



*Men*  
*of a*  
**DIFFERENT**  
*Sort*

ADDISON AVERY

ASPEN MOUNTAIN PRESS

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Men of a Different Sort

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Addison Avery

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## **Men of a Different Sort**

### **Chapter One**

The ka-clink, ka-clink, ka-clink, sounded out in a recognizable and undeniable jingle. Without a doubt, the man behind the wayward walk, stopped her heart. Only one cowboy in the wild, Wild West owned the sound, stepped to that pace. One man and she didn't have to turn around to verify who entered the dimly lit room.

She sensed him without his hands groping her or his body melding to hers. The ebb and flow of the rowdy saloon activity changed the second he walked in and why wouldn't it? Few outlaws possessed his presence. Few men, if any, demanded her attention.

Callie Matthews held her breath. She placed her sweaty palm to her stomach. If she knew how to fake a swoon, she might have considered dropping to the dirt floor. Then again, the night held a lot of promise, and she didn't want dust on her skirts. Instead, she waited and yearned for his first touch.

When the air changed, she shut her eyes tight and anticipated his voice, the broken way he made demands, or the half-hearted requests he counted on her to meet with a certain amount of predictable enthusiasm. He expected her to respond the same way each and every time he rode into a town where he hoped to find her.

They had a history and she always respected his wishes. He didn't wait for her time. She never asked him to. If she had a customer in hand, she'd drop him. If some lonesome gambler bought her a drink in hopes of sharing a whiskey sip, she'd gulp it.

He made it pretty easy. Her heart stopped one beat shy of striking its next beat whenever she heard his distinct and alluring strut. Sometimes, she thought the thumping in her chest stopped altogether when he showed up in the desert saloons

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where she worked. Every nerve ending in her body came alive and he set her womb on fire just by being close enough to touch her.

The man had his issues. Lord knew all about them and she did too. It didn't matter. He'd found her again and most likely, wanted his just reward within the hour.

Folks everywhere called him Little Joe but there wasn't anything small about him. He had thick, long limbs and broad shoulders. He stood six foot five and some said, maybe even a tad taller. His hands were the biggest she'd ever held and another important body part was the largest she'd ever felt.

Callie cared about Little Joe but she feared him. They grew up on adjoining farms but then Little Joe's father sent him away. When they met again a few years later, she had her eighteenth birthday behind her and a lot of tainted dreams tugging at her from the front. She was wild, young, and apparently just a little on the dumb side of things dreaming up young woman fantasies. Back then, when she thought about the future, she dreamed of men bidding for her time, bringing along expensive gifts and paying for intimate services she wanted to provide anyway. She never imagined the loneliness or the life she'd forfeit working as a whore.

Little Joe warned her then. He told her so. She didn't listen.

"Whiskey," he said in his gruff voice.

The barkeep there knew him. The locals recognized him, harbored him for safe keeping because in Tombstone, the occasional outlaw – so long as he left the townsfolk alone – was viewed as a hero, of sorts.

In Little Joe's case, fear kept him out of trouble. No one thought they could take him and if they did, with his bad attitude and worse reputation, no one wanted him. Except Callie, and even she denied the attraction, it kept things simple between them.

She glanced over her shoulder before she whispered something to one of the whores wiping down the bar there. The woman turned and looked his way. She didn't look too impressed but then again whores never looked overly interested in him until he cleaned up right nice.

Little Joe took his swig of whiskey, released an ah-sound and then slammed the glass against the smooth wood surface. "Let me get a bottle. Two glasses."

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Callie swallowed over and over again. He was moving a little faster than the average Little Joe. He must've been without a woman, or a man, a little longer than what he liked.

Worse still, Callie miscalculated somewhere along the line. When she moved to Tombstone, left and then returned again, she really didn't think he'd find her there again.

Her error in judgment should've instilled a few jitters but instead, her skin felt clammy and her body prepared for him. No, she wasn't afraid of what she faced upstairs. She couldn't wait to get there.

\*\*\*\*

She took to the steps, in a lady-like maneuver. He watched her tap the top of her hair; the ridiculous bun she had high on her head might fool some, but not all. Joe chuckled. She was anything but a lady, but even after agonizing days apart, she was still his woman.

Tucking a few stray ringlets into the blonde mess piled high on her head, she gathered her thick burgundy dress at the sides and climbed upstairs. She acted like she thought of it as an effort to raise her multiple petticoats with every single step.

He narrowed his gaze when she reached the landing. He thought about the first time he truly viewed her as a woman. Something about the way she bowed her head and lowered her eyes made him reflect on the past. She was eighteen. He asked her to marry him but she refused. He wanted to make an honest woman out of her before she pursued her lifelong dream of becoming a whore. She declined the offer. At the time, her words were hard for him to digest, a little discouraging, at the very least.

Now, he didn't give a damn.

Every time he walked into a saloon where she worked, he thought of the years passing him by. The children they might have had and the love he once wanted them to share, none of his ambitions materialized. Everything worked out for the best anyway considering his profession, and later, hers.

Little Joe Dylan liked the way things turned out, by and large. Life treated him fine enough. He did what he wanted and never answered to anyone. Hell, everywhere he

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went, men feared him. The bounty hunters and the lawmen, folks pretty much left him alone.

Then there was Callie. She had a way about her and their games kept him entertained. This time, it had taken him two years to catch up with her. The last time, the chase took three months and the time before six. Sometimes, he wondered what he might do if he never saw her again. On rare occasions, he took another whore or two to his bed but none of them worked out for him like Callie. He preferred her for several reasons.

One of them—he glanced in the mirror over the bar—stood directly behind him with dirty buckskins and an undeniable grin. He walked a whole lot like Little Joe and if Joe cared to guess, Callie probably heard him too when she started down the velvet-coated hall leading to her bedroom.

\* \* \* \*

Richard Brandon had the ka-clink part down pat but his spurs or something attached to them made his stride a little more pronounced. When he stopped, the act of halting sounded out in a scratchy-like echo, making her think he caught his boots in large mess of tumbleweed.

Both of her men were in the house. Her heart raced forward and she gripped the doorknob. After she gave the round brass handle a turn, she traipsed inside her private quarters.

Callie pushed the bedroom door wide. She didn't have much reason for slamming it shut or trying to hide behind wooden panels. Little Joe and Richard would look for her until they found her and she didn't want them to waste precious time. She paced back and forth across the solid oak floor boards, the swishing sound of her skirts almost as annoying as her runaway heartbeat.

Richard was as played out as yesterday's bloom but he looked about like Joe. Tough and hardened, handsome and wild, many women would consider him the sexier of the two. He had bronze skin, blue eyes and dirty blonde hair which he didn't bother



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to cut. On a good day he was plain mean and any other just downright deadly.

Sometimes, Callie liked him better than Joe but for reasons she never dared explain. While Richard visited her bed, his purpose for being there wasn't the same as Little Joe's. She was the only one who knew their secrets. She believed Richard was the reason Joe refused to let her go.

Callie turned down the bed and fluffed up the pillows. The men would go for a hot bath and a few glasses of their whiskey. In all likelihood they'd put up a good front. Most of the time, and she recalled hearing them plenty, they told others in town about a blonde-haired, blue-eyed woman they couldn't wait to share.

They never told the locals the truth. Joe was the one, the only one, who ever enjoyed life in the middle.

They'd endured a long wait, nearly two years passed. Sometimes, Callie wondered if Joe or Richard ran out of days, and if luck finally deserted them. Maybe a gun battle gone wrong left them dead somewhere on the open range. For nearly a decade, they'd played this game of hide and seek. It was part of the allure, the element of the unknown. It kept life exciting, and her senses alert.

She used to fear what would happen if a group of outlaws or even a few good guys, those fellas on the right side of the law, rode up on Little Joe and Richard frolicking in the river like they used to do when they were younger. Would some cowboy take offense to their wolfish behavior and maybe fire up their ass with some power found in a different kind of gun, one Little Joe might have left holstered with his clothes? Or would they drag them back with their breeches around their ankles and force them to hang with their cocks in each other's hand. Yeah, she had cause to worry some.

Callie carried those fears. She dreaded the day the news would come. Some loud-mouth cowboy might stand downstairs buying drinks for everyone shooting off his mouth about two men he caught in a compromising position. Or worse still, she wouldn't see either of them again and they'd leave her behind to mourn the unknown.

The latter bothered her the most and for several reasons. If she never saw them again, she wouldn't know if it was because she won the game and they couldn't find

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her or if they died trying. Then again, sometimes she thought they might eventually give it up, stop fighting whatever they felt for one another, live together in the middle of nowhere and forget all about her.

She spent a number of days feeling uneasy, but positioning herself on the bed right then, with her dress high above her thighs, she struck an inviting pose. She smiled to herself in acknowledgement. For today, probably the entire week, her worries were over. Her men waited right outside her door.

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### Chapter Two

Little Joe eased into her room first. "Callie." His dark eyes dropped to her chest for a passing second, just like they always did only today might have been a little different because the natural sparkle in them had disappeared.

"Little Joe," she responded. A sizeable lump formed in her throat and she tried to move *the fix* on out of the way by swallowing a few times. It didn't help anything so she tried again. She needed to practice her gag reflex.

Joe liked it when she wrapped her lips around the better part of a man. He told her the last time they were together, he thought Richard might ask her for a scad more than they'd shared before. She didn't think much about it because Richard never mentioned it. If he had, she might have charged him since his penis was thick enough to make a woman's mouth bow wide with a painful stretch.

She imagined his size was why he never asked before. Joe had the money. He might offer to pay for her time if she asked him, but she never bothered. Richard didn't lie down beside her and truth told, she wouldn't mind if he did. He could have a free one.

Sometimes Richard talked about getting inside her and once or twice, the mere mention of it made him hard. She watched how his thighs tightened and the showing in his breeches proved he wanted an invited ride. Callie didn't think he held much of an interest for women, but sometimes when he looked at her a certain way, she doubted her own assumptions.

"You been doing all right for yourself?" Little Joe asked, slumping over on the bed. Typically, he waited for the invitation but not tonight. He tossed one of her pretty

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pillows to the side and slid up against the headboard.

"The boots," he said, trying to kick them off while holding his belly in the process.

Callie's focus immediately fell to his gut. He pressed a large handful of material to his side and winced in pain when she tried to pry his fingers away from it. She studied his face again. He looked sick as a horse and she noticed the beads of ready sweat pebbling across his forehead.

"Let me see you," she insisted, tugging at his wrist. "You've been shot, haven't ya?"

"No," he replied with a devilish smile. "I somehow woke up this morning with this hole in my side. I ain't got any idea how it ended up there." He chuckled at his stand-alone humor, but then moaned when she removed the cloth and the gush of blood stained her fingers. She immediately applied pressure again. He watched her face, like he wanted to see a reaction, maybe some sort of concern in her expression, her eyes.

"Damn you, Little Joe. This is what I've been afraid of." She rushed to the basin, quickly filled it with water from a hand-painted water pitcher and then ripped a few strips from an old dress hanging nearby. In a frantic effort to stop the bleeding, she knelt beside him with the water dripping from the cloth.

"I'll pay for the dress," he advised, groaning out in sudden pain when she made contact with his open wounds.

"I'm not worried about a dang dress. You should have come straight up here to this room rather than stand downstairs trying to look all interesting to a woman."

"Did it work?"

He grinned. She didn't.

"No."

About the time she realized her efforts were useless, Richard slipped inside her room. His gaze immediately locked with Joe's and just like always, Callie felt a little left out. The level of intimacy the men shared wasn't anything she ever tried to understand but right now, after two years passed, she wanted something from them. An explanation was in order.

"Who did this to him?" she asked, trying her best to clean the wound.

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"Don't know. First time I've bumped into him in over a year," he replied, returning his focus to Joe. "What happened?"

"Trouble," he announced, his gaze moving back and forth between them.

"Trouble don't shoot guns," Callie informed. "The men behind a mountain of it typically fire the first shot."

"Is that right?" he asked, adding a wink. "Why don't you tell the law around here then? They ain't seen hide nor hair of the group that did this to me."

"Did you follow 'em here?" Richard asked.

"Yep, sure did. They're here. Ain't a doubt in my blessed mind."

She swallowed hard and squinted with an intent focus on the three or four day old bruises. "Did they beat you too?"

"I don't recall," he said, locking eyes with Richard.

She smacked his arm. "Don't you start with me, not right now. You're bleeding out pretty bad here on my bed and if I'm gonna fetch Doc Scott then we need to understand one another."

With the mention of the town doctor, Little Joe scowled, "We understand plenty, Callie. Don't we Richard?"

Richard shook his head. "Not today we don't." He moved toward the bed and held up Callie's hand. He took a peek at the gushing wound. "Callie, go get that doctor. Tell him it's a private matter and we'll pay him real nice for a tight lip and a life saved."

"You buying?" Joe asked.

"No you son-of-a-bitch. You are so you best not skip out on your tab."

\* \* \* \*

Callie returned with Doc Scott in record time. She dragged him from his bed and by the circles under his eyes, he looked like he needed the rest he might have found there. He had a head full of hair and it was all standing straight up like he combed it and then teased it that way or something.

"Doc," Richard greeted him. "We appreciate you coming over here so late and all."

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"Do you?" he asked. His contempt barely concealed, he removed the bunched cloth and took a closer look at the hole in Joe's side.

"Yes, sir." Little Joe growled, sarcasm evident as he tried to keep his manners about him. Those present might have guessed the men didn't take to one another right off, but if nothing else, Little Joe remained polite.

The people he often robbed or even those he sometimes killed would have to say that about him. Yes, his momma raised him right. Minus the killing and the robbing, she did all right by him. He had a way with people and most liked him, except those he murdered in cold blood. Most people understood the differences of opinions formed then.

The doctor leaned over Joe's body. He tugged his glasses from his shirt pocket and studied the wound. "How many bullets were fired into you?"

"Think I counted four," Joe explained, grunting in pain. "What do you think?"

"I believe you counted about right," the doctor confirmed without much effort.

"Believe so," Joe agreed right away, looking at Doc Scott like he was Sam Hill in the flesh.

The doctor pointed to the shallow basin and rolled up his sleeves. "I need some hot water, plenty of rags and another bottle of whiskey. Those bullets are deep. That's the problem." He glanced up at Little Joe and then back at Callie. "That and the fact nary of 'em finished the job."

Richard pulled his gun and aimed it at Doc Scott. "Why don't you explain what you mean there, Doc."

"I just stitched up the men who must've emptied their guns into his gut. They were in a lot worse shape. I know why they fired their guns at this man." He spoke directly to Callie. Apparently, he didn't want to discuss Joe's condition with Richard.

Callie read between the lines. He already pegged Richard and Joe as a peculiar pair.

"You do?" Richard asked. "I always heard one man's word is rarely another man's story when guns are involved."

"Well then, there's no use in talking about opinions." Doc Scott studied Richard for

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a few seconds and grabbed his little leather bag. "I'm going to dig these bullets out, and then I'll stitch him up. Afterwards, I'm going to say a prayer that I don't see either of you again. Then, whatever business you have with Callie here, I hope you'll conduct it and leave Tombstone."

Richard cocked the gun. "Any particular reason?"

Doc Scott looked at Callie and then back at Little Joe. "Do you want to tell him or do you want me to?"

She looked down at her feet and shook her head. "Get him stitched up and then they'll ride on out tomorrow," she said on a promise.

Joe snarled. "If I'm not ready to ride? I have a feeling with deadly bullets in my belly, I may not have the strength."

"Then find it," Doc Scott encouraged. "You seem to have other talents, make healing well one of 'em."

"I doubt I will," Little Joe replied with a wink, staring back at Callie.

Doc Scott toyed around with an instrument jabbing into Joe's flesh. Joe squealed out in pain, this time he sounded like a pack of pigs. "You might reconsider."

After a few groans, Richard stood and gave Joe a word of advice. "Keep stalling for time. You may bleed those bullets right out, right along with your organs. Don't suppose you'll need those anyhow since the only thing you'll have left is pure stubbornness pumping through your veins."

"You might find it in your best interest to agree with me right now," Doc Scott advised. "I'm the only one in Tombstone set up to do this and if I don't do it right, you will bleed to death."

"Joe," Callie gasped. "Tell him you'll leave tomorrow."

He wouldn't do it so Richard spoke for both of them. "He'll ride, if I have to lead him myself. You have my word."

## Chapter Three

Callie's wrists were tied to the saddle. She hadn't spoken a word since they left Tombstone and if Richard dared to guess, she might never speak again. She kept ranting and raving when he first threw her on the horse. She had roots down, friendships developed and scheduled *pirooting*. Just like a woman, she claimed she had a whole lot to do – men included – in a short period of time. Too damn bad.

When he didn't change his mind, she zipped her lip. She must've thought pouting looked good on her. It didn't.

When Joe came to, he didn't stay conscious long but generally moaned and groaned until he finally said something pretty stupid, something Richard would take up with him at another time. He talked about his *dangler* too much for Richard's liking. Little Joe wasn't talking about a passing train when he made the gentle suggestion of what he wanted to do with the length of his. Richard reminded him for the time being, he still had what he needed to get the job done in a woman's bed, maybe even a man's.

Once, Joe woke up ready to fight. "Richard, don't you ever speak for me again. I like it in Tombstone. There's a lot to see and do there. I sure as hell didn't want to leave there without a piece of pussy."

Richard gripped the reins only tighter. He might fuck him quiet, if he didn't give it a rest. In his delusional stupor, Little Joe failed to notice the pussy in question riding along behind the wagon.

Callie didn't tell him any different, whatever her reason. She set her jaw, jerked her hands and waited for his next words of wisdom.



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"I bet she was pirooting with the doctor. What do you wanna bet?"

Richard looked over his shoulder and her skin blushed red. Yeah, he thought so too. "I'll take that bet, Joe."

He didn't have to worry. Joe never stayed with them for longer than five or six seconds.

By the time they arrived in Tucson, Joe's fever spiked. The hotel and saloon were welcomed sights but also a reminder. News traveled fast in Arizona.

The good doctor, apparently scorned, anticipated their first stop and he sent a telegraph. It arrived before they did and there wasn't any doubt about it. No one there looked glad to see them.

When they walked into the crowded, smoke-filled saloon, the café-style doors swooshed back and forth. Callie had a way of luring a man's watchful eyes and there were plenty there to gawk.

Richard allowed Callie to walk in the saloon on her own accord but now he wished he'd thought about it more. He should've hauled her inside. The little thing didn't weigh much. Besides, others might like seeing a pretty woman over his shoulder with her ass up, face down, and his palm on her tail.

For some reason, the image, offered an unexplainable thrill right then and he tried to shake it but couldn't. He stood back in the corner, with his hand on one of the flimsy wooden doors peering over the top while Callie negotiated a room.

"Seems, they have one left," she informed.

"I can sleep in a chair," he volunteered.

Callie released a sigh and stared out at the wagon. "I imagine we'll both have to make do. Little Joe's in no condition to have bed company tonight. I'll help you get him inside." She started to head out but he placed his hand on her wrist.

"Let me get him. Go on up to the room. You need to get out of sight for the night. We may have some trouble after while, no thanks to the Doc.

Callie didn't deny intimacy lingered between her and Doc Scott. In fact, her eyes flickered with some kind of something when Richard mentioned his name.

Sure enough, Callie and the Doc had something going on. He looked at Little Joe

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and shook his head. He knew one man who wouldn't like it a bit and come to think of it, he had a problem with it too.

\* \* \* \*

Little Joe slept restlessly throughout the night. He cried out one minute and the very next, he spoke to angels and claimed to even see the devil. He fought Indians and cowboys, and killed them all of course and he even played a hand of poker with Doc Holiday and claimed to have actually won. Whatever delusions he experienced, he was some kind of hero, a legend in his own dreams, a man of the hour in his own mind.

Richard listened to his ramblings and hoped for information. Joe never spoke of relationships and as far as Richard knew, he was the only man Joe cared anything for. Richard and Joe parted ways on occasion, but it wasn't anything Richard necessarily enjoyed. He only accepted the time apart because Little Joe insisted.

The distance between them was never up for discussion and sometimes Richard wished Joe would ride the hell on and leave him alone. He pressed his hand to his forehead and jerked in alarm.

"He's burning up again."

Callie stretched her arms above her head and quickly stood, holding onto the bedpost in a stagger. She grabbed some rags and anything she found handy before dipping the cloths in the small basin she'd kept filled to the brim with cool water.

After a few minutes, Joe's lifeless body was draped in damp towels. Richard stroked his arm determined to wait by his side until his fever broke.

Callie primped for a minute and then sat down in a nearby rocking chair. "I used to work here," she admitted quietly.

Richard glanced her way. "I know."

She cocked her head and bent an eager ear. "How? Did Little Joe tell you?"

"Nope, I...I knew that uh, you were here for awhile."

"Yeah, I like it better in Tombstone but the people are all right here, and the whores stay busy."

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"I reckon if they look like you, Callie, they all make an honest wage."

She laughed aloud. He joined her with a good hearty chuckle.

When the room stilled, she continued to sway with the chair. "Richard, what do you reckon happened back there?"

He flinched. "I don't care to think on it."

"You believe he was with a man, don't you?"

Richard swallowed tightly. Joe groaned and started mumbling his new way of speaking the English language. A lot of cursing and gibberish followed.

"Do you?" she pressed for Richard's honest opinion.

He pursed his lips, then released a sigh, took another breath and stood straight up. "We ain't seen each other in a long time, Callie. Me and Little Joe parted ways back a few months after the last time we saw you."

"Oh," she said. "So you two don't, or haven't...been together?"

"I don't reckon. Last time I checked, the kind of activities me and Joe used to enjoy generally require close contact."

She narrowed her gaze and watched the dust mites scattered in the air when the morning sun blazed into the room announcing the rise of a new day. Since the room had few appointments, Richard slumped against the far wall on the opposite side of the room.

"So are you, or did you? I mean...have you?" She couldn't decide how to ask so she shut up.

"Nope," he told her. "Last time I spent quality time with Joe was with me, you and Joe."

Joe kicked the thin sheet away from his body all of a sudden. "That's a lie," he groaned. "One time by the fire out on the trail before I told you to leave and never come back."

"Joe," Callie began, startled by the sound of his voice. "You're awake?"

"I did, ask him," he whispered, stuck on the topic at hand, making sure Callie and Richard were aware of the fact he wasn't ready to pass in his chips. "And yeah, I'm up. It's not time to give death a fair shot when I'm so sweet on living."

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Callie looked at Richard, "So he told you to ride out without him?"

He shrugged. "I don't remember much about those days. We drank a few cups too much and sat by the fire trying to decide what to do about you and about each other."

Callie moved closer to Joe. "What did you decide, Joe?" She had a condescending tone and knew it wouldn't sit well if he was starting to feel a little better.

"I decided," he said before he tried to turn in the bed and true pain existed in his face. "That you and Richard would probably be better off with out me, is that about right, Richard?"

Richard didn't acknowledge one way or the other.

"Since you're so big on making decisions and running off at the mouth when you shouldn't," she began. "Who shot you and why?"

He attempted sitting. The sudden move didn't come without guttural growls and a little blood spilling from the bandages, not to mention his head rolling all over the place. He looked drunk, injured, and above all else, mad as hell. "You know who and you can guess why."

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### **Chapter Four**

#### **Six Weeks Later**

Joe watched her walk across the street from the livery stable. A few men gathered around the entrance of the barn. He saw them poking each other and didn't have to wonder. They stood there for one purpose...to watch her wiggle her way over to the hotel.

If Joe cared to guess, the word was out. Since they didn't whistle or grab at her, somebody around town did them all a favor. They spread the news and avoided disturbances. Callie belonged to them and everyone in Tucson understood it.

Joe revisited the ideas he once harbored as a young man. Callie sure was a pretty little thing then, and still to the day looked very much the same. Joe loved her, God he loved her, but they'd made their decisions, stuck by them and as a result, still chose the more complicated life.

A few minutes later the door swung open, and Richard walked in and sat down on the edge of the bed. Little Joe narrowed his gaze and really gave him a good gander.

Joe had developing plans for Richard, and Callie too. He felt quite nice with the new day and was up for a little fun. Since he coerced death and then ran from it when he was too afraid to face it, Little Joe missed out on some mighty fine fucking.

He wondered if Callie and Richard had enjoyed one another. He licked his lower lip and fought the temptation to ask. Richard didn't pester him with questions and Joe appreciated the courtesy. What he shared with Richard was precious but what he had with Callie resembled love. If Richard and Callie had relations while he was out like a

light, he might have a slight problem accepting their impatience, even if he understood the needs of a man.

"What?" Richard asked. "Something on your mind?"

Joe smirked and then pointed to the window. "You're sitting on a bed with a man who is now well known for working it both ways. Those people over yonder can look up here and see us."

An uncomfortable silence filled the room. Richard still refused to pry. Joe was glad. It wasn't like Richard didn't know why Joe had been shot. The whole truth would only hurt him. While a gun was fired with the intent to kill, the reasons behind the actions spiked Joe's pain. The man who pulled the trigger had multiple motives, and good ones, as much as Joe hated to acknowledge them.

"Since when do you care what people think?"

Joe carefully considered his reply. "I was shot. I don't want the same for you."

"You were *boogered up* because you had your dick where it shouldn't have been." He stood up, walked over to the window and tugged the wooden panel forward and up. He stuck his head outside and waved to Callie. "Get your sweet bottom up here, woman."

"Nice, that'll work," Joe said.

Richard slammed down the window and drew the shades. "Yeah, maybe for those cowboys across the street, but the one headed here right now might have something to say about the outburst."

A few seconds later and Callie stormed into the room. "What do you think you're doing?" She had her hands on her hips and quickly set her jaw.

"I was trying to please Joe here. He said people below would start to assume things if they saw me sitting here with him."

"Since when do we care what people think?" she asked, staring at Joe.

"That's what I asked him."

Little Joe rubbed his two week old beard, the one gaining a little more length than what he liked, and then responded. "I care what people think about you and Richard."

Callie folded her arms across her middle. "Oh yeah? Since when? You never did

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before. Your attitude is one of the very reasons we played our games. You think those people in the towns we've been in didn't know what went on in my rented rooms?"

"Callie," Richard warned. "It don't matter now what they thought. We ain't there anymore and you ain't either."

"Yeah, but when I went back to Tombstone, it took me nearly a year to get those folks to believe the two of you didn't screw each other but instead took turns with me."

"Is that why your doctor friend didn't like us much?" Richard asked.

"No," she said honestly. "He knew the truth about you two."

"He what?" Joe asked, faking the shock of betrayal and trying to change his expression in an instant before clenching his fists. It was all an act.

Richard didn't look at all surprised. He had the unique ability to walk away and turn the other cheek. He didn't particularly like confrontations and since most of the time he killed those who pissed him off, he turned his back and separated himself from the brewing fury.

Little Joe watched his every move now, afraid for Callie but equally hurt for Richard. Never mind his own feelings.

"Did it ever occur to you that he didn't want anyone to know about us?" Joe asked.

"I never thought the two of you were coming back and if you'd stayed away, then you wouldn't be standing here right now asking questions you shouldn't be asking."

"It's my fault you wagged your damn tongue, I see?"

"Little Joe," she began, "I think it's a good time for you to hush up and not ask any other questions. I don't want to hurt you or anger Richard."

"That doctor friend of yours," Little Joe began, dead set against pulling in his horns, "What does he mean to you?"

Callie acted like she thought hard about the way she wanted to answer. "He's good with his tongue," she admitted.

The hair on Joe's balls twitched. She still knew how to make his senses come alive in all the right places.

"A good tongue," he processed it. "A real good one, or average to almost *no count* but serves the purpose when a woman's needs come up?"

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Callie grinned. "I do believe you're jealous."

"Terribly," he admitted.

"Wasn't too smart of you telling him about us, Callie," Richard finally said.

Little Joe tossed his holster on the dresser. He'd had it on the bed earlier, loading his gun. "No, she ain't a woman with a brain for much outside of fucking."

Richard turned around and looked at Joe. "Is that what you think of me too?"

Callie looked from one man to the next. If she had to guess, there was only one man Richard feared, one cowboy Joe would hate to go up against. They stared down at their own worst potential enemy. Callie had a sudden thought. She wondered if their past relationship held them together in the first place. If they weren't lovers, they sure couldn't be friends after what they'd shared.

Little Joe stared at Richard's cock. "How long has it been since you've fucked somebody, Richard?"

He looked the other way.

"Come on now, answer me," Little Joe probed. "How long has it been since you sank your pretty pecker pole inside another man's ass?"

"What makes you think I ain't had any pussy?"

Callie shifted uncomfortably. "I would hope not," she said quietly. Joe studied her reaction and she wondered what he was thinking.

"Would it bother you if he had relations with a woman, Callie?" Little Joe asked.

Richard waited for an answer too. His expression softened and Callie knew in an instant, they both saw through her façade. It would crush her if Richard had sex with another woman.

"I wouldn't have the right," she admitted. "And I got a right mind to remind you of something too. I never once told you not to have sex with a woman."

"Hell baby," he laughed, showing off a hint of his notable arrogance. "It wouldn't have done you a bit of good to tell me anything and you ought to know it."

"You're still a cocky-ass, Little Joe," Richard told him. "You don't have a right to talk to Callie like you do."

"Maybe you're right." He looked around them then. It was as if he saw their



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surroundings for the first time since they'd been there. The old dresser in the far corner had a mirror propped up against the wall at an angle. The oval wood surrounding the looking glass needed a good polish but the mirror served a purpose.

Since Callie worked there once before, she knew why the owners kept the whore's rooms set up a certain way. The mirrors provided anyone in the bed a good look at themselves. Men paying for sex loved those mirrors. Shoot, truth told, she liked them too.

Outside of the large mirror, everything else was plain. There was a basin in the corner right next to an old wooden high-back chair and two blankets strewn over the seat. The dresser itself had three drawers. If Callie had known they were planning on staying longer than a day or two, she might have used them to divide up their things. Instead, they had their saddle bags and she had her small leather bag, shoved under the bed. Most of her belongings, she left back in Tombstone and she imagined by now, someone stored them for her. Doc Scott probably took it to task.

Joe shifted the weight in his hips. "Got anything to tell me?" He looked from one to the other. "Either of you?"

Callie was confused. "No, I don't reckon we do but you, aren't you a different story?"

Richard grunted. "He fucked the wrong somebody. That's what got him in the mess he's in, ain't that right Joe?"

She watched Richard. His mood shifted with the sun. Joe wouldn't care to tell him what he wanted to know. Then, he'd expect him to move the hell on and get over any kind of sudden disappointment a confession might bring.

"I had a few things going on. A couple of young fellows," he shrugged. "Didn't mean anything."

"Did you fuck 'em or not?" Callie demanded turning her attention back to Richard.

"Yeah, but shit Callie, you don't have a right to say anything."

"I don't but..." she looked at Richard and quickly added, "If you were messing with some young fellows, then I imagine the act meant something to you. If not, what the hell were you thinking?"

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"How old were they?" Richard asked, keeping his closed fists hanging at his sides.

Little Joe looked peculiar then. He acted like Richard asked him for information he didn't want to provide. Richard was a good twenty years older than Callie and Joe so maybe that's what bothered him, threatened him. He never discussed much about age and whenever they brought up the differences in years, the mention was an outright sensitive subject.

"In their twenties, about my age," he said.

Hurt flashed its existence in Richard's eyes. "I see," Richard said and his nose twitched, his eyes watered. He walked over to the door and placed his hand on the center panel. "Ya'll hungry?"

"Nary a bit," Joe said, smiling. "I had some better plans cooked up."

Richard didn't turn around. "I'll be back. I have to think about those ideas of yours before I participate in them. I may not be interested anymore, Joe."

"Ah now Richard," Callie started for him but he held up his hand.

"I'll be back before long," he stated flatly. "Joe, I don't want talk of this kind of thing when I get back, ya hear?"

He didn't say anything so Richard turned around and stared at him. "Did you understand?"

Little Joe narrowed his eyes. Richard took one heavy step in his direction.

"I heard you. Go throw your field fit and hurry back. Me and Callie will sit here and wait on you."

## Chapter Five

Joe watched Richard until he was over the hillside. He had it pegged about right. Richard was going to take a walk, find a private place to throw his tantrum and then head back when he had his temper in check. Much as Joe hated it, Richard was hurt and angry.

"Damn," he muttered.

"What's wrong, Joe?" she asked. "Upset because you're missing out on that angry sex you like so much?"

"I'll still get some of his fury when he gets back," he said with a lopsided smile. "I always do."

"Maybe," she said.

"Wanna wrap your mouth around something for me?"

"No," she replied with sassy lips and a pucker to boot.

"I could make ya."

"And I'd never forgive you, any more than you've been able to forgive yourself for hurting Richard."

"You don't know what it was like, Callie."

"I understand you probably didn't carry on with your foolishness just to hurt Richard but you did all the same."

Joe gently touched her elbow. "What about you? Did I hurt you?"

"I'm different."

"How?" he asked.

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"I don't particularly care for you sleeping with women, Joe."

"But?" he probed.

"We ain't been together in a couple of years. I suspected you'd see one or two and maybe even get attached to someone."

"Like you did to your doctor friend?"

"I'm in the sex business, Joe."

He rubbed his chin. "Ah, I didn't know. How come you never told me before?"

"Smart-ass, Nancy-boy," she snapped, sitting next to him. He picked up her wrist and laced his fingers through hers.

"Good one," he said, chuckling. "Sort of true too, huh?"

"I reckon so," she said. "It's the reason you almost went and got yourself killed. You made it with one of those men—your kind—and his partner or maybe the lot of 'em, if he had a gang of fellas riding with him, shot you up and left you to die. Is that about right?"

"Can I tell you what really happened?"

"If that's what you want to do," she said, eyeing their entwined fingers.

Little Joe looked like a little boy when he grinned then. His wicked smile was part of the reason Callie loved him. She still remembered her childhood friend, the one who ran with her through the open prairies when her step-father stood on their tiny front porch screaming for her.

Little Joe used to hold his palm over her mouth and sometimes, he even pinned her body to the ground, realizing she always wanted to run home. She was a good girl. The kind of kid that liked to mind her parents but more often than not, their discipline came at a price. Joe protected her from her step-father's wrath. Maybe even saved her life, more than once, because when the man was mean, he was mean all over and Callie generally took a few harsh beatings.

Joe tucked her in the hook of his arm and leaned back on the bed. He kissed the top of her head. "This won't bother you to hear about the details, right?"

"I'm ready when you are," she assured him.

At times, she wanted to tell him her stories too. She stopped herself because to tell

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him things, her sexual experiences with other men, she risked those men and the lives they might want to lead without a Little Joe meeting.

Joe's legs fell open and he squeezed her body tight against his, clutching her torso to his side. "I must've been riding for a couple of days. I heard you were in Colorado so I tried to find you in a few of the mining towns. Somebody said they saw Richard in Forest City and a few days later, I heard you were near there too so I headed to the mountains. Anyhow, I met up with some boys headed the same way.

"They were riding out in hopes of finding gold or silver, maybe both. You know me, I half pay attention."

She crooked her head and listened. Truth told, Joe did the same when he met up with strangers on a lonely trail because Joe was suspicious of everyone. Since he was, he hung on every word spoken around him, trying to make sure to read between the lines. Joe didn't like surprises. At least, he didn't before he met up with his new friends.

"Anyhow, they were setting up camp, told me they planned to stay three, maybe four days, and invited me to roll out my blanket and make myself at home."

She rolled his shirt over his stomach and started tickling his belly. When he squirmed under her touch, she stopped and he immediately covered her hand with his. "Now, remember, I'm still a man, Callie and this kind of business will stop the story right here and now."

With a giggle, she let him have her hand and he brought her fingertips to his lips before he kissed her palm and released it. He continued. "So you see, where was I?"

"They told you to make yourself at home," she reminded.

"Yeah, so that's what I did on night number one. It was a hot summer evenin' too. The kind where a man don't mind to sleep in the nude, and they did. I kept my pants on, uncertain of expectations or appearing rude and all."

"Right," she said.

"And anyhow, in the middle of the night, a couple of hours before daybreak, I heard the wildest sounds I ever heard in my life."

Alarmed, she sat straight up. "What did you hear?"

He gave her a devilish grin. "The sounds of more pleasure than I can even start to

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tell you," he explained. "Callie, there's no way to accurately describe the way the noises echoed through those quiet hills."

"Try," she said, tempted to learn more.

"Well, I got up to go relieve myself. I reckon where I didn't know these boys, they felt they had to go hide their private business. I took a hike downstream, sort of disoriented, I guess, and all truths, I thought I was headed away from the racket. Callie, the air was so full of animalistic grunts and groans that I swear to you, I didn't know what I was walking into but if I had, I might have been afraid to approach."

She sat on the edge of the bed with her palms on either side of her hips. "What did you see?"

He looked in the mirror across from the bed and his eyes twinkled with the memory. "I saw a train reaction of pleasure."

"Define train reaction," she coaxed.

"There on a large flat rock, the three of them were going at each other like they were hungry for the other one. I nicknamed 'em, Small, Medium, and Large because of how tall they were, had nothing to do with their penis size on account of all 'em had big um...well, you know what I mean.

"Anyhow, Medium, turns out, was in the middle and Large was behind him. His balls were slapping at his ass so hard, I swear I thought he might fuck them black and blue. Medium bucked up against him and how he did it was anybody's guess. Small was on his knees just a suckin' and a lickin' and good grief, Callie, it was something to see. They formed a straight line of pure wonder."

She swallowed tightly. "Did you uh, join them then?"

"Oh no," he said. "I would've though. If they had caught a glimpse of me and asked me to, I would've been right there with my hand or rear ready to go."

"Still don't like to open your mouth and offer a few favors, huh?"

"No but I sure enjoy pounding the hell out of some ready throats."

"You're awful," she shivered when she looked down and saw the thick root of his erection bulging under the material barely able to keep him covered.

"What I did was pure sinful," he confessed. "You're right."

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"What did you do?" she asked.

"Well, after seeing what I saw, I went back to camp and jacked off a few times. I almost rode on out of there that night but instead of leaving, I stuck around for breakfast, and then hung around for lunch. By nightfall, there wasn't any sense in denying what I wanted. Dinner with those fellas was better than eating something on the range, all alone."

"So you stayed?"

He nodded and a thin line shaped his tight lips. "I couldn't bring myself to make a run for it after what I watched. I stuck around and was handsomely rewarded."

"What happened?" she probed, excitement whipping around her like a cool wind. She was engaged by the details of the story. Her body heat rose and her nipples throbbed. Hearing Little Joe's confession made her want him like never before, and his easy drawl made her burn for his touch.

"After a campfire supper, they passed around a bottle and we started drinking and talking about women we'd had. Something I worried a little later about because Medium was pretty interested in the likes of you."

"Ah shoot, you never could keep things about me and you to yourself, could you?"

He reached around her middle and pinched her nipple. "I just told them the truth."

"Which is?"

"If you didn't know how to suck my sac and penis better than any man around, then I'd dump you flat on your pretty little bottom."

"Uh-huh. So now I can expect men of a different sort bidding for my time more now than ever before, huh?"

"If these three ever find you, I imagine so."

"They're the ones who shot you though, aren't they?" she asked, eager for his reply.

Instead, Little Joe deliberately avoided providing an answer. "So we were talking about sucking and fucking. You know cowboys do that a lot around their fellow men. Then, out of nowhere really, Small says, 'I can suck you right, maybe even better than your woman' and I said something like prove yourself or something sorta insignificant,

only whatever I said, he took my come back as an invitation."

"Really?"

"Yes, indeed. He did."

"And so he just opened his mouth?"

"In faster time than I like to keep, he whipped his pecker out and the other two followed right behind him. He dropped to his knees and God help me Callie, he started to untie my buckskins in the most seductive way I ever saw those strings part in my life."

She was a little offended. "How's that?"

"He had these real pretty deep blue eyes and he kept 'em focused on me. I kept mine focused on him. He used his teeth to untie the front and then pushed my pants down like he'd never been so glad to see a hard and ready man."

"Then what?" she whispered. Part of what turned Callie on the most had always been watching Little Joe with Richard. Right now, hearing all about his indiscretions ignited similar sensations she enjoyed in the past when she watched them with her own eyes.

"He grabbed a hold of the thickest part with a real manly tug. Only way I can describe his grasp is to make a comparison. Remember how you used to snatch the reins of a wild horse when one of those ornery beasts flared your temper? You'd grab the leather straps together and grip them so tight, the animal knew you meant business. I thought of you when he first touched me, on account of the way he yanked me forward, no questions asked."

"So you realized exactly what he had on his mind when he closed his hand around ya?"

"Oh yeah, sugar. There wasn't any question." Lust filled Little Joe's eyes and he ran his hand over the length of his erection pressing forward in his breeches. "I wish you could've been there to watch for yourself."

"Did he give you a good one?"

Little Joe crooked his arm behind his neck and looked straight ahead. "Yeah, Callie, he did but let me tell you the best part."



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"What?" she whispered. Joe's story reeled her in so tight that she was ready to hear more and then hoping for a long, slow screw too. If this was Joe's idea of getting her all worked up before Richard returned, he succeeded.

"When he sucked me, he stopped mid-stream and just beat the hell out of my stick. He'd grab a tight, fisted hold and pull and release, pull and release faster than I can tell you in words alone. Maybe I'll show you later."

"Okay," she shrugged. "And you enjoyed him more than most?"

"Ah Callie," he sighed. "He made these slurping sounds from base to tip and when he finally set me about right, he moved his face to the side and nuzzled my dick all the way around like he couldn't get enough of my cream all over his cheeks and chin."

She swallowed hard. "So you like that better than—

"No, I like both. This was just different and a first for me, you know."

She tried to imagine Little Joe and his new friends sitting around a campfire playing with each other. Truth told, it made her hot and incredibly wet. She tried to imagine more details by closing her eyes and squeezing them shut.

"Joe," she whispered.

He cocked his head and looked at her with a knowing smile. "Come here, Callie."

She crawled on his lap and he pulled her hair back in a ponytail. He held a fistful of her locks tight against the nape. "You know what I like, right?"

"I thought I did," she choked out her answer.

"You do. You always, listen to me Callie, you always do everything right."

"Except loved you like you needed most?"

He hesitated and she saw him flinch. "Callie, I had to let you go and find yourself. I had to let you go and live out your dreams. You asked me to honor your wishes and told me you wanted to make your own way, remember?"

"I didn't live the life I thought I'd live, Joe," she stated flatly. "I didn't see those dreams like I thought."

"I know, baby," he whispered, brushing her lips with feather-like kisses. "But I did."

The crushing sound of his three words threatened to leave her shattered. "Joe," she

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licked his name into his lips. "Do you still want me?"

"Absolutely."

"And Richard? Do you want Richard?"

"Always," he assured her.

"But what about those cowboys?"

The faraway expression on his face told her while he enjoyed his time among strangers, he paid a price too high when he gave his body to them. The hours spent with them almost cost him his life.

"They were bounty hunters hired to find me and Richard," he finally confessed.

She pushed away from him all at once. "What?"

"Seems my relationship with you and Richard never was as private as I would've liked."

Callie gulped. "Did I cause this?"

Joe cupped her neck and with complete honesty, he told her what she needed to hear, the truth. "I think maybe you did when you trusted the wrong man."

"Oh Joe, I'm so sorry."

He pursed his lips and kissed her forehead. "Did you fall in love with him? I could accept this a little better, if you told me you loved him."

When he asked the question, she saw a hint of anger. For Joe, the ultimate betrayal for him was a confession of love for another. He was playing her like a hand of poker.

"No," she said, thinking of the town doctor everyone in Tombstone respected.

"But you could've loved him?"

"I...I don't know."

The tenderness gone, he trailed up her inner thigh with a fast hand. "Open up for me," he said biting at her lobe.

She shifted her legs and he pressed his palm under her heat. "Did he make you crazy when you were with him, Callie?"

"I don't remember," she lied.

He slapped her pussy with a hard hand and she felt the spurt of moisture fall from her inner walls. "Joe," she whined.

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"Did you think about me when he sank 'tween your legs?"

"Yes," she admitted. "When his tongue was there, I thought about you."

He snarled. "I know you did. And you and I both know the reason why."

A flicker of recognition danced in his eyes. Yes, they both realized why. Joe's cock, and tongue, was the only one capable of reaching where it needed to go to fully please an insatiable woman. Then, there was another reason. One she fully intended to tell him all about...later.

"You didn't love him, Callie," he told her.

"No, I didn't love him," she whispered before his fingers sank into her walls. She would say anything he wanted to hear now.

Dropping his lips to hers, she jerked when he held her in place. He thrust into her deeper, inspired by every moan, every sigh.

"Come here, Callie." He dragged his lips across hers and the familiar taste of him drew her tears.

She pulled away. He stroked harder, plunged with purpose.

"Come here, baby," he said again, licking her bottom lip and nuzzling her cheek. "Let Little Joe take care of you."

Ah, she hated it when he spoke about himself in third person. And she loved it. He twisted his fingers, flipped his wrist and finger fucked her right into a pleasure no woman had ever known.

She believed it because no other woman would dare act like this in a man's bed. She held tightly to the wooden headboard behind her, clutching to his shoulder in front of her. She clawed at his skin, broke a nail on the other hand and rode right into his palm.

"Joe!" she screamed.

He steadied her by looping his arm around her waist. He worked his hand against her body. One finger buried inside, the others pinching and tugging the skin around her opening. Pleasure and pain, a mix so hot it was undeniable, no other man seasoned her like this.

"That's it, Callie. Close your eyes and think of me. Watch me from that campfire."

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“Joe!”

“No, Callie. Imagine me now.”

She swallowed stiffly as one release left her and another lingered around waiting for his hand and words to draw out another. “Joe.” Breathless she tried to escape him, close her legs and move away. He refused her.

“Callie,” he kissed her soft lips and looked down on her with a smile. “That’s my girl.” He brushed his lips over her forehead and teased her. Pulling at her womanly folds, he pushed his fingers through her opening again.

“Keep your eyes closed, Callie. Let me tell you a story,” he mumbled, leisurely feeding her his lips and his fingers at the same time.

“After I shot off in Small’s mouth, I dropped down to the ground, exhausted. Medium and Large moved closer and wanted me to try taking them in my mouth. Callie, you should’ve seen these guys.” He stopped talking for a second and thrust his hand against her pussy while going still deeper inside her walls.

Her mouth fell open and his lips curved in a lopsided smile. “They had dicks like mine and they pumped their meat into their hands with a hard drive no one like me had ever seen before. They expected me to suck. One of them held my head to his cock and when I didn’t open, the other one grabbed my hips, positioned me on my knees and then spanked me.”

“Oh God, Joe,” a fountain from her newly formed puddle drifted over his fingers and completely coated them.

“And I liked it Callie,” he whispered. “I thought of you the whole time they spanked me with their bare hands and a switch. One of them had a switch.”

Her ass clenched and he ran his fingers through her lips before tapping her back hole with the moisture he easily gathered from her pussy. He locked his lips over hers then and she feasted on his kiss. She was hungrier than he ever recalled from simple kissing and finger fucking. She held tighter to his shoulder and then cupped his neck, letting go of the bed to do it.

“That’s it, Callie, squat over my fingers. Good girl. Let me feel you, Callie.”

She rode into his palm and screamed out his name almost the second he asked. He

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watched her wither away under his touch and then pinned her against the bed. "Ah yeah, Callie, that's my naughty woman. I wish you would've been there to watch them. I think you would've liked seeing all the signs of pleasure for yourself."

A door slammed behind them and they both jerked.

"Shit," Richard said, looking at the show they created. He glanced in the mirror and then stared back at them.

"And later I'll tell you the rest of the story," Joe said, pushing his body away from hers and eyeing the loveliest cock he'd ever had the pleasure of riding in all of his life.

Richard eased into the room and sat down. He tugged his boots off and Joe smacked his lips. No, he didn't suck on a man but he might, if Richard asked.

## Chapter Six

For the first time in all her life, Callie recognized a new lust in Richard's eyes. He watched her with a focus like never before. Callie suddenly felt exposed, like a new lover just paid her going rate and then asked if he could spank her, something she always loved and seldom earned from the men who paid her.

Richard was going to fuck her. He looked more interested in her than Little Joe. He had his hand stuffed down in his breeches for a minute and after he settled things there, he rolled his tongue over his upper lip. He was ready for her. He stared right into her pussy and she spread her legs so he could see what he wanted to find. After years of their games of hide and seek, Richard wanted her.

"That's pretty," he complimented her. "Real nice."

Little Joe's skin went pale. "What? You like what you see here?" He shoved up her dress and patted her pussy. She felt a hot spurt of excitement and every nerve ending in her body woke right on up.

"Yeah, Joe. It's real nice, don't 'cha think?"

Truth told, how would he know? He'd never fucked a woman that Callie knew of and he never paid her much mind when they were all together. He focused on Joe and he had quite the love affair with Joe's shapely ass. Good grief, when he sank in between Joe's cheeks, he stayed awhile.

She shivered then. Would he sink between her folds and claim a stake, settle down, and like the way he felt inside her? Would he enjoy her enough to lay down a solid root? She felt faint when she thought of the way he fucked Little Joe.

Bracing herself against her elbows, she rolled her legs forward and back, Joe moved to the side and with a forced chuckle, he patted her knee. "Careful, Callie. You

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may get what you're inviting today."

"I hope so," she purred.

Joe frowned. After the story he told her to get her going—and every detail he shared spiked her interest —she didn't care what Joe wanted or liked right now. She had needs and someone there to take care of them.

"Richard, I want to make a suggestion. If you're going to act like you know what to do with a woman, you best learn how, starting right now."

Little Joe smacked her leg. "I'm telling you, this time you may get more than you ask for since Richard hasn't had his fill lately."

Richard looked lost in the midst of translation. "Callie?"

"I hope I get both of you today," she said. "I've craved you too, Richard, for a long time now."

Two years had nothing on them. She'd wanted Richard at various times over the last ten years but the days of separation made her hungry for the hearty meal she always missed.

"You heard the woman," Joe said. "And let me add, if you get her, this is the only way...with me watching."

Callie ignored Joe and his possessive behavior. Instead, she worked at freeing her buttons. She didn't have on bunch of frills and lace under her skirt so stripping didn't take long, something Joe could've helped her do earlier but since they didn't fuck, he never bothered.

Little Joe only had on his pants by the time she was naked. He didn't remove them. Instead, he took a seat in the rocking chair and Callie pushed Richard to the bed.

Straddling him, he swallowed tightly. He stared into her eyes and barely moved. She waited until the appropriate time to work at the ties on his buckskins and she wasn't one to waste a few ticks in time. One twitch and she went with the signal.

Joe splayed his legs and she concentrated on Richard, since he was right below her. She kept Joe in her peripheral vision.

"Callie, this is a bad idea," Richard warned.

"How do you know?" she purred, yanking his cock from his breeches.

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"I don't enjoy women," he informed. "At least not like you want me to."

"You don't know what you like, Richard."

She slid over his body and down to the floor tugging his cock into a hand job as she moved. The pre-cum tipped the end by the time her knees hit the floor and Little Joe stood behind her.

Richard acted nervous, like the first lick of tongue paralyzed him and the second and third only brought one part of his body back to life. Its delicious and intended function returned right before her mouth dropped over the swell of his dick.

"Oh heavens," he whispered.

Her tongue wrapped the crest and she sucked him to her throat, taking the time to let him linger right against her tonsils. Then she sucked and released him, pulling him all the way out so she could lick the tip.

Joe massaged her shoulders. "Let him go, Callie. I want to see him stroke himself."

Callie released him, not that she ever got the best of him anyway, and turned sideways to kiss the tip of Joe's penis. At some point, he slid his pants over his hips but he never stepped out of them. They were bunched at his ankles.

He fisted his size and ran the tip over her lips and encouraged her to take him.

"I want to watch Richard," she whined.

"Ask him if you can. He likes to see you pleasure me, you know."

"I never said anything of the sort," he said, pulling at himself with a fast hand, a deliberate cause. "I kind of liked her lips draped over the better part of me, if you want to know the truth."

She didn't remind him, but he mentioned he didn't like women. After holding him in her mouth and feeling him grow between her jaws, she had to wonder. No, she didn't have to guess. He liked her well enough to fuck her.

She gripped Joe's dick in her closed hand and kneaded him through her palm. "Can I see?" she purred.

Joe narrowed his gaze. "Can she watch?" he mimicked her.

"I'd like that, Callie," he said.

With a change of stance, Joe stood sideways. Callie sucked him between her jaws



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and gawked at Richard while he beat at his erection.

Callie felt sexier than she ever remembered. Richard trusted her enough to let her watch him and Joe was so attentive. Sharing his attention with equal consideration, he ran his fingers through her hair, bunched a handful at her nape and then stared at Richard with raw hunger in his eyes. She wondered what was going through their minds right then.

Richard, sprawled out on the bed, continued to stroke his length with a real nice grip. He held it tight and pulled his size through his hand with a rapid yank. Joe's eyes darkened.

Callie licked around the tip of Joe's salty stalk and then sucked him to the back of her throat. He pressed his palm to the top of her head and started thrusting harder and harder against her mouth.

The taste of his salty substance jetted to the back of her throat and he released an overdue sigh long before he stroked out the final seed of his release. Richard gripped the headboard behind him. His strong, muscular arms bulged thick with his defiance. He was holding back, waiting for the right time to let go of his spill.

Joe held onto Callie's shoulders, greedy and probably hopeful she'd stay on the floor in front of him. It didn't matter. She was too tempted and what Richard offered enticed her wet heat into a thick pool between her thighs.

She shrugged away from Joe and hurriedly crawled up the bed. She dropped her jaw and her lips surrounded him. Richard jerked with the first squirt of his excitement and heaven help her, she tasted him. She wanted to drink him in but changed her mind.

Little Joe spoke about his memories with such passion and she knew how to make him want for more than what he experienced with three strangers he met on the prairie. She'd show him a good time with the familiar and to hell with the strange.

Richard jack-knifed in the middle of riding out his violent, but pleasurable, personal storm. He caught strands of her hair with the upright motion and her locks caught between his belly and the juncture between his thighs. She moaned out against the tip and turned her head in time to nuzzle the end. His release sprayed sideways and his cream ran down her cheek.

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Joe sat down. His focus held hers and then out of nowhere, he slapped her hip. "That's my baby. Lick him, don't suck him. Let him come."

If lust carried another name, Little Joe Dylan defined it now. His dark eyes ran over with eagerness and his cock size, enormous anyway, increased by the second.

Richard collapsed against the bed and her mouth hovered over him. He motioned for her. She was in a daze, a state of confusion only trumped by her complete and total arousal.

Joe spread her hips and ran his fingers under her. Toiling in her juices, he dipped his fingers through her sleek heat before moving them from one entrance to another. A forbidden cave, she'd never allowed him to stroke inside but now nothing stopped them.

Richard kissed the top of her shoulder. "Can I?" he asked her for permission.

Chill bumps ran up and down her arms. He placed his palms on either side of her torso and raised her over him.

"I wanna suck on your pretty nipples and then Callie, my mouth—not Joe's—will dine on your sweet pussy."

She couldn't believe what she heard and by the look on Joe's face, he couldn't believe the request fell from Richard's thick lips. This experience, wasn't about Joe, not that their frolicking was all for her but for once, Joe wasn't the anchor or the only fella in the middle.

Before she could ask Joe for his permission, Richard's teeth clamped down on her nipple and she squirmed with new shock. It didn't hurt at all but instead provided a slow burn.

"Teeth," she reminded him.

"Joe," he said, licking around her swollen breast, "Tell her I don't need instructions."

"He won't," Joe grunted. If anyone knew how well Richard performed as a lover, Joe understood.

Bracing her hands on either side of Richard's head, Callie bowed her body and Richard flicked his tongue over her nipples. Lapping at them hungrily, she watched his

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eyes close with pleasure and better still, she felt him rise against her bottom.

"Richard," she hummed, grinding her pussy against his belly. Then, she started to slide down his stomach.

"No," he said one thing and nodded another. The no was for her and the nod, for Joe.

Joe's palm came down against her ass and she cried out, a familiar sound rang throughout the room when his hand struck her flesh again and again with the kind of spanking he loved to give. She longed to receive.

Callie moaned and arched, braced for another one and begged. God help her, she asked for more slaps, a burning punishment. "Spank me. Harder. Please, Joe. I need you to...spank me."

Richard's jaws shut around her full breast and his tongue tipped her nipple a few times during his suckling sound. Her hand played through his waves of hair and he dragged his lips over her nipples, pausing long enough to watch her.

After he released her, Joe stopped smacking her bottom and helped Richard hold her over him.

"Ah Joe," he said staring into her vagina. "She's sopping wet here."

"Then lick it," Joe said. "Or I will."

"I know what to do with it," he growled. Sipping his way into the middle of her folds, he proved he knew what to do with a woman's pussy regardless of whether or not he'd tasted one in the past.

His tongue uncurled right inside her channel and he thrust into her cave with a man's mission, a hungry rhythm. The in and out gesture meant to feed desires and then crumble control, held her at Richard's mercy. She fell onto his face with a grinding pattern. Her hips rolled and swayed. Forward and back, she moved around his tongue, with his timed strokes.

"Richard!" she warned but he lapped with more persistence. The man knew how to shower a woman's vagina with the kind of persistence needed to bring on a thrashing release. And he drew it from her.

Joe reached around her torso and tweaked her nipples. And the flood came. Harsh

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and violent as a sudden storm, her body jerked but her resistance remained low. She couldn't take enough, and he gave plenty.

Riding his chin and his mouth into one heavenly experience, she finally collapsed against the bed. "Oh God, that was...Richard."

"Yes," he grinned before he bit her hip. "You know who can take care of you don't you, Callie?"

She did now and with it came a new dawn, and an unexpected discovery. There were only two men for her and fortunately, they didn't mind to share.

## **Chapter Seven**

Sated, she watched them a few minutes later. Joe was on his back and his legs were spread wide, far apart and in a different position than she ever witnessed before. Richard towered over him and once he did, Joe draped his long, thick legs over Richard's shoulders and back.

Richard touched Joe's ass, and she couldn't see everything but it looked like he used the touch to spread him, prepare him for something far better. Kneeling on the mattress he pressed his cock to Joe's bottom and slowly inched his way into his ass. The initial penetration was the only thing slow and easy about the whole act.

"Yeah, Richard," Little Joe muttered. "You know what you like. Take it."

The second his cock was in place, Richard pounded into his body. He snarled at first, like he was ready to have a little angry sex and Callie knew from watching them before, the madder they were at one another, the harder they fucked out their differences.

With every stroke, Joe moaned, an ongoing stale cry. The soft echo sounded like music to her ears because she saw his expression. He was in heaven.

A few moments passed and Richard pressed Joe's calves high above his head and drove into his ass thrusting himself deep into Joe's bottom. Richard looked down at him with crazy lust boiling hotter. "You like it hard, Little Joe?" He hammered into him before he answered.

"Ah yeah," he finally said in a broken voice. "That's it. Fuck me, Richard. Fuck me wild." He called out and when he did Richard stopped, yanked him forward, and

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grabbed his shoulders. His lips crashed against Joe's in a meaningful kiss.

Stunned when they kissed in front of her, since they seldom met mouth to mouth, Callie twisted around to watch them. Richard immediately pulled away, turned Joe to face the bed and pushed him to the mattress all in one smooth move.

"You'll hurt him," Callie screeched, thinking of the recent wounds.

Joe sneered. "Hush up, woman. He knows what I like."

Once Joe was face down against the bed, Richard rammed his cock into his ass and slapped his hip a few times. "So you want it rough now?"

Joe arched his back and Richard pressed his palm to the center of his spine. She could tell he did it to pin him to the bed rather than hurt him.

"Can you handle me?" he slapped his ass and grabbed him around his middle, never allowing his cock to leave him. "Talk to me, Little Joe. Feel that?"

His hips jerked and he pulled all the way out. Then, he sank between Joe's cheeks again, cupping his bottom and grinding away, fighting for a new release.

"I want it...hard," he said breathless while Richard rode him. "I want ...you. I always need you!" He cried out and Richard thrust in between his cheeks rearing back away from his body in order to thrust in once more.

She reached out and held Joe's hand when he touched her fingertips. He brought them to his lips and sucked her fingers.

Richard tugged him up to his knees and elbows. With a guttural growl, he withdrew and held himself at the base of his cock. "Callie, get under him."

"What?"

"Come here, Callie," Joe said, pulling her under his body.

With her legs together, Little Joe penetrated her slow. Unable to resist the pleasure and the tip swelling inside her pussy lips, she reluctantly let her legs fall out of the way. He drove into her walls with a force strong enough to make her come instantly but Richard led the way.

She felt him too when he drove into Joe's ass. The beat of a man ready to come strummed thick into Joe's walls and he screamed out loud, "Richard, oh God, Richard!"

Joe's eyes closed in sweet surrender and he pounded his penis into her collapsing

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walls. She locked eyes with Richard and he continued to slap and fuck Joe's ass, the whole time watching her like he wanted to know the feel of her body, planned to move on to her next.

Before Little Joe slipped out of her, the release she wanted to find rushed in for her, and them. She held onto Little Joe's shoulders and Richard clasped his hands over hers. Together, they braced for and then enjoyed the ultimate rise and the crashing fall of one life-changing experience.

\* \* \* \*

A heavy knock interrupted the potential for pillow talk. They rarely indulged in much anyway. Richard hurriedly grabbed his pants and Joe slid behind the door with his gun in hand. She covered up with a thin sheet and held the scant material against her chest.

Richard leaned against the doorframe, his back blocking Joe's completely nude form through the crack.

"Marshal, is there a problem?" Richard asked.

The Marshal stared at the bed. Callie had plenty of run-ins with him when she worked there. He used her services himself before he married the pretty little flower he later kept wilted in his arms.

"I heard you were back," he addressed her.

"I am," she said, adding a saucy little wink.

"My wife is sick, did you hear that too?"

"No, I haven't had time to check on everyone, if you know what I mean."

"Uh-huh, from what I heard from Doc Scott back in Tombstone, he had plans of making a woman of worth out of you."

"A woman of worth?" Richard asked.

Oh, that would not sit well.

"What he said he aimed to do, and his words not mine, for your interest." He shot Richard a cold stare.

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Smart man. He was two steps from the grave, three seconds before he made the correction.

"Callie, everything all right in here, though?"

"Yes, Marshal," she replied quickly. "You should know better than anyone, I don't play nice and quiet."

He looked at Richard and then back at Callie. She dropped the sheet, bracing herself with her palms next to her hips and proudly showcasing her voluptuous body. "We don't want any trouble here, you know what I mean, don't you Marshal?"

He stared at her breasts either in disbelief or out of pure gratitude, she wasn't sure which until he patted his cock. "My woman is dying," he said again. "I don't get much lovin' at home these days."

"Then come on back here in a few days, and I'll treat you right. A free one on the house."

"Are you coming back to Tucson for good?" He deliberately ignored the huff from behind the door. "We'd sure like to see you back around these parts."

"Have a right mind to settle here again. Kind of miss the people around here, even you Marshal." She fluttered her eyelashes.

He put his hat back on his head and started to leave. "Callie, you ain't going to run with these two are you?"

Little Joe shook his head and then stepped out from behind the door. No sense in hiding from a man who realized he was there all along.

He worked his nude body over to the bed and fell on it with his ass up before kissing her nipples. She wedged her body in between Joe and the headboard, The new position allowed the Marshal a pretty good show.

Richard watched him. She saw his upper jaw twitch, his bicep flex. For a second, she thought the good Marshal might stay a bit longer than her men planned to tolerate. Joe's lips snapped over her breast and he showered her nipples with his attention.

She moaned out and then locked eyes with their guest. "They entertain me, that's for sure."

"I imagine it only takes a man to do what these two do, huh?"



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She looked at his erection and caught the deeper meaning. "I'll be damned," she said in an instant. "Wanna join us?" she offered, laughing.

Quickly, he looked at Richard and then back at Little Joe. He shook his head and then pressed his palm to the front of his breeches. "I want you to act like a descent whore and take one man at a time to your bed when you're in my town."

Richard clenched his fists but Callie rescued the Marshall before he found himself face down somewhere, and probably not in her bed, which he might have liked.

"Okay, I'll do it," she assured. "But you're welcome to stay."

His face turned blood red and he rushed out. She could hear him taking the steps as fast as his feet would carry him and with her current mood, even that turned her on.

## Chapter Eight

"You're a bad girl, Callie." Richard walked over to the bed and stripped the sheet from her body and then the thin mattress. He pulled her from Little Joe's arms and at the same time, unhooked his fly and let his erection hang free from the front.

The shades were drawn but since the Marshal would've headed across the street, Richard decided to give him a show. After what he'd interrupted and the way he brazenly negotiated time with Callie, he'd let him see what he missed. It would serve him later because some fantasies never came true and the Marshal wasn't coming near Callie again.

After the shades were up, he pushed the glass window forward also. He grinned when he spotted him. As luck would allow, he looked their way.

"Joe," he motioned for him to move and he did.

Richard grabbed a cloth from the basin and tossed it at her. "Clean me," he demanded.

She smacked her lips and dipped the cloth under his balls and swiped the material back and forth before she ran it over his shaft from base to tip. When he was clean, never mind hard, she sucked the tip in between her lips and licked around the head.

Richard growled before he reached over her back and pressed her body forward. He stood parallel to the bed and she hooked her arm around his hips and greedily sucked what he offered.

"You like me, don't 'cha, Callie?" He fucked her mouth with one hand applying pressure between her shoulder blades and the other twisting her nipples. His balls slapped against her chin and the little wench slurped as she sucked.

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"Ah yeah, she likes you well enough, I think," Little Joe acknowledged.

Richard backed away all at once and watched the pre-cum tip his mushroom head. With a wink and a shove, he pinned her to the bed and watched her boobs bounce when her back met the mattress.

He wasn't a breast man but with full ones like hers, he might learn to appreciate them. He spread her legs wide and fingered her pussy. "Want me inside of you right here, don't you Callie?"

She shook her head and he was grateful. He wanted her ever-lovin' ass. She gave permission when she reached between them and pressed his tip to her bottom.

Working his body in between the nice space she provided, he shoved his dick in between her cheeks. He held her legs open ignoring her precious cries when he found his space, the one reserved for his cock, his erection, and his pleasure.

"Richard!" she gasped. "More please!"

"Good hell, she's tight. Ah yeah," he mumbled. He didn't want to hurt her, but the way she encouraged him, he couldn't help himself. He had to go deeper, stroke harder. He fucked her ass just as hard as Little Joe allowed him earlier.

The facial expression she held showed the element of pain and he flipped her over, wadding up the blankets to help her hold the arch he needed her to have. Gripping her shoulders, he raised her up enough for Joe to slide under her and caress her breasts.

Richard drove into her ass. His full sac smacked against her bottom as he stroked beyond any protective barriers her inner ring once provided. The experience brought more satisfaction than he ever imagined.

He was fucking a woman. He once feared taking Callie because he didn't want to hurt her, couldn't imagine tearing into her like he fucked Little Joe. Yet, now he had Callie Matthews right where he needed her and she matched him stroke for stroke, thrust for thrust. She bucked against him and cried out his name. Not Joe's but his.

"Richard!" she screamed out and he saw Little Joe shift his weight. The sensation rippled around his shaft about the time Joe fingered her pussy. His fingers purposefully found their spot and Richard drove harder and harder.

"God yeah! That's my girl, my good woman. Ah yeah, Callie. Give it to me,

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sweetheart.”

She shifted back and forth on her knees and his hand came slapping down against her cheeks. She whimpered and she cried but he didn’t stop the fucking.

He couldn’t stop now. They were both hollering and yelping. She rubbed against him and Little Joe pushed on her hips giving Richard the opportunity to go as deep as he could reach. This was one lovely moment he’d never forget.

Richard found his way home and he liked it well enough to stay awhile.

\* \* \* \*

They all stood at the window fully dressed. Little Joe wrapped his arm around her shoulders and kissed the top of her head.

“I don’t know what they’re thinking but I reckon they’re waiting on someone.” He pointed across the street. “Best I can tell, those folks they’re expecting may look a lot like us.”

“Yep,” Richard said. “The two ropes hanging side by side in the center of town kind of ruins the element of surprise too, *don’t it?*”

“Sure does,” Joe said rubbing his neck. “Makes a man stop and reconsider all of his options, huh?”

Callie stood between them both. She grabbed Richard’s hand and held it tight and snuggled closer to Little Joe. “I’m going with you.”

“No,” Joe told her firmly. “You’re gonna stay put. We may not make it out of here. I believe we pissed off the wrong Marshal.”

“What makes him any different than the others?” she asked.

“You fucked him,” Little Joe easily pointed out.

“And apparently he liked it,” Richard chimed in.

“Is that all?” she batted her eyelashes.

“Shit, Callie,” Richard began. “You need to take this a little more to heart. You can see his hard-on from here. I really hope you haven’t fucked all the other Marshals in the west.”

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"Don't blame her," Joe said, "What the hell were *you* thinking anyway? I betcha the second you screamed out her name, the noose was hooked and tied."

"Maybe. I didn't care at the time. A man with a hard dick doesn't have to worry about anything more than the woman—or man—he's stroking." Richard stared straight ahead. "Besides, I reckon I used the same brain you did when you up and decided to let those strange men have a piece of your ass." He tilted his head toward a few cowboys to the right.

Callie looked down the dusty street and pointed toward the three riders waiting there. "Let me guess, Small, Medium, and Large?"

Richard studied Little Joe. "Hell, with names like that, you deserve the trouble they've brought down on you."

"I named 'em," he stated flatly.

Richard continued to watch everything outside without making a move. "I don't wanna know, Little Joe, I really don't."

"You heard what you wanted to hear anyhow," he said, realizing Richard was outside the door when he told Callie about his travels.

"Uh-huh, I listened to about all a man in love could stand. Now, I've seen about all I wanna see too." He turned around and headed for the door.

"Where are you going?" Callie asked, tugging at his arm.

"He's going to kill them," Little Joe told her.

"No!" she squealed. "You can't, Richard."

"I reckon I can. I've done some killing before."

"That was before you decided to take up with me," she replied. "And I don't go to bed with killers."

Richard and Little Joe locked gazes. Joe cleared his throat. "You don't?"

"That's pretty dang funny when you think about the company you keep, Callie." Richard stroked his chin. "Considering your profession and all."

"I don't." She stood firm in her beliefs. "No killers come to my bed."

He imagined a lot of them *came in her bed*. He didn't argue with her. Sometimes lust was blind and the money behind a hard and ready penis must've paid for stupidity too.

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"If I'm going to screw men of a different sort then I think it's only fair I set some rules," she quickly added.

Richard was amused. "You do?"

"Yes," she said. "For starters, we stick together from here on out. No more parting ways and playing hide and seek. We stay together because," she hesitated and then said, "We love together."

Little Joe narrowed his gaze. "Why the sudden change?"

She peered at Richard from under her long eyelashes. "I...I..."

Richard slapped Little Joe on the back. "You ought to understand."

"I do," he promised. "But she's never hurt for sex. I always give her what she wants and some of those fellas paying her, probably did too."

No one mentioned the fact that it took Little Joe two years to meet her needs this time.

"So, why now?" Joe demanded.

"I've never wanted to change things until Richard...well, you know."

Little Joe gnawed the inside of his jaw. "Liked it in the ass, did you?"

She choked out a response and it sounded like a "Yes."

"Uh-huh, and Richard here is the only one able to give you what you gotta have, huh?"

She shyly looked at the floor and then back at them again. "Yes, the only one and you, Little Joe, give me other things I need."

"And you can't live without us now?" Joe asked, his tongue positioned at his upper lip as he studied on things for a dang minute longer.

"No," she admitted. "I can't and I won't."

Richard swallowed hard and Joe sat down on the bed. "I reckon we have a problem then don't we?"

"Yes, I believe we do," she said knowingly. "I've never known you to turn me down for anything, Joe. I hope you don't start now."

He sat in deep thought. When he looked up at Richard, they shared a quiet stare. She reverted back to their past history. Richard and Little Joe would always have their

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secrets. Most of them they'd never share with her.

Richard nodded. "Go on, tell her. I've already figured out your connection back in Tombstone but she needs to hear the truth from you."

Little Joe rubbed his chin. "Doc Scott patched up those fellas I told you about because he uh, well he knows 'em pretty well."

"What do you mean?" she asked. "What does any of this have to do with those men out there waiting for you now? You think Doc Scott sent them?"

"Well, truth is, Callie, I reckon Doc Scott wanted a pretty little thing like you on his arm. It was for show and nothing else. He uh, he meets up with those three a few times a year for a little man lovin and such. He needed you for social fronts and looked for an excuse to get rid of me and Richard once and for all."

Her chin dropped. "You're kidding me."

Richard paced back and forth across the room. "Tell her all of it."

"Truth is, Callie. There were four cowboys and not three. The fourth was your doctor friend and it's the reason he wanted me out the way as quickly as possible."

Callie stared at him in disbelief. "That's not possible. Doc Scott is a woman's man. He likes things a certain way. I don't think he's a man's man in all the ways you might think."

Little Joe smirked. "You don't? Well, you're wrong. Those three fellows down there are waiting to encourage me and Richard here either to ride on out in the other direction or hang for some kind of crime that we most likely committed."

"I don't understand."

Little Joe took a step forward and touched her cheek. "That Doc Scott, let me ask you something about him. Did you ever fuck him or not?"

"No," she said.

"Didn't think so," Richard said.

"But we were intimate," she quickly added.

"Uh-huh. I'll bet. You sucked his cock and he fingered you and that's about the extent of it, right?"

"He uh...did other things for me. You know, down there." She sounded almost

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proud of the fact as she pointed toward her pussy. "He was skilled with his tongue."

Little Joe clapped his hands. "Well whoopee. Now I feel so much better. Callie, look here and listen too. You told Doc Scott too much and he sent his fellows to look for me. Small rode out that first night I told you about so he could let Doc Scott know I was in their camp. The Doc rode on back with Small. Since he already knew about me and Richard, it made everything a little easier. They passed around the bottle that night but it wasn't necessary. Doc knew what he wanted and he understood how I liked it best on account you told him everything."

Callie sat on the bed. "Little Joe, I'm sorry."

"No need to be sorry. Truth is, we enjoyed the hell out of one another. In less than a day, he wanted to run away, just the two of us. When he realized I have feelings for you and Richard, feelings I couldn't abandon, well Callie he plumb lost his mind. Jealousy is an evil thing, I reckon."

"You mean, he shot you because you wouldn't run off with him?"

"Yes, ma'am, he certainly did."

"He strikes me as a peculiar man," Richard said thoughtfully.

"Indeed," Little Joe agreed. "I think you would've enjoyed him too, though."

"I doubt it," Richard sneered. "I have everything I want with the two of you. I don't need another one."

"I'm not suggesting," Little Joe began. "That we look him up."

"Good," Callie exclaimed. "I'm not in favor of bumping into him again after what you've told me."

Richard paced. "I have an idea," he said, returning to the window. "Callie, you're gonna go downstairs and talk to those cowboys. Tell them we're going to ride out of here. Let 'em know you're going too. You need to explain to them that the good doctor in Tombstone doesn't want you back there."

"You have to make them believe if you return to Tombstone, you won't marry Doc Scott and you won't make a *man of worth* out of him. Since he was the one to suggest it first, you see, he'll get the message. Then, you tell those boys you're going to ride out with us and for the sake of conversation, tell them I'm pissed off cause they fucked my



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man. Let them know I don't have a problem getting a piece of their asses since they had a piece of Little Joe's here. Make sure they know I'm a good shot regardless of what I draw." He winked, then laughed.

Joe shook his head. "I don't want her going downstairs without us to guard her."

Callie fingered the butt of Richard's gun. "I'm pretty sure he has my ass covered."

## Epilogue

### Four Years Later

Callie had little Joey on her hip when Doc Scott slid out of his saddle and strode toward the small covered porch. "Callie?"

"Doc?" she replied, tenting her hand over her brow in an effort to block the sun and greet her guest at the same time. She wasn't glad to see him. Holding her little boy closer to her chest, she was ready to protect her only child.

"Kid looks like Joe," Doc said.

"Yes," she agreed, cautiously. Joe proudly fathered a son and the little boy looked just like him.

"I never thought I'd see you again," he said quietly. "I guess I'm a surprise."

"I wouldn't call you out as a pleasant one," she quipped.

The sound of a gun cocked forced Doc to look behind him. "Me either."

"Little Joe," he snapped over his back. "How ya been?"

There was something saucy in the way he asked, something peculiar about the way he waited for Joe's response.

"Good," he said. "Real good."

Richard stepped outside and stood on the porch. He had to bow his head a little to keep from bumping it on the roofline. He had a towel in his hands and he dried them off before he tossed it over his arm. "Need something Doc?"

He cleared his throat and stared at Callie. "My uh, my friends," he began, "You remember them, Joe..." His voice trailed off and then broke. "They're dead. They were

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caught in Colorado near one of the springs and they were killed because of their indecent activity.”

“You rode all the way out here to tell us about this?” Joe asked with his gaze deliberately unsettled. He looked him over real good and the heat of the day scorched hotter right then.

“I thought you might want to know,” he stated flatly.

Callie watched Joe and Doc Scott sum one another up and what she saw didn’t sit well. Little Joe looked at the crooked doctor with lust in his eyes.

Richard sat down on the stoop. His age was starting to show and it bothered her. Truth told, Callie always liked Doc Scott prior to the Little Joe occurrence, but she couldn’t imagine why Richard would welcome him into their home. She took one look at Richard and knew what he was going to say long before he said it.

“We got supper on. If you’d like to stay, you’re invited.” He reached up for the baby and turned to walk back inside. “But remember, I said dinner. That’s all I’m offering and beyond that, you and Joe will have to work out the rest.”

Callie followed Richard inside and only glanced back at Joe and Doc once. She put her hands on her hips and when he didn’t acknowledge her, she asked, “Why did you invite him to stay?”

He tilted his head and then kissed her cheek. “Callie, I didn’t have a choice. Men like Joe Dylan never settle down. They ain’t happy in one place, and men like me, facing age and all, worry about their family. Doc Scott showed up just in time to save us both from a little heartache. A few more days, maybe a couple of weeks and Joe would’ve ridden on out of here. Now, he’s not going to be in any unnecessary hurry.”

“You knew he was coming here, didn’t you?”

“I suggested he stop by when I ran into him at the General Store.”

“And you invited him for a little more than dinner too, didn’t you?”

A sparkle came into his eyes and he waggled his eyebrows. “Joe always loved a little creamy pudding for dessert.”

Callie looked out the small glass window and watched Little Joe and Doc Scott make eyes and small talk with one another. “He’s the one that gave Little Joe that

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unforgettable blow, isn't he?"

Richard looped his arms around her waist and whispered his reply. "Yep, and he's also the *only one* to ever pump four bullets in his gut too. That's how come he was a little shocked to find Little Joe alive. He fired his gun with the intent to kill and Little Joe survived."

"I imagine Joe's ready to get even," she said leaning her head back to rest against Richard's thick chest.

"Yeah," he said. "By the way those two are acting, my guess is Joe's more than ready to return the favor and pump him full of something."

"I have no doubt, he'll give him his best shot," she said, laughing.

Richard drew her in for a kiss and whispered, "Me either, Callie. I just hope we get to watch."