

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

*Under His  
Thumb*

VONNA HARPER

ELLORA'S CAVE *Quickies*®

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Under His Thumb

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# *UNDER HIS THUMB*

Vonna Harper

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## **Chapter One**

Sometimes the gods get it right, Meka Morgan concluded as she drove along the densely treed road. In a random world where bad things happen to good people and bad people get away with murder, once in a while the good guys win. At least they're handed something that makes them think they have.

For the umpteenth time, she glanced over at the ornate invitation on the passenger seat. Then as she turned her attention back to staying within the narrow and deserted lane, she smiled. Given recent unreal job stress and one Bruce Wisdom, it was time something went her way. Maybe the best part of the whole thing was that thanks to the unexpected invitation, she'd been given an excuse to get out of town for the weekend. No more working overtime while wondering what had happened to job security in addition to admitting she should have seen Bruce for what he was long ago.

A girl could dream about some major escapism.

\* \* \* \* \*

"It's certainly large for being so remote," she said a half-hour later. "I never expected—"

"Its distance from civilization's complications is part of its appeal. We aim to make everyone's time at The Getaway memorable."

"I'm sure it will be. And to think I won—the weird thing is I don't remember signing up for an all-expenses-paid weekend here."

"Perhaps a friend—"

"Maybe, but I can't think who. Surely it's no one from work. Like me, they have all they can do to keep their heads above water."

"What matters is that you're our guest, a hopefully satisfied one by the end."

Even as Meka nodded and smiled, she wondered how she was going to take her eyes off the man she'd just met long enough to give the mountain lodge's main room the attention it deserved. Given what she'd gone through with the man she thought she'd be marrying, she shouldn't want to be anywhere near a member of the male persuasion. But this one—had he told her his name?—all but oozed sex appeal.

Gads, getting turned-on—just what she didn't need on top of a day so busy she hadn't had time to change out of her office attire before heading up here. On the other hand, maybe there was the slightest possibility her *host* was feeling the same vibes. Hmm. How could she find out whether fraternizing with the guests was allowed?

Not seeing anyone else in the cavernous main room with its many chairs and couches, massive rock fireplace, beam ceiling and masculine wall decor was a little disconcerting, but there'd been a number of cars in the parking lot, and muted music provided a calming backdrop. Besides, with this particular welcoming party of one promising to take personal care of her, what more did she need?

*How about a man you can trust?*

*Forget that. How about nothing more complex than having a particular fantasy come true?*

Angrily shaking off thoughts of Bruce, hopefully for the last time, she focused on her host's rugged, almost harsh features, professional athlete's body and cool, appraising gray eyes.

Leaning back in the oversized leather chair he'd selected after directing her to an adjacent plush couch, he regarded her. He wasn't exactly undressing her with his eyes, but his gaze said she was more than a prize winner to him—like maybe *his* prize.

Determined to beat him at his game, she stared back. Two, maybe three sanity-saving seconds later, her pussy began heating. *How'd you like to drop into a certain long-running dream of mine? Provide the distraction I badly need in my life. Maybe a little role-playing.*

Although he wasn't the most handsome man in the county thanks to a five o'clock shadow, shaggy black hair, thick neck and big hands, there was no denying his

appeal – and danger. Men with only a thin veneer of civilization, male with a capital M, had always rattled her, which in part was why she'd felt comfortable around Bruce. Bruce was civilized, suit and tie, well-mannered. Sex with him had been that – sex. No fucking or rutting or wham-bam allowed. No turning into a bitch in heat on her part, not that she'd ever done that – just imagined. Even more important, no granting Bruce a role in the fantasy she should have never told him about.

*Geez, will you get off it!*

Her host stood. "Are you ready to see your room?"

Looking up, it was all she could do not to gape. How tall was he anyway? And those muscles – what was a resort employee doing with a power-lifter's physique?

"Of course," she belatedly replied, and planted her legs under her. When he held out his hand, she placed hers in it.

*Run! Run before it's too late!*

Startled by the out-of-nowhere warning, she tried to extricate her fingers. However, he held on, albeit not with enough force to frighten her or cut off circulation. "It looks like it could snow," she babbled and tugged again. "I hope I've brought the right clothes."

"Oh, you have."

"How can you say that? The notice I received didn't stipulate what kind of attire was recommended. When I called to confirm, I was told that if I needed anything, there's a clothing boutique." She glanced down at her hand, or rather what she could see of it. "I don't mind telling you, I found that a little off-putting. Given the rates I'm sure you get for this place, doesn't it seem as if you're fleecing the client if –"

"Clothing won't be your main concern."

"Oh? Then what will?"

Lightly massaging her hand with his wonderfully strong fingers, he granted her a smile that didn't make it all the way to his eyes. She had the disconcerting thought that

he was playing with her. If her impression held up, she'd be sure to let his supervisor know she didn't appreciate it. Spinning a little make-believe with him in it was one thing. His sensing her single-and-stressed status and taking advantage of things was quite another.

"Think of The Getaway as an escape from reality. Things happen here that don't anywhere else on Earth."

"Oh? Then why haven't I heard of it?"

"We don't advertise in the usual media. In fact, starting with our first few months in existence, we've discovered that word of mouth from satisfied customers has been sufficient."

"Oh? Then whoever signed me up was either a satisfied customer or someone who—"

Before she could finish, he yanked her toward him and spun her so her back was against his chest. His arm clamped around her waist, sealing her to him. The other went to her face, and something pressed against her nose. Gasping, she dug her nails into his forearm, but if he felt them he gave no indication.

She reached back and up, hoping to claw his face. As she did, she took a breath. Something horrid smelling seeped into her, and she weakened. "What's happening?"

"You'll understand soon enough."

"What?" she repeated, her system coming unglued. Still, she threw herself against him, hoping she could knock him off his feet. No such luck. Although she tried not to breathe, she did. When she opened her mouth, more of the awful stench invaded not just her nostrils but her nerves.

Something both hot and cold spread through her. What had been disbelief gave way before the assault to be replaced by a calm and disconnect she lacked the will to question.



Fully awake and aware, albeit uncaring, she slumped in his grip. Her arms sagged and her head fell forward. He removed whatever he'd held over her nose while effortlessly supporting her dead-and-willing weight. After a moment, she felt her head being lifted by the hair. When the back of her head rested against his chest, he patted her cheek.

"That's right, relax, just relax. And enjoy."

*Enjoy?*

"I know what you're thinking, at least I have a darn good idea. You can't quite wrap your mind around this particular reality, and fully expect to wake up at any minute, but this isn't a dream. Neither am I."

*Who are you? What –*

"This inability to speak won't last long. At the same time, you'll soon stop feeling as if you've been separated from your emotions. You'll start to be afraid, but you aren't in danger—at least not what you've always comprehended as danger. I'm not going to hurt you. If you believe nothing else, believe that."

Much as she tried to pick his words apart and make sense of what he was saying, she felt as if she were drifting. He was so darn strong, his voice commanding and comforting at the same time. Maybe if she told him what an intriguing hunk he was, he'd let her in on why this was happening. And once he had, they'd — what?

"That's better," he said, his hand now at the side of her neck as if taking her pulse. "Your heart rate's slowing." Still effortlessly supporting her, he slid his hand under the top of her sweater. His fingers closed around a breast.

"Welcome to your new reality. One you've wanted for a long time."

## Chapter Two

*You don't know what you're talking about.* She tried to open her mouth to tell him so, but even that was beyond her. He continued to massage her breast much as he had her hand earlier, the touch both disconcerting and erotic. Her breast no longer belonged to her because he'd effortlessly laid claim to it, taken over responsibility for it. From now on he was in charge of what happened, not just to that one part of her body but everything.

She was still struggling to make sense of what was taking place when he turned her toward him. Like a doll with the stuffing pulled out of it, she started to slump forward. Her suddenly untouched breast remained heated as if waiting for its new owner to return. Instead, clamping his hands around her waist, he hoisted her over his shoulder as easily as if she weighed no more than the doll she'd been and started walking. Each step resonated drum-like throughout her. They were on the move together, a journey for the two of them.

No, that wasn't right! Couldn't be.

And yet—

As if keyed into her confusion, he patted her rear. However, if he'd intended the contact to be nothing more than comforting, he'd missed his mark because that part of her anatomy was acutely aware of the male/female difference and becoming more so with each pat.

"Feels strange, doesn't it?" he said almost conversationally. "Not having any control over your body and yet being aware of everything that's happening. I've breathed what I gave you so I know what it feels like. Part of my job training, so to speak."

As she was trying to make sense of what he meant by “job training”, his hand slipped under her skirt. Something she couldn’t call fear and didn’t want to label arousal jolted through her.

Sliding his hand between her legs, he slowly made his way up her thighs, lingering here and there, painting her with his rough finger pads. Although her body didn’t so much as jerk, every nerve short-circuited. Dismissing the press of blood in her temple, she mentally traveled with him. A stranger’s hand was where it had no business being, and yet even if she could fight, would she? She might be a thousand things, fulfill a thousand roles, carry a thousand responsibilities, but at the core she was a woman.

Hungry.

Finally done with his journey, he fingered her panties. With fabric in the way, the pressure against her pussy was blunted, more promise than reality. Just the same, she anticipated, wanted.

“What do we have here?” he said in that low and humming tone of his. “Damp, are you? That’s nothing compared to what your body will be doing before I’m done.”

*What are you talking about? I don’t understand, don’t want –*

*Yes you do.*

Pushing the nylon aside, he touched her moist and willing flesh. Although her muscles remained beyond her control, she dove into fantasy. The moment he slipped into her opening, she’d tighten herself around him and turn him into her prisoner. Even now he couldn’t be immune to her satiny labia, could he?

He was a man, she reminded herself when helplessness threatened to erode her growing arousal. If his libido matched his physique – and she refused to acknowledge anything else – she held a certain power over him, didn’t she?

Eyes unfocused, she tried to imagine him struggling to remember why or who had ordered him to take control of her while his forefinger worked her soft and swollen cunt. No matter how much he tried to harden himself against his own sexuality and concentrate on this strange job he’d been hired to perform, he couldn’t. Perhaps cursing

both of them, he'd strip off their clothes and take her into his arms. After a time, she'd find the strength to lift her pelvis and welcome him into her, to become as much of an animal as he was.

But not yet because although her sex dripped and her nerves sang as he stroked her, she was incapable of movement. At the same time, she acknowledged something she hadn't before. Perhaps she wasn't truly afraid because she'd long wanted—no, needed—something like this to happen.

"The helpless feeling won't last long," he said, perhaps reading her mind. "Which means I have to get you ready."

*Ready? For what?*

Pulling his hand out from between her legs, he leaned forward, and she started sliding off. Instead of hitting the floor, however, she landed on something soft, her body flopping and then settling onto a different couch from the one she'd been on. She was on her back, her head nearly off the side, one leg dangling as far as her straight skirt allowed. The sounds of his footsteps on a hardwood floor told her he'd walked away and then returned. She couldn't say whether she'd had any thoughts while she was waiting for him.

*Help! Someone please come in and help me!*

*Or maybe not...*

"Had to get my equipment." His tone was matter-of-fact. "And because I'm sure you're wondering, the woman you spoke to on the phone isn't available today. Neither is anyone else. Granted, there are people in other areas of the lodge performing *duties* similar to what we'll be experiencing, but because privacy is paramount, you won't see any of them, just me."

Already confused and helpless, she became even more so. She was alone with a madman, a rapist, maybe a killer. And perhaps everything was a figment of her imagination. Some people under stress relied on alcohol or drugs. She'd found that sinking into erotic and over-the-edge make-believe made coping easier. If right now

was part of that coping technique, should she thank him or warn him not to get carried away?

Maybe whatever she'd breathed had a drugging effect because instead of trying to answer her own questions, she felt as if she were lifting above her body. Floating overhead now, she studied herself. There was something both laughable and erotic about her slumped position. Perhaps she'd become a member of a sheik's harem and was waiting for her lord to claim the body he had every right to. In preparation for his arrival, she'd cleaned and perfumed herself and dressed invitingly, maybe with one breast exposed. Her lush hair spilled over creamy shoulders. Her full, painted lips were parted, her legs bent and inner thighs exposed.

*I await you, my lord and master.*

"You're bound to have questions," her captor said, the words slicing into but not completely destroying her fantasy. "Everything will be spelled out, eventually. But I don't believe in getting ahead of myself. A little anticipation and suspense, you know." He brushed a lock of hair off her forehead.

"This might not matter to you, but I deeply enjoy my job. Over time I've refined and further defined it because even the most appealing career becomes stale unless there's constant improvement. I'm self-directed and fascinated by human psychology. At first I was also self-absorbed. Yes, I was performing a *service*, but it was all about me. Now that I've done it as long as I have, I'm becoming more and more interested in the women I'm servicing. You're particularly intriguing for reasons I've yet to decide whether I'll share with you."

He'd been standing behind her head, but now he stepped to the side of the couch and held up his hand. Several leather strips dangled from his fingers. Metal rings were embedded in the strips. A shudder coursed through her. "Your new *jewelry*," he said as she struggled to comprehend how much he knew about her. "You have to be eager to start wearing it. I know you are, but first I need to get rid of your clothes."

No, she wasn't part of a harem after all. Instead, something she'd held close to her for years was now a step away. Inescapable. The thought of cold, hard metal settling around her wrists or around her neck stole her breath. She'd never been more vulnerable.

After depositing the leather and metal *things* on the couch between her legs, he took hold of her sweater hem. "I thought about saying nothing," he told her. "Leaving you in silence to anticipate. But as I mentioned, I intend to be as much a part of this experience as possible. Toward that end, I'll begin by telling you this. You're soon going to be naked, whether you tell yourself you want it or not. Naked and unable to stop me. It's what you need." He drew the sweater up a few inches. Cool air brushed her midriff. "You're pale there. Either you don't get enough sun or you only wear a one-piece."

He spoke slow and low, positioned so she could study his face as bit by bit he exposed her. Never more alive than she was at this moment, she lived for each second.

"Your eyes are expressive. I want you to be aware of that in case you try to keep anything from me. And I don't see fear."

Was she supposed to be? The part of her that had her locking her door at night and looking around whenever she heard police sirens argued that she must be so terrified she couldn't recognize the emotion. But the rest of her knew better. Her world had changed the moment the door to the lodge opened, and no matter what the outcome, she had no desire to flee.

After something between a heartbeat and forever, he reached her breasts, causing her to hold her breath. He blinked several times, and his jaw seemed to tighten, causing her to wonder if he had to grab hold of self-control before continuing. Then, moving so slowly she was certain she'd scream, he drew the sweater over her bra-captured mounds before releasing it.

"I don't need to explain what's going to happen next, do I?" he asked. "Putting aside the issue of how many charges you could bring against me if you were able to and so inclined, I suggest you stay in the present. I know I'm going to."

*This moment is all I have, you must know that.*

“Communication is incredibly complex,” he continued. “Anyone who believes it is limited to the verbal is selling themselves short. As an example, those expressive eyes of yours are getting even larger, and I dare say you’re acutely aware of your breasts. You have no doubt I’m going to touch them, take possession of them. What’s driving you crazy is not knowing when or how that will happen. Therein lies much of my power.”

Her mind fairly pulsed from trying to pull together everything he’d just said, but he was right, even more important was the anticipation. Her breasts were incredibly sensitive and the damnable bra suddenly many times too small. *Do it*, she longed to scream. *Just do it!*

Instead of heeding her silent plea, he rocked back and folded his arms over his chest. His gaze slid from her face to what he’d exposed. “Your résumé mentioned that you were well-endowed. It was right.”

*What résumé? What are you talking about?*

Leaving her alone with her questions, he unfolded his arms and reached for her. Inch by insanity-making inch the distance between them slid away. When his hands disappeared from view, she again held her breath.

There! Slight pressure from ten fingertips compressing her breasts and heat pouring through her bra. Her breath whooshed out, her nostrils flared.

“You’re damn sensitive, aren’t you, more than I expected, not that I’m complaining. Now the question is, do you need time to gather your wits about you or are you ready for the next step?” The pressure increased and heat burst into flame. “Never mind. We’re doing it my way.”

With that, he slid his fingers under the base of her bra and forced it up, exposing the C-sized mounds that had made her one of the most popular girls in high school, at least with the boys. She didn’t need to look at herself to know that pressure from the fabric had distorted their appearance, undoubtedly making them look even more

swollen. He again blinked repeatedly, and although she might be mistaken, she thought his own breathing had increased. He muttered something that might be a curse.

“Lovely, absolutely lovely. And to think they’re part of my playground. How do you feel about knowing I’m going to get as much out of this as you are and that I’ve been looking forward to our *date* more than I usually do?”

He was telling her so much. In contrast, she couldn’t speak so much as a word about what she was feeling and thinking, but maybe he already knew. Thinking about that shrank her world, blanked out everything except him.

“I’m going to have fun with these.” He inclined his head at her breasts. “Did you know,” closing his finger pads around her nipple, he slowly drew her breasts upward, “how easy it is to control a woman this way?”

The pulling sensation snaked from her breasts to her pussy, causing it to flood. She longed to clamp her legs together, to do anything. To tell him how confused his treatment was making her.

“It’d be interesting for us to discuss how close what you’re experiencing comes to what you’ve long wanted to have happen, but as much as I’d like your input, that’ll have to wait until you’ve reached the end. Let’s call it a matter of both of us getting the full picture.”

Wondering what he meant by *the end*, she sank even deeper into what was happening to her body.

“Despite my extensive *research*, you’re better equipped to explain the connection between a woman’s breasts and her innate sexuality than I am. Any woman is. My purpose is to open the channel to that connection for your benefit.” Giving weight to his words, he tightened his hold on her nipples and slowly drew her breasts apart. When she didn’t see how he could increase the distance between them, he backed off a little but didn’t relinquish his hold. Blood pooled in the swollen orbs. This all-knowing stranger was taking her on a journey she’d never expected but had long wondered about and for that she was grateful, so far.



"I'd love to explore your breasts' sensitivity," he told her with his head bent so his moist breath bathed what he'd exposed. "Something tells me we haven't come close to reaching your limit. But interesting as the question of limits is, first things first."

He released her nipples, allowing the blood to flow out in all directions and further harden her nubs. If she could move, she'd cup her breasts. Leaning even closer, he exhaled. In her mind she was in constant movement, feeling everything, living for each moment. Staring at his dark hair, she accepted that he called every shot and she wanted nothing more.

After giving her the better part of a minute to absorb what she'd just acknowledged, he took hold of her wrists and lifted her arms over her head. The drawing sensation along her sides dove deep, touched even more nerves.

*I'm yours!*

When he started to roll her toward him, she was afraid he'd let her fall onto the floor. Instead, he stopped when she was anchored against his legs and bent her upper arm so he could remove her sweater on that side. Next he rolled her away from him until she was pressed against the back of the couch and did the same to her other arm. Before pulling her sweater over her head, he unfastened her bra.

This time when he released her, she slid away from the couch back with her arms still over her head and her spine pressing into the seat. By lowering her arms one at a time, bending her elbows as he did and pulling on the bra strap, he easily removed the garment. For a moment he held it up so she had no choice but to stare at what he'd decided she had no use for. Then he draped it over her throat.

Naked from the waist up. Still helplessly at his mercy and shaking with need. Unable to do anything else, she stared at him. What, she wondered, did he now see in her eyes?

*I'm yours, Master.*

"There's a bit of the beast in all men," he told her. "Believe me, I've lived with it so I know what I'm talking about. Yes, the majority go through their lives keeping that beast

behind bars, but it still wants out. And when, like now, the cage is no longer necessary, convention and civilization is the last thing we concern ourselves with. At least I don't. The animal rules."

*What about women? When convention and civilization no longer matters, what do they become?*

"Psychology fascinates me," he continued, touching her with his eyes and words. "Specifically what kicks in when nothing's left except the basics. That's where you and I are, down to basics."

*I know.*

Again he timed his movements so she had no doubt of what he had in mind, and although she struggled to hide her anticipation from him, she suspected her gaze was giving her away. Otherwise he wouldn't bother drawing out the act of unbuttoning and unzipping her long wool skirt. Obviously not concerned with the expensive garment's future, he grabbed the hem and tugged, holding her in place with a hand just beneath her breasts at the same time. When the garment hung up on her hips, he jerked, pulling on the right followed by the left. Inch by inch, he exposed her belly, or rather the plain white panties covering it. Next would come her crotch and after that —

"What's this? No slip?"

The skirt was self-lined, not that she could tell him.

"And no hose? Never mind. I never did understand the damn things."

His hand heading toward her crotch heated her core even more. Getting turned-on had never been a problem. In fact, trying to keep her sex drive tamped down had been a long-running battle. What was it she told a few trusted girlfriends? That she could make a killing in the porn industry because she'd never have to fake an orgasm. However, between her conservative upbringing, determination to earn a respectable and responsible living, and not having found a man she trusted with a certain uncivilized nature, libido and reality remained at odds. It was only when she was alone that her imagination truly took over.

Wrapping herself in more fantasy, she'd imagine she was some powerful man's mistress. Whatever she wanted, he'd grant it. Money was no object, and he didn't care who knew who he was lavishing that money on. He wanted her, his trophy, to represent his wealth in part by putting her up in an upscale apartment. She wore expensive jewelry and the finest clothes. However she wanted to pamper herself met with his approval. He loved nothing more than for them to have sex after her masseuse had rubbed fine creams and oils over her. As for the sex, mystery man was the world's greatest lover. He could be energetic and tender if he wanted, but he preferred rough, and what he wanted, he got.

Rough, oh yes! Ropes and chains, her body restrained and singing.

Oh god! Her captor's touch, just his damn touch—

"This is exactly what you need, isn't it?" he asked, pulling her back to reality. Barely aware of what she was doing, she kicked off her shoes. Not giving her time to prepare, he rubbed his thumb against her panties' crotch. Sudden heat burned her labia and her head felt about to explode. "Having a man finger you and not being able to stop him. That's all right. You'll have your chance to thank me, eventually."

*Eventually? What makes you think I want this?*

Except mentally being manhandled sometimes kept her from jumping off a cliff.

"What's this? Getting wetter, are you?"

*I can't help it!*

"Just let it happen. Don't try to hold back or deny yourself your pleasure. If you're ever going to let go, this is the time." His thumb slowed, and pressure became a caress. Juices oozed from her to drench her one remaining piece of clothing.

*You have no right, you bastard, no right!*

*Yes, he does.*

Ignoring her unspoken outburst, he kept at her, by turns gentle and demanding until she thought she'd shatter. Any other time she might have already climaxed, but

not having any control over her body must be responsible for this horrible suspended frustration, this never-ending anticipation. Her thigh muscles twitched.

“Ah, starting to recover, are you? That’s the sign of a healthy system, and serves as a warning that it’s time for us to move on.”

Unease, or was that fear, lashed through her. Just a moment ago she’d lost herself in sensation and the conviction that nothing bad could happen as long as the world revolved around her growing sexual need. But if he could be believed, before long she’d regain control over her nerves and muscles. If he wanted to prevent her from running away and back into her world, now was the time for him to make that happen.

By concentrating, she managed to stretch her outer leg closer to the edge of the couch, but any delusion she had about jumping to her feet died when he effortlessly replaced her leg where it had been.

“Not going to happen,” he muttered. “That’s something you’d better get used to.”

In her mind, she kicked him where it would do the most damage. Unfortunately, in the real world, she only managed another muscle jerk.

“I was hoping this wouldn’t happen so soon,” he told her. “That I’d have more time to get to know your body while it was helpless. Yeah, I’m selfish, but then you fascinate me. You shouldn’t, but you do.”

After unceremoniously removing her panties, he wadded them up and pressed them against her teeth. Despite her determination to resist, her lips parted, and he filled her mouth. Tasting her sex juices, she embraced everything it represented.

“I’ll let you talk, eventually. But right now I want you to concentrate on sensation.” He held up a roll of electrical tape, leaving her to acknowledge the use he intended to put it to. Then, while she lay there helpless, he wrapped the tape around her head, securing the panties inside her mouth and flattening her hair.

Silenced. By him.

*Bring it on.*

As he fastened the leather straps around her wrists and ankles, the snap of locking metal said it all. He'd claimed her. All but branded her. When he held up her arms, she saw that her *bracelets* each had a ring secured to them. Her body became heavier yet more alive and centered. With the leather pressing against bone and skin, she couldn't begin to delude herself into believing this was a dream, albeit one she'd often used during lonely and uncertain nights.

Oh yes, the too-long nights visited by her make-believe Dom. That nameless, sometimes faceless man would storm into her bedroom and then yank her to the floor. Wise in the ways of both their needs, she'd kneel before him, her hands uplifted in surrender. Sometimes he left her waiting. Sometimes he curtly commanded her to take him into her mouth. And sometimes he'd order her to crawl to where he kept the restraints and whips that defined their relationship.

The real-life man who'd replaced her dream Dom released her right arm, but because he'd first hooked a finger through the ring, he easily moved her arm about. She'd become his puppet, danced to his tune. Then he said, "I'll show you how handy these are," and she couldn't do anything except wait and learn.

He gave her the first demonstration by threading a metal clip through each cuff ring and manacling her hands together so they rested on her naked belly. "Ever been handcuffed? Oh, that's right, you can't answer, just experience. In case you need it spelled out, these tricks of the trade will remain in place until and *if* I decide to remove them. I have the key, somewhere. One last touch and we'll get started."

*No! I'm not ready!*

As if reading her mind, he patted her shoulder then trailed his nails from there to her bound wrists. "You're shaking. I hope it's from anticipation and not fear, but sometimes a blending of the two results in the best experience. Whether you believe me or not, the truth is, the two of us wouldn't be here today if I had any question you were going to panic. I've said it before but I'll say it again. Live in the moment. Enjoy."

*Enjoy what? Being trussed up like –*

The pliable leather he placed around her neck stopped her in mid-thought. It wasn't tight, and so soft it caressed her skin. She wouldn't have known she was shaking if he hadn't it pointed out, but now that she was even more tuned into herself, she embraced the similarities between fact and fiction. Granted, always before she'd controlled every step of the journey.

Masturbating had almost always done the trick, especially once she'd discovered that adding fantasy to the mix made things even more exciting. Her favorite fantasy, particularly when the nine-to-five life became too much, had been bondage. She'd only told a handful of girlfriends about her particular kink and usually only when wine had loosened her tongue and inhibitions. She'd sworn them to secrecy then giggled as they made their own confessions and demanded similar secrecy.

Bottom line, imagining herself naked and restrained and on her knees before a man kicked her climaxes into overdrive. Granted, she'd started with mild scenarios involving law-abiding macho men who first made sure she wanted what they were offering, but as she'd delved deeper and deeper into BDSM, those law-abiding gentlemen were replaced by Tarzan types. She became, not a pampered mistress, but a slave who existed only to give her master pleasure. Her body was his playground and freedom a distant memory. Everything revolved around restraint and *forced* sex with ropes, leather, even chains a core part of her existence. Under her Master's command, she no longer had to concern herself with what society and economics demanded of her.

This was no fantasy. A living, breathing stranger had just secured a collar around her throat. It would remain there until he deemed otherwise. And insane or not, she could barely wait for what came next.

Could only tremble and anticipate.

## Chapter Three

Before the effects of whatever he'd made her breathe had completely worn off, he'd fastened her wrists to her collar via a chain so short her hands were now pressed against her chin. A few experimental tugs had reinforced what she'd already known. Even though her legs were now capable of holding her weight, he was in charge. This was his show. She had no choice but to follow his lead.

Once he was satisfied with what he'd done to her arms, he helped her sit up and slid her legs around so her feet were on the carpet and her ass near the edge, forcing her to concentrate to keep from losing her balance. Patting her cheek, he kneed her legs apart and slid a masculine thigh between them. His knee pressed against her naked crotch. Feeling both less and more than she ever had, she stared up at her captor.

"It's too bad you can't see your eyes," he said. "They're absolutely huge and dark. I think I know what they're saying, but I might be missing a few nuances. The pins and needles sensation has worn off, has it?"

Despite her determination to keep what little she could from him, she nodded. "Good. Damn but you're beautiful. All mine and beautiful." He paused. "Now it's time for you to stand."

*Where are we going?* she tried to ask with her eyes. When he said nothing, she realized he had no intention of forecasting what he had in mind for her. Maybe she didn't want to know.

"Did you hear me? Stand up."

How, without use of her hands and him looming over her and his knee against her crotch ripping into her sanity?

"Now stand!"

Shaken by the harsh tone, she tried to lean forward only to be stopped by his greater size. His laughter as he cupped her waist and scooted her back a few inches rang through her, but before she could take advantage of her more secure position, he again claimed her nipples and hauled her to her feet.

Her nipples and breasts burning, she tried to turn to the side only to have him force her back into position. "Remember what I said about how easy it is to control a woman this way? The question is, how much of a demonstration do you want?"

With lightning snapping from her breasts to her sex and from there to the insides of her legs, she shook her head. Her mind spun, and her useless fingers clenched and unclenched. Everything spiraled down to one thing—she was naked and utterly, completely under his control.

Reality and fantasy had woven together.

She was still coming to grips with everything when he again pulled on her breasts. Moaning into her gag, she stumbled after him out of the main room like some animal being taken to—what, slaughter?

As they walked down a long, dark hall, her muffled footsteps made her think of drumbeats. Where was he taking her? What existence had he planned for her and how much would it change her? Even more important, would she embrace or fight the change?

At the hall's end, he released one nipple so he could open a door, and directed her through it. Planting his hands against her shoulder blades, he pushed her forward and into the dark. Thank goodness he hadn't manacled her ankles or she would have fallen.

Coming to a stumbling stop, she concentrated on breathing. The air in wherever he'd taken her was fresh, warm and strangely soothing. A strong arm slid around her shoulder and he drew her to his side. She stared at nothing as he stroked the flesh below her collar.

"Don't be afraid," he said, his tone putting her in mind of what someone might use to calm a frightened child or animal. "You're probably initially going to be shaken by



some of what I do. I expect that. But in the end you'll thank me. Even more important, hopefully you'll understand."

*Don't be afraid.* Although he'd told her that before, tears filled her eyes. If she had use of her arms, she would have hugged him.

"Time for the *demonstration* to begin. As I've done from the beginning, I'm going by what I believe I know of you. I might not get everything right, but hopefully you won't have too many complaints." His hand roamed lower, gliding between her breasts, sliding toward her belly. Moaning into her panty-gag, she thrust her pelvis forward. "You get it, don't you? I'm not surprised."

*How do you know so much about me?*

Lower still, fingers reaching her mons. He patted her there, causing her to moan again. "What an incredible sound. Chew on this. Even if your mind hasn't completed the journey from what you were earlier today to this, your body understands."

His fingers were between her legs and drank of her juices while she tried to clamp her legs together but failed. Being bound and robbed of speech had already taken her into a secret place. Knowing he could touch her however he wanted and push her to the edge reminded her of the winter night her car had spun helplessly on black ice. Although she'd managed to get out of the spin without wrecking, the out-of-control sensation had lingered for months.

"A cunt is an amazing and primal thing. Like a cock, it wants what it wants. It doesn't understand or care about anything else."

Long, leisurely strokes heated her until she longed to bellow in frustration and need. Growling, she widened her stance. The need for explanation no longer mattered. She didn't care if she ever told him certain things. There was only the primitive creature she'd turned into under this big stranger's control. He'd pressed his other hand against the small of her back to help her stand. If she fell, maybe he'd come down with her. Feed the flames. Feed her.

"More lessons." He tapped her mons. "There'll be a *real* payoff at the end, but as they say, the pleasure's in the journey."

Still reeling from how submissive she felt, she barely noticed when he led her farther into the room, this time by her elbow. She couldn't see, but obviously he was familiar with the space. At length, he stopped and spun her around. Then he pushed. She started to fall back only to connect with a wall.

"Spread your legs."

Calling herself the next thing to a whore, she nevertheless obeyed. All questions dispensed with, the only thing that mattered was the journey.

When he pressed his fingers against the base of her belly, the tips seemed to reach all the way to her core, pulling her deep into herself, deep into him. Praying he'd again head for her pussy, she increased her stance. Fresh wet heat coated her labia. "Plez," she begged behind the gag. "Plez."

Her plea earned her repeated not-quite-playful slaps to her inner thighs. Somewhere between angry and excited, she tried to straighten.

"No." Two fingers slipped into her and lifted her onto her toes. "You are not to move, got it?"

Not move? Not respond to the desperately needed invasion?

"Stay the way you are until I tell you different. That's the only thing you have to do, understand?"

*With your fingers in me, yes!* Desperate to let him know she intended to obey, she tightened her inner muscles around him. After a moment, he dove deeper. Dancing on his fingers, she jerked her head up and down. *Who is the prisoner?* she wanted to demand.

Leaving her lost, he pulled free and wiped his wet fingers on her thighs. As he lowered himself to his knees in front of her, his fingers dragging along her body to let her know what he was doing, thoughts of his tongue on her sex lips consumed her. He

was kneeling before her in preparation for granting her one of her secret wishes. In her mind, the moment his tongue tasted her, something would shift between them. She'd no longer be an object but his equal, or nearly so.

By the time it dawned on her that instead of giving her what she craved, he'd fastened a cuff to her left ankle, it was too late. Instead of being horrified, however, she accepted the leather's caress. She felt him clip something onto the ring then encouraged her to spread her legs wide. With no resistance on her part, he easily cuffed the other ankle and secured both legs to the wall. Exposed and vulnerable, she trembled while he ran his nails over her from calf to pussy.

"My slave," he muttered. "That's what you are, mine."

*Yes!*

"How does it feel?" His nails made another circuit. "As good as you expected?"

"Plez!"

"Please what, stop or continue?"

*I don't know.*

Maybe he comprehended how confused she was and was determined to use that to his advantage, because he once more traced a trail from her lower legs to her sex. If he'd made his touch any lighter, it would have tickled, but he obviously understood how much pressure was necessary.

"Plez."

"You're shaking so much I'm afraid your muscles might cramp and that's something neither of us want," he informed her with his fingers spread over her knees. "I'm going to release your hands, but don't try anything. A quick move on your part, and you'll fall."

When she muttered understanding, he stood and unhooked her right arm from the collar restraint. Somehow she remained in place while he lifted her arm and refastened

her wrist to something on the wall behind her. A few seconds later, her left arm had been similarly repositioned.

His to do what he wanted with and for as long as he wanted. Her with no existence beyond these moments and the smell of him in her nostrils. What had he called her, his slave?

When he drew her breast into his mouth, a long whimper found freedom. She rocked from side to side. Releasing her saliva-bathed nipple, he began tonguing it. Whimper after whimper rolled out of her. Her cheeks burned, and the climb to a climax felt a single step away. Still teasing her nipple, he again ran a hand between her legs.

If it hadn't been for her restraints, she might have taken flight. As it was, she found a measure of sanity in the rocking motions, and when he stopped teasing her breast, she began twisting about, but with her legs splayed, he easily, smoothly invaded. Her whimpering died away to be replaced by harsh gasps she half believed belonged to someone else.

"You've got a great barometer there." His finger dove deeper, claimed more. "Nature doesn't lie, does she?"

Arching her pelvis toward him, she stared at the faint shade that was all the darkness allowed her of him. "Plez."

"Did I give you permission to speak, slave?"

She shook her head.

Using his free hand, he slapped her mons. "That's right. I trust you've learned your lesson."

She nodded.

Gone again! Leaving her alone and dripping.

Seconds or was it minutes pulsed around her? Where had he gone? Surely he didn't intend to torture her with his absence. No, he couldn't do that to her, he wouldn't, would he?

What was that? Commanding her heart to stop hammering, she realized he'd turned on a muted light. As he returned one solid step at a time, she stared at the strong, dusty form he'd become. He was holding something, but how could she concentrate on it when she couldn't take her eyes off him. He'd removed his shirt and his erection strained his jeans.

His cock! Oh shit, his long, strong, ready cock!

Cupping his prized possession, he cocked his head. "Believe me, I want in as much as you want me there, but the plan and promise is to go through certain steps. You don't want to miss any of them."

Although he released himself, the mound continued to tempt her until she forced her attention elsewhere. He held a slender chain connecting—oh god, clamps!

They were figments of her imagination, part of the sexy stories she read and adult videos she paid to watch. The devices hadn't been part of her reality before.

"I take it you know what this is." He held up the elaborate nipple clips. "Ever have a pair on?"

She started to shake her head then nodded without knowing why she was exposing so much. Bruce had gifted her with a set a few weeks ago and she'd allowed him to put them on. But either they weren't well-constructed or he hadn't known what he was doing because they'd pinched, prompting her to jerk them off and let him know she had no intention of letting him risk hurting her. His reaction had been to swear and accuse her of being a cock tease, but she'd stood her ground.

Now she had no control over what was going to happen.

No stopping the sensations.

Demonstrating his mastery of the proper use of nipple restraints, her captor fingered her nubs until they became even harder and more sensitive. Then, dividing his attention between what he was doing and her eyes, he positioned a spring-loaded clamp over one nipple and slowly let it close down. Although she jerked, she didn't try

to back away as he secured it. There was discomfort, but mostly she felt restrained, controlled in yet another way.

When he'd done the same to her other breast, she tore her gaze off him and looked down. Metal on flesh with a slim gold chain dangling between her mounds.

*He owns me.*

*And I want him to.*

## **Chapter Four**

This time when he stepped away from her, she took in her surroundings. The room's furnishings consisted of two beds, one barely single-sized, the other a queen with ornate head and footboards. Although the larger bed sported a velvet coverlet, what grabbed her attention was the assortment of chains and ropes hanging from the solid brass headboard. Despite its luxurious appearance, it was obviously a bondage bed. Thinking about what had taken place there before tonight made her stomach muscles clench.

Dragging her attention off the bed, she watched him open a drawer in the only dresser. Even with the dim lighting and the muscles roping him serving as distraction, she studied his spinal column. Then her gaze slide lower to the taut ass cupped by denim, and fabric-straining thighs. What did he do when he wasn't—

He turned, or rather he glided back into her space, the movements sleek and smooth despite his size. Her gaze ran over his chest and down to what she could see of his belly. It wasn't fair! She deserved to see all of him, didn't she?

But he was deliberately keeping vital parts of him separate from her. If, going by some of the things he'd said, this wasn't the first time he'd done this, what other than sexual need motivated him? One explanation surfaced. This man got off on domination and control.

What he now held up needed no more explanation than the nipple clamps had.

"A vibrator." Standing before her helpless body, he brought the large, black, cock-shaped toy within an inch of her face. "A number of steps up strength-wise from what you have at home."

*How do you know?*

"The major difference is that this toy runs on electricity, not batteries. As a result it packs a lot more power."

Apprehension nipped at her to be chased away by expectation. She gave scant thought to trying to keep her reaction private because, after all, what good would it do? He had his plans for her, his captive. And as long as he continued to tap into aspects of her sexuality, she wanted what he was offering.

"I try to imagine what it's like to be helpless and know a man can do anything he wants to me, but that's asking too much of my imagination. I'm not interested in being a sub. Being a Dom is much more to my liking, not that I get to indulge that often." Smiling just a little and with his finger hovering over the switch, he drew the vibrator from her cheek to her throat.

"I've no doubt there's a lot of conflicting sensations going on inside you—all of them leading in one fashion or another to a climax." The vibrator now rested along the top of her right breast. "You can tell me I don't know a damn thing about you, but I do. You have a lot going on in your life, things you can't do anything about during daylight hours. Fortunately, there are the nights and your mind. Yes, your mind, that fertile and necessary thing."

The vibrator started humming, sending its promise throughout her and loosening her hold on what he'd just said. The *tool* danced, not just on her skin but seemingly clear through it before reaching veins and nerves, muscle and bone. Heat oozed everywhere.

"Hmm. Hmm." Sucking in a breath and trying to turn away proved fruitless because he kept it against her captured breast. The chain connecting the nipple clips vibrated, distracting her. By the time she again focused on the thrilling movement, her breast had caught fire. No matter where else the *toy* touched, the ultimate destination wasn't in doubt—her cunt. Once again the overwhelming promise of a climax clawed at her. Frightened by how little of her might remain in its aftermath, she again tried to pull away only to give up when he kept after her.



Panting, she let her head hang, and when he switched to her other breast, she mewled.

“What’s that you’re saying, slave? Is this a sign of approval?”

“Hmm.”

“That’s what I thought. Of course the thing is—” Lifting the vibrator off her but keeping it on, he held it next to her face again, prompting her to lift her head. “The design is pretty straightforward. Looks a lot like a cock, doesn’t it? Size is about the same. The texture is different, but unlike a cock, this little toy doesn’t wear out. Ready for that particular demonstration?”

Although she wanted that more than life itself, she shook her head.

“Oh, yes you are.”

Again she shook her head.

“Don’t. I know you’re lying.”

She gaped at him.

“You heard me right. I know more about you than you can comprehend. Remember what I said about wanting to give you something to think about? Actually what you’re going to get is an explanation.”

When she stared blankly at him, he turned off the vibrator, placed it between her legs and brought it up until the tip pressed against her labia. She rose onto her toes, gasping at the unexpected warmth. It remained silent and but filled with potential and the end to sanity.

“This is a birthday present. From your boyfriend.”

*Bruce?*

“Pay attention if you can. I provide what we call a service here. The other *employees* and I here have become experts at the art of sex in all its forms. There are worse jobs, a lot worse. For a fee, we’ll satisfy anyone’s most erotic and exotic fantasies.”

But she hadn’t asked for this.

"Bottom line, I was hired to do to you what Bruce would like to. He's hoping that spending time with me will introduce you to elements of your personality that will work for what he calls your mutual benefit. He's a self-serving bastard, not that that should be my concern. As long as I'm well-paid, I should focus on fulfilling my *client's* wishes. As for my responsibility to you, as I said, I'm not going to hurt you."

Sudden laughter bubbled up and threatened to choke her. If she could speak she'd tell him he was doing things to her she'd fantasized about for years—or would she? Mind whirling, she tried to concentrate on the man standing before her. It would have been easier if he hadn't mentioned Bruce. Damn it, Bruce had no right making any decisions about her life. But he had and now look what was happening.

"What do you think? Ready to rock and roll?"

Shaking more than she had the one and hopefully only time she'd testified in court, she lowered herself as far as she could so the pressure against her pussy increased. Her testimony had helped convict a former employer who'd been doctoring his books and had threatened her when she told him she'd do whatever it took to make sure he didn't get away with it. She'd been afraid, not of the threat so much, but that the defense attorney would rattle her. Her hour on the witness stand had passed in a sweating blur. This time, however, although she was again sweating, she was determined to live in the moment.

To her surprise, he gently pulled off the tape around her head, taking care to free her hair. When he removed her soaked panties, she ran her tongue over her lips.

"I want to hear you. And for you to hear yourself."

"Thank—you."

"For what?"

"A lot of things."

Instead of responding, he withdrew the vibrator and again dipped a practiced finger into her. She sighed, then sighed again when he touched his drenched finger to her mouth. Lightheaded, she licked him clean. "Yeah," he said. "You're ready."

She knew what was coming, knew it down in her bone marrow. Still, when he slid the vibrator into her, she gasped and lifted herself onto her toes. The toy felt even warmer than it had before, but more disconcerting—and exciting—was the smooth, energetic hum. Her inner flesh settled around the invasion. What a kind and considerate Master she had.

“Don’t forget.” He was so close that his breath heated her. “This toy never gets tired.”

*Bring it on! Damn, bring it on!*

Another notch. More than a hum. Her core responding and caressing the object fucking her. Of all the things she’d imagined a powerful man doing to her, none had excited her more than this. Even as a *sex slave*, she wanted to be catered to. What did it matter if her *Master* followed up by forcing himself on her as long as she was satisfied?

Satisfied, oh yes!

“Hmm. Ah, hmm.”

“Is that all you have to say? Is that all?” Inclining his head toward her, he took hold of the nipple chain with his teeth. Leaning back, he brought her breasts with him. Another time she might have found the sensation painful, but now it simply added to the totality of her submission, her bone-deep helplessness.

And trust?

“Oh shit. Shit.”

Notch number three. The dance beat picking up, shaking her and nipping at hundreds, maybe thousands of nerves. If she got out of this in one piece, she’d exchange her battery-operated toys for electricity driven. And she’d insist that this man be the only one to use it on her.

“Shit. Shit—shit.”

He chuckled, low and strong. Her legs were locked in place, thigh and calf muscles threatening to cramp. Despite the restraints on her wrists and ankles, she leaned forward. In her mind, she became his sagging, slumping, waiting toy.

Even with his jeans in the way, his cock pressed against her belly. They remained like that, captor and captive communicating and her system fixing to shatter.

"Do me. Do me, oh please, do me."

"Not—shit. Not me," he muttered around clenched teeth. "That's not what this is about."

Even with everything she was experiencing, she absorbed his suddenly harsh tone. He wanted more for himself than he was getting. "Why not?" she got out. "Why can't you—"

"The rules. The damnable rules."

"Then break them."

Stepping back, he released the chain followed by the clamps. Even as blood rushed back into her nipples, causing her to cry out, she saw something fierce and barely contained crawling over his features. Before she could ask him to explain, he ratcheted up the cunt invader.

*No!*

Masturbating with her limited collection of sex toys had never felt like this. Hell, garden-variety sex hadn't come close! This was—this was being held over the edge of a precipice, a shimmying man-made instrument pressing against her pussy walls and her nervous system shooting off into space, a prisoner of her own body and a man who knew how to play it.

Loving every damn moment!

A fog settled over her. Staring into it, she acknowledged that she'd entered a long-running dream. The difference was that for the first time, her secret lover/Master/Dom/owner had a face. *Him*.

"Coming! I'm — going to come!"

"Ride it. Grab hold of that stallion and race."

What had he said? Didn't matter—didn't matter at all because something, his finger, she guessed, now pressed against her clit.

Touch and retreat. Caress and stroke. Vibrator spinning her upward. This incredibly knowledgeable man controlling her hot buttons and uncovering some she hadn't known she possessed, pushing, pushing. Nerves quivering, breath sobbing, head thrashing, fighting the restraints but loving her captivity. Trusting.

"Coming. Com — coming!"

"Do it. Now! Let go."

She shattered, broke apart, flew off into the flames with her pussy weeping. Her climax became a wild stallion. Astride it, she raced into the wilderness. Sitting high, she swallowed the churning air while the stallion she'd mounted sent waves of heat throughout her.

Continuing. Continuing.

Dying.

"Stop. Stop, please."

"You're done?"

*Done? Dead was more like it.* "Stop, please. I can't take — can't take any more."

Oh thank god! The *thing* inside her was slowing, stopping and then sliding out, leaving her spent and shaking.

But her captor's finger still tiptoed over her clit.

"Stop. Please. I can't..."

"Yes you can. There's another in you. Let it come."

"I mean it, I can't!"

"I know you better than that," he said, capturing her clit between thumb and forefinger. His other hand clawed at a breast, and his breath scorched wherever it

touched. Reality spun away, leaving her to stare at what she'd become, a slave in the hands of the one man who knew her better than she did herself.

*Master, she longed to say. Master, make the world go away.*

*I am. Just let it happen.*

*Coming! Damn, damn, damn, coming again.* She shrieked. Then, although the sound revealed too much, she couldn't stop from crying out again. Although she jerked at her restraints, it was because she needed to touch him, not find freedom. Her pussy muscles continued to spasm.

"Please, I can't—"

"It's all right. All right."

"Ahh!"

"I'm taking you down slow. Drawing out the pleasure."

*Oh? Thank – thank you.*

Maybe she'd blacked out because the next thing she knew, he was releasing her legs. Crying and laughing at the same time, she leaned forward as far as her tethered wrists allowed.

He was there, meeting her mouth with his, tongues and lips touching, tenderness flowing from him and into her. Even feeling as if she had been rode hard and put away wet, she found the strength, desire and need to kiss him. Soft, then hard, then tender again. Finally he broke free.

"I didn't expect that," he said. "Didn't mean..."

"Mean what?"

"To kiss you."

"Then why did you?"

Instead of answering, his harsh breaths gave her something to focus on as she gathered herself back together. There were so many things she wanted to know about

him, so much she wondered if they'd share. She might not feel this way tomorrow, but she'd never forget him and prayed he wouldn't forget her either.

"I'm going to release your arms," he said. "Don't worry about falling. I'll catch you."

She didn't lose her balance. Neither did she trust herself to remain upright unaided, but what did it matter because he had his arms around her and her head rested on his shoulder and his cock was caught between them, and she didn't understand anything.

"Thank you." Her voice sounded raw.

"You mean it?"

"Yes, oh God, yes."

"Then you're welcome."

*Tell him. Damn it, tell him.* "It isn't my birthday. It isn't even close. And Bruce—he isn't my boyfriend. Not after what he did."

Giving no indication he'd heard a word she'd said, her *captor* lifted her in his arms and carried her to the queen-sized bed. Velvet caressed her back and buttocks, and when he stretched out beside her, she nestled against him.

"Tell me."

"He stole from me. Took money from my checking account and maxed out my credit cards. I—last week I gave him his walking papers."

The man who'd become her world kissed her forehead and pulled her closer. "In other words, the money he used to buy you a weekend at The Getaway was yours."

At his words, a light went on inside her, but not just a light. Laughter too. "It was."

"Why'd he do it?"

"Steal from me?"

"No, give you this *gift*."

*A present? No, what had just happened went way beyond something wrapped up in a bow.* "I don't think it was any more complicated than what he told you. I believe he figured

I'd be so grateful for having my submissive side exploited that I'd rip off his clothes—clothes I'd probably bought—and jump his bones. Forgive him and beg him to become my Dom."

"Is that how you feel?"

*I feel you. Nothing but you.*

Unable to say the words, she slipped out of his embrace. But instead of sitting up, she closed her fingers around his waistband and from there to the jeans fastening and zipper. She thought he might protest and bring up the rules, but he only moved about to make the disrobing easier. Finally the jeans were around his hips and his cock was free.

"So I paid for two nights here, did I?" She punctuated her question by licking his tip. "What about after the weekend's over?"

His grip tightened as did his stomach muscles. "Monday is good. And the next day."

"You're serious? You don't have other...obligations?"

"No. I need some time off, to think."

"About what?"

"A lot of things."

At that, she cradled his cock. His groan said everything.

Then he spoke. "I-I need to tell you something."

"What?"

"After Bruce contacted the *agency*, I decided to check him out. We do that with all new clients. Besides, something about him seemed off. He was too vague about why he was arranging this particular experience for you. He said he was only interested in your pleasure, but I didn't buy that."

"I appreciate that."



"Among other things, I had a private detective look into Bruce's finances. The detective discovered that Bruce had money coming into his account at irregular intervals that didn't make sense. Before long, the detective found the trail from your account to his. At first all we had was your name, but it didn't take long to find you. I've been watching you."

"You have?" The thought of him following her kicked up her pulse rate.

"You work for a social service agency that asks its employees to do more and more while holding the threat of discontinued funds over you. You care deeply about the people you're trying to help or you would have quit. The stress is unrelenting and when it becomes too much, you seek relief in a little BDSM fantasy."

"You—how do you know?"

"You're hardly the first woman to rely on that particular piece of make-believe. What stood out, for me, is that you've never found a man to join you in it."

"I've never found one I trust."

"That's understandable. The wrong choice could destroy that career you've given so much to. Unfortunately, you wound up with Bruce. The more I watched the two of you, the more I knew he was wrong for you."

"You watched him too?"

"Yeah. You're smart. A beautiful, desirable, committed woman. The more time I spent in the shadows, the more I was drawn to you. I knew you'd figure out what he was doing, if you hadn't already."

"If you were drawn to me, why didn't you say anything about Bruce's—hell, I don't know what to call it."

"Maybe I should have. I thought about it enough times. But how would you have reacted if a stranger walked up to you pointing his finger at the man you were or had been sleeping with? Would you have believed me?"

"No, I probably wouldn't have, especially not after you told me you'd hired a private detective to dig into my finances."

"Which I had no right doing. Just the same, I'm not going to apologize because otherwise I wouldn't have learned the truth about Bruce."

Bruce, whose clothes she'd packed up and left on the front porch. Bruce who had already been visited by the police. Bruce who'd touched and then twisted and bruised her heart. Bruce who'd sent her into this man's arms.

Not daring to touch or look at his cock, she gazed up at her captor. What he'd just admitted touched her deeply. Just the same, she'd be a fool if she didn't ask him what might be the most important question. "Knowing what you did, you still cashed the check? Used *my* money to pay for your...for your services?"

He stroked her neck where the leather still rested. "I never cashed the check, Meka."

With his words, she started shivering all over again, and her skin burned.

"What just happened was my gift to you."

"Why?"

"A lot of reasons, all of them with you at the core. Back when I was first hired by The Getaway, I thought I'd found the world's perfect job. I get paired up with a lot of desirable women, but all they care about are their needs and my ability to satisfy them. My needs don't matter. As a young buck, I told myself not to complain. The pay's great and the working conditions amazing, but lately it hasn't been enough."

"What would make it enough?"

Instead of immediately answering, he took several long breaths. Moisture filmed his eyes as he ran his knuckles over her cheek. "Connecting."

Blinking back tears of her own, she leaned into his touch. "Emotionally and not just physically, you mean?"

"Yeah." He smiled. "I'm getting older. I want someone in my life."

"Most of us do."

"Yes, we do. The problem is that not many women would want to hook up with a man with my particular job experience."

Returning his smile with one of her own, she guided his hand to her mouth and pressed her lips to his knuckles. "That's understandable. At the same time, you can bring that unique experience into a personal relationship."

"Yeah, I can."

"There are worse things, a lot worse. Not only can you indulge my whims, there's the whole human psychology thing."

"In regards to what?"

"Do you know why I stay with my job?" She tried to keep her question casual but emotion fairly bled from the words. "Yes, I do good, but look at the personal cost. It takes wrapping BDSM around myself in order to cope. Is it worth the trade-off?"

"You want the truth?"

"Yes," she whispered.

"A lot of people delve into BDSM because that's the way they swing. But I don't think you'll learn whether that's true for you as long as getting through the days takes so much out of you."

"I have to earn a living."

"So do I." He trailed a finger over her temple. "But not this way."

"What?"

"It's time for me to find a different career, one that leaves room for a personal relationship, if I can find someone willing to put my past behind her."

"You're serious? You're going to quit?"

"I turned in my resignation earlier today. Seeing you struggle provided me with the push I need."

Her head swimming, she leaned back a little so she could study his features. He could have told her what he had without waiting for her to strip off his jeans. In fact, he hadn't needed to tell her anything.

"Whatever woman you wind up with," she told him, "she'll never have any complaints in bed."

"I hope not."

"I know she won't. But that isn't the only thing you have to give a woman."

For the first time she spotted vulnerability in the way he was studying her. "What else?" he asked.

"Understanding." She kissed his cheek. "You're so damn right about me. I don't know why I haven't put it together before this. I want to take some time off work, do a little soul-searching, look into other career options, talk to someone—"

"What someone?"

They were going to have sex. Every molecule of her being knew that. Even more important, when the sex was over, they'd leave The Getaway as one. "You."

## **Chapter Five**

*Six months later*

"I've sold you. Unless there are complications, your new owner will be here within the week."

"What kind of complications?"

"That's none of your concern, *slave*. You should be thinking of what you must do to please him."

"Hmm. I imagine you have suggestions."

Grinning like the proverbial cat about to swallow the canary, Rafe Cordon tugged Meka's sleeveless top off one newly tanned shoulder. "My *suggestions*, as you naïvely call them, will come later tonight in the form of lessons, including a number of the hoops you'll be expected to jump through."

Meka glanced down at the breast the man who'd changed her life was exposing, then back up at him. "How many hoops?"

"Depends on whether we get any sleep tonight."

Matching his grin, she lifted an eyebrow. "I have a nine a.m. presentation tomorrow I must look halfway alert for."

"They'll get halfway, maybe." Rafe looped a finger under the other shoulder strap and eased it down. "Where is this presentation going to take place?"

"At resort headquarters."

"In other words, same old same old. You can do that standing on your head." He ran a forefinger between her breasts.

Determined to hold firm against a familiar and always exciting tingle in a certain region of her anatomy, Meka struggled to keep from squirming. "This is for four travel writers. They're going to want facts and figures, not fluff."

"Which you can easily give them without having to stop to draw breath. If you think you can avoid my *lessons* with your flimsy excuses, you're sadly mistaken. In fact—" His finger still resting between her breasts, he lifted her dress hem a few inches, revealing sun-kissed thighs. "I've made my decision. Tonight's training will begin right now."

Hands demurely at her side, she lowered her gaze and gave him a respectful nod. "You own me, *Master*. Whatever your demands, I will do my best to live up to them."

"Well said, well said." Stepping closer, he aimed his open mouth at the side of her neck, prompting her to tilt her head to give him full access. "Your new owner, who happens to be one of the sea's most bloodthirsty pirates, will be impressed by your subservient behavior."

The instant he raked his teeth over tendons and flesh, she shivered. Her breath hung up in her throat. "A pirate, *Master*," she managed. "If I may ask, what are his personal cleanliness standards?"

Instead of answering, Rafe nibbled. Wave after wave of sensation chased through her system. Despite her best efforts, she swayed.

"What are you doing?" Rafe demanded with his mouth still near her electrified flesh. "Are you fighting your nature, *slave*? Maybe you don't want to admit how easily I control you?"

"It isn't that, *Master*, I swear!"

He licked, leaving behind a swath of hot moisture. "Then what is it?"

"I love...what you're doing."

"Of course you do." Straightening, he turned his attention to what he'd exposed of her breasts. Apparently not content with the view, he pulled down on her top, revealing her hot pink push-up bra. "Good. You're wearing the garment I set out for you. Tell me, did anyone you do business with today notice?"

Remembering the middle-aged man who'd been unable to keep his gaze on her face as she took him and his brightly dressed wife on a tour of the oceanfront resort, she nodded, careful to keep amusement from her expression. "A well-heeled customer. Before he left, he'd signed up for two weeks at one of our most expensive units. He repeatedly asked if I was going to personally attend to his needs while he was there, much to his wife's disapproval."

"And you enjoyed every moment of it, didn't you?"

What she enjoyed the most was right now. Still, she nodded. "*Master*, if I might be so bold, how much did you get for me?"

"No, you may not be so bold. What I will tell you is that I'm going to be paid in gold coins and stolen royal jewelry. My only concern is that your purchaser's ship might be so loaded it'll sink, either that or he'll be attacked by other pirates."

"That's the disadvantage with dealing with such, ah, people, isn't it?"

"True, true." Inch by inch he exposed more of her legs. "It's a shame that the market for sex slaves is a limited one these days." He shrugged, his considerable shoulders stretching his red knit shirt. "Such is the disadvantage of living in *enlightened* times. However, as long as a person remains resourceful and open-minded, there are always solutions."

Although she took her relatively new position in public relations for a high-scale Florida resort seriously—given her generous salary and even more generous commissions, how could it be otherwise—she wasn't about to torture herself with pantyhose, especially in the summer. As a result, *Master* Rafe now had his hand on naked flesh. Much as she wanted to concentrate on what he was telling her, did he really expect her to ignore the sweet brush of fingers and nails on skin?

"Did you hear me?" he insisted as he settled his thumb against her crotch. "I swear, half the time you aren't listening."

"Ah, solutions, what solutions?"

Despite his chuckle, his expression was fierce. And if he understood that the intimate pressure was responsible for her distraction, he gave no indication. "Elementary, my *slave*. If the pirate—I believe his name is Blondbeard—winds up in Davy Jones' Locker, fortunately my cell phone is full of messages from Arab sheiks. Posting your attributes on Craigslist has been a stroke of genius. The Net is much preferable to antiquated slave auctions. Fortunately for me," eyeing her intently, he stroked her panties' crotch, "your new owner isn't expected tonight, which means you still belong to me. And believe me, I intend to take full advantage."

If she closed her eyes, she risked losing her balance, but although she kept her eyes open, his features blurred. How practiced her *Master* was when it came to triggering her sexual responses! Anticipation arched her back and widened her stance. "You don't have to work tonight?" she asked. "No counseling sessions?"

Leaning close again, he nibbled on an ear. The hand between her legs touched even more nerves. "Nothing for the entire weekend."

"Then..."

"Then I can devote the next forty-eight hours to you."

With his words, his promise, she shook herself free of the playacting that had led to her calling him *Master*. As a counselor specializing in the pros and cons of the BDSM lifestyle, he had his share of night meetings, or rather he had when he'd first set up his practice. Fortunately, these days he did most of his work during day group sessions. As more and more people heard about his expertise in dominant/submissive relationships, they were willing to arrange their schedules to fit his. That wouldn't have been possible in the small communities around the mountain resort of The Getaway but heavily populated southern Florida was another matter. In addition, both she and Rafe loved living near the ocean.

"All right," she belatedly picked up on the conversation. "Since the next two days and nights are for my pleasure, I intend to begin by listing my requirements."



His expression hard on neutral, he slid his knowing finger between her panties and labia. A light brush of nail against clit got her on her toes. "List away, my pet."

"Ah, I need, I mean I want —"

"That's what I thought." Two fingers expertly parted her sex lips. "You're so accustomed to being catered to that you've forgotten how to make decisions."

"I have no complaints."

"Of course you don't. I might not be offering you a pampered life, but there's more to satisfaction than fine jewelry and rare wine, isn't there?"

If she was the one turning him on, she'd challenge him to put a coherent sentence together. However, their relationship was defined by his dominant nature and her delight in playing the submissive, and once again his knowledge of her body exceeded her own. Far from resenting his knowing ways, she settled her weight back on the balls of her feet and widened her stance even more.

"Who needs jewels and wine when I have you?"

"You really mean that?"

Already drunk on anticipation and heat, she wrapped her arms around his neck, careful to align her body so his hand remained between her legs. "You know the answer."

"Indeed I do."

Some thirty or forty seconds later, he'd pulled her sundress over her head, carried her into their bedroom, and deposited her on the bed neither of them had bothered to make that morning. The sheets smelled faintly of sex. As he bent down to remove his shoes, she writhed about, tearing off her bra and panties. Fortunately, she'd kicked off her sandals as he was carrying her so was able to spend her spare time studying his form as he revealed it to her. The notion of ever growing complacent about his body made her shake her head in disbelief.

"I'm hungry," he announced. Settling himself on the bed next to her, he rolled her onto her side so she faced him. "Starved, in fact."

"For sex?"

"That too." Cupping a breast, he sheltered it in a broad hand. "I was talking about food."

Studying him, she raked her nails lightly over his chest. "In other words —"

"Shit, woman!" he gasped, shivering. "Damn but you know how to press my buttons. In other words, I'm interested in a wham-bam. And if you satisfy me, I'll take you out for dinner."

Determined to give as good as she was getting, she raked him again. He both punished and rewarded her by capturing a nipple between thumb and forefinger and drawing her breast away from her chest wall.

"If I satisfy you?" she asked. "You have doubts?"

"None, my *slave*, none at all."

She might have said something if he hadn't taken that moment to slide down her body and close his mouth over her breast. A hand strong on her shoulder, he sucked on her swelling mound. Mewling as she did almost every night, she stared at nothing. Her body flamed. Her nipples tightened, compelling her to draw a comparison between them and her hard clit. He wasn't touching her there, not right now at least. But in the six months they'd been together, he'd trained and conditioned her cunt in ways that threatened to blow her apart.

Drunk on anticipation, she wrapped her leg over his hips. Even as he continued to suck, he stroked what she'd presented to him. Again and again, he traced hot paths over her waist, belly and inner thighs until savage sounds burst one after another from her, and she struggled to press herself against him.

He licked her hard-as-hell nipple, then let it go.

"No, don't!" she demanded. If she could, she'd grip his head with both hands and force him onto her again. "I need —"

"What about what we both need?" He punctuated his question by working his hand between her legs and capturing her labia.

"I'm sorry. Sorry, *Master*."

"No need to be as long as you satisfy me."

Satisfy? Of course! Feeling drunk, she pressed her fingers against his chest and arm. Putting herself in his place, she switched between firm pressure and feathery caresses. She desperately wanted to make it all good for him, great even, but he still had hold of her sex lips. She was trying to convince herself that she could weather his manhandling when, as she should have known he would, he expertly spread her and ran his thumb deep inside her.

"Shit, shit!"

"What are you saying, *slave*?"

"Damn, oh damn!"

"That's what I thought. No complaints about wham-bam, I take it?" He punctuated his question by bending his thumb and rubbing his knuckle over her weeping channel.

"None! Shit, none!"

Beyond intoxicated, she all but buried her fingers in his shoulders and tried to haul him on top of her. He slid out of her long enough to allow her to roll onto her back. She'd just started to spread her legs when he straddled her and finished the job. Mouth open, she arched her pelvis upward, and as he'd done countless times, he touched his cock to her pussy.

For an instant everything stopped. Anticipation ruled. Then touch became pressure followed by total acceptance. He was in her, his cock sheltered by her sex, her temple pulsing and nipples turning to hot stone.

A sigh burst to life somewhere deep inside her, and she tightened her PC muscles around the male invasion. He let loose with something between a grunt and a groan that she took as proof of how much she'd improved her sex techniques since they'd met.

"Ah shit," he muttered.

"No talking, action."

Oh yes, action! For a man who spent much of his time sitting and talking, he obviously made the most of his gym sessions. A less well-conditioned man would soon be gasping for breath, but not Rafe. He tirelessly went after her, sometimes thrusting double-time so her pussy burned, other times slow and languid. When he shifted into low gear, she used the brief respite to clamp down on her impending climax.

She wanted to come all right, wanted it bad and hard and hot! But if she wasn't careful, she'd spend herself before he did. It was all his doing, his knowing ways and strength and heat, that and her always turned-on body!

Her body wouldn't win the race, she wouldn't let it! Instead, she'd pant through the low-gear times and calm herself a bit so she was ready for the next overdrive.

It was coming! She felt the promise and power in every line of the body holding hers to the mattress. Legs splayed, hands painting every bit of his flesh she could reach, sweat dripping, she lost herself in the wave that was him.

Quick, hard, loud, him grunting like a bear and her sounding like a raging cat, moving as one, sweating and searing, hearts slamming, her toes digging into the sheet and her head thrashing.

And then *it* was there, the rolling earthquake that took her over the edge and made her deliciously crazy. The quake hit everywhere, not just in her sex. Unraveling endlessly, she nevertheless sensed that the same was happening to him. Blinded by tears, she wrapped her body around his and rode his climax as well as her own.

"Thank you, thank you," she sobbed when she could speak. "Oh my god, thank you."

One more grunting groan from him accompanied by the wash of cum filling her, some dribbling out, and he sank down on top of her. Immobilized by his weight, she listened to him breathe. His heartbeat vibrated against her chest. Tears continued to run from the corners of her eyes.

"No," he muttered. "Thank you."

His cock no longer swelled her pussy walls, but those satiated walls remembered the delicious pressure, and when he lifted himself off her, she rolled back onto her side so she could lick sweat off his chest.

"That tickles," he said.

"Can't help it. I'm thirsty."

"What about hungry?"

"Hungry?" she parroted. She'd stopped crying, but it wouldn't take much for the waterworks to start again. His heat had become hers, and her pussy held his gift, and she couldn't remember life before he'd walked into it.

"For food. I promised you dinner."

"Oh that. I guess."

"I thought you were starved."

Smiling, she took his hand and guided it to her sex. "Right now I'm pretty full."

"Hmm." He gathered up some of what he'd deposited in her and used it to paint her breast. "And a tad messy. You want the first shower."

"I thought we could share – again."

"Again? Yeah, I'd like that."

## About the Author

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

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

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

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

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