

ELLORA'S CAVE TABOO

AUCTIONING

Charity

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Auctioning Charity

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AUCTIONING CHARITY

Reese Gabriel

Chapter One

Charity Bradford stood in Roger's doorway, curvaceous as a goddess, determined as the devil.

"Can I help you?" asked Roger Morvan with a smile, always happy for a chance to visit with his vice president of corporate development.

"Yes, I wonder if I could speak to you for a moment, Roger."

Charity could speak to him all day as far as Roger was concerned and all night too, with that sultry voice of hers and those pouting, sensual lips.

He had no idea what those lips did in private but he had plenty of fantasies—beginning with her murmuring "Kiss me please, Roger" and ending with her worshipping his firm, athletic body.

Errors on her part would be dealt with strictly, of course—his hand delivering spanks to her sweet buttocks or, better still, a flogger to those ripe, full breasts.

"Of course, Charity, have a seat. I'm all ears."

Charity approached the desk with typical boldness, heels pressing into the deep pile carpet. For a moment he imagined her crawling—wicked and graceful as a cat, her thick, full mane of blonde hair hanging in front of her face, so silky and soft, made to be grasped in a man's fist.

Roger had often wondered about Charity's sex life. She was not married and as far as he knew from two years of working with her, she did not have a serious boyfriend.

Married to the job—not unlike himself.

Charity sat demurely, pulling down the gray wool skirt as she crossed her legs. They were long and tanned—beautiful—as was the full bosom and wasp waist that had earned her the nickname Sweet Charity.

Not that anyone would dare call her such a thing to her face.

"It's about the executive auction," she said.

"Oh?" Roger felt a tightening in his crotch. This particular charity event had been the idea of one of the members of the board but it was particularly close to his heart, given his predilection for dominating beautiful women.

It was a harmless-enough affair. They auctioned off executives, who were required to submit to nothing more than dinner with their purchaser. For this reason he had no qualms about requiring all his upper-echelon employees to participate, including Charity.

"Frankly, I'm a little uncomfortable with the idea," she continued.

Roger wondered idly about her lingerie. Woman like Charity sometimes dressed to play underneath their staid exteriors—lace-trimmed bras made of sheer silk and tiny, teasing little panties that just begged a man to rip them off and ravish the wearer.

"And why's that?" he asked.

She arched a brow. "Well, isn't it obvious? I'm a woman."

"I had noticed your gender, yes."

A little hard to miss, the way she sashayed as she walked, wafting that perfume of hers—sheer intoxicating musk mixed with jasmine and hyacinth—ripe, sweet and succulent. You could almost see the pain in the men's faces as she walked by.

As far as Roger was concerned, Charity could do with a little session of being strung up, hands cuffed overhead then being carefully worked over—light, taunting kisses mixed with blistering bits of pain all across her scantily clad body until she begged to be of service, submitting to his every sexual whim.

Could she read it in his eyes—the secret fantasies that racked his brain? He had never said an untoward word to her, though he wanted to possess her utterly and completely.

It is hell being between submissives, Roger thought. He currently didn't have a woman to chain and teasingly whip into orgasmic frenzy whenever he felt like it.

Charity shifted in her seat—a rare show of unease. “It’s just that I am the only female. I’ll stand out.”

Damn straight she would. Just as always. She was pure distraction, pure hell on male concentration.

“I’m afraid I’m still not following.” Roger played dumb, leaning back in his chair, curious to see where all this might go.

Somewhere fun, perhaps?

He had considered asking her out more than once but it was never a good idea to sleep with one’s employees. And that’s where it would end up with Sweet Charity, no doubt about it.

Maybe he should fire her first. Nah, she was too damn good at her job.

“The image of the female on the auction block,” she said now, evidently deciding on the direct approach, “is rather repugnant, don’t you think?”

He narrowed his gaze. “As opposed to a male being sold?”

Her full lips formed into a pouty, irritated frown. Oh, how he would like to explore the full range of her emotions, putting her under absolute control, manipulating her pleasure and her pain, her agony and ecstasy, for endless hours.

To begin, he would like to take her in his arms and overpower her with a kiss, reducing all her arguments to a single, panting, breathing motion, only one word left in her vocabulary—*Yes*.

Correction—two. *Yes, Master*.

“You know what I mean, Roger. There are a preponderance of images and cultural metaphors surrounding the exploitation of the female body.”

Roger snorted. “Good heavens, woman, it’s a charity dinner. I have no intention of selling you into white slavery.”

Something flashed in her eyes, difficult to read.

Interesting.

"All the same, Roger, I would rather sit this one out."

"Permission denied," he said, invoking his status as chief executive.

It was Charity's turn to narrow her gaze. Her brows were lovely, perfectly plucked.

"Excuse me?"

Apparently she hadn't expected him to refuse her.

"You are going to participate in the auction with everyone else," he declared. "I want this to be a real group effort, the employees deserve it. Besides, it won't do your reputation any good if people think you're afraid of some silly little game."

Her eyes became stormy. He could see that magnificent brain working overtime, hell-bent on winning her point.

"Is there something else, Charity?"

"As a matter-of-fact, Roger, I haven't seen where *you'll* be participating."

Ordinarily he would give a patient, respectful answer but she had gotten his dominant blood flowing. "That's because I'm not."

"Seems like a double standard to me," she shot back.

"You are entitled to your opinion. Now if you don't mind, I have some other business to attend to."

Charity rose to her feet. "As do I."

Such a strong will. He would love to meet it head-on and see what lay underneath. Something exciting and hot, no doubt, like that so-very-lush body of hers. She was born for a man's hands, her breasts made for caressing, nipples made for tweaking. Her belly made for kissing and tickling. Not to mention a bottom just itching to be spanked, bringing it to a rich, rosy red color.

Sweet Charity indeed.

It was almost as if she were taunting him.

Was that what she wanted deep down, to surrender her power in the bedroom and submit to a man's whims completely?

Maybe it was just wishful thinking on his part. Then again...

He watched her walk away, his cock hard as a rock.

Right then he decided he would be the one to purchase Charity at the auction. He would accept her companionship at dinner but that would only be the beginning.

Before he was done with her, he would strip away the layers of her defenses and lay her bare, body and soul. And unless he missed his guess, what he was going to find was a hot-blooded, sexy wench, born for bedroom submission.

* * * * *

Charity had never been so infuriated in her life. Roger was acting like an insensitive, dictatorial bastard. He was a hypocrite too, making her do something he didn't even have the guts to do himself.

"I still don't see what's so terrible about it," said Charity's friend Riki over lunch. "You stand up there and you accept bids so you can go to a nice dinner and do something to help a worthy cause."

Charity speared her lettuce, pinning it like a butterfly. So far she had done a whole lot of rearranging of her food on the plate and very little actual eating. "You don't understand the business world, Riki. I have to fight every day to be an equal and not just a female. You think anyone will take me seriously after I prance around some stage like a vacuous beauty queen?"

Riki eyed her skeptically. "That's a little duplicitous, don't you think, the part about you not wanting to appear female?"

"What do you mean?"

"Look at your lunch," said Riki, grease dripping down her chin from her mushroom burger with everything on it. "You call that a meal? Supermodels eat more."

"I'm trying to be healthy."

"You want to keep your shape, girlfriend. You want to stay attractive to guys. Let's be real."

"It's always a double standard," Charity complained, wishing she had Riki's metabolism, which would put any hummingbird to shame. For all the grease she ate, she managed to stay perfectly thin. Her job as a publicist helped. She never sat still for more than ten seconds at a time. "Guys get all out of shape and it's a sign of success but if a woman lets herself go just a little, she's a has-been."

Riki shook her head. "I think you just need to get laid."

"Sex is overrated," Charity dismissed.

"Only by people who aren't getting any. So let's talk details. What about him gets you all hot and bothered?"

Charity fought a blush. "He's a jerk. I already told you."

Riki focused her big green eyes, perfectly positioned in her oval face. "Yes, but he's a sexy jerk. Even I know that."

"He's average," dismissed Charity.

"With that face and those blue eyes?" Riki arched a brow. "If he's average, I'm a prize sumo wrestler."

Actually, Roger's eyes were a bluish green. They would change colors, depending on the light. Charity would lose herself in their mysterious depths sometimes.

"I bet he has a hell of a body too," Riki prodded.

"He wears clothes, so how would I know what his body looks like?"

Riki smirked. "You undress him with that wicked little mind of yours. I know you do."

Charity sighed. "Fine. If it will shut you up, I will tell you. He's very athletic, has a nice strong jawline and he's got these hands...like he can reach out and take what he wants."

Her pulse quickened as she got more deeply into her description. Could it be there was something more in this for her than mere objective appraisal of a handsome male? She had fought very hard not to be attracted to Roger. The reasons were obvious. He was her boss and he also happened to be her type—smooth and strong, always in control of his life.

Was there something else though? Something she was afraid to admit even to herself?

“Hmm...” Riki mulled it over. “Think he wants you?”

“No.”

“You say that awfully quickly, girl. You’re not exactly hard on the eyes, you know.”

“Well, he better not want me because I don’t want him.”

Riki smirked. “What if he buys you at the auction?”

Charity’s pulse quickened. She felt her heart skip a beat as she imagined being sold to the man, even if it was just for dinner.

“He wouldn’t dare.”

“Why not? He’s making you put yourself up for sale. Maybe he has his own motives.”

Charity’s nipples tightened as she thought back on their conversation, the way he had so easily dealt with her arguments.

She had felt handled, put in her place.

Speaking of handling, what would it be like to be touched by those hands of his? He would be decisive, determined, but what would he want? Her arousal, most certainly, but it would be directed toward a special end.

Toward *his* end. Roger Morvan liked to control, she knew that instinctively. In the same way that he ran his boardroom, he would run his bedroom. A woman would do as she was told, no compromise.

And he would make her like it, showing her that her very femininity depended on surrender.

Good heavens, had she seen all that in his blue eyes?

It must be her imagination, the reawakening of some very old fantasies, ones that did not go well at all with her corporate image.

After all, who would hire a female vice president whose panties instantly moistened at the thought of bondage or whose nipples instantly hardened at the idea of a man looming over her, whip in hand, demanding she become his sex slave?

"I hate Roger Morvan," she decided. "And I'm going to sabotage his little plan if it's the last thing I do."

Riki sipped her cola. "Sounds like love to me."

"Over his dead body."

Just then it came to Charity – the perfect plan, guaranteed to bring the house down. And the best part was that she would not have to defy the orders of her tyrannical boss, not even a little.

"You look like the cat that swallowed the canary," said Riki.

"Oh, it's much better than that, Riki," Charity said, thrusting the prongs of her fork into a defenseless olive. "I am going to be the "cat" who makes Roger Morvan swallow his pride."

Chapter Two

It was the night of the auction and Roger had been nervous as a bridegroom all day. Charity, on the other hand, had seemed particularly calm and happy, almost smug with self-satisfaction.

He found her mood most puzzling.

She had been so reluctant to be a part of things. Surely her misgivings would not have evaporated into thin air? One thing was sure—she had outdone herself by showing up at the office in black heels and skirt and peach-colored silk blouse. He had wasted at least an hour trying to guess the color of her underwear.

If Charity belonged to him, it would be a different story. He would never be in doubt as to her intimate apparel because she would reveal it at his merest word or gesture—assuming he allowed her the luxury of bras and panties in the first place.

Ah yes, the wonders of sexual domination. Having one's lover under wraps, safely buttoned up, away from the outside world but completely vulnerable and available underneath.

Vulnerable to him, of course, and no one else.

He hadn't seen her since five o'clock. She was somewhere backstage now, getting ready. No doubt she was changing clothes.

The auction was being held at the country club, which meant evening wear was a requirement for audience and participants alike.

Charity would look fetching in a long silver gown, cut low enough to show off her dreamy cleavage. Or maybe a black dress with spaghetti straps, backless, to draw a man's eyes from the nape of her neck down her spine to the glorious curve of her ass.

Very soon he would be bidding on that ass and the rest of her too. Blast it, why was the clock moving so slowly?

This waiting was hell.

At one point they had bandied about the idea of auctioning off the CEO and the board members as well. In the end, they had decided to limit it to the vice presidents and department heads.

The ostensible reason was to allow the truly wealthy persons to sit in the audience and place the really high bids. Especially Roger, who would bid an astronomical amount as his charitable contribution. And it was certainly true that the board members were in no rush to parade themselves onstage.

Was it a double standard?

Charity had certainly implied as much.

Roger had to admit to taking more than a little delight in overruling her objections, seeing her so indignant. Her eyes, lit with rebellion, had made him burn with the need to conquer her. Of course he would never push her beyond her limits but he was certainly keen on making her kneel of her own free will so he could teach her the delights of submissive sex.

It was all he could do to contain himself in his seat, fingers drumming the linen-covered banquet table. Everything was going to be perfect. The caterer was the best in town and Terry Wyatt, a local news anchor, was to serve as auctioneer. His voice and personality were unbeatable.

A podium had been set up for Terry at the front of the room alongside a dais, which was to be used as the auction block. It was octagonal in shape, raised about a foot off the floor.

Roger imagined the setup in a different place and time. A pirate fantasy...yeah. Sawdust spread across the floor to tickle the bare feet of the captured women. Charity, scantily clad and terrified, shackled and collared, a rough pirate pulling her by her

bonds as he led her forward for purchase. Virgin blonde booty from a pillaged English galleon—sweet, soft pink skin to slake the lust of ruffians, himself chief among them.

“You seem distracted,” said his friend Henry Rawlings, one of the longest-serving board members of Morvan Enterprises.

“Hmm?” Roger realized Henry had been talking to him. “Sorry, I guess I have business on my mind.”

Henry chuckled. “If it were me, I would have that young woman on my mind. The one with all the energy and new ideas. I understand she’s up for bid tonight?”

“Who, Charity?” Roger tensed, sensing competition. She was going to be his, even if he had to beat out a friend. “She’s no big deal,” he said too quickly.

“No big deal? She’s built like a pinup girl, Roger—no offense to her managerial skills. I wish to high heavens I could get an assistant who looked that good.”

“She’s no mere assistant. She was top of her class at Thaxton Business School.”

“One in a million,” said Henry with a nod of his head.

Damn it, so Henry *was* interested. Who wouldn’t be? Roger looked around the room with new eyes. These were potential enemies now, rivals for the body of luscious Charity.

The pirate in him came to life. If they were in that other time or place he would bid with gold—stolen Spanish doubloons—and if that were not enough to win the prize, then he would compete with steel, daring any and all to fight him for the woman.

Helpless and overwhelmed, the captured wench would watch the proceedings, learning just what kind of man claimed her. And later that night she would kneel on the sand for him and beg to give him pleasure with every part of her irresistible body.

Utterly confident and in control, he, the undisputed pirate lord, would lift her into his arms, press her against his fevered flesh and kiss her until she was eager and aching to surrender.

His.

"Squeeze that glass any harder, Morvan," Henry interrupted his reverie, "and you'll smash it."

Roger looked down. He was clenching his fist on the glass.

What the hell was wrong with him? The first rule of business was never to let on how much you wanted something. It gave your opponents leverage.

There were rules in the game of BDSM as well. Never get too attached to a submissive. Let her need you more. Let her feel needy and dependent.

Everything felt upside down. This was all just a game, right? No serious attachments beyond tonight?

He frowned, hoping he wasn't going to fall for Charity Bradford. Nothing was more insane than trying to dominate a woman you wanted too badly.

Definitely something to keep in mind as the night wore on.

Assuming it wasn't too late already.

* * * * *

Charity had told the event's organizers that she was nervous and would prefer to wait by herself in a nearby empty room until it was her turn to be auctioned off. That was her cover for pulling off the prank she was planning. If anyone had known ahead of time what it was she intended to do, they would most certainly have pulled the plug on her.

She had her costume in an empty banquet hall down the corridor, all set to go. A bellhop had agreed to watch it for her until her arrival. It was amazing, the kind of outfits you could rent if you were willing to pay.

Big Al, of Big Al's Costumes, didn't even bat an eyelash when she made her request earlier in the week. She had picked it up this morning after a one-hundred-dollar deposit on her credit card.

"Have fun," he had told her.

"Oh, you have no idea," she had replied.

The outfit was going to be difficult to put on. She wished she had practiced a few times. Leaving the bellhop on guard outside the door, she got down to business. First she took off the red dress she was wearing. Next she put on a T-shirt and running shorts to go underneath the costume.

Then she got down to business. The zippers were a little tricky. She had to call the bellhop in to help.

They almost missed it when they called her name for the auction. She made quite a sight, running down the hall, but she wasn't going to miss this, even if it killed her.

* * * * *

Something was going terribly wrong.

Roger's frown deepened by the second.

"Charity Bradford," Terry called for the third time, trying to maintain his cheerful persona.

"I think your pinup angel ditched us," Henry declared.

Roger clenched his teeth. Charity wouldn't do this to him. Something serious must have happened to keep her from being here. She was a lot of things but disloyal was not one of them.

He tried her cell phone. It went right to voice mail. Roger's heart pounded, all kinds of terrible scenarios of car crashes and muggings going through his mind.

For a split second he tried to imagine life without her.

Unthinkable.

There was a gasp in the back of the room, followed by a guffaw. Some kind of commotion was occurring.

"Oh my," boomed Terry. "Would you look at that?"

Roger turned in his seat just in time to see Charity sashaying down the aisle in the most outrageous getup he had ever seen.

"Meat for sale," she called out. "Prime cut."

The place was in hysterics.

Charity was dressed as a pork chop, an enormous, smug smile on her face.

Son of a bitch.

Henry applauded vigorously. "Bravo!"

Charity continued her waltz straight up to the stage. Men rushed forward to help her up the stairs.

"Care to bid, folks?" Terry said. "I know you don't want to miss out on this one."

The laughter continued. Charity managed to get her point across to Roger without harming the mood or the charity auction.

Clever vixen. But the battle wasn't over yet.

Roger stood up and lifted his arm to get Terry's attention.

"Yes, Mr. Morvan?"

"I bid one million dollars," he called out. "For the pork chop."

Everyone was on their feet, applauding and cheering, not one unhappy soul in the house. Except the pork chop.

Roger winked, meeting her scowl.

She had won the battle and lost the war.

"Sold!" Terry cried. "To the always very, very generous Roger Morvan."

There was more applause followed by spirited toasts and amicable challenges for the bidding on the next executive as Charity made a hasty exit out the side door.

Roger followed but she was gone by the time he made it to the corridor. He finally found her ten minutes later in the parking lot. She was dressed in shorts and T-shirt, trying to stuff an overstuffed costume bag into her trunk.

"Going somewhere?"

Charity jumped as if he were the last person she expected to have come up behind her. "What are you doing skulking around out here?" she demanded.

"Hunting down AWOL meat products. You know everyone is looking for you."

"Please extend my condolences. Now, if you don't mind, I would like to go home."

"You still owe me dinner."

Charity looked at him in utter disbelief. "You can't possibly expect me to go out with you after tonight?"

"I paid a million dollars. I'm owed something, don't you think?"

"Charity should be its own reward."

"Is that a pun? Never mind, my chauffeur will pick you up at seven o'clock tomorrow night."

"I won't be there."

"That would be a pity. I would hate to have to disappoint all those poor children at the orphanage when I stop payment on my million-dollar check," he bluffed.

Charity narrowed her gaze, hoping it was a bluff. "You're a bastard, you know that?"

"Not a very nice way to talk to your employer."

"Trust me. I'll be circulating my resume."

"May I?" He offered to help her tamp down the bulging bag.

"No thank you," she said, though he did it anyway.

"Be sure and refrigerate that thing when you get home," he said, closing the trunk on the foam-rubber pork suit. "Nothing worse than spoiled meat."

Charity glared at him as if considering whether to tell him off once and for all. "I bet you think you're funny, don't you?"

"I have my moments. Until tomorrow, Miss Bradford?"

She snubbed him in reply, her pretty nose in the air.

He watched her leave, thinking that he was either the luckiest man in the world right now or the most confused.

Maybe both.

Chapter Three

Charity tossed and turned deep into the night. She had gone to bed naked, which was a mistake because the silk of the sheets against her skin was maddening. Half conscious, she was on the edge of a dangerous world of seduction as she dreamed of Roger. At one point she had managed to twist the sheet around her wrists, confining them as though in bondage.

“Oh god yes,” she whispered, opening her hot, dry mouth, spreading her aching thighs for penetration. “Don’t make me wait.”

The dream that followed was so real she could almost taste it.

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Roger was standing there beside the bed, looming over her.

“Take me,” she begged again and again.

“You must learn first,” he told her, bare-chested and bold as a pirate.

“Learn what?” she gasped.

His smile was subtly wicked as he leaned down and brushed the errant strands of hair from her face.

“Isn’t it obvious, my love?” he said, encircling her wrists in gold velvet ropes. “You must become my slave before I will have you.”

The ropes were attached to the head of the bed. He settled himself beside her on the mattress. She could smell sweetness in the air—incense—as if they had been transported to some distant, exotic land.

Desire rose from deep within but also resistance. The stakes were too high.

"No," she declared, pulling against her bonds—soft but unbreakable as iron. "I will not yield to you. Not like this. My heart and soul belong to me alone."

"It's your body I will possess. Tell me my touch does nothing to you."

She stifled a moan as he caressed her flank. There was gentleness in his fingertips but also determination and a will that moved through her like electricity. This was a man who took what he wanted, and at this moment she was what he wanted.

"You have me at too much of a disadvantage," she protested. "You are not allowing me to fight you."

"No." He climbed onto the bed next to her, bending to take her earlobe between his teeth. "It is yourself I am not allowing you to fight."

He nibbled insistently, sending hot chills down her spine. "You think this is about the ropes I place on you, but you are bound to me by something infinitely deep and invisible."

His hand was on her again, this time sliding across her hip toward the juncture of her thighs.

"Oh no...please."

"Open for me, girl."

He had spoken it as a command. She whimpered, feeling the resistance drain away.

"That's a good girl," he soothed, his body hard against her side, cock pressing and pulsing hotly.

He was naked now. When had that happened?

"Turn over for me," he cajoled, helping her to turn onto her belly. With firm hands, he pushed her legs apart, widening her thighs for his advances. In vain, she tried to brace herself.

Roger's fingers moved to test her, ever-so faintly tracing a line along the ridge of her damp sex lips. "You like to be a good girl, don't you?"

"Y-yes," she croaked, the admission betraying everything she had been taught to believe as a strong and independent woman.

"I am here to keep you that way," he said as he delivered a crisp, hot smack against her straining ass cheeks.

Charity gasped—half in shock, half in shame—because it felt so good, as though little cords were tugging at her insides, leading directly to her dripping pussy.

"You would like me to fuck you," he continued, rhythmically masturbating her now, his thumb finding her clit, brushing back and forth over the swollen nub, his index finger probing her pulsing, open channel. "But the truth is, you will allow me to do whatever I wish. You will surrender completely. I'll be your Master and you'll be my plaything."

"Yes...yes, Master."

"Did you enjoy my hand on your ass?"

She could not bring herself to answer.

"I asked a question." He spanked her again, harder.

Charity moaned, feeling punished and at the same time cared for, knowing this incredible man was utterly consumed by her, investing completely in her energy and she was in his.

"I'm...I'm embarrassed to say."

"You shouldn't be. You belong to me. I know already what you need. It's our secret, you can trust me...with everything."

Charity felt her ass lifting toward him. She could not see his face but she could feel the warmth. "I do trust you and yes, I enjoy it. I like your hand smacking my ass."

He did it for her again, chuckling. "Of course you do, that's why you are so wet. I give you pain and pleasure."

She groaned, eager to receive.

"The bondage is another symbol," he told her. "Between me and you. A sign of trust."

She clenched her fists, knowing how securely she was tied—with or without the ropes. "I am your prisoner in this bed."

"By your own will as much as mine," he said.

"Take me," she begged for the second time.

He ordered her to reposition herself so that she was on her knees, her roped wrists stretched in front of her. The position caused her breasts to squash flat against the mattress. Her engorged nipples sent pleasure flooding through her already hypersensitive body.

"You are the most sensual, incredible beauty I have ever laid eyes on," he proclaimed. "Your ass, your lovely sex—every little bit of you. I've been enchanted from the moment I saw you."

"I am yours," she sighed. "I always have been."

Roger put his hands on her hips, molding, squeezing, taking her measure, confirming what they both already knew. That she was a perfect fit for him and vice versa.

The time for delay was over. She could tell he was as hungry by now as she and he was not about to delay his pleasure any longer. Charity drew a ragged breath, barely able to contain her anticipation as his smooth, pulsing, hot shaft poised at the entry to her dripping canal. She would take him deep—as deep as he wanted, forever.

Roger slid in his cock with expert ease, exercising cool and comfortable mastery. In one measured motion, staking his possession of the quivering Charity.

"Do not move," he ordered when he had sunk himself to the hilt.

Charity made a small sound—intensely frustrated. Why would he not get on with it?

"Remember this moment, my slave, when first your Master entered you. When first I claimed and conquered you."

She closed her eyes, memorizing the details—the sound of his voice, guiding and controlling, the scent of him, so strong and masculine, faintly sweet like pine and musk. His hands gripping, knowing just how to keep her in place, and his cock? Magnificent, sized perfectly to fill and dominate her.

I want a kiss, she thought. That is all that I lack.

"You will not come without permission," he told her now. "You will want to. You will ask and you will beg me. But you will be refused because you are a slave. Any satisfaction you receive is mine to give. I own this body and everything it can do, including come. Follow my directions, be a good girl, and in the end I will show you pleasure such as you've never dreamed. What do you say, Charity?"

Her reply came breathlessly. "Yes...use me, Master. Teach me who I am."

"Have no fear," said Roger, rearing back then thrusting decisively. "I have every intention of doing just that."

His sudden dominance shattered every ounce of her remaining will.

"I didn't know it could be this way," she gasped. "I want to be taken only by you."

He fisted his fingers in her hair and yanked back. "Beware," he said, amused, "of the sort of man you ask to have you."

"Yes..."

Roger's cock seemed to grow even thicker as he commenced to pound her, driving himself with utter and absolute self-indulgence. "You're not a bad lay, Charity...for a beginner. Perhaps it won't be necessary to whip your ass afterward."

The deliberate coarseness of his words sent heat to her cheeks, indignation to her soul and red-hot need to her pussy. "That's...no way to talk to a lady," she moaned.

His balls slapped insolently against her ass. "And you think yourself a lady? After what you've told me, the way you're reacting now?"

She nodded her head. "It's not fair."

"No it isn't." He pinched her bottom, making her wriggle. The mild pain only excited her more, much to her exasperation.

A few thrusts later and she was no longer in the mood to debate. "I'm...almost there."

"You're a million miles away as far as I'm concerned."

"You'd really deny me?"

"In a heartbeat."

"Roger, you can't." Her pussy clenched and unclenched, the stress of his pistoning cock forcing her into crisis mode.

"Why won't you let me come?" she exclaimed. "It's not as if it will make me dominant. I'll just be the vessel, taking cum from you."

"Don't tell me how to do my job."

Charity whimpered.

"Or I stop right now and take you over my knee."

"S-sorry."

Roger didn't slow down. He stopped talking and began to grunt softly.

Charity's toes curled. She pulled helplessly at her bonds.

He was getting ready to come. Correction, he was coming now. Roger flooded her—streams of his hot, thick cum filling her canal. His orgasm was accompanied by the most splendid male sound, like a lion roaring.

It was just too much. She had to be there with him. Oh damn, it was too late to hold back. Her pussy spasmed as her body was racked by lightning. Her own climax was like a rushing wind, bathing her in raw, liquid desire.

When he was fully drained, Roger collapsed on the bed.

"Oh lover," she said, forgetting his injunction against climaxing without permission. "That was...incredible."

“Was it now? I hope it will be worth the punishment I’m going to dole out on your ass in exchange.”

Charity stiffened but Roger told her to relax. “I promise you’ll enjoy it...eventually.”

Nibbling at her neck, chuckling, he enjoyed the last laugh...

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Charity called in sick the next day. She was far too exhausted to work, not to mention how mortified she was at the prospect of subjecting herself to the inevitable office gossip. No doubt about it, Roger’s outrageous purchase of her for a million dollars had not only kept her from getting a minute’s sleep, it was going to ruin her reputation as an independent female.

As she ran the whole thing over and over in her mind, she alternated between blind rage and something else, an emotion she couldn’t quite put her finger on. It was close to desire but darker, wilder.

The fantasies were the most vivid she had ever had, particularly the one about him coming to her bed and initiating her into sexual slavery. Even when fully awake, she could not remove the image of Roger’s eyes, his naked body, compelling and drawing her into his orbit. She could almost hear him whispering for her to obey him and submit. She had to fight it even now because it was like fire—consuming her, taking all her strength.

A few other times in the night, she had imagined strange pirate scenarios with herself falling at his feet, panting, naked on some foreign beach. He would bend and lift her to her knees. His hand would seize her hair, compelling her to open her mouth. Then he would present his luscious, erect cock—thick and pulsing—for her to suck.

She would take it—submissive and obedient—between her lips. He would whisper a command and she would place her hands behind her back as if they were bound there.

At other times she had imagined him scooping her into his strong arms. He would carry her to his bed on the pirate ship and lay her down. Without being told, she would spread her limbs. There would be leather cuffs – soft and supple but quite unbreakable. One for each of her ankles and wrists. The cuffs would be attached to tiny chains, their gleaming links rendering her helpless.

He would make her watch as he brought out his toys, one by one. Taking his time, he would tell her all the things he planned to do, the things she would have no choice but to feel. Oh god, she imagined it all – clamps to pinch her nipples, riding crops to tease and punish her flesh, dildos to bring her piteously to the brink, only to hold her from orgasm.

Thank god Roger's voice mail had been on when she'd called him. Talking to him in person would definitely have sent her over the edge. Faking a sore throat and a cough, she promised to be in first thing tomorrow morning. Meanwhile she would start looking for a new job, preferably on another continent.

Donning sweatpants and an old T-shirt, Charity sat at the computer, barefoot. How hard could it be to circulate her resume online to a few thousand companies or so? She was just about to engage the proper search engines when the word popped into her mind.

Bondage. Almost guiltily she typed the word, just to see what would come up.

In an instant the screen was flooded with possibilities. Many sites – some naughty, some nice, some triple-X-rated, others promising serious information for serious practitioners of the art, whatever that meant.

A few button pushes later and she started finding answers. A whole world opened up, a place where people took on the roles of Dominants and submissives, sometimes 24/7. The Doms seemed to have a lot in common with Roger – strong, confident, sexy as hell. It was the subs who really got to her though. Seemingly intelligent, sane women, talking about shackles and whips, posing online in cuffs, kneeling, with smiles on their glowing faces.

It wasn't long until Charity's hand found its way under the waistband of her sweatpants in response.

Her sex was more than ready for attention—labia characteristically puckered and her clitoris swollen and eager.

She was dripping in seconds. Oh yes, this was what she had been wanting, imagining...and running away from.

Her fingers were about to breach the barrier of her pink, swollen lips when she heard the doorbell ring.

Damn it, could there be worse timing in the world?

Or maybe it was very good timing.

She would have to thank whoever it was for saving her from herself.

Peering through the peephole, she saw the familiar, somber face. Her heart skipped a beat.

Damn it, what was *he* doing here?

"Open the door, Charity. I know you're in there," Roger said. "I can hear you."

He was in no mood for games. He knew full well Charity wasn't sick. She hadn't missed a day of work in the whole time she had worked for him. The one time she had bronchitis, she had still gone in and coughed all day. Roger had had to order her to go back home and get some rest before she ended up with pneumonia.

No, her little sore throat routine on his voice mail had everything to do with last night and he was going to get to the bottom of things.

"Do it now, Charity," he repeated, his voice taking on that commanding tone he had found so very effective over the years in his position as CEO and sometime volunteer football coach with underprivileged youth.

Roger heard the deadbolt release and the chain slide. Slowly the knob turned. Charity stood in the doorway, looking perfectly sheepish and sexy as hell in a T-shirt and sweatpants. She was barefoot, one set of pink-painted toes self-consciously

covering the other. Her hair was tied back, errant gold strands hanging in front of her face.

She wore no makeup. She didn't need any.

"I look awful," she said. "Couldn't you have just called me on the phone?"

"You look fine, and no, I couldn't. This has to be done in person."

Actually she looked bedroom hot, ready to be tossed on the mattress, stripped bare, toyed with to his heart's content.

"My place is a mess." She offered up a fresh excuse.

He pushed gently past her. "Charity, I don't care about your apartment, I want to know the real reason you didn't come to work."

"I'm sick," she said, suddenly remembering her fake cough from the phone message.

"Don't insult my intelligence," he said flatly. "This is about last night, isn't it?"

Charity frowned. He saw the impending fight in her gaze. He wanted to know it all, experience every bit of what she was capable of dishing. In fact, he was craving it. God, was he turning into some kind of masochist, or could it be he really was developing feelings for her?

"You had no right to do what you did, Roger. Don't you see how impossible this makes my position in the company?"

It was his turn to frown. "I don't see why. I am the boss. If I want to place a bid for charity, that's my business. You would think people would applaud such an act. Besides, you drew plenty of attention to yourself by wearing that ridiculous getup onstage."

"I did that to prove a point. You can't buy or sell people. It might be a game to you but I worked hard to get where I am."

"I still think you're overreacting." She sure was worked up though, her cheeks flushed.

He cast a glance in the direction of the laptop. His breath caught in his throat when he saw the picture on the screen. A masked female in skimpy leather, on all fours on top of a bed, holding a whip between her teeth, eyes aflame, back arched as she offered herself to an unseen Master.

So that was it. Charity didn't resent his purchase of her because she hated the idea of play slavery. It was because she was secretly attracted to it and afraid at the same time.

Seeing where his eyes had strayed, Charity ran to shut the laptop. "I would like you to leave, Roger."

Roger clenched his fists. He sensed the edge on which they played. He was her employer, which gave him power, and he was a natural Dom. She, as it now turned out, was submissive.

Could they cross the bounds of polite society and take on the roles they both craved?

I've known this about her all along.

The words came unbidden into his mind.

Was it true?

"Charity," he said gently, "do you think we should talk about this?"

"No I don't." Her lower lip trembled.

He stood his ground. "I know I have barged into your life and used my position as your boss but I don't think we can go backward. You're researching BDSM, aren't you? You have fantasies."

"Roger, if you want my resignation, you can have it because —"

"I want the truth," he cut her off, firmly but evenly. "Do you have submissive urges? Are you curious about letting go to a Dom? Because that's what I am, Charity. I am a man whose arousal comes from controlling his female's sexual experience. Bondage and sweet pain. Mastery of soul and spirit. That's where I come from."

Charity was silent, the raging conflict so very obvious in her eyes. She wanted to give in but she didn't want to appear to be some kind of sexual deviant.

He started toward her very, very slowly. "If it's a small taste you want, from a man you trust and believe in, I will give it to you right now, Charity. Just stay where you are, let it happen, let your silence speak. Otherwise, tell me one more time to go and I will walk out and never speak of this again."

Her mouth opened. She stiffened but she stood in place.

Good girl, he thought.

Step-by-step he closed the distance between them.

So very beautiful. Delicate skin. Silky hair. And yet inside she was a wild beast, a sexy cat waiting to writhe and purr – he just knew it.

"Charity." He whispered her name and reached out, touching her face.

She exhaled as if struck by the thinnest, gleaming arrow – a piercing blow to the center of her chest.

Featherlight, he brushed his fingers over her cheek.

"Yes," he rasped as she closed her eyes.

She seemed to anticipate the tip of his finger as he ran it across her lips, which were hot, dry and needy.

Cautiously, tentatively, he gave it to her to suckle.

She drew it in, as trusting and obedient as a little bird.

Roger's cock swelled to fierce proportions. He wanted her now, wanted complete domination and control.

But he must go slow and savor everything for her sake and for his. Just one more guilty little pleasure and he would be on his way.

"Dinner," he told her, lowering his head to capture her lips. "Tonight."

Before she could object he sealed his lips to hers – hot mouths exploring, trembling. Roger held fast, gauging. Charity released a moan. She was melting fast. He could feel

her hard nipples against his chest. He cupped her ass cheeks, sliding his hands under the waistband of her sweatpants.

Jeezus, no panties.

Roger pulled back.

She opened her eyes. He was standing there as though nothing had happened. "Seven o'clock. I will pick you up."

Charity was not able to reply. It was as if she were coming out of a trance. He could not believe it as he walked to the door. It had been ages since he'd had such a spring in his step.

Oh yes, tonight would be a night to remember.

Easily worth a million dollars.

But what about tomorrow? If his time with Charity was even half as good as he expected it would be, it might be hard to walk away. Dominance and submission was a funny thing. Sometimes the Master became needier than the slave.

Especially when the slave in question also happened to be the most beautiful, dynamic and intelligent woman Roger had ever known.

In short, the sort of woman a man might easily fall in love with. Roger was not that type of man though.

At least he hoped not.

Chapter Four

Charity dressed and undressed a total of three times. The bed was covered with the discarded outfits. There were a number of others still on the hangers, which she had pulled from her closet only to toss aside with varying emotions, from fury to giddiness to utter confusion.

If she had half a brain she would barricade herself in her apartment by now, or better still, be long gone by seven o'clock.

That would serve Roger right. Let him show up to an empty apartment. How dare the man bully her and violate her space, not to mention touch her like that?

He had no right.

Running his finger over her cheek, pressing it to her lips, making her feel so incredibly weak-kneed that her pulse raced and desire pumped through her.

She had responded to him too, her toes curling, her mouth hungry, taking his finger and sucking on it like a lollipop. All under his command, no less.

The memory made her flush bright red. What kind of woman must he think her?

Not a strong, independent, gender-neutral executive, surely. Something very, very different.

And that kiss. She ought to have slapped him, not thrown herself at him like some kind of hussy. She had nearly died of embarrassment when he had discovered her lack of panties. But it had felt so good, damn it—his hands on her body. Didn't she deserve that?

"I hate Roger Morvan," she told her beleaguered reflection in the mirror. "He thinks he knows me because he saw me looking at a BDSM website? Well, he hasn't a clue. And I'm going to prove it to him."

Charity frowned at image in the mirror.

"I will," she insisted. "What happened before was a fluke. I am not submissive. And if I choose to go to dinner, it will be as a professional, liberated female. I'll be a good sport and that's all. I'll do what I have to so I can keep my job and help some poor orphans and that's it. Paying a million dollars for me won't get him a damn thing."

But it already had gotten him something, hadn't it?

Professional, liberated females didn't stand there and let their bosses touch them at will. And they sure as hell didn't secretly wish for those very same bosses to run their hands over their curves, insolently stripping them, taking their fill of heaving breasts, squeezing their buttocks, all while whispering dark things into their ears.

What kind of things would a man like Roger do to a woman? He was so powerful and strong. He commanded the respect of one and all. None dared cross him. He did not share what belonged to him and he did not compromise.

And when he wanted something, he always got it.

Chills went down her spine as she remembered the words he had spoken. Fearless as he breached the subject of alternative sexuality.

I want the truth. Do you have submissive urges? Are you curious about letting go to a Dom? Because that's what I am, Charity. I am a man whose arousal comes from controlling his female's sexual experience. Bondage and sweet pain. Mastery of soul and spirit. That's where I come from.

That's what he was. A Dom.

And he considered her submissive.

For crying out loud, how could he have gotten all that from one picture on her laptop? It was more like he had busted into her dreams, taking a front-row seat as she subjugated herself as willing, panting sex slave.

I will go for the black cocktail dress, she decided. Those things were supposed to be all-purpose, weren't they? In this case it would send a message of neutrality, complete indifference.

Charity frowned, holding it up to her nude body.

Neutrality? Not with that hemline.

Dear heavens, it was six thirty. She could call him and cancel but then he would just show up again, acting like a lunatic, demanding an explanation.

And look where that had gotten her last time. The blue dress. That would work. It had a reasonable scoop neckline, respectable cut and fell to just above the knee. No man in his right mind would look at it and think of ravishing a woman.

Then again, Roger Morvan had not shown himself to be a man in his right mind of late.

The whole thing had gotten so darn complicated. According to him, she had overreacted to his huge bid. She should have gone along with the whole thing, pranced onto the stage and let the money pour in for charity. Nothing personal.

So why did it feel so personal? If it had been anyone else but Roger...

Charity frowned, weighing her options for undergarments. Not that he would see them. No way. It was a matter of feeling comfortable, secure and inaccessible.

Some nice granny panties would be perfect. Too bad she didn't have any. Her fingers sifted the various garments in her unmentionables drawer, mostly silk and lace, the majority on the skimpy side. Pretty, feminine underwear was a vice of hers. A way to feel like a woman underneath while trying so hard to be one of the boys on the outside.

She opted for virginal white silk, trimmed in lace. The bra was one of those push-up kinds though. But why not? She had every right to wear any style she chose.

Slipping on the panties, she smoothed the material over her tingling bottom. In one of her fantasies she had told Roger how much she liked to be spanked by him.

He had made her confess, teasing and tormenting her captive flesh. Egotistical bastard, telling her what he would do step-by-step, how he would take over her body, make her beg and then deny her.

"I hate him," she said aloud, finding it more and more difficult to separate what the man had actually done to her and what she had only imagined.

The bra had a little pink bow between the cups. It seemed to her the sort of thing a woman—a slave—might wear to show her Master that her breasts were his, a gift freely offered.

As if on cue, her nipples rose to attention.

This was going to be a really long dinner.

Charity cupped her hand over her pussy. She was running a very serious risk of wetting her virginal panties, leaving evidence of her not-so-virginal desires.

Desires that included bondage and submission.

Her fingers trembled a bit as she pulled the dress over her head.

What was it they said about covering a multitude of sins?

On autopilot she did her makeup. Not wanting to fuss with her hair, she drew it straight back into a ponytail.

No telling what would turn Roger on though.

He was the kind of man who got off on frumpy T-shirts and sweatpants.

He was getting off on you, fool. You could be naked for all he cares, in fact he would like that just fine.

Charity hated it when that little voice rang out in her head, the one that loved to burst her happy, delusional little bubbles.

Then again, maybe the voice would come in handy tonight at dinner.

She would take all the help she could get.

* * * * *

Roger was stunned at the sight of her. Charity had definitely outdone herself. The blue dress was both classy and exquisitely feminine, the perfect choice to highlight the different sides of her personality. He could just bet she had something wickedly sexy on underneath.

"Well?" she demanded as he stood there in the doorway, staring at her.

"I don't know what to say."

She frowned, pouting her sweet, full lips. "Allow me to make a suggestion. How about, 'I'm here to cancel dinner, Charity, and by the way, I am leaving for Africa for the next fifty years. Have a nice life.'"

Roger hid his delight at her moxy. Just barely. "Is that any way to talk to your boss?"

A single, perfectly plucked, golden brow arched, as enticing as it was damning. "Oh, I think we've managed to muck up the employer-employee relationship pretty good by now, don't you think?"

Actually, he was just getting started.

"The reservation's at eight, we should get a move on."

"Yes," she said. "Sir."

There was no missing the irony in her use of the title.

Oh yes, he was going to enjoy tonight immensely.

"After you." He placed his hand on the small of her back, enjoying the warm rush of body contact, all too quickly followed by Charity's semi-comical attempt to skip ahead a half step.

"Are you curious what I have done with other submissives?" he asked her in the limo. "The little games I have played?"

"No." She sat across from him, as far to the opposite side as possible.

“Not even a little? I only ask because many submissives have fantasies about the backs of limousines. You know, being made to perform certain actions or submit to certain rituals.”

“Does this answer your question?” She had her hands over her ears. She was impishly adorable.

One thing was certain—if she hadn’t been thinking about submissive sex in the back of a limo she most certainly was now.

“You know that you look very attractive when you’re being petulant.”

“I am not being petulant.”

“I thought you weren’t listening to me.”

“I’m not. Where are we going to eat, anyway?”

“A gentleman prefers to surprise a lady.”

Charity’s brow shot up. “You mean he prefers to keep her in the dark, like a slave.”

Roger smiled, unable to resist temptation. “Is that something you read on the internet?”

“Go to hell, Roger.”

“Not exactly an appropriate way to address the boss,” he pointed out.

“Not to worry. If you don’t fire me by dessert I’m sure I’ll have quit.”

“In that case I will keep you as far away from food as possible.”

“Ha-ha,” Charity replied.

If only she knew how serious he actually was.

Chapter Five

Charity tried not to react as the limo pulled up in front of the Cedrick Tower. They were obviously headed for the Tower Club, the fanciest and most expensive restaurant in the city.

She should have known he would milk this thing for all it was worth. Oh well, at least he wasn't jetting her off to Paris for crepes or some such nonsense.

"I hope you like to dance," he said as they rode the gold elevator, so shiny she could make out the tiny initials on his cufflinks, reflected off the walls. "I understand they have an incredible chamber orchestra here this month."

Dancing. So that was the trick he had up his sleeve.

"What are you talking about, Roger? The deal was dinner." Charity did not like being in such a confined space with Roger, not one little bit. It served as too strong a reminder of his masculine presence in the face of her excruciatingly contrasting femininity.

And what a figure he cut in a crisply tailored midnight blue dinner jacket, the outfit highlighting all his best features. He was such a gorgeous man. Polished without being overly refined. His face was so smooth. He smelled of fresh cologne, a light odor of musk and sea breeze. She would like to reach up and kiss his cheek, run her hands over his skin.

Talk about playing with fire. She already knew what his lips could do. No, she must not forget for a second that this was a dangerous man, no matter how civilized he appeared.

Dangerous to her sense of aloof independence, that is.

He had seen her looking at a BDSM site. He was a Dom. He was interested in her...as a submissive.

Something she was not now, nor ever would be.

"Dinner and all the trimmings. Absolutely," he confirmed as the elevator climbed to dizzying heights.

"If you think I am going to let you get close to me," she said. "You have another trick coming. And while we are at it, I would like to go over the ground rules."

"Ground rules for dinner?" he mused. "And what did you have in mind? Negotiations on how to pass the salt?"

"Why not? Then we'll move on to pepper."

Roger laughed good-naturedly. His ease and self-assuredness rankled her. Was there no insecurity in him anywhere?

"Somehow I think salt and pepper are the last things on your mind right now."

She tensed up another notch, if such a thing were possible. "What is that supposed to mean."

"Look at you, backed against the corner of the elevator. I'm not going to bite."

"That remains to be seen."

"If it makes you feel any better, I can't concentrate on condiments either. Not with your beautiful body so damn close."

Charity swooned just in time for the elevator doors to open. Giving her no time to argue, he put his hand on her back again and eased her out onto the splendid black-and-red-checkered carpeting.

The heat of his hand went straight through her, reminding her of their earlier encounter in her apartment, not to mention the perils that would surely follow any sort of intimate connection while they were swaying to music.

There had to be a way out. Maybe she could take her chances and jump?

"Mr. Morvan," said the *maitre d'* as though he were welcoming a movie star. "We are honored. Your usual table has been prepared."

Charity's interest piqued at the mention of a usual table. "Do you do this sort of thing often?" she remarked as he held her seat for her at the intimate round table shielded from the rest of the room by a Chinese-style folding screen. "Must get expensive wining and dining your potential slaves."

Roger shrugged. "Like the politician said, 'a million here, a million there, and before you know it, it adds up to real money'."

They were right in front of one of the floor to ceiling observation windows. The city was far below them, a busy blur of colored lights, thousands of glowing dots, thousands of human stories.

"Seriously, you must know," Roger said when the wine arrived. "How truly special and unique you are. I've never done anything like this before and I can't see myself doing it ever again."

The finality of his words, combined with the intensity of his gorgeous eyes sent a hot thrill down her spine. "Must you insist on looking at me like that?"

"Tonight you are the most beautiful woman I've ever seen," he replied unabashedly. "I wouldn't know how else to look at you."

There he went again, so darn sure of himself. "Just look at me as a colleague."

"I don't kiss my colleagues. Not like we kissed today."

"About that." She cleared her throat. "That was—"

"A toast." He cut her off with the raising of his glass. "To Charity Bradford, who couldn't be bought for any amount of money in the whole world."

She clinked her glass to his. "To Roger Morvan, who tried."

Roger laughed as Charity put the wine to her lips. It was damn good and it hit the spot.

"Refill?" he asked, holding up the bottle.

She looked at her glass. Dear heavens, had she swallowed that much in one gulp? "This really isn't like me, Roger."

He arched one of those devastating brows. "I hope to coax a lot more uncharacteristic behavior out of you before the night is finished, my dear."

In his dreams.

And mine too, she thought glumly.

Dinner was going perfectly as far as Roger was concerned. He had his plan and he didn't need to ply Charity with drink to have his way. In fact, he was adamant that Charity's passion not be dulled in any way by alcohol. He would let her unfold in all her natural beauty.

No rush. None at all. For a while the conversation swung back and forth. She talked about her childhood as a military brat, she and her two young sisters and mother following her stern air-force-colonel father from base to base.

Some of Charity's attraction to authority probably stemmed from that heritage, though Roger was well aware that sexual proclivities for BDSM were generally as unique and genetically cued as was a person's hair color and body type.

She was her own woman and he wanted to know her as such. For his part, he talked about growing up on the south side of Boston in a rough and tumble neighborhood with an abusive, alcoholic father who had told him he would never amount to anything. His old man had finally run off for good when Roger was ten.

"Too bad you didn't get a chance to show him what a success you turned out to be," Charity said.

"It doesn't matter to me. He was a stranger, always will be. I'd rather have the respect of people I care about. People like you."

Charity looked down at her food. She had barely touched her beef Wellington. "You know I respect you, Roger. You are the finest man I've ever worked for."

"Why do you say it like that? You make it sound like you're about to pack up for Timbuktu."

"I might as well." There was surprising emotion in her voice. "After...after this."

"After what?" Roger had the distinct sense that telling her his background had touched off something in her. Before, it was almost as though she had been afraid to get too close. Now...

"Come on, Roger, you've made a mockery of my position with the company."

"I have done no such thing."

"People will talk. For all we know, someone is taking pictures right now to post on the internet."

"Without you in a collar and corset? They wouldn't dare."

"I'm serious, Roger. Everyone will say we're sleeping together."

"All the more reason to actually do it."

"You're crazy, you know that?"

"Crazy enough to ask you to dance." He was around the table before she could mount an argument.

"Roger, no." His took her hand, gentle but firm, leaving no option.

His breathing quickened at the contact. Damn, her fingers fit into his perfectly. It was the sort of feeling a man could get used to.

Nice as it was to hold her hand and lead her to the dance floor though, it was a million times better to hold her in his arms. The swell of her breasts brushed his nipples and there was no controlling his erection as her flat, toned belly pressed against him.

"It's a shame," he murmured.

"What is?" She was trembling slightly, her muscles tense, trying to resist.

"That you've never been loved the way you should be."

"You don't know anything about my love life."

"Has a man ever made you come and come until you screamed for him to stop?" he challenged. "Have you ever begged for release only to be denied, with no option but to surrender yourself completely and utterly to your lover's unbridled lust?"

"Sex isn't the same for everyone," she insisted. "Some people don't get into it so much."

Roger chuckled, enjoying her defensiveness, her stubborn pride and all the rest of the quirks that made her Charity. "I'll take that as a no."

"Oh, and I suppose you've had the most earth-shattering sex known to man?"

He pulled her a little closer, his hand positioned on her bare back, so smooth and deliciously soft, created to be kissed.

To be flogged.

"I've never wasted an opportunity, Charity. Any woman I have been with, I have demanded she yield up the maximum pleasure for myself and her."

She rolled her eyes. "As a submissive. I know."

"What do you think a submissive is, Charity?"

"An idiot," she answered too quickly. "A woman used by a man to fill his silly fantasies."

Roger bent to kiss her neck. "And you don't have fantasies? You haven't thought of being the total and absolute center of a man's pleasure? Of being wanted by him so badly that he will accept nothing less than your complete conquest—your body chained, tied down, completely open."

"I've read all that," she dismissed. "On the 'net. It doesn't strike me as very original. No offense."

"Why should it be original? Dominance and submission is as primal and elemental as lovemaking itself. Kiss me, Charity. Kiss me now."

She opened her mouth to object but instead she gave herself up, sighing as she molded her lips to his.

Roger splayed his fingers, caressing her just above the swell of her ass. She moaned softly, another level of resistance crumbling.

"I have a suite I keep here at the hotel," he said. "I would like to take you to bed."

"You bastard," she breathed. "Was that your plan all along?"

"If you mean, did I hope to take possession of you – absolutely. I believe we'd be quite good together."

"I won't be whipped, Roger. I won't crawl for you like a dog."

"BDSM isn't about those things."

"So you don't have a whole torture chamber waiting for me somewhere?"

"Not until the second date," he said, winking.

"Fine, I'll go to your suite," she said, regretting the words as soon as they came out of her mouth. "But just for a nightcap."

* * * * *

Charity spun around so many times while checking out Roger's suite that she made herself dizzy. She had seen places like this on television and in magazines but never in real life.

"Like it?" Roger asked.

"Like it? It's something out of a movie." At the moment she was playing with a shimmering water wall at the back of the living room. She poked her finger in, just to verify that the colored fluid was real. "How do they come up with stuff like this?"

"I've no idea. For what they charge me, they ought to be able to have flying elephants in here. I'll make us a drink. You should go check out the bathroom if you really want to be amazed."

Amazed was an understatement.

The room was the size of Charity's dining room and kitchen put together. For a moment she thought the colored mosaic tiles were wet, they were so shiny. The sink was made of carved marble, fancy enough for a palace.

Roger stood behind her, kissing her neck.

She was so entranced, she neglected to tense up. "Thanks," she said as he handed her a glass.

"I took a guess on what you would like."

Charity sipped the Cosmopolitan. It meant nothing that he could figure out her favorite drink. They had nothing in common, no vibes at all. "This will do, thank you." She tried to hide her growing enthusiasm.

"One more stop on the tour." He took her hand. Her belly did a flip because she knew he was taking her to see the bedroom.

"Why don't we take a look at the balcony?" she asked, trying to divert him.

"Later. First things first."

Her heart skipped a beat as she saw the four-poster bed. Beautiful, expensive, elegantly made.

"What do you think?" he asked.

"I think you're a naughty boy," she said.

"This has been put off too long," he declared, erasing the distance between them.

She gasped as he put his hand on her waist. This was not the dance floor. She had no public protection here. "I'm drunk. I should go home."

"You are not drunk, Charity. I regulated your alcohol intake quite carefully."

Something in her rebelled. "Nobody regulates me."

"Unless you want them to." He cupped her buttocks, squeezing possessively. "In fact, I think there's a whole lot you want but you're afraid because you think it'll make you a bad girl. Well, you can be bad with me, Charity. I know how to handle you."

"Nobody...touches me...like that." She was practically panting.

"Except in your fantasies, right? Well, it's time to grow up and let fantasy become reality."

"I don't want any fucking reality." She pushed at his chest. He let her go.

"Walk out the door if you want. Personally, I think it would be a shame."

"I quit, Roger."

He inclined his head. "I know you can hardly keep your eyes off that bed. There is a whole world waiting over there, an adventure. You don't have to be the person you are during the day and neither do I. I can be a pirate and you can be a wench. Hell, you can be a slut if you dare."

Charity was scarcely aware of her movements. The next thing she knew, there was a cracking sound and heat in her hand.

She had slapped him. At last.

"Again," he taunted her, his voice low and steady.

This time he caught her wrist in midair. She struggled, swearing at him. She wanted him to let go, then again she didn't.

"Give it to me, Charity Bradford." His eyes were like fire. "Give it all to me on that bed."

"I came here for a drink," she reminded, barely able to breathe.

"Yes, a drink." He smiled, releasing her wrist. "So you said."

Charity narrowed her gaze. "I won't be mocked or patronized. If you've no interest in just my company —"

"My interest, Charity, is in having you naked," he cut in.

"I'm leaving." She could scarcely think straight. How had she ended up in this mess?

"No."

Charity swallowed. "No?" His tone, so utterly commanding, caught her off guard. Her heart raced, pounded. Everything hinged on the next few moments. Their eyes locked. It was a battle of wills and she had a terrible feeling she was losing.

"You will take off your shoes and then your dress."

His words snapped through the air like a whip, jolting her memory. The underwear! White silk panties and a push-up bra trimmed in lace. Talk about a come-on. He would think she had wanted sex all along.

“Charity.”

No turning back. She felt the world move into slow motion. His voice, his presence, filled the room—her fantasies come to life. His dominance freed her of responsibility.

“Roger, I don’t think this is a very good idea.” Her objection was pathetically meek and even as she spoke the words, she was already slipping off her heels, obeying.

“That’s an excellent start. Keep going.”

She was standing there in stocking feet, staring, eyes glazed. Her cheeks heated, hearing his approval. She might as well already be his submissive. His slave.

The cool air tingled on her exposed skin as she removed her dress. Her knees went weak as she tugged the material overhead. She was as terrified as the very first time she had ever shown her body to a man. What if he should reject her, laugh at her skimpy little bra and panties?

On the other hand, he could really want her, which would be ten times worse.

“Place it over there.” He pointed to a chair, his tone and expression neutral. “Then come back and stand facing me.”

She could barely walk. He held all the power now—evaluating, judging.”

“You’re nervous.”

“No. I’ve just never done anything like this.”

He arched a brow. Devastating. It was all she could do to keep from falling at his feet.

“You mean to tell me you’ve never stripped for a lover? You’re a very poor liar, Charity.”

Charity flushed. She stood before her fully dressed boss in her underwear, both of them less than ten feet from the most luxurious bed she had ever laid eyes on.

"The thing you need to understand, Charity, is that domination is ninety percent mental. Of that ninety percent, the vast majority is you surrendering your own secrets."

She shifted from one foot to the other.

"That is not how you'd like to stand for me, is it? Shoulders hunched, full of tension? You want me to know you are sexual and vital. You want to interest me, don't you?"

Her breathing was ragged. The little strength she had was bleeding away. Why didn't he just take her over, chain her up and spank her...or whatever?

"That's why you wore the lingerie," he pressed. "You wanted to please me. You're desperate, Charity. You're consumed."

"Y-you're putting words in my mouth."

"Am I? Look at you. You've already changed your posture."

She sucked at her lower lip, suddenly aware of her arched back.

"Would you like me to have your pretty breasts, Charity? You want me to play with them? Why don't you show them to me?"

"Roger," she choked. "Don't do this."

"I'm not doing anything. I'm just giving you a chance for something different. I see how men are intimidated by you. Most are afraid to even ask you out. If any ever do, I'll wager they treat you like a china doll. You'd like nothing better than to serve a man's lust. In my bed, you'll do as told, you'll serve my pleasure. You will be left with absolutely no doubt that you are a female in the hands of a dominant male. Now take off that bra and make it quick."

Emotions jumbled in her head—fury and embarrassment, mixed with overarching need. Fingers trembling, she did the only thing possible and reached behind her for the clasp of the bra.

The position lifted her bosom even more, her breasts straining against the underwire cups. Suppressing a soft moan, she slid the straps forward, letting the silk-and-lace garment fall to the floor.

"Place your hands at your sides now. Stand perfectly straight."

She was wearing only her panties, a thin barrier of soaking-wet silk over her throbbing pussy.

"You should know that you are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen."

Her toes curled, digging into the soft rug. She shouldn't care about this man's opinion but she did. Oh god, his slightest word sent her heart soaring.

"Still nervous, Charity?"

"Yes."

He laughed. "At least you're not trying to pull the wool over my eyes anymore. So tell me, what do you think will happen next? Better still, what would you do if you our positions were reversed?"

"Tell you to get dressed and order a G-rated pay-per-view?" she quipped hopefully.

"Nice try. How about you turn around, face away and pull your panties down for me? Just to the tops of your thighs."

She gasped, faced with yet another step in this agonizing, slow-motion exercise. "You like torturing me, don't you?"

"What do you think?"

She rolled her eyes and turned for him.

"When you are done, I want you to lift your arms over your head."

Charity felt the material slide over her bottom, the silk enticing her like the touch of a hundred lovers. Except this wasn't foreplay, at least not in any form she knew.

Once her ass was bare, she raised her hands in the air. The panties were bunched at her hips.

"You've crossed your wrists," he noted. "Is that a hint?"

Shit. Too late, she separated them.

For the next few minutes he made her wait. She could hear him behind her at the bar, mixing a drink. It was maddening not being able to see him, standing there so utterly exposed, the object of whatever pleasure or pain he wished to bestow.

"I think," he said, startling her to attention as he came up behind her, "that you can already guess some of the ground rules. When a Dominant and a submissive are together, they inhabit their own world. Whatever goes on between them stays there. Outside of bed I am your boss and a colleague and that won't change. In bed, however, you will know me as your Master. You'll obey me, Charity, or I will punish you. Is that clear?"

She nearly cried out as he touched the ice-cold glass between her shoulder blades. "Y-yes."

"Pleasure beyond your wildest dreams can be yours but you'll receive it as a slave. Don't even try to guess what that means, just know I've been at this a long time. I'm an expert in controlling beautiful, submissive women and you're not even close to being a match for me." Roger slid the glass down her spine as he spoke.

"Hey," she yelped. "That's too cold."

He delivered a firm smack to her bottom. "Are you paying attention, girl?"

"Ow. Yes."

"Then repeat what I said."

"You're my Master in bed and I'm your slave."

Charity earned herself a second blow. "That's rather a lackluster recounting, don't you think?"

"Please, I'm sorry," she gasped. "Just don't do that again."

"Are you telling me what to do?"

"No, no, I swear!" She could still feel the heat of his hand zinging across her utterly helpless bottom. It was stirring up conflicting responses, none of them welcome.

"You need to calm down." He turned her about and put the glass to her lips. "Drink."

She swallowed some of the whisky, arms still high overhead.

"Better?"

"Yes," she croaked, feeling the liquor soothe even as it burned a hot trail down her throat.

"Good, then we can continue our little meeting of the minds."

Charity sucked in her lower lip as he placed the glass against her swollen nipple. Fighting the urge to struggle or argue, she accepted the increasingly uncomfortable sensation.

"The thing about a sub's fantasies," he said as he moved his other hand across her belly, "is that she can only make up so much in her head. She wants more than anything to be a man's plaything—to find the pleasure in having her will overridden. But that takes a real Dominant who is willing to use her precisely as he wishes. Your job is to be available and wet. Are you?"

Her body went into tiny spasms as he talked. It was as if he were already inside her, probing her at will with his cock.

"Are you?" he repeated, his fingers poised at her swollen labia.

Why did she have to answer? She was so horny she was dripping. And look at her nipples. It wasn't the cold air making them stand out like hard buttons.

"Yes," she said, barely audible.

"I didn't hear you."

"Yes, I-I'm wet."

His gaze never wavered—testing, evaluating—as he touched her pussy, just grazing the supersensitive skin. "Would you like to come?"

"I...no...I mean yes." She squirmed, trying to push herself against his hand, trying not to move like the slave he had already invited her to be.

"You seem undecided," he mused. "Have another drink."

She heaved with relief as he removed the glass from her nipple and put it back to her lips. Eagerly, cooperatively she sipped.

"You still think you can hold out, don't you?" he said, studying her as he downed the rest of the whisky.

"What...what do you mean?"

"You think because our game of Master and slave will be limited by time and place that I won't own a piece of you forever?"

Rebellion ripped through her, along with an absolute and unspeakable dark thrill. "No one will ever own me, Roger Morvan."

"Brave words, but I see straight through you. You want this as much as I. You are curious as hell."

"Maybe *you* want another slap. I won't give you any excuse to spank me though."

His smile was so utterly confident and predatory it nearly brought her to her knees on the spot. "Don't worry, girl, you don't have to goad me, discipline is on the way quick enough."

"I'm not going to be disciplined and don't call me girl."

"Very well, *slave*, get on the bed on all fours, facing the headboard."

"Make me," she defied.

Roger's instrument of discipline was a kiss. Never had a man taken so much with only his lips. She whimpered. Must he be so uncompromising, yielding nothing as he forced her hot, nude flesh against him, his rigid muscles like a wall of impermeable steel?

She had no choice but to give in and offer herself, but he wasn't taking, not yet. There was no mistaking it. Whatever was coming was going to be on his terms.

If only he would just fuck her and be done with it.

“Roger, I don’t want to fight you anymore,” she breathed. “See how far I’ve come already? Farther than either of us dreamed. We could make love tonight and see where the dice fall tomorrow.”

His cock was rock-hard against her pelvis. Shamelessly, she ground her pussy against him, though it did nothing to budge his will.

“Your journey hasn’t even begun, Charity.” He took hold of her breast as if it were his undisputed territory. “But it’s about to.”

The way he held her—molding, caressing and squeezing—made her forget in an instant the touch of any other man. How could he know her body this way? She was terrified to think what other secrets he might hold.

“Roger...” It was a plea, not a protest.

“On the bed, slave, now.”

The next few moments were a blur. She had no idea how she got there—whether she walked or flew or was escorted. The next thing she knew she was up on that great big four-poster bed, her head down, her hair over her face, on her hands and knees, her ass exposed, the infernal little white panties still on her upper thighs, covering nothing.

“I gave much consideration to our first time, Charity.” He was behind her again, very near but not on the bed. “You can imagine how I would want everything at once. You’ve been quite a distraction, you know, keeping my mind off business, costing me hour after hour of sleep.”

So I’m not the only one, she thought.

“In the end, I decided on something simple and straightforward to establish the tone of our affair, though I want you to hear some of my fantasies so you can respond to me now with proper anticipation of the future. You have no idea all the ways I have wanted you—spread-eagle, sweetly gagged and blindfolded, completely at my mercy.

“Or on tiptoes, your hands cuffed over your head while I work you, teasing and stinging with a leather whip, awakening your nipples from a lifetime of slumber, making you sing and moan and beg, craving my cock but settling for a dildo or a vibrator. Hours and hours of sweet torture.”

He continued his talk of ropes and chains and of the delights of floggers and cunning devices to insert into her helpless body. Charity was already gone, however, her mind sent way over the top at Roger’s mention of an affair.

So he intends to keep doing this.

She would never allow it. Not in a million years.

Would she?

And if she did, how would she survive?

Chapter Six

Roger had a fantasy come to life on his bed.

Okay, so it wasn't exactly his bed. But he had paid for its use.

And what about Charity? Had he merely paid for her use as well? She didn't strike him as the sort of woman who would leverage her body for any advantage, financial or otherwise.

It was no small thing that she had given in thus far. Retracing the steps in his mind was like crossing some great expanse—an infinite journey from the proper, upstanding woman who had stood in his doorway so vehemently objecting to the idea of an auction, to a luscious wench on all fours, stripped to panties, ass naughtily exposed, awaiting his will.

"Now there's a view," he teased. "Looking like that, you would have brought down the house at the auction."

She tensed in obvious fury but remained where she was.

"You know I had a fantasy," he confessed. "That you were auctioned by pirates. They brought you to the block in chains, screaming. Horny men demanded you be stripped so they could see what they were bidding on—your breasts, your ass and belly. It wasn't dinner they wanted, Charity, it was your flesh. The right to take you away and use you again and again as a sex slave. Does that appeal to you?"

She shivered as he touched her, running his hand down her spine.

"Does it, wench?"

"Does it matter what I say?" she spat. "You will do what you want to me no matter what."

Roger promptly teased her clitoris, fingertip flicking back and forth, robbing her, for the moment, of any ability to fight back. "Are you being insolent, little girl?"

"N-no," she moaned. "I admit it, I've had fantasies."

"Such as sucking my cock?"

"You know I have," she hissed the words between clenched teeth. "You egomaniac."

"And you've imagined being spanked too?"

She nodded, defeated.

Roger smirked. "So which should we do first? Lady's pleasure."

"You expect me to tell you?" she cried.

"Don't tell me you're going shy on me."

"No, I just don't know what to say."

"In that case, leave it up to me." Roger sat on the edge of the bed and pulled Charity over his lap. She tried to resist but a blow to her quivering bottom settled her in a hurry. After several more swats, crisp and efficient, she lay still, breathing heavily.

"Roger, that's enough, please."

"You would rather do something else?"

She groaned in frustration.

Time to teach her a lesson. "Let's count, shall we?"

"One," she exclaimed. "That really hurt."

He took her from two to five, each time spanking her just a little bit harder. Her ass was hot and glowing to the touch. He let his palm rest on the sweet, punished globes.

"Well, what do you have to say?"

"I'll do what you want," she rasped. "I'll suck your cock if you like."

"You call that submission? Sounds like you're doing me a favor."

"What else do you want?" she cried in exasperation.

He inserted his hand between her thighs and pushed two fingers into her pussy, all the way to the second knuckle. "You're acting like you still have something to give. All of this is mine to take."

She moaned, her pussy muscles clenching. "I...I don't know what to say. You ask me to pick then you tell me I have no choices."

Roger pinched her quivering bottom. "You're thinking too much. You're not surrendering. Tell me what you feel."

Charity whimpered. "I...I feel lost."

"Good start." He helped her from his lap onto her knees between his legs. "I want you to kiss my cock. Lick it, Charity, because it is going inside you next."

She was breathing heavily, breasts quivering as she opened his pants and freed his cock. Her eyes slid closed as she moved into place. Roger knotted his hand in her hair, helping to direct her mouth. Her kiss was hot and dry on the very tip of his cock.

"Sweet Charity..." He groaned in approval as she licked along the base of his cock, pressing her tongue against the thick, protruding vein. She was a natural, knowing just how to treat a man's shaft.

She kissed along the sides next, giving him a preview of what it would feel like to be in her mouth. "That's it, baby, surrender to it," he encouraged.

Charity widened her lips and slipped the tip of his cock inside. Tentatively she suckled his rigid rod.

"Deeper," he commanded.

Charity took him in, sliding her tongue, suctioning. He let her find her rhythm, enjoying the sweet torment. Soon he found his own motion—rocking his hips, gliding his cock along the ridges of her teeth.

He wanted more than anything to come in her mouth but he had a different finale in mind for both of them. "Back on the bed," he told her, gently tugging her off him. She made a moaning sound as his cock popped out of her mouth.

Roger helped her onto her side. He wanted her from behind, spooning the length of her lean body. Her pussy was so wet and warm it was like slipping inside heaven. He wrapped his arms about her, taking hold of her full, luscious breasts.

"Give in, sweetheart," he growled. "Let yourself be taken."

She arched her neck as he sank his teeth in, just hard enough to make her groan with pleasure.

"You are mine, Charity. When you come, you will do it for me. Sing for me."

She rocked her body at his command, pushing her ass against his pelvis. He drove his cock in deep and hard then withdrew to the halfway point. She whimpered with need, wanting to be filled. Desperate for more, she began to beg.

"Roger, oh god, fuck me, fuck me hard, please?"

"Fuck me, Sir," he corrected, pinching both her nipples to remind her of her place.

Charity writhed, pain and pleasure shooting through her nervous system. "F-fuck me, Sir."

"Are you a good girl, Charity, do you deserve to come?"

"Yes," she whined.

"If I let you come, it will be as my sex slave."

Charity stiffened, her pride rebelling.

He nibbled at her earlobe and the heat instantly transferred to her nipples. "Do you understand my terms?"

"Yes...but I don't like them."

Roger slid his cock all the way out.

"Please don't stop."

"I only fuck good girls."

"I'll be good," she wheedled, trying to get him back inside her.

He smacked her ass. "Lie still."

She did so, panting.

"What are you?" he asked.

"Totally fucked," she groaned in frustration.

Roger chuckled. "You haven't seen anything yet," he said, inserting a finger into her anus.

"I hate you," she whimpered.

"Go on, fuck my finger."

Charity impaled herself, out of her mind with the need for contact.

"I knew you'd be like this," he said. "I knew you'd be the perfect sex animal."

Charity moaned as he touched her clit.

"You are my sex slave. Say it."

"I'm your sex slave."

"You may beg to be fucked like the slave you are."

"Please, fuck me, please fuck your slave, oh god."

Roger turned her onto her belly and pushed her knees toward her chest. "Open, slave," he commanded, delivering a loud slap to her quivering ass cheeks.

"Yes, Sir, oh yes..." Charity spread her thighs wide.

"You're beginning to get the message, aren't you?" he growled, grasping her long hair in his fist. "When we are in bed, I fucking own you."

"Yes...oh yes."

He drove his cock in as though she were captured booty—a pirate's slave, taken from a fine merchant ship, primed for passion.

She held on to the covers, clawing as he pushed her forward, thrust after thrust. Shaking and moaning, her body quaking, on the verge of coming she lay, cheek down, ass high in the air, a sacrifice to the fury of his lust.

"Charity," he exclaimed. "Now."

She understood the command all too well. Screaming from the back of her throat, she climaxed, a whirlwind mixing with the wild force of his ejaculation. White-hot semen filled her aching, thirsting emptiness.

His hands gripped her hips – possessive, not wanting to let go ever. It went on and on but eventually he felt the inevitable slow down, his cock beginning to flag, her body weakening beneath him, the last orgasm wrung out of her.

Rolling to his back, he gathered her against him and held her as close as he could. Half asleep, she laid her head on his chest. His heart swelled as she showed him this side of herself – peaceful and trusting.

“Roger, that was...amazing.”

“You were amazing,” he said.

“Now what?” she murmured, and then she was asleep, softly purring. He lay awake, staring at the ceiling, her question echoing in his brain.

Now what indeed.

He had accomplished his goal. He had bedded Charity on his terms, taking control of her gorgeous body and awakening her submissive desires. Now he must make a choice. Pursue their games further as he had hinted earlier or abandon this part of her and go back to business as usual, the two of them nothing more than colleagues.

Roger was pretty sure that’s what she would want, at least on the surface. It was the smart thing to do. The safe thing.

But Roger hadn’t gotten where he was in life by playing it safe.

Like it or not, Charity was going to have to face her inner desires and so was he.

It would be a battle, one he could not lose.

As much as he valued Charity’s professional contributions in the board room, he valued her on her knees as well – naked and pliant.

Just thinking of the possibility was making his cock hard as a rock all over again.

Oh yes, this was going to be an interesting affair.

Chapter Seven

Charity woke to the sensation of Roger's lips on her nipples, lightly licking and suckling. She moaned, tossing her head on the pillow.

It felt so good, she nearly forgot her circumstances.

All too quickly it all came flooding back. The romantic dinner, the dancing and everything that had followed in bed.

"Oh god," she croaked with embarrassment, trying to sit up. "What did we do?"

Roger moved on top of her, pinning her wrists over her head. "We made love like consenting adults," he said.

"No." She squirmed now, trying to get free. "We made a huge mistake. I had sex with my boss and you...you..." What could she properly call the things he had done to her?

"I took possession of a beautiful woman, fulfilling her submissive fantasies."

"I need to go," she said, not wanting to hear his voice, so charming and soothing in spite of everything.

"You don't have my permission," he said, smiling mischievously.

Charity regarded him open-mouthed. Her pussy clenched, the familiar heat rising against his powerful body. "You can't keep me against my will," she said huskily.

"It hardly seems against your will." He parted her legs for a demonstration, rapidly pushing his hard cock between her puffy labia and into her waiting sex. Heaven help her, she was wet for him, hot and open and as available as a female could be.

"Roger, please, we can't do this."

"Sure we can and you're going to enjoy it."

A shiver went down her spine, hot and cold at the same time. If she didn't fight now she would end up submitting all over again.

"I'll scream," she threatened.

"Then I will have to gag you, won't I, you naughty girl."

Charity looked away, flushing. He was talking to her as though she really were a submissive, the kind of woman who enjoyed being dominated.

"Don't deny it," he said. "Last night was the most pleasure you ever had during sex, wasn't it?"

She swallowed hard.

"You needn't be ashamed. This is how you're built. Luckily for you, I can turn you into exactly the kind of bedroom slave you need to be."

He must have seen the scandal in her eyes, not to mention the arousal.

"You like that, eh? You want me to train you, tease you, discipline you? Not even close to politically correct, Charity, but it's a fact. You will obey me or I will punish you...hard."

"Roger..." She closed her eyes.

"Sir," he growled, savagely thrusting his cock to the hilt, taking up every bit of her pussy – pulsing, filling, demanding.

"S-Sir." She clenched her fists. He was holding her down. She was helpless and responding, allowing her body to be taken, possessed exactly as he wished.

"Charity, look at me."

She opened her eyes. The intensity of his gaze overwhelmed her. It was as if he had concentrated all his charisma, all his famous power for corporate conquest into a single beam of blue. It was more sexual, masculine desire than she had thought existed on the whole damn planet.

"I'm not giving this up. I'm not giving you up. The rules say you can't have it all but I say we make our own rules. We will continue as lovers and you will continue to

submit to me in bed. But you and I will also work together and never the twain shall meet."

It will never work, she thought. I haven't the strength.

"Tell me we're in agreement."

"Yes, Sir," she whispered.

He nodded, satisfied. "When we're done here, we will take separate showers. It's still quite early. I will have a car take you back to your apartment. You can prepare for work like nothing ever happened."

Like nothing ever happened...

Impossible.

He didn't wait for her to reply. His lips were on hers, his body crushing her under disciplined, sculpted muscle. What choice did she have if this was what he wanted?

"Now," he whispered fiercely, nibbling at her ear, his cock moving in and out of her, the timing perfect as always. "Come for me now."

The world dissolved around Charity and for a few moments it all made sense, flesh fused to flesh, her body dissolving in molten pleasure, attuned to the rhythm of his cock.

All too soon reality would kick in and she had a feeling they would be in over their heads.

Unless she figured out a way to be strong for both of them.

* * * * *

Roger resisted the urge all morning. Charity was right down the hall in her office but he was determined not to make excuses to see her. No matter how much he wanted to know what she was wearing. Not to mention talking to her just so he could watch her lips move.

Blast it, he felt like a high school kid with a crush. He was a CEO and a sexual Dominant. Neither role called for him to be mooning over his shapely colleague.

It wasn't helping that he kept getting erections while thinking about the things they had done and the things they had yet to do.

She had felt his hand on her ass. She would feel the sting of his whip as well. She had taken his cock in her aching pussy. She must surrender her sweet, tight ass to him as well.

Roger tapped his finger on the mahogany desk, an inch from the intercom. He had the power to summon her. He need only give the word and she would have to present herself, at his disposal.

Professional disposal, that is.

Their personal and business relationships had to be kept separate. Never the twain shall meet.

Bullshit.

Impetuously he pressed her extension.

"Yes, Roger?"

His blood heated at the sound of her voice. He wanted her here, now. "May I see you a moment, please?"

There was silence on the other end. Then, "I'm in the middle of something, Roger."

He clenched his fists. Insolent wench. Oh, how he would love to put her over his lap right now and teach her a lesson. "This is important," he said, trying to keep the edge out of his voice.

Charity sighed. "All right, I'll be right there."

A moment later she appeared. Her hair was down loose over her shoulders. She wore a black skirt that hugged her curvaceous hips. Her blouse was peach-colored, the material straining ever-so slightly at her bosom. She wore dark stockings, which made him wonder about a garter belt.

Instantly the scenes played in his mind, all the things he could do to her once he had her stripped. He would let her keep the stockings and heels but that was it.

The defiance in her eyes said it all.

She needed fresh conquering.

"Is something bothering you?" he said.

"As a matter-of-fact, yes." She closed the door. "I wasn't comfortable with your tone of voice a moment ago."

"Oh?"

"It didn't sound altogether...professional."

He leaned back, interlacing his fingers on his hard belly. "Could it be that you were reading something into it?"

"Maybe," she conceded. "So what is it you need me for so badly?"

Roger frowned, resisting the impulse to tell the truth.

I need you on your hands and knees, crawling over here to take care of my aching cock because it's all your fault that I can't think straight.

"I want to go over the Tenley account again."

She her gaze narrowed suspiciously. "We did that yesterday. I believe you said everything was in order."

"I changed my mind."

Charity arched a brow, reacting to his tone. He hadn't intended it to come out quite so dictatorial.

"Yes, Sir," she said sardonically.

Roger clenched his teeth, watching her full, pouting lips. He needed her whimpering, begging. He needed her coming, helpless in his arms. "Forget it," he said, not trusting himself to continue.

"Excuse me?"

"You're dismissed, Charity."

And you had better go quickly, he thought, before I bend you over this desk and teach you another lesson in the glories of submission.

She regarded him with an icy glare before pivoting on her heel and storming out.

Damn, her ass was perfect. Those hips too. How in hell was he supposed to be around her and not want to own her every fucking minute?

Clearly he would have to think this through. Obviously he could take her any night he wanted. It wasn't conceit, just the calm confidence that came from having tasted her submission. She had yielded once and she would do so again.

Neither of them would have peace until she did.

The trouble was, a second night wasn't going to be enough. It had been hard enough letting her go this morning. What about a weekend? Yes—a long one—the sooner the better. He had a cabin upstate, which would serve their needs perfectly.

He would tell her to pack a bag and be ready for him to pick her up on Saturday morning. Not that she would be wearing much in their time alone.

His crotch tightened at the thought of a whole weekend to dominate sweet Charity, pushing them both to the limits, letting their imaginations play to the fullest extent.

It sounded like heaven.

Like all perfect things though, it would come to an end. He of all people should know that. Crushing disappointment had its own special moniker in his world. Marguerite was its name. She had taught him a hard lesson at a very young age. Never involve emotions. Keep it physical, keep it distant or keep it business. There could be nothing else. He didn't think he could ever really trust another woman. And the more money he made, the harder it became.

Damn, what had made him think of her now? It had been so many years. Did Charity have something to do with the sudden flashback to his lost love? Impossible. He and Charity were only playing, no emotional involvement. He never broke that rule.

For the second time, he called Charity's extension. "Have you any plans for the weekend?" he asked.

"No," she said warily.

"Well you do now," he said, feeling better than he had all morning. "I'll pick you up Saturday morning at nine."

* * * * *

If there was one thing you could count on about Riki, Charity thought as they met over lunch after her ill-fated trip to Roger's office that morning, it was her ability to put a positive, albeit absurd spin on things.

"So let me see if I have this straight," she said, leaning over an intimate table at a cute little café near Charity's office. "Your fabulously handsome and obscenely rich boss bedded you last night and not only didn't he give you the typical morning-after male freeze out, he actually wants to follow up by whisking you away for a romantic weekend?"

Charity gritted her teeth, staring down the giant plate of fries they were splitting. No lettuce and bean sprouts today, it was all cholesterol. "Riki, would you look at the situation for what it is. There's no romance here. I'm being sexually exploited, okay?"

Riki's eyes lit up as she stabbed a long, golden fry in ketchup. "I know and I am so jealous."

Wow, was this conversation ever going in the wrong direction. Par for the course, Charity supposed, given her life of late. If only she could wind back the clock and prevent Roger from doing all those perverted things. "Well, you shouldn't be jealous. As if one night wasn't bad enough, I'll be in his clutches for two solid days. I'll be lucky if he lets me out of bed at all."

Riki arched a brow, barely holding off a smirk.

"Okay," Charity conceded, waving her hand in the air. "So I'm talking to the wrong audience. The thing is, I don't want to play his games. They are not my style."

"Because you're not submissive, right?"

"Exactly," Charity replied, ignoring the irony in Riki's voice. "I mean, look at me, I am totally a woman in control."

Riki licked her lips, going after a dab of ketchup. "Uh-huh."

"You think I'm not?" Charity demanded.

Riki shrugged. "Being submissive sexually isn't about being passive in real life. Usually it's the opposite. People with all the responsibility out of bed want to be told what to do *in* bed."

"In that case, Roger should be the biggest submissive of all."

"Maybe he is, deep down."

"That's ridiculous. Roger is a natural Dom, in and out of bed. He knows what he wants and he gets it, no compromise. It's not about force. If I hadn't gone along on his terms, he would have stopped—no harm, no foul. But as long as we were going all the way, I had to surrender. He wouldn't even let me come until he said. When I did, it was like I was this fortress totally crumbling. You have no idea, Riki. He can make a woman crawl and beg. He's so hot and strong but it's like he doesn't need sex at all. You would end up wanting to be his slave too. You would have to."

Charity took a breath. She hadn't expected to say so much. Nor had she expected to feel a stab of jealousy at the idea of Roger dominating Riki or any other woman.

Riki eyed her. "No, honey, I would not have to be Roger Morvan's slave. BDSM isn't my kink, though I think you would claw out my eyes if I did try to play with him, friend or no friend. Face it, girl, this is your thing. So why fight it?"

Charity buried her head in her hands. Could it be that Riki was right?

"Oh, I wish I knew what to do," she lamented. "Maybe there's something wrong with my genetics."

Riki laughed. "Because you like BDSM? That's crazy. Everyone has their thing. It's all good as long as it's safe, sane and consensual."

"Getting hard nipples and a wet pussy every time you look at your boss is not sane."

"Sure is fun though, you got to admit," Riki quipped.

"I don't have to admit anything." Charity squirmed on her seat.

How could she explain to Riki what it had felt like that morning, trying so hard to resist going into Roger's office, feeling commanded as she presented herself before him.

The way he had looked at her with such naked desire had all but caused her knees to give way. What if he had wanted her to do something other than review an account? What if he had ordered her to crawl to him or strip off her clothes?

She would not have been able to resist.

Fortunately, he had sent her away just as abruptly as he had called for her. She had thought the relationship was over and then he had called her again, this time ordering her to go away with him for the weekend.

"Nothing will happen," she had told Roger stubbornly on the phone. "It will be an entirely platonic work trip."

His laugh, deep and insolent had made her belly do a hot flip. "There's not a damn thing about you that's platonic, not where I'm concerned. And this won't be work," he had replied stiffly.

Heart slamming in her chest, she had tried to come up with some excuse, any excuse. "What if I say no? You can't threaten to fire me. That's against the law."

"How about if I offer a spanking instead?" he had rasped wickedly, making her toes curl.

She'd hardly been able to breathe. "That's illegal too."

Another laugh, more of a chuckle, the sound of a man who had already won his battle. "Unless it's consensual, Charity. Nine o'clock Saturday morning. Don't keep me waiting."

Giving her no chance to answer, he had hung up. She had been a mental wreck the rest of the morning, unable to concentrate on a thing...except him.

"Hello in there, Earth to Charity."

Charity blinked, startled to see Riki waving at her. Where was her head? She had just blanked out.

"Sorry, Riki. I'm just...tired I guess."

Riki laughed. "You're a lot of things right now but tired is not one of them."

Charity sighed. "It doesn't help having you make fun of me."

Riki shook her head. "I'm not making fun of you, trust me. I'm happy for you. Now I just need to make you happy for yourself."

"Good things don't happen to me," Charity said firmly.

"I believe that is going to change. Sooner than you think."

Chapter Eight

Charity was ready and waiting for Roger as he drove up to her apartment building on Saturday. She wore sandals, a sleeveless blouse and a sporty skirt. She had her hair back in a ponytail. Her sunglasses were tortoise-shell, highlighting her white skin and high cheekbones.

Despite her weekend attire, she was all business. No smile, back straight, gripping her overnight bag for dear life.

She was going to put up a fight, he could tell.

Good. It would make it all the more fun reconquering her.

Pulling his convertible up to the curb, Roger hopped out to retrieve her bag. He could feel the tension in her body as their hands touched for a second.

"Are you hoping for a kiss?" he whispered in her ear, making her shiver. "Sorry, not just yet."

His lips brushed her earlobe, causing her to shiver.

Quite pleased with himself, he deposited the bag in the trunk and opened Charity's door for her.

She stood there seething. "I thought I made it clear that there would be no nonsense on this trip?"

"You could call what we have a lot of things, Charity, but nonsense isn't one of them."

She shook her head. "I knew this was a bad idea. I'm sorry. I can't go through with it."

"What is it you're so afraid of, Charity?" he challenged, determined to break through her self-denial. "Don't you believe you're entitled to happiness?"

The question seemed to catch her off guard. "I'm not afraid of anything."

"Then get in the car and prove me wrong."

Charity frowned. He had her and she knew it.

With great pleasure, he watched as she settled into the creamy-leather passenger seat, her long legs sliding smoothly over the surface.

The skirt rode up, much to her annoyance. Noting his rapt attention, she tugged at the hem, covering as much of herself as she could. What a delight she was, so innocent on the surface and yet so sexually volatile underneath.

Damn, it was going to be hard to keep his hands off her all the way to the cabin. Then again, why shouldn't he begin enjoying Charity's glorious flesh as soon as possible?

"You look gorgeous," he complimented, climbing behind the wheel. "I'm very pleased."

She flashed him a look of anger, though he could see the passion in her eyes. "I didn't dress for you. I picked out something comfortable, that's all."

Roger pulled out into traffic, letting her words hang in the air. His timetable, his game. "Really? Seems to me that skirt is designed to advertise your long, slim legs, made to wrap around a man's waist. And there's no mistaking the shape of your breasts under that top, is there? Are you hoping I will fondle them first, or would you like me to skip straight to your nipples? A little pinching, perhaps, to drive you wild?"

Red-faced, Charity folded her arms over her chest. "If this outfit says anything dirty to you, it's because you're a pervert."

"Is it perverted to want to possess you again completely, baby? To make you surrender to all your darkest desires as my lover? My slave?" For emphasis, he put his hand on her thigh.

Roger could feel the heat through the material of her skirt. He wanted her naked, naughty and submitting. As soon as possible.

"Don't do that," she complained, prying his fingers away.

He allowed it, for now.

"Is that a ground rule?" he teased, recalling their time together at dinner.

"Consider it a deal breaker," she said.

Roger settled back now, enjoying the feeling of control, the car, the sunshine, the beautiful woman. "So you want to make a deal, do you? In that case, I have a few parameters of my own. Hell, let's call them rules. Just for fun."

"Fun for you, maybe." She pouted, doing her best to hide her submissive nature.

Roger wasn't fooled, not for a second. As for the verbal banter, it was part of the foreplay, the igniting of the sparks that would put her back on her knees, not to mention into his arms, utterly exposed and blissfully, orgasmically hot.

"Enjoy them or not, Charity, they are binding and there will be consequences for disobedience."

He let the word hang in the air. She snorted in disgust but there was no disguising the quickening of her breath, how rapidly her lovely breasts rose and fell. He could see she was already battling the stiffening of her sweet nipples, the chafing against her bra, whatever wispy little piece of fabric she had chosen.

"Really, Roger, you are much too full of yourself. What are you going to do, spank me like an errant child?"

"No." His hand went back to her thigh. This time he did not intend for it to be removed. "I will spank you as the proud, beautiful woman you are, naked and over my knee, my hand rubbing and caressing and teasing you between blows."

"I told you not to touch me, Roger." Charity was squirming, trying in vain now to dislodge his hand, using both of hers.

She might as well have been trying to break a piece of steel.

"Rule number one," he said, sliding his hand under the hem of her skirt to clamp bare flesh. "I touch you as I please this weekend. Where and when and how I choose."

"I'll scream," she warned. "Then you'll have to let go."

"You could do that," he acknowledged, lightly massaging the smooth, hot flesh. "But that would end this thing between us. Aren't you curious to see where it will go?"

"No...yes...I don't know."

Roger hit the accelerator, bringing them up the ramp to the interstate. "Just answer me honestly. When you dressed today, did you think of me?"

Charity sighed, putting her head back against the headrest. He could tell she was responding to his touch, to the calm authority of his voice. "I changed three times," she admitted. "I didn't want to...to give you the wrong message."

"You don't need to send a message, sweetheart. Just be yourself." He let his fingers slide farther up until they reached Charity's silky-soft panties.

She squeezed her legs together tightly, blocking him. "Roger, watch the road."

"I am," he said, easing into the left lane, cruise control set on seventy. "I'm multitasking."

"I'm not a task. I'm a person."

Roger hit the button to recline her seat. "You're a handful, that's for sure."

"What are you doing?" she cried. "I'm not riding this way."

"Trust me. You'll be glad for the privacy."

"Privacy? What for?" She was trying to raise her seat with the controls on the side. They weren't working.

"For when we get to rule two. Your body is mine for the weekend, Charity. It was made for pleasure and I'm going to take full advantage."

"This is kidnapping."

"If you want to call it that. Now I want you to unbutton your blouse. Let me see what you have covering those luscious breasts."

"Like hell."

"Are you disobeying me?"

"Damn straight."

He slowed the car, checking the rearview mirror.

"Now what are you doing?"

"I'm pulling off the road," he said nonchalantly. "To discipline your insolent ass."

"You wouldn't dare."

"Try me. I'll have you bent over the hood of this car in a heartbeat. And don't count on the protection of your clothing either. It will be skirt up and panties down—nude—the way god and the universe made you."

"You're a fucking prick." Insults aside, she looked down and reached for the top button of her blouse.

"Do it nice and slow, Charity," he counseled. "We're in no rush."

"Maybe you aren't," she fumed, "but I am. The sooner we get this trip over with the better."

Charity couldn't believe it. She was actually playing one of Roger's silly games, unbuttoning her blouse while going seventy miles an hour on the interstate.

It wasn't silly though, was it? Not the way her pussy was throbbing and her tight, hard nipples were chafing against her bra.

Had it really been less than hour ago that she stood in front of her closet, deciding what to wear?

The bastard was right, she had thought about pleasing him. She had fought the impulse, determined not to fall into his stereotypes of what a submissive should look like.

Charity Bradford would be no man's sex object.

Even if it was exciting and naughty and dangerous to imagine herself as such. It wasn't imagination now though—following his obscene orders, stripping for him on the highway at ridiculous speeds under threat of corporal punishment.

Would he really spank her in broad daylight, her ass exposed, her breasts and belly pressed to the warm metal of his car hood?

Would he take such a risk with cops around?

Then again, he was Roger Morvan, wasn't he, the man with the reputation for breaking all the rules and the financial success to back it up.

"That's it," he coached her as she managed the final button on her blouse. "Now arch your back for me."

Charity whimpered, knowing the position would make her that much more vulnerable, that much more exposed.

Roger growled low in the back of his throat when he saw her lacy bra peek out from between the two halves of her blouse. "Rule number three," he declared. "You're going to dress for me like the sex kitten you are."

Charity flushed. "You need glasses if you think I'm a sex kitten."

He was the sexual one, in those tight jeans, his thick cock so temptingly close, his biceps stretching the material of his golf shirt.

"Oh no, baby," he rasped, sliding his hand over her warm, smooth belly. "I need a lot of things at this moment but glasses aren't among them."

Charity turned her head away, suppressing a moan. No man had ever been able to do such things to her, arouse her so completely with his least touch.

"You like that, my sweet slave girl?"

She nodded, shivering.

He found her left breast, cupped it.

"Oh god," she cried.

"Touch yourself," he said now. "Show me how you give yourself pleasure."

Charity tensed. "I can't."

"You can and you will. Take off your panties first. It will make it easier."

The idea of resisting passed through her mind but he kept caressing her, teasing her, running his fingertips over her flesh, and the next thing she knew she was lifting off the seat, working her panties down over her thighs. She kicked off her sandals too, making it easier to shed the tiny garment.

"Give your panties to me," he ordered.

Charity was powerless to resist.

Her juices flooded as she watched him put the panties to his nostrils and inhale the scent of her arousal.

"Now touch yourself," he said a second time. Gone was the light, coaxing tone. He was urgent now, commanding.

Dominant.

Charity knew she must give her unbridled obedience and with it the complete access to her inner erotic world.

With greedy, trembling fingers she sought her pleasure center, sex lips drenched and puffy, throbbing to the touch. Almost at once she began to writhe, her thumb rubbing over her hot little clitoris.

"Hike your skirt," he told her. "Show me everything."

She looked at him, biting her lower lip. "People will see."

"My pussy," he said commandingly. "My concern."

Charity felt the pressure lifting off her shoulders. She could do this. No one would ever know it was her.

Eagerly, she maneuvered herself until she was bare-assed on Roger's leather seat. *I am such a naughty girl, she thought, exposing myself, dripping wet.*

"Play with your nipples at the same time," he ordered, raising the stakes yet again.

Panting, wild with need, wanting his eyes on her, his hands, his cock, she pulled each breast free of its confining cup. The wind was blowing through her hair. Could the other cars see her?

"Fucking beautiful," said Roger sounding as though he were ready to devour her.

"Roger..." She gasped his name, caressing her left nipple. The pleasure was so sharp, almost painful. A line tugged all the way down to her neglected pussy.

Quickly she put her hand back in between her thighs and stroked back and forth across her clitoris then inserted her fingers into her pussy as her muscles contracted wickedly.

Witnesses be damned, she put her heels up on the dashboard to give herself better access.

Just another minute or two and she would be there, in the throes of a delicious, perfect orgasm, swirling in her own heat and fire, consumed by her own desire.

"That's enough for now, sweetheart."

Charity heard Roger's voice from somewhere far away, distant but insistent. "Wh-what?"

"We're stopping for brunch," he said, pushing the button to put her seat back to the upright position. "You need to pull yourself together."

She was in shock and her voice reflected it. "But...I was about to come."

"Rule number four," said Roger as they exited the highway. "Orgasms are a privilege. You'll have to earn them."

Unbelievable. Was he serious?

"I knew this would happen," Charity said, scrambling to button her blouse before they turned onto a narrow country road with a sign for Andalucia Winery. "I am going to end up hating you."

Roger's smirk told her all she needed. He was having the time of his life. "Don't put the panties back on. They aren't befitting of your status."

"And what status is that? A kidnap victim?"

"I was thinking sex toy but if the idea of kidnap turns you on, go for it."

"You're all heart. What are we doing out here in the middle of nowhere, anyway?"

"I told you, we're going to eat."

Charity frowned. All she saw was row after row of grapes—beautiful, red and juicy. "Are we eating in the middle of somebody's arbor?"

"That's my concern. Open the glove box, there's a moist towelette for your hands."

"You're such a gentleman," she said sardonically.

Her stomach dropped as she looked at the contents of the glove box, which included handcuffs, a vibrator and a dildo.

"Jeez, Roger, why can't you just play car bingo like everybody else?"

Roger chuckled. "You're adorable. I think I will find a way to fuck you while we're in the restaurant."

Charity swallowed. For once she didn't argue.

She wanted it too, as much as she had ever wanted anything in her life.

On the other hand, she was terrified. How far would he go in a public place? What if they got caught?

The choice wasn't hers. She was Roger's slave. The fault was hers though.

Entirely hers.

* * * * *

"You have barely touched your food," Roger noted, watching Charity push forkfuls of risotto back and forth across her plate. "Don't you like it?"

"It's delicious," she said, her voice strained.

"So what's the problem?"

As if he didn't know. Still, it was fun making her admit things step-by-step.

"I'm not hungry, that's all."

"Look at me," he ordered.

She raised her lovely eyes from the plate. They were deep green. His heart melted at the sight of so much emotion just below the surface.

He told himself it was only sex but once again he thought of what he'd felt long ago for Marguerite, the way he had cared for her more than he did for himself, the way the room had lit up every time she walked in.

"You're lying," he decided. "You are hungry. It's something else. Tell me."

Her lower lip disappeared between her teeth. She took a gulp of her wine—a delicious, fruity Chablis. "It's about what you said in the car, just before we came in the restaurant."

"Yes?" Roger had no intention of making it easy on her. "Spell it out, girl."

"You...you said we'd...have sex."

"In the restaurant. Yes, what of it?"

She took another gulp of wine. "Did you mean it?"

"Have you ever known me to go back on my word?"

Charity shook her head.

"I said I would find a way and I will. My cock will be inside you quite soon, don't worry."

Charity's breathing was ragged. She was quite wet already from her time in the car but he had checked anyway, on the way into the restaurant, after spiriting them to a hidden alcove. His fingers had emerged from her pussy glistening. He pushed her back against the stone wall and she had licked them, one by one.

He could have taken her right there, in fact she seemed to have expected it.

"For the moment, you should eat. That's an order."

"Yes," she said softly.

Roger refilled their glasses from the bottle. He had a reservation for them booked at a hotel up the coast so didn't plan to drink more.

"Do you think I should let you come when we fuck?" he mused.

Charity looked at him like a deer caught in headlights.

"You will want to, I am sure, while I am thrust up inside you. I imagine the impulse will become irresistible by the time I come, don't you think?"

Her hand trembled as she reached for the wine and gulped it down.

"It's a little cruel, I suppose," he said idly. "Using your pussy for my own pleasure, working you up to a climax you'll only be denied. It might be simpler to receive my relief orally."

Charity looked around, conscious of who might be listening. The restaurant was nearly empty and the tables were largely separated into alcoves half hidden with artificial grape arbors and rows of stock wine, all the best years. "Can't we talk about something else?"

"Something other than you sucking my cock, you mean? But you're thinking about it, aren't you?"

"You know I am," she said in a low hiss. "Because you brought it up."

Roger pursed his lips. "Are your thoughts that easily manipulated? Interesting."

"Only by you," she declared. "And it doesn't help that I'm sitting here with no underwear, after the state you worked me into."

"You did it to yourself."

"Because you made me."

"You give me too much credit. You wanted to talk. Let's talk. When did you first fantasize about a man controlling you?"

"I said I wanted to talk about something other than sex."

"We are. Fantasies aren't the same as doing it," he reasoned. "So let me guess, you were that curly haired little blonde who always liked the boys to tie her up. You didn't want to be set free, and when they did, you cried. They got tired of the game and after a few years you caught on to something brand new, under the covers at night, your hand deep between your legs. Am I in the ball park?"

"Not even close. I was a tomboy."

"All right," he conceded. "Different scenario. You're in the backseat, it's your first time. You aren't feeling it, so on a whim you put your hands behind your back, pretending he's got you cuffed. But he's not rough enough. Hell, he's more scared than you are. He practically apologizes when he comes, he can't wipe his dick off fast enough and all the while you're wishing he had the balls to make you suck him until he was hard again so he could go at you all over again, this time from behind, his hand slapping your ass until you come together. Or did you *really* want him to show you who was boss and pull his cock out so he could come all over your spanked bottom?"

Charity was on her feet. He had her where he wanted her.

Hell, where they both wanted her.

"I need some air, Roger."

"Did I say you could get up?"

She looked at him, trying to see how far he would take it. "I will be outside."

Roger left a hundred dollar bill to cover the food, wine and tip. He caught up to her in the vestibule.

"Not a word," he whispered fiercely, steering her to the corridor leading to the bathrooms.

Charity offered no resistance as he chose the women's room. It would be sexier this way, being taken in a place where men were ordinarily banned, her thighs wide and her pussy stuffed with throbbing, dominating cock.

There was no lock on the door.

Good. It would add to the excitement.

"Roger," she said in hushed tones, her voice edged with excited terror. "Someone could walk in."

"It won't be anything they haven't seen before." His fingers were already on his zipper.

Charity was backed against the sink, watching wide-eyed. She looked utterly delicious, like a wild, scared little animal—one who secretly wanted everything he could dish out and more.

“Take out that ponytail,” he ordered. “Turn around and lean over the counter.”

“This is rape,” she declared.

Roger laughed. “You are going to enjoy every fucking second and you know it.”

Charity undid her hair—proud, defiant. “We’ll see about that. And for your information, I can’t wait for you to get caught.”

“No problem. I have an army of lawyers. What have you got?”

“I have the truth on my side.” Nose in the air, she turned away from him, arrogantly offering her backside.

“I said lean over, slave girl.”

“Don’t call me—” Her protest dissolved into a shriek as he gave her bottom a crisp smack. “Hey, what was that for?”

“I told you I would punish any disobedience. You got up from the table without permission. Now lift your skirt for me, or would you rather I use my belt?”

“Fucking prick,” she spat.

Roger paused to examine his naked prize—the swell of her twin cheeks, the lovely crease of her sex, the puffy, dripping pussy lips. “So much for rape,” he taunted, pushing his index finger deep enough up inside her pussy to elicit a moan.

“It’s official. I hate you, Roger Morvan.”

Roger played with her a little longer, enjoying his raw power as he induced her to rock forward and backward, her pelvis against the granite countertop, her whole world spinning on the axis he had established at the point of her clitoris.

“Hold still.”

Charity cried out as he delivered a crisp smack, hard enough to leave a sweetly pink outline. “Roger, no!”

"Punishment," he reminded, though he was already back to caressing her, causing fresh trickles of juice to erupt from her sex.

"Oh god," she groaned. "Just...just fuck me."

Roger smacked her again and followed with a pinch. "When and how I take my pleasure with you is my business, you insolent wench."

"Ow!"

He let her squirm a little before releasing her. "Push out your ass, slave."

Charity did so, breathless.

"You really want to be fucked?"

"Puh-lease."

Roger was beyond holding back. Charity wasn't the only one who had been suffering all day. Unsheathing his cock, he pushed it into place, letting the head rest at the entrance to her pussy.

Charity began to sob, trembling all over at the contact. Raw, pure sex. He knew she was the tiniest millimeter away from all-out meltdown.

The woman was like a volcano on the brink.

Could he hold her back from an orgasm?

"I want you to fucking come," Roger hissed, grabbing the back of her hair, pulling her head against his ear. "I want you to come like an animal."

"Yes, oh fuck, yes."

Roger's cock slid in easily, despite the sheer velocity and force of his thrust. It was as if this pussy had been made for him, made for this.

He muttered under his breath, trying to hold it together.

Shit, he was going to come too soon.

"Roger, oh...Roger...Sir." Charity sounded sweet and dirty, the dream submissive underneath him. Nothing to do but take hold of her waist and go along for the ride.

"You hot little bitch..." It was an accusation, a compliment, a promise all wrapped into one.

But a promise of what? Where would this lead? Roger Morvan was a bottom-line man. He liked exit strategies.

But this...this had complication written all over it.

A man could get addicted to a woman like Charity.

"Can't hold back," he groaned.

"Don't, please don't..."

Roger let loose a roar.

Just then the bathroom door opened. A woman gasped and quickly retreated. Charity gripped the fixture of the sink for dear life, bucking hard against him through one orgasm after another. He felt his release—hot, thick cum—as though he had been storing it his whole life. As though he had never come before.

Crazy as it sounded.

Time slowed to a standstill. Was it a matter of seconds or hours until the spasms died down, the explosions dulling to a distant roar.

"Baby," he whispered, marveled—amazed.

"Mmm." She sighed, letting him nuzzle her neck. Roger wanted to cradle her, comfort her, cover and protect her.

For crissakes, they were in a bathroom.

It was almost funny.

They started laughing—hard to tell which one first—and turned to face each other, clinging.

"You really are a deviant bastard," she told him.

"And you're an inciting little devil," he countered.

They melted into a kiss, tongues fencing, remembering, strategizing, planning.

Oh yes, this was going to be an interesting weekend.

* * * * *

Roger watched Charity as she stood on the balcony of their hotel room, barefoot, happily chatting away about the landscape.

"Roger, it's so beautiful up here," she exclaimed, her hair blowing in the breeze, the late-afternoon sun glistening off the stray strands.

"You're beautiful." He couldn't resist coming up behind her, to kiss her neck. "It's nice to see you so happy and free."

"Am I?" The possibility seemed to surprise her, or maybe it was the wine making her giddy.

"Uh-huh," he affirmed, pulling her blouse free from the confines of her skirt. "And you're about to be a lot freer."

"Oh Roger, you wouldn't...not here." She was breathless, her voice a little dreamy.

"Wouldn't what? Take you right here on the balcony? As a matter-of-fact, I am giving the matter serious consideration."

She turned her head toward him, all but forgetting the green valley before her. "You have no idea what you do to me, Roger Morvan."

He chuckled, deftly unbuttoning her blouse to expose her bra. "I know exactly what I'm doing."

"Please...don't expose me," she said without much conviction.

"Why not?" He massaged her full breasts through the material of her bra. "These are my property."

His claim of ownership seemed to get to her, arousing her as much as his hands. Sighing, she tried to turn to face him but Roger held her fast, putting her in her place.

"No," he chided, delivering a stinging slap to her bottom. "You take what I give. Rule two."

Moaning, Charity gripped the handrail. She had no choice now but to feel.

Speaking of which, her earlobe felt good between his teeth. He liked how that made her breath quicker and how she seemed to want it all the more.

Teasingly, he ran his hand up her thigh, under the hem of her skirt. Her reaction was predictable. "Fuck me again, like you did in the restaurant."

"I thought you were worried about being seen."

"I don't care any longer. I need it. I have to have it." She pressed her silk-clad ass to his crotch for emphasis, connecting with his raging hard-on. "Use me, right now. Show me that you control me."

There was an edge to her voice, a note of desperation, or was it in his head? It reminded him of Marguerite. He remembered how she'd sounded, how it had affected him, and how things had degenerated toward the end. The mess everything had become.

Roger backed away suddenly. "No."

Charity turned to face him, a confused expression on her face. "Did I say something wrong?"

"You're trying to top from the bottom," he said. "And it's not going to work."

"I'm trying to...what?"

"You want to control things as the submissive, make me do what you want, when you want it."

"I...I thought you wanted this too."

"What I want is your ass on the bed, naked."

"Do you?" she purred. "Then maybe it's time we tried it another way, fifty-fifty. Just two hot, naked people?"

Roger snapped his fingers. "I gave you an order, slave."

Charity did as told. He stayed on the balcony, watching from the corner of his eye as she walked inside without another word and stripped off her clothes, baring her maddening flesh.

"On your back," he called as dispassionately as possible. "Legs spread. Wide."

No doubt she would notice the ropes he had tied to the bed while she was on the balcony – one tied to each of the four corners. They were red velvet, thin, but more than enough to hold a woman in place.

He gave her a couple of minutes to think before he went back inside.

She watched him like a hawk, deep concern in her eyes, not for herself, but for him. "Roger, are you all right?"

God, she looked incredible. Completely submissive, arms overhead, her legs apart, pussy exposed to him, breasts at his disposal. His cock raged with the need to answer with dominance.

"I would like to use a flogger on you," he said, ignoring her question. "It's not like a whip. It's softer, more erotic."

"Yes," she said, her voice barely audible.

"I didn't hear you."

"You have my permission to flog me."

Roger acknowledged her, his nod barely perceptible. "You see the ropes on the bed. You know what they are for."

"They're for me."

"And I have the right to tie you down, to administer punishment, to take pleasure."

"You do." She seemed aware of the ritualistic significance of the conversation, the kind of verbal foreplay it constituted.

"I am not your boyfriend. I am not your friend. Do you understand?"

Her expression was unreadable. "Yes."

"I'm not even your boss. Not right now. This is sexual, Charity, do you understand?"

It was her turn to nod.

"You enjoy being dominated and I like doing it. It's nothing personal." He went for the flogger, not waiting for her response.

He told himself it had nothing to do with not wanting to see her face, her eyes. If she got hurt by this, it was her own fault.

"You're sure that's not a whip?" she said as he presented the device—a long glass handle with six attached strips of leather dangling from the front.

"If you have any doubts, we can go home now."

Her brow furrowed. "You don't have to be a dick about it."

"I am just making sure we are on the same page. Relax."

She gasped as he trailed the flogger across her ankle and up her leg, stopping just shy of her pussy, the strands lightly teasing.

"Your body is betraying you, Charity."

"I've already given in, you know that."

"I don't want you giving in right now," he said stubbornly. "I want you fighting." Roger dragged the flogger up her belly, swishing it across her breasts. "That way I can get your senses so confused you won't know whether to beg for pleasure or pain."

Charity rolled onto her stomach, denying him access to her breasts and belly. "Is that enough fight for you?"

Roger could not resist the target. He laid a soft blow across her ass, turning the flesh momentarily pink. "Did I say you could move?"

"I guess you will have to tie me down," she said.

"I would but I derive even more satisfaction from bending your will to mine. The ropes will be invisible."

"I haven't."

He flipped her onto her back. His grin bordered on evil. "Go ahead then, leave, Charity. If that's what you really want."

Charity did want to leave, with all her heart. She did not know how much more of this she could take. Not so much what he was doing to her body but the wear and tear on her emotions. It was like a roller coaster. One minute Roger would seem to be opening up to her, letting some playful banter develop, showing some tenderness, as he had on the balcony a few moments ago. The next minute he would be all over her again, hard and relentless.

As if he were going into character.

Was this how it had to be in a BDSM relationship? Lovers playing parts—the bastard and the bimbo—around and around until no one knew what was real anymore?

Sure it all made her hot, even this. It was her fantasy, after all, to be taken and controlled by a man of unbendable will who would not be afraid to cross the boundaries of political correctness, using her how and when he wanted and with all the tools of the trade.

Maybe some things were better left in fantasy though.

Otherwise one could lose touch with reality.

Didn't Roger want to know her as a person, not just an employee or sex toy? It couldn't always be about sexy games and risk-taking. Sometimes people just rode in their cars and had regular conversations when they went out.

Sometimes they just made love too, without saying or doing anything kinky. If only he weren't so driven by his passions. It was the same with his work. The secret to his success, she supposed—never quitting, never yielding. But at what cost?

Her naked and on the brink of tears in a strange hotel room, that's what cost.

Apparently he was trying to teach her a lesson.

Maybe she should teach him one.

"You're right, Roger, you don't have to tie me. I'll be a good girl."

He cocked his head, trying to read her as usual. "You're holding something back."

"No, I just need you."

Roger pulled off his shirt, baring his chest. She licked her lips, a reflex action. He was so muscular, such a perfect specimen of manhood, from his bulging biceps to his sculpted pectorals and six-pack abdomen.

"I am going to tie you," he decided.

Charity didn't like that look in his eyes. He was up to something. She ought to say something but no words came out.

Were things going too far? He had given her the perfect out. Just tell him they were through and have him take her home. Better still, make him pay to send her by taxi or helicopter.

Instead, she was lying here waiting for the next installment in his crazy game.

He had her ankle in his hand. She shuddered as he kissed the bottom of her foot. Goddamn arrogant bastard, trying to silence her with sex all over again.

The velvet rope slipped over her skin and he drew it tight, securing her to the corner of the bed—a bond so soft and seductive yet unyielding.

Roger drew her second leg into the air, leaving her pussy alarmingly exposed. She wished it weren't so obvious, the way her juices were flowing, the way her scent filled the air.

Bondage turned her on. So did his will, bending but not breaking hers. She sighed as he secured her second leg, wide apart from the first.

Roger secured her wrists next, one at a time, overhead. She felt the cool air on her swollen nipples. She was helpless to touch them or protect them now.

Not that she wanted to.

Charity wanted sex. She needed it and she did not know if she could manage to wait much longer. Asking for it would be futile though. She knew that.

"You're quiet," he observed, brushing errant strands of hair from her face, his motion surprisingly gentle and loving, given his recent harshness.

The roller coaster again—unpredictable, dangerous, and leaving her unable to properly defend herself emotionally.

"It wouldn't make any difference what I said, Roger."

Roger caressed her nipples one at a time, his thumb dragging as though he had all the time in the world. "You're right, it wouldn't. But I'm going to make you beg anyway."

"Is this what you truly like? Humiliating your partners?"

"This isn't real humiliation. I'm too much in your head, operating off your own signals."

"I thought I wasn't supposed to top from the bottom or whatever you said."

He laughed. She framed the moment—his eyes dancing, his guard lowered. If only she could make it last.

"You should have been a lawyer, Charity. As it is, I may need one of my own before I incriminate myself around you. Luckily I have one final advantage."

Charity watched warily as he sat on the bed beside her. She braced herself for the worst. Sure enough, he traced his fingertip over her belly and down to her crotch. She cried out as he found her clitoris, subjecting her to such a controlled and powerful rush of pleasure that she nearly had an orgasm on the spot.

The fact that she couldn't move, couldn't react or resist made it ten times as maddening.

Roger knew just how to time it to keep her from climax. "We could be apart a hundred years," he said, leaving her hanging on the precipice. "We could be a million miles away from each other and I could still find my way inside you."

"So do it," she hissed through gritted teeth. "Sink that cock, show me who is the boss."

"Such fierceness from my pretty little sub." He rubbed his knuckles over her cheek, grazing her skin. She could smell her pussy – dripping wet, desperate with need.

"I'll be however you want, Roger. Fuck me, for god's sake." She lifted her pelvis. Offering, inviting, surrendering.

"I want more," he said.

More? As in...what exactly?

Was he thinking of a relationship?

"You said this was physical," she reminded.

"It is. Your brain is part of your body. I want inside it. I want to fuck Charity Bradford right down to her core."

"You can't always get everything." *Not without investing.*

"I can try." He reached for a black nylon bag he'd placed by the nightstand.

"What are you doing?"

"Breaking the resistance."

The vibrator was deceptively small. He had a roll of colored tape to attach it.

"What do you plan to do? Fuck me into submission?" she declared, anxious at the thought of being subjected to the relentlessly stimulating little buzzer with no way to stop it, no way to move away from it.

"It can take up to a half-hour for the effects to kick in." He ignored her, turning the vibrator on low. "In your case, I would give it five. My advice is not to fight. Surrender completely. Let the orgasms have their way with you. If you put on a good enough show, I'll replace this little toy with my cock."

"Fuck you, Roger Morvan," she replied, determined to maintain her dignity even as he placed the infernal device next to her clit, securing it in place. "And the horse you rode in on."

He winked, enflaming her that much more. "The only filly I'll be riding today is you, assuming you behave yourself."

She had a reply in mind but the first orgasm was already coming.

Oh shit, not this quickly.

The vibrator was more insidious than she'd realized or else she was a whole lot hornier.

Her limbs began to shake. She pulled at her bonds. Fucking useless. Roger had no right. This was her body. She could handle her own pleasure.

The climax rolled like a wave, bathing and then drowning her.

Oh fucking god...

She panted and sought refuge in the depths of her mind.

But another wave was right there to take her and pull her back in.

Her pelvis was in the air, her entire body trembling. Roger was still sitting there but didn't intervene.

This was going to be harder than she'd thought.

The third orgasm came nearly seamlessly on the heels of the second. By the fourth orgasm, starting, stopping, continuing had no meaning.

Hot sobs of desire filled her being. She wanted his voice telling her, framing for her, who and what she was.

She would be anything, do anything to be taken back into his orbit, back to some semblance of reality. Or was it already too late?

"Charity, open your eyes."

She didn't respond. Damn it, he was losing her.

Roger had let it go too far. He cursed himself and untied her bonds then removed the tape and vibrator. Sitting her up, he called her name again, trying to bring her back.

She was in sub space. A person under domination disappeared into subspace after a time, depending on the suggestibility and amount of sexual and or pain stimulation. It was a state of mind, a level of consciousness. It was like being hypnotized or going into a dream state. Most submissives found it to be heaven.

Rarely did it manifest like this, in such a dramatic form and so quickly. Charity was no ordinary woman though. She was passionate, imaginative and keenly intelligent.

Roger lightly slapped her face, delivering a mild sting. He did so a second and a third time until she began to cry.

It was a good sign.

She was coming back to him. He held her close, her warm, naked body against his, chest to chest.

What the hell had he been thinking? Charity was a novice. He didn't know her limits. His emotions had gotten the better of him, clouded his judgment. She had irked him somehow and he had responded irresponsibly.

What the hell had he been trying to prove?

Frowning, he calculated the end game.

There could not be any more sex between them, no more games. She was not an appropriate play partner. End of story.

Hopefully he could keep her as an employee. She was such an asset to the company. Damn him for losing his head. Of all the women to get involved with, she was the worst possible choice. He should never have placed that bid on Charity in the first place. That's what he got for showing off.

"Where are you going?" she asked meekly as he got up from the bed after she stopped crying.

"I'm getting your clothes. Then I am going to call the front desk and have them bring the car around. We are going home."

The expression in her eyes nearly tore his heart open. "Because of this? But why, Roger? Can't we talk about it?"

"No we can't. Coming here was a very bad idea. I take full responsibility. If I've done anything that will require counseling for you, I will pay for it."

Charity's frown hardened. "I don't need your charity and I'll thank you not to treat me like a fucking mental case."

"That isn't what I meant and you know it."

The rest was pure defiance. "Actually, I don't know a goddamn thing. You run hot and cold, you treat me like I'm some business competitor or a know-nothing temp. Give me a little credit. I knew what I was getting into."

"Having fantasies about a man spanking your ass doesn't prepare you for the real thing."

She shook her head. "You know what I think? This is all an excuse. It went too far and you're freaked-out. I might not be an expert but that was some heavy-duty stuff between us. You pushed me hard. Hell, we pushed each other."

"Just get dressed, for fuck's sake," Roger growled, surprised at the level of his own anger. "You can save your brilliance for the Monday morning staff meeting."

"How's this for brilliance?" she spat, heading to the bathroom. "You're a coward. And don't expect me to take it back. I'll lose my job first."

"Overwrought female," he called out after her. "Emotional and —"

The sound of the slamming door cut him off.

No matter, he was wasting his breath.

Charity locked herself in the bathroom, determined as she had ever been in her life. She would not break down, no matter what. That would only give Roger satisfaction. What the fuck had happened that made him behave so strangely?

Let him get his jollies from someone else.

Of all the nerve, telling her to see a counselor. He was the one who needed professional help. Really what he needed was to grow the fuck up.

Big man with his big company and he didn't have a clue how to deal with a woman, how to have a relationship.

At the first sign of conflict, what did he do? Shut down like Fort Knox. Fine, so they hadn't technically been in a relationship but there was certainly a thing between them. They had had sex, they worked together and they had shared feelings and thoughts.

Enough so that they were having a lovers' quarrel.

Oh yes, this affair could have developed into something serious. He had to be aware of that at some level. The ingredients were there. Not just because of the bondage either. Any two people who could laugh together, not to mention conspiring at two in the morning over business deals, had something going.

Roger had to go and fuck it all up though.

And she would have to find a new job on top of everything else. It was fine for him, he owned the damn company but she was just an employee. And every time she saw him would be a constant reminder. Not to mention dealing with all the rumors and innuendo.

"Charity?"

She froze in place, her hand on the shower knob as she heard him knocking and calling her name. Was he going to try to reconcile? Emotions swirled in her head. Breathing was like having a knife cut through her.

"What is it?" she said, trying to sound neutral.

"You forgot your clothes."

"Oh."

At that moment she realized how much she cared what he thought about her. She cared very much. Much more than was good for her under the circumstances.

Opening the door, she put her hand out just enough to retrieve her clothes. "I want to leave as soon as I'm done with my shower," she said, making sure he had no illusions about her own state of mind.

"Don't worry," he said, his voice devoid of all emotion. "I have it covered."

No you don't, she thought sadly. You don't have a clue.

The trip home was a blur. They didn't speak again until they were just down the street from her apartment.

"I suppose you realize I'll be resigning," she said. "I'll give you as much notice as you need."

"That won't be necessary. Just tell me where you want to work. I'll pick up the phone and get you any job you want," he replied.

"I don't want special treatment." *Just an explanation*, she thought. A little insight into what made him tick. Into what had gone so horribly wrong.

"You'll take severance, at least. I'll keep paying you until you find another job. You could have trouble on your own in this economy."

She offered no reply. What was the point of arguing?

Charity spent the next few minutes trying to think of a good way to say goodbye.

Roger spared her in the end.

"Need me to walk you to the door?" he said, popping the trunk so she could get her bag.

"No," she said. "I'm good."

If only.

Chapter Nine

Roger finally managed to fall asleep around three a.m., though he regretted it as soon as the dreams started. All of them were about Charity. In the first one he was chasing her. He was in the middle of a city and she kept reappearing, her face in the crowds of people walking through the plazas and down the long avenues.

Every time he would get close she would disappear again.

The second dream was a reenactment of their ill-fated trip. Everything went the same until he reached the point where he was about to knock on the bathroom door to give her the clothing she had forgotten...

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

He wanted to tell her something important but he didn't know what. The worst part was that he was sure she wanted him to as well.

Finally he gave up, the weight of the clothes too heavy to hold up. His jaw was locked, his feet weighed a ton.

Slowly the room began to spin and he felt himself harden into a statue.

"Serves you right," Charity lectured him, emerging from the bathroom. "That's all you care about."

He didn't know what she meant until he looked down at his body and saw the truth.

He had turned into solid gold.

A minute later Charity vanished and everything went dark. Then it was Monday morning and he was waiting for Charity to arrive for the staff meeting.

They weren't arguing and in fact had kicked up their sex games to a new level.

He had told her she couldn't wear panties to the meeting, he would punish her if she did. He was unable to breathe normally as he waited for her. Then, like a vision, she was there.

Charity was gorgeous in a tight blue skirt suit. His cock grew rock-hard at the sight of her. He knew at once that she had defied him and worn panties. She probably thought herself quite clever, a closed book, but she could not be more open to his penetrating glances.

Her carriage, not to mention the way she refused to make eye contact, gave her away. A storm of emotion raged behind those spectacular blue eyes. He knew a part of her wanted to play along—be the naughty girl going to a meeting without underwear, their little secret. But another part of her rankled at having her choices taken away.

They were on a dangerous, unpredictable edge. How far would he go? He could simply whip up that skirt, bend that pretty ass over and his little slave girl could be fucked or punished at will.

Damn, she looked good. Much as he treasured her naked body—soft flesh trembling, utterly vulnerable in his arms—he still never tired of seeing how it looked all dressed up.

What man wouldn't want to spoil such a woman? Dress her in new designs for every occasion? Naturally they would be one of a kind and he alone would be the one to tear them off her.

He forced his mind to business. She blushed every time his eyes found her. Did she know what was coming? The meeting went by in a blur. Barely able to contain himself, he told her that she must remain behind in his office.

"Close the door and come here," he said.

"Is there a problem?"

"Actually, there is one matter. I believe we had an agreement this morning?"

Her eyes belied her sudden anxiety – very submissive, very female. “I didn’t think you were serious.”

“Do I look like a man who makes jokes? You were to dress according to my specifications. Do you recall?”

She narrowed her gaze. “I recall, all right. I’m not some bimbo who forgets everything. Nor am I the kind of girl who walks around dressed like a slut.”

“Not a slut, a slave. A slave obeying her Master.”

“This conversation is over,” Charity declared.

“As soon as you demonstrate your obedience.”

“Excuse me?”

“Remove your panties and place them on the conference table.”

“I will do no such thing.”

“If you require assistance, I will provide it.”

She frowned. “I won’t play your games, do you understand?”

“It’s not a game, Charity. You’ve been a naughty girl. You will surrender the unauthorized panties. After that, you will bend over the conference table for punishment.”

The rising and falling of her breasts indicated Charity’s arousal. Whether she knew it or not, she was already lost. “You...you can’t do that. Not at work.”

“I can and I will. Whose girl are you? Whose orders do you obey?”

She was sucking at her lower lip, uncertain. “You...you said the domination was only in bed,” she reminded.

“Yes, I did, and by extension that means anywhere else two people can have sex. The point is, I own your body and I will do what I wish with it.”

“Roger, couldn’t we just talk about this later?”

Roger snapped his fingers. “Panties, girl. Now.”

Charity startled at the sound. Had she thought there might be some way out, some way to hold back from the dirty, sexy things he was going to make her do?

He could see the defiance draining from her body. From this point forward she would do what he wanted.

"What are you going to do to me?" she asked hoarsely, lifting her skirt.

He took his time replying, enjoying the sight of her – guilty and so very excited as she hooked her thumbs under the waistband of the wispy, forbidden panties.

"I'll do whatever I want, slave."

"Yes," she whispered, tugging them down over her hips and letting them fall to the floor.

Daintily she stepped away.

He could smell her heat, her submissive desire.

"Punishment position," he reminded, sensing that she had become lost in the moment.

"Yes, Sir." She moved to the table, bent at the waist and pressed her belly flat against the polished wood.

"Spread your legs wide," he ordered. "Palms down, either side of your head."

Charity obeyed, opening her superheated thighs as far apart as the material of the skirt allowed.

"Is your pussy wet?" he asked.

"Yes, Sir."

"Was it wet during the meeting?"

"Yes."

"You weren't paying attention at all, were you?" he asked scornfully.

"No, Sir."

"What were you thinking of?"

"Sexy things, Sir."

Roger rose from his chair and circled behind her. He had something in his hand – an old-fashioned ruler.

The wood snapped through the air, impacting her upturned ass.

"Ow!" She lifted one foot in protest.

"Be still," he warned. "Or you'll take it bare-assed."

Charity resumed her position.

"Now let's try again. When I ask what you were thinking of, you don't tell me sexy things. A slave gives her Master details, she bares her soul."

Charity whimpered. "Yes."

Roger struck her again with the ruler, a sharp bite that stung her hard even through the skirt. "What were you thinking of?"

"I thought of you...dominating me," she confessed.

"How?"

"You...you made me get on my hands and knees in front of everyone. I had to crawl to you so everyone would know I was your property. Then...then you stripped me naked and forced me to show my body."

"You were ashamed?" He delivered a firm blow, inducing an artful wiggle.

"Yes, but it excited me too. You told me I was going to have to give pleasure to every man in the room and the women too."

Roger chuckled. "You certainly have a wicked imagination."

"It's your fault. You bring it out of me."

"Do I now? I've always said the smartest women enslave themselves."

"Roger? Sir?"

"Yes, my pet?" He rubbed his hand over her taut bottom, causing the heat to rise like a tidal wave.

"You do know someone could walk in? Please be reasonable. If we have to do this, it should be in private."

He smacked her ass again, stifling rebellion. "You'll do what I want here, girl, won't you?"

She gasped as he undid the zipper of her skirt. "Sir, don't..."

"I asked you a question."

"Yes, Sir," she said hotly. "I'll do whatever you want."

He pulled down on the skirt and let the garment fall at her feet. Grasping her hair, he straightened her so she was standing erect. "Unbutton your jacket and your blouse."

Charity whimpered, complying as quickly as possible. When the jacket was undone he pulled it down over her shoulders. Still holding her by the hair, firmly but not painfully, he waited for her to take off her blouse then tossed both aside.

She wore nothing but a bra and black heels.

"Much more fitting, Miss Bradford," he mocked, turning her slowly about for a better view.

Charity flushed red.

"I want a little show," he said, slapping her ass. "Up on the table."

"Sir?"

"You're going to dance for me, Charity, slow and sexy. I'm going to watch you while I stroke my aching cock. And when I'm tired of that, you're going to lie down on your back on the table and beg me to fuck you like the slave girl you are."

"But...but I don't know how to dance."

Roger silenced her with a kiss—a quick sealing of lips, a thrust of his tongue into her mouth while simultaneously pushing his finger into her dripping pussy, pushing open her throbbing sex lips. "Sure you do. It's in your genes. Just think about what you are with me, what we are together, let it all go and you'll be there."

Roger left her on the brink. She moaned, trying to rub her body against him.

"On the table," he commanded, tweaking her engorged left nipple.

He had to help her up. Her breathing was hot and heavy, her eyes glazed. Sheer magic.

"For me," he whispered encouragingly into her ear. "For the man who's claimed you."

Unzipping his pants, he took out his thick, hot shaft.

She seemed mesmerized by the sight of him, his fingers working up and down his long, hard shaft – vein-covered and thick.

"Dance for me, sweet Charity. Dance, sweet slave."

Her hips began to gyrate. It was as though she were connected to him, imagining his cock inside her. What a sight she made in those sexy heels, her breasts straining against the bra, her sex lips puffy and pouting, just begging to be played with.

"Touch yourself," he commanded. "Play with that hot pussy."

She moved the tips of her fingers across her belly and down to her clitoris. At once her pelvis began to rock with a hungry motion, craving fulfillment.

Roger could feel the pressure in his balls, high and tight, full of semen waiting to release inside this gorgeous female, or maybe all over her body. "You want my cock, slave?"

"Yes, Sir," she rasped.

"Dance for it. Earn it. Let me see your breasts," he ordered.

Charity kept moving, her belly undulating as she followed his directions and extracted her mouthwatering breasts from the confining cups.

"Pinch your nipples," he urged.

Charity sighed, taking the sensitive nubs between her forefingers and thumbs.

"Your pussy is dripping, girl. You can't hide what this does to you."

"No, Sir. I can't."

"Your body is mine, Charity. It moves and breathes to arouse me."

"Oh god, yes. I want to arouse you. I love your cock. I love your body."

"Would you like my cock in your mouth? Your ass? Your pussy?"

"Anywhere, Sir...everywhere. Please...use me."

"On your knees. Don't stop moving."

Charity's face lit with angelic submission. She knelt with the grace of perfect slavery – back arched, body offered up for total domination.

"Let me see how you spank your own ass, girl."

Charity reached back and delivered a sweet, punishing blow.

"You like that, don't you?"

She nodded, groaning.

"That's because you're my naughty girl."

"Yes, Sir."

"You need punishment mixed with your loving, don't you? Go on now, keep on spanking yourself and I want you to make yourself come at the same time."

Charity's eyes closed. "Yes," she hissed, leaving him no doubt that she would obey him to the letter.

He made her turn so he could see how red her ass was. Her sex juices were dripping down her thighs as her fingers worked her clitoris, moving her closer and closer until at last there was nothing to hold her back. With a moan she cried out, letting her body be overtaken by orgasm.

On and on it went, her body writhing in deepest pleasure.

"Lick your fingers, girl," he ordered when finally it was over.

Charity obeyed, already looking hungry for another climax. If and when she got one was up to him.

"Over here, girl. Your Master needs you."

Charity did not need to be told what he wanted. She got off the table and knelt between his legs. Charity began to lick his balls and cock, running her tongue along the underside. More than a little overexcited, he grasped the back of her head, pushing his shaft between her eager lips. Her mouth was a warm pocket, a dream of attentive pleasure.

His cock moved in and out then went straight to the back of her throat. She made greedy little slurping sounds the whole time.

Roger betrayed his pleasure with a small groan. "You're going to make me lose it here and now. Or is that your intention?"

"No, Sir," she gasped as he pulled her off him.

"On my lap, girl, facing me."

Charity willingly climbed astride Roger's rigid cock.

She moaned as he impaled her, sliding his shaft deep into her pussy, inch after inch, obscenely parting her swollen labia.

"That's it. Now move on top of me. Hands behind your head. Rock your body, shake your breasts for me."

Roger held her fast by the waist, allowing her to rise only so high.

Up and down he slammed her, again and again, onto his hard pelvis until she was unable to hold back. The orgasms overtook her, one after another. She rode his cock hard.

Charity screamed as he came inside her, filling her with jets of thick cum. Unable to hold back, he closed his teeth on her breast, nipped just hard enough to induce a fresh round of orgasms in Charity.

When the final quakes passed, she collapsed against his shoulder. They were spent.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

At that point Roger woke, twisted in the sheets, his teeth locked onto the pillow.

Unable to bear the loneliness of the bed any longer, he got up to check the overseas markets.

Thank god for the distractions of work, he thought.

Except that work would never be the same, not without Charity at his side, to help him solve problems, to tell him he was full of bunk when he needed it. Damn, she lit up the room when she came in.

Employees like that were impossible to find. He would work it out though, his head would be fine.

It was his heart he wasn't so sure about.

* * * * *

Charity checked the clock by the bedside for what felt like the millionth time. Ten minutes after two. What day did that make it? Monday, right? So where had the weekend gone?

Really, she should be asleep like a log, exhausted. She had come back from her trip with Roger and had sat up watching old movies until dawn. The next day she'd cried nonstop. Then it was off to bed again and here she was, still thinking about him.

At least it was keeping her mind off job-hunting anxiety.

The whole thing was surreal.

Could she really have been a happy, successful executive, man free and independent just a few days ago? Now she was miserable, unemployed and royally pissed off.

What the hell was Roger's deal?

She hadn't asked to be bought by him for a million bucks, nor had she asked to be seduced and swept away for mind-blowing sex games in wine country.

He had started this whole fucking thing, so why didn't he man up and finish it?

The least he could do at this point was stay out of her frigging subconscious.

What little sleep she had gotten since lying down three hours ago had mostly been consumed with him and his BDSM nonsense.

She had the plot of the dream practically memorized, she had replayed it so many times since.

It began with the two of them in the car. They were heading to a conference and he was arguing with her that she should go there as his slave, publically acknowledging her place as a submissive. She was trying to reason against it, using all sorts of dream logic. At last he hit a winning note, the trees rushing by the car as he leaned back in his seat to explain it all...

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"The reason you're resisting, Charity, is because your good-girl upbringing tells you to fight it. Let's try a little experiment. When we get on the highway, I want you to unbutton your blouse. We'll try flashing a few truck drivers."

She looked at him, aghast. "Roger, you can't be serious."

"I'm absolutely serious," he drawled. "Slave girl."

Charity went into a different mental space the minute she heard the words from Roger's lips. What was it about hearing it from him that made it so much more real?

She was a slave girl to this one man who knew the secrets to her deepest heart.

And he wasn't afraid to push her boundaries to get to her either. This weekend wasn't supposed to be about the sex, the mind games, but here he was, at it again less than five minutes in. And she was panting, dying to play, even as she felt the absolute dread.

He wanted her to expose her chest to truckers, drooling strangers on the interstate. Was he insane?

"Please, Roger, you can't want me to do that."

As if it weren't already clear that the choice was ultimately his.

"You will, sweetheart, and if you make any more trouble about it, you'll be showing off a lot more than that sweet bosom of yours. Understood?"

"Yes."

"Open," he commanded, pinching the inside of her left thigh.

Charity spread her legs, knowing she was in Roger's power completely. It was her own doing, her own submissive desires driving her.

She suppressed a small moan as he moved his fingers under the waistband of her panties. "Nice and wet," he approved.

Charity tried not to move against him. The last thing she needed to do was show him how needy she was.

They were heading up the on-ramp already. Time was up.

"Unbutton," he ordered.

Her fingers trembled, her protests reduced to the tiniest whimpering sounds, barely audible over the sound of the wind.

"Put your seat back," he said when she had undone the last button. "And hold the headrest."

Charity grasped hold of the metal bars, leaving her chest fully at Roger's mercy. She was wearing a gray silk bra, the kind that pushed her breasts up and out.

"Baby, you are a little slut, aren't you?" He could barely keep his eyes on the traffic as he started to run his hands over her straining mounds.

"Roger," she moaned, squirming. "Watch the road."

Just then they nearly got sideswiped by an RV.

"You're more dangerous than the traffic. I need to watch you," he teased, tweaking her nipple.

Charity tried to concentrate on her breathing. She mustn't lose complete control.

"Isn't this brilliant? The cars will barely know what is going on but the truckers will get a nice eyeful."

"Why don't you take me somewhere private," she gasped. "I'll be good."

"You'll be good here, honey, won't you?"

"Yes...oh yes." She wiggled a fingertip under her panties and played with her swollen labia.

"There's a truck coming up on the left. Lift your ass, give him a show." Roger brushed the halves of her blouse away, fully exposing her bra-clad bosom.

The driver blew his air horn, indicating his satisfaction.

He rode alongside them for a mile or so before taking off ahead of them.

"Roger, Sir, may I cover up now?"

"After one customer? I don't think so. Next time I want you to hold them up, do a little advertising."

They came up on an oil-tanker truck this time. The stubbly faced driver got one look at the half-naked Charity and nearly drove off the road.

"Look at you," Roger exclaimed. "Talk about stopping traffic."

"I can't do this much longer, Sir, please."

Roger veered off to the left. "Spoilsport," he teased. "Tell you what—if you can get me unzipped and in your mouth in under a minute, we'll call it a day."

Charity whimpered as she realized he was not making a joke. Was there no end to the man's sadistic impulses?

She dared to think what he might have in store if she didn't follow through on his latest demand. Frantically she tugged at his zipper. "Can you slow down a little? What if I bite you or something?"

"I'm sure you'll be careful," he said, just the slightest tone of menace in his voice.

Roger's cock emerged rock-hard. She pulled it free of his boxer shorts and stroked her fingers all the way along the length of it. You would think she would get bored with his anatomy but with every touch she craved more.

"Are you sure this is safe?" she asked.

"I'll never put you willingly in danger, darling."

Charity melted, lowering her head to his lap. She kissed his cock head. As if on cue, he shifted, accelerating. So much for safety. At speeds like these they could go end over end a dozen times in the space of a few heartbeats.

Wasting no time, she drew his cock between her lips and wrapped them around the tip. She tasted the waiting drop of pre-cum, enjoying the familiar musky saltiness.

Roger groaned in satisfaction, pushing back his seat to give her more room. Wrapping her hand around the base of his shaft, close to his tight, full balls, she sucked him deep.

"That's it," he coached as she bobbed her head. "Show me what you can do, wildcat."

Another truck blew its horn. Apparently she was still managing to provide a show. Lucky her.

Correction, lucky truck drivers.

"Oh yeah, Charity, come on."

She increased her speed, desperate to receive the gift of his cum. He didn't disappoint, shooting his cum straight to the back of her throat. Charity swallowed it, enjoying the high of subservience, the sweet bliss of obedience.

Roger stroked her hair as she licked his cock clean.

She put his cock away and zipped it back inside his jeans.

"Come here," he murmured, allowing her to rest her head on his shoulder.

"Was I good?" she purred.

"Baby girl, you were phenomenal, as always."

Charity had never felt happier, her hair blowing in the wind, having Roger all to herself. She could stay like this forever.

Looking down, she saw her open blouse and below that her thighs, which had opened of their own accord.

Suddenly the raw need hit her like a wave. "Sir?" she asked meekly.

"You'd like to come?"

She nodded.

"There's something in the glove compartment you can use. Be quick about it."

"Yes, Sir, thank you."

The vibrator was a tiny silver rod, lying next to his air pressure gauge. She took it out, licked her lips.

"Skirt and panties off," he ordered. "Heels up on the dashboard, wide apart."

Charity felt a rush of hot fear. "Sir, I...I can't."

"You can and you will. Or I will pull over and make you walk the rest of the way naked." His sudden harshness jolted her. He grasped her bra, ready to strip her.

"Please, no," she begged. "I'll do what you told me. I'll obey you."

"The clock is ticking," he warned.

Charity laid the vibrator on the seat and worked frantically to pull down her skirt. Kicking it free of her sandal-clad feet, she hooked her thumbs under the waistband of her panties. She could smell her own arousal as she slid them past her ass.

The leather was sticky and felt kinky against her bare skin.

"Give me those," he ordered. "And get on with it."

She handed him her panties and complied, lying back in the seat with her feet in proper position on the dash. It was a little bit like being at the gynecologist's office except there was no doctor here, only her demented boss.

"Show me, Charity. Show me how you pleasure yourself. Make me the luckiest man in the world."

It was at that moment that Charity realized she would do anything for Roger. Anything at all.

She picked up the vibrator. It went in nice and easy. She pulled it out, placed it against her clit and moved the switch to high. "Oh god," she moaned, grabbing his arm with her free hand. "Oh Roger, I-I—"

"Come for me," he said, directing her into an instant climax.

She rolled her head, her body writhing on the seat, her cum dripping all over the expensive leather. The orgasms rocked her one after another at speeds much faster than the car, faster than the wind. She couldn't think straight, she couldn't see. There was only the two of them and this exquisitely bizarre scene. No highway, no other drivers.

Her pussy clutched greedily as she imagined Roger inside her. It was all she wanted. It was all she could ever desire to be.

"That was perfect." He praised her as she lay there afterward, utterly spent. "I'm very, very pleased."

"Thank you," she said, looking over at him in awe.

"In fact, I'm going to give you a special treat when we get where we're going."

"You are?"

"Yes. I'm going to tell you how I really feel about you. I am going to tell you the three words you want to hear."

Up until that moment she hadn't been sure but now she knew, she had to have Roger's love. Hear the magic words from him that would open every door.

Then she would be able to answer, "Yes, Roger, I love you too..."

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Charity awoke confused then realized it was all a dream. She got up and took an extra-long shower. Icy cold. It was time to get on with her life, time to forget Roger and his torturous ways. No more games, no more men. No more sex. No more dreams. Whatever it took to make things quiet and safe and predictable again.

Chapter Ten

Time heals everything, or at least it helps you cover the wounds better. It had been three months since Charity's dramatic exit from Roger Morvan Enterprises as well as from the man's personal life and she couldn't have been happier with the turn of events.

Her new job with Excelsior International was affording her all kinds of opportunities and she had still managed to find time to take up jogging and yoga on the side.

She hadn't met anyone special but a person couldn't have everything in life.

As for BDSM, it was good riddance to the ill-fated physical relationship with Roger. Sure, she was frustrated at times and she still sometimes woke in a cold sweat, her limbs twisted in the sheets, but that was the price of being a business person first and a woman second.

If only Riki would let the topic go. For some reason she kept insisting on discussing the fine points of Dominance and submission every chance she got.

"All I'm saying," Riki elaborated for the umpteenth time while they were jogging through the park one Sunday, "is that your rejection of Roger's domination isn't necessarily a sign that you aren't submissive or even that you weren't truly attracted to him. In fact it bears all the classic signs of—"

"Of bratting, I know," Charity cut her off. "Darn it, I can't even stand that word. You know how offensive it is?"

"It's a technical term, that's all. Look it up. A brat is just a submissive who is looking for a stronger relationship with her Dom so she carries on in a way that begs punishment and discipline."

Charity hated that these discussions made her so agitated, especially the way they heated her pussy and tightened her nipples when it came to words like punishment and discipline.

"I'm a grown woman. I think I know what I need in a relationship," Charity dismissed.

"So why don't you have one?" Riki reasoned as they crested the hill by the lake. "It's not like you don't have opportunities. What about that cute guy from your accounting department? What's his name...Craig? Or that guy in our yoga class? He's plenty hot."

"Who? Frank Williams?" Charity tried to picture herself with the mellow, gentle guitar player. "He doesn't know I exist."

"He's shy. You'd have to take the initiative. Then again, that's not what you want, is it? There is no asking you out. A man has to tell you point-blank how he wants you. Better still, he should knock you over the head and drag you back to the cave."

"That's silly. I just need a guy with confidence. Someone secure and gentlemanly on the outside but a tiger underneath. A guy like...like..."

"Like Roger?" she supplied. "Come on, kiddo, you and I both know you aren't over him. It's so obvious, the way you moon over anybody who looks even remotely like him."

"You are totally off-base, Riki. Do you ever listen to yourself?" Charity mopped her forehead.

Sleeping pills had helped fight the endless bouts of sexual frustration she had been facing and most of the dreams were gone. But every now and again a daytime fantasy would crop up. That's when she fell back on the jogging or yoga class. She was in better shape than she had ever been in her entire life.

Really though, how could Roger have acted like that, just cutting off his passion? What had he been thinking? Had he ever had any feelings for her? What had she represented to him in the first place?

The list of questions went on and on.

One thing was sure – if he had intended to punish her, it had backfired. That which does not kill us makes us stronger.

“Anyway,” said Charity, “I never rejected him, he rejected me.”

“You could have tried again though.”

“How? You don’t know what kind of willpower the man has. Kings and presidents have failed to shake him.”

Riki smirked. “Sounds like you still admire him, huh?”

“No, I’m just telling you there is no way you walk up to a man like Roger and convince him to change his mind.”

“So don’t convince him. You’re his submissive. Ask him for another chance. Obviously something about you pleased him if he took you in the first place. Just remind him of it.”

Charity felt a zap of electricity as she imagined herself going to Roger, reigniting those old desires. What if he did take her back, with his whims and his rules, her body reduced to his sex toy, subject to arbitrary pleasure and pain?

The hell of it was, he could make her beg for all of it back again with just one look, one touch.

She couldn’t go there.

“Maybe *you* should hook up with Roger,” Charity snapped. “As hopped up as you are on sexual control and domination.”

“Holy smokes,” exclaimed Riki, stopping dead in her tracks. “Would you look at that!”

Charity instantly jarred back to reality, her feet planted solidly on the winding asphalt.

“What are the odds?” said Riki as they both got a good look at the man approaching them at a casual, loping pace. “Talk about a coincidence.”

"Like hell," muttered Charity.

"Gosh," said Riki, looking at the invisible watch on her wrist. "Look at the time. Gotta run. Bye."

"Don't you dare leave me," Charity cried.

"You'll be just fine."

"Traitor," she called out as Riki did a one-eighty and took off in the other direction.

Great, now what?

Charity wasn't sure how she had managed it but she had no doubt that Riki had coordinated this seemingly accidental meeting.

"Hello, Charity," said Roger, as though it were nothing at all for the two of them to meet in the park on a Sunday afternoon after all this time.

"Hi," she said, trying to keep her composure.

Damn him for looking so good under every circumstance, in this case wearing a sleeveless T-shirt and shorts that showed off his muscular physique to perfect advantage.

He had obviously been running a while, though the tiny bit of sweat on his forehead only made him look more appealing.

It was all she could do to keep from falling into his arms...or at his feet. *Please*, she thought, *let him do the talking*.

Roger had never felt so much at a loss for words as he did at that moment. Every day for the past three months he had been trying to banish Charity's memory, so totally overpowering. The scent of her perfume, the taste of her full and lush lips, not to mention the feel of that body of hers—curvaceous and smooth under her clothing. And now here she was in the flesh.

"You're looking good," he observed, unable to resist a casual glance up and down her lithe form, from her healthy, tied-back hair to her well-formed golden calves.

"Excellent muscle tone."

There was no mistaking the pink color in her cheeks. A match to her cute pink sneakers. He would be lying if he said he didn't take particular pleasure in seeing her in her present state, her full breasts moving enticingly with her breathing, tightly constrained by her sports bra.

A fine sheen of sweat lay over her bare, flat belly. Roger would gladly lick her skin clean, driving her mad with desire. He would work his way down to the waistband of those spandex shorts, so tightly stretched over her womanly hips.

What a pleasure to spank her ass again too. Feel his hand against the material, hear her moan in response.

"Um, thanks," she said, uncharacteristically shy.

Yes, she was a sight all right, with that sweatband in her hair and the ones on her wrists. They gave a man ideas, at least one who was into bondage.

"You're welcome," he replied. Damn it, here he'd had a full two days to prepare for this moment and he was drawing a total blank.

Charity sighed, as if steeling her nerves. "Roger, why are you here?"

He had to admire her straightforwardness. She deserved the same. "It's no accident, as you've probably already figured out."

"Nothing is an accident where Riki is concerned. The thing I can't figure out is why go through all this trouble? You're not a subtle man. If you had something to say to me, I'd have thought you would find a more direct way."

"Let's just say some things are better done on neutral territory. I hope you won't hold anything against Riki. I'm the one who contacted her and asked her to do this."

Charity visibly bristled. "So you have spies on me now, figuring out who my friends are?"

"It's not like that."

"What is it like, then?"

Roger frowned. He had pictured this going so smoothly, himself in total control. Then again, nothing with Charity ever went according to plan, did it?

“Calm down, woman, will you?”

“Oh, so I’m a woman now, huh? I thought I was your little slave girl.”

“There’s no need to be snide.”

“Why not, gives you a perfect chance to take me over your knee?”

“It’s what you need,” he acknowledged. “But it isn’t going to happen on your terms. That’s what you need to learn.”

She rolled her eyes. “Bye, Roger, see you in the next life.”

He watched her jog off – that insolent, perfect, agonizingly spankable ass.

Roger clenched his fists. He was doing it again, fucking up and letting go of the best thing that had ever happened in his life.

* * * * *

Charity could hear Roger’s footsteps behind her, his strong, steady breathing as he matched her pace. She knew it was him as sure as she knew anything. He had caught up to her some time ago. Blast it, why didn’t he just overtake her and get it over with? It was as if he were stalking her or something.

No, not stalking – hunting.

The thought sent hot chills down her spine. This was no ordinary man behind her. This was the very same Roger who had put her through her paces, awakening her body to an unspeakable need to submit, to do exactly as he wished, no matter how far it pushed her out of her comfort zone.

And with every push had come liberation, the secret thrill of finding her deepest self, whether on her knees or writhing under his hot, spanking hand.

Did he plan to intercept her now? If so, what could he do to her out here on a public trail? She could certainly picture it, the two of them wrestling on the ground, hot and semi-naked, her body contorting as she tried futilely to resist his power, his mastery.

Surely he knew the effect he was having on her now?

He was taunting her. And she was not going to allow it.

Cutting hard left, she dove into the woods. There was a footpath, just wide enough for a single person. She didn't need to turn around to see if he followed. She knew he did. It was just a matter of time. He would catch hold of her or she would have to confront him.

Charity opted for the latter. "Does this make you feel like a big man?" she demanded, turning to face him, breathless. "Chasing me like some kind of pervert?"

He came to a halt a few feet in front of her, not even winded. "I'm just jogging. It's not my fault if you have an X-rated imagination."

"It's impossible not to, Roger, given what you think of me."

"How do you know what I think of you?"

She snorted. "You're right. I don't because you never shared. Not that you didn't give me some clues. How did it go again with those rules? Oh yes, I remember. I'm a toy to you, a body made for your pleasure. And let's not forget an ass to be spanked if I don't cooperate."

"The rules were part of our play, Charity. For mutual pleasure."

"Not very even though, were they?"

"I was under the impression evenness didn't work for you in the bedroom. You need a man who isn't afraid to tip the balance."

"Oh, you tipped it all right. You opened me to a whole new world and then you dumped me."

"Things were happening fast," he acknowledged. "I was afraid."

The confession caught her off guard. Roger didn't seem like the kind of man to be wary of anything. "Can I have that in writing?"

"Absolutely not, this is for your ears only."

"I'm listening."

Roger drew a breath, his gaze narrowing. "You posed one hell of a dilemma for me, Charity. You were my most valued employee, the only one I would trust to run the place in my absence. If only you were a man, things would have stayed simple. But you aren't and the way you are put together made it impossible for me not to want you in my bed, and as you well know, that has its particular complications in my case."

"Because you are a Dominant," she supplied, her pulse having quickened considerably at his mention of still wanting her.

"And you are submissive. Don't deny it, girl, we've been through too much."

She stared at the dirt in front of her sneakers, her cheeks hot.

"Tell me you haven't missed our games." He moved in closer, his fingers lifting her chin, raising her eyes until they locked on his.

"I have," she rasped. "It scares me how much."

"Then we need to work this out."

"There has to be more, Roger. We have to try to make a normal relationship."

"We can never be normal. You know that."

She shivered as his hand slid down her belly, his fingertips stopping to rest just under the waistband of her tight shorts.

"I don't mean the sex, Roger. I mean there has to be more. I...I want to know you as a person."

He smiled, intrigued. "You mean, go on dates?"

"Is that out of the question between a prospective Master and slave?"

"Of course not. Now let's see how wet you are for me."

“Roger, wait.” She squirmed ineffectually as his fingers moved underneath her moist panties, straight to her throbbing, dripping sex lips. “I’m serious.”

“So am I, sweetheart. I’m going to have my way with you. Right here.”

Her knees buckled. “You can’t. Someone could see.”

“I doubt it, but that isn’t your concern, it’s mine.”

She moaned as he pushed his fingers deep into her pussy. There was no denying what his touch did to her, the way her body responded. Oh god, she wanted his rules, his hard domination, just as much as she wanted his cock right now, thrusting and conquering, reclaiming the empty pussy that belonged to him and him alone.

“So...so you’ll work on our relationship?” she stammered, trying to hold on to that rational part of her mind, still able to see beyond hot animal lust.

“You have my word. Now let’s get you naked, shall we?”

She was putty in his hands, powerless to resist his nibbling kisses, almost punishing in their burning heat. She was all sighs, falling against him as he pulled her shorts and underwear down over her hips. Oh god, how she had missed this – the way he talked to her, the way he made her feel so totally safe and completely at risk at the same time.

“You’re a crazy person,” she gasped.

“Then you must be crazy too,” he whispered fiercely. “Because you’re in this for keeps, no turning back.”

Roger had her step out of the shorts and panties, giving her his shoulder to brace herself. Her shoes were next and her little white socks.

The bare ground was cool on her feet. She felt wicked and primal. Somewhere in the background a crow called out into the fresh, fragrant air. Everything was suddenly a hundred times more green and vibrant, the woods bearing silent witness to their act of primal bonding, power and sex and wondrous lust.

“Arms over your head,” he coaxed.

Roger removed the sports bra in a single motion. "You are so damn beautiful," he murmured, kissing her hard and deep.

Charity melted against him, primed for anything and everything.

As if hearing her body's silent plea, he took off her wristbands and quickly fashioned makeshift cuffs to bind her wrists together in front of her.

She licked her lips, relishing the feel of raw captivity, the way her bound arms framed her naked bosom, forcing it up and out. All for him.

Roger had free rein of her body now and he took full advantage, lightly caressing and teasing each of her breasts, working her nipples into hot, needful points.

She clenched her fists, anticipating his next move.

"Open your legs, darling."

Charity spread for him, allowing him to explore her pussy at will. She stood there, shuddering slightly as he manipulated her swollen clit.

"You'll lie right here on the ground for me," he told her, giving her his fingers to lick. "You'll submit in bondage."

"Yes," she said, putting her head on his shoulder for support, her voice barely audible.

Roger paused to stroke the side of her face. "I'm glad I caught you."

"I'm glad I let you catch me," she teased.

Roger grinned, cupping her ass cheeks.

"We'll have to have ground rules, you know. Work will be off-limits to our intimate life."

"I don't work for you any longer."

Roger chuckled now, lifting her into his arms and carrying her to a nearby clearing of soft grass. A few stray pine needles pricked her bottom lightly as she settled into position.

"What's so funny?"

"The part about not working for me," he said, pulling off his T-shirt to bare his magnificent chest, toned and chiseled, exactly the way a man should be. "As it so happens, I bought the company you work for, which makes me your boss again."

"Confident bastard, aren't you? What if I had turned you down today?"

Roger gave her an eyeful, tugging down his shorts, giving her a mouthwatering view of his lean waist and his fully erect cock. His balls were full and high, just as she remembered them, exactly the way she had fantasized almost nonstop.

"Refusing me was never an option," he told her. "You were mine the moment I placed my bid."

Charity laughed. Could they really make a go of this?

One thing was sure – they were worse apart than they were together.

Roger lowered himself to lie between her legs, letting his cock rest just at the entrance to her starving, aching pussy. Hands overhead, bound by her own wristbands, she could do little but await his will.

"You will never own my soul," she said.

"I'll settle for your body. And your heart."

Her pulse raced. Did he mean what he said?

"A man like you doesn't love, he possesses."

"I know," he said, sinking his cock deep into her in one agonizingly slow thrust. "That's why I think I have a shot with you. You were born to be possessed, Charity Bradford."

"I'm not easy," she warned.

One by one, he suckled her breasts. "I can handle you."

She groaned, arching her back, fighting the full and complete surrender that he would surely take from her. "Spankings alone won't do it."

"I have a bigger repertoire, trust me." Roger extracted his cock nearly to the tip. He was depriving her, making her need him all the more.

"Please," she rasped.

"Lie still," he chided as she tried to lift her pelvis.

Whimpering, she let her body go.

"You know how much I suffered?" he asked. "Every night and day you were gone?"

"I suffered too," she said.

"The difference is, I am the Dom and I can take revenge."

"You wouldn't."

"It will be slow. Might take months."

"I need to come, Roger."

He licked her breasts, flicking the tips of her nipples with his tongue, employing it like a tiny whip. "You know what you need to do, then."

Charity swallowed. "Please, Sir, may I come?"

"Wouldn't you rather work on our relationship?" he taunted.

Cruel bastard. "Later. Just fuck me now. Hard. Oh...please, please."

Roger laughed, delight in his eyes. "Don't worry, I don't have it in me to make you pay the way you really deserve. Besides, a good Dominant is a gracious one."

A few thrusts was all it took, their breathing hot and heavy and intermingled, their hearts beating furiously together. He called out her name and she called out his as his cock rammed home, shoved to the hilt again and again, driving her ass into the fresh earth.

Just like the animals, the wild beasts.

Just before he was ready to come, he flipped them over, helping her to sit astride him. She squeezed his cock, getting the feel of it so deep inside her. Pushing forward she rubbed her clit against his hard shaft.

She was so close to the edge. "Roger?" she moaned.

"Yes," he said granting her unspoken request. "Come for me, darling."

His words were all the trigger she needed. Digging her nails into his chest, she let the flood wash over her, a rising tidal wave that all but obliterated her conscious mind.

Distantly she heard her own cries mingled with his, her pussy clenching and unclenching, encouraging his full and complete release.

Afterward Roger released her hands, kissing them over and over. They lay side by side, clinging to one another until the sun began to set.

"I'm hungry. How about dinner?" he proposed.

"Is that all you're hungry for?" she asked skeptically, noting his rejuvenated cock against her thigh.

"Perhaps some dessert as well," he mused.

"Sounds like a late night. I might have to call in tomorrow."

"Good luck. I hear your new boss is a real slave driver."

"It's all right," she kissed his cheek. "I'm his favorite slave."

"Sure about that?" he rasped, smiling wickedly.

"I better be," she declared, taking hold of his thick, pulsing cock. "If he knows what's good for him."

Chapter Eleven

They went away the very next weekend. Roger booked a suite for them at the very same hotel where things had gone so badly the first time. While he wasn't a man to easily admit mistakes, he was hardly fool enough to repeat them twice.

Patience was the key. Go slow enough to nurture the spark into a warm and steady blaze without letting it extinguish too quickly.

Roger was amused at Charity's curiosity during the trip. No doubt, she expected something kinky, but he was a perfect gentleman on the ride up.

They listened to his favorite CD, a jazz compilation. It was the perfect background for him to let her in on some of his own history, his early life in the system, bouncing from one foster home to another. Some were decent and it wasn't as bad as many cracked it up to be.

Then again, he was probably just lucky. He had been lucky in business too, managing to land a job as a dishwasher at sixteen at one of the best restaurants in the city. His boss had been a Russian immigrant, an entrepreneur who took a shine to him, teaching him everything he knew about the world of finance.

Meager as his pay was, Roger had managed to scrape together enough money by the time he was eighteen to buy a gumball machine, which he had managed to place in a busy video store. In exchange for a cut of the profits to the store owner, he had managed to garner quite a pile of quarters for himself.

That meant more machines, followed by his first laundromat. It was easy after that. One business leveraged against another, always more nickels, quarters and dollars to be had.

He hired an accountant to keep track of them and a pretty secretary to field the calls.

Her name was Marguerite and that's where the trouble had begun. Long story short, the woman had had a predilection for making mistakes and he for chiding her in return. It was just a joke at first but one day it had happened for real. Marguerite's ass over the desk, the woman patiently waiting for her punishment.

He had done it over her tight skirt the first time and for a while it was almost platonic, a play ritual, really, of errors and consequences. Roger had even assembled a little collection of rulers and a paddle too, which he kept in his desk drawer.

Then it turned more serious.

"I dreamed about you last night," Marguerite told him one morning as she stood in front of him awaiting a sentence for over-sugaring his coffee.

Somehow her skirt had ended up on the floor and her blouse too. She had begged to be punished without mercy. It was the hardest paddling ever, his cock getting harder and harder as he watched her ass twitch, getting redder and redder under her thin panties.

At some point they had crossed the line—whatever line was left—and she had accepted his cock, thick and hard, thrust into her helpless, wet canal, so very available and submissive. The sex had lasted all of five minutes but it had awoken something deep. He had found his sexual being. His place.

Time blurred, the sex got steamier, she practically moved in with him and some months later he confessed love to her while she, in tears, told him about Carl, her on-again, off-again fiancé in the air force in Germany. Hard lesson learned. But he had learned and knew he wouldn't make that mistake again. Had been sure. Until Charity came along.

Charity put her hand on his thigh the whole time he was speaking, the words pouring out of him.

"I'm sorry," she said when he was finished.

"It's not your fault."

Her fingers trailed to his cock. "It's not yours either."

"I never said it was."

"You didn't ever feel guilty?"

Roger frowned. "Enough of my life, what about you?"

"Not much to tell."

It was the usual story, a string of boyfriends who never quite went the distance in meeting her erotic needs, relationships that fizzled, potential unions that seemed great in theory but never amounted to anything.

"You needed the BDSM," said Roger.

"I needed you," Charity said throatily.

"I'm sure there are others who could fill the bill."

She smiled wistfully. "Maybe I don't want to look."

His cock throbbed as he thought of having Charity all to himself forever.

Was this only a lustful fantasy, or did it have to do with his heart? He had hinted that day in the park about wanting her heart.

The words had spilled out of him, unplanned, like the rest of it.

Victory snatched from the jaws of defeat.

"Be careful what you wish for, Charity."

"What about you? What do you wish for?"

The question caught him off guard. Had he ever given himself permission to really dream? Up to now, even as he stood on the brink of his second billion, he saw everything in terms of survival.

"I want someone I can come home to, someone who knows me, someone who can handle the ups and downs."

She laughed. "There are plenty of those available. Especially where you're concerned."

"I guess it's a state of mind, isn't it?" He continued his reverie, feeling freer than he had ever remembered. "I don't want to be stereotyped. There are BDSM people who try to live by rigid roles. Me, I want a female who can best me in the boardroom, match me on the tennis court and give me the ride of my life in bed."

"But she has to be submissive," Charity reminded.

"Sexually, yes, she has to have that place in her heart where a man can go, totally ravishing her. But she needs imagination, drive, a mind of her own and she should be flexible, just in case we ever want vanilla sex, you know, just for variety?"

Charity was staring at him now. "Is this a job interview?"

Roger shrugged. "Life is one long interview."

They were silent the rest of the way.

As they pulled into the parking lot, Roger let her know what was in store. "I'm going to push you hard. We're going to test every limit. Are you ready?"

She squeezed his hand, excitement, fear and wonder in her eyes. "With you? Yes."

It was exactly the answer he had been hoping for.

* * * * *

Charity could sense the sudden shifting of Roger's disposition as they entered the hotel room. She understood much better now where it came from and what it meant. It wasn't that he had no heart or that he didn't care, it was just another side of him. Maybe part of his history. Maybe just biology.

Whatever it was, it took a hell of a lot of trust on his part and his partner's too, to let it show.

Just the edge of his voice alone was enough to cut Charity to the quick. Yes, there was something in her too, something that needed to rub against his hardness, to be exposed and manipulated.

"Take off your clothes, Charity, and fix me a drink. Scotch on the rocks."

There was no “please” or “thank you” now. No room for refusal or excuse.

“Yes, Sir,” she replied in a husky voice, her fingers already unbuttoning her blouse. She undressed then went to make his drink.

She was shaky, twice dropping ice cubes as she tried to retrieve them with the little tongs. He paid her no notice as he sat waiting, his attention focused on a newspaper he had found outside the door.

Her nudity screamed out to her as did the comparative humbleness of her position. She was taking orders, performing her tasks while he just sat there, free to imagine and plan.

“That’s not how you do it,” he said as she tried to hand him the cold, heavy glass.

Her heart slammed in her chest, trying to understand.

Roger tossed away the paper to give her his undivided attention. “A slave serves from her knees.”

He pointed to the floor between his legs, making it simple enough, even for a beginner. “Now.”

The sudden snap of his fingers jolted her into action. Letting her knees give way, she collapsed into position.

With both hands, she held the drink, waiting.

He studied her. “I will think of you this way every time I see you from now on. It will be our little secret, however we interact, however much we shine. I’m the man who can make you kneel, Charity.”

“You are,” she agreed, her voice a tight whisper.

“Lower your head and offer me the glass.”

She did so, as if to a god.

He took it from her and put it to his lips.

She tried to taste it with him, to hang on his every need, his every desire.

“Too much ice,” he pronounced. “We’ll have to do something about that.”

Did he want her to take it back, fix him another?

She reached out, only to be rebuked.

"Did I tell you to move, slave girl? Did I tell you to do anything?"

"N-no, Sir."

"Hands behind your neck, fingers interlaced. Kneel back on your heels, thighs wide, breasts thrust out," he commanded.

Her head swam as she tried to follow his orders – so many all at once.

"You need discipline."

She was practically panting. It didn't help that her naked body was so close to his, her breasts within his reach, her mouth perfectly positioned to give him pleasure, should he so order.

"Your nipples are hard."

"Yes, Sir."

"I can smell your sex. You are wet and hot."

"Yes, Sir."

"This turns you on."

"Yes, Sir," she said, beginning to sound like a broken record.

"You should be ashamed. Are you?"

"No, Sir."

His brow furrowed. She watched him nervously as he removed a single ice cube from the glass.

"Pucker your lips like you are going to kiss me."

Her mouth trembled, she felt like a flower, opening to the dawn, exquisitely rare and hopefully beautiful.

Roger applied the ice, a single swipe over her lips, cool and slick. She gasped.

"Suck."

She did so, gently working it, taking as much as he would give her. The ice began to melt. Water trickled down her cheek and splashed on her breasts, which were already explosively sensitive.

“Lean back.”

Oh god, he wanted to put the ice cube on her nipple, and why not? He owned her, after all. Every part of her.

She moaned from the sensation—hot and cold, pleasure and pain.

“I want to put clamps on you,” he said. “Would you like that?”

Charity was beyond begging. She had no clue what to ask for, where to even begin when confronted with a will, an imagination as deep as Roger’s.

“I want...what you want,” she croaked.

“Be careful,” he said, hearkening to their earlier conversation in the car, “what you wish for.”

It was true that the risks were boundless, but how could she make him understand it was already a done deal?

No wonder she had fought this so hard her whole adult life.

It wasn’t just her flesh at risk.

“I can take it,” she said.

He arched a brow, handsome and devilish. “We will have fun finding out.”

Charity melted on the spot, hopelessly ensnared. He replaced the ice cube in his drink.

“I’m not thirsty anymore,” he decided, handing it back. “Dump the glass in the sink and meet me in bed.”

Her legs carried her, though she didn’t know how.

This was it—the next step.

She would be lucky if she didn’t faint.

Roger undressed, not wanting any obstacles between them. He was naked by the time Charity reached the bed.

"Don't move," he told her, stopping her just in front of him.

He wanted to savor the moment, the absolute beauty of her imminent submission. She was his to touch, to explore and also to drive absolutely wild.

And the best part was that she wanted it as much as he.

"I have never seen a creature as lovely as you."

She blushed.

"You are mine," he whispered.

Her shy, expectant smile said it all. His hands weighed her breasts. He eyed each erect nipple. One by one, he would clamp them. Then he would fill her orifices, owning her to his heart's content.

"Take hold of my cock," he ordered.

She did so, holding her breath.

"Stroke it."

Obediently, she ran her fingers along the length, lightly grazing the veins, pressing just right on the sensitive places.

"You do that well."

"Thank you."

"For the remainder of this session you will call me Master," he decided.

"Thank you," she obliged. "Master."

"Shall I put my cock in your mouth?" he wondered aloud.

"Yes, Master." Her eyes lit.

"Or in your pussy?"

"Oh yes."

"But you would take it in the ass too?"

She nodded. Her breathing was shallow.

"Show me how wet you are."

Her eyes slid closed as she inserted a finger between her legs.

It emerged glistening wet.

"Suck it clean," he ordered.

She put her finger between her lips and sucked.

The obedience of the act fired his dominant spirit. Reaching behind her, he gave her ass a crisp smack.

Charity jolted, groaning.

"That's enough. Put your hands at your sides."

She was forced to stand there as he took hold of her nipples, pinching them tighter and tighter.

"Look me in the eye," he said. "I want to see your response."

He read the emotions. Her discomfort was mild but there was no mistaking the implications. In surrendering rights to her body she was opening herself to whatever he wished, his merest whims of pleasure and pain.

And her reactions? Those too belonged to him.

"Are you nervous, Charity?"

"No, Master."

"But you don't know what to expect."

"You'll protect me from any harm," she said with an assurance that seized his heart, twisting it with an unspeakable force.

Roger released her now, brushing back damp strands of hair from her face. It was there in the back of his throat or maybe on the tip of his tongue, something that might be appropriate to say.

"Kneel," he said instead. "Take my cock in your mouth."

She knelt with perfect grace, as though this were the heart of her pleasure and not his own.

He gasped as she let her tongue ride along the underside of his cock. In one motion she brought him inside her warm mouth.

Roger had not intended to let go. He was a man of discipline, after all, a man of control. Inside the bedroom and out.

But it felt so damn good, his sweet slave spoiling him, giving him this service. Groaning, he put his hands on top of her head.

She was swallowing his cock whole, leaving him no choice.

His ejaculate came of its own accord, his cock pulsing, thicker than it had ever been in his life. The release was hot and satisfying, utter release, bliss. No worries, no concerns as she swallowed, easily adapting to the thick bursts of his cum.

One thought came to his mind, a strange one for a Dom.

I must return the favor.

Charity burst with pride as she felt Roger cum inside her suckling mouth. Swallowing a man's ejaculation was not something she had relished in her vanilla sex life but as a submissive it did something deep and hot and wicked to her belly.

What better way to belong to Roger, to prove she could be his slave girl? Happily, she swallowed every drop, and when he was done pumping his cock in and out of her mouth, she licked it clean, covering every sweet inch with her tongue.

"If you think that will dissipate my sexual attentions," he growled good-naturedly, "you are sadly mistaken, girl. I've only just gotten started on you."

"I was hoping you would say that."

He had her by the hair. Roger gently but firmly lifted her to her feet, positioning her mouth for a kiss. It was deep and hard, his tongue pushing its way into her mouth, forcing hers to yield at once. Helpless and eager, she pressed against him, rubbing her nipples against his chest.

Roger kept kissing her though his hands were busy elsewhere. He gripped her ass, hard and punishing.

Oh yes, he had only just begun.

She could scarcely breathe by the time he let her go.

"On the bed, on your back, girl," Roger said as he retrieved his bag of tricks.

Charity scrambled into place.

Roger took a rope from the bag and bound Charity's wrists then tied them to the headboard. Though her arms were firmly captured overhead, she could easily turn her body.

He took his time with the clamps. They were gold, connected by a long, thin chain, which he dragged over her skin again and again.

Twice he stopped the process of teasing and tickling, making her turn over so he could smack her ass. She couldn't help it if the chain tingled, making her giggle and squirm.

At last she lay still, submitting to this most unusual torture.

"You have to feel your way into it," he said, holding the first clamp up to the light.

"Will it hurt much?"

"Let the pain own you," he advised. "And you'll be fine."

Let the pain own her? What kind of answer was that?

Roger applied the clamp with tender expertise. At first she felt nothing, but as he turned the tiny knob that compressed the two sides, the pressure began to mount.

She clenched her fists. He kissed her cheek and told her he was proud of her for being brave. Gasping, she let the clamp have its way, the sudden flash of pain building to a dull, deep ache.

She was scarcely aware of the second one going on.

He was right, the pain was owning her.

One by one, he licked the swollen, captive buds.

She wanted more.

But was it pleasure or pain she sought?

Was there a difference any longer?

“Charity, I want to see what you are capable of,” he said, his voice traveling from some distance outside her universe. “I want to fill your pussy and your ass simultaneously. I want to go further than before but I will go slowly, I will do it right this time.”

Her head was swimming. Could she possibly be expected to answer when every time she tried to wrap her mind around some reality, some emotion he was creating in her, the ground kept shifting completely—tender one minute, totally agonizing the next? He knew how to play her, all right, making her moan and sigh and beg. She had never imagined it could be like this, not even in her wildest fantasies.

In one way it was too good to be true and yet the connection she felt now with Roger was the strongest and most real bond she had ever known in her life.

“Which hole would like filled first,” Roger wondered aloud. “How about your little pussy? Is it feeling neglected?”

Roger showed her a vibrator, teasing her. Turning it on, he rubbed it over her cheek and down her torso, all the way to her thrumming sex. “Let’s hear you beg for it.”

She moaned as he tugged on the little chain connecting her nipple clamps, making her feel as though her body were going to be torn open.

He gave no quarter, pressing the infernal, buzzing little device to her clitoris, pushing her almost immediately to the brink.

She writhed under the stimulation, wishing it would end, one way or the other. “Please...”

“Please, what?” he teased.

She groaned. If only he would take full control, press his body on top of hers and shove his cock inside her for his pleasure. At the very least, he could tie her down so

she had some sense of boundaries. As it was, she felt as though she might dissolve or explode into a million pieces.

"I don't know. It's too much."

"But we haven't dealt with your other orifice," he reminded.

Oh god, she had forgotten.

"Ready, my dear?" He laid the vibrator on the bed and held up another device—slightly curved, flared at the end and made of soft-looking, colored plastic.

She nodded in utter defeat. Defeat mingled with mind-blowing expectation.

"I think a little lubrication is in order." He found what he needed and generously lubed the anal dildo then swabbed it through her own sweet sex juices and pressed it between her labia. He pushed it deep inside her pussy for good measure. It emerged glistening wet, perfectly coated.

She flushed red at the sight.

"It's best to relax," he advised. "It will go in better."

"Yes, Master."

Roger picked up the vibrator, turned it on and inserted it deep into her pussy. He kept a hand on her hip, steadying her. He positioned the anal dildo at the entrance to her tight, sensitive opening. "Good girl," he whispered, nibbling lightly on her ear. "You are ready, aren't you? Now take it for me."

She sighed, releasing her tensions instinctively. Before she realized it, the anal plug was halfway in, claiming her open hole, filling her as a vicarious extension of Roger's will.

"Take it. Take it all."

Charity bit her lower lip. The insertion felt as though the anal dildo were a mile long, impaling her, utterly dominating her. The clamps put pressure on her nipples and her pussy thrummed to the rhythm of the vibrator, a counterbalancing need. She wanted to be squeezed, grabbed and possessed everywhere on her body.

Satisfied at her level of penetration, Roger went to work with the vibrator. He worked her expertly, as if he had spent his whole adult life in her company, dominating and playing her flesh.

“Come for me, baby,” he told her.

They were the words she most yearned to hear. At the same time she was terrified of just how much she would reveal in her current state – in bondage, in pain and under total sexual control.

The orgasm came like a roaring freight train. The built-up tension unleashed like electricity, frying her nerve endings from head to toe. Her body thrashed. She pulled at the rope in vain. Her nipples felt as though they were going to explode. She clenched and unclenched her pussy, demanding more, needing the absolute and total devastation.

If Roger hadn’t been there she would have blasted apart. As it was, he guided her through, let her soar to the other side and caught her before she crashed.

Eventually it passed. Hours later? Or had it been only a few minutes?

Roger held her, stroking her.

“I’m going to untie you and remove the clamps. It will hurt. Just let the pain flow over you, be part of you,” he instructed.

It was agony. It was Roger’s will, by his hand. It was ecstasy.

“I love you,” he murmured as he dispensed with the other toys. “More than words can say. And while we’re at it, I’m seriously open to marriage negotiations.”

Leave it to Roger to make it sound like a business deal.

She mumbled something funny but she was too busy falling asleep to really process any of it.

* * * * *

Roger watched Charity. She was sound asleep, breathing softly, her lovely head on the pillow, golden hair billowing around her face. Yes, it was true. He had asked her to

marry him. The proposal had been inside him, in some deep place all along. The explosiveness of her orgasm had brought it out of him. They had been slaves to each other at that moment, or rather slaves to the amazing love that had blossomed between them.

It all made sense now, all the scheming on his part, all the back and forth between them—the stops and starts, the highs and lows. It could only be the preamble to something absolutely soul shattering.

He was crazy about her, couldn't imagine life without her. It was absolutely and positively unacceptable to have her separated from him ever again.

For a fleeting second he realized how vulnerable he had allowed himself to become. What if she rejected his mention of marriage? What if she woke up and didn't mention it, thinking it had all been a weird dream?

It was a good lesson in dominance. Keeping control of one's own emotions was the only way to learn to handle another's.

Her eyelashes began to flutter. She made tiny murmuring sounds with those irresistible lips. His heart skipped a beat as he anticipated her opening those pretty eyes, giving him a chance to see once more into their timeless depths.

She blinked twice, looking around. At last her eyes focused on Roger.

"Hi, sweetheart," he said, smiling to hide his nerves. "You've been out quite a while."

She tried to sit up and discovered the aching muscles in her arms.

"You should lie still," he advised. "It's been a pretty intense day. You want something to drink?"

She shook her head.

"What about something to eat?"

"I had this amazing dream," she said, her brow furrowed.

He tensed. "Oh?"

"You'll laugh, I think."

"Will I?"

"You asked me to marry you," she said. "You were sort of kidding about being open to negotiations but I think you were serious."

He pursed his lips. "Was I? And what did you say?"

She cocked her head. "I don't remember. I'm not sure I said anything."

Roger cleared his throat. "And what would you say now?"

Charity got a faraway look in her eyes. *Here goes, he thought. Total disaster.*

"I believe I would give it real consideration."

Roger felt an instant lump in his throat. Did he hear correctly?

"Not that you would ask me, of course," she said sweetly.

"And what if I already did?" His sober expression changed to a smirk. "What if you weren't dreaming at all?"

"What do you mean?"

He bent to kiss her forehead. She was naked under the sheet, her breasts tenting the thin cotton. "I mean that sometimes dreams become real. Or should I say reality can become a dream."

She sat up now, mouth gaping. Her eyes went wide with realization. How beautiful she looked, hair tousled, breasts exposed. "Omigod, you did ask me to marry you! It was real."

He nodded. "Just before you passed out on me."

She winced a little. "Sorry to give you such a bizarre response. But you have to admit, you have a weird sense of timing."

"I was pretty surprised myself."

Charity pouted her luscious lips. "If you are playing with me, Roger Morvan..."

Roger sank down on one knee to take her hand. "Don't you dare try to back out. If you want a formal proposal, here it is. Charity Bradford, make me the happiest sadist in the world and give me your ass. I mean your hand in marriage."

"Ha, ha, very funny. Seriously, we have a lot of stuff to negotiate."

He kissed her hand. "I fully expect you'll keep me on my toes the rest of my life. Just know I will do the same to you."

"Except you mean it literally."

"Tell me you hate it."

"I hate it."

"Liar." Roger whipped off the sheet, baring her completely. "You know that will cost you."

"Roger, no." She giggled as he climbed on top of her and pressed his nude body down over hers. "You're impossible."

"Get used to it," he growled, pinning her arms overhead. "I'm going to spend the next fifty years or so being impossible."

"Make it a hundred," she sighed, yielding herself to his hard cock.

He plunged deep. She was ready and willing and hot and wet. The way she was born to be—his slave, his lover, his partner and friend.

Not to mention the best investment he had ever made in his life.

A million didn't begin to cover it and he would spend the rest of his life proving it to her.

About the Author

Reese Gabriel is a born romantic with a taste for the edgier side of love. Having traveled the world and sampled many of the finer things, Reese now enjoys the greater simplicities—barefoot walks by the ocean, kisses under moonlight and whispers of passion in the darkness with that one special person.

Preferring to remain behind the scenes, cherished by a precious few, Reese hopes to awaken in the lives of many the possibilities of true love through stories of far off places and enchanted lives.

For the sake of love and hope and imagination, these stories are told. May they be enjoyed as much in the reading as in the writing.

Reese welcomes comments from readers. You can find Reese's website and e-mail address on the author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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