

EXOTIKA

ELLORA'S CAVE

VONNA HARPER

*Roughing It*

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Roughing It

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# ***ROUGHING IT***

**Vonna Harper**

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## **Chapter One**

Heat wrapped around Asia Kandell the moment she stepped into the Midnight Special Lounge. A quick, hard instrumental song from an unknown source ignited her nerve endings and brought her hand to her top blouse button. One more minute, or maybe scant seconds, and she'd have it off and be hauling on the too-small bra in her desperation for freedom.

She shouldn't have come into this opulent place with its leather club chairs grouped around tables meant for intimate conversations. The air smelled of tequila and beer, gin and whiskey and the sleek aroma of rich red wine. Between the scents, low lighting, nerve-shaking music, and her own screaming hormones, this was the last place she should be, alone, on a Friday night. But what was her option? Staying in her condo while she drank too much wine and listened to fast, throbbing songs about getting it on with the right partner?

There was no such thing as the right partner for her—she knew that deep down where her blood flowed. Okay, maybe a man capable of scratching her itches really did exist, somewhere, but she was beginning to lose hope. And tonight she was too tired and horny to expend energy in the search.

She'd take a fuck, with anyone, anyplace, in any form or fashion. Now or sooner.

Waiting for her eyes and ears and skin to adjust to the setting, she amended her thought. There were certain forms of the sex act she didn't have the patience or stomach or desperation to experience or repeat. Ever.

A drink. That's what she needed. Chugged down as fast as her system could handle followed by a slow and appreciative sipping while she scanned the room.

Putting her focus on the act of getting to the bar without being mowed down gave her a few seconds of relief from the hard ache between her legs. The bartender, attentive

and yet suspicious of a relatively young and attractive woman coming in alone, gave her too many choices to consider. In the end she settled for the house chardonnay and a stool at the bar. "No," she had half a mind to tell him, "I'm not a hooker. Thought about it a few times but my CPA talked me out of it. Too hard to document the tips."

If nothing else, sitting took the strain off her toes and insteps, and although she risked losing the damn heels in the near dark, she kicked out of them. Ah, relief. As for why she sometimes tottered along on three-inch torture devices, well when you're barely five foot one and the populace keeps getting taller, you do what you can to compensate.

The wine was good, more than just good, nearly cold enough to make her teeth ache, and soothing to her throat. The first swallow landed in her belly and between her eyes. Sighing in anticipation, she took another drink. Then she swiveled. No matter that the movies specialized in bars and lounges full of class-A singles checking out the competition and possibilities, most of tonight's crowd consisted of middle-aged groups. Work seldom brought her to this part of the city, so when she'd spotted the watering hole tucked into an upscale hotel, she'd taken a chance on it being a meat market. Wrong. Once again, wrong.

Plan B. She'd have her two drinks, hail a cab, and go home.

At the thought, depression rose until she thought she might drown in it so she fortified herself with more wine and tried to distract herself by taking in the groups one table at a time. A quartet of women on the downhill side of thirty made her acknowledge how soon she'd be there herself. Three of the four carried more pounds than was healthy, and they all had *that* look about them. Not quite desperate but getting there. They were pretending to care what their companions were saying, but their eyes kept straying elsewhere. A specific elsewhere. Curious, she followed their example.

Two men. Well-heeled if her impression of their suits and manicured hair was any indication. Probably six feet or a little more going by what she could see of their upper torsos above their table. None of that lean and lanky look so many corporate types

sought. Fit. As in work out regularly fit. They smiled easily which she liked. And they kept looking at her.

No surprise there given her solitary status, but what if they were trying to work their minds and courage around to approaching her with a proposal that would consume the rest of the night and entail more than one body opening at a time? Hmm. How would she respond?

What was she doing even considering what might not be on their minds at all? Was she that desperate? That filled with itches? And even if those itches were on the verge of driving her crazy, which they were, no way would she go off into the great unknown with two strangers. Not only didn't her one hundred and one pounds of muscle and bone stand a chance against what she decided had been college or even professional athletes, her one and only threesome had been more confusing than satisfying.

"You want a refill?"

Jumping a little, she spun back around and faced the bartender. "Sounds good," she told him. When he nodded and wandered off to fulfill his mission, she gave her glass a bemused look because she didn't remember draining it. Whoever was in charge of such things had changed CDs or whatever was responsible for the music. Now a woman with a fuck-you huskiness was belting out a country song about fast driving on a hot night. If only that was her! Driving and being driven by a fast, hot man!

*Get a grip! Otherwise you're going to come right here and now.*

Male warmth stroking her spinal column had her completing yet another half circle. She found herself looking up, way up at the two men who'd been watching her. They were smiling their easy smiles and yet she thought she detected a certain nervousness in their gazes.

"I'm Mike," one of the basically interchangeable males said. He started to stick out a hand then pulled it back. "And this is my friend Todd. Ah, we've got...we want...we'd like..."

"Spit it out, Mike. You sound fifteen," the bartender said. "And, lady, I happen to know he's happily married and harmless, as is Todd, although his IQ is never going to make it over double digits. Whatever they're up to, you're not going to need to slip a knife between their ribs."

"I'm not carrying a knife," she admitted. They really were hunks, and even with the bartender proclaiming their happily married states, she couldn't help but wonder what a night with the two of them would be like.

"Good, good," Todd muttered, making her wonder what he was referring to. "Look, do you mind joining us at our table? We have a...a business proposition to discuss with you."

A minute later a still-barefoot Asia was sitting across from the men, trying not to stare at their big hands, and wondering what their slacks hid. They really were nervous, which was kind of cute. Hopefully their emotional states kept them from clueing in on her rock-like nipples and the compulsion to press her thighs together. No two ways about it, she needed to get laid. Hard and fast.

"We have a friend," Mike finally got around to saying. "The three of us went to college together. You know how it is, when you've been playing varsity baseball since you were high-school sophomores. You think you own the world, and the Yankees can hardly wait to sign you up."

Although she could have pointed out that the Yankees had absolutely no use for a woman who didn't come up to most men's armpits, she didn't.

"Our friend—his name is Ritter—he's the only one of us who made good on his boasts to make it to the big time."

"This is about Ritter?" she asked. "Why isn't he here?"

The two exchanged glances. "'Cause he doesn't know what we're planning," Mike admitted.



Curiouser and curiouser. "And I'm part of the plan?"

"We don't know. It's up to—look, I gotta ask you something. I just hope you don't take it the wrong way."

No wonder Mike's wife was a happy camper. That little-boy grin coming from a no-question-about-it jock was a killer. If the mysterious Ritter was anything like Mike and Todd, and available, maybe the night would turn out better than she'd thought.

Todd cleared his throat then cleared it again. "We've been watching you."

"I noticed."

"You did? Yeah, I guess you did. About Ritter, he didn't play for the Yankees but he was drafted in the second round his senior college year and played for three teams over ten years before he retired a couple of years ago. He made good money, damn good money."

Much more of this and she'd know Ritter's shoe size. "I see." She didn't.

"Okay, okay. Good." That from Mike, making her wonder if the men were a tag team. "I don't know if you follow local sports, specifically women's."

Her head shake led to a short and choppy explanation that Ritter was now the head coach for the local university's softball team. The Fillies came in second in their division the first year Ritter was at the helm and it was looking good for them to take the state title this year, wherein lay Ritter's problem.

"Dating's not easy for him, being high profile and all," Todd supplied. "He got married right out of college, but it didn't last. Since then there's been a lot of—never mind. He's single."

"Okay."

"With a birthday coming up."

They weren't going to ask her to jump out of a birthday cake, were they? Just because her shrimpy stature and girth meant they'd get away with a cupcake didn't mean she'd say yes.

"You were going to ask me a question," she prompted because neither man seemed to know what to say next. "I'm partial to chocolate, but if the lemon is really lemony, I go for that."

Her attempt at a joke went right over their heads, probably because they'd gone back to staring at each other. Studying them, she decided they had something to do with financing and investments, maybe stockbrokers or bankers. Given their athletic bodies, it seemed a shame to have to shove said bodies into suits, not that they didn't fill them out to perfection. If Ritter came from the same mold —

"Are you a hooker?"

"A what?" She couldn't get her mouth to close.

"Not a hooker," Mike corrected his buddy. "A call girl. Paid escort."

*I own a women's boutique, she thought but didn't say because the conversation had taken a mind-stealing turn, and what she carried in the way of upscale female business attire couldn't possibly matter to them. "Wait a minute. You're thinking—you were thinking you could hire me to..."*

*Fishnet stockings, sheer blouse and black lace push-up bra. Dangling on the arm of hunk of the year. Smiling up at him and guiding his hand to her hip. Laughing at his jokes, showing him that his forefinger fit perfectly between her jammed-out-of-shape breasts, turning into him and spreading her legs as far as her thigh-high leather skirt allowed. Gliding into the most expensive restaurant in town and squeezing into the seat next to him so he could rest his hand against her inner thighs. Makeup troweled on and dressed-to-the-nines rich women glowering at the whore in their midst while their husbands panted and fantasized. Ritter letting her know with a look and a jerk of the head that he wanted her to slip under the table, unzip his slacks, and suck him while they waited for the salad to be served.*

"What?" she babbled, returning to the here and now too late to catch what had just been said. Although her cheeks were about to catch fire, she was in no hurry to stomp the fantasy into oblivion. Given the state of her libido, she'd scramble under the table and swallow his cock because —

"A thousand dollars."

"For what?"

"One night. Playing to Ritter's fantasy."

*And mine? Needs I keep deeply buried?*

## Chapter Two

Ritter stepped out of the elevator, both marveling at the view beyond the twenty-second-floor observation window and cursing his worn out knees for issuing an emphatic no to thoughts of taking the stairs. As he'd entered the hotel, the doorman had sniffed at his casual attire which had made him smile because if he hadn't taken a shower after practice, he'd still be in sweaty sweatpants instead of his jeans. The doorman didn't know when he had it good. In his right hand he held the key card for what he figured was the penthouse suite.

Speaking of good, he thought as he turned his back on the skyscrapers that seemed to be little more than an arm's length away, and paused at the door to a room that undoubtedly cost more per night than he wanted to think about... He had good friends, all right—a little crazy but loyal. Mike and Todd had had his back for as long as he'd had theirs, as witnessed by whatever they'd cooked up for his birthday celebration. Although they had the money to have this party—he assumed that was what was on the agenda—catered, he'd prefer they'd spend it on the charity of his choice. He didn't need or want presents and sugar overload. He wanted—hell, why had he told his friends what he had the other day?

"You want to know the truth," he'd said with two too many beers in him during the barbeque at Mike's house. "Give me a sex slave."

Mike had nearly lost his non-existent dentures at that while Todd had laughed so hard he'd cried. And instead of keeping his stupid mouth closed, he'd kept flapping his gums.

"I'm surrounded by liberated women," he'd said. No further explanation had been necessary because he'd already told his pals about the female university professors, instructors, and graduate students who peopled and complicated his life. Not only was

the president a woman, so were his assistant coaches, to say nothing of a team made up of liberated co-eds. All the time he'd been a professional baseball player, he'd lived surrounded by testosterone and beautiful women who knew how to cater to and take advantage of said testosterone. In some respects, that had left him ill-equipped for the real world beyond the Big Show.

True to his macho persona, he'd wanted to coach the university's varsity baseball team, but they already had a full staff so he'd decided to bide his time and feed his baseball addiction by taking the helm of the female equivalent. He was damn proud of his players, in awe of their physical abilities and quick minds, their self-confidence and don't-mess-with-me attitudes. If he ever had a daughter, he'd want her to face the world head on the way his team members did.

But when it came to what he wanted in the sack —

About to place the card in the slot, he paused. He and his buddies had come up with their fair share of antics over the years, but the gods who protected idiots must have been with them because they'd never been arrested. What if what his so-called friends had come up with for tonight wasn't an over-the-top bash but proof that he should have never opened his stupid mouth about a sex slave?

Fortunately, as far as he knew, sex slaves were in short supply and a couple of men whose personal lives revolved around mortgage payments, alarm clocks, and daycare were woefully ignorant of where one might be procured or rented or whatever. Him too. Everything he knew about women who at least pretended to put his needs and desires first and foremost came from back when he'd been chased by groupies.

Of course Mike and Todd might have found an actress to play the part.

Yeah, right.

Hoping that the first thing he'd see were the duo's goofy smiles and a beer being thrust into his hand, he opened the door. A line of illumination came from near the ceiling on the far wall, but it was a dusky red that made it all but useless when it came to making sense of the space. Instinct told him the room was empty of human life,

putting an end to the fear that he was about to be jumped by revelers yelling, "Surprise!"

A party for one in a room dominated by a round bed large enough to double as a swimming pool?

Oh shit, this was no penthouse suite. It was what, some idiot's idea of a brothel? A Hollywood-set brothel.

"Mike? Todd? I'm going to kill you."

His words still echoing, he blinked repeatedly. His eyes were beginning to adjust to the lack of adequate lighting, which allowed him to take a more complete survey. The bedspread was deep red and satin or silk, which fit in with the heavy purple drapes covering what was probably a floor-to-ceiling window. To make matters worse, a number of purple, red and black pillows lay on the circular bed. The air smelled of some kind of perfume. He might not have minded if it wasn't so strong. And what was that, red flower petals strewn over the plush white carpet?

"Kill you slow. Make you suffer for a long time."

There was other furniture – dark nightstands on either side of the bed and a seating arrangement near the gaudy purple drapes. That area consisted of an oversized white couch and massive flat screen TV. He guessed it was either tuned to an adult station or a porn DVD had been loaded. On the ceiling directly over the bed – shit, it was a mirror, wasn't it?

"Death's too good for you two fools. What the hell is this about?"

He thought he heard something, a faint rustling sound, but before he could investigate, his cell phone rang. He didn't need to read the display to narrow the choice to two numbers.

"Are you there?" Todd asked before he could say hello.

"Yeah."

"You sound hesitant. We thought you'd absolutely adore the decor."

"You and Mike have lost your ever-loving minds."

"That might be. Damn but I wish I could see your expression right now. Have you seen her?"

"Her?" Sharp, tiny teeth of either apprehension or anticipation nipped at his spinal column. "What are you talking about?"

"You haven't. She's there all right. You just have to go looking for the ultimate in gifts. One thing—she's exactly and everything you said you wanted."

"You didn't!"

"Hey, what are best friends for? One sex slave tied up in a bow and delivered." With that, Mike hung up.

Ritter's first impulse was to beat a hasty retreat. If he never laid eyes on the woman in question, he could pretend the whole thing had been a bad dream. Only, even if it was a dream, he couldn't honestly call it bad, could he? Besides, his cock was demanding he satisfy its curiosity.

Tied in a bow?

Walking on the dense, long carpet reminded him of what it had felt like to run onto a natural turf baseball field after a heavy rain, which might have something to do with the energy charging through him. He'd been joking when he'd yammered on about his desire for his own living, breathing sex toy, and yet he hadn't. Sometimes, usually as he was falling asleep, he gave his mind the freedom to play with possibilities. Responsibilities be damned. Modern law be doubly damned.

Fantasy full steam ahead.

She, if there really was a she, obviously wasn't on the bed, and she hadn't been on the couch. She might be behind the door he figured led to the bathroom, but if the faint sound he'd heard was a clue, he didn't think she was that far away.

There it was again. Near the bed. Something brushing against something. Zeroing in on the exact location as his experienced catcher's eyes had once locked onto a foul tip, he looked down at the floor.

A lump, a mound, a shape. Not particularly large. Not moving.

His heart responded with a crazy series of thumps, and his groin tightened. Something locked down inside him. Even as his eyes worked to make sense of what they'd discovered, he turned his back on thirty-three years of modern civilized behavior.

The shape curled on the floor belonged to a woman all right. Unless the red ropes circling her wrists and ankles counted, she wore absolutely nothing. Someone had gagged her with an orange ball that filled her mouth, held in place via a leather strap that went around the back of her head, making a bit of a mess of her shoulder-length hair. She had on a dark blindfold.

This was his best friends' birthday present. Happily and expensively given, at least on their parts. As for Miss Nude—what was he thinking! She was no human purchase recently removed from an auction block. Any other time or place or circumstance and the naked flesh would be a career woman, a card-carrying, taxes-paying voter who—

Only this wasn't another time, place or circumstance. It was now and she'd been delivered to him...

*Strung up by her wrists with her arms reaching for the ceiling, her toes barely reaching the ground, gagged and blindfolded. Cotton rope wound over and under and around her breasts, and wearing nipple clamps connected by a thin chain that swayed with her every move.*

*He, master of the realm, stood before his latest acquisition with a thin whip dangling from his fingers. He hadn't said a word while his flunkies had placed her in position for her initiation into servitude. In due time, he'd turn her into a well-trained and chained slut whose existence revolved around his pleasure, but he was in no hurry to complete her training. It was the process that fed him, watching her slow transformation from separate human being into the life he intended for her as his pleasure toy. His sex slave.*



*He'd ordered her stripped naked before rousing himself enough to hide her wide eyes beneath the blindfold, and now he willed his whip hand to remain still while he took his measure of his newest slave's lush form. She wasn't one of those protruding bones types. A thin layer of substance beneath her smooth skin gave her the softness he preferred. Because of the ropes, it was hard to tell much about her breasts, but he remembered that they'd been full and round and capable of filling his hands.*

*Hearing her sharp intake of breath, he debated letting her hang awhile longer, but his palm was itching and he'd been waiting a long time to see the creature dance.*

*"Lesson time, slave. For as long as it pleases me, your body belongs to me."*

*She shook her head as he'd hoped she would – there was nothing more worthless than a slave whose will had been broken. Spirit. Spirit contained and controlled, that's what it was all about.*

*"You don't believe me, do you? You think that because you were born free, you always will be. But this is my kingdom and my dungeon. And I have experience you can't possibly comprehend. Enough talking." He lightly ran the whip from her throat to her mons, chuckling at her futile attempts to back away. "It's going to be a lengthy education, and only one of us is going to enjoy it, at least initially."*

*Spinning the whip around so he no longer held the base, he shoved the hard end between her legs and pushed up. She tried to kick him but stopped when he slapped her left breast. "The female body is both complex and simple," he explained. "It wants to be treated with respect and hates pain. At the same time, once its primitive nature has been triggered and certain lessons learned, it comprehends that pain is followed by pleasure. And nothing matters more than that pleasure."*

*He made his point by pulling on the chain tethering her breasts. Then as she whimpered behind the gag, he replaced the whip base with his hand and began stroking her labia. Within seconds, his fingers were drenched.*

*A cross between a moan and profanity pulled Ritter back to reality. He again seriously considered walking out the door and forgetting any of this had happened, but then he ran his gaze over her, and the impulse died.*

She was small, not quite doll-sized but nowhere near the stature of the co-eds he was trying to mold into a championship team. There wasn't much substance to her bone structure, her legs were short and slender, her breasts about what he'd expect of someone who tipped the scale at around a hundred pounds. Because her hands were tied behind her, he couldn't see enough to come to a conclusion about her arms but —

Delivered to him. At his feet. Available to him. His to play with. To spin fantasy into reality.

A nod of agreement and excitement from his cock pushing him over the line, he touched his tennis shoe to her bent knees. That done, he leaned down and ran his forefinger over her calf. Nice, over-the-top-nice. Shocked by his behavior, he stepped back.

*He's here, really here,* Asia thought, nerves churning and calf alive with goose bumps. She'd heard him enter the room, and there'd been no mistaking the sound of his shoes brushing over carpet as he came closer. She should have anticipated the light, albeit exciting touch, but she'd been stripped of the ability to see and wasn't used to her hearing and nerve endings needing to tell her everything.

She'd done it, no two ways about it, done it!

For reasons he might never know.

The nervous anticipation she'd been battling since Ritter's friends had escorted her into this made-for-sex room took even deeper hold. Strange as it was to acknowledge, when the hunky clones had presented her with their thousand-dollar offer, she hadn't been at all nervous or appalled. Quite the opposite, she calmly asked for proof that Ritter was someone she could trust. Just as calmly and professionally, they'd suggested she Google him. If she uncovered nothing objectionable, she was encouraged to get in touch with them so they could hammer out the details.

She'd gone to her computer as soon as she'd gotten home and had been surprised by how many times he'd been written about. Perhaps most assuring, his name had

never come up in anything involving drugs or out-of-control behavior. He'd twice been selected as an All Star, and once he'd come up from the minors, he'd never been sent back down. He'd lent, not just his name, but his presence to a number of charity events. The clearest picture she'd found of him had been at a children's hospital where he'd regularly volunteered to assist in physical therapy for accident victims. In short, he'd been an all-around good guy back when he'd been drawing an astronomical salary, and he now seemed to be succeeding as a softball coach. Sandy-haired with hazel eyes, he had the requisite square jaw and slightly tilted nose that went with being a jock. His hands were huge, his chest more solid than was good for her nervous system. Flat belly and powerful thighs added to the physical package.

*Safe*, she'd stood up from her computer believing. Maybe a little boring but maybe not beyond redemption if he could joke about wanting a sex slave.

So here she was, tied up and presented for display by Mike and Todd. She'd been the one to suggest she be waiting on the carpet when Ritter arrived. She'd also offered to take off her clothes before the soft rope was wound around her ankles and wrists. The gag had been Todd's idea, not that she couldn't work it out of her mouth if she wanted to. As for the blindfold, that was probably the only thing she was having second thoughts about.

Other than wondering what was going to happen next and after that. And wondering when and where he was going to touch her again. And asking herself if she'd lost her ever-loving mind.

Praying for something she'd never expected to experience.

## **Chapter Three**

“Are you here of your own free will?”

Asia started to nod, remembered that tonight was about fantasy and turned the nod into a shake only to stop because she didn’t want him to get the wrong impression, whatever that was.

“You’re not sure?”

She shrugged, or rather she tried to. Two things worked against her, the obvious being that moving her shoulders while lying on one of them was next to impossible. In addition, between nudity, ropes, blindness and a man most likely staring down at her, she was equal parts unnerved and turned on.

“Do you want to leave?”

Ah, something she could answer as she did by shaking her head.

“Okay then. Let’s take a look at you.”

She was still trying to get used to the sound of his voice when she felt hands on her shoulders, strong hands, take-charge hands. He pulled her into a sitting position, but her forced-together legs refused to cooperate, and she started to tip over. So much for sexy and cool. She heard a faint thump next to her and guessed he’d gotten down on his knees. Something suspiciously like a groan shot out of him only to be forgotten when he propped her against the side of the bed and pulled her legs out in front. Funny how all-consuming skin against skin could become.

“How they got you to agree—never mind. I don’t want to know. It’s my birthday, and I’m playing it my way.”

He'd released her legs, but before she could risk freaking herself out wondering what he had in mind, he lightly stroked her knee. Just like that, personal space invaded again. Her neck hot and sweaty.

"Actually," he continued conversationally, "my birthday was yesterday, but we had a road game so those two idiots said we'd celebrate tonight." He chuckled. "Turned out to be a celebration of one. Yeah, you're here too, but there's something you need to know, something I can't believe I'm actually saying. Truth is, I'm a lot more into pleasing myself than making sure you get the same benefits."

*Little do you know.*

"My sex slave," he all but crooned as his fingers slowly and deliciously made their way up to her hips. "Having never had one before other than in my dreams, I'm shaky on the rules." His finger pads lightly skimmed the joining between thigh and pelvis, making her shudder. Making her hot. "But now that I think about it, there aren't any rules, are there? I do what I want because you belong to me."

*Yes. Yes!*

"You're a delicate little thing, not my preference, but maybe I can be persuaded to change my mind."

She needed to concentrate on his words so hopefully she could anticipate what he intended to do with her, but lordy was his touch electric! It was the forbidden, his rough and calloused fingers on her soft flesh. His control and ownership. Most of all, he'd set her skin to tingling simply because she couldn't do a damn thing to stop him.

*Helpless. Wonderfully helpless.*

"You're drooling. I don't like my slaves to drool."

Cupping his hand over the rubber ball in her mouth, he pushed it against her teeth until no way could she spit it out. A sliver of fear slid through her at the thought of him covering her nose and shutting off her breathing, but even as she battled the emotion, it fed her inner heat. She'd long dreamed of being in this position. Now that the moment was here, she'd ride it for all it was worth.

"I want to see what your mouth looks like and hear your voice." The pressure briefly let up, then he was demonstrating his mastery again. "But if you say anything that displeases me, I'll silence you. I trust you understand."

Communicating with head movements now that she was sitting up was much easier, and yet even as she nodded, she said a reluctant goodbye to what might be the ultimate in servitude—silence.

"Good. You might be trainable after all."

In preparation for tonight and to have something to do, she'd given her hair special attention while getting ready, and when he went to work on the buckle at the back of her head, she hoped he noticed how soft it was. Thinking that a slave should look a bit disheveled, she hadn't bothered with styling her straight brown-on-brown hair.

Relief! Her first impulse when he drew the ball gag out of her mouth was to lick her lips and swallow repeatedly, but, wanting to give the impression of gratitude, she simply closed her mouth. After a few seconds during which she tried to imagine what he was doing, he wiped away her spittle only to deposit what he'd collected on her collarbone. More goose bumps bloomed.

"You have a small mouth, just like the rest of you," he said with a finger on her upper lip. "I'm not sure it's large enough for sucking cock."

*Sucking cock? Bring it on!*

"What do you think, slave? Can you get all of my cock in your mouth?"

"I know I can," she muttered, surprised by how rusty her voice sounded.

"And you won't bite, will you?"

"No, of course not." The thought hadn't occurred to her.

"That's good, because I wouldn't want to have to punish you any more than I'm already going to."

A little shocked by his increasingly husky tone, she strained to see his expression, but of course nothing except darkness waited for her. When he took hold of her chin and turned her head to the side, she wondered what he was looking at.

“A question, slave. Do you believe a Master has a right and responsibility to punish his possession?”

“If...if he believes it’s necessary.”

“And what if he simply wants to?”

She’d been only marginally aware of how tense she was but now, sensing her body loosen and become even more alive, she embraced the change. Obviously, he was determined to make tonight the fulfillment of his fantasy and intended her to comprehend the nuances of that fantasy. Well, he wasn’t the only one to want to play that game – or a version thereof.

“A slave has no voice.” She tried to sound as submissive as possible, something she had absolutely practical experience in. “She exists at the whim of her Master.”

“That’s right.” He turned her head to the other side then patted her cheek. “I am your Master. And as such, I insist you call me that.”

Another step taken, yet more of the real world left behind. “Yes, Master.”

She almost swore she heard him sigh in relief, something she’d nearly done herself. “You speak when I give you permission to.”

“Yes, Master.”

“Did I just now, give you permission, that is?”

About to respond, she pressed her lips together. This sex slave business came with a learning curve. Maybe she should have read the manual. Suppressing a giggle at the thought, she searched her mind for memories of what he looked like. He might weigh double what she did and had to be more than a foot taller. As if that wasn’t enough, he’d been a professional athlete and had continued to stay in shape. Mutt and Jeff pretty

much spelled out the contrast between them, except there was only one male in the equation. Quite the male in fact.

She shouldn't have suggested she start out naked. Undoubtedly, he was dressed, to say nothing of free to move about while there she was trussed up like a Thanksgiving turkey. Granted, his intention wasn't to pop her in the oven and then start carving on her after she'd reached the right temperature but—

"You said you came here of your own free will," he said with his hand cupped over her chin. "But I'm not sure you fully understand what you've gotten yourself into."

How could she when she'd never done anything like this before? "Do you want me to speak, Master?" Darn, the *master* hadn't sounded particularly respectful, had it? Well hell, in between the carpet tickling her naked ass, the strain in her tied arms, and knowing there wasn't anything about her he couldn't see, it was impossible to attend to all the details.

"You have permission to answer this question. Are you willing to follow my lead in all things, including and specifically everything I do to your body? Will my fantasy become yours, completely?"

"What fantasy is that, Master?"

Damn but she was distracting, Ritter admitted as she repositioned herself so she was sitting up straighter. If this had been the real deal, he'd have clamped his fingers over her nipples and be using his hold to pull her breasts in one direction and then another. Or maybe he'd suck a delectable mound into his mouth and lightly nibble on the lush flesh. Then again he'd have had the foresight to have brought nipple clamps and a chain and be studying her expression as the metal clamped down.

Shit! Enough already!

At least until the ground rules had been clearly spelled out.

Like he knew what they were.



"I told my friends I wish I had a sex slave." Tipping her head upward, he took note of her sleek and kissable throat. "They laughed, and so did I. But they knew that on some level I was serious. Otherwise, you wouldn't be here."

"No, Master."

Although he wasn't sure he understood her response, he didn't push the issue. All those years of spinning out middle-of-the-night make-believe and he'd finally gotten as close as he ever would to the real deal. No way was he going to blow it!

"There's an auction," he began, speaking from a place he'd never thought he'd share with anyone. "It takes place whenever the supply is enough to make the effort worthwhile."

"What supply is that, Master?"

He'd been on his knees longer than they were good for, prompting him to release her and shift position so he was sitting next to her, his back also supported by the side of the stupid bed. Although he should have kept his hands to himself, the fingers closest to her wound up on her knee. When she shuddered and squirmed but didn't try to pull away, he knew he'd done the right thing.

"Of newly-captured females. The country – this country I'm talking about – doesn't exist on any map you've ever seen, but it's real."

"I understand."

Maybe she did. Hopefully she did.

"In it, men rule supreme while females are considered little more than a step above animals. They live in the mountains and hills, wild creatures who are both terrified of and fascinated by the men who pursue them."

Her breasts rose and fell, rose and fell. "Why are they pursued...Master?"

"Because men have certain needs. Some of them, you might call them the working class, earn a good living running down and capturing these wild females and bringing them to the auction site."

Closing his eyes, he mentally stepped into a familiar place. As he did, he released her knee and spread his fingers to encompass as much of her slender thigh as possible. If she tried to resist, he'd grab her ankles and haul her even closer.

"The working class males have searched diligently for the most beautiful wild females they can find because they bring the highest price. They strip and bind their captives and aren't above bribing the auctioneer to overstate their captives' charms. But those who place the bets are experienced in the value of female flesh. Lies or exaggeration don't sway them."

"The bidders, are they the ruling class?"

Was it possible that this nameless woman harbored the same dream? "Indeed they are. Generals and dukes, princes, maybe even the king. They're men accustomed to power and having their desires fulfilled. They could have hired the working class to simply bring a female to them, but they enjoy spirited competition and having the widest possible selection of sex slaves."

The woman – who was she anyway? – bent her knees and her head tilted back until it was nearly on the bed. He wished he could see her eyes and what he now suspected was proof of how much she was embracing his fantasy. Funny. A few minutes ago he'd never suspected he'd be saying what he was, but now he'd started, the words were becoming his reality.

Determined to bring her fully into it, he ran his hand down her legs to the ropes around her ankles and then back up until his fingers were as high on her thighs as possible without having to turn into a contortionist.

"You're considered a prize, a true prize. In the year since you were first spotted near a creek, slavers have been trying to capture you. But you proved fast and elusive, adding to your value."

Her breathing had picked up, same as his.

"How – how was I captured?"

Details, damn it, what were they anyway? Responding to the ache in his shoulder, he turned toward her. Although he forced himself to put off the moment of renewed contact, she made no attempt to put distance between them.

"By a seasoned slaver on horseback. You'd made a mistake by coming out into the open. Although you started running for the woods the moment you spotted him, he easily overtook you. His lasso settled over your upper body, pinning your arms to your sides. Then he jerked you off your feet."

"His – his horse? Was it trained in keeping me on the ground?"

Staring at her small nose and unadorned lips, he easily conjured up an image of her trying to stand while the horse slowly backed up much as a trained rodeo mount controls a downed calf. In his mind, he became the slaver who'd dismounted and was now approaching his prize, ropes meant for her wrists and ankles clutched in strong fingers.

"Extremely well trained," he finally thought to say. With that, he slid a hand under a breast and lifted it. His other hand settled over her mons. *Ah shit, actually doing it.* "You fought as fiercely as any captive has ever fought, but it did you no good because he soon had you in a hog-tie."

"Oh." The word came out a sigh, and when she was done, her mouth remained open.

"You were the last to be offered up for sale that day," he continued, his attention dancing between what his hands were doing. Despite its small size, her breast was heavy. And wasn't the heat between her legs growing? "The anticipation mounted. Bets were placed over who would purchase you and advice given on how to best tame you."

"How did you tame me, Master?"

"In degrees, beginning with exerting maximum control over you."

"With restraints?"

Maybe he caught the excitement in her voice because his grip on her mons tightened, and his other hand slid down her breast until he had a firm hold on her nipple. Although he hadn't touched her ropes, they seemed to grow tighter and more restrictive.

"Certainly," he belatedly said. She heard increased energy in his tone. "And by isolating you from everyone except me. You learned that food and water came from me, that only I gave you a blanket, and you had to earn the right to a shower. You slept at the foot of my bed."

"A blanket?"

"Of course. I'm not cruel."

"Did I have clothes?"

"Not for many days. I prefer to see my slaves naked, for them to comprehend that their bodies are available to me at all times."

He was spinning out an erotic image that became more vivid the longer she thought about it and the longer his hands controlled her. In her mind, the fantasy had changed from a vague image of an auction block to a sheik's domain. Her new master was often gone doing whatever it was sheiks did, but when he returned, she and his other slaves trembled in anticipation. Before leaving, he'd ordered his flunkies to mold metal bands around her wrists and ankles. She also wore a collar. All of her *decorations* had rings welded into them so she could be restrained in any number of ways.

Now, on the eve of his return to his kingdom, she waited in his opulent bedroom. She'd been secured with her arms over her head and short lengths of chain kept her feet close together. Of course she'd been gagged but not blindfolded so she could see when her master entered.

The door handle moved, a hinge squeaked. Caught between terror and thrill, she stared. Then *he* was there! Only who was that sixty-something, short, soft-bodied man?

"Master? Could I please see you?" she begged, determined to get things back on track.

“Why should I?”

“Because—I need to understand that you truly are my Master. How can I if I don’t know what the man who owns me looks like?”

He didn’t respond, and although she didn’t want to, she mentally returned to the scene she’d spun out in her mind. Maybe all sheiks were older men who’d had too much opulence and indulgence. She wanted a Greek god, not someone who might fall asleep before getting around to the sex act.

“You might be disappointed,” Ritter said.

How could he possibly think that? Then she reluctantly acknowledged that he was with a living breathing human being and not some Greek god, and yet couldn’t he at least play the role? No, she answered her own question. He couldn’t because he was no more an expert in the world of BDSM than she was.

Confused by her less than perfect or illuminating revelation, she said, “I know I won’t be disappointed. I’ve seen pictures of you.”

“You have?”

Although he released her breast, his fingers continued to rest near the juncture of her legs, making it all but impossible for her to concentrate on anything else. And why not? It wasn’t as if any other man had ever claimed that part of her anatomy within minutes of a meeting. When she’d finished explaining about looking him up on the Internet, she thought he’d say something about her admission, but he didn’t. Instead, he stroked her eyes through the blindfold. “I like you like this. Hands and feet tied, helpless. My toy.”

Feeling rather like a toy, albeit an adult one, she lifted her head in an attempt to touch her lips to his fingers, but before she could find him, they moved to her throat. Fingers roughened by years of contact with catcher’s mitts, baseballs and earth abraded her skin in ways that had her pressing her thighs together again. Too late she acknowledged that the hand near her cunt had surely felt her reaction.

“What’s the matter, slave?” he challenged. “You don’t like this?”

"I-I do, Master."

"And you accept that it pleases me to rob you of sight?"

"Yes," she fairly whimpered. The sense of touch was a powerful thing, all-encompassing if she allowed it to be, and she was.

"Good. It also pleases me to see your responses."

Although he still had his fingers around her neck, she was no longer aware of his calluses. Bit by bit his warmth was seeping deep into her throat until when she swallowed she swore she took his heat down into her. She loved not being able to use her arms or legs and having to remain close to him. And, for now at least, she no longer minded the blindfold.

"My – my training, Master. What happened the first night we were together?"

Ritter didn't immediately reply, and when he did, he wasn't surprised by his husky tone. "There was no sex."

"There wasn't?"

"No, because I don't believe in rape. A woman encouraged to tap into her sexuality becomes a primitive creature who wants only one thing."

"That-that thing. It's fucking, isn't it?"

So, Ritter acknowledged, she was down to earthy speech. Good, because he felt damn earthy himself. "Eventually, but not until you were begging for it."

She sighed. "I was?"

"Quite shamelessly. I handled you much as one works with a wild horse," he came up with although he'd never done any bronc breaking. "I kept you restrained until you understood how fully I controlled not just your body, but your mind."

"My body?"

She was trying not to squirm, but her thigh muscles kept tensing and relaxing only to tighten again. Watching her, touching her, he shrugged off his initial disappointment that she wasn't long and lean. A hell of a lot of woman could be contained in that barely

five-foot package as witnessed by her pale breasts with their dark centers and the soft mat of pale hair tickling his palm. Much as he wanted to spread her legs and hammer home, he clung to each moment and fantasy.

“By keeping you at my feet and showing you that I could touch you whenever and however I wanted. By restraining you in various ways, sometimes rendering you mute, sometimes denying you sight.”

“Like now,” she more mouthed than said. “Did-did I fight you?”

Her mouth was slightly parted, and her tongue worked her inner lips which took his thoughts in a dangerous direction. Just inches from his fingers lay her sexual core. She’d welcome any and all invasions he subjected her to—he had no doubt of that. But would he be content to plunder her secrets with his fingers or would his straining and complaining cock demand satisfaction?

*Like you don’t know.*

“Yes,” he belatedly picked up the thread of their dangerous conversation. “Not that it did you any good. But you were a wild animal, proud and independent. You screamed that you hated me, and I had no doubt you’d kill me if I gave you the chance. But I knew better.”

“Did-did you beat me?”

In his deepest and most private fantasies, he expertly wielded a whip over his captive’s helpless body. He never drew blood or left bruises, just the thought made him ill. But he loved to watch his captive dance, to see the turned-on look in her eyes as he lightly lashed her breasts, buttocks, and thighs. And when her body was on fire, he further inflamed it by forcing a climax out of her—sometimes more than one in a matter of seconds.

“Daily, until you stopped resisting and started begging me to pick up the whip I sometimes made you kiss.”

Her head again fell back. Her mouth sagged open. She bent her legs a little more, then swiveled toward him so her knees were only inches away and her toes brushed his

legs. A deep sigh made her breasts rise and fall. "You sometimes ordered me to bring the object of my punishment to you, to carry it in my mouth as I crawled to you, didn't you, Master?"

"Yes."

"Why was I so willing to do that? Because I was afraid of the pain?"

He wasn't doing this was he? Yeah, he was he acknowledged as he touched his lips to her cheek. Her skin was so incredibly soft and tasted faintly of lotion. He couldn't remember the last time he'd been this close to a woman who wasn't wearing makeup. Guessing she'd come to him this way to heighten her slave fantasy made it easier for him to hold on to the threads of what they were spinning out together.

"Pain shocked your system and taught you valuable lessons about having to give up your separate self, but it has never been my way to break a possession's spirit." Much as he needed to again feel her skin against his lips, he didn't trust his reaction.

"Each day when I was done painting your body with proof of my dominance, I exchanged the whip for a vibrator. To ensure you received full benefit, I secured you in ways that gave me complete access to your sex."

On another sigh, she squared around, separating her knees as she did. Even in the dim and imperfect lighting, he saw her glistening tissues. His hand had slipped off her while she was changing position, but much as he wanted to claim her again, he clenched his fist instead. Torturing both of them, he released her breast.

"Master? Master, when you made me come with the vibrator, what did I say and do?"

She was a greedy little thing, hungry for words and touches to feed off. He hoped he could remember that and take advantage of her weakness. "*You* were the subject of my expertise. Tell us both what you felt."

The way her jaw tightened let him know she didn't appreciate having the ball thrown into her court. She much preferred feeding off the images he spun out, to be the



passive and eager recipient of his imagination. Well, truth be told, his imagination had just taken a vacation.

"I don't...I can't remember."

"Yes you can. Damn it, answer me!"

He slapped her, struck her breast with enough force that the contact rippled through her loose flesh. Shocked, he again clenched his fist.

"I'm sorry, Master, sorry," she whimpered. "I didn't mean—I won't defy you."

Son of a gun, the little vixen was still playing her role. Slapping her had only made it easier for her to embrace it.

And maybe the same was true for him.

"See that you don't," he said, wincing at his melodramatic tone. Then, for reasons that were tied up in the pressure in his groin and the delectable morsel next to him, he lightly slapped her breast again. "And when you speak, be totally honest because I'll know if you're lying."

## Chapter Four

No man had ever slapped her breasts like that. Granted, her need for a certain kind of sex had resulted in a handful of sessions that left them stinging and finger marks on her flesh, but she'd always directed those sessions, and the men, afraid of hurting her, had "pulled their punches". As a result...

To hell with past performances. This was tonight.

Locked within the darkness she had no control over, she opened her legs a few more inches, stopping only when the ropes around her ankles rubbed against her bones. She could smell her excitement, an excitement that grew stronger as she imagined Ritter sitting fully clothed while studying her self-imposed humiliation.

"I wasn't wearing a blindfold because you wanted me to see everything you did. You'd placed metal bands around my wrists and ankles," she told him, her earlier fantasy reasserting itself. "With rings welded into the bands so you could easily fasten chains to them."

"They were gold, slender but unbreakable," he said.

"Yes, yes."

"And when I'd locked the chains in place, what happened?"

This was so easy. She was nothing more than the recipient of a flood of sensation and images. Long past strong enough to close her legs, she described how she looked with her body forced into an X shape. Her arms were restrained above her head and so far apart she felt the strain across her shoulders. Her legs were similarly separated thanks to anchors driven into the flooring. He'd positioned her thus before subjecting her to the teasing pain of his thin lash. Most of his *treatment* centered around her breasts and the back of her thighs. Not until she whimpered and whined did he silence her by striking her pussy three, four, maybe five times while ordering her to be quiet.

Then—lordy—then he draped the whip over her neck and stepped back, compelling her to lift her head and stare up at him. There'd been no compassion or hesitation in his expression, only determination and the absolute belief that his actions were justified and just.

Leaning down, he picked up a large electricity-driven vibrator. Once she acknowledged it with a nod, he closed in on her. He began by touching the rapidly humming tip to her nipples. He grunted in displeasure and, she believed, understanding, when she tried to pull free.

"Take your pleasure, slave," he ordered. "No matter what I do to you, you *must* understand I won't quit until you've been molded into what I want you to be."

"What-what is it you want of me?"

"Servitude. Devotion."

That said, he renewed his attention to her breasts. With each short and all-encompassing touch, her body had jerked and shivered. Lightning had coursed through her, stripping away the lingering memory of having been whipped and replacing it with a primal hunger. She clenched her teeth in a futile attempt to hide her hunger from him, but her never-still body gave her away.

Giving her no opportunity to adjust and adapt, he moved from her breasts to between them and rested the toy against her breastbone. Hot jolt after hot jolt reached her heart and lungs and when he slid the vibrator down to her belly, she sucked in a breath and held it until her nearly empty mind spun and she twitched as if she'd been attacked with a cattle prod.

No, not a prod, nothing painful, nothing fearful. Instead, she fell in love with the rapid and unrelenting vibrations and begged with voice and eyes for him to continue. Finally he responded to her desperate need by guiding the vibrator between her legs. The instant the relentless buzzing touched her clit, she stood on her toes and howled. A climax nipped at her nerve endings but faded when he pulled back. Beyond sanity, she

begged for release, only to be reduced to more begging because momentary touch after momentary touch was all he granted her. It wasn't enough.

"Master, Master, Master," she chanted. Her throat raw, she tried to lock her gaze on him only to have him spin out of focus. In her raw state he became a monstrous force, and she both hated and adored him.

Moving to her side, he reached between her legs and spread her sopping lips. Unnerved, she concentrated on him. His features impassive and therefore frightening, he pressed the vibrator to her clit and kept it there. No matter how she strained or twisted in her bonds, she couldn't free herself. And the energy, the awful, wonderful energy! It shook her with a monster's strength.

Seconds or maybe minutes later, her climax continuing, she started begging him to stop. She couldn't take it! Her system wasn't designed to withstand such an overload!

"Feel my power," he'd hissed. "Understand the totality of my strength."

"I do, I do. Master, please! Mercy, mercy."

"And did I grant you mercy?" Ritter asked, breaking into her swarming thoughts and words and returning her to the present.

Ritter was touching her again, his thumbs and forefingers claiming her nipples and drawing her breasts away from her body. Where had her mind and senses been when he'd taken control that way? And should she care, or was it better to continue to float in sensation and the fiction she'd spun out for both of them?

Suddenly so weak she wondered if she might pass out, she forced herself to lift her head. But with the blindfold still in place, she was reduced to trying to remember what he looked like and whether there was any kindness to him.

And asking herself why she'd exposed so many of her secret desires to him.

"Answer me. Was I a merciful master?"

"Finally," she admitted, too far gone for anything except her fantasy's truth. "But not until I thought I was going to die."

"And that wasn't the only time, was it?"

"Was what?"

"My training of you. You hated it when I forced my control over you, and yet you loved it. At least your body did."

"Yes."

"When I finally allowed you into my bed, what happened?"

"I was afraid. And grateful."

"Is that how you feel now? Both fearful and grateful?"

"I'm not sure," she admitted as his fierce control demanded her full attention. "I feel so many things. Being blinded – maybe that's why I can't keep anything straight."

His hold on her nipples let up just enough that she could no longer label the sensation painful. At the same time, admitting she couldn't free herself without risking injury drew her into a space and place she often sought but seldom achieved. She'd come into tonight filled with anticipation for the unknown, at least that's what she'd told herself. But with each passing minute, mystery and challenge were being replaced. She just wasn't ready to acknowledge the alternative.

"You want to see, do you, to throw new sensations into the mix?"

"Yes. Yes, Master."

"All right. But that might be the only freedom I grant you tonight. Are you ready to live with that?"

"Yes," she blurted before allowing herself time to think about what she'd agreed to.

"Not only that, I might rob you of certain privileges I've already granted you."

At first she couldn't think what he might take from her, then decided he might be contemplating gagging her again. "Whatever you decide, Master. I'm yours to do what you want with."

"So you are. So you are. Not that I need to hear you tell me that."

Bit by bit the pressure on her nipples let up, allowing blood to flow through them again. Distracted by their hot tingling, she belatedly realized his fingers were now at the back of her head. A moment later the blindfold fell away, not that she could see anything except a blur at first.

Whoever had designed this made-for-sex room had decided that the only illumination should be supplied by some kind of rope lightning at the top of the wall behind the bed. As a consequence, even when her vision returned to normal, Ritter remained little more than a shadowy outline.

She liked that, liked the aura of mystery, the power surrounding him. Up close he was even larger than she'd anticipated. His shoulders were so damn broad, how could she possibly have thought she could dictate any part of what happened between them? The hands hovering over her sensitive breasts were perfect for a professional athlete all right, fingers long and solid.

Pulling courage around her, she lifted her gaze to his face. He was positioned so the pitiful lightning highlighted his right side while locking the left in darkness, which conjured up memories of *Phantom of the Opera*. Fortunately Ritter's features were regular although his nose was a little out of alignment, maybe the result of having been broken. In many of the newspaper pictures he'd been wearing a catcher's mask, a batting helmet or sunglasses. As a result, she hadn't known his eyes were so deeply set in their sockets. That, combined with his bushy eyebrows, hinted at something sinister.

Not sinister. Mysterious.

Content with her definition, she again acknowledged his hands. He didn't seem to notice as he said, "You have beautiful eyes. I should have exposed them earlier."

"That's all right. I don't mind." Hearing her stupid words made her wince. "I mean, whatever you want, Master."

"Oh, I think you know exactly what I want." With that he raked his gaze from her face to her splayed legs.

She did the same, wincing. What had she been thinking, exposing herself like that? Telling herself that unseen behavior made it less real didn't go far enough when it came to justifying her behavior. But much as she needed back the scant privacy afforded by pulling her knees together, she couldn't muster the strength. Maybe he sensed her inner battle because, letting her see his every movement and feel his every touch, he ran his hands from just below her breasts to her pelvis. Sucking in air did nothing to cool her core, and there was damn nothing she could do to stop the flood of wet heat oozing from her.

"You're a little slut, aren't you," he said with his fingers dangerously close to what she couldn't control. "Hot and horny."

"What-what do you expect. The way you're touching —"

"I'm doing exactly what you want, aren't I, slave?"

Oh yes, the act. "If-if that's what you wish me to say, Master."

"No you don't," he said harshly.

Before she could guess what he had in mind, he slapped her pussy with the flat of his hand. Gasping, she tried to turn away, but before she could make her body work, he tapped her there again. Something heavy radiated out from her cunt, not stopping until her fingers and toes tingled. Her lids drooped. Her nipples tightened. *Yes, oh yes!*

"That's what a slut does, the way she reacts," he informed her.

She might have responded if his hand wasn't covering her sex. Her head was on fire, but that was nothing compared to the flames his hand had brought to life. Much longer and she'd be begging him to slap her there again. But if he did, she might explode, and she didn't want to be weak. Not yet, not until she'd tapped into his weaknesses — whatever they were.

Strength. Somehow strength.

"Trying to stay on top of things, are you?" he teased.

The challenge behind his words penetrated her mental haze. "I'm at a bit of a disadvantage. If the tables were turned —"

"Not going to happen so don't even think of it. You know..." Daring her to meet his intense gaze, he ran his forefinger between her swollen labial lips. "I'm debating the pros of keeping you like this forever."

Yes! "You can't. It's —"

"Against the law? I won't debate that, but it's a problem only if I'm found out."

Her juices coated his finger which made it deliciously easy for it to slide into her. Once he'd housed that single part of him inside her, he stopped moving. A deep silence closed around her. He'd somehow placed her in suspended animation. She was alive, wholly and rawly alive, and yet she wasn't. She waited — that's what it all came down to, waiting.

"I don't know what you do, or anything about your family and friends," he continued, "so I can't say whether turning you into my full-time sex slave is worth the effort and risk."

"I-I'm not married, if that's what you're asking."

A frown transformed him into a stranger. The finger inside her curled. "I would hope to hell not. What about a boyfriend?"

"No," she said belatedly. Maybe, eventually, she'd tell him about her failed attempts to join her life with a man's, but not now. Not with him taking her so close to the raw.

"Family?"

"A mother. An older brother."

"Complications but not many. I could tell them you had to go into the witness protection program, tell them to be proud of their daughter and sister for risking her life to turn state's evidence."



She wanted to join him in debating the impossible, but not now with her breasts sagging and her cunt housing a man's finger.

"Maybe I don't want you after all."

Startled by the unexpected words, she stared at what they both could see of his hand. *You want*, she tried to tell him, *maybe as much as I do*. Instead she said, "You're lying."

"Didn't you hear what I said? *Maybe*. Maybe because I don't know what fucking you is like."

She was incredible! No matter how long he'd harbored his fantasy, he'd always doubted he'd find a woman who not only understood his needs but shared them. Submissive women existed, but he'd never come across one in the world he lived in.

Until tonight.

He wanted to kiss her, damn it! Wanted the trust and commitment that went with a kiss. At the same time, the thought of sharing something so intimate with her scared the hell out of him so he pulled his knees under him and leaned toward her. He stopped when his mouth was inches from her breast. His hand still covered her pussy, and the finger buried in her made his cock ache.

Possession. That's what he needed to think about, handling his possession-for-a-night and building a lifetime of memories.

Opening his mouth, he sucked her soft flesh with its hard-as-hell nub. She tossed her head back and forth. Sounds akin to a newborn kitten in distress rolled out of her. The more of her he pulled into him, the louder her mewling became. His erection pressed against the damnable zipper, distracting him, but he held on because he loved the sounds and sight and smell of this helplessly aroused woman.

Then she lifted her buttocks off the carpet. Her cunt muscles clamped down on his finger, and he nearly lost it. Wondering if this was what it felt like to be in a speeding car without brakes, he jerked away. He stood awkwardly, his used-up knees creaking.

“What?” she hissed. “Where are you going?”

“Nowhere.” He tugged on his jeans’ fastening and yanked down on the zipper. Relief shot through him as his cock filled the space he’d created. Wondering why the hell he’d waited so long to do this, he kicked out of his tennis shoes without bothering with the laces. The jeans came next, followed by a brief battle with his shirt before the buttons gave way. He spent most of his life in T-shirts bearing various logos and designs and wouldn’t have gone in search of one of his rare dress shirts if he hadn’t thought he was going to be attending his own birthday party. Showed what he knew.

She watched his every move, her eyes saying she’d long remember what he’d just done. Her legs were no longer obscenely apart, making him conclude she was trying to regain some measure of modesty. Maybe the ankle ties were hurting her.

To hell with his latest acquisition’s comfort. He’d paid dearly for her, and now she was going to repay him. Bonds, yes, bonds. Always changing but never leaving her lush body. He’d order slim but unyielding bands forged around her limbs and that delectable, vulnerable neck. Bit by bit he’d wear her down until she no longer remembered what it was like to be free and her Master became her world.

“I thought we were going to fuck.”

Distracted by her earthy words, he shook off the disturbing thoughts that had overtaken him. The line between make-believe and reality had never been thinner, and he didn’t dare lose sight of the difference. Her wellbeing and his self-respect depended on it.

“We are.” About to crouch beside her again, he thought better of it. Grabbing her under her arms, he pulled her to her feet. She swayed, reminding him of how useless her legs were. Holding her against him meant dealing with further proof of how much he towered over her, and yet he’d be lying if he said he was the one in charge.

When he leaned down and pressed his cheek to the top of her head, he was struck by how soft her hair was. That wasn't the only silken thing about her as witnessed by his still wet finger. Her skin had been designed to drive a man — him at least — insane.

That's what his make-believe had never touched on, the reality of this particular feminine form leaning on him for support.

Mentally cursing himself for being unprepared for her impact, he sought sanity in pushing her away and depositing her ass on the stupid bed. He had to lift her in order to position her far enough back that she wasn't in danger of sliding off, which meant her knees now pressed against his thighs. His cock, that shameless barometer of what he was thinking and feeling, pushed through the slit in his briefs.

"Something's glad to see me," she said.

"You think that's funny?" The words hanging, he pondered whether he wanted to continue the charade. Then he remembered she'd begun the *charade* before he knew she existed. She wanted to play out this thing, did she? Fine, he'd give her her wish and in the process get what he needed.

Needed. Yeah, that pretty much said it.

"My slaves don't laugh at me," he informed her. "If they do, they're punished."

He half expected her to tease him and was grateful when she settled her features into a respectful expression. Even up on the bed, he couldn't be sure what color her eyes were, which maybe was just as well. He needed her to remain ill-defined and nameless, intriguing body parts but little more.

Stepping back, he considered what he wanted to do with her. If truth be known, nothing would please him more than to charge past "Go" and plunge right into fucking. At the same time, there was a great deal to be said for continuing to draw things out. One thing he was certain of, her hands had been behind her long enough.

He made a show of closing in on her, pleased to see her start to lean away only to stop when she reached the limit of her balance. Loving the feel of her flesh and bones in his grip, he turned her away from him and ran his hands down her slim arms. If she'd

come out for his team, he'd have sent her to the weight room with orders to return once she'd bulked up. However, right now she was perfect.

Whoever had tied her hands had done a thorough enough job that she couldn't pull free. Fortunately, the rope was thick, which kept it from cutting into her, and the knots were on the outside, thus sparing the slender wrists. Untying the knots wouldn't have taken more than a half-dozen seconds if he'd been able to concentrate on what he was doing and his hands had been steady. However, neither of those things was possible.

"Wonderful," she muttered as her arms fell free. She started to massage them.

"No," he ordered when he wanted to say he'd tend to her needs. She turned even more away from him, giving him access to her shoulders and back. Skimming his fingers over her, he acknowledged that she wouldn't be sitting here if she didn't trust him. Putting one's life and body in another's hands wasn't an act easily accomplished.

Even with her nearness scrambling his mind and more, he wished he knew more about her. She'd given him next to nothing in the way of personal information, but maybe it was all she was capable of. Acknowledging she might have deliberately thrown up a barrier between them went contrary to the fanciful scenario, but could he blame her? After all, no one peeled away all their secrets in front of a stranger.

Damn it, that's what they were, strangers.

For how much longer?

The tightness across her upper back had faded away, and she was relaxing a little. That's how he wanted her, loose and ripe and ready, all willing softness. His lover.

*His lover?*

Confused when he wanted to keep things simple, he gave her back a gentle shove. She looked over her shoulder at him but said nothing. He still had on his shorts and socks, not exactly macho-wear, but although he had no argument with yanking off the socks, the shorts stayed in place. Not sure what he had in mind, he spun her back toward him, marveling at how little resistance the silk or whatever the spread was made of provided. Her legs again dangled dangerous inches from him.

“Master, could I please untie my ankles?”

Folding his arms over his chest in his best imitation of a master, he nodded. Watching her tuck her legs close to her body and lean over so she could attack the ropes was unbelievably erotic. The act completed, she ran her hands over the marks they’d made. His self-control slipped, faded, became shaky, but he couldn’t take his eyes off her. Neither could he keep his hand off his cock. Housing the throbbing organ in tight warmth helped, a little.

“What happens now?” she asked.

“You tell me,” he snapped, angry that she’d thrown the ball in his court.

“I’d like you to join me here.” She patted the spread.

*And then?*

What the hell was wrong with him, he pondered as he sat beside her. Not only had he been married, he’d had his share of sex partners. Adolescent insecurity was a distant memory. And she was willing. Damn but was she.

Before he was forced to ponder whether he’d lost his nerve, he leaned into her, knocking her onto her back. He went after her, straddling her much as a superior dog covers a weaker one. Hot energy radiated around her, and her breath came in gasps. He’d pegged her as a sexual creature from the beginning but this was deeper and more fully realized.

Curious and maybe a bit afraid, he pressed his hips against her and sealed her to the bed. Lowering his head, he zeroed in on the side of her neck. Her heart pounded so he sensed the vibration against his chest. Determined now, he further hindered her movements and raked his teeth over the tendon running from her ear to her collarbone. He actually growled, and his cock, now caught between their bodies, pulsed.

She shivered—shook, really. Gasp after gasp rolled out of her. Sweat stained her body and those incredible breasts seemed to be getting larger by the moment. Shifting position, he supported his upper body by his elbows. Her arms were pinned to her sides, her heels beating a disjointed tattoo. She’d turned her head away from him which

increased his access to that delectable and delicate neck but prevented him from seeing her features, not that he needed to.

This remarkable creature was turned on in ways he hadn't seen coming. Being caught under him had obviously triggered the change, but why was she more excited than she'd been in bondage?

"You can't get away, can you?" he asked. "If I wanted, I could crush you under me. There wouldn't be a damn thing you could do about it."

"No," she breathed. "No, I couldn't."

"And that's getting to you." Thinking to bathe her in his damp breath, he kept his mouth near her throat. "What kind of slut are you?"

"Doesn't matter. Doesn't matter." She squirmed weakly under him.

The hell it didn't. Or it would have if he hadn't gone so long without sex and this naked creature wasn't pinned under him, her legs spread just enough that his cock would fit perfectly in the space. Damn his shorts! Damn and necessary.

## Chapter Five

Shit, shit, shit!

The chanting inside her head bled into her pounding heart. Together, the sensations were nearly more than she could handle and certainly more than she'd admit to Ritter. But he surely didn't need words from her to know how overwhelmingly turned on she'd become. Her body had spilled too damn many secrets.

Gone, hopelessly gone, she writhed under the much stronger form. He might pull away, might back off, might rob her of what she desperately needed, but she'd feed off him for as long as he offered himself to her.

Yes, yes! His powerful body continued to press down on her, killing most of her movements and leaving her helpless to do anything except tattoo her legs against the bed. Much as she needed to expend energy by tossing her head about, his teeth against her neck prevented that. Her world darkened but not just because he stood between her and the lighting. She'd plunged into make-believe several times to enhance tonight's experience, but now she had no control over what was happening.

*Once more she became the sheik's latest possession. No chains held her in place, and yet she was afraid to move off the bed he'd thrown her onto. At his command, she'd spread her arms and legs and had bitten her tongue to keep from crying out when he fastened clamps to her nipples. A long chain attached to the clamps lay between her breasts. Smiling a feral smile, the sheik picked up the chain and drew it away from her body. Eyes bugging, fingers and toes curling, heart hammering and breath catching, she followed his every move. Felt the strain.*

*"You're such a passive little thing," he said. "You wrap your helplessness around you and hide behind it like the rest of my sluts, but I know the truth."*

*Knowing better than to speak unless he gave her permission, she remained silent, and because she needed the pain as much as she did his attention, she concentrated on the bite and pull.*

*"You're like a dog that keeps crawling back no matter how many times he's kicked. If I told you to lick my feet, you'd do it, and not just because I ordered you to." Taking the chain between his teeth, he pulled it taut, causing her to arch her back. He spoke with his teeth clenched. "You need this life, you little whore. The more helpless I make you, the more alive you feel."*

*Heat poured through her and distanced her from the pain. Her breasts, her poor abused breasts! But even when he tore the restraint off her right nipple, she continued to grip the bedding and dived into the sharp life-affirming sting.*

*"Such a slut!" Laughing, he spat out the chain. "That's your greatest weakness, your whorish need to be treated this way."*

*Again smiling that hellish smile of his, he slapped her cheek. She'd just straightened her head when he slapped the other cheek. "Watch me," he ordered. "Tell me how this feels."*

*Taking hold of the chain again, he pulled. Her still-captured breast lengthened out. A fiery clawing sensation centered around her nipple.*

*"It hurts, Master. Hurts so much."*

*"A pain you love." Staring intently, he subjected her cheeks to a series of quick slaps. Sucking in her belly, she willed herself to be what they both wanted.*

*He hadn't taken his eyes off her, which meant he wasn't done. And he was still pulling.*

*There! Agony rippling through her suddenly free breast!*

*"Tell me how you feel, slave. Tell me everything."*

*"Helpless. I'm helpless. I can't –" She gripped the bedding so tight that she bent a nail backward. "I can't stop you from hurting me, Master."*

*"Do you want me to?"*

*"No." The truth went far deeper than that.*



A pained hiss of breath freed Asia from the overwhelming images and sensation. Focusing, she realized that Ritter no longer blanketed her body with his. Instead, he'd lifted himself off her and was rolling onto his side next to her. His lips were tautly drawn, his nostrils flared. "What is it?" she asked.

"My damn knees. Should have known better."

She remembered reading that he'd had surgery on them, but that had been years ago. Concerned, she scrambled onto her hands and knees. He lay on his back with his head propped up by his hands, staring at the ceiling with its massive mirror. Hoping he'd let her know if she hurt him, she straightened so she could lightly run her hands over his knees. They were large and bony, and at first she couldn't detect any unusual about them. Then her fingertips found a hard horizontal ridge just below the hinge on the knee closest to her. A scar, thick and long, and she might be mistaken but wasn't the flesh around it slightly swollen?

"Should we — do you want to see a doctor?"

"No need. I know what he'd tell me."

"Which is?" She didn't need to be a mind reader to understand his frustration with his imperfection.

"That I'm going to have to live with the damn things for the rest of my life." He sighed, and she thought he relaxed a little. "Most of the time I know better than to put too much weight on them when they're bent the way they were."

*But other things, namely I, distracted you.*

Now that her concern for him was returning to manageable levels, her own body again began speaking to her. She was still turned on, and the heady fantasy she'd spun around herself a few minutes ago returned to both haunt and tease her. Damn her secrets! Wasn't it enough that she'd been given the opportunity to play sex slave?

Obviously not, she acknowledged. Then, determined to take the focus off herself, she leaned down and brushed her lips over his knees. She might not be the world's

biggest baseball fan, but she'd seen enough games that she knew being a catcher was hard on the player's knees. And he'd done it for years.

Wondering whether anyone had been there for him after he'd had his surgeries, she began licking the scar and flesh around it. He shifted, shifted again. His breathing, although not as out of control as hers had been a few minutes ago, was far from calm, giving rise to thoughts of what would happen if they started panting at the same time.

The next time he moved, it dawned on her that she might be tickling him. Just the same, she wasn't ready to end her ministrations so started nibbling. She had a hard time finding enough loose flesh to lightly close her teeth over so contented herself with scraping motions, wondering what he was feeling. As for herself, all she had to do was acknowledge the damp heat on her pussy to know what her twisted attempt to play nurse was doing to her.

This wasn't how she'd believed things would play out between them. Being helpless had been dispensed with. And yet she loved these moments of power.

Keeping his lower body still, Ritter curled toward her and rested his hand on her buttock. "What you're doing feels damn good," he muttered.

A sigh, driven by hormones and need, slipped out of her. "That's all, just good?"

"Point taken. At first that's pretty much all there was to it because there were some sensations I needed to get past."

"Sensations?" She couldn't help but laugh. "That's what macho men call agony?"

"It was hardly that. Just a sharp reminder that I'm not a young buck anymore." Taking a deep breath, he patted her ass. His hand roamed lower, closing in on her thigh and turning her thoughts to her reaction if he reached her cunt.

Although it meant abandoning his knees, she scooted around so he no longer had to stretch to reach her. With each moment, his strokes became more purposeful and made an even greater impact on the rest of her anatomy. In between his taps, he stroked her flank, confusing and exciting her. Arching her back, she stared up at the ceiling only to come face-to-face with the less than appealing view of her naked buttocks.

"Get over here, woman," he ordered. "Closer."

She wasn't sure what he was talking about, not that it mattered as long as he continued touching her. Sinking into a dream world, she slid her hands along the silken coverlet in preparation for obeying his latest command. Suddenly her hands shot out from under her. She was sliding, slipping, awkward as hell with her ass sticking up and her chin and breasts slamming into the stupid cover! Nearly perfect belly flop.

"Whose damn idea was this fabric?" she grumbled as she cautiously replanted her arms under her. "It's like being on ice."

"That pratfall of yours wasn't the most graceful thing I've ever seen."

Damn him. Didn't he know how much a woman loathed being robbed of her dignity? Then, unable to stop herself, she started giggling. She might have laughed hysterically if something hadn't dawned on her. Thanks to what he'd labeled a pratfall, her ass was now out of his reach.

Concerned with how to remedy the situation, she assessed the distance between them. That's when she noticed, really noticed his cock saluting her through the slit in his shorts.

He must have known what she had in mind when she positioned herself so she could grab the elastic waist because he was already lifting his buttocks off the bed. She stripped him down same as her.

Then it somehow seemed right and normal and the only logical thing on earth to do to hunker down and lick his cock. In marked contrast to his knees, he was all sleek satin here. Turning her head to the side, she closed her lips over his thick length and washed him with her own juices. She started sucking, drawing as much of him as she could into her mouth, feeling her pussy tighten and pulse as she did. She was facing his legs, her elbows supporting her upper body, eyes closing in concentration. Hopefully he was oblivious to the image the mirror was picking up since once again her ass had become her most prominent feature. But stopping what she was doing was impossible. After all

this time, after what had seemed like hours when her useless body had been his to handle, the need to give back at least a little felt wonderful.

Trying to keep her mouth around him made her jaws ache, prompting her to lick her way to his tip and then suck him into her mouth. Firm and yet soft, powerful and yet capable of turning her entire being hot and wanting. Making her head swim and her lungs demand more air.

"You're taking a hell of a lot of liberties for a slave," he mumbled.

Unwilling to release him, she responded with a shrug followed by the question of whether she could suck his balls down her throat. Maybe, but not unless she changed position.

How had life become so complicated?

"I'm speaking to you, slave!" He sharply slapped her left ass cheek.

Startled and even more turned on, she released him but kept her mouth near his now-glistening cock. "I know you are, Master."

"And what did I say?"

"That I was taking liberties."

"Ah!" A second slap punctuated his comment. "At least she's listening. Now let's see if you can tell me how you intend to remedy your error?"

Opening her eyes and keeping her smile under lock, she looked back at him. "By obeying you?"

"Right you are." A third slap resonated throughout her and forced her to clench her cunt muscles. "Now, the issue at hand is that I've spent a great deal of energy bringing you this far in your education. I'm weary of working so hard while you lie there doing nothing."

*What did you expect? I was tied up.* "Yes, Master."

"Exactly. First on the agenda, bring your ass closer. Then place your forehead on the bed. Don't move until I give you permission."

Sweat instantly dampened her armpits and the base of her throat. Shivering in anticipation, she did as he'd ordered. With her head down, she couldn't see him. Rough hands slid over her buttocks. He spread her ass cheeks.

The instant he pressed a thumb to her puckered opening, she started to lift her head, only to lower it. She'd tried ass fucking a couple of times but hadn't been able to carry it off because she couldn't relax her muscles enough. Instinct again tightened her opening.

"So much to learn, so much I have to teach you."

Lulled by his gentle tone, she took a breath. She'd just begun to expel it when the pressure on her ass increased. Once more her muscles started to contract, but it was too late. He was inside her. Granted, less than an inch of his thumb had penetrated, but it was enough. Turning her head to the side, she struggled to bring him into focus.

"You are not to move, do you understand that?"

"I-I'll try."

Her hesitation earned her yet another stinging *punishment*, but somehow she found the will to obey. Bit by bit she relaxed. Her mind painted a vivid picture of what he was doing to her. She'd long wanted, not just to play sex slave, but to be manhandled. If being ordered to submit to this wasn't being manhandled, she didn't know what was.

"It has to be more than an attempt," he continued in a conversational tone. Millimeter by millimeter, his invasion deepened. She leaned into him. "We're getting there, slave, making progress. I might even reward your effort—might."

Deeper and deeper still, the most intimate privacy invaded and loving it, not trusting exactly but so filled with need that nothing else mattered. She was becoming a good slave, wasn't she, a submissive little whore who lived to please this man who ruled her world. She no longer had to be forcefully restrained, no longer harbored thoughts of freedom.

And when he pulled her left ass cheek back with his free hand and then ran that hand down and under her to her pussy, she lifted her head and howled like the wild animal he'd turned her into.

Ritter's mind had emptied out, leaving residues of thought that went no further than the incredible creature beside him. If she'd balked at a finger up her ass, he would have stopped, but although she was still uneasy, she'd let him have his way with her.

Only it wasn't enough.

Shaking off dangerous questions of what the hell he was doing to a woman whose name he didn't know, he dove back into the mental and emotional space ruled by his cock. Oh yes, his teased but unfulfilled cock. It had been patient, at least what passed for patience with that organ, but there was no ignoring the hard knot.

After lightly striking his *sex slave* a final time and listening to her pant, he pulled his thumb free and wiped it on the spread. Then he lay on his back again.

"Master?" she muttered.

Although she'd lifted her head and was staring at him, he wasn't sure of how much she was seeing. He debated berating her for moving without permission, only to have his cock shout him down.

"Showtime, slave. Satisfy me, now."

Sitting up, she slid around so she was facing him. He wondered if she realized he'd said that in part because he was damn tired of thinking, or rather trying to. She had to have figured out the latest ground rules, namely that he was going to give his knees a rest and let her do the work.

Instead of jumping to his command, she sat there staring at him. Was it possible—after the time they'd spent together and the things they'd done—no, she couldn't be backing out. Could she? Shit, where had this insecurity come from?

*Because, you idiot, you're treading in uncharted waters.*

"That's what you want?" she asked. "For me to take over?"

There, in her eyes, the reason behind her actions or rather the lack thereof. She wanted to be commanded, not doing the commanding. But didn't she understand that nothing really had changed? She was still dancing to his tune.

"Put me first, slave! Your pleasure, if it comes, is secondary to pleasing your Master."

Although she still looked uncertain, she nodded. He could almost see the wheels turning in her mind, not that he could say the same about himself. Well what the hell did he expect? The male animal was that after all, a beast, ruled by one thing.

As if agreeing with him, his cock tightened even more. Watching her watching him, he grabbed his organ and began massaging it. As a randy teenager, he'd discovered the art of masturbation. Although it wasn't the most satisfying act he'd ever performed, it was a lot better than spending all his waking hours with a hard-on.

Then he'd buried himself in his first pussy and the world's brightest light bulb had gone on. So that's what females had been created for.

"Now," he fairly growled.

She was no longer looking at him, or rather her attention had slipped from his face to what lay between his legs. And either it was his imagination or her expression was beginning to resemble that of the cat who'd swallowed the canary. So there was another side to her was there, something far different from the gagged and blindfolded creature with ropes on her wrists and ankles.

Welcome to modern woman.

One moment she was next to him. The next he swore she'd levitated because she was standing with her legs on either side of his hips, her feet digging into the uncertain footing, arms out for balance, and swaying a little. The notion of being straddled by a naked woman gnawed huge chunks out of what remained of his brain. For the first time in their relationship, she was truly on top.

"What's this about?" he demanded in his best bad-guy imitation. "One wrong move and you'll be sorry."

"I doubt that."

"You sound pretty sure of yourself."

"Wouldn't you like to know." That said, she slowly bent her knees until her crotch was mere inches above him. Much as he envied her flexibility, now was hardly the time to think about that. The strain showed in her taut thigh muscles, and when he ran his fingers over her calves, they reminded him of stone.

Coming closer still, bending at the waist and her fingertips now resting on his chest. Her pussy lightly kissing his tip. Then the contact ended, leaving him shaken. His fingers on her calves twitched, but if she felt it, she gave no indication. She seemed to be locked in some zone of her own making, eyes half closed and mouth parted. Her gracefulness blew him away. This was no sex slave. She'd become something wild and free and wanton, all instinct and primal need. And he ached to be wrapped in that need.

Seconds ticked away. He waited, simply waited. And wanted.

And then her sweet softness caressed him again, and he nearly exploded. Afraid he'd hurt her, he reluctantly released her calves and dug into the spread. Those incredibly sleek and warm cunt lips of hers stroked his cock and bit-by-bit pulled him into her shelter. This was no inconsiderate and demanding thumb invading her ass. Instead, when she ruled him, it was with a primal woman's power. She was swallowing him, eating him alive, robbing him of his separate self.

And he loved every moment and sensation.

After what seemed like forever, she'd fully settled herself over and against him with her buttocks kissing the top of his thighs and her cunt squeezing him. Her hands fanned out over his chest, and her inner legs heated his sides. So this was what being trapped felt like, to be a prisoner.

This woman's prisoner.



Leaning even lower, she brought her face close to his. "What does it feel like, Ritter?"

"Kiss me," he growled. "Just the hell kiss me."

"You're ready for that?" She sounded unsure.

"You aren't?"

*I don't know*, her eyes told him. Then naked honesty was gone, and he couldn't read her expression. Running his hand over the back of her neck, he put an end to what distance remained between them. Her mouth was open and ready, her tongue gliding over his inner lips.

He groaned, shuddered a little, his cock swelling when he swore it had reached its limit. This angel/devil was the most incredible woman he'd ever met and not just because she'd allowed him to fulfill the fantasy of a lifetime. Now that they'd stepped beyond the boundaries of playacting, he found himself mouth to mouth with hot energy and a pounding heart. His own heart mirrored the wild beat, and his temples pulsed. She was riding him, embracing and ruling him at the same time. Fear warred with hunger—maybe she felt the same way. But the touch of lips to lips—had anything been so sweet, so necessary?

Suddenly she was gone, at least her intoxicating mouth was. He stared hungrily at a slender throat and full breasts as she worked herself up and down his rod-hard cock. She threw back her shoulders in an attempt to remain in alignment, her entire body in motion. He'd never seen such grace in a woman. Every molecule of her being had come together for this one act, her nipples like dark knots in the pale mounds, her belly sucked in and her pelvic bones prominent. On moment sweat sealed her ass to his belly. The next she'd broken free and was rising above him, stopping just as he started to slide out of her. Her breathing was measured, her eyes staring at nothing, hands now on her own hips. She'd become a puppet, a sex-driven puppet.

And his cock! All that sleek sliding and hot flesh was too much! He couldn't handle it! Couldn't remain still.

Clamping his hands on her hips, he held her tight against him. He loved the feel of her fighting him, her women's strength battling his, her thigh muscles straining, her hands now fists and beating his chest. She kept making quick, harsh sounds. Then she tried to twist from side to side, prompting him to increase his hold on her.

"Fight me!" he taunted. "Go on, try to get free!"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

Her words were still echoing when it hit him. She might be the one struggling against his greater strength, but she'd trapped him inside her sex cave. Who then was captor, captive?

Didn't matter. How could it with his blood threatening to split his veins open and his cock an exploding volcano?

Ignoring his protesting back, he arched and shoved himself into her, held there, fell back, gathered himself and hammered her again. His muscles constantly reinventing themselves, he became a snorting, whoring stud with a mind and body for one thing. Release. Life was about release. In her. Feeling her all around him, shivering like a newborn in a storm, her cunt clamping, trapping.

There! Going. Gone. Arching so that most of his weight was on the back of his shoulders and heels, forcing her up with him and her reminding him of a woman trying to ride a wild horse.

One more thrust, a final surge, his muscles screaming. Then the always frightening, always incredible explosion. His harsh grunts slammed into his ears and was she laughing? Sweat ran down her, bled into him. His cum flooded her. His bones shattered, and his muscles melted.

Done. Done and dead.

He'd climaxed, come, whatever he called it. His cock might still stretch her pussy, but the rest of him seemed to be flowing out like water over stone. There was nothing

left of him, maybe not even consciousness. Unfortunately, she couldn't say the same for herself. Yes, she was close, the cliff's edge a step away, her body raging and rippling. Needing that final push.

"Ritter?"

"What?"

How exhausted he sounded. "Nothing," she lied. Gripping her own breasts, she repeatedly squeezed them. He'd fallen back on the bed, and she clenched his cock with every bit of strength in her while rising as high as she could as if trying to rip his organ from his body. Then, more desperate than sane, she started to lift a leg in preparation for rolling off him.

"What the hell?" He wrenched her back into place. All too soon he'd start to wither and she'd have nothing left to hold onto.

If only she could tell him what she needed. The words were right there, demeaning maybe, frightening certainly, revealing and honest. But she couldn't expose herself like that to this man who in too many ways was still a stranger.

What she was in danger of telling him would strip her down in ways nothing else ever could. Why was climaxing so hard this time? Why the goal just out of reach?

*Because this is the closest to your truth you've ever gotten.*

Knowing she was right didn't make it any easier. If anything, she was now in even greater agony, her body screaming and hungry. Suddenly afraid of herself, she slammed down on Ritter and opened her pussy so, maybe, she could get an even greater grip on him. She began pounding his chest again, her head back and eyes sealed closed so she didn't have to look at him.

*Let go, she silently screamed at herself. Just god damn let go!*

"You whore. You little whore!"

His hands were on her waist, his fingers digging in. When she realized he was trying to lift her off him, she fought and cursed and cried, but he won as she'd known

he would. Not content with simply freeing his spent cock, he threw her from him only to scramble onto his knees. Grabbing her hands, he forced them over her head. Then he locked one wrist over the other so he could grip both in a single paw. His other hand went to her pussy.

“Dirty, desperate little whore. Like it rough, do you? Like being treated like the bitch you are.”

## Chapter Six

Words. Desperately needed words. Burrowing deep into her and staying there, spinning out and through her until his profanity became her world. "Let me go!"

"The hell I will."

Her existence centered around the hand blanketing her sex. Although he hadn't inflicted true pain, there was nothing gentle about the contact. *I own you*, his hold said, plain and simple.

*I know.*

The longer his fingers imprisoned her, the less her awareness of anything else. If she wanted, she could have shaken off the hand on her wrists. Instead, she mentally returned to the night's beginning when she'd been tethered and helpless. As much as she'd loved those colliding sensations and emotions, she'd been reaching for more, seeking an even deeper level of pleasure. Like now. Once again she was helpless, only Ritter was no longer treating her like something fragile.

Had he learned her secret?

"What are you going to do?" she demanded.

"Whatever I want. Everything I want." That said, he gripped her mons and shook it until she swore her entire body was in motion. Lightning shot through her. She was losing her mind, losing ownership of bone and muscle.

"Don't, please," she whimpered even as she spread her legs. "Don't hurt me, Master."

"You'd like that, wouldn't you? Maybe you want me to whip you, slap you, pinch." He demonstrated by increasing his hold and giving her mons another sharp shake.

She wasn't sure about being pinched, but she'd loved it when he slapped her earlier. And a whip – hot threads of sensation blooming wherever the lash landed –

"You didn't think it would come to this, did you?" he taunted. "When you took my friends' money in exchange for one hell of a birthday surprise, it never occurred to you that you'd wind up under my thumb. That I'd do whatever I wanted to you."

*I'd hoped.*

He was leaning closer, coming nearer, his mouth hovering over her breasts and his breath dampening the swollen flesh. Not only were his fingers flattening her pubic hair and keeping her pinned to the bed, he'd found her flooded opening. A finger pushed past her labia.

"I don't want – damn it, you have no right!"

Laughing at her sad attempt to break free, he dipped his head. His lips brushed her nipple, wrenching a long sigh from her. Before she could guess what he had in mind, he touched her again. Only instead of limiting himself to a warm caress, he closed his teeth over her nub.

"Don't! Damn you, don't." She didn't move.

Chuckling, he lifted his head and took her captured breast with him. The pressure on her wrists increased. Most exciting, a second finger entered the one already in her pussy. Trapped. By all that was holy, trapped.

"What are you going to do to me?" Anticipation warred with her whimpering tone.

His answer came in the form of a quick spark of pain striking her nipple and radiating outward. Shivering, she willed herself to remain still. When he opened his mouth, the pain died, replaced by raw energy and wanting. A single tear dampened her cheek.

"Why are you crying?" he demanded.

*Because I've waited so long for this. "I'm not."*

"Don't lie to me, slave. Don't you ever lie!" He punctuated his command by taking her nipple again and pressing down so his nose was buried in her breast.

"I'm sorry, sorry," she whined. "Just don't hurt me."

Lifting his head, he spat her out once more. "Don't hurt me," he mocked. "You think I haven't figured you out? I know what you crave, what brought you here."

Rocking back, he released her wrists. His fingers remained housed in her. "Spread your legs, slave."

"You-you can't make me."

"Can't I?" He slapped the breast she had no doubt carried his teeth marks. "Spread it, slave. Tell me you hate me for what I'm doing. Tell yourself you don't want this. Lie to both of us."

If only she could concentrate, that way she'd say what she needed to. But she was drowning and loving every moment of it. He'd ordered her to increase his access to her most private place. That's what she'd do, but not because he'd commanded.

"What will it take? Please, Master, what do I have to do for you to stop hurting me?" she whimpered as she opened herself to him. Her hands were on her breasts, cradling and pinching at the same time.

"Nothing you do or say will change my mind—don't you understand that?" Planting his elbow on the bed between her legs, he pushed his fingers in as far as they would go. At the same time, he grabbed the leg closest to him and rested it on his shoulder, positioning himself at her core. His fingers twisted inside her. "You're my property. I'll do whatever I want to you, whenever I want. Teach you to put my needs before yours. Train you to climax whenever I want you to."

This was fantasy, but his words, his words! And his command of her cunt! Her hold on her breasts tightened. In her mind, she lay spread-eagled with her wrists and ankles tied to stakes driven into the ground. Her Master stood over her with a whip in one hand, a powerful vibrator in the other.

"Whatever you wish, Master," the slave she'd become spoke for her. "I belong to you, yours to do what you wish with."

"No more fighting?"

"If-if you don't want me to."

"What a slavish little thing you are," he fairly growled. "Anything to please your Master, right?"

Much as she wanted to reply, she couldn't think what he wanted to hear. Even more important, she didn't know what she needed. Maybe nothing more than what she was experiencing.

She was swimming, floating, existing in a red-hot world born of her imagination.

"What are you thinking?" he demanded. "Speak."

"It's not fair!" she blurted. "You got yours. Everything your way, your rules. Now you're playing with me."

"Maybe I am. Let's see if you're right."

She should be paying closer attention, reading the emotion behind his words. But with images of herself staked to the ground swirling through her, she couldn't do anything except respond to the invasion to her pussy. If she tried to scoot away, he'd undoubtedly force her to remain where she was. At least she fervently hoped he would.

Held against her will. Being buggered by a man's relentless hands. Dancing on the brink of a massive climax. Waiting. Needing.

"Listen to me, slave. Listen and obey."

She didn't care what he was saying, barely cared what he might do. But then, suddenly, harshly, her pussy was empty. Cursing, she glared at him. He was still between her legs with an expression she couldn't fathom, demanding her attention. Her legs shook, and her toes dug into the coverlet.

"Bend your legs. At the same time, you *will* spread your legs and lift your ass off the bed. I want your arms out at your sides."



All those commands seemed beyond her, and yet she struggled to obey. He punctuated his words with quick slaps to her belly and thighs that had her shaking her head.

"Damn you, damn you," she hissed. "How dare you —"

"Because it's what you want. Wider. Higher. Get that damn ass higher."

Her cheeks and throat burning, she struggled to obey, and when her strength gave out, she bent her knees as deeply as she could and drew her feet together soles to soles. Her legs splayed out like a frog, exposing her in ways she hadn't known were possible. He'd leaned back and rested his hands on his thighs and was staring at her gaping sex.

*You bastard. Making me want this so much.*

"Beautiful," he said softly. "All hot pink and wet, swollen."

He couldn't really see her that well, could he? After all, the lighting wasn't—ah, what?

With a shudder wracking her from head to toe, she locked her gaze on him. He was no longer sitting placidly at her apex but had taken hold of her labial lips, his thumbs and forefingers gripping and separating them. Something that was more than a moan but less than a scream clawed at her throat before finding freedom. Another animal sound started to follow the first, only to die because something, maybe his thumb, had found her clit.

"This is what it's all about, isn't it, slave?" He pressed. "Your entire existence revolving around this one little spot." The pressure increased.

"No, no, please, no."

"What don't you want me to do? Touch you like this?" Trapping the inflamed nub, he started rolling it between his thumb and forefinger. "I don't believe you, slave. This is what you've wanted all along. Having pleasure ripped from you."

Words tumbled inside her, all of them lies. She'd played so many roles tonight, ending with the one that said the most about her. That's where she wanted to remain,

for the first time in her life trusting a man with the truth. "Yes," she managed. "I need, oh damn, I need —"

"To be manhandled."

He knew! "Yes," she whimpered with her nails digging into her palms.

"Rough sex. Hard and fast, dangerous."

She couldn't breathe. Couldn't think. Couldn't move.

And he was taking advantage by releasing her clit only to tap it repeatedly. He'd done this before, hadn't he, briefly, exploring, testing her. This time, she knew, he wouldn't stop.

Not until there was nothing left of her.

More changes. A thumb plundering, followed by his hands under her buttocks and lifting her high. His mouth against her pussy, sucking, licking, his tongue hot and wet inside her.

"Yes, yes. Yes!"

The tip of his tongue vibrating her clit, teeth running over her screaming tissues, her body useless and weak.

*Hard. Rough.*

*Soft. Knowing. Taking her down.*

"Coming. Oh god, I'm coming."

"Let it go. Let it happen."

As if she had any choice. Plunging into the explosion was wonderful, right, perfect, exhausting. Her legs started to cramp. She tried to roll onto her side only to discover a hand pressing on her belly. She couldn't tell if he still had hold of her cunt and didn't care. Nothing mattered beyond the downhill rush and heat flooding her body. Knowing he was responsible.

She started to cry.

\* \* \* \* \*

"You're feeling better?" Ritter asked.

"I've never felt better."

"Does that mean you're ready for another round?"

Instead of answering, she snuggled against his side and breathed in the scent of man. If her memory served her right, which she had no faith in, she'd fallen asleep shortly after climaxing. She vaguely remembered him pulling back the spread and tucking a sheet around her. Then he'd climbed in next to her and offered his chest as her pillow. Just before she nodded off, he'd asked her her name.

What was the saying, rode hard and put away wet? That was her all right. In essence, she'd been emptied out. Pulling herself back together would take time, not that she was in any hurry. She was debating whether to dive back into sleep when a thought seeped into what existed of her mind.

"How did you know?" she asked, "that I like it rough."

"I didn't until at the end." He started rubbing her back. "I figured there was something behind your willingness to play into my fantasy, but I wasn't sure what it was. The truth, I was having too much fun to look into your motives."

"Does it bother you? I mean, not many women get off on acting like a whore."

"You're no whore. You like what you like. When it comes to sex, I figure it's a matter of whatever turns your crank."

She slid her hand down his chest, stopping at his waist because they needed to talk, at least a little longer. "Like you wanting a sex slave?"

His chuckle rumbled through his chest and into her. Wondering if they could spend the rest of the weekend here, she made the easy decision to attend the next game he coached.

"Our high jinks worked out pretty well for both of us, didn't it?" he said. "I had no intention of hurting you—I hope you know that."

"I want you to," she admitted, "hurt me, I mean. Nothing that leaves scars, but I do love it rough."

"More than what we did tonight?"

How long ago had they had sex? More importantly, how much longer before he recovered? Maybe she should check on his progress. "I'd like to explore—"

"More of the Master/slave thing? Woman, you're going to wear me out."

"Oh, I think you're up for it." Snuggling closer, she gave her hand free rein to explore farther south. He was erect. "Amend that, I'm sure you're up for it."

"And what do you mean by *it*?"

"Exploration. Testing our boundaries."

"Consenting adults?"

At the moment, she wasn't sure she could call herself an adult, not that it mattered.

"My—it doesn't bother you that I get off on being manhandled?"

"Hell no. In fact, it excites the hell out of me. No one looking at you would expect you to have such a wild side."

"I'm tough."

"I'm starting to figure that out." Smiling, he rolled her onto her back and twisted her hands behind her. "Now where are those ropes?"

## About the Author

“Of course I’ve time-traveled to the ancient Everglades, infiltrated bondage strongholds, done wilderness search and rescue, and spent a night trapped in a workout gym with Mr. Universe. How can I possibly write about something I haven’t experienced?”

Although I love telling readers that, the truth is much more mundane. In my “day” jobs, I’ve been a commercial pilot, brain surgeon, worked as a white-water river guide, bee keeper, snake charmer, and garbage collector.

And if you buy all that, let me pitch the bridge I have listed on eBay.

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

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