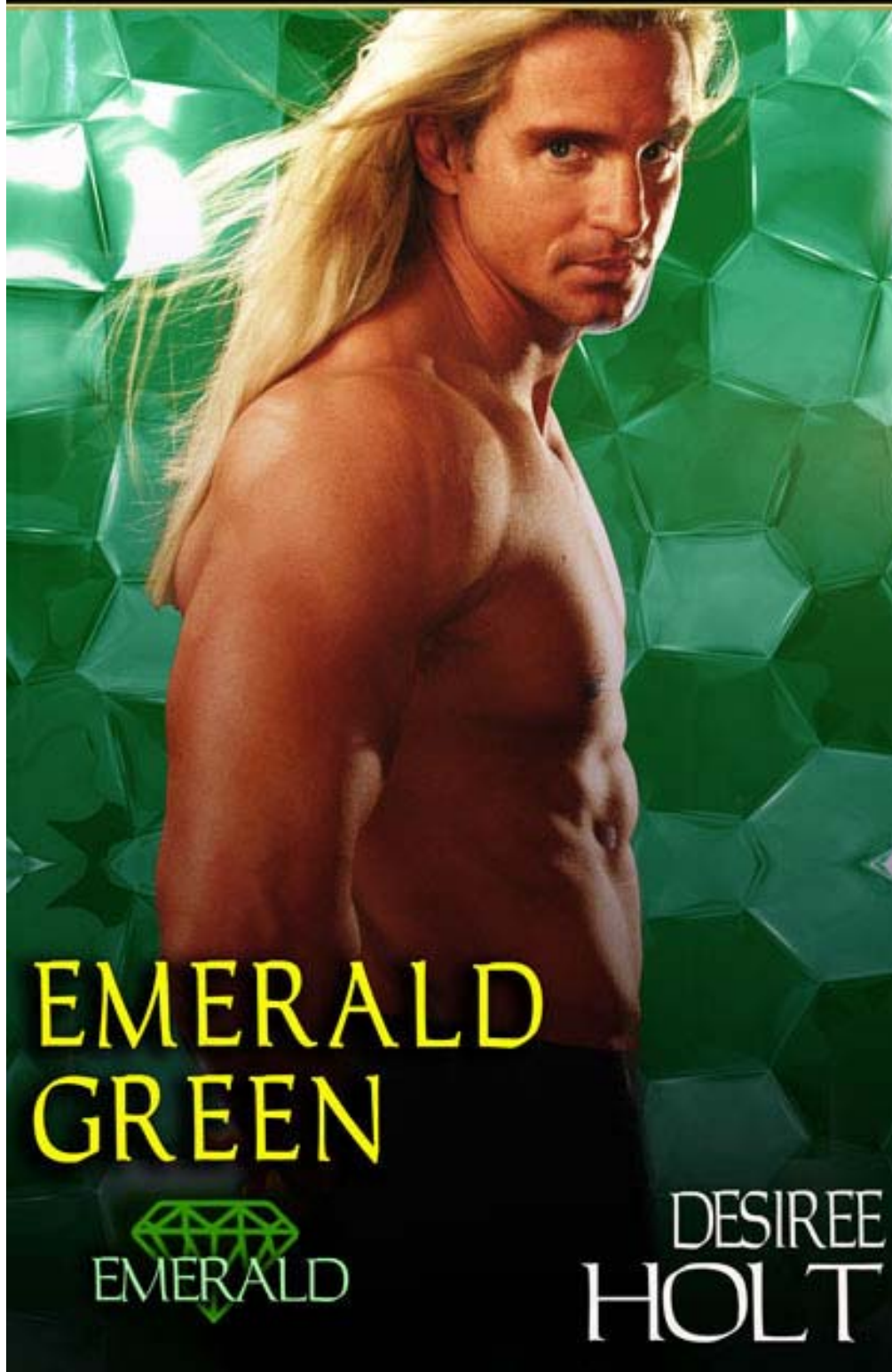


ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS



EMERALD
GREEN



DESIREE
HOLT

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



www.ellorascave.com

Emerald Green

ISBN 9781419914027

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Emerald Green Copyright © 2008 Desiree Holt

Edited by Helen Woodall.

Cover art by Syneca.

Electronic book Publication May 2008

With the exception of quotes used in reviews, this book may not be reproduced or used in whole or in part by any means existing without written permission from the publisher, Ellora's Cave Publishing, Inc.® 1056 Home Avenue, Akron OH 44310-3502.

Warning: The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this copyrighted work is illegal. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is investigated by the FBI and is punishable by up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000. (<http://www.fbi.gov/ipr/>)

This book is a work of fiction and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, or places, events or locales is purely coincidental. The characters are productions of the authors' imagination and used fictitiously.

EMERALD GREEN

Desiree Holt

Dedication

To my readers. Thank you for making Desiree Holt a success.

Chapter One

Meredith Kincaid pulled her little car into a parking space in front of Chocolates and Gems and leaned back in the seat. Only in Bradley Corners could you find a combination candy store and jewelry shop. Maybe she'd find something to lift her spirits, which at the moment were below the bottom of the ocean.

She was still coming to terms with the fact that she was in Maine in October, at her grandmother's bed-and-breakfast. Instead of basking in the Caribbean sun on her honeymoon. But finding one's fiancé in bed with not one but two women tended to put a crimp on one's wedding plans. Torn between rage and humiliation, she'd dumped the mess on her parents' head, thrown the handiest things she could grab into a suitcase and taken off.

"Things are slow this time of year," Gram told her. "You'll have plenty of space. I only have one guest. A man."

"Well, keep him away from me," Meredith spat. "I don't have much use for men right now."

Gram chuckled. "I don't think he'll be bothering you. It's J.C. Reilly, the writer. He always comes up here to finish his books. Says he likes the solitude."

Meredith snorted. "At least we have that in common."

She spent her days huddled on the couch in the glassed-in sun porch pretending to read, or sitting in the window seat in her bedroom, staring at the ocean and wondering what it was she lacked that a man discarded her so easily.

But today Gram had lectured her before leaving for the afternoon. "Get off that lounge," she'd ordered. "It's too comfortable. Get out of the house. Get some fresh air, for heaven's sake. It's warm for this time of year. Take advantage of it."

So here she was, about to gorge herself on the rich fudge the place was famous for, hoping the indulgence would ease the pain.

Surprisingly the store was crowded. Late season tourists, she guessed. As she waited for the fudge line to go down, she casually glanced into the jewelry case she was standing next to. Many of the pieces were made by local artists. Her eyes stopped suddenly at a pendant nestled on white velvet. A tiny pine tree set with emeralds on a gold filigree chain.

"That looks like it belongs on you." The voice was deep and warm like honey.

Meredith turned her head and found herself pressed full length against the most gorgeous man she'd ever seen. Dark hair brushed the collar of his shirt and thick lashes framed whiskey-colored eyes. His tanned face, more rugged than handsome, had deep grooves etched into the sharp planes and a sharp scent drifted past her nose. Pulses throbbed instantly in her breasts and her cunt.

"Oh!" Her breath felt trapped in her lungs. "Thank you."

She tried to move slightly away but his body enveloped her, keeping her in place. She knew she should feel threatened but instead she only felt turned on. The heat from his body was like a cloud of air around her and she could feel the thickness of his cock just touching her buttocks.

He must have gestured to a sales clerk, because in a moment the case was unlocked and the pendant lay displayed in its glory on the counter.

"Allow me." He lifted it with long, slender fingers and fastened it around her neck.

As his hands fell away they brushed across her breasts, so briefly she wondered if in fact she'd imagined it. His fingertips lifted her chin and moved her head so she was looking into the mirror on the counter. The pendant glowed as if it was alive.

"I knew it," he said, his hands resting on her shoulders. "It matches your eyes perfectly." He bent his head so his lips were almost touching her ear. "Do you know in ancient times emeralds were coveted for their magical powers? They were believed to heighten sexual desire in women."

Liquid dampened her panties and her nipples tightened. What was she doing here with this stranger, his voice slowly seducing her? She touched the little tree, running her fingertips over the miniscule stones, hardly aware that he was paying the clerk. Her eyes widened as he pocketed the receipt.

"I can't let you buy this for me. It's way too expensive. I don't even know your name."

"Connor."

The smile undid her again.

"Oh. Well. Hello, Connor. Nice to meet you. And I still can't allow you to pay for this."

"But I just did." He pressed his mouth to her ear again, his breath a sensuous feather against her skin. "And I have a pound of that fudge you were looking at so covetously. If you tell me your name, I might share it with you."

"M-Meredith." Oh, way to go. Tell your name to a perfect stranger. Be smart for a change and run as fast as you can. But her feet wouldn't move.

"All right, Meredith." He took her hand in his large, warm one and tugged her toward the door. "Why don't we go find a place to indulge ourselves in this forbidden pleasure." He smiled down at her. "Or any other one that comes to mind."

She let him lead her outside, images of forbidden thrills dancing in her head. God, this was so unlike her. She had no idea what she was doing with him, let alone any man after her last disaster. But a feeling of recklessness gripped her and as he tucked her into his car she thought, *Why the hell not?*

"You know the Egyptians were the main provider of emeralds to the world for centuries," he told her as they pulled away from the village. "Men gifted their women with them to help seduce them more easily."

"Is that what you're doing?" Her voice was shaky. "Seducing me?"

"Would you mind if I did?" His voice was like warm honey.

She didn't know what to say, nor could she make words come out if she did. When his hand, which rested on her thigh, moved slightly higher, rational thought disappeared. His touch was magic, calling forth instant response from her body. His fingertips nestled in the crease between thigh and hip, sending tendrils of heat dancing along her skin. Moisture dripped from her pussy at the intimacy of his touch and tiny flutters pulsed in her vagina.

What's happening to me?

"Meredith?" His deep voice nudged her.

"Yes? What?"

He chuckled, an embracing sound. "I asked if you'd mind if I seduced you."

"Why don't you try it and find out?"

Oh, my God. Where did that come from? Has this piece of jewelry bewitched me?

"My pleasure."

His hand slid lower until it was between her legs, his fingers prodding at her pussy through the thick fabric of her slacks. "Wet already." His voice had taken on a husky quality. "I knew the emeralds would be right for you."

His fingers pressed harder against her cunt lips and her hand flew to the pendant resting at the hollow of her throat. She could feel her pulse beat erratically beneath it and heat from the stones radiate through her body.

"I-I don't know if I thanked you for the gift."

He tightened his fingers around her pussy, rubbing it through the fabric that covered it. When he spoke his voice sent delicious shivers through her body. "Oh, you haven't begun to thank me. Not yet."

Meredith wanted to squeeze her thighs together, trapping his hand so he could never remove it. This man had such a quiet air of confidence, liberally laced with sexuality. His very scent tantalized her and his tanned skin begged for her touch.

Sunglasses shielded his eyes but she sensed they were full of mischief. Sex with him would be not just incredibly erotic but fun. What a combination.

She couldn't take her eyes away from the shift of denim against his powerful thighs as he drove, or the bulge pressing against the fly of his jeans. She could still feel the outline of his impressive cock against her when he'd been so close in the store. It seemed impossible but her body heated even more.

"Where are we going?" She tried to divert her mind.

"It's a surprise. Do you like surprises?"

"I-I think so. Although the last one I had was not too pleasant."

"Well." He grinned. "We'll have to see what we can do about changing that."

He hoped she did, because he had plenty in store for her. From the minute he'd seen her in the store he knew he had to have her. The creamy skin that begged to be tasted, the high breasts and flaring hips that promised a sensual feast. How he wanted to lie down between those hips and explore every inch of her body.

He wasn't given to impulses like this. Not that there weren't plenty of women in his life. Sometimes he thought there were too many. But none like this one—sexy and fresh at the same time, with no artifice about her. And God, those eyes. Such flashing green fire. How could he not have bought the little pendant? It was perfect for her.

He had no business playing today, not with the project looming over him. But he'd worked hard for days and decided he needed to give himself a break. How fortunate he'd picked today to do so.

Her thigh was warm where he touched it, heat radiating through the fabric. And when he dared to reach between her legs and feel her cunt he was delighted to feel the moisture seeping through her slacks. Hot and wet. Just what he wanted.

As they drove along the highway he had all he could do to keep from pulling onto the shoulder, tearing her clothes off and fucking her right there. Of all the women he'd

known, none had ever made him so instantly hard or so incredibly aroused. Just touching her bare skin would make his mouth water.

He wondered what her pussy tasted like—her juices that seemed to flow so easily. Strawberries, he guessed. Ripe red ones that burst when you bit into them. He wanted to suck it all down his throat, swallow it until it seeped into every inch of his body. He nearly drove off the road trying to imagine what her clit looked like and the inner flesh of her vagina. He righted the car quickly and forced his brain back on what he was doing.

His cock was so hard and swollen it pressed uncomfortably against his jeans. What if he unzipped his pants and pulled it out right now? Would she be frightened? Turned off? Would she lean down if he asked her to and put those luscious lips around it and take it into the warm wetness of her mouth?

Jesus! He needed to stop this. Right now, before he came all over himself like some out-of-control teenager.

At least keep control of yourself until you get to where you're going.

"Where are we going?"

Her voice cut into his thoughts and just in time.

"Right here."

He pulled the car off onto an overlook at the edge of the cliffs. Below them the ocean pounded against a tiny scrap of beach.

"Out here at the side of the road?" Her eyebrows flew up in astonishment.

Connor grinned and pointed. "Down there. I come here a lot. It's very private."

When she climbed out of the SUV she saw a set of wooden steps built against the face of the cliff. Weather had aged them but they looked sturdy enough.

Connor pulled a thick blanket from the back of the truck and took her hand. "Hang on to me. It's all right. They're safe."

Suddenly he stopped and pulled her around to look at him. Without warning he bent his head to capture her mouth and it tasted every bit as good as he'd imagined. He licked at the seam of her lips and when she opened for him he swept inside. Sensation jolted him and he felt as if his entire body had been lit by a torch. He touched his tongue to every inch of the wet silk in her welcoming cavity, every contact sending licks of fire racing through him.

At last he drew back, the killer smile teasing at his lips. "So, Meredith. Have you ever been fucked beside the ocean before?"

* * * * *

"Emeralds first became popular in the New World in the sixteenth century," Connor continued to talk as he opened the blanket and spread it out. "That's when the Spaniards arrived in South America and discovered a mine. Did you know that?"

Meredith stood watching him, her heart stuttering. She was really going to do this! "No." She swallowed and wet her lips. "No, I didn't."

"The *conquistadores* knew about the sexual aspect of the precious stones and hoarded them as gifts for their women."

His voice was like a hypnotic drug to her, holding her in thrall while he unbuttoned her blouse with great care and slipped it from her shoulders. He stroked her shoulders and the bare flesh of her upper arms, raising goose bumps that had nothing to do with the cold. A quick dip of his head and the tip of his tongue licked the hollow of her throat where the pendant lay, sparkling and green.

"Your skin is like the petals of a flower. A rose. Soft and delicate but with a heady fragrance." He nipped one shoulder lightly. "I could spend hours just licking and nibbling at it." A wicked grin turned up the corners of his mouth. "Everywhere."

"Ohhhh." The word was more a sigh, a whisper on an indrawn breath. She imagined Connor's mouth on all the intimate parts of her body—her breasts, her nipples, her cunt that was now pouring fluids into the crotch of her already dampened

panties. An involuntary flex of pussy muscles let her know that just his words were igniting desire within her.

A quick twist of his fingers on the front clasp of her bra and it too, dropped to the blanket. The faint breeze whispered against her skin as she stood half-naked in the sunlight before him.

"Beautiful." His hands cupped her breasts, cradling them in his palms. "Just beautiful. You have the breasts of a goddess. I am but a humble slave come to worship at them."

Meredith wanted to clench her thighs together to control the increasing throb in her vagina, a pulsating she felt all the way through her womb. She wondered if he could actually talk her into orgasm.

Connor's hands moved and he took her nipples in his fingers and pinched and tugged them, raking the edge of a fingernail over the hardened point. Meredith's first instinct was to pull back. Her ex-bridegroom had always criticized her breasts as too small, her nipples as too large. But the look in Connor's eyes told her he saw them differently.

"Someone criticized these magnificent breasts," he guessed. "Tell me who it is and I'll beat his face in."

"I-It's all right," she stammered."

"No, it's not." He pressed his thumbs against the nipples. "Whoever it was had the brains of an ass. Your breasts are perfect, your nipples even more so. I wish I had emerald nipple rings for you." He brushed his thumbs back and forth in a steady motion. "They'd be outstanding on you. How I'd love to see these tight peaks swollen and aching, hardening to my touch." He dropped his hands. "But we don't so we'll improvise."

She frowned. "Improvise?"

"Uh-huh." He lifted the bag with his fudge in it and grinned. "I told you I'd share this with you. I just didn't tell you how."

He reached into the bag, broke off a piece, rolled it in his fingers to soften it and molded it to one nipple. Meredith looked down and sensation shot through her, sizzling every nerve in her body. She clenched her fists to keep from falling to her knees.

Connor repeated the process with the other nipple, playing with the softened candy until he was satisfied. Then he bent his head and began to eat from one breast, his teeth taking tiny nips from the rich confection and scraping her sensitive flesh. His tongue felt like a soft brush whisking over her skin, calling down a firestorm of sensations that raced through her body. He was gentle but merciless and her breath caught at the back of her throat.

Meredith thanked God his hands clasped her arms firmly or she really would have fallen. The sensation was so erotic she felt more liquid seep from her cunt. She knew by now her panties were drenched.

They stood there while he finished every bit of the candy, licking the last little bit from each breast. When he was done he bit down gently on each nipple, then suckled it, drawing the last of the flavor into his mouth.

"My God," she whispered.

"Oh sweetheart, we haven't even begun."

He unbuttoned her slacks and lowered the zipper, then slid the material down her hips to her ankles, lifting each foot to free it. When she was almost naked he knelt before her, his gaze raking over the tiny scrap of green silk that covered her mound. He grasped the lace edging at the top between his teeth and drew the fabric away from her, his hair brushing against her thighs and his breath like a kiss on her skin. Very slowly he pulled the fabric down, inch by maddening inch, until the minuscule panties too, were tossed to the side.

He sat back on his heels, looking at her with those whiskey-colored eyes, until she thought she'd go mad if he didn't do something. Every pulse in her body vibrated. Her

blood, racing through her veins, felt like molten lava. She had never, ever been so hot in her life. And they'd hardly done anything.

She waited until she couldn't stand it a moment longer. "Touch me." Her voice sounded strangled. She could barely get the words out.

Connor breathed gently against her skin. "My pleasure."

His hands nudged at her ankles, telling her silently to move her legs apart. Gripping her hips with his long fingers, he used his thumbs to open her labia, then leaned forward and ran the tip of his tongue over her clit. Meredith could barely stand as a hunger stronger than any she'd ever known swept over her. The evidence of her arousal trickled down the inside of one thigh and heat suffused her. That one lick of his slightly roughened tongue erased any memories she had of any other man's touch on her body. Every inch of her vibrated, her body demanded satisfaction and all he'd done was taste her once.

God! She was lost and she knew it.

With a touch as light as a feather Connor teased at her clit, lapping at it, tasting it, swirling his tongue over it until she was ready to scream in frustration.

He moved his head back, his lips and chin wet with her cream. "You taste like strawberries, just as I imagined." He licked his lips. "But I think it's time for a different taste."

Standing up, he lifted her in his arms and placed her full length on the blanket. "Don't move," he told her, a wicked gleam in his eyes and a grin teasing at one corner of his mouth. With swift movements he shed his own clothes until he too, was naked in the sunlight.

Meredith couldn't take her eyes away from him. Every muscle in his body was defined, like a sculpture. Fine dark hair that her fingers itched to touch covered a tanned chest and tight abs. His fit body tapered from broad shoulders to lean hips and narrowed to a line over his flat belly directly to his groin. She stared at his jutting erection in open-mouthed admiration. Long and thick, with a broad plum-colored head,

his cock extended from a nest of curls as dark as those on his head and his chest. Below it, heavy testicles rested against his thighs. Moisture pooled in her mouth at the thought of tasting that delicious-looking cock.

His eyes focused tightly on her body, Connor stroked his penis once, from root to tip and back again.

“When I slip this into your body, Meredith, you’ll know you’re well and truly fucked. You’ll feel every inch of me inside you, filling you, stretching what I damn well know is a perfect little cunt so tight it’ll feel like a vise gripping me. And when I fuck you, you’ll climax like never before in your life. I promise you that.” He released himself and dropped to his knees, reaching for the bag of fudge. His eyes were hot as they swept over her body. “But first, we’re going to give a whole new meaning to the words ‘eat you up’.”

Connor knelt on the blanket, kissed her knees and with gentle hands bent them and spread her legs wide. His breath hissed as his eyes feasted on her weeping slit.

Meredith shivered in anticipation. She wondered why she didn’t feel the least bit self-conscious, lying here naked under the sky, her entire cunt open to a man she’d never met before today. But rather than feeling embarrassment or discomfort she was in the grip of a feeling of total sensuality. She wanted to feel his hands and his mouth everywhere, his thick cock filling her tight channel.

Whatever it was he had in mind, she knew she would crave it. He could do anything with her and she’d cry for more. How had this happened to her? She reached up and touched the pendant. Did the little piece of jewelry have magic embedded in it?

She wet her lips, her mouth suddenly dry. “You’re right,” she told him.

“About?” He was kissing the insides of her thighs, his mouth like a silken caress.

“The emeralds. It’s so strange. I can feel them burning against my skin. Sending messages through my body. Making me feel...”

“Yes?” he prompted.

"Lust," she finally said. "They make me feel lustful."

"Good. That's what I mean them to do." His eyes glittered like the precious stones themselves. "I'm going to satisfy that lust and pleasure myself while I'm doing it." He opened her labia wide, bent his head and lapped the entire length of her slit.

"Ohmigod!" She arched up to meet him. "Connor!"

His hands branded her where he touched her and his hair brushed against her like strands of fire. With every lick she felt her juices flow, pouring onto his tongue. The walls of her cunt quivered with need and she pushed herself against the thrusting tongue. When he ran the tip of his tongue along the crease between her thigh and her mound she grabbed for his head, trying to pull him closer. She wanted his whole face on her, touching her pussy everywhere.

He lifted his head and pulled back, removing her hands and placing them on either side of her. "Hold on, sweet thing. I have a treat for you."

She heard the crackle of the paper bag from the store. Then his lean, wonderful fingers were sliding something into her vagina, pushing it in as far as he could reach, rubbing it into her flesh. It felt like a thick substance, titillating and not at all unpleasant.

"What?"

"We've hardly made a dent in the fudge, sweetheart. Hmm." His voice had a wicked tone to it. "Strawberries and chocolate are a decadent treat. When I said I'd share my fudge with you I meant it."

"Are you —"

"Mm-hmm." He buried his face between her thighs, his breath tickling her mound. "Just lie back, sweetheart and let me enjoy my snack."

Streaks of electricity jolted her as she felt him rub the fudge into her cunt and over her clit. Erotic images intensified, beating at her like an internal drum and warm liquid trickled out to bathe her heated flesh.

Connor took a long time pressing the fudge into the slickness of Meredith's vaginal sheath. Lean fingers that shook slightly at the sweet feelings of her pussy rubbed the gooey taste treat into her tissues, reveling in the feel of her slick walls. Each time he reached inside her his fingers danced along the quivering flesh, rubbing lightly to coat her with the thick confection. Occasionally he would pinch her clit with his other hand, not hard, just enough that more of her cream released onto his hand.

He felt her pussy begin to clench and her hips automatically start to rock when he massaged the candy far enough into her vagina to reach her G-spot, curling his fingers to rub back and forth. He sensed her poised on the brink of orgasm but he wasn't ready yet to give her that release. He hadn't had nearly enough of touching her, of feeling that cunt around his fingers, of toying with the hot little clit that was already swollen and a dark rosy red. He wondered if forever would be long enough to play with her like this.

"I know you want to come, Meredith." His voice was tight with his own restrained desire. "But not until I've touched and eaten my fill and driven you so wild you'll shatter into a million pieces. Not until I say you can, Meredith." He pinched her clit. "Hold off for me, Meredith. That's an order. Do not come until I tell you to."

His thumbs opened her moist center as wide as possible and he stabbed his tongue deep into her, scooping at the chocolate with the tip. With long, lazy strokes he licked at the confection inside her, reaching to the very bottom of her slick canal. In and out he stroked with his clever tongue, licking and swallowing. Her inner flesh, her outer lips, her clit and the tiny spots on either side of it. And he took his time about it, tasting slowly and thoroughly.

Connor withdrew his tongue and lifted his head. "Hold your breasts for me, sweetheart. Take them in your palms." He nodded when she did. "Good. That's good. Just like that." His eyes darkened. "Now roll your nipples between your fingers. Pinch them for me. Hard. Come on, Meredith. Oh, yes. Squeeze them until it hurts enough to make you want to come. There. Oh, God, that's a beautiful sight."

Breathing unevenly, Meredith did as he asked.

Connor felt his cock twitch in response, watching her cup her breasts and hold them out to him like a sumptuous treat. God, he could suck on those plump offerings forever, they were so firm and perfect. He wanted to take her long nipples into his mouth and bite on them until they turned a dusky rose and swelled to bursting, then teased the pebbled flesh with the tip of his tongue.

He gritted his teeth as he felt his balls tighten and a tingling sensation start at the base of his spine. No. He couldn't come. Not yet. Not until he'd given this woman pleasure beyond her imagining.

Connor's voice had such a ring of command that Meredith automatically did as he asked. But rather than frightening her, it heightened her desire, made her juices flow more and the walls of her pussy quiver. What was happening to her? What had taken over her senses and her mind?

She could hardly keep her body still. The throbbing in her womb had increased from a tiny pulse to the pounding of a drumbeat, spreading everywhere. Her breasts felt heavy and swollen, her nipples hard and aching.

When she squeezed her nipples, exerting pressure with her fingers, the pain shot streaks of pure pleasure through her. Connor began to lick the fudge from her clit again, his mouth suckling her swollen bud and she grabbed the blanket with her fists. She had all she could do not to come right then. But she'd hold off, just like he told her to, although her control was slipping fast.

At the moment she was sure her body would betray her and erupt in a fountain of pleasure, he lifted his head just enough to look at her. "All right, sweetheart. I'm ready to taste your juices mixed with that delicious candy. I want all that sweetness dripping onto my tongue, your plump pussy lips clasp around me. Let it go now, Meredith. Let go."

He took her into his mouth again, at the same time sliding two fingers back into her cunt and reaching for her sweet spot. She clenched around him, every muscle in her

body tightening at the feel of those long fingers probing her, fucking her. When he bit down lightly on her clit she couldn't have stopped if she'd wanted to. The orgasm roared up from deep inside her, like a beast let loose from a cave. The muscles of her pussy clamped around his fingers, her body shook and she poured into his mouth.

Every muscle tightened and spasmed, wrenching every bit of response from her. Connor drew out her climax with his very clever mouth and fingers, pushing her up and over a precipice until she was sure she'd fall apart. She was spinning in space, whirling, twisting, her body no longer her own, as the orgasm went on and on and on.

He was relentless, never taking his hands and his mouth from her cunt and her clit. Whenever the tremors would begin to subside he drove her to the peak again. Finally, when she was trembling from the effort and her body refused to respond one more time, he slid his fingers out, gave her slit one last, long lap with his tongue and lay down beside her, pulling her against him. His large warm hands moved easily over her back, soothing her and calming her. His lips, still coated with candy and her own wetness, pressed kisses to her forehead, her temples, her cheeks. When her breathing had evened out he tilted up her chin and smiled at her.

"Definitely the best treat I've had in a long time." He smoothed her hair back from her forehead. "Are you doing okay, sweetheart? You came for a long time."

She smiled up at him, still shaky but unbelievable sated. "Better than I've ever been."

He chuckled. "Don't say that. We've just gotten started here." He touched one finger to the emerald pendant, the gems vibrant as the sun's rays caught them. "I guess the Egyptians knew what they were talking about."

She let out a tremulous breath. "I'd say so."

With fluid grace he stood and lifted her in his arms. "All right, then. Time for a swim."

Chapter Two

"Connor, are you crazy? It's October in Maine. And this is the ocean. We'll freeze to death."

He laughed, a rich, full sound as he strode across the tiny strip of beach, holding her to his chest. "Afraid of a little cold water? I think you need something to cool you off."

"No!" she squealed as he stepped into the surf, lowering her to her feet. "Oh! Ouch! Cold! You brute."

"Come on, chicken. We need to wash away all that fudge."

Still laughing, he tugged at her hand, leading her into water up to her hips. She flinched at the first cold touch but Connor stopped, pulled her against him and lowered his mouth to hers. The kiss was like a flame, scorching her, setting every nerve ending to sizzle. He moved his tongue in and out of her mouth in rapid strokes as he'd done with her cunt, mimicking the movement. The chill of the water disappeared as flashes of warmth spread through her.

"Touch your pendant," Connor whispered, his lips against her. "Go on. Do it."

Meredith raised her hand in slow motion and pressed her fingertips against the emerald pine tree. At once the warmth she felt turned to white hot heat. Even the water swirling around her seemed to rise in temperature. "What?"

"Better?" he murmured against her mouth.

She felt his lips turn up in a smile. "Yes. But how —"

"Ssh. I told you. The emeralds have secret powers. Stand still and let me wash you."

He knelt in the water that now slapped at his shoulders, nudged her legs apart and ran his fingers lazily the length of her slit and back again. She shuddered as,

unbelievably, her pussy responded, muscles she could have sworn were exhausted begin to flutter again, His lean index fingers moved up the insides of her labia until the reached her clit, then peeled back the tiny hood covering it and sucked on the unprotected bud.

Meredith's body jolted, every nerve ending sizzling in response. Her legs were shaking so badly she had to dig her fingernails into Connor's shoulders to keep her balance. But as soon as she took her hand away from the pendant she felt the icy kiss of the ocean again and goose bumps rose on her skin. Somehow she managed to grab the emerald jewel again and still hold onto Connor with one hand, anchoring herself. Even immersed in the water she could feel her pussy juices flooding again and the muscles quaking. When he slid two fingers inside her vagina and began lightly scraping the walls with his fingernails, her body began to spasm and shockingly another orgasm rolled over her.

Connor wrapped one arm around her thighs to steady her as the tremors overtook her, holding her close so she didn't slip down in the water. He pressed his lips to the soft flesh of her belly and held her like that until the aftershocks subsided.

"I told you the emeralds were magical," he reminded her. His voice was thick with passion. "I'll be you've never been finger-fucked in the ocean before and brought to climax. Am I right, sweetheart?"

She nodded, barely able to speak, still shocked at what was happening to her.

He moved his hands to separate the cheeks of her ass and ran a fingertip up and down the cleft. "Has anyone ever penetrated you here, Meredith?"

She shivered and not from any feeling of cold.

"Well?" he asked again, rimming the opening to her rectum. "Have they?"

"N-No. No one." There hadn't been anyone who'd tempted her enough to allow that particular act. But now the thought of Connor taking her ass heated her blood and sped up her pulse.

The pad of one finger pressed against the tiny puckered rosette of her anus, pushing gently, chafing across the sensitive skin. Incredibly she felt her cunt come to life again and throb with a need she was sure had been already well-satisfied.

"Count on this, then, beautiful lady. I'm going to be the one." She heard the desire in his voice and the anticipation. "I'll be the one to have that pleasure of fucking that delicious virgin ass. First with my fingers, then with my cock." He pressed his fingertip more firmly against her. "Would you like that, sweet thing?"

Meredith automatically pushed back against him, unexpectedly wanting that penetration, a dark thrill running through her. Forbidden images were spinning through her mind and she felt a sense of loss when Connor moved his hands to the front again, separated her labia and bathed her cunt once more.

When he rose from the water she could see his magnificent penis jutting from his groin, the broad head now a dark purple, the veins running beneath the skin thick and ropy. For a moment the thought of taking that large cock in her tight ass made her anxious. But then she forgot to worry about anything as Connor bent his head and took a nipple in his mouth, stroking her clit at the same time. One strong arm supported her tightly awhile his legs wedged her thighs further apart.

Meredith threaded her fingers through his hair, clutching his head tightly, the feel of his tongue and teeth on her engorged nipples driving her wild. The more he suckled her breast, the more he played with her clit, the more unbelievably hot she got. And she didn't need the emeralds to do it this time. She wanted him inside her. And now.

"Fuck me," she cried, wondering in some faint corner of her mind at her boldness. "Please, Connor. Do it now."

Connor raised his head. "My pleasure."

He swept her up in his arms, strode out of the water and lay down on the blanket with her. Ignoring the fact they were both dripping wet, he moved briefly to reach for his jeans, pulled out his wallet and extracted a foil packet.

"Put this on me," he told her, handing her the condom.

His eyes never left her as she rolled the latex onto his cock. Then, pulling her legs over his shoulders to widen his access to her, he took his shaft in one hand and guided himself to the opening of her slick entrance.

"Pinch your nipples again," he told her in a taut voice. "Just like you did before. And when I tell you to, squeeze them as hard as you can."

Meredith obediently took her nipples and tightened her fingertips around them. Instantly jolts of sensation shot straight to her pussy.

"Good girl," he rasped, as he thrust inside her. "Look at me while I fuck you, Meredith. Don't take your eyes off me."

She couldn't if she tried. His eyes held her as if they were magnets and she was steel.

The blunt head of his cock pressed against her opening, pushing against the now-resilient flesh. Already her cream was running again, easing the way for him. Inch by slow inch he eased himself inside her, his eyes locked on hers. At last he was in all the way, the muscles of her pussy gripping him like a tight, wet fist, squeezing him hard.

His breath hissed through his teeth and his body tensed.

Meredith lifted her hips, urging him to move.

"Oh, I'll fuck you all right, sweetheart," he rasped. "I'm just enjoying this too much to move for a minute."

His whiskey-colored eyes darkened to the color of aged cognac, golden lights dancing in the irises and his face was taut with passion. He braced himself over her on his arms, hands bracketing her head.

Meredith wrapped her legs around him, locked her heels and pulled him tight against her body, pressing him into her even deeper. As large as his penis was, she couldn't seem to get enough of him.

"Please," she begged.

"All right," he whispered. "I'll give you what you want."

He began to move in slow, powerful strokes, pulling all the way out, then thrusting back into her. Each time she felt the broad head push against the mouth of her womb, setting off sparks that lit her nerve endings. Everything around her ceased to exist—the beach, the ocean, the gulls wheeling overhead, the hot sun blazing down on them. Nothing existed but this man filling her pussy, fucking her with a rhythm that drove her out of her mind.

Connor had to grit his teeth to hold on to his control. The feel of that delicious cunt around his penis was making him ache with the need for release. Not yet, he told himself. He wanted the caress of those plump pussy lips as he moved his cock in and out of her grasping channel. As large as he was he knew he'd needed to ready her to take him with those other orgasms. As it was she was stretched tight around him, the tender tissues a dark pink, the labia swollen and tempting.

More, he told himself. *I want more*. The next time he pulled back he balanced himself to grab her thighs and brace her legs on his shoulders.

"Open your cunt wider for me," he ordered. "Let me see that gorgeous pink flesh."

Meredith reached her hands down and spread her labia, eyes still fastened to his. He saw fire dancing in the deep green of her eyes and knew she was as turned on as he was by this. She was so responsive. So fucking receptive to everything he did.

His stomach knotted as the thought whisked through his brain. *This is far more than just sex*. He tried to shove it away before it could fully form. That wasn't what he wanted. He'd seen this woman, wanted to fuck her, to have inexhaustible, erotic sex with her and that was it. He'd learned the hard way he didn't do relationships well.

But Fate was apparently playing a trick on him, because something more complex was building here and it terrified him. The emerald had been an impulse, a way to seduce her. But what if there really was something to those old legends? What if the whole thing was backfiring on him?

If he had an ounce of common sense he'd take Meredith back to her car and drive off into the sunset, doing his best to forget what happened here today. But a maelstrom of emotions was crashing down around him and he couldn't shake himself loose.

His eyes focused again on the woman beneath him, her pussy clutching at his shaft in greedy hunger. He caught his breath at the sight of his fat cock stretching that tiny, tempting opening to its limits.

"God." He was mesmerized by the sight. His breathing was uneven. "Now touch yourself. Take your finger and rub it back and forth over your clit. And pretend it's me. Will you do that for me?"

"Yes." The word came out on a whisper of breath.

She moved her finger across her swollen nub and moaned, an excited sound bubbling up from her throat that made his cock throb and his balls ache. Her little cries were seductive music to his ears. He resumed his in and out strokes, slightly increasing the tempo, never taking his eyes away from his cock pulling at her swollen cunt. "Does that feel good, Meredith? Do you like masturbating in front of me? Does it turn you on to have me watch you?"

She nodded, her finger moving faster.

"Tell me. Say the words."

"Yes, it does. Oh God, Connor. Fuck me harder."

"I always aim to please the lady," he ground out and began to thrust harder and faster.

The more he increased his tempo, the faster she moved her finger. His cock slammed into her again and again, his testicles slapping against her elevated ass. She felt him tense and knew his climax was near, as was hers.

"Now, Meredith," he commanded. "Pinch you clit hard and come for me."

Oh, God.

She pinched as hard as she could. Connor's shaft pulsed inside her as her pussy spasmed and her entire body clenched. Again she felt outside herself, twisting in blackness with bright colors exploding around her. Every nerve in her body fired, setting her skin on fire. She was devoured, consumed, her essence pouring from her in a copious flow. As intense as the previous orgasm had been, this one racked her even more.

Her heart hammered against her ribs so hard she thought they might break and she couldn't catch her breath. There was nothing except that thick cock impossibly filling her, stretching her, pounding inside her. And Connor's big body looming over her, every muscle straining with his cataclysmic release.

At last she settled back to earth, heaving and panting, sure she'd splintered into a million pieces. The breeze from the ocean felt good against her overheated skin. With infinite care and gentleness Connor eased her legs down and lowered them to the blanket. He eased himself out of her, leaving an unexpected emptiness and a tiny cry of protest burst from her lips. But then he rolled to the side, taking her with him and wrapping her in his arms. She burrowed close to that rock-hard chest, feeling its solidness against her and the flex of muscles in his arms as he tightened them around her.

"Connor," she sighed, unable to form another word.

He kissed the top of her head. "You are a treasure, sweetheart. A gem in your own right."

"A very worn-out gem right now." She smiled. "But very content."

He ran his fingertips lightly over her arm and she shivered. "Cold?"

"No. Not at all." She smiled against his chest. "I think the emeralds really do keep me warm."

"I think they must transfer heat to me too." He moved his hand between them to touch the pendant. "You know, gemstones are the flowers of the mineral kingdom and emeralds are one of the stones named for a color of the rainbow. For thousands of years,

when they were pulled from Cleopatra's Mine in Egypt, legends of all kinds were attached to them."

"Oh?" She wriggled until she could move her head enough to look up at him. "What kinds of legends?"

"Most of them had to do with sexual prowess." He grinned down at her. "You think they were talking about me?"

Meredith laughed. "I don't know. Are you two thousand years old?"

"Right now I feel like it." He rested his chin on the top of her head. "But no, I was thinking about the sexual prowess part."

"Unless this pendant has infused you with special properties, I'd say you're doing just fine on your own."

He tipped her face up and kissed her, his lips a caress against hers. "But who knows. Maybe the emerald is touching both of us."

"It's certainly affecting me. I can't ever remember being this turned on or this wild with anyone. Ever."

Connor hugged her to him. "And there's more to come, sweet thing. Much more to come."

* * * * *

They swam in the ocean, languid in the water's buoyancy and warmed by the invisible aura that emanated from the emeralds. They floated on the crest of the waves, fingertips touching.

"It's hard to believe a gem could do all of this," Meredith commented lazily, eyes closed, letting the water carry her on its surface.

"There are a lot of myths that say emeralds can do anything," Connor replied. "They have mystical, magical powers. They were prized as gifts to royalty and Cleopatra favored them over all other gemstones." He chuckled. "I've heard people

who possess them can perform the most amazing feats of sexual dexterity and endurance."

"I'd have to say," she told him, "I think we've proven that point."

Connor squeezed her fingers. "But remember, I said we've barely scratched the surface. If we were back at my home there would be no limit to the things we could do together."

"Where is your home?" she asked. "You've told me almost nothing about yourself."

They had drifted toward shore. Now Connor stood, his feet touching bottom and lifted Meredith upright with him. "Wouldn't you rather I'd be a man of mystery?"

She tugged at her lower lip with her teeth. "I don't know. Where will you go when today is over? Does this mean we'll never see each other again?"

He touched his forehead to hers. "We haven't finished seeing each other yet. Have we?"

"I don't know." Her breath caught at her throat. What else could he have planned? "Have we?"

"I have so many things I want to do to you, sweet thing. And with you. I wonder if forever would be long enough."

Her breath caught at his words and she deliberately tamped them down. That kind of thinking was dangerous. She needed to focus just on today.

He lifted her in his arms as he had before and carried her to the blanket. When he looked at her his eyes were hot. "You have no idea how it would turn me on to see you finger yourself. Not just when we're fucking but by yourself, so I can see everything."

"Would it?"

He brushed his lips across her forehead. "I'll bet you do it when you're alone, don't you." When she didn't answer him he tipped her chin up and captured her eyes. "It's nothing to be embarrassed about, sweet thing. And it's very sexy to watch."

Her heart began to hammer again. She tried to say something but her mouth wouldn't move. The idea made her feel uncomfortable yet at the same time the idea turned her on so much she could feel her arousal already dripping from her cunt.

"Watching you slide those fingers over your clit and rub that luscious pink skin and bring yourself to orgasm would be one of the most incredible things to see." He rolled over until he was almost on top of her and cupped her face with his hands. "Would you do it, sweetheart? For me? Bring yourself to climax and let me watch every bit of it."

"Connor, I—"

"If you do, I promise you a real treat." He refused to let her look away, holding her face turned toward him.

Her breath hitched. "But we've already used up all the fudge."

"We won't need it," he told her and bent his head to capture her mouth.

His lips were warm against hers, his tongue like the flame of a candle as he licked the seam of her lips and probed into the warmth of her mouth. His tongue swept against the roof of her mouth and licked the insides of her cheeks. She met his tongue with her own, thrusting it into his mouth to seek his taste and swallow his flavor. His body was warm against hers and his cock, hard and fully erect again, prodded at her belly with its wet tip. He kissed her until her bones felt as if they'd melted and she'd dissolved into a puddle.

"All right," she gasped, when he finally lifted his head. "I'll do it."

This was more new territory for her. Playing with herself while he was fucking her was one thing. But now his whole focus would be on what she was doing. She took a deep breath and let it out slowly, her hands resting lightly on her abdomen.

"I want you like this," he told her, bending her legs and placing her feet flat on the blanket, wide apart. Then he lay down full length with his head between her thighs, his eyes fastened on her cunt. "I want you to listen to me, sweet thing. Follow what I tell you to do. Are you okay with that?"

"A-All right." Trepidation was fast vanishing as the entire concept of what she was about to do heated her desire and made her tingle everywhere.

Connor touched her vaginal opening with one fingertip. "Wet already. I love it. You know, I'd have to say the emeralds are more than doing their job."

Something was, she thought, if she was this wet again so soon.

"Pull the lips of your cunt apart," he told her, "and let me see inside you. Yes, that's it. Oh, God, what a luscious pussy." He dragged his finger through the cream seeping from her, then put it to his lips, licking it clean. "Delicious too."

Meredith watched him, waiting for him to speak again.

"All right, Meredith." His voice was like a warm embrace sliding over her. Reassuring her. "I'm going to put my fingers on your pussy lips so your hands are free. I want this gorgeous vagina wide open the entire time. Now. Put your fingers on either side of your clit and push down so that little button pops free from its hiding place."

Meredith felt tremors already building in her just from his words. She did as he asked, feeling the touch of cool air as she freed her aching nub from the hood protecting it.

"Good, sweet thing. Very good. Now drag your fingernail across it. Not too hard."

She did as he asked and at once the tremors increased and more liquid gushed from her. One more touch like that and she'd come without further urging.

"Now slide two fingers down and into your pussy. Let me see you fuck yourself."

Meredith didn't even need to wet them with her saliva, she was already so juicy. Her fingers easily slid inside her dripping sheath and she began moving them back and forth.

"Oh, sweetheart, I am so hard just watching you I'm in pain." Connor's voice was taut with passion. "Keep doing that. Don't stop, no matter what."

He moved one hand to slip a lean finger into her cunt along with her own. The feeling of their fingers joined inside her was so erotic a minor orgasm shuddered through her.

"You like that do you?" His voice with thick with lust. "You'll like this even better. Move those cum-soaked fingers for me, sweet thing, and hold yourself open."

Obediently Meredith did as he asked, glad he was making decision for her because she was fast losing the ability to make any for himself.

He moved his hands away from her pussy, slid one lean, strong finger along the ultra-sensitive skin between her cunt and her ass and pressed the wet finger against her anus. "Take a deep breath, Meredith and whatever you do, don't stop finger-fucking yourself. Keep pumping those fingers in and out of that slick sheath."

She inhaled slowly and felt him push his finger inside her ass, into that dark forbidden tunnel and her own hand began to move faster. Instead of pulling away from him, she automatically pushed against it. Heat flooded her and electricity jolted through her like streaks of lightning.

"Aah. I can tell you like that." He kissed the insides of her thighs as he wiggled his finger back and forth. "You can pretend it's my cock in there, sweet thing, because before we're through it will be. I am going to give you the ride of your life." He nipped at the soft skin. "No other man will ever satisfy you after me. I promise you."

Her hand took on a life of its own and without even realizing it her other hand reached for her clit. Her fingers probed the hooded bud and began pinching it. Her fingers were soaked with her juices and her clit felt as if it were on fire. Connor fucked her ass with his finger, his eyes glued to her face. She was on sensation overload, a battery of feelings she was unable to fight.

"Tell me when you're ready, Meredith. Let me know when you can't hold back any longer."

"Now," she screamed. "I'm coming now. Connorrrrrr!" His name erupted from her on a long high note and she began to thrash.

Connor slipped his finger from her rectum and spread her labia, blowing soft air on her wet, heated flesh. She wanted something to fill her—her hands, his hands, his cock—but he held her wide open as her pussy convulsed with orgasmic spasms.

Connor could hardly breathe. Meredith bucked and heaved even as he held her in place, her fingers thrust inside the pulsing cunt. Her head was thrown back, the muscles in her neck taut and cream poured from her pussy drenching his thumbs and running down to that luscious ass.

The walls of her cunt rippled, seeking something to fill them besides her own touch but he would have none of that. He couldn't get enough of the magnificent sight before him, mesmerized at the rhythmic pumping of her hand. He had seen other women bring themselves to climax before at his urging but none of them affected him the way Meredith did. She gave herself over to it completely, a red flush spreading over her body and her cheeks turning rosy as the orgasm consumed her.

He wished he could stretch her pussy wider, peer all the way to the mouth of the womb and see that delicious cream begin its journey through that hungry channel. His heartbeat speeded up and he could feel the blood thrumming in his ears. Meredith had the most gorgeous cunt he'd even seen—and he'd seen plenty. It was especially gorgeous in the throes of passion, clutching at air as it sought something to relieve its emptiness.

He wanted to plunge his face into her flesh, to lap up the delectable cream dripping from her and swallow it into himself. He wanted to eat up every inch of her, probe her hot vagina with his tongue until he had lost all breath. A warning voice called to him in the back of his befuddled brain but he ignored it, so besotted with the woman convulsing in his hands that at that moment he would have given up anything to keep her forever.

God! He was just losing it.

Meredith's hands holding his head made him suddenly aware that he was still lapping at her, still licking up the last drops of liquid. He couldn't resist stroking a line from her vaginal opening to her anus, tickling the sensitive flesh with the tip of his tongue, then sliding one long finger into her rectum just once more. She moaned and squirmed but her ass automatically pressed down on the intrusion.

Connor withdrew his finger and lifted his head. Meredith lay before him like a carnal buffet, so much there for the tasting and taking. The lips of her pussy were puffy and pink. Her mouthwatering cream glistened on her skin, tempting him until her had to bite his tongue to keep from thrusting it into her. Her curls glistened with moisture and he combed his fingers through them, loving the feel of them against his skin. They felt like a kitten's pelt, satiny and delicate.

But everything about her was like that. She was fresh and dewy tempting, yet with her eyes still hot with need and the sun casting golden light on her skin, she looked like a totally sinful angel. How had he been so lucky as to have her walk into his life? But how, then, would he ever be able to let her go?

He could see the pulse beating erratically in the hollow of her throat. Her lips were slightly parted and her breasts heaved as she tried to pull air into her lungs. Her hands at his head clenched and unclenched.

He slid up her body and pressed his mouth to hers, the wetness of her delicious juices still on his lips. "Taste yourself, sweet thing. Lick my lips."

She did, lightly, then licked her own lips. "It tastes...strange," she told him.

He chuckled. "It tastes wonderful. I could drink from your pussy all day and all night. Your flavor is better than any fine wine. And more intoxicating."

A faint smile curved her lips. "Could you give me a moment to rest first?" she asked in a weak voice.

"Yes but just for a moment." He kissed her again. "The sun will be going down shortly and I don't want to waste a minute of what's left of the afternoon."

She was silent in his arms for a long time. Then her hand snaked down between them, she shifted her body and her hand reached for his cock that was pressing into her soft body.

Connor drew in a sharp breath. "I thought you needed rest."

"Yes," she said with a wicked tone in her voice. "But you don't." She raised an eyebrow. "Do you?"

He felt his heartbeat speed up and his penis swell even more. "Exactly what did you have in mind?"

She fluttered her lashes at him. "Why don't you roll over onto your back and find out."

Connor did as she asked, suddenly sure he was about to cross an invisible line and step into a yawning emotional pit. And he had no idea what to do about it.

Chapter Three

Meredith rose to her knees and let her eyes roam over every inch of Connor's body. He could have been a statue, with every muscle perfectly designed and the lines of his body flowing gracefully one into the other. His chest was covered with fine, dark curls that felt soft to her touch. She thought she could stroke it for hours, just running her fingers through it. But beneath their softness he was rock hard, his muscles defined beneath the bronzed skin.

His stomach was flat, broken only by the indentation of his navel.

The muscles in his powerful thighs were tight and clenched even more when she ran a finger along the crease between thigh and groin. Her fingers drifted through the curls surrounding his cock and rubbed at the base of the thick shaft. Swollen veins pulsed just beneath the surface of skin as soft as silk.

Her hand drifted back up over his chest, sending ripples of sensation through him. She licked the tip of one finger and rubbed it over one of his flat nipples, drawing a tiny groan from him. She couldn't remember any of the men she'd slept with having nipples that attracted her but now she bent forward and took one of Connor's in her mouth.

"God!" he hissed.

She bit lightly on the fat bud then swirled her tongue on it. Muscles jumped in Connor's body but he forced himself to lie as still as possible. She took her time with each nipple, licking and sucking and nipping as he had done to her.

"You taste good too," she told him with a mischievous grin and dragged a fingernail from one nipple to the other.

"I have other parts that are tasty too." His voice was unsteady.

"Oh, I'll get to those. I just want to check everything else out first."

She had no idea where her bold attitude had come from. Even with her fiancé she had been a passive lover, an acceptable trait since he was a take-charge person. He'd never inspired her to take control, to tease and tempt. She'd ignored so much of this because he was promising a secure future. Well, how secure was it when he was busy fucking someone else just before their wedding?

For a brief moment she wondered if it really was the emeralds casting a spell on her. She'd had more orgasms in one afternoon that she'd ever had in a week—or a month, depending on the relationship. And that was another thing. It had finally occurred to her that she sucked at relationships, picking absolutely the wrong men for herself. Yet here she was sharing an erotic afternoon with a gorgeous, sexy man who seemed to find her tremendously appealing. Somewhere between the meeting at the store and now he'd managed to erase the memories of her shame and betrayal without even knowing it. Maybe there was some truth to this emerald thing after all.

But what if he turned out to be like all the others?

Cool it, Meredith. Don't look for something that isn't there. And don't expect anything. This is just an afternoon of sex, nothing more.

Tucking her hair behind one ear to keep it out of the way, she bent down and ran her tongue over every inch of his chest, stopping to tease at his navel before leaving a wet trail to his groin. With every touch of her tongue his cock twitched.

"Uh-uh," she told him when he tried to reach for her. "It's my turn."

He dropped his hands to his sides and fisted the blanket.

"Okay but you should know you're killing me."

She winked at him, then took his hot shaft in one hand while her other reached down to cup his balls. A pearly drop of moisture beaded at the center of the flat head of his penis and she licked it up greedily, rolling her tongue around and humming with satisfaction.

She slid a glance at him. "I promise you won't die."

And then she took him into her mouth.

Jesus!

Connor could barely hold himself still when her hot, wet mouth slid down over his throbbing penis. Blood rushed through the veins and impossibly he swelled even more. It was hard not to react. Her mouth was like wet silk, so soft yet at the same time powerful. When her slender fingers began pumping up and down, drawing the skin up toward the top, then back down to the root, at the same time her tongue swirled over him, he thought he'd lose it for sure. This was pure heaven, delicious sensations racing through his body with every nerve responding. He wanted to make his mind a blank and simply give himself over to the magic she was working with her dainty mouth and slim fingers.

But he was afraid he'd come in her mouth if he let go. Not that it wouldn't be heaven to have those lips stretched around him while he pumped his hot seed down her throat and she swallowed it. But he had plans that didn't include climaxing before he was ready.

He wound his hands in the silken waterfall of her hair, pulling her closer, hips lifting to meet the thrusts of her mouth.

Don't lose it, old man. Hang on. The best is yet to come.

How the hell was he going to walk away from her after this? He'd planned it so carefully. One wild afternoon and then he'd go back to his regular routine. Whatever the hell that was. This was his usual habit with women. The one time he'd deviated from it had nearly destroyed him. But Meredith was exerting a power over him like no one else ever had, not even Nila, the bitch of the world.

That's good. Think about Nila. That should shrivel your cock.

But not even thoughts about the woman who'd taken his heart and nearly destroyed him could dampen what he was feeling. He was in big trouble and he knew it. And when they got to the grand finale today, he'd be in even worse shape but no way could he stop himself from moving forward.

When she dragged her teeth lightly over his shaft and began to suck harder, he grabbed her head and wrenched her mouth away.

"Enough," he gasped. "I have other plans."

"But—" she began.

"Next time," he promised in an uneven voice. "Next time I'll come in your mouth and love every minute of it."

Next time? Was he crazy?

Next time?

Meredith's eyes widened. Did this mean he planned to see her again? There'd been no promises for this afternoon, just hours of pure hedonistic pleasure. But the more they talked and the more intimate they became she realized how impossible it would be for her just to go back to her self-pity, or the tattered shreds of her life and just forget about today. No, she'd have to figure something out.

But while her brain was stumbling, Connor rolled over, taking her with him and turned her onto her stomach.

"Sweet thing." He kissed the sensitive spot where her shoulder met her neck. "Lift up onto your hands and knees for me and spread your legs wide. Can you do that for me?"

She shivered at the seductive tone of his voice and what she knew his words implied. She nodded.

"Say it," he urged. "Say the words for me."

"Yes, I want to get on my hands and knees for you."

He kissed her ear and licked the rim. "You know what's coming, don't you. And I promise, I'll make it so good for you."

She rose onto her hands and knees as he asked, back arched.

Connor reached around and moved the emerald pendant so it rested on her back. "I want them to touch you when I'm fucking your ass." His voice was low and hummed with desire.

He positioned himself behind her and rested his hands on the globes of her ass, separating them. The hot lash of his tongue trailed a path along the crevice until it reached her anus. When he rimmed it with the tip of his tongue she started to shake. A dark ribbon of need began uncoiling in her belly, winding its way through her body.

As he lapped at her he slid two fingers into her cunt, maneuvering them against the heated tissues that she knew were already soaked. She was sure her juices were dripping out of her again but her body, exhausted as it was, seemed to have a mind of its own. She wiggled her ass at him, begging him for more, her cunt that had only been tantalized by her masturbation wanted satisfaction.

"You want it, don't you," he asked in a hoarse voice,

"Yes." She didn't even have to ask him what he meant.

Without a word he dragged his fingers from her dripping pussy and rubbed her cream around her anus, then carried some inside with his finger.

"I wish I had some lube to ease this for you, sweetheart but I'll go as slowly as we need to. Okay?"

She nodded her head, beyond speech.

He fucked her asshole with his finger, sliding another one in beside it and scissoring them to stretch her tissues. When he pulled them back she tensed, knowing what was coming. She heard the snap of latex as he swiftly sheathed himself. And when the broad head of his penis pushed into that tight, dark hole she sucked in her breath.

"That's it," he encouraged. "Take in a deep breath and hold it until I tell you to let go."

He braced one hand on the small of her back as he slowly, inexorably pushed his thick penis inside her virgin asshole. He adjusted his position slightly and she felt two lean fingers slide into her cunt again and his thumb find her clit.

"All right, sweet thing. Let that breath out now."

She blew it out as he pushed hard and seated himself fully inside her. The pressure was almost more than she could bear and her tissues burned with the friction. But then he began moving his fingers inside her pussy and his thumb stroked her clit over and over. In spite of herself she responded, the walls of her vaginal sheath beginning to quiver and her cream pouring into his hand. That wicked thumb teased and tormented her clit until she thought she would go mad. And still she wanted more.

"Okay?" he asked, his voice rough with his effort at control.

She nodded. "Yes."

"Then hang on for the ride of your life, sweetheart."

His hips rolled and thrust, the tempo increasing as he moved his cock in and out of her tight, dark hole. At the same time he increased his movement in her pussy and the friction over her clit. The more he fucked her, the easier it became, until she started pushing back to him. The dual sensation of his penis in her rear sheath and his fingers in her cunt, rubbing against himself through the thin separating membrane, drove her to a fever pitch.

Harder and faster he moved and she matched his rhythm, her body demanding more and more of him. She heard him groaning with desire above her, his hand and his cock moving faster and faster. His thighs slapped against the backs of hers and his testicles bumped against the cheeks of her ass. She tried to hang on until she could feel him ready to explode but her body demanded its release.

"Please," she begged. "Please now."

"Yes," he shouted. "Come now."

They exploded together, his hot seed pumping into her ass while her pussy clenched around his fingers. He rode her through the spasms as she flew into space, splintering, shattering, her entire body shaking. She couldn't breathe as the contractions seized her body and her juices poured into his hand. There was no beginning, no ending, just this endless peak of unbearable pleasure that she was sure would kill her.

She was crying and screaming his name, at the same time she continued to buck back against him, forcing him into her again and again.

And then the storm was over and they collapsed onto the blanket, Connor's big body covering hers. His breath rasped in her ear and she could feel his heart beating hard against her back, competing with her own in volume and intensity.

Meredith had no idea how long they lay there like that. She began to shiver and realized the sun had dipped down toward the horizon, taking its heat with it.

Connor rolled to his back, taking her with him and kissed her so thoroughly she could hardly breathe.

"I have no words," he told her. "You cannot imagine how you made me feel. And to know I was the first man to fuck your ass... It's a gorgeous ass, Meredith. If I weren't ready to collapse I'd stick my cock in it again and ride you to heaven." He kissed the tip of her nose. "Are you okay? Was it all right for you?"

"Oh yes," she breathed. "It was wonderful. But I think I need a week to recuperate."

"Just don't take off the pendant," he warned with a grin. "This all might disappear."

"Connor?"

"Yes, sweetheart?"

"Will-Will we ever see each other again."

He brushed his knuckles against her cheek. "Life holds a great many surprises. You never know when the next one might come along." He gave her one last kiss.

"Meanwhile we need to get dressed before we freeze to death. And I have to get you back to your car. Surely there must be someone wondering where you are."

She shook her head, her smile disappearing. "No, not anymore."

He hugged her tightly. "Maybe the emeralds will bring you a prince."

"At least someone like you," she told him and reached for her clothes.

* * * * *

Meredith?"

Meredith heard the voice calling her as if from a great distance. Her mind tried to shut it out and reach for the dream that even now was floating away. She could still feel the sand of the beach between her toes, hear the roar of the ocean, feel the salty breeze on her skin. She was languid, soporific after hours of unbelievable sex with the most incredible man she'd ever met and she didn't want it to end. *Come back*, she wanted to shout. *Don't leave me*. But her dream prince was already nothing more than smoke, drifting into nothingness.

"Meredith, are you out here, honey?"

She dragged her eyes open and looked around her. Instead of a beach she was on her grandmother's sun porch at the bed-and-breakfast, wrapped in her usual afghan, a book open on her lap. She shook her head. Had it really been a dream? It had seemed so real.

"There you are." Gram stood beside her, shaking her head. "I just got back from Portland and hoped I'd find you out doing something fun. And here you are, with just a book for company again. You've got to stop this."

Meredith pushed herself up in the lounge and the book on her lap dropped to the floor.

Gram picked it up. "Is this your book, honey? It's not mine."

Meredith took the book from her. When she saw the title it almost burned her hand. *The History of Emeralds*. Where had that come from? It wasn't hers, either.

She shoved her fingers through her hair. "I guess I was reading it and fell asleep. I'm sorry." She sighed. "I know you wanted me to get out and I really meant to do something this afternoon." She frowned. Why didn't it feel as if she'd slept? Why did she feel like she'd been somewhere and done something? She must have been asleep but her body felt too spent to have rested. And sore, in the strangest places. Why did her rear end sting the way it did? A strange feeling meandered into her stomach.

"Well, go wash your face and brush your hair. Mr. Reilly's decided he can't take another evening with his computer and he wants to take us out to dinner. I told him I'm beat after this afternoon but you would be more than happy to go."

"Gram!" Oh, lord. "I don't even know the man. No, I can't do this. I don't want to. Make my excuses."

Footsteps sounded on the stairs.

"Too late. Here he is now. And you still need to make yourself presentable."

Meredith threw up her hands. "I can't—"

"Can't what?"

Oh, God. That voice. She knew it from her dream. But that was impossible. And then he walked out onto the porch and her breath caught in her throat. It was *him*! From her dream. It had been a dream, right? Every pulse in her body began to throb.

"This is my granddaughter, Meredith," Gram was saying. "Honey, this is J.C. Reilly."

"You didn't tell me how beautiful she was," he teased.

Yet while he wore his charm like a second skin she detected something unsettling in his eyes. Apprehension? No, impossible. He didn't seem like a man who would be unsure of himself. And besides, they had just met. Right?

"I told Meredith I needed to rest after today," Gram went on, "but she'll be happy to have dinner with you."

Those whiskey-colored eyes that were suddenly so familiar studied her. "I'd be more than pleased if you'd accept my invitation, Meredith."

She couldn't make her mouth work. Her brain seemed to have deserted her. Apparently she'd spent the afternoon reading a book she'd never seen and sleeping on the sun porch. Then how did she know J.C. Reilly?

"But..."

"Aren't you up for a little adventure?" he teased. "You never know what you might find when you venture out of the house."

"But I...you..."

"For heaven's sake." Gram's voice was edged with impatience. "Just go fix yourself up and come back here. It's time you got out of here for a while." She turned to Reilly. "That child would sleep in that lounge chair forever if I'd let her."

"I think you look just fine." His eyes dropped to the hollow at her throat. "By the way, that's an exquisite piece of jewelry you're wearing. A very interesting pendant. The emeralds just match your eyes."

"Why, he's right," Gram said, reaching out to touch it. "I don't think I've ever seen you wear it before. Is it new?"

Meredith's hand shook as she reached up to her neck and her fingers came in contact with a pine tree charm. She flipped it up and saw it was studded with tiny emeralds. So it hadn't been a dream after all. Had it?

She remembered all the things she and her dream man had done on that beach and her face flushed hot. Impossible. This whole thing was impossible.

"Meredith?" Gram prodded.

"I-It was a gift. From a special friend." She turned to Reilly, again aware of the indefinable look in his eyes. What was he so unsure of? She wet her lips. "Tell me, Mr. Reilly. What does the J.C. stand for?"

"The J is for John, like my father. But most people use my middle name. Connor."

Meredith thought she would faint. Her legs threatened to buckle under her and her mouth went suddenly dry. She looked at Connor and saw a grin playing at the corners of his mouth. An invisible thread suddenly tightened between them, tugging her toward him. He reached out a hand for her. "Come on. I know a great place for lobster and they have a wonderful wine cellar."

Meredith gave him her own trembling hand. "I can't think of anything I'd rather do than have dinner with you." She turned back to Gram, hoping she wasn't making a mistake. "Don't wait up for us."

His fingers linked with hers. "Good. We can get a little tipsy and I can tell you all about emeralds." He looked into her eyes and whatever tentative feelings had been lurking in his had disappeared. "Did you know they have mystical powers?"

About the Author

I always wonder what readers really want to know when I write one of these things. Getting to this point in my career has been an interesting journey. I've managed rock and roll bands and organized concerts. Been the only female on the sports staff of a university newspaper. Immersed myself in Nashville peddling a country singer. Lived in five different states. Married two very interesting but totally different men.

I think I must have lived in Texas in another life, because the minute I set foot on Texas soil I knew I was home. Living in Texas Hill Country gives me inspiration for more stories than I'll probably ever be able to tell, what with all the sexy cowboys who surround me and the gorgeous scenery that provides a great setting.

Each day is a new adventure for me, as my characters come to life on the pages of my current work in progress. I'm absolutely compulsive about it when I'm writing and thank all the gods and goddesses that I have such a terrific husband who encourages my writing and puts up with my obsession. As a multi-published author, I love to hear from my readers. Their input keeps my mind fresh and always hunting for new ideas.

Desiree welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

Tell Us What You Think

We appreciate hearing reader opinions about our books. You can email us at Comments@EllorasCave.com.

Also by Desiree Holt

Cupid's Shaft

Diamond Lady

Double Entry

Journey to the Pearl

Night Heat

Once Upon a Wedding

Teaching Molly

Where Danger Hides



Discover for yourself why readers can't get enough of the multiple award-winning publisher Ellora's Cave. Whether you prefer e-books or paperbacks, be sure to visit EC on the web at www.ellorascave.com for an erotic reading experience that will leave you breathless.

www.ellorascave.com