working for Jarwyn."

Derek gripped the steering wheel, his knuckles whitening. "And just how do you know that?"

Mike sighed. "Because I spoke to Jarwyn. Asked him how Shyra was doing. He had no idea what I was talking about."

Derek's heart raced.

"She lied to you, bro. And you fell for it."

"I...what do you mean, 'I fell for it?' What was I supposed to do, give her a lie-detector test? She said Jarwyn offered her a job, so—"

Mike rolled his eyes. "Shyra's always trying to get your attention. You're just too wrapped up in all your insecurity over mom and Gail to even notice."

Derek's face heated. "I noticed, I mean, I notice plenty."

Mike sighed. "I don't just mean the physical stuff you jerk, I mean...her. She'd do anything for you. Anything. And now, you sit here, watching her, stalking her like some kind of..." He waved a hand through the air. "And me, I'm the biggest idiot, helping you."

Derek turned and faced Mike. "You think I'm watching her because I'm jealous?" Mike nodded.

"You're so wrong. Sanchez is out of jail."

Mike's eyes widened. "What? How? When?"

"A few days ago. He threatened to go after Shyra. I didn't want to tell her, I thought she'd be frightened."

Mike slumped back on the seat. "You let Shyra believe it was all that crap with Gail?" Derek nodded.

"Ah hell, bro, why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't want anyone to know, but—" Derek's eyes narrowed when he saw Sanchez grab Shyra. "Move!" he shouted. "Now."

Mike spoke via cell phone, a rapid-fire set of instructions to the rest of the team. He got out of Derek's SUV and followed behind his brother.

Derek grabbed hold of him. "Stay here. You and everyone else watch my back. I don't want to spook him. He might be high."

Mike nodded as Derek made his way towards Shyra...and Sanchez.

\* \* \* \*

Keep him talking!

"What do you want, Sanchez?"

He squeezed her arms behind her back, his grip painful. Holding the knife against her

throat, he said in her ear. "You bitch. You're the one who ratted me out to the cops."

"I never did. It was your girlfriend."

"Lying bitch!" Her neck stung, the tip of Sanchez's knife skimmed her throat. "My girl wouldn't do something like that. She loves me."

"Sure she loves you. She loves how you knocked her up, how you beat the crap out of her and her mother."

Shyra's stomach rolled. He'd do the same to her, and probably cut her into a zillion pieces. From the corner of her eye, she noticed a dark figure moving between the cars parked near the curb. Gun drawn, she recognized Derek's head full of long, dark hair.

Derek!

Life did play the strangest tricks. Here she planned to tell Derek the truth about Jarwyn... She only hoped she'd get the chance!

\* \* \* \*

Derek eased his way from behind a black sedan parked near the curb. He crouched low, keeping his eyes on his prey...

Sanchez.

It was now, or never.

Sweat broke across his forehead. Fear snaked down his spine making him shutter.

He leaped at Sanchez, grabbing the knife from his hand.

Shyra fell to the ground, scrambling to her feet. She beat Sanchez while Derek grappled for the knife.

Mike arrived a few seconds later. It took Derek, Mike, and the rest of the team to subdue Sanchez.

She heard the sound of police sirens in the distance.

"Are you okay?" Derek asked her.

She could only nod.

\* \* \* \*

A few days later, Derek sat in his office.

"Derek, the next candidate is here."

He looked up to see Jen standing in front of his desk. "What next candidate?"

She shook her head and grinned. "We're interviewing for a bounty hunter, remember?"

He didn't. In fact, he couldn't seem to remember a damned thing lately...

All he knew was his heart ached.

Shyra had done that. She filled the empty places in his soul, then left, like all the women in his life. He'd secretly been glad when Gail left, although it tore at his heart that his boys felt her defection.

Until Shyra walked into their lives.

He felt her departure more because he truly screwed it up. Maybe Gail, in her perverted way, was right. He had gotten involved with a fellow bounty hunter, one of his employees.

Instead of telling Shyra the truth about Sanchez, he allowed his protective instincts to take over.

Fool that he was.

No, he'd do it all over again...wouldn't change a thing, even if it meant Shyra would walk out of his life.

Just like she did.

When he looked up again, it was to see Shyra standing there.

He blinked.

Once.

Twice.

"Hello, boss."

She wore a tight, black t-shirt that outlined her size forty double D's and a flirty skirt that swirled around her thighs. Black, lace-up biker boots lined her ample calves. Long dark curls swirled around the cocoa skin on her face.

He shook his head to clear it of her image, but it remained.

Derek rose from his chair on shaky legs, rounding the corner of the desk to stand before her.

"I thought you decided to work for Jarwyn after all." His voice echoed in the confines of his office. He lowered his voice. "You haven't returned any of my calls."

She walked over to the door and locked it. Then she approached him. Taking his hand, she placed it beneath her skirt. He groaned.

"I haven't been around because I was busy updating my resume."

He snorted. "My ass, you were."

She raised a brow. "You needed to know my...qualifications."

He narrowed his eyes, his heart racing. "I know your uh, capabilities."

"Oh, by the way, boss, I'm not wearing any underwear." Her voice held a seductive note.

His groin ached when he felt the bare skin of her thighs, his hands settling on her bare backside.

"No, you certainly aren't." He felt like he should say more, but couldn't.

Shyra led him by the hand, walking over to the chair behind his desk. She pushed him into it then climbed into his lap, straddling his thighs.

"Why don't we begin the interview now?" she purred in his ear.

She unzipped his pants and freed his cock.

It sprang to attention, despite Derek's efforts to stop it.

Hell, he was so tired of fighting.

He just wanted Shyra.

"I didn't bring the resume, I forgot it," she whispered, her warm breath tickling his earlobe.

He managed a nod. "That's fine," he croaked.

"But if I did bring the resume, it would have said..." She stopped for a minute, her eyes filling. "It would have said that I wish you would have told me the truth about Sanchez."

Derek sighed. Taking her face between his hands, he kissed her lips. "I didn't want to frighten you, and after all that shit with my ex, well, I figured it was better you thought it was about that. Even if you thought I didn't care about you, or valued you, I figured it was better than frightening you."

She took his dick between her hands and rubbed. "You're my white knight."

He laughed, the sound sarcastic. "Far from it. Even with me keeping tabs on you, watching for Sanchez, he attacked you anyway."

She leaned down and slid her tongue across the tip of his cock. His eyes nearly crossed.

"You did a fine job," she smiled up at him. "We're both still here to talk about it. It'll make a fine story to tell our grandchildren."

He nodded. "Sure." He didn't think he could form one complete thought when she placed her entire mouth over his dick. Derek gripped the arms of his chair, his mind fuzzy.

"Grandchildren? Did you say grandchildren?"

"Uh huh." She kissed the vein that ran along the top of his dick. He needed to be inside her...now. "I think I also mention that in my resume." She sucked his cock, drawing it inside her warm, moist mouth. "You would read in my resume that we have to be truthful with each from now on."

"Agreed."

She removed her mouth, replacing it with her hands.

He stilled her movements, placing a hand over hers.

"I have to know, Shyra. Are you here to stay—for good?"

She licked her lips. "Uh huh."

"You're not going to take a job at Jarwyn's?"

She shook her head, 'no.'

"I love you, Shyra." He felt like a big, open wound. Derek held his breath, waiting for her answer, half hoping, half dreading...

She smiled. "I love you, too. I think I always have."

Shyra mounted him and rode his cock. It was a slow, sweet journey to oblivion.

"There's just one thing we'll have to settle." He didn't know how he managed to speak with her riding him so sweetly, her pussy skimming his dick.

"What's that?"

She kissed him on the mouth.

Hard.

With one final thrust, he pushed himself inside her.

They came together.

"We have to settle this tendency you have for 'going commando."

She threw back her head and laughed the sound bright, her warmth, and light filling him
to the brim.

#### About the Author

Catherine Chernow writes sensual, fast-paced, contemporary romance – the kind of books that make your body sizzle and your heart soar.

She was born in Fairbanks, Alaska, an "army brat", and at the age of three her family and she moved to Long Island, New York, where she still resides.

Check out her website at www.CatherineChernow.com for reviews and excerpts.

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Hailed by the bridal flower world as an artistic genius, Meli works long nights making bouquets for women lucky enough to find love, while she herself lives a life of solitude. She yearns to share her heart and body with someone other than Bob, her Battery Operated Boyfriend, but acute shyness keeps her from engaging the "living" world.

However, Meli's quiet and predictable existence takes an unexpected turn when she is pulled over and ticketed by the most gorgeous cop she has ever encountered—Officer Michael Johnson. Though he does not seem to notice her as anything more than a traffic violation, Meli makes plans to overcome her timid nature and seize the police officer's attention... using any speed necessary.

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Wren Thornberry's life isn't going according to plan. She let her father talk her out of marrying Bryan Stockard, the man she loves, and moved halfway around the world. Now she's back home in Texas, babysitting her grandmother while grandma and her boy-toy work through their list of sexual exploits, making themselves the talk of the town.

But what Wren doesn't know is that things in her hometown are about to heat up even more, and it will have nothing to do with her grandmother. It seems that Bryan Stockard is still around, he

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