



OBSSESSION OF
Jayde
ELIZA GAYLE

Loose Id

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About this Title

Genre: Full-figured Heroine/Paranormal Ménage

When Jayde returned to Hickory Falls to settle her grandmother's estate she didn't know what she was in for. A secret antique puzzle box with a necklace and a note that only says *Beware of the Obsession*. A bakery everyone is anxious to see reopened despite her inability to cook and a pair of hunky too good to be true tenants living in the same house.

Marc and Anthony are lovers waiting on their third to complete them, the Guardian they have sworn to protect. When Jayde arrives they are anxious to get her into their bed until they see the necklace around her neck. Now they have to take things slow, seducing her before they reveal the duty to which she has been called.

When the Guardian denies her calling, the protectors will do anything in their power to convince her, but in the end it has to be her choice. Will she sacrifice her heart to do what is right?

Sometimes free will is a bitch.

Publisher's Note: *This book contains explicit sexual content, graphic language, and situations that some readers may find objectionable: Anal play/intercourse, male/male sexual content, ménage (m/m/f).*

Dedication

As always, thanks to my word war buddies for their support and for helping me get through deadlines.

Chapter One

"Can you feel it? I'll soon be free. My time is coming, and all hope will be lost."

Marc jerked awake, his body coiled tight and covered in sweat. His gaze swept left and right as he crept from the bed, searching for the source of distress.

Evil.

A sudden gust of mist and wind tore through the room, shattering the calm. Glass and ceramics crashed to the ground in a flurry of noise and dangerous debris.

"What the hell?" Aidan jumped from the bed, muscles taut in defense, searching for the source of the disturbance.

"Relax. It'll be over in a second." The thick and suffocating air pushed desperately at Marc's skin as he fought to stay upright. A quick glance at Aidan showed a healthy dose of anger mixed with fear on his lover's face. "Do. Not. Fear. This," he yelled over the swirling vortex. "Fight it!"

He pushed against the dark power filling the room. It pushed back. *Son of a bitch.* His muscles strained, and the blood pounded in his head as the unseen evil slammed them into the wall, pinning them in place. Sweat poured from Marc's body as he fought to continue breathing and expel the demonic spirit. He should have seen this coming.

With every physical and mental aspect of his being strained to the breaking point, he pushed and struggled harder. Invisible fingers wrapped around his throat, cutting him off from the life-giving force he needed to stay

alive. Despite Aidan's and his considerable combined strength, the darkness wrapped them from head to toe in a shadowy shroud. He dared not break his concentration to check on Aidan and, instead, racked his oxygen-deprived brain for another solution.

Frigid air moved in, and the temperature of the room fell by at least fifty degrees. But that cold touch made him remember what it was he sought. A faint heat source in the room now beckoned him like a lifeline. His arms dived through the swirling blanket of obsession, greed, and jealousy surrounding them as he groped for the crystal amulet he knew had to be mere inches from his grasp.

His body twitched and flailed against his movements, and a sliver of fear tried to break through his resolve. A century ago when he'd faced these very fears, his inexperience had gotten the best of him. Not this fucking time.

His right hand wrapped around the heated crystal, which warmed his hand with its magic. Shards of light and color burst through his skin, heating him from the inside out. Hope and joy fragmented the rage, forcing the hateful and unbalanced emotions from the room in a fiery display of dominance. His body collapsed onto the floor in a heap of exhaustion and sweat alongside Aidan.

Marc blew out a hard breath and looked at the damaged room. The balance of power was shifting more quickly than he'd expected, and they'd just been warned.

"What was that?"

"That, my good man, was the welcome wagon." Marc stood on shaky legs and placed the crystal amulet around his neck for safekeeping. "It appears our Guardian has arrived."

* * * * *

Jayde rushed down the sidewalk, sweat trickling down her back as she hurried toward the glass doors of the bank. She gripped her bag tighter, willing

her hands to quit shaking. What could possibly be in that damn safety-deposit box to warrant the increased fear racing through her the closer she got to it? It had to be the heat, the hot, sticky air she dragged in and out of her lungs. Much longer, and she would certainly melt.

She'd grown accustomed to the mild climate of San Francisco and had forgotten that during the summer in South Carolina, you never knew what to expect. Rain one day, heat the next, but always the miserable humidity. Instead of the jacket and skirt she wore, she longed for a thin sundress and sandals. Not to mention a tall, cold drink. The kind with an umbrella and some fruit on the side. Something with enough liquor in it to make her forget why she was here.

Her stomach knotted in grief at the memory of the polite phone call she'd received a few days ago. She'd woken to the shrill ring of her cell phone at an ungodly hour of the morning and had been ready to curse the person calling. Those words were forgotten when the caller informed her that her beloved grandmother had died the night before, and that she was needed in Hickory Falls as soon as possible.

It had been several years, more than five in fact, since she'd come here to visit, and she had no idea what would await her on Main Street. Jayde always had an excuse whenever her gran would ask her to come. Looking back now, every one of them sounded even lamer than the one before. Pangs of regret sliced through her as she considered all the time she had wasted. And for what? A dead-end job with an ex-fiancé as a boss?

The only information she had managed to pry out of the attorney was that renovations had recently been completed, and there were currently a pair of tenants living in the guest apartment on the third floor, next to her grandmother's residence, which she guessed was now hers. She'd looked over the photographs the attorney had given her, and she had to admit she was quite impressed with her grandmother's vision; the place looked fantastic and not at all like the run-down house she remembered. But nobody had been able

or willing to give her a straight answer about the financial status or future plans for the historic home. She would have to dig through her grandmother's things and find all her financial records herself.

Her gaze swept across each business lining the sidewalk until she spied the familiar stone arch of the old town bank. Anxious to get inside, she pushed through the revolving door, and a blast of cool air brushed her face. Goose bumps prickled across her heated skin, and she wondered if she could just stand there awhile to recover. On a slow sigh of regret, she moved on and searched out the information desk to find a petite, dark-haired woman eyeing her curiously with a smile on her face. She headed in that direction.

"How can I help you today, ma'am?" The thick Southern accent rolled from her tongue.

"I need to access my safe-deposit box." Jayde showed the woman the gold key she'd been gripping in her hand.

"No problem. Bob can take care of that for you." She waved to a tall balding man across the room. Jayde watched him approach, wondering if his strictly starched appearance and pasty skin hid a darker soul underneath. *Where the hell did that come from? This isn't San Francisco.*

After he verified her ID and declared her the official owner of her grandmother's box, Bob led her through a series of lifeless corridors in the back of the building. Funny, the farther she followed him, the more her anxiety ratcheted up. Perspiration broke out on her forehead, even with the chilly temperature, and her hands shook harder than before. Silly, really. What could her grandmother have left her that would give her any reason to be nervous? Or for that matter, what could she have left that would require the security of a safe-deposit box?

That was the real question that had burned through Jayde since she'd been told about it. She'd never thought of her gran as the secretive type, but there was no telling what she'd been up to before she died.

“Your box is right in here, ma'am. I'll just leave you alone, if there is nothing else you need.” While he spoke, his eyes darted down to her breasts, which didn't relieve the nerves.

What a perv! She turned away from him in disgust and surveyed the room, a tiny, smaller-than-her-walk-in-closet area that was lined with lockboxes. “This is fine. Thank you.”

She gritted her teeth and stepped inside. A stronger sense of foreboding surrounded her like a thick and powerful cloak. Her skin prickled, and the tiny hairs on the back of her neck stood on end. It took every ounce of willpower she possessed not to turn and run.

What the hell?

She searched through the numbers until she located the right slot. Maybe she should leave. Her grandmother's will had left her with a cryptic message about her life being about to change forever. It had said there would be no turning back, all fate was hers. At the time, she'd assumed they were the wild ramblings of an aging mind.

Now she wasn't so sure.

Slowly she released the breath she'd been holding, one fraction at a time, searching for an internal calm that seemed to elude her. With trembling hands, she pulled the container from the shelf marked with her number and carried it to the table.

She slid the key into the lockbox and turned it.

Jayde lifted the lid to find another box, an old, ornate wooden one to be exact. How old, she had no idea, but from the brown, aged wood and odd markings, she could only guess it was really old—as in centuries old. Her fingers brushed the edges, and her skin tingled from her arms to the back of her neck. When she lifted it from the safe, her throat tightened, making her breathing seem labored. As she eyed the box, she couldn't help but think how silly she was behaving. *It's just a box.*

Her fingers slid along the seam, trying to find the spot that would open it. Finally it dawned on her that the series of levers created a pattern, and she would have to follow it to get inside. One by one she moved the pieces of the puzzle until only one remained.

She held her breath, pressed the last lock, and flipped open the box. Sucking in a deep breath, she stared down at the intriguing antique gold necklace nestled in the corner. The filigreed gold of the chain had aged to a shimmery bronze color, and the intricate beading work around the edges of the rough-cut links gave it a delicate yet sturdy look.

In the center of the delicate arcs of the pendant sat a pearlescent oval moonstone, sparkling in the artificial light of the room. The stone was large and flat, so that when she ran her thumb across it, she found it to be smooth as glass. But where she expected a cool, solid surface, she found heat and life. Jayde pulled it from the box and held it up in front of her. The stone seemed to change color as it moved in the light. She guessed the necklace to be the perfect length to nestle between the breasts, atop the beating heart of its owner.

The weight and texture of it seemed perfect, not too heavy nor too light. She wanted nothing more than to put it on and wear it. Feel it against her skin. Why had her grandmother hidden it away in a bank? More importantly, why had she never seen her grandmother wear it? It was far too beautiful a piece to never be appreciated and kept hidden. Unable to resist, she unhooked the clasp and slid the chain under her hair.

With the necklace fastened, she let the chain fall, and the dangling moonstone did exactly as she'd thought. It slid between her breasts to nestle in the cleavage there. The contrast of the cool temperature of the chain and the heat of the stone felt delicious against her flushed skin. A sudden crackle of energy swept the length of her body, causing her to shiver. Heat continued to build inside her, until her sex tingled with arousal and surprising need.

Jayde's fingers followed the sensation as she skimmed her hands up the seam of her skirt, stopping at her hips. She looked around the room, hoping to find something she could use as a mirror; she wanted to see how it looked. No luck. She would have to wait until she got to the house before she could admire the beautiful necklace around her neck. Not to mention figure out why her pussy throbbed between her legs.

Unable to resist, Jayde slid her hand down and cupped herself, applying pressure to her clit. Common sense told her to stop. Yet her hand rubbed harder as carnal, wicked thoughts filled her head. Maybe she could just go with it for a few minutes.

"Is there anything you need in there?"

Her hand jerked at the bank manager's voice outside the door. Heat flooded her face as she smoothed her skirt and fought back a desire she didn't understand.

"No...no, I have what I need." Not really, but this was not the time and place to figure that out.

Opting to keep the necklace on, she picked up the box and tucked it under her arm. No need to keep this locked up here, not when she fully intended to wear the beautiful stone.

A piece of paper fluttered to the ground as she lifted the wooden box. Unfolding the worn and wrinkled paper, she found one sentence scrawled inside.

Beware the obsession.

* * * * *

Without needing the walking map the attorney had given her, Jayde located the bakery from memory. It occupied the first floor of an historic, three-story home on Main Street. The other two floors had been converted to small guest apartments that were rented out. Her grandmother's attorney had informed her that the establishment would now be her responsibility, as well as

the two tenants living in one of the apartments above. Nausea rolled in her stomach when she thought about that. She wasn't sure she could run a place like this on her own, but she could imagine the shock and disappointment on her grandmother's face if she didn't at least try.

The brick building reminded her a little of an old brownstone, except for the large plate-glass window encompassing the entire front of the building. There were decorated shelves with empty serving platters along the window ledge, with a large pink sign above them stating the shop was temporarily closed.

Might be more than temporary, she mused.

A baker she was not. Sure, she'd followed a few recipes in her life but with mixed results. She'd decided long ago that cooking was not her forte. She dug through the envelope stuffed in her bag and pulled out the key to the front door. A doorbell chimed, announcing her arrival as she stepped into the cool entry of the store. To the left was a large open archway leading into the main store area, and to the right, a door that would lead to the apartments upstairs, she presumed.

Going left, she walked into the brightly lit shop, the sweet smell of chocolate and vanilla filling her thoughts. Oh, and coffee. Inhaling deeply, she thought a tall cup of iced java would be perfect right about now. The interior walls were the same aged brick as the outside of the building, and it gave the place a cozy feeling. The couch and overstuffed chairs at the far end of the room looked comfortable and inviting. This place seemed perfect for her grandmother, and Jayde would have enjoyed seeing her here. She traced her fingertips along one of the glass cases, admiring the nostalgic look that had been preserved despite the newness of the fixtures. Tears welled in her eyes as the responsibility of it all overwhelmed her.

Her head pounded with the beginnings of a migraine as she tossed her things on one of the chairs and took a seat on the couch. Looking at the empty glass cases around the room, she could imagine them filled with her

grandmother's candy and treats. Her talent in the kitchen had been legendary, and Jayde had always enjoyed her fudge the best. While the quiet comforted her, the emptiness of the room left her adrift, wishing to see her gran come through the kitchen door to smile and chastise her for being away for so long. Tears pooled in her eyes and threatened to fall down her cheeks. She fingered the stone between her breasts, taking strength from it, willing a calm she desperately needed to flow over her.

Stretching out on the couch, her skirt riding up her plump thighs, she rested her head on one of the pillows and shut her eyes in an attempt to block out the bright light. She just wanted to lie here for a while and relax. She had all the time in the world to deal with it all, because she had nothing to get back to.

* * * * *

Marc stood propped against the wall right inside the doorway, watching Jayde sleep. She was everything he had imagined and more. Footfalls sounded on the steps leading to the bakery, and when Aidan came through the entrance, Marc grabbed his arm to get his attention. He placed his finger against his mouth and indicated for Aidan to stay quiet, before pointing to her sleeping form on the far couch.

Aidan turned in her direction, his straight black hair settling around his shoulders. "Is she okay?"

"I think she's just sleeping."

"Is it her? The one we were expecting?"

"I think so. She matches the vision I had of her, as well as the picture we found on Katriona's nightstand. And the energy in the room matches what I've been sensing for hours now."

"She's even more beautiful than I expected."

Marc froze, momentarily speechless at the longing that vibrated from Aidan when he spoke. "Getting to know her should be a very interesting experience." He moved farther into the room to get a better look.

His gaze was drawn to the glow of her skin. Her beautiful face had softened in sleep, and she had a mass of curls that surrounded her head. But it was the fair, smooth skin that called out to him to touch her. To taste her. Katriona had certainly sent a woman to tempt him; that was for sure.

Marc bent down and touched her cheek.

Her eyes flew open, and she gasped. "What the—"

"It's okay, Jayde; you're safe."

She sputtered awake, struggling her way to a sitting position, attempting to pull down her skirt. It had ridden up in her sleep, revealing the sky blue panties she wore underneath.

"Who...? What...?" She closed her eyes and inhaled before continuing. "How did you know my name?"

Marc rested a hand on her shoulder. "My name is Marc, and this is Aidan. We live on the third floor."

"Oh...oh of course." She stood and smoothed down her clothes and her long mane of fiery red curls. A faint blush tinted her cheeks, enhancing her natural glow. He imagined those long fingers touching his body or Aidan's. He bit back a groan at that, and in the light of the sunset, her head looked as if flames surrounded it. *Beautiful.*

She tugged at the edge of her blouse, pulling it over the rounded, sexy curve of her belly, and ended up revealing the deep cleavage of her breasts. Nestled between them was the blue moonstone he and Aidan had been searching for all these months.

His back stiffened. Katriona had said that it was hidden in a safe place, but this was not safe at all.

"That's a beautiful gem you have there, Jayde."

Her hand flew to the chain and lifted the stone, rubbing the smooth surface between her fingers. "Thank you."

The husky tone of her voice sounded like sleep and sex. It made him want to get to know her a whole lot better. But he wondered if she had any idea of the danger she toyed with.

"Where did you get it? If you don't mind my asking."

She stared at him with her deep green eyes, a shadow of distrust touching her face. He could almost see her processing his question and trying to come up with why he was so curious about it.

"It was in my grandmother's safe-deposit box. I don't understand why she hid away such a beautiful necklace. I couldn't resist putting it on." The way she continued to finger the stone had him worried.

Aidan cleared his throat behind her. She jumped like a scared rabbit, letting the stone fall back into her cleavage and breaking the spell between them. She nibbled on her bottom lip.

"I'm sorry about your grandmother, Jayde," he offered. "We both cared for her very much."

"Thank you." She didn't look at him when she said it, and instead began gathering her things. "If you two will excuse me, I need to get changed and get a feel for the place a little. It's been a long day, and I'm not feeling sociable at the moment. You don't mind, do you?"

"No, of course not. Please let us know if we can be of any help. Miss Katriona is going to be missed."

"Thank you." She grabbed up the last of her belongings and headed out of the shop and up the stairs to her grandmother's apartment, now hers. The one right across from theirs.

"What are we going to do now?" Aidan asked. "We need to get that necklace from her before it's too late."

"There's not much time." Marc nodded absently as he rubbed the front of his jeans, trying to adjust himself to ease the ache for her in his groin. They had more than one issue to deal with.

"You felt it too, huh? Any chance it's just a side effect from the stone?"

Marc cocked his eyebrow in response. "You know better than that. We're immune to the stone, but not the woman who wears it, obviously."

Aidan looked down at Marc's crotch and smiled at the erection plainly visible through his thin pants. "She really got to you, I see."

"I know you're not mocking me; you look to be in the same condition." Marc stepped forward, and Aidan took a step back. "She got you hard too. Why?"

"Did you see her? So lush...so much energy surrounding her."

The deep tone of Aidan's voice told him more than words ever could. He took a few more steps, and Aidan backed up. The man's eyes glinted with lust; he liked it when Marc stalked him like this. Tonight he would take what he wanted and share a pleasure neither of them would be forgetting anytime soon, while Jayde slept in the apartment across the hall...

Aidan's back hit the wall.

Trapped.

Those sexy lips sent a sizzle of need to where Marc's cock throbbed against his zipper.

Marc leered at him and slapped his hands on the wall on each side of Aidan's head. "I know you don't want to get away."

"No." Aidan's voice came out a husky whisper, the sound of a man on the edge of desire and dying for more.

"What do you think of the fact that Jayde got me horny as hell? That I'd be upstairs fucking the both of you right now if I could?"

Aidan's eyes darkened, and his breathing kicked up a notch. Marc knew it wasn't jealousy that had him excited. Oh no, just the opposite. They'd been

waiting a long time for this day. When the woman who would be their Guardian showed up.

“What do you want right now?”

Aidan hesitated. The man knew how to push every fucking button he had, the ones that would draw out his dominance.

“Say it.”

“I want you,” Aidan growled.

“Liar. You want Jayde, don't you?” Marc leaned his hips forward, rubbing his cock against Aidan's.

“Is that what you really think? Or do you already know that we'll both have her...soon?”

The delicious friction had him inhaling sharply, but it was Aidan who reached for him first, his hand wedging between their bodies to rub Marc's dick through his pants.

At the simple touch, he jerked in Aidan's hand and hissed. “On your knees. Now.”

Aidan smiled and slid to the floor, a look of eager anticipation on his face. He made quick work of unfastening Marc's belt and sliding the zipper down to free him, but when his large hand encircled the shaft in a tight grip, Marc groaned his appreciation.

Between seeing Jayde's bare thighs just inches below her pussy, and now Aidan's willing submission, he wasn't sure he would last more than a few minutes before he came. “Our beauty has the smoothest, palest skin I've ever seen. The way her skirt inched up her thighs—” He banged the wall when a warm tongue stroked over the crown of his cock, swirling the edge and slipping into the slit to lap at his fluid.

Fuck. The man knew just what he liked and how to use it against him. Marc looked down in time to see Aidan open his mouth wide and swallow him whole, taking his full length to the back of his throat. His control snapped. He

grabbed a fistful of Aidan's midnight black hair and forced him to take more before sliding back out. When only the swollen tip remained, he pushed his way back in and fucked Aidan's mouth with short, hard strokes. With every push against the back of his throat, Aidan would swallow and tighten around him until Marc was mindless with pleasure.

"Deeper, take it deeper."

Aidan stroked and licked the underside of his shaft until Marc couldn't take it anymore. "Oh hell, I'm going to come."

His head fell back as he struggled to stop the release. He wanted to draw out the pleasure a little longer, let Aidan work his flesh until he joined him in a frenzy. The hand at the base of his cock tightened to an almost painful level, slowing the need enough to allow him to hold off.

"I can't wait to see Jayde touch you like this." Aidan groaned. "It's going to be fun to see her make you wild."

With his tight fist squeezing and that wet, firm tongue brushing over every inch it could, Aidan reached for his balls and stroked the tightened sac.

"Hell yes." He loved Aidan working his dick like this, taking it, controlling his orgasm. "So good." His breath grew harsher as even Aidan's pressure at the base of his cock did little to stop the onslaught of pleasure threatening to slice through him. He wanted to come in his mouth, let him suck every drop. Unexpected images of the three of them together flashed through his mind. Jayde's lush lips would look incredible wrapped around either of them, and it would drive them both crazy.

Marc bent down and grabbed Aidan's flat, beaded nipple. The tiny nub poked at the fabric of his shirt, and with two fingers, he tweaked it with a hard, quick twist. The resulting moan from Aidan vibrated the length of his cock, shooting pleasure from the base of his spine to the top of his head. On a snarling hiss, the pressure from Aidan's hand lessened, and he began stroking him as fast as his mouth was swallowing him.

The pressure built in his balls, tightening his whole body until the storm of his release exploded into Aidan's mouth. Streams of cum seemed to erupt from him as his dick was sucked dry. The blood rushed to his head, roaring in his ears as his hips continued to jerk forward.

Every day Aidan reminded him in different ways that they were a perfect match, and today was no exception. As the breath sawed in and out of his lungs, he looked down and met Aidan's gaze. The love, acceptance, and sheer pleasure there tore at his heart. He never wanted it to end, and with Jayde here now, he was certain that she would take their relationship further than either of them had experienced before. *If* they could convince her to do the right thing.

He pulled his cock from his lover's mouth with much regret and hauled him up by the shoulders. "Time to go upstairs and finish this, my love," he whispered. "I think we're in for an exciting ride."

Chapter Two

After a long night of restless sleep, Jayde finally gave up and headed downstairs. With the sun barely on the horizon, she doubted anyone would be up, and she could have some time alone in her gran's bakery with her thoughts and memories for company.

Seconds after she eased her door quietly open, she heard an angry male voice filter up the stairs. She halted in midstep and hovered at the top, debating whether to retreat to her room or investigate. *This is your house now, Jayde. You should probably know what's going on.*

She crept downstairs one quiet step at a time, straining to make out their words before they realized she was listening.

"We have to tell her, Marc."

"Not yet. If we scare her, she may run, and then where would we be? At least here we can try to control any damage."

Jayde's mind raced in confusion. Were they talking about her?

"So when do we tell her? We can't wait too long."

"Dammit, Aidan, you think I don't know that? If you've got a better idea, let's hear it." Their voices were loud now as their argument escalated. Curiosity piqued, she decided it was time to make an entrance. Besides, she wanted some coffee.

"Am I interrupting?" She kept her voice light and strong but had to stifle a laugh when both men sprang from their seats at the sight of her.

They'd been sitting at the little café table in front of the window, where there were newspapers opened and strewn about. The delicious aroma of fresh-

brewed coffee was stronger in here, and her gaze darted to the serving bar in the corner.

“Good morning,” they both managed to say in unison, looking like two boys who'd just gotten their hands caught in the cookie jar.

“Morning,” she answered as she beelined for the caffeine.

“Here, let me get you some coffee.” Aidan jumped in front of her and began pouring another cup. “How do you take it?”

“Black, two sugars.”

Marc continued to stare, and she started to get a little uncomfortable under his scrutiny. His dark eyes practically glowed with heat as his gaze raked her over from head to toe and back up again. She hadn't even bothered with real clothes, instead coming down in a thin tank and pajama bottoms. She'd assumed they were together, as in *together*... He lingered a moment on her breasts, where it would be impossible for him to miss that her nipples had hardened and now strained against the fabric of her shirt. Maybe they were bisexual. After her years in San Fran, where'd she seen all kinds, nothing should surprise her when it came to human sexuality.

“I didn't think anyone would be up.” Oh God, was that her voice? The husky, whispered tones perked up both men, and their gazes sharpened with a quick glance to each other before resettling on her face. They looked at her as if she were something to eat, and they were starved. Her brain functions halted for a second, and she shook her head, trying to get the sudden image of the two of them licking her out of her mind. Aidan broke the moment first, with a handsome smile that caused butterflies to erupt in her stomach.

Damn.

Marc turned and pulled out the empty chair for her. “We're both early risers. In fact, we've been anxiously waiting for you.”

Stunned by his quick movement, she looked at him. Short and wavy dark hair teased his forehead, and his angular jaw was dusted with a few days of

shadow, giving him the rough, dangerous look that worked so well on someone like him. His eyes, however... Oh yeah, she could get lost in the mysterious depths of sable brown that somehow seemed to see right through her. While not as traditionally beautiful as Aidan, the sight of him was like a punch of reaction in all the right places.

Aidan handed her the mug, and she gulped greedily, not caring about the slight burn from the hot liquid. Something was definitely wrong with her, and maybe the caffeine would help. It wasn't a normal thing for her to sit down for breakfast with two gorgeous men and wet panties.

"Did you sleep well?" Aidan's voice rolled from his tongue like warm silk, every syllable sending a shiver up her spine.

She nodded and gulped more coffee. Her sleep had actually been restless and intermittent, but she didn't want to get into that now. "May I?" Her hand hovered over the tray of bagels. She'd skipped the last few meals, and her stomach rumbled in hunger, reminding her she needed to eat.

"Of course."

When she bent and reached across the table, she felt each man's gaze lock on the gap at the neckline of her tank top. A heated blush crept up her neck, until her face flamed in embarrassment. She hadn't even bothered with a bra this morning.

"You're still wearing the necklace?" Marc asked.

Jayde stopped midchew and looked long and hard at his face, trying to read his eyes. "Why shouldn't I?"

Aidan had fallen silent, but from the corner of her eye, she noticed the furtive glances he threw at her neckline. She had to fight the urge to pull up her shirt and cover it.

"If you ask me"—Marc's lips thinned to a grim line—"it's the kind of necklace you wouldn't see someone wearing every day. It looks valuable and probably needs safekeeping."

"I don't know about valuable, but there is something about it and how I feel wearing it. I'm drawn to it, and I don't want to take it off." And it's not as if she were planning to be out running around town or entertaining anytime soon.

Aidan choked on his coffee, and Marc shot him a sharp look.

"Is there something I should know here?" Jayde straightened in her chair and pinned them both with a hard gaze. "You two seemed to be arguing when I came in, and now you're acting strange about my necklace. What's going on?"

"Are you a superstitious woman, Jayde? Do you believe in the metaphysical?" Marc asked.

She contemplated that, wondering what it had to do with anything. "As in, do I believe in ghosts or fate or something like that?"

Marc smiled at her. "Something like that."

"I don't put a lot of time or faith into things I can't control. I think you are what you make of yourself, not necessarily what destiny has in store for you. I like to believe I have more choice than that."

His expression stilled, looking more serious than before. Where the hell was he going with this conversation?

"What about something as basic as balancing energy? There's good and evil in everything we do, but in order to keep things peaceful, there must be a balance."

Jayde spread some cream cheese onto the second half of her bagel as she considered Marc's words. Where had all this come from? It was a little early in the morning for philosophy. "I don't know. Maybe."

"Did Katriona tell you anything about where the necklace came from?"

Again with the necklace. She took a bite of her bagel and chewed slowly. Marc's finger brushed her lip, and the soft touch reawakened the sexual feelings she'd managed to bank down.

His finger came away with a tiny spot of cream cheese, which he licked slowly from his skin without taking his eyes off her.

Wicked thoughts of what he could do with that finger invaded her mind as she fought to breathe normally. Her breasts tingled, heavy with arousal as the tips strained harder against the fabric of her tank top. She should be embarrassed—mortified, actually—because her wild thoughts included masturbating right here in the chair as the two of them watched.

If they wanted to talk about energy, how about the sexual energy that buzzed in the room around them? Or was that just her imagination getting the best of her? Her body burned hot with desire until her skin itched with it, making her crazy and unable to sit still. Her heart raced as she tried to compensate with big gulps of breath.

“Jayde, are you all right?” Aidan's hand touched her arm, and she didn't know whether to pull him closer or jump up and run. All her senses were on overload, and she couldn't control her reactions. Her eyes fixated on his full lips as he spoke; she wanted to kiss him, to taste the sweet sin she knew she would find there. Aidan's face blurred as her body clamored to get close.

Marc caught Jayde's arm as she slumped slowly to the side. “Shit, her arousal is too strong.”

“What the hell happened?” Aidan looked toward Marc in confusion.

“It's being amplified by the power of the necklace. There's a lot of power stored in that thing, and with the three of us struggling with our own attractions, her body wasn't ready for that overwhelming physical pull.”

Aidan picked her up and carried her toward the couch. “What does she need?”

“To take the damn thing off.”

Aidan cringed. "Obviously she knows nothing about her role." He sounded as doubtful as he looked. "We could just tell her what she is and who we are, and see how she takes it, but she doesn't seem ready to understand."

"Not yet. As far as she's concerned, we're strangers living in her grandmother's home. We have to give her some time to get to know us."

Aidan moved beside her and brushed the springy curls from her face. The soft, reassuring strokes to her arms and face, the whispered words he murmured to settle her... Already Jayde had made an impact on them both.

A fierce need to protect her welled in his own gut as he considered their options. A protector was only as strong as his Guardian needed him to be, and right now their Guardian was headed for big trouble.

"What happened?" Jayde whispered.

Marc looked up to see her wide-eyed and wary. "Relax, sweetheart. I think the stress of the past few days is starting to get to you."

She looked between the two men and struggled to sit up. "I didn't get much sleep last night or the night before..."

Aidan picked up her hand and took the opportunity to bring it to his lips for a quick kiss. "None of us were prepared for the loss of your grandmother. It will take some time to feel normal again."

"How come she never told me about you both? You seem to know her so well."

Her soft words wrapped around him, reminding Marc of Katriona. A Guardian like no other. Jayde had a lot to learn about her heritage. "It's human nature to think you have all the time in the world, when actually, we never really know." Even protectors have limits.

"I guess I should get up and get to work." She sat up and pushed herself off the couch, stretching her limbs as she moved.

Marc stared down at her, caught up in the sad glow in her eyes. “What are you planning to do?” He didn't want to push her now; she had plenty to think about.

“I don't know yet. Go through some of the paperwork the lawyer gave me, get the lay of the land, that kind of thing. There's a lot to do.”

Marc nodded in understanding. “Aidan and I are here to help you in any way that we can. We do all the handyman jobs around the house, and right now there is a plumbing leak with our name all over it.” Whatever it took to stay close.

“Thank you.” She turned and left the room, and Marc shoved his hands into his pockets, doing what he could to stay calm. They had to give her space and hope that time didn't run out before she faced the truth.

Aidan had moved in behind him, close enough for the heat of his breath to flutter against Marc's neck. “You really think we're doing the right thing with her?”

“I guess I could have tied her to the bed and had my way with her—or should I reserve that position for you?” A grin tilted his lips.

“Smart-ass.”

“She's smart and beautiful. She'll come around.” There was no room for failure.

Chapter Three

Jayde gasped as the long, strong fingers inched along her inner thigh, closer and closer to her pulsing clit. "Please, please..." Aidan had been stroking and teasing her for what seemed like hours. Her entire body throbbed and twitched with every new press of his lips against her skin and touch of his rough hands. Desperate to fuck, she struggled at the bonds holding her wrists to the headboard. "Please."

"Not yet, beautiful." Marc's voice caressed her ear. He'd stretched his body against her side while Aidan had settled between her parted thighs. The hard length of Marc's cock pressed against her hip, distracting her until she'd grown mindless with need, tears tracking down her face. He caressed her neck with his lips, nipping and licking. "You can wait a little bit longer. It will be better that way, trust me."

The ability to respond left her when Aidan slid a thick finger between the drenched folds of her sex, spreading her moisture all around. "I think she's ready."

Marc turned to Aidan. "What about you? Are you ready?"

Aidan's eyes darkened and filled with a deep lust. Without answering, he bent over and licked the head of Marc's cock, and for a few minutes, all she saw was Aidan's head bobbing and Marc's eyes closing in ecstasy. When Aidan shifted back to her, his hot tongue swiped against her own skin as well, feeding her desire. She wriggled and fought against her bindings, desperate for more.

"Do it." Marc's voice had deepened, and he too looked on the edge of his control.

Aidan rose up and slid his hips close to Jayde's wanting pussy. The head of his cock nudged at her moist lips, teasing but not entering. She tilted her pelvis in an attempt to get more of him inside, but he pulled back.

"You are being a very bad girl. If you're not careful, you'll end up watching instead of participating." Aidan's words seemed harsh, but the quirk of his mouth told Jayde he wasn't all that serious. But she was, and she needed him right now.

"Please fuck me. Please."

A broad grin slid across his face as he pushed his cock inside her, the weighty thickness of him stretching and filling her to capacity. The hard touch against her inner walls had her panting for breath as the sensations sizzled to her brain.

"Oh...oh yes!"

"I think she likes that." Marc grasped Aidan's hips and slowly pulled him away, watching her as Aidan's cock slid back out of her pussy. "Oh yeah, she likes it, all right. In fact, I bet she'll be screaming in orgasm after just a few strokes." At the word *stroke*, he pushed Aidan's hips hard against her pelvis, filling her, stretching her...

Marc was right; she wouldn't last much longer. The energy of her imminent climax rose higher.

"Bend over," Marc said to Aidan.

With his cock still buried inside her, Aidan bent over, and his lips latched onto her right breast, licking and nipping the hardened nipple. Marc moved in behind him, and despite not being able to see exactly what he was doing, the mere thought of him sliding his erection inside the tight passage of their lover made her shiver. Aidan wiggled inside her as he anticipated Marc's move, and the looks on both men's faces were of soul-baring pleasure. Aidan's licking turned into biting, and his breath came out in sharpened pants. His lids grew heavy with the bliss of Marc pushing against his backside, filling him.

"That's it, my love. Relax so I don't hurt you." Marc's low moan ignited a flurry of sensation low in her stomach.

With a groan and a sharp bite from Aidan, Marc surged forward. His final push left Aidan nowhere to go but harder inside her. When the crown of his cock rubbed against her G-spot, she lost complete control, letting out a scream as her orgasm tore through her.

"Fuck." Aidan cried out with each spasm of her vaginal muscles clenching down on him. "She's so tight. She's milking me, and I can't hold it back."

Marc bucked against them both as she cried out in continuing pleasure, unable to control the sensations flowing over her...

Her screams tore Jayde from her sleep as her body convulsed around her fingers. The orgasm flooded her hand as she rode it out to the end, wringing every ounce of pleasure she could, before her fingers slipped free and she turned to bury her face in the pillow. Again.

It had happened again.

She fought for breath as her mind replayed the intense dream once more. The memories and sensations had seemed so real. Even her nipple ached where Aidan had bitten down that last time. Her body trembled from the cool breeze blowing through the window across her sweat-soaked skin.

Why is this happening? Every night since she had stepped through the doorway of her grandmother's home, she became consumed with thoughts of sex and erotic dreams. Before that she'd never had a dream so vivid that she'd actually had a real orgasm. Sure, the superhot, hard-bodied men in the apartment across the hall were incredibly sexy and had been kind and welcoming to her, but they were so obviously into each other. She'd seen them exchange looks that would have scorched her had she gotten in between them.

That was probably what had her going like this to begin with. As she fell asleep alone every night, thoughts of their hard and slick bodies rubbing up against each other turned her on more than she ever imagined possible. Never

before had erotic thoughts of two men making love entered her fantasies, let alone gotten her going so much that she fell into incredible sexual scenarios every night in her sleep.

Jayde looked at the clock and realized she might as well get up. The sun would rise soon, and she had a lot to do today. This way she could get some things done before she had to face her gorgeous and arousing neighbors, who managed to keep her from doing what she had planned. They'd become invaluable companions the last few days, but they were also distracting as hell.

She smiled and hurried through her shower, trying not to think about Marc and Aidan, but Marc's commanding voice wouldn't go away as she fantasized again of him taking both her and Aidan together. Her breasts grew heavy, her nipples as hard as the moonstone around her neck. In her mind's eye she saw him standing in front of her, the waves of his dark hair framing his chiseled face and his knowing brown eyes watching her every move as he guided her onto her knees in front of him. Blood rushed to the juncture between her thighs, and her wet folds plumped up with the weight of her desire.

Her head fell forward, pressing against the cool tiles of the shower. How could two men have such an effect on her? She fought against the sensual haze threatening her long enough to finish her task and get dressed. But the moment she walked out of her apartment and spied their door across the hall, her knees buckled and her body longed to go to them.

One afternoon, downstairs in the bakery, she had interrupted a shared kiss between the two. Before they had noticed her standing behind them, she had watched in utter fascination as Marc's fingers tangled in Aidan's black, silky hair, pulling the man to him. Their dark and golden skin tones had showcased their pink tongues sliding against each other, and her panties had instantly gotten damp with arousal. Later, walking up to their door, she'd heard distinct masculine moans coming from the room, and she'd imagined their writhing bodies on a bed. Now here she was again, driven by an obsession

beyond her control. She found her hand sliding under her skirt and slipping under her panties to seek out her throbbing clit.

She longed to be in their room every day and night, sharing the bed with them. Both their dark hair and muscled bodies would look incredible all over her fair skin. They were big men, Aidan about six feet and Marc taller by at least several inches, with a sexual aura that she swore she could taste whenever they came near her. It reminded her of spice cake, dark and rich with a variety of pungent scents, yet a constant underlay of something sweet and sinful.

It didn't help that Aidan flirted with her incessantly, and between his smoldering gazes and touching her every opportunity he got, her will to resist—or at least act like a civilized woman—seemed to diminish. And yesterday, when Marc had again brought up the precious stone she wore around her neck, Aidan had reached for it, picking it up to admire. The simple brush of his fingers against the top curve of her breast had sizzled down to her aching clit, pushing her body so close to an orgasm, she had literally whimpered. Mortified by her inappropriate behavior, she'd hastily made an excuse and a quick getaway. But not before she heard a rumbling laugh from Marc, a sound any normal woman would have been insulted by.

But not her. She'd found it so erotically arousing that as soon as she'd gotten into the bathroom and locked the door, she'd practically torn her panties off and stroked herself to orgasm.

So distracted by her own needs and cravings for these two men, she didn't hear the doorbell until someone started chiming it nonstop.

She quickly smoothed her skirt and hurried down the stairs to see who was so persistent. She opened the door to a young woman, a teenager, more likely, with a belly swollen from pregnancy.

“Can I help you?”

“Are you Miss Jayde? I ran into Mr. Black this morning over at the diner on Rose Street, and he suggested I come by and talk to you.”

The simple, earnest expression shining from the woman's face startled her. She couldn't imagine what they would have to talk about, but her manners kicked in, and she invited the young lady inside. Together they walked into the shop, and Jayde couldn't miss the longing on the other woman's face as she looked around the room.

"What can I help you with...uh... I don't know your name."

"Beth." She fidgeted with her hands, which rested on her belly. "I've come to find out if I still have a job here, Miss Jayde."

Jayde sat down hard on one of the easy chairs, sinking into the soft fabric. Dear God, she hadn't even considered whether her grandmother had any employees. In fact, she had been avoiding dealing with the bakery since she'd arrived.

"I...uh..."

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to just come here and put you on the spot like this. But I loved working here almost as much as your grandmother did. And with the baby coming in a couple of months, I really need this job." She once again tapped lightly against the swollen belly.

As much as Jayde hated to turn the woman away, she didn't know what else to do. "I'm not sure, Beth. I don't have the same talents that my grandmother did. I've been considering shutting down the store permanently."

"That's not what Katriona thought. She told me often that you and she shared the same gifts. You even look like her."

"That is very kind of you to say." The eager hope in the other woman's eyes threatened Jayde's resolve, until she decided on a compromise. "I'll tell you what. Give me a day to think about it, to play around in the kitchen, and we'll see what happens."

"Oh yes, that's more than fair. Thank you so much. Is there anything I can do to help? I'm pretty good in the kitchen myself."

The thought of embarrassing herself in front of a witness, if her idea blew up in her face, made her cringe. “Not yet. I think this is something I need to try on my own the first time around.”

Beth tried to hide her disappointment, but Jayde saw a quick flash of it in her eyes. “Okay, I understand.” The girl hugged her before she turned and headed to the door. “Miss Jayde, this shop is really missed. We hope you'll reopen soon.”

“We?”

“All the locals, of course.” She slipped out the door, and Jayde watched her fan herself from the heat as she walked down the street.

She took a deep breath and exhaled on a sigh. What had she just committed herself to? She couldn't cook. In fact, calling her the world's worst baker would not be a stretch of anyone's imagination. But the earnest look on the poor girl's face had done her in, and now she had to try. She looked at the door leading to the kitchen, fear trembling through her limbs. Time to get the recipe book and at least give this a shot.

* * * * *

Aidan woke to the smell of baking chocolate, a sweet aroma that made his mouth water. The house smelled like Katriona again. *What the hell?* He turned to Marc and planted a kiss on his shoulder. “I'm going to go check on Jayde. I'll be back shortly.”

Marc mumbled something he couldn't understand, but didn't move.

He slid from the bed and snagged a pair of jeans from the back of the chair. The aroma drifting through the house made his mouth water and his stomach grumble. But if what he thought was going on down there actually was, it wouldn't be food he was hungry for once he saw her. Partially dressed, he slipped from their apartment and headed down the steps, taking two at a time.

The lights were dimmed in the entire building until he reached the entrance to the bakery, but even there, no lights shone in the main area. Instead a low glow came from the door leading to the kitchen. Outside the window, it was pitch-black, as the sun had gone down many hours ago. He and Marc had spent the entire day and evening giving Jayde some space to deal with it all, but waiting to have her had damn near driven them into a sexual frenzy as everything about her called to them both. Katriona had laughed when they'd scoffed at the idea that her granddaughter would be their fate; now they questioned how they could avoid it. A chill swept over him, from either the cool room or just the sense of inevitability he faced. *Maybe I should have snagged a shirt too.*

Unsure of what he would find in the kitchen, he eased the door open slowly. The heat of the room rushed out, enveloping him in warmth and scents of deep, dark chocolate.

The counters were covered in tray after tray of varying types of fudge. He recognized peanut butter, chocolate chip, raspberry swirl, and of course, his favorite—dark chocolate. In the midst of all this sweet-smelling perfection stood Jayde, looking good enough to eat herself. Her red curls were tucked tightly behind her ears, her skin flushed a pale pink from the heat and her efforts. The vigor in which she stirred her latest creation heated his blood. He would like to see that look of intense concentration on her face as she sucked his cock deep into her throat.

Blood pounded in his dick. A feral desire to be naked and free gripped his insides. He needed nothing more right now than the sensation of plunging into her wet heat. He should have made Marc come down with him. His defenses were crumbling, and he hadn't even gotten close to her yet.

She'd shucked her blouse, probably because of the heat, and now stood there in a turquoise lace camisole and a skirt. Funny how she always wore skirts that had her constantly tugging at the hemlines trying to cover herself. He didn't understand why. Her body was lush and full, driving him wild every

time he got near her. He and Marc had been going at each other nonstop since she'd arrived, fucking every chance they got. Not only because they needed each other, but because they both needed her and were afraid she wasn't ready.

He didn't want to wait anymore. Couldn't.

"Jayde." He spoke softly in the hopes of not startling her, but she gasped and looked at him with wild fear nonetheless.

Her hand clutched at her chest. "Oh, Aidan, you scared me to death. I didn't think anyone else was still awake."

"The smell in here woke me."

"Oh my God, I'm so sorry. I don't know what came over me. I dug out grandmother's recipe book, and well, next thing I know, I've tried every flavor of fudge she had listed." She swept her hand around the room, shying away from his gaze.

"It is nice to see someone cooking in here again."

"Well, I'm in here, and I'm following these recipes, but I have to be honest—I'm not much of a cook. In fact, I don't think I've ever made anything that others have deemed edible. But after Beth came by this morning, I felt obligated to at least try. I think my grandmother would have expected that."

He nodded, understanding how much approval from those you love could mean to a person's soul. He turned around the room again, surveying all the hard work she had put into creating all these trays of fudge. "I find it hard to believe that you can't cook, dear Jayde. It smells delicious." He zeroed in on the oversize tray of the dark chocolate and strode over to it. "This is my favorite."

She raced around the corner to where he stood. "I'm...uh...I'm not sure you want to eat that."

"Why not? It looks delectable." But if she didn't want to share her chocolate, he could certainly suggest an alternative.

"It's probably not any good."

He plucked a piece from the tray and brought it to his nose, inhaling the combination of chocolate and vanilla. "It smells really good. Guess there's only one way to find out." He quickly took a bite, amused by the look of horror splashed across her face.

The familiar flavor of Katriona's fudge and something extra exploded in his mouth. It was like a sensual stroke on his tongue that shot sensations straight to his groin.

"You aren't saying anything. It's awful; I knew it. Let me get you something to drink." She started to turn away, and he grabbed her arm, pulling her body against his.

"No, Jayde. It's incredible. Have you not even tried any of them?"

She shook her head.

He lifted the fudge to her mouth. "Open."

Slowly, her ruby lips parted, opening for the sweet. His pulse beat in his head, pounding with a lust that wouldn't be denied. When her mouth closed over the treat and she bit off a piece, he pulled his hand back and set it aside. The look on her face was priceless as the fear slid away and was replaced with a rapture he knew all too well.

While she savored that small bite, he dipped his head to her neck, licking along the curve to her shoulder. She tasted of sugar and woman. He was lost.

He continued to kiss and nibble his way upward until he reached her lips. With no thought of stopping, he slipped his tongue inside to seek and tangle with her own. The sensual taste of the chocolate pushed him beyond the point of no return as his hands reached for the bottom edge of her camisole. He tugged upward, breaking the kiss long enough to get it off before continuing his steady exploration of her mouth.

His hands roamed the soft skin of her waist and torso, tracing the curve of her spine with his fingers. Ending the kiss, he pushed her an arm's length

away and looked at those brilliant green eyes, shining with as much lust as he felt.

“What's wrong?” she asked.

“Oh babe, nothing is wrong; I just wanted to get a better look at you. Watch you strip down for me.”

She blushed an even deeper shade of red and averted her eyes.

“Uh-uh. Don't go hiding from me.”

“I can't help it. I'm not...”

“Not what? Jayde, look at me.” When she turned back, he continued. “You are the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. You glow. Now please take off the rest of your clothes before I die here, sweetheart. I really need to be touching you.”

“Do as he says, Jayde.” They both turned to the door to see Marc standing there, stark naked, his hard-on jutting boldly away from his body. “What?” He narrowed his eyes at Aidan. “You thought I wouldn't hear or sense what was going on in my own house? You two are radiating sensual energy so strong, even humans could pick it up.”

Jayde started to back up. “I'm...I'm so sor—”

Aidan reached for her and caught her by the hand before she could get away. “Wait. You don't understand. Marc isn't mad at us.” He smiled broadly at her. “Oh no, baby, he wants you as bad as I do.”

Marc's gaze raked over her body. “If you won't remove your clothing, I'll have Aidan do it for you.”

Jayde blinked in surprise at Marc's surly demand. He'd come down without bothering with clothes, obviously assuming he'd join in.

“C'mon, baby, don't back up. The two of us have been panting after you for days now. We need you.” Aidan tugged at her arm, pulling her several inches closer.

This was more than she could process. She'd been about to drag Aidan to the floor, and now they both wanted her? Her brain wasn't functioning. Not when all she could think of was being taken by two men at once.

Marc cocked his eyebrow in question, and God help her, after the dreams and time alone, she couldn't resist him. Nor did she want to. She reached behind her back and slid the zipper of her skirt down, easing the silk fabric down her bare thighs. Kicking the skirt out of the way, she stood up straight before them with nothing but a pair of pink bikini panties to cover her more-than-ample frame. When neither man made a move, clearly waiting still, she slipped out of the undergarment as well. She again lifted her gaze to the men watching her so intently, her body bared to them. The only thing left was the moonstone necklace she'd refused to take off since she'd found it.

A shiver coursed down Jayde's body from the top of her spine to the tips of her toes.

"Are you cold, baby?" Aidan stepped to her, reaching out to caress her arms. His head dipped, and he kissed her shoulder, trailing kisses down her arms and back again. His hands roamed and explored her shoulders, waist, and anyplace he could reach, before he finally took her lips in a soft, passionate kiss. Hunger exploded within her, and she moaned into his mouth. He settled his hands at her waist and lifted her onto the edge of the counter.

Aidan parted her legs and stepped between them. His fingers stroked from her knees inward, following the path of her thighs to her already wet center. "Mmm, do you want me, Jayde?" His sensual smile drove her wild with want.

"Yes." Her answer came out sounding more breathless than she'd expected.

Marc moved to her side, his mouth close to her ear. "Just him, Jayde?"

"I...I want you both." No point in hiding the truth anymore. She'd worry about the consequences later.

Aidan's face split into a wide grin while his fingers continued to play with her pussy, stroking her clit like a musical instrument. When he paused to pinch it, her hips bucked upward, begging for more.

Marc reached for her heavy breasts, kneading them with just the right amount of pressure to drive her insane. She arched forward, hoping for more, and his fingers rubbed and pinched her taut nipples. When she moaned her pleasure, his movements grew stronger, rougher. Their hands worked together, with one working her pussy and clit while the other stroked every other sensitive zone of her body until she trembled with the need to come. She tried to jerk away to stop from making a fool of herself.

"It's okay, Jayde, relax. Come for us," Aidan murmured. Normally that word wasn't in her vocabulary, but looking at them, seeing the way they both wanted her, made this different beyond the two-men thing. "Don't fight it, babe. You want this as much as we do."

He had no idea. She doubted either of them had a clue of the torture she'd put herself through dreaming of this very thing. But he was right—she wanted this with them, more than anything else she could think of.

Marc looked at her with a wicked smile; then, with a tight pinch to her clit, as well as to a nipple, her orgasm blazed through her. She screamed out, letting it take her over.

"Damn, Marc, she's so wet. Look at her tremble for us." His thick fingers dived inside her passage, reaching for her sensitive G-spot, throwing her into a climax even stronger than the first. "Come on, baby, give me more."

"And so tight. Damn."

Aidan removed his fingers as she continued to ride the pleasure. He flipped her over so that she stood back on her feet with her chest leaning forward over the counter. The head of his cock pushed at her wet folds a split second before he dived into her, fast and smooth, stretching her as he stroked her sensitive walls. Undeniable bliss whipped through her, and her hands beat

at the countertop, looking for something to hold on to. Her mouth opened to scream, but no sound came out, because she couldn't breathe.

"Oh my love, she is so fucking tight. I can't stop myself." He pounded in and out of her harder with each stroke, every touch filling her with frissons of pleasure and heat until he too cried out with his climax, filling her with his cum. Eventually his movements slowed, and Jayde rested her forehead on the counter.

She trembled with little aftershocks as she gulped air into her lungs. When Aidan slipped from her body, she stood up and turned, looking first at the satisfaction on his face and then at the obvious hunger on Marc's. His tanned body looked carved from granite in its absolute perfection, and his erection was certainly hard as stone.

The way he looked at her drove her to go to him and kneel.

"Jayde, you don't have—"

"Please, I want to." She opened her mouth wide, and he pushed the head of his engorged cock between her lips. The perfect taste of male spice exploded on her tongue as she licked around his slit, lapping up the precum already waiting for her. His hands tightened in her hair, pulling her farther onto his hardness. She relaxed her throat, trying to accommodate more of his large, thick size. She'd never been with a man this big. Her pussy once again tingled with pleasure as she sucked as hard and deep as she could, her tongue working the underside with quick swipes.

"Beautiful," Aidan said. "She is absolutely fucking perfection on her knees sucking you off. I bet her pussy is dripping again with all that sweet honey." He brushed against her back when he knelt down behind her and wrapped his arms around her, one hand pinching at her nipple, the other diving for her clit. She moaned around Marc's cock as her desire built again under Aidan's relentless attention.

The hard heat of him swelled against her tongue, warning her he was close. She suckled faster and wrapped her hand around the base to stroke him

each time he pulled from her mouth, all while Aidan applied more pressure against her clit in a furious rhythm.

“Oh yes, baby. Like that. Oh hell...” On a loud grunt, Marc came in her mouth, pulsing against her tongue, pushing her over the edge into yet another explosive climax. She swallowed every delicious drop while her tongue coaxed him to the end.

When Marc pulled from her lips, she slumped back into Aidan's arms, exhausted and replete. All the hours of marathon cooking and the mind-blowing sex had wiped her out.

“Sleep. I need sleep,” she whispered.

“Yes, you do, darling. You need to rest up for tomorrow.” Aidan's warm breath brushed against her ear as he spoke, sending a new shiver down her spine.

Looking into Marc's eyes while Aidan's arms surrounded her gave Jayde a sense of peace she'd sought her entire life. “What's tomorrow?”

“Your destiny.”

Chapter Four

Jayde stumbled from the shower still tired and in need of sleep. Marc and Aidan had woken her several times through the night with their wanton touches and sweet kisses. Once, she had surprisingly found herself holding their softened cocks until they'd hardened with desire yet again; they all seemed insatiable. When she'd rolled over in bed to find herself alone, she'd pried open her eyes to see that it was two in the afternoon. She'd slept more than half the day away.

Padding across her bedroom, she stretched her tight muscles on her way to the closet. She didn't care how sore she would be today; she would never regret what had happened. Even if it was just this once.

The view of herself in the full-length mirror on the door halted her movements. With Marc and Aidan, she hadn't thought even once about her plus-size body. They'd admired and worshipped her all through the night, not once making any reference to her figure except in the most positive light. They'd genuinely enjoyed every inch of her. She spied splotches of slightly pinkened skin where their overnight stubble had rubbed her skin. Just the memory of those sensations sent goose bumps skittering across her flesh.

Feeling on cloud nine, she searched through her closet for the perfect outfit, something to catch the eye of a certain couple of men she wanted to tempt all over again. Despite the mess and cleanup that faced her in the kitchen today, she chose a hot pink, knee-length skirt, matching tank top, and a short brown sweater with an open weave so the pink would show through.

To complete the outfit, she slipped on white lace panties and brown knee-high boots. They were her favorites, which was a good thing, considering the expense and time she'd gone through in finding boots that fit her calves.

Taking one last glance in the mirror, she was pleased with the look she had created and was ready to face the men. A twinge of panic jerked in her belly. How would they feel today? Would they regret what had happened? What would happen now? Would they all go back to the way things were yesterday?

Jayde gulped in a few calming breaths and headed for the door. She had to focus, because more was at stake here than simply hot sex. It was past time to get downstairs and figure out what to do about the bakery.

As soon as her boots hit the landing at the top of the stairs, voices carried up to her. Lots of voices. *What the hell?*

She hustled down the steps to find a long line of people winding from inside the shop. "Excuse me." She pushed her way through the throng of people to find Beth and Aidan standing behind the counter, ringing up purchases. In the glass case in front of them were plates and plates of her fudge squares. For a few minutes, she stood dumbfounded, watching the chaos around her. Beth couldn't box up the fudge fast enough before the next customer was demanding theirs.

Jayde couldn't help but wonder what rabbit hole she'd fallen into...

"Oh my God, Jayde!" Beth had finally spotted her and came running over, then pulled her into a tight hug that pressed her extended belly into Jayde's stomach. "Oh Miss Jayde, thank you so much for this. You really have no idea how much I needed this."

"Beth, what exactly is going on here? Why are so many people lined up? Is this normal? We're supposed to be closed."

"No, it's definitely not normal." She whirled at the familiar masculine voice and came face-to-face with Marc. And he did not look happy to see her. Her heart sank as all the good energy from last night faded away. Thinking she

might cry if he continued to scowl at her, she turned her back on him and continued questioning Beth. "How did all these people get into my bakery?" Not only was the place packed, but the crowd was getting a little aggressive, by the looks of things. Insults could be heard over the excited chatter, and occasionally, she caught from the corner of her eye a shoulder edging someone out of the way.

"I came back this morning to see if I could help you out and found all your new, magnificent fudge all over the kitchen. I tried a piece, and oh my, it was the best thing I'd ever tasted in my life."

Mortified beyond belief, Jayde bit back the angry comment she wanted to hurl at the girl for being so presumptuous.

"The thrill of excitement took over, and I started moving the serving platters into the presentation cases out here. I had planned to go upstairs and wake you, but a knock on the outside door stopped me. Mrs. James had seen me through the window setting out the new goodies and was desperate for a tray of them for her brunch party in the garden. I didn't think it would hurt, I swear I didn't, so I opened the shop to customers."

"But this?" Jayde motioned toward all the people crammed inside. "How did it turn into this? And why?"

"I don't know. One customer led to another, and then another, and before I knew it, they were packed in here, taking every available spot. The fudge is almost gone. That's the last of it in the case, there." She pointed to the small case where Aidan still stood helping customers. The shelves were already half-empty. "Can you make some more?"

"I...I guess I could, but it wouldn't be ready until tomorrow." She watched Aidan package up the last of what sat on the plates. "It's really all gone?" Pride infused her at the eagerness with which the customers embraced her treats. Yesterday morning she'd been unable to cook, and now people were clamoring for something she'd created on her own.

“Jayde, this is a really bad idea.” Marc again sounded so gloom and doom. “You need to listen to me. I have something important to explain to you.”

Hurt and pride warred within her as she ignored him as best she could. If he wanted to pretend last night hadn't happened, then so would she. “Beth, do you think you and Aidan can handle the rest of the customers while I get started in the kitchen?”

Beth nodded.

Jayde walked toward the kitchen and found herself being grabbed by the arm and swung around. Losing her balance, she fell forward, right into Marc's embrace. His hands steadied her by pulling her against him, chest to pelvis. His hard body and clean male scent set her on fire all over again, and she wanted him more than breath. Sadness in that fact engulfed her, making tears spring in her eyes. She tried to hide her face, but Marc caught her by the chin.

“Jayde, what is it?” His face softened with the question.

She couldn't speak. No, she didn't want to. She shook herself out of his arms and fled to the kitchen, not looking back or looking up to see if anyone had caught the odd exchange. She needed some time alone to think, and she had a lot of work to do this afternoon.

* * * * *

An hour later, Marc heard heavy footsteps coming up the stairs, probably Aidan checking up on him and looking for answers. He turned away from the window and considered his lover. Would Aidan still understand his current thoughts? The longings for both him and Jayde together?

Last night had stirred his cravings. He knew part of the draw to her was the curse of the necklace. Sexual obsession was a dangerous thing. But history told him that Guardians and protectors of the box were connected, sometimes as mates, sometimes not. Knowing those thoughts were selfish didn't seem to help; he couldn't stop thinking about Jayde on her knees in front of him, sucking his cock, while Aidan played with her lush body. He needed to take her

himself, claim her for his. He only hoped Aidan would understand the depth of his need, and if he was really lucky, share his desires for not just a new playmate but much more.

Aidan appeared in the doorway. "Where have you been? Are you all right? Beth and I finally got all the customers to go home by promising they could get their fudge tomorrow, but Jayde is down there working herself into a frenzy again. I wanted to go in the kitchen and comfort her, ease her need, but I thought maybe you and I should talk first."

"You know what's happening, Aidan. It's not like this is the first time we've seen a Guardian who's resisted her duty."

"It doesn't feel the same. She's different, isn't she? Tell me you don't feel it."

Marc knew exactly what Aidan was referring to. From the moment they'd found her on the sofa in the shop, he'd sensed a ripple of change surrounding them all. But first things first.

"We have to tell her. Get her to understand who she is now and what she's expected to do before things get even more out of control. Wearing that stone affects not only her but also everyone around her. We could end up with big trouble in this town." Marc rubbed his face, adrenaline surging through him unpleasantly. Things were getting far more complicated than he'd hoped for.

"Why not just steal the necklace and box from her?" Aidan asked in an undertone. "Couldn't we just protect it ourselves?"

"You make it sound so easy. Would be nice if it worked that way; we would never have any trouble. The curse of the damn box is totally based on free will. Whoever breaks the seal and removes the necklace must willingly return it to end the cycle of obsession. Until then, the potential for chaos reigns." It was times like these when free will was overrated.

"Marc, please don't tell me what's going on between the three of us is all to blame on a cursed box and pretty bauble." Aidan nipped at Marc's shoulder

with his teeth. "Sure, she makes me horny, so hard I hurt, but it's not just sex with her. Like you, she is special. I really like her. Please don't tell me you don't feel that. I'm not sure I could take it."

Marc turned his body to face the other man, surprised by Aidan's confession. "It's definitely more, my love." He pushed his hips forward to rub his cock against Aidan, seeking his hardness. His hands slipped underneath the hem of Aidan's shirt and rubbed the heated skin there, the sprinkling of hair tickling his palms.

Aidan groaned. "Do you have a plan?"

"You mean, besides getting you to strip down for me?" He chuckled. "I tried to talk to her earlier, but she ran from me. I still don't think she's ready, but time is ticking, and she may have to face it sooner than she wants to." He lowered his head and nipped at Aidan's lip. Aidan moaned, and he slipped his tongue inside, seeking the heat and connection his lover gave freely every time they were together. "Bed first," he said firmly, pushing Aidan into the mattress. "Worrying later."

* * * * *

Exhausted yet exhilarated from her latest baking spree, which had again yielded hundreds of fudge delights in a dozen different flavors, she thought back to the crowd and the strange way everyone had behaved over getting some of her sweets. It didn't make any sense for them to be so crazed over something she'd just learned how to make. Despite the euphoria of her success, her body had betrayed her all night long by clamoring for Marc and Aidan. She missed them. She'd glanced at the door repeatedly all evening, half expecting one of them to come after her. The waiting and hoping had left her tightly strung, and irritable to boot.

Jayde turned out the remainder of the lights in the shop and trudged up the stairs, her footfalls echoing around her in the quiet house. All the way up, she fought an overwhelming urge to knock on Marc and Aidan's door and jump

their collective bones. She'd seen no one since she'd disappeared into the kitchen, only to emerge hours later, after everyone had gone home, still in need of two certain men, who wouldn't leave her thoughts no matter what she did.

At the top of the stairs, she approached the door with the intention of knocking and finding out what the deal was. Stopping in midknock, she realized she knew exactly what they wanted, and it wasn't her. She'd been a fun diversion in the midst of a sensual episode. She rested her head on the door, wishing for something she couldn't have, not in the long run. From what she could tell, the two of them were completely devoted to each other, sharing a bond she had no intention of breaking up.

Forcing herself to move, she turned from the door and shuffled across the hall to her own room. She slipped inside so they wouldn't hear her and removed her shoes and clothes, one piece at a time, as she crossed to her bed. Naked and lonely, she collapsed onto the homemade quilt and snuggled in deep, her last thought before drifting off to sleep being of Marc and Aidan pressed against her the night before.

A sharp sizzling sound somewhere in her room caused her eyelids to fly open in alarm. Twisting her head around, she found the two men she'd been dreaming of again standing next to the bed. Eager to have them any way she could, even if it was just for now, she spread her legs and invited them to join her on the bed. She eased herself back on the pillow, so eager to feel them touching and stroking her body to the most exquisite pleasure she'd ever experienced. In the distant back of her mind she wondered when she'd become such a wanton woman.

As Aidan's dark head dipped to the apex of her thighs, her breath hitched in anticipation of the first touch to her sensitive heat. A smile for Marc played across her lips as his fingers followed a trail of lust up her legs alongside his lover to her saturated curls. Surely she would die if they didn't do something about the aching hunger inside her. The instant Aidan's tongue lapped at her clit, a scream tore from her throat and her door burst open. Aidan and Marc

pushed through the doorway, and the men between her legs dematerialized. Disappeared.

What the hell?

Her blood froze in fear. Her chest constricted as panic seized her from the inside out. Is this what a heart attack felt like? Was she dying? Was she already dead?

“Jayde, are you all right? What happened?” Aidan rushed forward and grabbed her arm as she scrambled across the bed to find the sheet to cover herself.

“What the—Oh dear God... What is happening?” She clutched at the edge of the blanket, but it was tangled underneath her, and no amount of tugging would get it free. Her frustration boiled over, and tears sprang to her eyes.

“Jayde, look at me.” Marc's voice called to her, so soothing and calm.

She swept her gaze in his direction, still fighting with the blanket.

“Let go of the covers and relax. No, Jayde, don't turn away. Focus on me, baby. Trust us to take care of you.” She let her white-knuckled grip on the blanket go and forced her body to loosen, but it did little to soothe her mind.

She didn't know what was going on around her, but it couldn't be what she was thinking. Had she hurt herself? Had she hit her head? Had she been dreaming?

“Can you tell us what happened? What you remember?” Aidan whispered.

As her head sank back into the pillow, she eased her eyes shut, willing herself to remember.

“A noise, like a sharp scrape or something, woke me up. And when I opened my eyes, you and Aidan were here. I thought I recognized hunger in your eyes, a sexual invitation that I eagerly returned.” She shivered as Aidan picked up a quilt from the end of the bed and pulled it over her nude body. “You were both here, touching me, and then you were gone and charging in through the door. How is this—Am I going crazy?”

"Incubus," they said in unison.

"Wait." She lifted her head and focused on Aidan. "What did you say?"

"Incubus, Jayde. You've just had a visit from a couple of nasty incubi," Aidan repeated.

"Incubus?" She rolled her eyes. "As in ancient sex demons that visit people in their sleep?" She looked between the two, certain she'd hit her head and suffered a concussion. What else could explain this insane situation? "Is this some kind of joke? Because I'm not laughing." She glared at them. Playing games in the middle of the night was not her idea of fun.

"It's no joke," Marc said. "Just because you haven't seen something before doesn't mean it doesn't exist."

Her lips twitched at Marc's words. She'd heard enough. "What time is it?" She swiveled around, looking for the bedside clock, which read 5:30 a.m. She groaned. She'd only been asleep for two hours. "This is absurd." She rolled onto her side, tucking her legs closer to her body and pulling the blanket over her head. "Go away and leave me alone. I need more than a couple of hours of sleep and a boatload of caffeine before I play games with the two of you. Seriously. Go."

"Jayde, don't be a child," Marc said.

"A child." She threw the covers back. "Are you fucking kidding me? Do I look like a child to you?" Annoyance vibrated through her at their words. With a fair mixture of irritation and satisfaction, she watched Marc's gaze travel down her body, lingering on her breasts before wandering down her rounded belly and full thighs to the dark curl-covered sex that clamored for him even now.

"No, you do not look like a child. What you look like is a sexy yet unbelievably stubborn woman, who won't even listen without interrupting the conversation."

Jayde listened to Marc's sweet insult and wanted to implode. Whatever was going on, she couldn't take it. Strange dreams, her desperate need for sex, ghosts in her room, a newfound ability to cook incredible fudge, and two men she could not stay away from—it was all more than she could handle.

“I can't take any more right now,” she whispered. “Please go away.”

Marc stood there for several long minutes, looking at her with cautious and sympathetic eyes. “Okay, Jayde, for now. But either Aidan or I need to be with you at all times, even here in your room. Is that understood?”

She took a deep, hopefully calming, breath before finally nodding her head. She didn't want to admit she was a little frightened. Despite her last pleas to be alone, when Marc turned and left the room without another word, she felt the loss deep in her soul. She wanted him. Needed him to touch her. Hold her. Be inside her.

She knew Aidan stood next to the bed watching and waiting, but she couldn't look at him, didn't want him to see the longing in her face. She needed sleep. Somehow things would be different after a solid eight hours. She just knew it.

Chapter Five

A knock at the bathroom door startled Jayde from the steady stream of hot water running over her face. She sputtered and wiped her eyes and mouth. "Hang on. I'll be out in a minute."

"Jayde, may I please come in?" Marc asked from the other side of the door.

She let her head fall back, and a deep sigh resonated through her. Why did he insist on being with her when she was at her most vulnerable? It was as if he did it on purpose. Was he testing her for something?

She looked toward the door, but the steam across the glassed-in shower obscured her view. "Yeah, I guess so."

The door opened on a whisper, and a bare-chested Marc walked in. She didn't have to see clearly through the glass to know his chest was chiseled to a fine, perfect specimen, or that a light sprinkling of dark hair covered his pecs and trailed down his ridged abs to a small strip that disappeared into his jeans. That trail led to heaven and hell. Her head tapped against the glass.

"Are you ready to hear me out now?"

She inhaled a deep breath through her nose and let out a slow exhale through her mouth to steady her pulse. When she'd woken from a surprisingly restful sleep, she'd been shocked to find Aidan in bed with her, sleeping as far from her as the bed would allow. Marc had left him here to babysit her while she slept.

Jayde turned the water off and squeezed the excess water from her hair. "Can you hand me my towel, please?" She slid open the glass enough to hold

out her hand. Marc did as she asked and placed the warm, fluffy towel in her grasp.

She took her time wiping herself dry and fluffing out her hair so it wouldn't drip all over the floor. Wrapped tight in the comfy bath sheet, she stepped from the shower, coming face-to-face with Marc. Although she was covered from her breasts to the tops of her thighs, she felt vulnerable standing there in front of him. She imagined this was how Little Red Riding Hood felt in front of the Big Bad Wolf, right before the wolf ate her.

"You are so beautiful, Jayde. Incredible. Really." The heartrending tenderness of his gaze shocked her speechless. What could she say when someone devoured her very thoughts with one simple statement?

"I know what's happening to you seems incredible, but you're going to have to take a leap of faith here, babe." His hand reached for her hair and brushed it from her cheek. Her body stiffened at the erotic thrill of his callused fingertips against her soft skin. She forced back a moan when he grazed her neck in the process. She had no defense for this.

"Why here, and why now? If there are sex demons—and I'm not saying there are—then why haven't I seen them before?"

"Katriona was the Guardian. She kept them locked away. She has passed her gift on to you, and now you must do the same."

A dull ache of foreboding spread through her body, making her limbs heavy and tired. "My grandmother? No way did the no-nonsense woman with the all-knowing eyes believe in this stuff." She brushed past him. She just couldn't go where he wanted to take her.

Walking out of the bathroom, she came face-to-face with Aidan, standing between her and escape.

"Give it a chance, Jayde. We can't do this without you." Desire flamed in his eyes. Strength. She needed to find some.

"This can't be true. I'm not the one. Who would choose me?" She crossed her arms over her breasts, holding the towel in place.

He reached out and cupped her face with his warm hands. "You are the one in so many ways. Don't you see?"

She shook her head. She couldn't see past her own confusion. "I can't... I don't understand."

"Open yourself to the truth, and you will." Marc's whisper brushed at her ear from behind. "The box you took from your grandmother's safe-deposit box is the doorway to sexual obsession, my sweet. By unlocking it, you now bear the weight of its power and complications, and its source remains around your neck."

Her hand flew to the moonstone resting between the crest of her breasts. "The dreams come from the necklace?"

"It's not just the necklace. By wearing it against your body, you've allowed the dark source free rein over what you do. The fudge that you made, the one all the locals can't get enough of? It carries a weaker, more temporary power of obsession. It's what makes them so aggressive for more."

"And the sex? The cravings I have for the two of you, they just come from a stone too?"

Neither answered that question.

"Is the stone what makes the two of you want me as well?"

Marc's fingers traced down her spine. "We're immune to the power of obsession; it's why we were chosen to watch over the Guardian. What we want comes only from what we feel for you and from the connection we share as protectors. There is no easy explanation for that; it is what it is."

"Yes, but more. Our lives are destined to be intertwined," Aidan said.

Marc's long, strong fingers reached for the knot of the towel and tugged it apart, letting it fall to the ground. The ice-cold air swept over her damp skin, raising goose bumps all along her limbs. She found it hard to concentrate on

their revelations when Aidan's eyes shone with heat that nearly seared her from across the room. They had to be wrong. Her gran would never let her walk into something like this unaware.

Moments later, the naked warmth of Marc's body heat cloaked her, seeping into her bones, making her want to burrow against him, soaking in his scent and taste as well. All semblance of logical thinking fled her mind as she watched Aidan strip off his clothing one piece at a time in front of her, while Marc trailed kisses along her shoulders and back.

Jayde reached for Aidan and pulled him close. Her hands wound through his hair, and the silky black strands tickled her wrists. "I want you." The tone of her voice surprised her, husky and rough with a desire out of control. With Marc pressed against her backside and Aidan rubbing up against her naked breasts, she found it impossible to hide the emotion and passion coursing through her. Heat welled between her thighs as Marc propelled her forward, nudging Aidan backward until he bumped into the bed and fell backward, pulling her down on top of him.

The air whooshed out of her lungs when she landed on his chest in a flurry of arms and legs. Aidan's thick, rigid cock pressed into her hip, reminding her precisely how much he wanted her and Marc together. In the back of her mind she thought she heard Marc rifling around in the bathroom, but she couldn't be sure, not with all the blood rushing to her erogenous zones, which now ached to be touched.

Aidan guided her head down to his for a kiss, and she dived between his lips, anxious to find his tongue and tangle it with her own. Skin to skin, heat to heat, Jayde was certain she would explode if Aidan didn't make love to her soon. She wriggled her hips against his shaft, rising a few inches more and putting the tip of him right at the entrance of her core. Aidan moaned into her mouth and fisted his hands in her hair, sending frissons of pleasure along her head and neck.

When a hand slid between the cheeks of her ass toward her heated slit, she froze in shock at the sudden sensations.

"Relax, beautiful, it's my turn to play." Marc's hand touched her now. He moved to grip Aidan's cock and rubbed it against her opening and clit.

Her eyes widened.

A finger dipped into her wet pussy, and her body jerked in response, pushing back against it. She wanted more.

"Is she ready?" Aidan had wrenched away from her mouth when she moved.

"What do you think? She is so wet, I'm not even sure she needs the lube I found."

She moaned again when Marc rubbed Aidan against her clit. "Please," she whispered, moving against him.

"What was that, Jayde? I don't think I heard you."

"Dear God, Marc, please don't torture me."

His laughter bubbled up in a gentle rumble from his chest. "Oh baby, we haven't even begun the torture part of this program yet." With those words, his finger slid from her quaking pussy and was replaced with the swollen crown of Aidan's cock.

Beneath her, Aidan sucked in a sharp, shallow breath. "So warm and wet. Damn, woman, you're going to kill me, and I think I'll die a happy man."

Before either of them could say or do anything else, Jayde moved against Aidan's shaft, sliding it deep in her pussy with a single stroke. A slow groan slipped from her lips as she watched Aidan's eyes go wide. She squeezed around him, his cock filling her.

"Greedy little thing, aren't you?" Aidan moaned, his hips rotating, moving, thrusting upward.

Jayde shook through the intense pleasure rushing over her. "Desperate, actually."

"Desperate for what, baby?" Aidan's voice was strangled, his corded abs tightening against her belly.

"For you both," she whispered hoarsely. "I want you both to fuck me."

"Have no fear, Jayde; we're both here, and we'll both have you right now."

To emphasize the last word, Marc slipped a lubricated finger into her tighter hole, surprising her with the intense sensation of his skin rubbing against even more sensitive nerve endings. She fought to draw breath in and out of her lungs with each stroke of his finger, until he added a second, giving her a slight burn with her pleasure. Deeper. She wanted them so much deeper inside her. Jayde ground her body backward against Aidan's cock and Marc's fingers, seeking even more. More what, she couldn't think. She was dying now. Her body was on the edge of the abyss, and she thought with one more stroke...

"She's going to come."

"I know. She's strangling my dick with her—"

Jayde screamed out, shaking and quivering as her climax washed over her, tumbling her headfirst into a pool of sensation she couldn't get enough of. As she pumped her hips against Aidan, drawing out the pleasure, Marc released his fingers and pressed the tip of his cock to her ass, pushing steadily as she bumped against him. Pain mingled with her ongoing pleasure until she thought she would burst from it.

"That's it, baby; fuck us together."

Gone were the easy movements of their initial thrusts as Jayde thrashed wildly against them. Her discomfort dissipated in the incredible bliss and fullness she felt with two men taking her. Her two men.

"I...I can't... She's going to make me come." Aidan grunted.

She bucked harder as jets of semen bathed her womb with every pulse of Aidan inside her.

Marc leaned across her back, taking over the movements as he pumped against her backside. His rough and steady shafting had her falling again. She was too hot. She was burning from pleasure so intense, she started to fracture.

“Come on, baby. Come with me now. Together we can conquer anything.”

Marc's rough words shot her over the edge, colors exploding behind her eyes as she screamed out another orgasm.

“Oh yeah.” Marc plunged twice more, until he too succumbed to the mind-numbing pleasure created between them, groaning as her contracting muscles milked the hard spurts of his release. Muscles flexed and quivered as sensation after sensation rolled over her, more than her brain could process.

Marc's cock sliding from her body brought her back to earth as he rolled over onto his side, perspiration covering his sleek chest and his dark curls plastered around his face. In that serene moment she wanted to forget about everything but the two men in her bed. The two men she hungered for daily, but more importantly, the men she had grown to care for more than anyone before them.

Here between them was a cocoon of safety and place of comfort she had never experienced. She finally belonged.

That thought struck her hard, because right behind it was the realization that if what she felt came from a box and a stone around her neck, then if she removed them, her happiness and sense of belonging would go with them.

How could she possibly give that up? Maybe that was a selfish thought, but dammit, she deserved happiness as well. Surely they could find another way to control the effects of the box. Provided what they told her about the box was even true.

She lifted her hips and shifted between the two men, her body automatically seeking the warmth and comfort of touching them together.

“I need to get up. There's a lot of work to do.” None of which she was really interested in at the moment.

“Rest awhile. There's time.” As her eyes closed and she drifted into sleep, she wondered how these feelings and needs could be created by a box.

It was impossible...

Chapter Six

Hours later Marc and Aidan walked into the bakery to a nearly identical scene as the day before. Beth and Jayde were selling boxes of her fudge as fast as they could, and customers were fighting to get their share before they ran out again.

“Apparently the talk we had this morning didn't work.” Aidan sounded worried, and Marc agreed.

“Maybe some startling facts will wake her up to the effect she's having on the town. Things are about to get much worse, real fast, if we can't get her to listen.” The distracting sight of her bending over to package the fudge heated his blood, leaving him hard and pissed off as hell as he spied the blue stone dangling in front of her. He had expected her to follow his advice on that cursed box, yet here she was, smiling and handing over her obsession-laced baked goods, all while wearing that damned necklace.

He had half a mind to bend her over his knee right here and spank that round, beautiful ass until she was red and sore and begging for him to stop. Maybe then she would listen and get the message he was trying to tell her.

It was then that she spotted him and flashed him a generous smile. That smile, however, died out quickly as she picked up on the anger that surely clouded his features.

He watched her turn and smile at her customers, waiting on them one after another until the last of the fudge was gone, and Aidan had to help her usher the rest of the crowd out of the shop. Some of them got a little angry and tried to start an argument, but Beth was quick to get in the middle and defuse the situation. Lucky for them, the obsession hadn't gotten too far out of hand,

and they could still see reason enough not to hurt a pregnant woman standing right in front of them. The dark looks ravaging many of their faces worried him. Violence was in the air, and it wouldn't be long before it couldn't be contained.

"Are you about done glaring at me?" Jayde's angry voice sounded from behind him.

He whirled to face her. "So I guess everything we told you about the necklace and the danger we're all in because of it meant nothing to you."

"I'm still considering what you and Aidan told me about it, but I'm not sure how much I believe yet. Other than the three of us having wild sex these past few days—and some delicious fudge—I'm not seeing that much of a difference."

"You're being naive, Jayde. You are now the root of its power, and everything you touch is being affected. When you make that fudge, you are sending it out of here to create chaos." His control slipped as he moved forward.

"Come on, Marc. Don't you think you're exaggerating now? It's chocolate and sugar and a few other secret ingredients from my grandmother's cookbook. Nowhere do her directions say anything about a pinch of sexual obsession."

He took a deep, steadying breath. Her behavior was stretching his patience to the breaking point. "What's it going to take to convince you? Anger, pain...death?"

"Seriously, you do not have to be so melodramatic. I've got my eyes open, and I'm looking for signs of *obsession*, as you so eloquently put it."

He grabbed her arm and dragged her over to the front plate-glass window, which overlooked the busy street outside. "Then I suggest you get out of this shop and take a look around. Already things are changing with the locals. Businesses are abandoned, police cars are sitting empty on the side of the road, and people are grabbing at each other like love-starved teens."

Jayde did look out the window, ignoring her irritation about how roughly he'd grabbed her arm. He released her, and she moved in closer for a better view, letting her head swivel from side to side, looking up one side of the street and then the other.

"What's going on out there?" Aidan walked in between them to see for himself.

"Nothing much at the moment." Jayde sounded contemplative.

"That's exactly my point. Normally, this time of day, the streets are all hustle and bustle with constant business going on."

"Stop it, Marc. This doom-and-gloom attitude is getting on my nerves."

"And your not giving a shit is pissing me off." Actually he wanted to shake her, to find a way to make her understand, obey.

She stood transfixed, staring at him, her hands placed belligerently on her hips. Her mouth opened to say something and, instead, abruptly closed as she stomped from the room, not giving him a second glance.

"Ease up, Marc. I'll see if I can talk some sense into her."

"Yeah, good luck with that." Marc watched Aidan hustle from the shop to follow Jayde as she stormed out the front door.

* * * * *

Jayde stepped out onto the sidewalk and slammed the door behind her. She was so angry, she had to stop and take a few deep breaths to calm herself. She rubbed her arm where he'd grabbed her. She didn't know who she was more upset with, Marc or herself. Damn this. *Why did things have to get so complicated?*

The door behind her swung open, and she whirled around, prepared to tell him to leave her the hell alone, but it wasn't Marc. It was Aidan. "Are you going to start in on me too?"

Aidan shook his head. "Nah, just wanted to make sure you're all right."

"I will be, after I get some fresh air and think about what it is I'm supposed to be doing." She waved her hand toward the bakery. "The pressure in there is more than I can deal with at the moment."

"I understand." His hand rubbed across her shoulder, the heat seeping through her shirt. "Let's go for a walk, then. You've been working really hard and not getting a whole lot of sleep lately." He winked at her with a silly grin on his face.

She tried not to smile, she really did, but the look on his face and the memories of all the sex they'd been indulging in were too impossible to resist. The decadent pleasure of it all could not be denied. "Yeah, I guess you're right." She linked her arm through his, and they took off down the street, headed in the direction of the waterfront.

Passing businesses and houses along the way, Jayde couldn't help notice the unusually high number of CLOSED signs in the windows. On a Friday evening the place should be packed with tourists and locals alike, spending their money on things they needed for the coming week, as well as things they probably didn't need. Instead, the street seemed almost empty, with only a few people passing by every now and then.

"Where is everyone?"

"I don't know for sure, but I would guess either getting laid or doing everything they can to get laid."

Her steps faltered. "That is so not funny."

"It wasn't meant to be." He started walking again, pulling her gently along with him.

"Please, Aidan, not you too."

"Me too, nothing. If you don't like the answers, then don't ask. You have to make up your own mind about all this. That's the whole point, anyway."

"What do you mean the whole point?"

"Not my place, Jayde, not my place. Stay here for a minute, okay?"

They had stopped in front on a tiny house a few feet from the sidewalk. It was tiny, resembling a child's playhouse, but it was well cared-for with pretty flowers blooming in every inch of the front yard. "I want to go in and check on Beth. She didn't look so good when she headed for home."

"Oh, this is Beth's house." It made more sense now. "I should go with you; maybe I can help."

"No, I can handle it. Enjoy the fresh air and consider what you came out here to think about."

She nodded as he disappeared behind the wooden and wrought-iron gate, wondering what the hell she should believe. Between Marc demanding she listen to what he said and Aidan giving her the quiet, reasonable approach, she was more confused than ever.

Not in her wildest dreams could she have imagined what would happen to her when she arrived back in Hickory Falls. She'd always considered it a boring little town she couldn't wait to get away from.

"Hello, Jayde."

She whirled to find the man she'd met at the bank, the one who'd taken her to the safe-deposit box room. God, what was his name? She racked her brain trying to remember, embarrassed that she'd forgotten. What a difference a week made. Had it only been a week since they'd met?

"Hi there." She hoped he wouldn't notice her failure to use his name.

"Bob, from the bank. I helped you with your grandmother's safe-deposit box."

Embarrassment flooded her. "Of course, Bob, I remember you." She held out her hand to shake his, but instead of shaking it, he brought her fingers to his lips and kissed them...lingering there... The inappropriateness of the gesture shivered through her, making her skin crawl.

Bob stepped forward into her personal space, so close that his chest brushed against her breasts. Jayde tried to take a step back, but Bob wrapped

his arm around her waist. He pulled her tight against his body and ground his hard cock into her pelvis.

The wild-eyed look on Bob's face terrified her. How could she not have noticed the leer when he'd first spoken? She fought against his hold, pushing against his chest with her free hand, but he was much tougher than his pudgy, conservative look gave away.

"Please...stop."

"Come on, sweetheart. You know you want this as much as I do. It'll be so good, I promise." She recoiled at the stink of his breath, as well as his intentions.

"Get off of me, before I yell for help and have you arrested."

"I don't see anyone around here, do you?" He clutched at her waist and hand tighter, to the point she could barely breathe, let alone kick or hit him. When his lips slammed against hers in a brutal kiss, and his tongue forced its way against her own, she did the only thing she could think of. She bit down on him, hard.

His head reared back, but he didn't loosen his hold. "You bitch."

She spat at him, not caring about his anger when she couldn't see past her own. In a split second, things changed, and he released her hand, raising his own. She squinted her eyes and steeled herself for a blow that never came.

Something shot between their bodies, halting his hand in midswing. She stumbled backward when she was abruptly let go, and the sound of bones crunching punctuated the quiet evening, followed by a piercing howl of pain.

Getting her bearings again, she saw Bob down on his knees, Marc looming over him. He had wrenched Bob's hand and arm in a painful, unnatural direction, a hold designed to keep him from moving. Bob's face twisted in agony, followed by bellows of pain that would surely wake the dead.

"You're lucky I don't kill you right here and now. Not only is Jayde mine, but you should know better than to treat any woman like that."

"I'm...I'm sorry. I don't know what got into me. I couldn't help myself."

"Is it going to happen again?"

"No...I...uh...don't think so."

Marc released his hand and shoved Bob to the ground. "If it does, you won't live through it."

He turned and stalked toward her. The relief she felt shriveled up inside her at the look in his eyes. The anger. The impatience. Hell, were his eyes red? She closed her eyes and shook her head. *I'm seeing things. Not possible. Not possible. Not possible.*

"Let's go."

"I'm waiting for Aidan."

"That's why I'm here. He wants to stay with Beth tonight, and he didn't want you to walk back home alone."

"Oh. Is Beth all right? Shouldn't I go check on her?" She looked toward the house Aidan had disappeared into.

"No, Aidan will take care of her. He's sure she and the baby are fine. He just doesn't think she should be alone tonight. Aidan is so protective of her. We both are."

Jayde nodded. She could understand not wanting to be alone. She too feared being alone again. Her hand clutched at the moonstone, worried what would happen if she gave it up, and equally as worried about what would happen if she didn't. She brushed herself off and moved to the sidewalk, heading back home. *Home*. Was this home now? What about her life in San Francisco? God, she didn't want to go back to her empty apartment, but she didn't think she could bear being here without them.

She and Marc walked in silence, with the occasional brush against each other. Regardless of the tension between them, every small touch made her want to reach out and grab him. To explain to him her fears of losing him and Aidan if she gave up the stone. But if the incident with Bob was an example of

what happened because of the stone and the box, then she would have no choice. Save the town, lose the love...

Her thoughts had slowed her pace, and she didn't realize Marc had stopped until she slammed into his solid-as-a-stone-wall body.

"What the—" She followed the direction of Marc's gaze and froze. Stunned.

The front window of the bakery had been shattered, and the door to their home stood open.

"Wait here."

"No, Marc, it's not safe. Let's just call the police."

"Did you not see the police here buying your fudge earlier?" He pointed to the empty patrol cars they'd left at the curb hours ago.

Her heart sank as more of the truth hammered into her. "Right."

Marc strode through the door and into the shop while she watched from the street. The store had been ransacked, and from the outside, everything looked broken. Her breath caught in her throat when Marc disappeared into the kitchen. Time slowed, and her heart raced, waiting...

When a crash and the sound of more breaking glass sounded from deep inside, Jayde rushed in. No way in hell would she just wait out here while Marc faced God knew what. She forced the kitchen door open so hard, it slammed into the wall behind it. There on the floor were Gary and Ray from the repair shop down the street. They looked dazed while Marc stood over them, waiting for them to move.

"What the hell?"

"They were looking for more fudge."

Jayde grabbed at the necklace, shocked at how out of hand things had gotten. "Doesn't anyone have any self-control in this town?"

When Marc started to speak, she held up her hand to stop him. "No, don't bother. I already know what you're going to say."

She ran out of the room and up to her apartment. Her lungs burned from the burst through the shop and up the two flights of stairs as she locked the door behind her. She sat down on the bed, gulping in air, desperate to catch her breath. She looked at herself in the mirror behind the dresser. Her hair stood out in a riot of curls, and her skin flushed red and sweaty from her fear and her exhaustion. She did not look her best.

Sometimes when she looked in the mirror, she could still see the pudgy, plain little girl she had been, but not anymore. She'd come to terms with her ample figure, and she knew how much she was worth, even if Aidan and Marc didn't see it without the stone's power to show them.

Tears tracked down her face as she spied the reflection of the box behind her, sitting on the nightstand beside the bed. She reached for the clasp to unhook the necklace. There was no choice. She had to do right by her grandmother and do the right thing. The warm stone settled in her hand as the tears continued to fall. She'd never known what love would be like with one man, let alone two. Somehow, the memories would have to be enough.

She pressed the lock on the box and pulled the lid open. When she'd opened the box the first time, it had been a seductive lure. Now it repelled her. Her limbs turned cold and achy the closer she got to placing the necklace inside. Her heart hurt, but she knew her grandmother watched her with pride.

"For you, Gran, I will protect the legacy of the box and all that it contains. I love you."

She dropped the necklace onto the velvet and slammed it shut, locking the puzzle pieces once again until the last of the tumblers fell into place. The deed was done, and she'd made her choice.

Epilogue

One week later...

"Are you about ready to close up for the day, Jayde?" Beth looked miserable and desperate for a break.

"Why don't you go on home, and I'll handle it on my own."

"Are you sure?"

"Definitely. There's not much left to do. I'll tidy up the kitchen, and then I'll be heading upstairs myself. I'm beat."

"I hear ya. I'll just grab my purse, then, and head on home." Beth gathered her things and headed for the door, stopping at the entry table to pick something up. "Someone left a package here for you."

Jayde glanced up to see Beth holding a present wrapped in brown shiny foil paper and tied with a red satin bow.

"For me?" She moved around the counter to see.

"It's from Aidan and Marc."

"Oh." Jayde turned away. She'd avoided them since she locked up the necklace, instead putting all her energy into cleaning up the shop and learning how to cook good fudge. And it was good. Customers weren't clamoring for it like they had for the obsession-laced version, but she had a good, steady clientele coming in every day for her treats. "Why don't you take it, then? I don't want it."

Beth sighed. "How long are you going to avoid them?"

"I'm not. I've just been busy."

“Uh-huh.” She looked liked she wanted to say more but decided against it. “I’ll leave the package right here on the counter. Why don’t you open it? Give them a chance.”

Jayde couldn’t do it. She was afraid their direct rejection would be more than she could bear.

She finished her cleaning and started turning out the lights one by one. The shiny brown package sparkled in the soft glow from the fudge cases. Unable to resist, she picked it up and carried it up the stairs with her. Passing by their apartment night after night without knocking was a damned difficult thing to do, and she wondered how long this would continue. How long before they made her talk to them, to listen to the truth?

She entered her apartment, anxious to be alone and away from temptation. She stared at the package in her hand.

Oh what the hell?

Sitting on her bed, she untied the ribbon and carefully unwrapped the gift. She pulled out the card. *To Jayde, with much love and fun. Marc and Aidan.*

The label on the box read, *Chocolates: Indulge Yourself.*

Jayde’s eyes opened wide as she saw the actual package contents. Oh dear, they’d given her a chocolate vibrator set. There was a delicious-looking, multispeed egg, a delectable seven-inch vibrator, and a decadent chocolate waterproof pocket rocket! And to top it all off, a bottle of chocolate body spread.

Her skin tingled with the sensation of what dessert could be like with this set.

“I couldn’t resist it when I saw it. It had your name all over it.”

She jumped at the sound of Aidan’s voice behind her. She scrambled to cover the package in spite of herself.

Turning to face him, she found both Marc and Aidan staring down at her. She opened her mouth to say something and had no idea what to say.

Marc cupped her chin. "We aren't going away, Jayde. We're all connected, and not just by the box."

Together they walked in front of her and knelt down.

"We need you, Jayde. In our lives. In our bed. In our hearts. Will you have us?"

Her chest clenched at their words. Was she dreaming again? They waited for her to say something, but denying them was impossible. She loved them far too much to even consider anything else.

She flung herself into their arms, letting the tears of relief streak down her face. She was home after all.

"Is that a yes?" Aidan grinned.

She looked at the gift on the bed and then back to them, flashing a sly grin. "What do you think?"

THE END

Eliza Gayle

From the moment Eliza read her first erotic romance novel several years ago, she knew she had found her niche and realized that her dream was passing her by. So after years of thinking about it she finally grabbed her laptop and wrote. These days she likes her stories hot and spicy whether they be contemporary, fantasy, or paranormal and will write in whatever genre her imagination has conjured that day.

Eliza lives in beautiful North Carolina and spends her days dividing her time between writing erotic romance, her full- time job as a marketing manager, and raising her two daughters.

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