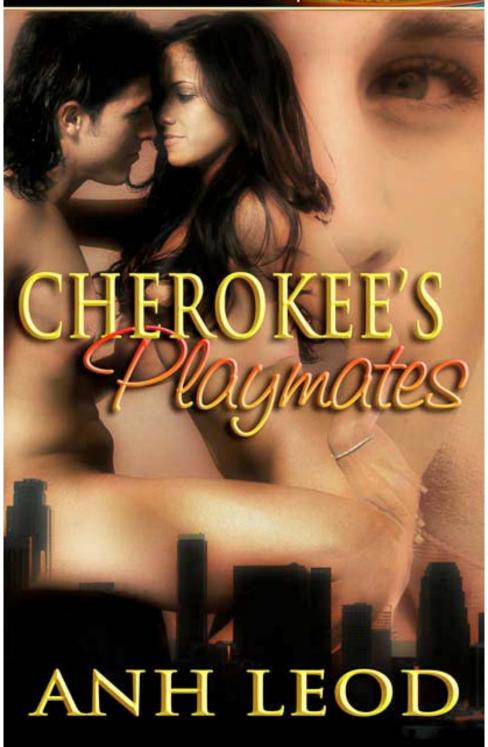
# ELLORA'S CAVE Spectrum



#### An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



Cherokee's Playmates

ISBN 9781419918087 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Cherokee's Playmates Copyright © 2008 Anh Leod

Edited by Helen Woodall. Photography and cover art by Les Byerley.

Electronic book Publication October 2008

With the exception of quotes used in reviews, this book may not be reproduced or used in whole or in part by any means existing without written permission from the publisher, Ellora's Cave Publishing, Inc.® 1056 Home Avenue, Akron OH 44310-3502.

Warning: The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this copyrighted work is illegal. No part of this book may be scanned, uploaded or distributed via the Internet or any other means, electronic or print, without the publisher's permission. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is investigated by the FBI and is punishable by up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000. (http://www.fbi.gov/ipr/). Please purchase only authorized electronic or print editions and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted material. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

This book is a work of fiction and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, or places, events or locales is purely coincidental. The characters are productions of the authors' imagination and used fictitiously.

## CHEROKEE'S PLAYMATES

**Anh Leod** 

### Dedication

For my husband, who provides ample inspiration for my sexy alpha heroes.

## Trademarks Acknowledgement

The author acknowledges the trademarked status and trademark owners of the following wordmarks mentioned in this work of fiction:

Agent Provocateur: Agent Provocateur, Ltd.

BlackBerry: Research In Motion Limited

Botkier: Botkier Bags Inc.

Carney's: Carney's Restaurant, Inc.

Chanel: Chanel, Inc.

Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf: International Coffee & Tea, Inc.

Hogan: Tod's S.p.A.

IPod: Apple Computer, Inc.

Jimmy Choo: J Choo Limited Corporation

## **Chapter One**

"That's bright, man." Dylan blinked in the paparazzi lights outside the movie theater."

"Let's get out of here." Cherokee needed to tug Dylan downstairs to the parking garage for a little private time. The cameras weren't for him even if he was an actor but the tabloids wouldn't hesitate to print a picture of him kissing another man if he ever became a big deal in Hollywood.

He tilted his head toward the stairwell. Dylan nodded and moved toward it.

Tonight wasn't supposed to be all about Dylan but when the foursome Cherokee had envisioned filling his Friday night had fallen apart, he'd taken the strikingly sexy architect to the movies, so he could check out the latest film from the producer he was meeting with tomorrow. The producer was considering him for a supporting role in a film that started shooting on Tuesday but all Cherokee cared about right now was getting some skin-to-skin time. He'd spent the last two hours surrounded by Dylan's enticing sun and sand cologne and his cock had practically drilled through his jeans in response.

The upcoming audition required a lot of preparation but as a half-immortal he didn't need much sleep and had stamina greater than normal men. Unfortunately Dylan, though Hollywood handsome and hard-bodied, was mortal. After Cherokee skipped the last two steps and jumped to the concrete floor of the parking garage, he turned to see Dylan holding back a yawn.

"Long day, huh," Cherokee said, sensing that he'd be spending the night alone after all. He didn't like it but thanks to his other playmates, he could handle it.

"It's the flying that gets to me," Dylan said with a wry smile. "Airplane air quality is terrible."

There had been some wonderful inventions in Cherokee's one hundred and fiftyodd years but they had taken their toll on the world. He could still remember the clear, crisp air of those mornings in the spectacular forests of the Snowbird Mountains when he lived with his mother, a *Ghigau*, or war woman, of the Cherokee tribe.

Of course, the mountains were still an amazing place but he was making his home in Los Angeles now. He needed to amass a fortune and build financial security for himself like so many of the immortals did.

Still, there was no reason he couldn't have a good time while he built a nest egg. He slid his arms around Dylan's waist and tugged him close.

"You can always lean on me," he said, "if you're getting tired."

Dylan's lips curved into a mischievous grin. "I can, can I?" He leaned forward as if to rest his head on Cherokee's shoulder and instead nipped at Cherokee's neck.

Cherokee grinned and tilted his neck to give his lover more access. Maybe Dylan wasn't as tired as he had imagined.

"You're a neck-biter, I see. I don't remember that from Monday night."

Dylan moved away slightly. "That's because you were on top that night, remember?"

Cherokee couldn't hold back his grin. He'd had two out of three of his partners that night, Dylan and the beautiful Claudia, who'd introduced them. Her boyfriend, Sam, hadn't been so open, which should have told him their foursome wouldn't be repeated. But something very good had come out of that evening. *Dylan*.

Cherokee slid his fingers through Dylan's thick red curls, tilting his head back so he could angle his lips and press them against the other man's. Dylan opened his mouth beneath Cherokee's, deepening the connection. The scent of popcorn replaced fuel and oil smells in Cherokee's nostrils. Their tongues tangled hotly, bodies pressing together.

Cherokee felt his cock press against his jeans. Was Dylan as hard as he was? He bent his knees slightly, felt his cock bump up against Dylan's. Yes, Dylan's cock was a hot rod straining behind his zipper.

Excellent.

Cherokee slid one hand down Dylan's neck, along his arm, then feathered his fingers to the other man's waist. Just as he made his move, Dylan's mouth opened wider underneath Cherokee's. Passion? Or a yawn?

Cherokee pulled back. "You okay?"

"Sorry," Dylan said after finishing what had indeed been an enormous yawn. "Not that I don't think you're attractive but I'm more into the girl-guy scene that just guys. I'd fuck you if I was in the mood but not tonight, okay? I can't find the energy for just a dude."

Cherokee slid his fingers around Dylan's impressive package and squeezed gently. "This is telling me something different."

Dylan's molded mouth curved into a grin. "And seeing as it's almost Halloween, those fangs of yours are telling me you're a vampire but things aren't always what they seem, right? I'm beat, man."

Instinctively, Cherokee ran his tongue over his canines. Yes, they were a little longer than human teeth but he wouldn't call them fangs, even if he had just played a vampire in his last movie with very little cosmetic addition to his smile.

"I think you hurt my feelings," he said.

Dylan shook his head. "I doubt it. Let's meet up tomorrow, okay? Maybe we can find a girl or two to share at a club."

"Tomorrow is Saturday night," Cherokee agreed. "Want to meet up after I see the producer?"

"Sure." Dylan pulled his keys from his pocket. "Good luck with the audition. I hope you get the part."

Cherokee put his hands on his hips, watching silently as Dylan walked between two cars and disappeared into the parking garage. What had been a sure thing had quickly fallen apart. That was never good, since he needed sex to keep him anchored to the mortal realm. If he didn't indulge almost daily, his essence might be sucked into Olympus and the gods only knew what task his father, Ares, might assign him. Cherokee found it best to avoid the war god.

He opened his car door. The sporty sedan had probably been some college boy's dream vehicle fifteen years ago but it was on its last legs now. Being an independent half-immortal took its toll on the lifestyle.

His cell phone was inside the half-broken glove box. He dug through his collection of condoms and breath mints until he found the phone. Who should he call? His recent conquests had all been actresses on the vampire movie. Surely one of them would be up for a booty call late on a Friday night?

He found the number for one of his vampire brides and dialed, then reversed from his parking space when the woman answered.

\* \* \* \* \*

"That went well," Cherokee said aloud the next afternoon as he left the office of producer Kaliq Hassan. The young man, a wealthy playboy whose oil-rich family was supporting his Hollywood habit, had responded well to Cherokee's audition. With the casting director already on board, he had the part.

Now he just needed to learn his lines. Luckily, that was no problem. Two reads through the script and he'd have them down. This time, he was playing a Middle Eastern bodyguard protecting an American senator on tour. He even had a death scene.

Let the celebration begin! By the time he was off the elevator leading to the parking garage, he had his cell phone out, ready to call Dylan and make plans for the night.

He selected the number and let his phone ring as he headed for his car. Another cell phone in the garage rang in tandem with his call and he soon saw why. Dylan was

#### Cherokee's Playmates

leaning against Cherokee's car, one leg tucked over the other. He wore tight jeans, black boots and a loose, long-sleeved linen shirt, which showed off a strong throat and a dusting of reddish hair. If Cherokee had been a vampire, he'd have pronounced Dylan good enough to eat. He folded up his phone and pushed it into his hidden jacket pocket.

"Nice suit," Dylan commented with a smirk.

"I'm supposed to be a bodyguard," Cherokee retorted. "I like showing up in character for auditions."

"Are you packing?"

Cherokee grabbed himself between his legs. "Always, my friend."

Dylan laughed. "That's not what I meant."

"I know." He waggled his eyebrows and shook out his hands for dramatic effect.

"What are you doing here?"

"My office is only two blocks south. I thought I'd stretch my legs, stop by and see how it went."

Cherokee spread his arms. "I got the part. It starts shooting in three days."

Dylan cocked his head. "Good for you. Are you going to be too busy to go out tonight?"

"Never. But at just this moment, I need to appreciate you." Cherokee stepped right up to Dylan, close enough to feel the other man's body heat.

Dylan reached for the lapel of Cherokee's jacket and tugged. "You're sure you want to wrinkle your suit?"

Cherokee fingered Dylan's ears. He wore small gold hoops in them. "I haven't seen these before."

"It's the weekend."

"Hmmm," Cherokee leaned in, bit Dylan's earlobe gently. "Nice."

When Cherokee swirled his tongue around Dylan's ear, the other man shuddered slightly. "You've hit my zone," he murmured.

"Zone?" Cherokee asked, doing the same with the other man's ear, ignoring passersby.

"The hot zone." Dylan exhaled roughly, then grabbed Cherokee's ponytail and pulled him in, pressing into his mouth with a questing tongue.

Cherokee wrapped his arms around Dylan, widening his mouth. He couldn't help grinding against the other man's pelvis as his cock hardened.

"You know what I'd like right now?" he said, when he took a moment to breathe.

"What?" Dylan asked, grabbing Cherokee's ass to pull him even closer.

"That hot mouth of yours on my cock. What do you say? I'll blow you next."

Dylan's eyes were dilated from the light of the warm, dim parking garage. Or maybe, passion was responsible.

"Your place or mine?" he asked, squeezing Cherokee's cheeks.

"Here." Cherokee pointed at his car. "The windows are tinted. No one will know."

A car came roaring down the ramp into the garage. Dylan flinched back as it zipped past them, only inches away from his hands and pulled smoothly into the empty spot next to Cherokee's car.

Cherokee ignored the dangerous driver, pulled out his keys and unlocked the car door. He grabbed Dylan's hand and put it on the front of his suit pants, making sure Dylan had a firm grip on his cock, then pushed Dylan into the back seat of the car.

As Dylan laughed and began to unzip the zipper on his slacks, the driver stepped around the back of the cherry-red sports car. Cherokee's cock hardened further as he caught sight of the woman's slim olive-toned legs. Her candy pink strappy sandals had four-inch heels and the black halter dress she wore should have been ticketed for public indecency, though he had to admit that's how starlets usually dressed in Hollywood. But if this woman was an actress, he'd never seen her movies.

And he'd seen them all, locked up in Olympus the last time he'd gone without sex for too many days and had been pulled back in. That was back when he was working in Italy and thought he needed to take movie-making completely seriously and not hit on his female co-stars. Then he'd been hit on and discovered sex on the set was fine.

Maybe the driver was a recent transplant to Los Angeles but he didn't think so. She fit right in, from the cascading black curls clipped back from her face, to the mile long legs, to the Chanel logo bag hanging from her shoulder.

As she sailed by, she saucily shook her head at Cherokee's own public indecency. Dylan's hand was now buried in Cherokee's open zipper so he could fondle Cherokee's still hidden cock.

Cherokee grinned at her and let Dylan pull him onto the seat. Maybe he'd see her again. After all, he felt like he already knew her since he'd practically seen her naked.

He wondered if she was wearing panties under the dress.

As Dylan made fast work of his belt, Cherokee grabbed the door handle and shut them into the car. Dylan slid from the seat as Cherokee pushed down his slacks.

"I forgot how big you were," Dylan said softly, taking the base of Cherokee's shaft in his hand.

Cherokee pulled Dylan's head to his cock, demanding, "Suck."

Dylan ignored him, caressing Cherokee's balls with his free hand and licking the tip of his cock like an ice cream cone until the first droplet of pre-cum appeared. Then he spread it and saliva on the head and started to work his mouth down the shaft.

Cherokee felt his eyes start to roll back on his head. One thing about men, they knew how to give head. He scooted forward on the seat, giving Dylan maximum access.

Dylan's mouth was hot, his tongue constantly flicking the sensitive skin. It wasn't long until Cherokee knew he would blow if he didn't slow down the proceedings and he didn't want it to end this fast.

"Do my balls," he urged.

Dylan pulled his perfect lips off Cherokee's cock with a sucking sound and grinned, then bent his head, taking each ball in his mouth in turn and sucking gently before returning his attention to the main event.

"Where'd you learn to be so good at this?" Cherokee asked, leaning back and spreading his legs.

Dylan pulled his mouth away again, using both hands now, fisted, to stroke Cherokee from root to tip. "Bathhouse."

"Ah." Cherokee swallowed. "Yeah, like that, perfect."

Dylan bit gently at the inside of Cherokee's left leg as he stroked. Cherokee felt his balls tighten and start to tingle. He had sweat on his forehead and his dress shirt was sticking to his back in the humid car.

"Now," he said, pulling Dylan by the hair. "In your mouth."

Dylan obeyed, moving one hand back to Cherokee's balls and taking him deep.

"Yes," Cherokee chanted. "Yes." His mind lost focus. The pressure built, then relented. His cock released its seed into Dylan's waiting mouth as he kept the other man's head in place.

When the last drop was out, Dylan licked Cherokee clean and then pulled a handkerchief from his jeans and wiped his mouth.

"You give good head, my friend," Cherokee said, relaxing back.

"I take good head too," Dylan said, raising himself and dropping down onto the seat next to Cherokee. He pulled Cherokee's hand into his lap.

Cherokee felt Dylan's cock radiating heat through his jeans. "Here? Now?"

"No, let's go to my house. It's fricking hot in here."

"I agree," Cherokee said, feeling lazy after his orgasm. "Do we need to get your car?"

"Yes. You can drop me off then follow me home."

Cherokee gave Dylan's fabric-covered cock a last gentle squeeze then pulled up his slacks, opened the car door and got into the driver's seat. Dylan stretched out in the back seat. Cherokee saw him grinning in the rearview mirror as he started the car.

\* \* \* \* \*

Brandi D'Angelo leaned forward on the low-slung sofa, balancing her notebook on her knee. Kaliq had granted her this interview about his new movie for her e-zine, *Moving Pictures*. Hollywood insiders paid a lot of money to subscribe to her site. She had credibility since her father was Nic D'Angelo, the legendary director and she had grown up in the business.

Of course, Kaliq wasn't the power behind his new movie, more of the moneyman but she should still be able to get something useful from him. She was regretting her outfit, though. The dress was a deliberate choice since she'd heard he opened up more to sexy women but he'd had a hard time forming sentences since he was so focused on her legs and breasts. Since he lived in Saudi Arabia most of the year she supposed he wasn't used to the way women dressed in Los Angeles.

"What can you tell me about *The Visit*?" she asked.

"We are very excited about the project," Kaliq said absently, his gaze roving her body for the hundredth time.

"Why? I understand you've had casting problems?"

Kaliq waved a languid hand. "We were forced to do a small amount of recasting but all the major roles have the right actor now. In fact, we just filled our last major supporting role today."

"Oh?" Brandi's pen poised over her pad expectantly.

"Yes, the role of the senator's bodyguard. We cast Cherokee Ares, an up-and-coming young actor."

"Is he from the Middle East?" Brandi asked.

"Greece, I think," Kaliq said. "He has that multi-ethnic look that's become so popular with female actresses. We think it's time for male actors with the same appeal."

Brandi's thoughts flashed to that sexy scene in the garage, the half-lidded look the tall man had given her as the redheaded man pulled him into an old car. He certainly fit the multi-ethnic bill. His eyes were his best feature though, dark and piercing but with a hint of self-deprecating humor too.

"Does this Cherokee Ares have dark hair in a queue? Was he wearing a gray suit?" she queried.

Kaliq nodded. "Yes, he left shortly before you arrived."

Brandi nodded. The actor was certainly appealing and not only that, came equipped with a hot scoop. Should she out him? Would it hurt his career? "Does he have any love scenes in the film?"

"No, he's the protector. The senator and his mistress have all the love scenes in the movie."

"I see," Brandi said. She was going to have fun writing her blog tonight.

"If you want to interview Cherokee, he starts shooting at Storyville Studios on Tuesday," Kaliq said.

"My father is shooting his latest film there right now," Brandi said.

"Then you must stop by," Kaliq said. "Anything you need, we will provide."

"Wonderful," Brandi murmured. "Can you spell that actor's name for me, please?"

Kaliq went to his desk and found the contract, then read out the spelling.

"Thank you." Brandi tucked her notebook into her purse and stood. "I'll give you a call if I decide to visit the set."

"Please do," Kaliq said, his blue-white teeth flashing. "Perhaps one night next week we might have dinner. I'd love to share some of my ideas for future projects with you."

"I might just take you up on that," Brandi said. The line was one of her most useful ways of extracting herself from these situations gracefully.

Kaliq walked her to the elevator, kissing her on the cheek as the door opened. She smiled politely and stepped in, anxious to get home and update her blog.

\* \* \* \* \*

Cherokee yawned and fumbled for the BlackBerry on his nightstand. When his fingers didn't find it, he opened his eyes. The white sheets didn't look familiar and instead of a nightstand table there was an oak Mule Chest dresser a few feet away. He turned his head and saw Dylan's tight red curls on the pillow next to him, somehow reminiscent of the hair on the ancient Greek statues of boys, despite the color. There were blackout curtains on the windows but he guessed it was only late afternoon. They'd both fallen asleep after his oral repayment to Dylan turned into a full-fledged sexual romp.

Cherokee slid out of the bed, careful not to wake Dylan and found his slacks where they dangled off a leather bench along the wall. His BlackBerry was blinking red. He didn't have any voice messages but he had three emails.

The first one was from his agent, congratulating him on the new job. The second was from Claudia, wishing him luck. She must be friends with the casting director, Cherokee guessed, to hear the news so quickly. He was glad she was willing to keep in touch. Theirs was a small world, especially since Claudia worked with Dylan's sister. The third email was from an internet search engine. One of Cherokee's actress lovers, who happened to be tech-savvy, had set up an alert for him so that whenever a mention of his name was posted on the internet he'd get an email.

The alert said,

The Visit *Update* 

By Brandi D'Angelo

Today I met with Kaliq Hassan, one of the producers of the upcoming Middle Eastern political thriller, The Visit. This movie is part of what is currently a very popular subgenre but

can Hollywood afford to continue to sell its message about war in the Middle East to the American people when none of these movies are big box office?

To be perfectly honest, my interest quickly waned from discussion of possible box office to the juicy news I discovered about one of The Visit's cast members. Just hired for the pivotal role of Majid Ali is Cherokee Ares...

Moving Pictures Blog -

Cherokee groaned and clicked on the entry's title link, hoping his BlackBerry was up to the task of pulling up the entire blog entry. Thankfully it was, though he had to scroll through a lot of header information.

This Brandi D'Angelo person had done nothing but tease, he realized as he finished reading the entry. What was she planning to reveal? He quickly typed a comment into the section provided after the blog entry and sent it, then scrolled back up the screen. A photo came into view, filling up the small space his phone had to display graphics.

It was that woman from the parking garage. His cock twitched automatically as he recognized her face. He could see her large sunglasses had hidden nothing but more beauty. Her eyes were the color of tiger-eye gems and were perfectly outlined with a makeup expert's hand in the photo. Despite her oversized, painted pink lips, her eyes still mesmerized and were her most prominent feature. He never would have taken her for a reporter, even a Hollywood one. Even if she didn't respond to his comment, he'd have to get a meeting with her. After noting that Dylan was still sleeping, Cherokee walked toward the bathroom, his fully erect cock leading the way.

\* \* \* \* \*

Brandi finished updating her *Currently Shooting* page and FTP'd the file to her server, then refreshed her blog page, curious to see if anyone was reading her on a Saturday afternoon. Duran Duran's latest album played in the background, keeping her awake despite the unexpectedly warm late October sun streaming through her home

office windows. She couldn't quite bring herself to turn on the air-conditioning at this time of year but the heat warranted it.

Wow, she already had a comment. She clicked on it, then was distracted by the phone ringing. When she glanced at the two-line unit, she saw it was her home line ringing but no number showed on her caller ID. Suspicious after far too many bad experiences, she let it ring into her voice mail and turned back to her new comment.

Author Caoneandonly@hotmail.com, with no website address, had written, "Tease! Stop starting rumors and find out the truth!"

Brandi narrowed her eyes at the screen. Was this another ploy by her tormentor? He'd been clever enough to get her to meet him in a restaurant once, by claiming to be George Clooney's personal assistant in a convincing way. On the other hand, the email address could belong to Cherokee Ares, though anyone could open a hotmail account.

She was just curious enough to find out. She opened her email and sent a message to Caoneandonly, asking where they had seen each other for the first time. Hopefully that would stymie her stalker if it were really him, though she had to admit the stalker could have been following her today and would know the answer. He popped up often enough.

Turning back to her blog, she decided to delete the comment rather than letting it post. She wasn't in the star-making game, she was in the industry knowledge business. Casting directors needed to know if actors who might be leading man potential were gay. Middle America wouldn't buy them in a key romantic role.

No matter how hot the gay actor was, how intriguing his smile had been, she just wasn't going to fall into the trap of being his publicist instead of a reporter.

The light on her phone was blinking, indicating the anonymous caller had left a message. Feeling suddenly nauseous, she forced herself to take a deep breath and pause the Duran Duran CD, which was belting out lyrics about a gray sky. No wonder she felt an affinity for the venerable group. Her days had all seemed pretty gray since the

stalker had shown up. She put the voice mail on speaker, not wanting the intimacy of the message coming right into her ear.

"I saw you today, pretty girl," the speaker rasped.

Brandi shut her eyes tightly and scratched at an itch on her left wrist. Damn, she'd been out there again when he was watching.

"Did you like that drink from Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf?" he asked. "I bet it tasted lovely. I wish I could have licked the foam off those tasty lips of yours."

Trembling, Brandi forced herself to press the double three and then the nine that would save the message. She kept everything for the police. The guy had never threatened her exactly, just made her uncomfortable. She had the impression he was a frustrated screenwriter who wanted to work with her father but he was also a total nut job.

She wiped frustrated tears from her eyes and went downstairs to grab a soda, something with caffeine, because she knew she wasn't going to get any sleep that night. The bright reds and yellows of her kitchen usually cheered her up. She'd much rather be here in her comfortable two-bedroom condominium than holed up in her father's monumental Studio City compound, even if he felt she'd be safer behind gates. Trusting in the security measures in her building, she'd stayed put for her own mental health. She had just turned twenty-four and needed to be an adult, out on her own.

Still, sometimes she felt like she'd been alone long enough. Couldn't she find a man, someone who would live with her and make her feel more secure? The problem was Los Angeles was full of party boys and she wanted a real man. Someone who looked like Cherokee Ares but straight, of course.

By the time she got back to her computer and refreshed the screen, she had two more comments on the blog and three emails. That was good news. Her subscriber base was staying on top of the news she provided, a good indicator that they'd renew when their initial contracts expired.

## Cherokee's Playmates

It was all just regular business, until she came to the last email. That one was from Caoneandonly again.

"I saw those long legs of yours in a parking garage on Wilshire," the email said. "And I promptly wished they were wrapped around me."

## **Chapter Two**

Brandi blinked. This email couldn't be from a gay man. His words were too flirtatious, too sexual. It had to be the stalker, though she hadn't seen anyone other than those two men in the garage.

"Stay away from me," she emailed back, scratching her wrist again.

She hit send quickly but paused her finger over the delete key. Everything needed to be kept for the police. Just in case. She moved the emails into her *Ick* folder and took a drink of her soda.

When she refreshed her screen, another email from Caoneandonly was already in her box. The guy was persistent but what else was new. He'd just called after all.

"You have me confused with someone else. I never saw you before today. You parked next to my car. I was with my friend Dylan. Just came from a meeting with Kaliq Hassan. I'm guessing you were his next appointment."

Brandi's fingers froze on her keys. Wait. That didn't sound like the stalker at all. "Cherokee?" she typed and hit send.

A minute later, she had her response. "Yes, of course I'm Cherokee. I hate to think who you thought I was. Want to get a drink? Dylan and I were planning to go club hopping but he's fast asleep."

Almost independently of her thoughts, her fingers began to type. "Sure, I'll get a drink with you. Meet me at Studio Café in an hour."

She had to get out of the condo anyway, calm her nerves, kill this claustrophobic feeling that was making her skin itch. It would do her good to go out for once. She was friendly with the bartender at the Beverly Hills karaoke bar so she'd be safe there. Besides, a girl could never have too many gay friends.

\* \* \* \* \*

For a karaoke bar, this place was pretty tame. Of course it was in Beverly Hills rather than Koreatown, which made it much more her kind of scene. Brandi took a quick look around the tables clustered in front of the stage but there was no sign of Cherokee Ares yet. If he'd arrived ahead of her, he could be in the bar, through a doorway to the right.

Her bartender friend held up his hand as she walked in but he had a full crowd waiting for drinks so she knew he couldn't chat. Still, his presence made her feel safer.

Once she sat down at a table in a far corner a cocktail waitress approached her. Brandi ordered a watermelon martini, wondering what Cherokee would like to drink. Ordering for him would be presumptuous, though a stylish gay man would probably put in the same trendy order she had.

The second her martini was placed in front of her, she saw Cherokee in the doorway to the bar. His dark hair was loose around his shoulders now, giving him the look of a barbarian king. He was wearing the slacks and white button-down she'd seen him in earlier that day but had lost the suit jacket and the tie. The white shirt wasn't top-of-the-line but the impressive lengths his shoulders stretched to under the fabric meant no one was going to care about the lack of a designer label. Plus, it clung enough to indicate he had serious biceps and pecs. As he walked, she could see how strong his legs were where the gray suiting caressed his muscles. He could have his own calendar with the body she suspected hid under his conservative clothes.

The cocktail waitress, perhaps responding to his considerable masculine appeal, approached him before he'd joined her.

She heard him say, "I'll take a beer, whatever you've got on tap."

Huh, a beer. That didn't fit her image of him. Sometimes in this town, appearance was deceptive but behavior rarely was if you got close enough.

The waitress nodded and made a show of bending over her ticket book to write down the drink order, as if a gay man was going to care about her breasts.

The corner of Cherokee's mouth tilted in an ironic smile as he took the seat across from her. Like all actors, he knew when someone had been watching him. He sat up very straight and gripped the edge of the table with both hands.

"You look like you're settling in for an interview," she observed.

"Aren't I?"

"I didn't find you on my subscriber list," Brandi said, making sure she kept a cool look in her eyes. "How did you see my message?"

"Your blog is open to the public," he pointed out. "My internet alert found it."

"You keep an eye on your own press?"

He leaned back in the hard plastic chair. "I don't have people to do it for me. Yet."

"Ambitious, huh." She caressed the stem of her martini glass. His skin was flawless this close up. He must photograph beautifully, a key aspect of filmmaking success in the high definition era.

"Just like everyone else in this town."

"I can respect that." She heard steps in the doorway and looked up. Three waif-thin girls were holding on to each other as they entered the bar, giggling and breathing hard. They were probably the performers who'd been singing an old girl-band song in the other room.

"What is your story? Are you working as a reporter until you can get your acting career going?" He frowned, turning around. "Do you know them?"

She shook her head. *Caught, how embarrassing*. A reporter needed to appear to be in control. "No, I just like to keep an eye on my surroundings. Single girl in the city and all."

His gorgeous dark eyes narrowed slightly. "Have you had some bad luck?"

She tried to laugh but was gripping her glass so hard she was afraid it would snap in two. "Sometimes I get attention that's a little, you know, creepy."

He nodded. "It's hard to be beautiful."

"Yeah." She set down her glass, felt her cheeks heating at the roundabout compliment but she didn't want to explain the real reason she often received attention and tell him who her father was. It always created problems.

"So what have you been in? Any good parts yet?"

"Oh, no." She shook her head. "I'm not an actress. Sorry. I own *Moving Pictures*, the e-zine?"

"Really?"

"Yes, it's a subscriber service. Insider news. The blog is the external face, I guess you'd say. It's a little more personality-oriented than the rest of the site, to give it some sex appeal." She certainly had picked a subject with sex appeal. If she weren't so unsure of his sexuality, she'd let herself feel it.

"I was the sex appeal of the day?" he asked with a grimace.

"It's just business," she said and decided to test him, because her body was still getting the signals that this man might belong in her bed. "How often does a reporter get to out a hot new actor?"

He put his elbow on the table and his fist under his chin, as if he was trying to shield himself. "I'm glad to know I'm a hot new actor. Yesterday I was just a B-movie actor."

She felt a sudden urge to pat him on the shoulder, comfort him. Status in Hollywood was confusing and altered all the time. "Things change fast in Hollywood. You don't have to grow a career like you used to. One movie can make you hot. You get enough buzz and you'll have offers even from people who've never seen your work."

"Are you're going to enjoy sabotaging all that and claim I'm gay?"

"When you put it like that, I-" Unable to finish her sentence, she took a sip of her martini.

"Because I'm not. Gay, I mean. I'm not gay."

She coughed. The martini hadn't gone down quite right. Probably because her body had switched focus from swallowing to pooling liquid heat into her pussy. "Then what did I see in the parking lot? That guy had his hands in your pants. Did he drop a quarter down them or something?"

"I don't differentiate."

His slow, sexy smile had her wriggling in her seat but her mind still knew better, even if her body didn't.

"Sure, buddy. Bisexual guys always choose to be gay in the end." A couple coming through the doorway distracted her again.

"Not me. Dylan and I hooked up because of a foursome. But the other two, which included a woman, weren't into that scene. Dylan and I aren't a couple."

"Oh?" The man in the doorway was one hundred pounds heavier than her stalker so she refocused quickly.

"No. We're just, I suppose, killing time until we find a woman."

Brandi glanced down at her martini glass. Had she heard him correctly or was in the booze talking? "A woman?"

"We wouldn't want to share her with another man. That's how we lost our partner from last week."

"The other guy won?"

"They've been together a long time. For them, group sex was an enjoyable experiment. For me," Cherokee shrugged. "I like sex. I need it."

"Don't we all," Brandi said. Her throat had gone dry and she took another sip of her martini, the last sip. "I think I need another drink."

He nodded. "Coming right up." He held up his hand and the cocktail waitress bustled over.

"What can I get you?" the over-endowed waitress asked.

"Another of those pink things the lady is drinking," Cherokee said.

#### Cherokee's Playmates

The waitress nodded and moved to the next table that was trying to get her attention.

Brandi noticed his beer remained untouched. Maybe it was only a prop. "So you need sex and you don't discriminate?"

Cherokee folded one of his hands over hers so smoothly that he was clasping her in his warm grip before she'd even noticed him moving. "Not at all. I'm very discriminating."

Where was her martini? Her throat had gone dry. "What are you looking for?" Why couldn't she meet a big, strong guy like him but one who was normal?

He leaned forward, kissed the fingers he had trapped in his. Her nerves melted into puddles at his chivalrous gesture.

"She has to smell right, feel right, look right."

"Oh?" she breathed.

"Of course. I'm very sensual."

He had a hint of an accent, she realized now but couldn't place it. All things considered, he was an enormously appealing package. Even if he did come with another man attached.

"Tell me about the other guy," she said impulsively. "Your friend, fuck buddy, whatever he is."

"I've known him less than a week, actually," Cherokee said. "I know he travels a lot. Dylan is an architect."

"It's always good to date outside the business," Brandi said. "What does he specialize in?"

"Domestic restoration and construction. He's going to renovate the 1920s Spanish Colonial guesthouse I'm staying in."

"That's how you met?"

"You could say that." His movie-star-perfect teeth flashed at her as he grinned.

She stroked her thumb over the top of his hand. "Is he as sensual as you are?"

"I think he's experimental, enthusiastic. With women he's definitely a breast man."

Brandi felt her gaze going to her cleavage. "Will he like mine?"

"They are perfect, no?"

She shrugged. "Sure, once I had them done."

He raised his eyebrows. "They aren't real? You must have had a skilled surgeon."

"I went tasteful. But I wanted breasts. There was almost nothing there before."

He shook his head, amused. "I like them very much and I'm sure he will too."

Brandi wasn't sure why she suddenly felt like she'd agreed to something. Something in her was so drawn to Cherokee but this had been arranged as a business meeting. "If I can't reveal you're gay on my blog, what am I going to write tomorrow?"

There was a commotion in the doorway. She looked up and saw a drunk couple weave in. Her bartender friend nodded sharply to a male waiter and he moved to intercept.

Cherokee pulled his hand from hers and tucked it under his chin again. Her hand felt cold but then the waitress brought her drink and she wrapped her fingers around the stem of her glass.

Then, his hand was around hers again and he was leaning forward, putting her glass to his lips. He took a tiny taste, then licked his lips.

His mouth mesmerized Brandi. In some ways, he had a lean, hungry look about him. His cheekbones were angular flat planes, his eyes were slightly tilted but his mouth was full and sensual. She could almost feel his lips on hers.

Under her fingers, the martini glass moved. He had turned it so the exact spot he had sipped from was now in front of her lips. She raised the glass and drank deeply, draining the martini.

When she set the glass down, the full force of his dark eyes was on her.

"What am I going to write?" she asked in a whisper.

Cherokee pulled out his wallet and dropped a couple of bills onto the table. "Why don't we figure that out in the morning?"

"The morning," she repeated.

"Yes. Let's wake up together and decide."

"Are we spending the night together?"

"I think you will enjoy it."

Brandi glanced down at her glass again. Had the martini been double strength, because she was pretty sure she was going to agree to this. Why did she want to give in to him? She'd turned down some of the hottest guys in Hollywood over the years. "Are you going to invite Dylan?"

"No. Not this time. Let's focus on the two of us for now."

"I'm usually pretty cautious," she said but the zings of attraction dampening her pussy were overriding that caution.

He gently disentangled her fingers from her glass. "You can trust me. I'm not what you fear."

How had he known she was afraid? "I know you aren't."

He pushed his chair back, stood and held his hand out to her. "Come. Forget your troubles for a few hours."

She sighed, hoping she could. Maybe a one-night stand was exactly what she needed. "I'd like that."

He extended his arm again. She stood, taking his hand in her own but then he wrapped his arm around her. The only reason her head reached above his shoulder was because she was wearing heels. Somehow she knew if there was any man who could protect her it was this one.

Even if he was only an actor.

In the parking lot, he held open her car door then shut it after she'd tucked herself in. She'd expected a kiss, some kind of sensual gesture to get her blood simmering but he was all courtesy. Maybe he'd learned from his experience in the parking garage that anyone could be watching a public display of affection.

She waited until he'd reversed from his space and drove out of the parking lot behind him. The moon brightened the sky overhead as she followed him back to the guesthouse where he was staying, curious to know how someone like Cherokee lived.

The guesthouse, tucked behind the main house on a gated property not far from the karaoke bar, was dark. Cherokee had no problem finding the keyhole in the door. It swung open. He let her enter first, then shut the door behind them. The air smelled of beeswax and old wood.

He turned on a small lamp in the foyer. She was disappointed to find how little there was of his personality in the small, traditional house. The foyer was furnished, as was the living room off to the right but it was impersonal. No art, no photos. She dropped her purse on a console table by the door.

"Let's go upstairs," he said. "Unless you want a drink first?"

"No thanks. How long have you been staying here?" she asked, following him up the tile-decorated steps to the second floor.

"Three months. The producer of the last movie I filmed lives in the main house and he said I could stay here until the place is redone. None of his wealthy friends would stay in a place that needs or is undergoing renovations."

"It's a great house," she said, though it was a little dark and creepy, even with the white plaster walls. Maybe it just felt this way because of the season. It was almost Halloween.

"It's old-fashioned. I hope Dylan can keep the owner from wrecking its charm when they agree on the redesign."

She followed Cherokee through a darkened doorway. A moment later, he lit candles and she could see large, shadowy shapes in the room.

"You don't waste any time, do you." She pointed to one shadow, realizing it was an enormous bed. The long, low chest of drawers was more obvious because the candelabrum was on it.

"That is what why you came. You find me attractive." He moved toward her.

She could hardly see him but she felt his arms touch her. Instinctively, she leaned into his chest. He smelled of the wind, fresh yet elemental and his chest was warm and pillowed with muscle.

"I shouldn't be doing this," she murmured.

"I don't feel you pulling away."

Her body tensed. Maybe she should pull away. What the hell was she doing? Just because he wasn't her stalker didn't mean she was safe with him.

"Shhh," he said, stroking his hands down her back, comforting her so gently that her muscles relaxed again.

"How do you do that?" she asked after a moment. "How do you make me feel so safe? You're a stranger."

One broad hand lifted from her back and moved to her chin. She tilted her face up to his.

"It's magic," he said, leaning in.

She turned away. Magic wasn't the word she wanted to hear. Magic wasn't logical. "It's just sexual chemistry."

"That's what I meant." He released her, stepped back. "Do you want to tell me what's bothering you?"

"Not really." She sniffed. "I'd rather just forget about it."

She felt him move around her, then the room came brightly to life. She blinked away the spots from her eyes, then turned to see him at the light switch. "What's wrong?"

"You aren't comfortable."

#### Anh Leod

As her eyes refocused, she noticed his arms were crossed over his chest. Uh-oh. She'd pissed off a big, strong guy and no one knew where she was. Now what? She had pepper spray in her purse but that was downstairs.

"You look pretty nervous," he observed.

"You look kind of hostile." No wonder she usually stayed home.

He blinked, then looked down at himself. His arms unfolded and he cocked his hip. Now he looked relaxed.

She couldn't help smiling. "Actor."

"Sorry. I come from a long line of hostile people." He shook his upper body, letting his arms hang loose at his side.

She recognized his movements as something actors did before starting a performance. "Is your family in the entertainment business too?"

"No, just me. I'm sort of an only child anyway. My mother's gone. I try not to see my father too much."

"Families are complicated." She was a perfect Hollywood example. Famous father with four marriages behind him. She could keep track of her step and half siblings but was losing her grip on details about their significant others.

"I agree."

Brandi wasn't in the mood for conversation. Her body was revved up, ready for pleasure but her nervous brain was sparking adrenaline into her system, making her feel jumpy. "It's pretty stupid to go somewhere with a stranger. I guess I had a reckless moment and now I'm having second thoughts."

"Risks can have rewards."

"So what's my reward?"

"How about an orgasm?"

She smiled despite herself. "You can promise that?"

"I can promise more than one."

"Hmmm. That would help me relax." Her gaze went to his wide, sensuous mouth. As she watched, his tongue moistened his lower lip. She imagined that tongue on her pussy and held back a little gasp when her clit spasmed with instinctive pleasure.

"All right then." He moved close to her again.

She forced herself to stay still but almost fell back when he went to his knees in front of her. "Yes," she whispered.

For a second she wondered what he was going to do. He bent his head, as if saying a prayer but then his intentions became obvious when he put his hands on her ankles and stroked gently up her legs.

She shifted her stance slightly so her legs were apart a few inches all the way to her rapidly dampening pussy. Now this was a fantasy moment with a big, hot guy, taking care of her in the most primal way.

As his hands reached the backs of her knees, her skin began to tingle, almost like he had some kind of force field around his hands. Was he into martial arts or some kind of esoteric healing art that developed such powers? It didn't matter as long as he could make her feel this good without even touching an erogenous zone.

Her mind went to mush when his fingers found the insides of her thighs. Her pussy was awash in hot juices now. Any moment now they'd start to trickle down her leg.

"I can smell you," he whispered.

She nearly fell back when he rested his face on her skirt-covered crotch. His nose was right over her clit and she couldn't help swaying her pelvis into deeper contact.

His fingers grazed her pussy lips. She bit back a moan, then let it go when she felt his fingers at the sides of her hips. Her panties slid down her legs. He steadied her with his shoulder so she could step out of them.

"Mmmm," he said somewhat indistinctly. "I fantasized about licking your pussy the second I saw you in the bar."

"You did?" She grabbed one of the bedposts to keep herself upright as his nose grazed her clit again.

"Oh yes. The challenge excites me. That snotty, casually arrogant attitude you project would put off most people."

"I'm not snotty!" she protested.

"Snooty, then. Very high class."

She smiled, then lost track of the conversation when his fingers moved to grip the backs of her thighs and widen her stance further. Cherokee tucked his head under her short skirt. She could feel his breath on her manicured curls. Those electric tingles had moved to her pussy now.

Her knees nearly buckled when his tongue touched her slit. Delicately, he separated her lips and lapped at her juices. Just when she thought he was going to be one of those gentle lovers, he tilted his chin so his mouth was right over her clit and sucked her.

"Oh my god," she gasped. "Do that again."

His chuckle vibrated on her sensitive skin, then she felt the exquisite sucking again.

"Don't stop," she begged. "Don't ever stop."

She grabbed the bedpost with her other hand. He moved with her, keeping firm suction on her clit. She wanted to hold his head to her but was afraid to lose her death grip. If she fell his mouth wouldn't be in her pussy anymore. The smell of varnish from the bed grounded her for a moment, then Cherokee licked her entire slit open to her channel before fastening on her nub. She ground her hips against him, unable to deny herself. He was better than a vibrator, more talented than anyone she'd been with before.

His hands were on her ass now, holding her to him as tightly as she needed. He responded to every move of her hips as if he could read her mind, not that much was going on in there other than, "Oh yes!"

Her body went tight as she climbed, then she felt shudders begin. Cherokee stayed with her through her orgasm, kissing her pussy until the tremors stopped. Eventually, she leaned her head against the bedpost and tried to catch her breath.

"You're amazing," she gasped.

He kissed her thigh and smoothed down her skirt. "Thank you."

He moved away for a moment and she heard a drawer open and close, then the sound of fabric sliding down legs, something being opened. She half turned, then he was behind her, repositioning her so that her torso lay on the bed. Her face rested on a red and gold art quilt. She closed her eyes, anticipating his next move. When he pulled her butt toward him she arched her back, knowing how tall he was.

He probed her entrance. One hand wrapped around her stomach, the other the back of her neck. He leaned into her. She could feel her pussy leaking juices around him as the broad head of his penis knocked against her channel. When she wriggled against him he slid into her smoothly.

"Oh," she squeaked, almost coming again from that first luscious stroke.

He was thick and long but he had made her very ready for him and she had no trouble accommodating him in her channel.

A phone rang a few feet away from them, startling her but Cherokee kept pumping. Whatever he was doing was hitting her clit somehow and her mind soon blocked out the ringing noise. She pushed her hips back with each thrust.

"Do that again," he ordered.

She pushed back with more force. He matched her. She tried to spread her legs further, grabbing the quilt in her fists to stay balanced. With each movement of his body she was pushed up and back on the bed. Her breasts were tortured by the slide of fabric and thread against skin and her nipples sent flashes of heat right to her clit.

"Don't stop!"

#### Anh Leod

He grunted and slowed down. But that wasn't what she wanted at all. She pressed back, wanting him to move in her harder, faster. His hand moved from her stomach to her pussy and began to play with her clit. She went over the edge again, spasming around him as he continued to thrust.

Then he gripped her legs, pulling her stance wide. Her body loosened as her orgasm calmed. His cock went deeper than any man had gone before. She felt herself moan, though in exhaustion or ecstasy she wasn't sure.

His upper body rose from hers, changing the angle of his movements. Her body began to shudder all over again and this time he came with her, grinding her into the mattress with the force of his passion.

She shook from the released strain and laughed from sheer joy. Now this was sex!

"No one's ever laughed before," he commented.

She felt him drop onto the bed alongside her. His warm arm drifted across her waist and tugged her close. She turned, tucking into his shoulder automatically and kicked off her heels. She didn't need them anymore.

"I'm delighted," she said.

"Me too."

Her lips were dry but she was too lazy to hunt for something to drink. "Clubbing," she remembered suddenly.

"What?"

"Was that Dylan calling? I thought you were going to go out with him later."

"Mmmm."

She nudged him. "I don't want him to be angry with you. I'd feel bad. You like him, right?"

His shoulders moved up in a shrug.

She laughed and sat up. "You can go out with him. It's fine."

"You want to go dancing?"

"No, I'm genuinely beat. But you should go."

"Okay." He sat up from the bed and a moment later she heard his footsteps next to the bed.

Stunned, she rolled onto her back. Not for a moment had she thought he really would leave! Yet it seemed he had taken her offer at face value. Where had he found the energy? She'd need at least ten minutes recovery time to even think about sex again.

## **Chapter Three**

Early on Sunday afternoon, Brandi hesitated, letting her car idle as she sat in the driveway in front of Cherokee's guesthouse. Was she setting herself up for one of those disastrous, one-sided actor relationships if she saw Cherokee again?

She'd left when he did the night before, though he'd gone out dancing and she'd gone home. It hadn't quite felt like the end of a one-night stand. He had kissed her soulfully and told her he wanted to see her again, that he hoped she'd stop by. Now she was here though, she wondered if he had merely been polite. Should she even get out of the car?

Her body said yes. She wanted more. It had been nearly a year since she'd had sex as her stalker situation made her so jumpy that she was afraid to leave her condominium after dark. During the day, she roamed the Los Angeles area doing her job but once she went home to update her website she never managed to get out again. She'd cancelled three first dates in the past two months. Last night had been a strange exception and she still wasn't sure what had prompted her to agree to go out. Maybe she'd been escaping her telephone, since the stalker had called right before Cherokee had commented on her blog. Or maybe she'd just hit the point of being desperate for sex. She'd been certain from the first time she'd seen Cherokee that he was a guaranteed excellent time in bed. The question was, did he want to have sex with her again?

With high hopes, she had dressed in her nicest barely there Agent Provocateur panties and bra set under a sea-green sleeveless shift that hugged her curves. She had belted the dress and wore a vintage flower pendant necklace. Around her arm she'd triple wrapped a fashionable wood bead necklace and she wore the latest trendy corkheeled sandals. She was dressed to kill...or to seduce.

Cherokee's sedan wasn't the only car in his driveway. A sleek, midnight blue sports car was parked next to it. She suspected that it belonged to Dylan but she supposed Cherokee could have brought home someone else with him too. How insatiable was the guy?

Still, she was very curious to meet Dylan. She took her key from the ignition.

After she left the sanctuary of her car, she took a deep breath that prompted her body to straighten into a confident, erect pose and went to the front door. Not twenty seconds after she'd rung the bell, the heavy wooden door opened.

The man at the door wasn't Cherokee but the handsome auburn-haired man who she'd last seen with his hand in Cherokee's zipper. *Dylan*.

"Hi gorgeous," he said, looking her up and down with a killer smile. "Curly black hair, sexy long legs...I'll bet you're Brandi."

She nodded, feeling a zing of attraction now she'd had her first full look at Cherokee's lover. Dylan's hazel eyes were set narrowly into an oval face under strong eyebrows and above prominent cheekbones. He was such a beautiful man that in anywhere but Los Angeles you'd have to assume he was gay. "Hi back. Are you and Cherokee hanging out today?"

"No, he's not even here. The director of his new movie sent a car here to take Cherokee for a cast brunch."

Brandi shifted her weight from one sandal to another. She should have made sure to get Cherokee's phone number last night. It wasn't like her to be impulsive. "I guess I should have called first."

Dylan shrugged and opened the door wider. "If he was here he'd be happy you'd stopped by. Come on in."

Brandi glanced back at her car. Should she leave? Cherokee might not be back until late and her father would be thrilled if she went to his house for the usual Sunday brunch. On the other hand, this was an opportunity to get to know Dylan. Cherokee had indicated they came as a package. A package that was looking for a woman.

Dylan smiled at her. "Is this situation making you nervous?"

"What situation is that?"

His smile widened and he held out his hand to her. After hesitating, she took it. His hand was perfect. Warm, with strong, solid fingers and slight calluses that indicated he worked out.

He drew her inside and shut the door behind them. "This situation with more than one man in the picture."

She followed him into the living room and sat down on a long, upholstered settee. He took the seat next to the settee.

"I've never been involved in this kind of relationship before," she said, placing her purse in her lap.

"I'm not one for relationships," Dylan admitted, "but maybe a setup like this would offer me the variety I enjoy."

Brandi felt her eyebrows rise. "How much variety do you need?"

Dylan chuckled. "I get stir-crazy pretty fast. What's your longest relationship?"

She straightened her dress and tugged it down her thighs. "I don't know. Four months in college. Not even that since then."

"I usually manage about three weeks. Six weeks once or twice. I travel a lot, leaving anyone I'm dating alone most of the time. Either they find someone else or I do."

"Cherokee doesn't seem to be much of a homebody either. He hasn't personalized the space here."

"Nothing is his. I think he has stuff in storage in Italy. That's where he lived until recently."

"I see."

Dylan grinned. "He's an interesting one. I think he's more into sex than anyone I've ever met. He's told me he has to have it every day."

She blinked. "Or what?"

He laughed again. "I don't know. But I can't offer him daily sex and I don't want to offer it to him anyway. I like women. I like Cherokee too, a lot, but generally men aren't my style."

"I think you're beautiful," Brandi said without thinking. Embarrassed, she put her hand to her cheek and felt the heat there.

"Thank you," he said. "I think you are too. I'd like to get to know you better. Not just because of Cherokee."

Brandi nodded. Dylan wasn't what she had expected. He might have the looks of a boy toy but he was clearly a man with his own mind. "How do we make that happen?"

"How about a date of our own? Without Cherokee? We ought to figure out if we like each other."

"Will he be okay with that?"

"He's going to have to be. He wanted us to meet."

"You think he wants us to be in a relationship? Separate from him, I mean."

Dylan left the chair and sat next to her, laying his arm along the top of the settee so that his hand was almost around her shoulder. "We only met last Monday—too soon to commit to anything for either of us."

"I should spend the rest of the day with my family," she said, suddenly afraid that Dylan would want her to jump right into bed with him, the way she had with Cherokee. Somehow, she thought she'd freeze up, as attractive as he was, if they tried. She was nervous about adding a second lover to the mix after being celibate so long.

"How about tomorrow? I'm in town for a bit."

"Sure. I can do that."

"Dinner? I have meetings all day."

She might be thinking twice about leaping right into bed with him but she was curious enough to break her after dark rule again. "Yeah, that sounds nice. Do you think Cherokee is leaving the situation up to us?"

"You've got your own deal with him," Dylan said. "What we need to decide is if we like each other too."

Feeling brave now that she knew she was leaving, she put her hand on his knee. "I'm going to have trouble focusing on my job while we figure this out."

He put his hand over hers. "Our situation does add a little spice to the usual dating scene."

"There's just something about him, you know? Something different. He makes me feel," she shrugged. "I don't know. Excited, I guess. Bold."

"Everything's heightened when he's around," Dylan agreed. "I guess he's got that 'it' factor."

She tilted her head. "I've met people with 'it' before because I've been around the movie business my entire life. There's something more than that with him but I can't put my finger on it."

He squeezed her hand, his expression becoming serious. "I may not be the kind of guy who commits but I do care about Cherokee. Will you use him?"

"What do you mean?"

"You write a blog, right? You were about to out him just yesterday, he said. That wouldn't have done his career any favors."

Dylan suddenly seemed harder and Brandi didn't particularly like that. Changeable could be dangerous. "My site is mostly business, not gossip. Still, I had a weak moment."

"I think some things ought to stay private."

"I can respect that." Brandi found she'd pulled her hand away, folded her arms across her chest. She didn't like being lectured or told what to do but Cherokee obviously inspired loyalty and that's what friends did, stand up for one another. "Your opinion is a minority one in the entertainment business."

"I'm not in the entertainment business. You could argue that I'm in the support business, since much of my work involves wealthy industry types but that's just another reason to keep what I know private." He leaned forward, so their faces were only inches away. "If I ever see anything I've told you in confidence on your blog, I won't see you again, regardless of whether we're both involved with Cherokee."

Brandi narrowed her eyes. "Don't worry. I protect my friends."

He leaned back and tilted his chin into the air. "Just so we're clear."

"Hmmm." Gorgeous or not, she wasn't as sure about Dylan as she was about Cherokee.

"Now that we've had that conversation, let's get back to where we were." He trailed a finger along her bare arm.

She shivered instinctively, then slid back on the settee to get out of his reach. "I need to get to my thing now."

"Tomorrow, then."

"Yeah, fabulous." She stood and straightened her shift. "I'll meet you at Carney's, tomorrow at eight." Since the restaurant on Sunset Boulevard was inside two old train cars, you could always sit with your back against the wall. It was too small for the stalker to watch her without her noticing.

"You want to eat at the train?"

She shrugged. "I'm craving a hot dog."

Dylan's boisterous laugh followed her all the way out the front door.

\* \* \* \* \*

"How is the dog?" Dylan asked the next night.

Brandi had experienced some serious second thoughts the night before after she'd left but when the time came tonight to dress for her date she hadn't managed to psych herself out of going, maybe because her stalker hadn't bothered her that day. Even he had better things to do on Mondays.

She ran her tongue around her lips, knowing she was making a mess with the chili. "Excellent."

Dylan rubbed one edge of her mouth with his thumb. "Chili."

"I'm not a very neat eater, am I?" She blushed as Dylan raised his eyebrows. "Of chili dogs, I mean."

"I'm not always very neat either." He stole one of her French fries, dipped it precisely into her mustard and slid it between his luscious lips.

Her pussy tingled. "You like eating out?"

Dylan smiled. "With select individuals."

That sexy smile of his was making her breasts swell. Her nipples pressed against her bra and white T-shirt. "Do I make the grade?"

He glanced down at her breasts, then back to her eyes. "You'll find out when you're done."

Brandi swallowed hard and pushed her meal to the center of the tiny table. Her panties were suddenly so damp that her jeans were providing some serious friction as she slid forward on her seat. "I'm done."

Dylan took a slow bite of his tuna salad. "I'm not."

Brandi closed her eyes, praying for patience. When she opened them, Dylan was still working on his salad, so she glanced at the orchid spray bouquet on the floor by her purse. He'd given it to her at the door of the train car. She appreciated the unusual choice in flowers, along with the fact he'd brought her flowers at all. He'd been so charming tonight that she'd chalked his aggressiveness the night before to a desire not to be used. That and maybe stronger feelings for Cherokee than Dylan was willing to admit.

The actor did have a strong pull. When she'd woken that morning she realized she'd been dreaming about him. Between her legs. She'd been so turned on she'd had to finger her clit until she came.

#### Cherokee's Playmates

When she glanced up, Dylan's gaze was on her. "What?" she asked.

He shook his head. "I was just thinking how beautiful you are. You're not the usual Los Angeles blonde, that's for sure."

"I dyed my hair blonde when I was sixteen," she said. "It looked terrible with my skin color."

"I'm glad you decided to return to your original color."

"Me too."

He cocked his head. "You look a lot like Cherokee in some ways."

"Is he Native American? I think one of my great-grandmothers was Cherokee but she died about fifty years before I was born."

"He told me he's half Cherokee and half Greek."

"And you are?"

"A Scot."

She glanced at his red hair. "I believe it."

"Cherokee and I were both born in North Carolina."

"Really? It's funny to meet out here then. I've always lived in Los Angeles."

"Is your family in the industry?"

"Yes. But let's not talk about family."

He set down his fork and reached for her fingers. "I was hoping you'd say that."

She heard the laughter in her voice when she said, "What do you want to talk about?"

His voice went husky. "Why talk? You and I have some catching up to do."

Her pussy released more cream and she shifted on her seat, catching her breath as the seam of her jeans dragged against her clit. "That we do."

"You sound a little breathy."

She nodded. "I'm ready to get out of here."

"Where to?"

She shifted again on her seat, biting back a gasp. Her skittishness of yesterday had not translated into today. She wanted Dylan. Her reawakened sexuality was ravenous. "Do you live anywhere near here?"

"Yeah, I'm not far at all."

"How about there?"

"Great." He stood up and held out his hand to her. She grabbed it and stood, swaying. He steadied her with a hand to her elbow. "You okay?"

"Sure." She looked down, biting her lip. "Forgot my purse."

"If I didn't know better I'd think you'd had a couple of drinks." He bent down to pick up her purse and bouquet.

"Thanks. No, just," she stood on her tiptoes and spoke into his ear, "very turned on."

He turned his head slowly, until his amazingly full lips were directly over hers. One of his hands held her possessions, the other moved to grip her butt in the narrow aisle of the yellow train car. He pulled her against him until she could feel his hot, thick length against her belly.

"Are you going to kiss me?" she asked.

"Excuse me," said a short Asian man. He was holding two boxes of food.

Brandi turned but there was no way to let him get past them. She took a step back, blocking Dylan to hide his erection and walked out of the restaurant. The other customer walked toward an outdoors picnic table covered by a striped awning.

She and Dylan continued into the parking lot, then he grabbed her by the waist and pulled her around, lowering his lips onto hers. She parted her lips eagerly, allowing his tongue to sweep in and take possession.

"Mmmm," he said. "You taste like chili."

She batted him away with a laugh and took her purse and flowers from him. "I'll follow you to your place. Hurry."

"We'll be there in less than fifteen minutes," he promised. "I can't wait any longer either."

She got into her car and followed him down Sunset Boulevard toward the 101. Soon, they were driving past Hollywood Forever Memorial Park, where stars like Jayne Mansfield were buried. A few minutes later, Dylan pulled to the curb in front of a lushly landscaped Craftsman-style house.

"Wow," Brandi said, getting out of her car after she'd parked behind Dylan, her gaze full of tropical details. "I didn't know you were a landscape designer too."

"That's my sister." Dylan put his arm around Brandi's waist and nibbled at my ear.

"Administrative assistant by day, gardener by night."

"Does she live here too?"

"Yes, we share the house for now. It was a foreclosure but this area doesn't come cheap."

"I know." One of her father's good friends, a huge star in the seventies, had recently put his home on the market not too far away from this one for eighteen million dollars. "What else did you do to the place?"

"I'll show you my *pièce de résistance.*" Dylan guided her up the front steps and into the dark, silent house. They kicked off their shoes in the tiny foyer, then walked down the hardwood-floored hall into the kitchen. He opened up French doors in the back of the room, put his hands on her shoulders and walked her through the door.

A light flickered on ahead.

"Wow," she said again. The backyard, though small, was a garden paradise, hidden from the outside world by thick green ficus hedges. Pots of pink and yellow flowers and bamboo trees as tall as four men made the scene exotic. "You should have seen the backyard before," Dylan said, stepping out behind her.

"We built the porch from scratch."

"It's wonderful out here."

"Thanks."

At one end there was a wicker sofa with white cushions in front of two-sided outdoor fireplace. Dylan knelt down in front of it and lit a fire.

"Have a seat. I'll turn out the light in a second and get us a bottle of wine." He walked to the doors leading back inside.

Before he could step back into the house, Brandi lifted her arms around his neck and kissed him. October or not, the fire made this hideaway the perfect setting for romance. She couldn't be out here and not touch him.

His lips were soft against hers as she nibbled and played with his broad bottom lip. She felt his smile as he tightened his arms around her waist and smoothed his hands down to cup her butt. Stepping even closer, she rubbed herself against him and tilted her head to deepen the kiss. Taking control, he swept his tongue into her mouth. She couldn't smell the flowers anymore. His yummy cologne overwhelmed her and her clit quivered in response.

"Forget the wine," she said, pulling away. "I can't wait."

He pushed her against the door and reached for the belt on her jeans. Brandi raised her arms overhead and against the cool glass, drinking in the night as he wrestled with her clothing. A soft breeze fluttered over her body but his hot hands and mouth followed the wind to her flesh, keeping her warm.

One of his hands moved to her pussy, gently rubbing along her damp lips. She started to reach her hands to him, to pull his hand up, but since the lights were still on she could see his entranced expression. He wanted to play with her and who was she to stop him? Her legs shifted and her head leaned against the door as he used two fingers to open her lips. Then he started to spread her cream around her pussy. The wind

cooled her hot juices quickly but his fingers were there and his breath drifted from her inner thighs to her pussy and back again, making her legs quiver.

She tilted her pelvis to signal she wanted more direct attention but he ignored her movement and moved his lips to her belly, caressing the indentation there and biting gently at the smooth flesh.

Could she stand this much longer? Her clit wanted action. She pressed her hands on his shoulder to force him down. The rumble of his laugh against her belly did strange things to her insides.

"You've got to stop teasing," she whispered. "I don't care if your mouth is on me or your penis is in me, just make something happen."

He looked up at her, his strong brows hiding his brilliant eyes. "Something, you say?"

"Yes." She leaned her head back against the door, expecting to hear his clothing start to drop. What man could hear the word "penis" without wanting to use his own?

Instead, she felt three fingers spear up her channel! She gasped, her knees buckling. He used his other hand to steady her, then sank his hot mouth over her clit and began to suck and lick in turn.

"Ah, oh," she gasped, any semblance of vocabulary fading from her brain as he branded her needy flesh. Her hips ground against his face and up and down his hand as if a separate brain controlled them. She let the door behind her take her weight and widened her stance.

A dog barked nearby and she hoped her moans weren't bringing out the neighbors. But it didn't matter because she couldn't help herself. "Don't stop," she said. "Please, don't stop."

He didn't answer since his mouth was buried under her curls. She thrust her hips against him, feeling her cream leaking down his chin. His hands moved from her ass to the backs of her thighs, pulling her legs apart further. He had every inch of her intimate flesh covered but now her pussy felt empty. She tried to reach around him so she could

put her own fingers in her pussy but he slapped her hand away and put his thumb inside her. His well-lubricated fingers played along the soft flesh between her channel and her rear entrance, then he started to rub there too.

The sensation sent her over the edge. She grabbed his head, losing all control as lights burst into a galaxy of sunshine. He kept her from falling, nibbling and licking and moving his thumb inside her until her body relaxed.

"Wow," she said, feeling like a broken record.

He moved away. She sagged against the door until he put his arms out. Her head drooped against his shoulder as he picked her up and took her to the sofa in front of the fireplace.

"I'll be back in a second," he whispered, draping a throw over her half-naked body.

She drowsed in the heat from the fire, aftershocks still gently rocking her body. At the back of the property, she heard the whirring, grinding noise that indicated a door was going up. She noticed a blue door at the edge of the small back garden. Was there a garage back there?

Waking up a little, she pulled the throw more tightly around herself and wondered what had happened to her jeans and panties. She heard hinges squeak as the garden door opened.

To her left, the French door opened too and she heard Dylan step out. Brandi closed her eyes and snuggled deeper into the blanket.

"Holly?" he called. "Do you need the lights?"

"No, I'm fine. Long day. I'm just moving slowly," said a light female voice.

"I don't mean to prod you along but I have a friend with me."

"Oops, sorry." Brandi heard a soft laugh as footfalls landed on the steps leading up to the patio and moved past the fireplace toward the door. "Have fun."

"Thanks. I left the mail in the living room."

"Okay. See ya."

#### Cherokee's Playmates

The door closed again and then Dylan was placing two glasses of wine on the iron table between the sofa and the fireplace. He sat down on the edge of the sofa next to her feet. Feeling languid, Brandi blinked, then reached out a hand and took one stem. She sipped at the wine, feeling completely relaxed and at peace with the world.

"There's not a lot of room on this sofa," she observed.

"No." Dylan took a sip of wine then put his glass back on the table. "What are we going to do about that?"

"I suggest you get naked and climb on top of me."

The light from the fire burnished his curls as he turned his face to her and laughed. "You are direct."

"Doesn't my idea sound like a good one?"

In answer, Dylan unbuttoned his shirt and tossed it on the back of the sofa, then stood and pulled down his jeans. Unfettered, his cock sprang free, the red curls at the base catching the firelight.

"You are a real redhead."

"Mmm-hmmm." He reached down and pulled a condom from his pocket and ripped it open.

"Let me do that."

He tossed the open packet to her. She crooked her finger and he moved close enough for her to grasp his cock and roll the condom on.

"Nice. That's going to feel good inside me."

"Yeah," Dylan said, his voice a little hoarse. "Now what was that second suggestion you made?"

"Get on top of me."

"Right." He plucked the soft blanket from her and knelt on the sofa between her legs, then shook his head. "This will never do."

"What? Not enough room?" She struggled to her elbows.

"Not enough naked." He reached for the bottom of her T-shirt then pulled it up. She sat up so he could tug it over her head, then she put her hand to the bow holding her bra together.

"Allow me." He pulled the cups away from her breasts. As the straps fell down her shoulders he murmured, "Magnificent."

"Thanks. I heard you like breasts." She wrapped her arms around his neck so he came down on her as she lay back. Their lips lined up perfectly and she sealed his mouth to hers with a kiss, sliding her legs around his lean waist at the same time. She was past the point of wanting to explore. She wanted his big hard cock in her *now*.

"Not in the mood for playtime?" he asked, raising his mouth from hers. "I'd love to suck those lovely tits."

She wriggled her pussy against him in response.

"I know you're ready," he said, with an impish grin. He found her channel and pushed in.

Her head fell back in pleasure as he filled her. He nuzzled her neck and took her shoulders in his hands. Each thrust was deep and perfect, filling her completely to the point of stretching. He felt wonderful inside her. Her hands roved down his back to grasp the round globes of his ass and she unwrapped one leg from his back to hook it over the sofa so he could access her even more deeply.

Their rhythm matched perfectly, as if they were both moving to the same silent music. Brandi heard the dog barking again, then another joined its lonely song a few houses farther down. She pulled Dylan's head to hers and kissed him greedily, battling his tongue.

Now she knew what both Dylan and Cherokee offered, she had no objections to either of them. She was a lucky woman to be desired by both.

"You are one seriously hot piece of ass," he gasped, breaking free from her mouth.

"Ditto," she said.

He sat up, his hands on her legs. She lifted herself so that her legs were against his chest. He kissed her ankles in turn then licked down her leg.

"Stop playing and fuck me," she told him.

"Yes, ma'am." He had complete control of her body as he wrapped his hands around her legs until there was no space between them, pushing himself inside her so deeply with each thrust that she felt a kind of pleasure-pain breaking her mind free until there was nothing for her but the sensations of her pussy clenching around his hot cock and the hum of her clit as her orgasm got close.

Dylan thrust harder, faster, deeper. He began to gasp.

"Don't stop," she ordered.

"Can't stop it." His face was perfect marble in the firelight, his eyes closed in ecstasy as his orgasm came. She watched his back arch, then her eyesight went dim as her own body began to convulse.

"Now isn't this a mouthwatering sight," said a masculine voice a few feet away from them.

# **Chapter Four**

Brandi let out a little scream and struggled up on her elbows, suddenly fearful. Who was that? She had forgotten to be vigilant.

"Hey," Dylan said, smoothing his hand up her leg. "It's okay. Everything is fine."

A dark shape moved closer to the firelight. "I didn't mean to scare you."

Cherokee. Brandi recognized the voice and relaxed, panting a little. He must have come over to check up on them. Dylan would have told him of her visit to his guesthouse and their date.

She rubbed her hand across her face. It was sweaty despite the October night, from her exertions and the fire.

"I'm not scared," she said. "Just startled."

Was Cherokee going to be okay with them having sex and not including him? Thankfully, he didn't look unhappy.

"Holly let me in," Cherokee said. He pulled the thong from his hair and let it fall free to his shoulders, then pushed his fingers along his scalp. "That feels good."

"Are you ready for your shoot tomorrow?" Dylan asked.

Brandi felt self-conscious. Here she was, with Dylan still buried inside her and he was able to carry on a normal conversation? She removed her legs from his shoulders and set her feet on his thighs.

"Ummm, bathroom?" she asked, pulling away and sitting up.

"Yeah, my bedroom is to the left when you leave the kitchen. The bath is attached."

"Thanks." She grabbed her T-shirt and held it to herself for warmth as she stood.

Cherokee grinned and stopped her long enough to kiss her cheek and whisper in her ear. "You like him?"

#### Cherokee's Playmates

She raised her eyebrows at him, clutched her shirt and dashed through the French doors, hoping she wouldn't run into Dylan's sister in the hallway. How had she gotten in so deep so fast? When she found the bathroom, she pulled on her shirt but it only went as far as her bellybutton. She pulled a towel from a rack and wrapped it around her waist after she cleaned up.

She caught sight of herself in the mirror and stared. Who was this woman who suddenly found two men equally hot, equally sexy and compelling? Wouldn't they be jealous of each other if they both liked her? Shouldn't she be jealous since they'd found each other first? Who would have thought she'd end up here after first seeing them in the parking garage together? She had to admit though, that two lovers ought to mean she'd hardly ever be alone. That would make her feel completely safe for the first time in a long while. And it kept her safe on her own terms, instead of those of her father.

A knock came at the door. She opened it slightly and found Dylan outside the door.

"Everything okay? You practically jumped over me to get away."

"Yes." She shook her head and put her hand on his chest. "I was just surprised. I'm not used to people walking in and out because I live alone."

He nodded. "Do you have to be anywhere first thing?"

"No."

"Then why don't you spend the night with Cherokee and me?"

"Both of you?"

Dylan grinned. "It's a big bed."

Brandi shook her head. "This is all so new to me."

"It's new to me too, more or less. But let's enjoy each other."

She flexed her hand on his chest. It felt warm and strong beneath her fingers. "I've already had two orgasms."

"I promise we'll double that."

"Hmmm." She let her fingers trail across his chest and pulled off her towel with the other hand, tossing it over her shoulder.

When she entered Dylan's bedroom, she found lamps turned on in the room, emitting a jewel-toned glow through multicolor lampshades. Cherokee was sitting on the bed, already naked.

"Big day tomorrow," she said, sitting down next to him. She hadn't seen him since he'd left to go out with Dylan on Saturday night and she was amazed that he looked exactly as delicious as she remembered. Some guys just don't disappoint.

A slight smile played on his lips. He rested his arm behind her. "It's just another shoot."

"Have all your lines memorized?"

He nodded. "Of course."

"Know how to use those bodyguard guns?"

His brow furrowed. "Yes. My father collects weapons."

"Does he live here in L.A.?"

"Greece," Cherokee said.

"Dylan said you were from North Carolina. How did your father end up in Greece?"

"He's Greek," he said. "He always lived there."

"My parents were never married," Brandi said. "She died when I was young and my father raised me."

"You want to talk about this now? When we could be—" He stroked his cock.

Her gaze was caught by his half-erection. She dropped the towel to the floor. "Dylan promised me two more orgasms."

"Greedy."

She watched fascinated as Cherokee's penis lengthened under his sure grip. Her mouth went dry as he thickened. "Let me."

He took his hand from himself and gestured, keeping his gaze on her as she folded the towel beneath her knees, knelt in front of him and took him in her mouth. As she swallowed him deep, she wondered if he was comparing her skills to Dylan's. The thought displeased her but she'd always been good at giving head.

She slid her tongue along his cock, playing with the veins and ridges until she tasted the first salty drop of pre-cum. Then she took him deep again. He was too long for anyone to take all of him but she did pretty well considering his package.

"More," he growled.

She scraped her teeth ever so gently as she moved her head back, teasing him. A rustle at the doorway distracted her but Cherokee took her head in his hands and pulled her mouth down his still growing cock. She found it hard to believe she'd been able to take him all in her pussy.

"I like that," said a voice behind her. Dylan was in the room now. She felt her pussy grow freshly damp with excitement. Two lovers in the same place, both wanting her. Or did they want each other now?

She pulled back to Cherokee's glistening tip and looked up at him. His gaze was completely focused on her and what she was doing, which was reassuring. She felt his hands tugging her deep again, then there was warmth behind her as Dylan knelt at her back and reached around to play with her breasts.

When he tweaked her nipples, she couldn't hold back a satisfied purr, even with a full mouth. Cherokee let out a gasp as the vibration translated to his penis. She repeated it, trying to stay focused as one of Dylan's hands drifted down her torso and into the curls covering her pussy. Spreading her legs slightly, she gave him access to her clit.

He got the message and began to circle her sensitized nub with his fingers. What she really wanted though was something big and hard inside her. She reached back, felt that Dylan was already hard again. How could she choose between two such splendid cocks?

Still, it was only fair that Cherokee had her next, since she'd already been with Dylan once tonight. She grasped Cherokee by the base and lifted her mouth off him.

"Where are the condoms?" she asked.

The warmth behind her vanished as Dylan rose. She heard drawers open behind her and then a box of condoms was tossed onto the green duvet cover.

Letting go of Cherokee, she climbed onto the bed. He grabbed the box and ripped it open, spilling out a roll of condoms.

"I need this," he said, staring across her to her newest lover.

Dylan raised his hand in acknowledgement. "Fine by me. I was just intrigued by what Brandi can do with her mouth."

She smiled and lay back on the bed, pushing a pillow underneath her head. Cherokee sheathed himself and positioned himself between her legs but instead of lying down on her, scissored his legs around one of hers and leaned sideways. His penis slid into her waiting channel. He was longer than Dylan, who was thicker. It made for a slight but equally pleasurable contrast. Cherokee's choice of position had exposed her upper body to Dylan's wandering hands. He dropped onto the bed next to her and this time used his mouth too, sucking her nipples in turn and rubbing her clit until she writhed against his hand as much as she moved up and down Cherokee.

"Oh my god," she gasped, after her orgasm had left her.

"One down," Dylan said, smiling. "Are you ready?"

It was hard to see through sex-steamed vision but she thought he was holding himself. "What do you have in mind?"

He pointed to her mouth.

"Right." All these orgasms were killing her brain cells. She reached out her hand to him, then lost her concentration as Cherokee increased the depth and speed of his thrusts inside her. Not only that, he had his hand in her curls now, his movements applying pressure above her clit.

Dylan fed his cock into her mouth slowly. She tried to keep her attention on him but it was so hard with what Cherokee was doing to her. For every gasp, she tried to suck, for every moan, a lick, until Dylan's eyes were closed, his head thrown back above her.

She reached underneath him and caressed his balls. He started to release salty precum and she eagerly worked for more, wanting to reward him for giving Cherokee a turn. His hand pressed harder on her curls, keeping a rhythm that he echoed inside her. She did her best to move with him but was already starting to lose it, her body starting to climb again from sheer sensory overload. But she had to hold on for Dylan. How could she though? She needed to get him to blow and fast.

When she remembered that Cherokee was his lover too, she knew. She gave his balls one final caress then slid her fingers along the sensitive flesh behind his sac. A few inches further and her finger was circling his sensitive hole.

Dylan gasped and pushed harder into her mouth. He was moving now, as she circled him with her fingers, doing most of the work. She tried to make encouraging noises, then gently pushed one finger inside him.

He came instantly, jetting hot rivers of cream down her throat, his entire body shuddering. She was amazed by the sensual pleasure she was able to offer as he bent his head and smiled at her, then leaned down for a kiss.

He turned and bent forward to kiss Cherokee. She could smell his musk now, mingling with Cherokee's, the scent a dangerous thrill to her senses. Dylan put his hand on Cherokee's, increasing the pressure on her clit.

She ground against them, unable to help herself. Sweat beaded on her chest. Her heart was racing, her mind was empty, her spirit soaring.

"Now," Cherokee said. "Come for me, beautiful."

"Now," Brandi repeated, as Cherokee thrust one final time so deeply that she felt him in her soul. She poured herself around him and found at the end she had tears running down her cheeks. Cherokee pulled out of her and used his thumb to wipe away the tear tracks. "You'll be fine," he whispered. "Wasn't that fun?"

She didn't know if she was laughing or gasping but she tried to speak. "Fun? You nearly killed me."

He brushed his lips with hers. "I haven't had sex since yesterday morning."

Brandi closed her eyes and shook her head. "That long? What happens if you go forty-eight hours?"

He leaned over her and whispered in her ear. His breath tickled her, making her smile. "You don't want to know."

\* \* \* \* \*

Brandi kissed her father on the cheek. He felt a little scratchy, which told her he was between mistresses. When he was sleeping alone he tended to get sloppy with his personal appearance. "Bye, Dad. Thanks for the drink."

"Anytime, *bella*." He pinched her cheek and gave her a roguish wink before picking up his call sheet.

His assistant opened the door for her and she stepped out to track down her car. She'd been running late all day after waking up at Dylan's house. Cherokee had been long gone since he had an early call time but she and Dylan had spent an hour exploring each other before he left for work. Her pussy was sore but she was very satisfied with her adventures.

Her father was her third stop of the day. She was gathering information for her Tuesday *Moving Pictures* update. Unfortunately, due to her late start, she wasn't going to have as much to offer as usual. She had to remember not to choose sex over business again. Or at least to wake up a bit earlier if she was going to indulge with Dylan.

How funny that she had these two men in her life. She'd been gun-shy for quite some time. Her jumpy behavior had greatly reduced the number of men approaching her lately. Maybe she'd been acting odd but no woman would blame her. Being stalked was scary.

Where had she parked her car? At the next bungalow, she thought, since her father's previous meeting attendees had filled up his spots and hadn't left until after she'd arrived for their usual Tuesday five p.m. drink.

"Brandi?"

She turned, this time not freaking out since she recognized her father's voice. "Dad?"

He waved a script at her. "Sorry. I forgot I wanted you to take a look at this. We just optioned it. Want to make me some buzz?"

She walked back to him and took it. "I will if I like it."

Her father pushed back his silvery curls and smiled, the skin around his eyes creasing. He was still a handsome man at forty-nine and could give quite a few of the aging leading men around Los Angeles competition for their leading ladies. "My little businesswoman."

She touched his shoulder. "I'm twenty-four now, not so little."

"You're still my *bambino*. I wish you'd come back home." He held up his hand as she opened her mouth to protest. "I worry. At least let me put security on you."

"I don't need it."

"But you're vulnerable."

"Maybe not as much as I used to be."

"Why?" Nic raised an eyebrow. "Is there a new boyfriend?"

She made a disgusted noise. "I haven't had a boyfriend since I was nineteen."

"Companion, then. What does he do?"

She shrugged, not knowing how to explain there were two of them. "He's employed and that's all you need to know."

Nic tugged at a loose curl that had fallen from her chignon. "All right, bella, but bring him over for Sunday brunch when I'm back from Rome."

She never brought her lovers to Sunday brunch even when she had been dating regularly but that didn't stop her father from suggesting it. "How long are you going to be gone?"

"Tomorrow until Monday, so I won't be able to have my brunch but we're still on for our drink."

"I'll see you next Tuesday then. Have a safe trip. 'Bye, Dad." She kissed him again and headed toward her car. She hoped.

"Be good," she heard him call.

She half turned but kept walking. "Only if you are!"

His rich laugh followed her as she spotted her car and pushed the key chain button to open the lock. She had one hand on the door when she heard her name again. Looking up, she saw her father had vanished into his office. Her heart began to pound. She looked around, trying to figure out what direction the male voice had come from.

How odd. There was Cherokee, coming toward her from the opposite direction from her father's office. What was he doing here? Then she remembered. Of course, his movie was shooting on this lot. After all, she'd met Kaliq, the producer, through her father at one of his cocktail parties two years ago.

"Are you done shooting for the day so soon?" she asked, shading her eyes against the sun.

"It is early. I was expecting eighteen hours but the female lead negotiated a shorter day due to her secret pregnancy."

"Oooh, sounds like you've got some good gossip." She linked her arm through his and smiled up at him.

### Cherokee's Playmates

He leaned forward, as if to kiss her but she turned her head so that he touched her cheek. She wasn't ready to go public. Part of the reason she had such good access was that men thought she was available.

"Going to put it on your blog?" he asked.

"I think I'll use the information more to do an analysis on the production, or maybe I'll write an article on current shooting schedule standards around town," she mused.

"I've got more juicy gossip," he said.

"What's that?"

"You appear to be close to Nic D'Angelo."

She made herself laugh casually, trying to make it sound real. "He's my father. Didn't I ever tell you my last name?" *Damn*, she thought. And so it begins. Will Cherokee ask me for a favor?

"No." He looked down at her hand. "What's that? A script?"

She smiled vaguely and opened her car door, tossing it in the passenger seat. "Just some research for another article."

"Are you done for the day?"

"Why?"

"How about going back to my place?"

"Aren't you going to even ask me to dinner first?"

Cherokee reached out to tuck her stray curl back behind her ear, in a gesture reminiscent of her father's. "I didn't mean to insult you. I'm just hot for you."

"Maybe we should just spend some time together, getting to know each other. I have to be able to tell the two of you apart, after all." Brandi's phone rang. She unzipped the cell phone pocket on her Hogan tote and pulled out her phone. The number wasn't showing. Should she answer it? She needed to, she knew. She didn't really have enough for tomorrow's update yet and couldn't afford to lose a hot tip any more than she could afford to spend the rest of the evening with Cherokee. Among

other things, she needed to read her father's script, knowing his assistant would have sent her an email with the deal details by now.

She accepted the call and put her BlackBerry to her ear.

"I saw you this morning, naughty girl," rasped a familiar voice.

Her palm began to itch and she had to clutch the phone with her fingers to keep it at her ear. How had he gotten her cell number? She'd just changed it the week before.

"You didn't come home last night. I might be jealous." Her stalker laughed.

She looked up and saw Cherokee's furrowed brow, realized she hadn't said anything. "I'm not interested," she said quickly and disconnected the call.

"Who was that?"

"Telemarketer. I don't know how they got my cell number." She laughed nervously.

"You look like you need a drink. Why don't we get one with a bite to eat, then my place?"

She didn't want to be alone and she didn't want to go home. "I need to do some work but I've got my laptop with me. Why don't we order in, relax, then while you get some sleep I'll work? You have to get up a lot earlier than I do."

"You want to spend the night?"

She sighed. Was that going to be a problem? "Yes." She stood on tiptoe and spoke into his ear. "How am I going to make love to you again first thing in the morning if I'm not there?"

He turned so his nose nuzzled her cheek. "Excellent point. Let's go pick up that food."

She got into the car, grabbing her father's script off the front seat and tucking it under her arm. If Cherokee got a look at it he'd probably want to read it and see if there was a part for him. She just didn't want to go there.

\* \* \* \* \*

The doorbell rang. Cherokee set his water glass in the kitchen sink and went to his front door. Since he'd spent Tuesday with Brandi he'd called Dylan for tonight, figuring she had work to catch up on.

"Hey, man." Dylan was slumped against the doorjamb, spotlighted by the porch light, looking sleepily sexy in tight jeans and a button-down shirt.

Cherokee took one look at his lover and knew something was wrong. Dylan wasn't the type to lie back and pose. What was going on now? Were both his lovers going to demand a nice meal every time he wanted to sleep with them? He couldn't afford them both.

He pulled Dylan away from the doorway and into the guesthouse, then shut the door. "What's wrong?"

Dylan yawned. "Just tired, I guess. Couldn't sleep last night."

Cherokee tipped up Dylan's head for a kiss. The other man didn't pull away but didn't respond either. Cherokee knew it wasn't his breath. Like the gods, his breath was always sweet, one of the benefits of being half-immortal. At least there was some compensation. He might need to have sex regularly but at least he had the power to attract lovers. This relationship thing though, that was tougher. Why was it so often easier to get strangers into bed than people you cared about?

For that matter, why was he suddenly caring, and not just for one person but for two?

"Hmmm. Do you need to talk or something?" Cherokee felt his face contort from the effort of saying that with a straight face.

Dylan narrowed his eyes, as if he too realized the absurdity of one man saying that to another. "Got a beer?"

"Sure. Let's go into the kitchen."

Before Cherokee could drape his arm across Dylan's shoulder, Dylan was moving through the living room toward the refrigerator.

"How'd the shoot go today?" he asked, as he pulled a longneck from the refrigerator and opened the cap with a magnetized bottle opener on the outside. He handed it to Cherokee.

"Fine. But I think the actor playing the senator's son is going to be a handful. I kept waiting for the tantrum."

"There's always tomorrow." Dylan popped the cap off another beer and took a long draw.

"Exactly."

Dylan swallowed. "What's up? Is Brandi on her way over?"

"No, it's just us tonight. I thought we'd spend some time together."

"What I had in mind was more of a booty call. It's getting late and I've got an early meeting to prep for." Dylan sat down on a ladder-back chair by the kitchen table.

Great, they both wanted the same thing. So why did he feel insecure all of a sudden? "Do you like Brandi better than me, now?"

Dylan rolled his eyes. "I'm getting into the threesome thing. That was hot. I liked us together."

"I kept her too busy to get her work done last night. But Sam's band, Rotten Tomatoes, is performing on Friday night at a Halloween bash and Brandi said she'd go to the show with us."

"Us? You haven't invited me yet."

Cherokee raised and lowered his shoulders. "I'm asking now."

Dylan ignored him. "I'm surprised you'd hear from Sam now that he and Claudia are monogamous again."

"Claudia emailed me. I'm curious to hear the band."

Dylan set his bottle on the table with a clunk. "Okay. If that's all, yeah, I can go to the show with you and Brandi. It'll be fun."

"You aren't leaving, are you?" Cherokee felt a strange panic grip his chest. If Dylan left and he wasn't seeing Brandi until Friday, he'd have to go find a stranger to sleep with. He couldn't possibly go three days without sex. Two, yes, though the pull would start. But by the third day he'd be back in Olympus listening to his father drone on about strategies to destabilize the Middle East or Africa.

"You have something else in mind?"

"Hell, yes." Cherokee knew the situation called for drastic measures or he was going to lose his skittish lover.

He set his bottle on the table and grabbed Dylan by the waistband of his jeans, pulling him from the chair. Dylan gripped the table behind him with his hands as Cherokee pulled open his belt and jeans, sliding them down Dylan's muscled legs.

Dylan's cock bobbed free. Cherokee groaned and knelt, capturing the thick length in his mouth, taking it deep into his throat. When he looked up, Dylan's gaze had gone blank. He began to move his hips, his clock sliding in and out of Cherokee's mouth.

After a couple of minutes, Cherokee grasped Dylan's cock by the root and pulled his mouth away. "C'mon, I've got to get you upstairs."

Dylan didn't argue as Cherokee almost pushed him into the hallway and up the steps. Cherokee kept his hand on Dylan's cock, playing with him while moving him into the position he wanted, facedown on the bed, ass raised in the air.

He pulled open a bedside drawer and found a bottle of lube. One-handed, he wrestled with his clothes, then smeared lube on his own cock. From the grunts Dylan was making, he knew his lover was close.

"Stay with me," he said, putting his cock to Dylan's tight entrance. "You won't feel a thing."

"Oh, I'll feel it but don't stop," Dylan ordered.

"I won't." Cherokee rubbed his cock against Dylan's entrance, making sure the opening was lubricated. He bent his knees and pushed in slowly.

Dylan grunted and thrust his hips against the base of Cherokee's hand. Cherokee slid in deeper, then pulled out a little. He lifted one leg so he could balance his foot on the bedframe. He felt Dylan begin to shudder, then pushed all the way in as the first hot jet of cum frosted Cherokee's fingers.

He knew he had to make it quick, so he moved his own hips faster, matching Dylan's rhythm as he came. When Dylan relaxed around him, Cherokee grabbed his lover's hips with his hands and worked fiercely, feeling sweat bead on his forehead and back. Everything was going to be okay for another day, he told himself and the next. He could handle this relationship thing.

He had to. For some crazy reason, he didn't want anyone but Dylan and Brandi.

## **Chapter Five**

Brandi entered the West Hollywood club alone, her hand inside her purse, wrapped around her pepper spray. It was Halloween and plenty of people were out but they were wearing costumes, so it might be hard to spot her stalker in the crowds. Still, crowds made her feel a little safer.

She hesitated, letting her eyes adjust, noticing a long bar to one side, with tables alongside a rail. On the other side of the rail was a dance floor and beyond that was the stage, where a band with only limited skill with their instruments was playing. The place was a bit of a dive but then Cherokee had said Rotten Tomatoes was basically a garage band. He'd admitted he hadn't heard them play before.

She spotted Cherokee stepping away from the rail on the opposite side of the room from the bar where the bathrooms must be and relaxed. When she moved toward him, she dropped the pepper spray into her purse and closed it. He was with a woman and they were both holding plastic cups.

"This is Claudia," Cherokee said when he was close enough for her to hear. His arm was around a voluptuous, dark-auburn-haired woman in a black cat suit. Adorable fake ears were attached to the headband she wore and her face was painted with whisker stripes.

He let go of her and leaned forward to kiss Brandi on the lips, branding her as his in front of everyone else within eyeshot. She liked that he had marked her.

"Hi," Brandi said. She shook Claudia's hand, all too conscious of the fact that both her lovers had recently had their cocks in this woman. Why was it that she wasn't jealous of the relationship between Dylan and Cherokee but was jealous of the idea of them with anyone else?

She knew, for instance, that they had been together on Wednesday night, because Dylan had texted her a scolding message, asking how she dared to be this busy just when he'd met her. She'd texted him back to say she was shocked he was even in town and that she'd make it up to him tonight after Rotten Tomatoes played.

"Love the outfit," Claudia said, taking a sip of her beer.

Brandi smiled and pressed her hands down the sides of her long, brocade dress. While the Tudor queen outfit might not look quite as sexy as the cat suit, other than the fabulous cleavage the tight bodice made, only she knew she wasn't wearing any panties under the long skirt. Besides, unlike Claudia, she had breasts to showcase in a costume like this.

Of course, beneath the brocade no one could see the pouting tips of her breasts, whereas under the thin fabric of the cat suit, Claudia's erect nipples were all too obvious. Either she'd had them fixed or Cherokee still turned her on.

Brandi turned to her man. Cherokee was looking hot in his vampire outfit, which was a tuxedo covered by a black cape. He also wore black lipstick, which made his white, pointed teeth all the more obvious. If he went too much farther in his acting career he'd probably need to get them capped. His teeth were perfect in their way but didn't look quite normal.

"Have you seen Dylan yet?" she asked.

Cherokee shook his head and pulled both of them along his body, so he had one woman at each side. "I'm sure he'll be here soon."

"When does your boyfriend's band come on?" Brandi asked Claudia.

"Around eleven. The opening band should finish their set any minute. Thankfully, huh?"

"They could use a few music lessons," Brandi agreed as the guitarist hit a bad chord again.

"Let's get you a drink," Cherokee said, turning them toward the bar. "You're going to need it if they play much longer."

Brandi saw a flash of red hair leaving the bar above a small crowd of girls dressed as mice. Was it Dylan? She saw another red-capped head as two of the girls turned aside. Had he brought his sister?

"Holly!" Claudia squealed, her hair flying around her shoulders as she dashed to greet Dylan's sister.

"I think I told you they work together," Dylan said, a big smile crossing his face as he caught sight of them.

Brandi reached out her arms and Dylan grabbed her in a hug. She felt his cold bottle of ale press into her back.

"My lady!" Dylan was dressed as Henry VIII. His powerful legs looked amazing in tights, Brandi thought and she began to regret not wearing panties as a telltale trickle of creamy warmth escaped her pussy.

She pulled his face to hers and gave him a smacking kiss. "My king! I'm amazed you managed to find the outfit in time."

"Holly found it for me. I think she borrowed it from a studio storeroom."

She tilted her mouth up to Dylan's ear. "You are making me so wet," she whispered. "I just love you in those clothes."

Dylan raised his eyebrows. "I'll have to wear man-tights more often then."

She stepped back, glad he had texted her about matching outfits. "I don't know. That or the crown. The crown is hot," she decided.

Dylan held out his hand to Cherokee. The other man laughed and shook, then pulled Dylan into a one-armed hug.

"Thank god it's Friday," Brandi said. "I can't wait to dance."

Claudia and Holly moved back within speaking distance. "Brandi, have you met Holly yet?"

"Sort of," Brandi said. "At her house."

"Hi Brandi," Holly said, sketching a wave. She was astonishingly pretty in her costume. The diaphanous material flowing around her body suited her slight frame and her pert, freckled face looked positively unworldly under a crown of flowers. Her wings were small but iridescent and they seemed to glow from inside.

Brandi noted Claudia's face lighting up as a gorgeous man with braids and surferdude clothes bounced up to them, unhampered by the crowd filling the room. She noticed a couple of girls whispering as he passed them.

"Babe," he said urgently when he reached their little group. "The zipper blew on Greg's vampire costume pants. Have you got any safety pins?"

Claudia's face went blank for a moment, then she burst out laughing. "Poor Greg! But no, I don't."

Brandi heard a button unsnap then realized Holly was carrying quite a large purse. It looked like it was hand-knitted and felted and didn't go with the faerie look at all.

Dylan's sister, smiling tentatively, held up a small red case. "I have a sewing kit, Sam."

"Holly!" exclaimed the surfer, who must be Claudia's boyfriend Sam. "Sorry, didn't see you there."

"I can fix his pants," Holly assured them.

"Too cool. C'mon, you can't get backstage without me."

Holly hesitated and glanced at Claudia, who scooped both of her hands into the air in a "get going" gesture. She nodded and hurried after Sam.

"Your boyfriend is seriously hot," Brandi told Claudia. "I love the tat."

"It's a lily," Claudia said. "His mother was named Lily."

"It's a good sign when a guy loves his mother," Brandi said, looking up at her dates. "What about you two? Do you love your mothers?"

Cherokee nodded. "Of course but like I told you before, she's been gone a long time."

Dylan's grin brought out shallow dimples she hadn't noticed before. "I love my mother but I'm glad she lives in Phoenix now."

"She's overbearing," Claudia agreed. "Remember her visit to your house last Christmas? She had Holly in tears."

"Yeah," Dylan agreed. "She took down all of Holly's decorations and redid the place while we were at work. It went from Hawaiian holiday to Christmas in Vermont in less than ten hours."

"Yikes," Brandi said.

"What about you? Where's your mother?" Dylan asked.

Brandi shrugged. "She was a model in the eighties, before and after I was born. She took off for an island in the Caribbean when I was in second grade, then died in a car accident, so my first stepmother pretty much raised me."

"Very L.A." Claudia observed.

"Her father is Nic D'Angelo," Cherokee said.

Claudia pushed back her hair. "Really? Are you in the business too?"

Brandi wished he hadn't blurted that out. "I own a business website. I did a short film in school and a major studio was interested in me but they wanted to put me in their animation division and that didn't sound like my thing, so I started the website."

"How old are you?" Claudia asked.

"Twenty-four," she answered, astonished that anyone in L.A. would ask that question.

"Plenty of time yet," Claudia said. "You should work on one of your father's films. Then, when it's a hit, someone will snap you up."

"I don't like using him."

"He gave you a script," Cherokee said. "Does he want you to get involved with it?"

Brandi blinked. Cherokee was being awfully pushy tonight. Dylan was one thing, since he wasn't part of the industry but she had her doubts about being involved with an actor and this was why.

She decided to ignore the question. "What do you do, Claudia?"

Claudia smiled self-consciously. "Production assistant. But don't let my sucking up to you be a problem, okay?"

Brandi laughed. "At least you're honest."

Up on the stage, the singer thanked the crowd clustered around the stage and introduced his band. "Next up after a short break is Rotten Tomatoes!"

The crowd whooped and hollered. Sam's band must be kind of a big thing, Brandi realized.

"This is their regular gig," Claudia said. "They play here all the time."

"Do they make a living at it?" Of course, that might be as rude of a question as asking a woman's age.

"No, Sam's a claims adjuster. Greg works at a bank. The others do construction. They've never tried to go big time. They think of themselves as a garage band."

"Your garage?"

"No," Claudia said, then pointed. "Hey, there's Holly. The crisis must have been averted."

Holly was giggling as she reached them.

"Oh my god," she whispered. "I saw his package!"

"What?" Claudia said.

"You know," Holly gestured toward her crotch. "His stuff!"

"Uh-huh," said Claudia, rolling her eyes. "Greg's stuff."

"He has the nicest green eyes," Holly said, warming to her theme. "And big stuff. Nice stuff. Like, gift-from-the-gods stuff."

Brandi saw Cherokee turn his head. The men were paying attention now.

"Holly," Dylan said. "No man wants to hear his sister waxing lyrical about some guy's package. Shut up, okay?"

Holly giggled again as Claudia shook her head. "He's a loan officer, Holly."

"He plays bass," Holly retorted. "I think he's hot."

"He's geeky."

"Holly's a geek," Dylan offered, grabbing his sister around the neck.

"Stop it!" she protested. "You're messing up my flower crown."

Dylan raised his eyebrows. "See what I mean? Geek city."

"I think elves are sweet," Brandi said.

"Faeries," Holly corrected. "Greg said he liked faeries. He told me about a book he liked with sexy faeries called *Wedding Jitters*. I'm going to buy it online."

"Sounds like love at first sight," Claudia said. "If he's talking about weddings already."

Holly blushed until her face nearly matched her hair. "It's just the name of the story. Hey, maybe it will be so good that our producer will option it!"

"We did do vampires last," Claudia mused.

"What do you think?" Brandi asked, prodding Cherokee's arm. "Want to play a faerie king next?"

"Ummm, no," Cherokee said, flipping back his cape so the blood red lining was displayed.

"Darn," Brandi said, snapping her fingers. "There goes another starring role."

Cherokee grabbed her around the shoulder and waist and dipped her down for a kiss. "I'll simply have to settle for being your king."

"Ohh, baby," Brandi cooed, as his tongue swirled into her mouth. She flung her arms around his neck, deepening the kiss. More cream flowed from her channel. She found herself wondering if there was a hidden alcove or somewhere they could have sex. Damn, she was horny.

"Hello?"

Distantly, Brandi felt a tapping on her shoulder.

Cherokee pulled her upright and she turned to face Dylan.

"I'm sorry, I thought I was the king around here." His molded lips pressed together in a mock pout.

"Ohhh, my other liege." Brandi put her hand to her crown, ensuring it was still attached and stood on tiptoes to kiss him too. Dylan dipped her as well and when he pulled her back up they were laughing.

It wasn't until she turned around that she saw the fascinated stare of Claudia. Holly was grinning uncertainly.

"Yeah," Brandi said defiantly. "I'm dating both of them."

Claudia grinned. "They're both well worth it."

Holly's eyes opened wide. "How do you know?"

Claudia laughed and patted her friend's wings. "Never you mind, my child but Brandi is one lucky girl."

Holly shook her head, still wide-eyed. "Both of them?"

Brandi put her arms around both of her men. "Yes, both of them. Claudia, do you think we could go backstage? I'd love a break from this crowd."

"Sure." Claudia turned and Brandi followed her, arm and arm with her king and her vampire.

Halfway across the dance floor, Brandi turned back to make sure Holly was following them in the heavy crowd, then stopped dead, feeling like she'd been glued to the wood floor.

That skinny, oval face? A shock of brown hair that looked almost as if the man had put his finger in a light socket? The eyes that didn't quite match in size, much less in color? Was that her stalker in the crowd?

"What's wrong?" Cherokee asked.

Dylan put his hand on her shoulder as Holly bumped into them, not paying attention.

Brandi shook her head. She craned her neck, looking but the man had vanished. She glanced at Cherokee. "It's nothing. I just thought I saw someone."

Cherokee looked at her steadily. "You're sure it's nothing?"

"Yes," she tried to smile. "Thanks for well, being concerned."

He nodded, still looking solemn. Was this his bodyguard act from the new movie role or was he really this thoughtful? She wished she knew if she could really be safe with him.

Claudia smiled at the bouncer blocking the door to backstage and he let them in. No doubt she was a regular.

This club wasn't the most upscale. Backstage consisted of not much more than a narrow corridor behind the stage, plus a few tiny storage rooms and a small bathroom. How was she going to get private time with Cherokee and Dylan when Claudia and Holly were in tow?

"Hey Claudia," said a male voice. A tall, lean man emerged from the shadows. He narrowed his dark eyes when he saw them. The space under his eyebrows seemed to sparkle, as if he were wearing silver eye shadow but under his eyes was dark, like he had smeared eyeliner there. It was an unusual look, even for a rocker type. Maybe he was a roadie. He was dressed for it, in heavy canvas pants and a long-sleeved cotton T-shirt covered in glittering chains. Of course it was Halloween.

"Hi Torc," Claudia whispered back. "My friends wanted to see backstage."

Torc's unusual eyes seemed to gather light into them as he looked over the group. He stiffened when he saw Cherokee. Brandi glanced at him, concerned. Did the two know each other? Torc obviously knew Claudia because of her boyfriend's band, but she wouldn't have thought he'd have reason to meet Cherokee before tonight.

Torc raised his hand, palm up, to his ear. "I own the place," he said.

"It's very nice," Holly said quickly. "We're looking forward to hearing the band."

"And eating those pumpkin cookies you always have," Claudia said.

Torc nodded. "We ran out and I was going to bring some from the storeroom."

"I'll help," Claudia said.

Brandi heard shuffling in front of them, then a door slammed. The Rotten Tomatoes bandmates came out of one of the rooms. Sam carried a guitar and another carried drumsticks. The rest of the instruments must already be on stage.

"Are we on?" Sam asked.

Brandi watched Holly blush then turn sideways after glancing at a gangly young man with green eyes. The young man pressed his lips together as if he wanted to say something but was too shy. The other bandmates looked to be standard rocker types, good-looking in a scruffy underfed way. Other than Sam, they were all wearing dark clothes and capes and all but one was sporting fangs.

"Yeah, anytime," Torc said. "You ready? I'll run out and introduce you."

"Whenever."

"Just show me where the cookies are and Holly and I will take them to the bar," Claudia said.

Torc pointed to the left. "They're in the far storeroom. The case is open. You can't miss them."

Brandi felt her arm slip away from Cherokee's back as he slid into the shadows behind her. Torc moved past them and through the curtains to Dylan's right. The band lined up at the curtain so they could enter as soon as they were introduced.

Maybe she'd get some alone time with her lovers after all, Brandi thought. The three of them waited quietly as Torc announced Rotten Tomatoes. If he went off the stage to the bar instead of coming backstage they'd be alone.

The band stepped through the curtain to loud applause and calls. They appeared to have quite a following for a part-time garage band.

### Cherokee's Playmates

"C'mon." Dylan squeezed Brandi's hand and tugged toward the door the band had exited from. Cherokee followed.

The room had stained white walls, a concrete floor and a long sofa. A table covered with hair spray and water bottles was in front of a large mirror and a couple of plastic and metal fold-up chairs were splayed at angles by the table.

"It has possibilities," Dylan said, folding his arms across his chest and surveying the room.

"Do you know Torc?" Brandi asked, glancing at Cherokee.

"No," he said softly. "But I've heard of him, I think."

"Anything bad?"

Cherokee shrugged. "I'm sure he's an honest club owner but I had no idea someone like him was here."

"Is he from North Carolina?" Brandi said, meaning it to be a joke.

"No," he said. "Not from there."

"We might not have much time," Dylan said, interrupting them. "My sister might come looking for us."

"What did you have in mind?" Brandi teased.

Before Dylan could speak, Cherokee wrapped his arm around her waist and pushed her over the tall arm of the sofa. Her shoulders fell back to rest on a cushion.

Her mouth dropped open as he pushed her skirt up over her head. She couldn't see but she certainly could feel.

Cherokee kneed her legs apart. She heard zippers unzipping, wrappers unwrapping and then a finger probing her pussy.

"Wet," he said, obviously pleased.

"Yeah," Brandi sighed. "I couldn't wait to be alone with you guys. It's been like, forever."

The sofa bounced and her skirt was pushed out of her eyes. Dylan put his hands on the sides of her face and kissed her. He tasted like the rich pumpkin ale he'd been drinking.

Cherokee's sheathed cock pushed against her entrance, then unceremoniously thrust inside her. Brandi's mouth dropped open again and Dylan thrust his tongue inside. She tried to wrap her arms around him but the position was too awkward so she grabbed the back of the sofa with one hand to steady herself and dropped the other to the nubby edge of the cushion.

Dylan, still kissing her, got on his knees. Her hearing was increasingly muffled but she thought she heard fabric rustling.

"No zipper," he gasped, moving back an inch from her lips to get some air in his lungs.

She tried to help him push down his hose but it was hard to balance with Cherokee's cock working in and out of her, pressing her against the sofa arm. Concentration was impossible anyway, with her clit being rubbed against his massive body.

Eventually, Dylan's cock sprang free from his hose. She tilted her neck and opened her mouth, eager to receive it and give him the same pleasure she and Cherokee were sharing. He filled her mouth with his thickness and her nostrils with his musky scent.

She couldn't think anymore, she was just sex, glorious sex. Her hands moved from the safety of the sofa to grasp Dylan's butt, using him as her anchor even as he slid in and out of her mouth. She heard both of her men gasping with pleasure and she was giving it to both of them. The sensation was heady and she never wanted it to stop.

Impossibly, Cherokee seemed to lengthen, to hit even more of her channel as he moved in and out of her. His hands stroked her thighs, her hips, anywhere he could reach. She felt him grinding his pelvis against her, felt his sac slapping at her entrance as he pressed inside.

Her clit felt impossibly huge, accepting all the sensations that friction offered. She knew she was close and she had to bring her men with her. Her nails dug into Dylan's butt, pulling him even deeper into her mouth. She quickened her sucking, speeding up the pace. At the same time, she pressed herself against Cherokee every time he thrust, bringing him ever deeper into her body.

"Yeah," Dylan gasped. "That's it. That's right. God, you're perfect."

Brandi closed her eyes, focusing only on the dual sensations of her body. But she couldn't, all her nerve endings seemed to be in her clit now and she couldn't stop the pleasure from starting.

Unavoidably, her mouth opened as she came. Dylan thrust in hard, then yelled and shot himself down her throat. Cherokee reached forward and took her breasts in his hands, squeezing as he slammed into her. His weight pressed as he jerked with his orgasm.

When Brandi's ears cleared, she heard the harsh breathing of three very satisfied people. "Damn, we're good," she mumbled, feeling drugged with pleasure.

"Damn," Dylan echoed, pulling out of her mouth and twisting so he could collapse on the sofa. "If this old piece of furniture could talk."

Cherokee lifted his head and pressed Brandi's ruffle down so he could kiss her cheek, then his weight lifted from her. He straightened his clothes then helped her up and they both collapsed next to Dylan.

Dylan took her hand in his warm grasp.

"Very satisfying," Cherokee murmured. "I apologize for not giving you much warning."

He tilted his head so his gaze met Brandi's.

She patted his knee. "I'm there for you, big guy."

He wrapped his arm around her and she relaxed against his shoulder.

#### Anh Leod

"I suppose we should watch the rest of the show," Cherokee said. "Claudia was kind to invite us."

"It's not like we can't hear it," Brandi said. She realized they had been in here through at least the first four songs of the set. The music was a mix of eighties hair metal, sixties surfer and current alternative rock.

"I have to make sure Holly has a ride home too," Dylan said.

"Where should we spend the night?" Brandi asked. "Dylan, will Holly be okay with us staying again?"

"We haven't been to your place yet," Cherokee said.

Brandi thought. Her sheets were clean but she rarely brought anyone into her sanctum. Still, she was really starting to have feelings for these two men. She had dreamed about them more than once and missed them during the days they had been apart, though she managed to get her website caught up in the interim. "It's a big deal for me to bring people home. You know I work there too."

"How big is your bed?" Dylan asked.

"Queen-sized. I definitely have the smallest bed of us three."

"Sounds cozy," Dylan yawned. "I must be getting old. I used to be able to get up and work out at five, then party until three in the morning."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-eight."

"You are old," Brandi said, using her free hand to poke him in the leg.

"How old are you?" he asked.

"Twenty-four."

"Baby," he teased. "How about you, Cherokee?"

"One hundred and fifty-four," Cherokee said.

"Right," Claudia giggled. "Then we'd better get you home, old man."

"Mmmm," was Cherokee's response. Somehow he managed to get his arm snaked around her neck far enough to squeeze her breast.

"Hey!" She sat up and batted his hand. "Hands off the merchandise, you old fogie."

Dylan sat up too and folded his arms around her from behind. "Let's skip the rest of the show and go fall asleep together after some more sex. That sounds fantastic."

Brandi let out a deep breath and stood, wobbling for a second on her Jimmy Choos until she found her balance. She held out a hand to Cherokee and he stood up.

"I'll find Holly," Dylan said, then left the room ahead of them.

Brandi wrapped her arms around Cherokee's waist and leaned against him. They were silent for a couple of minutes, listening to the band playing a kitschy Halloween tune from some old TV show.

"Are we too young for you?" Brandi asked. She had a feeling he was a decade or so older than she was.

Cherokee tightened his arms around her. "Absolutely not. I adore both of you."

Brandi smiled. "I adore both of you too. Do you think we can really make this work?"

"Time will tell. It's only been a week. I should tell you that in public, it is better you appear linked to Dylan than to me."

She frowned. "Why, so you look single for your fans?"

"No but I have an Italian passport. My life is complicated and I couldn't ever marry you, for instance. It's a long story but it will be easier for a number of reasons if your public relationship is with him."

"What if he doesn't agree?"

"He will. Besides, I don't care if our friends and family know all about us, but it's in my best interest to keep my press image as vague as possible."

"Okay." Brandi had the feeling she was missing something, though she was pleased that he was as into her as she was into him. "We'd better go find Dylan."

Holding hands, they left the room and found the door that would lead them out around the stage.

"Do you see him?" Brandi asked, craning her neck.

"I see Holly."

Brandi's gaze followed Cherokee's pointing finger until she saw the faerie princess dancing right in front of the stage with Claudia. "They're keeping close to their men."

"Hey, Claudia's going to give Holly a ride," Dylan said, pushing his way toward them.

Brandi had to read his lips to get his meaning since she couldn't actually hear him.

Cherokee nodded. "Sounds good."

He pushed Brandi forward a little until she took Dylan's hand. They made their way toward the bar. Torc was behind it and they waved to him.

Brandi mouthed thank you to him and he nodded, then turned his head when a bartender came up behind him and spoke in his ear.

Outside the air was decidedly chilly. The street was deserted now. Los Angeles was either asleep or indoors celebrating.

"What time is it?" Brandi asked, huddling close to Dylan for warmth.

He glanced at his watch. "A little after midnight."

"Are we all at the same parking lot like we agreed?" Brandi asked.

"I saw your car," Cherokee said.

"So did I." Dylan squeezed her shoulder. "Let's walk fast."

At the corner, the pedestrian walk light was about to change but there weren't any cars nearby. Cherokee dashed into the intersection.

"Wait!" Brandi called. She didn't want to run in her high heels.

Seemingly out of nowhere, a low-slung black sports car pulled out of a driveway directly across from the bar and turned left onto the crosswalk. The streetlight above reflected off the windshield so the driver couldn't be seen.

Brandi opened her mouth to scream but no sound came out. Dylan let go of her and dashed forward, waving his arms.

"Watch out!" he yelled.

The car moved at an angle, heading right toward Cherokee. He started to turn but the car was moving so fast that it was impossible for him to escape.

Brandi heard a sickening crunch as car and man collided. Cherokee bounced onto the hood but instead of being flung sideways, seemed to do a cartwheel up the windshield then spring back into a flip so only his hands touched the top of the car. She could only marvel as his feet touched down on the trunk. He leapt off, rolling on the asphalt and ending up in a kneeling position. The car sped off, its tires squealing as it disappeared into the distance.

Brandi expected Cherokee to fall sideways now, dead practically at her feet. Instead, his gaze seemed to bore into hers, full of reflected light from the street lamp overhead.

## **Chapter Six**

Dylan ran into the street, holding out his arms to stop another car that was driving in their direction, slowly this time. Brandi raced behind him, hoping to help Cherokee out of the way before any more cars came their way or the one that hit him returned.

She saw her lover bend forward, his palms on the asphalt, then he stood, swaying a little. Gently, she put her arm around his waist, marveling that he could stand at all and helped him out of the street as the car Dylan was attempting to stop lurched to a halt only a couple of feet away.

"Sit down." She pointed at the curb. "I have to call for an ambulance. Do you have any broken bones? Are you bleeding?"

Frantic, she looked around. Shouldn't there be bouncers out here? The bar had a cover charge, so why wasn't anyone outside?

"No police," Cherokee, said and coughed.

"That driver tried to kill you. He or she was probably high." Brandi felt tears well up in her eyes. The truth was this probably all her fault. She'd seen the stalker and then had forgotten all about him. She'd forgotten to be vigilant and now this. What if he had been the person behind the wheel? What if he'd attacked Cherokee because he was with her?

"Did you get a license plate number?" he asked.

"No, maybe Dylan did."

Dylan waved at the stopped car and dashed back to the sidewalk. The car drove past. "Is he okay? Should I call an ambulance?"

"No," Cherokee said. Strength had returned to his voice. "I'll be fine."

Dylan crouched down. "You should have been killed, big guy. It's okay to go to the hospital. You're not due back on set until Tuesday, right? You can afford to get checked out."

Cherokee shook his head. "I'm fine, really."

To Brandi's astonishment, Cherokee stood, stretched out his arms and turned in a circle. His clothes were ripped and the knees of his tuxedo pants were bloody but he seemed to be moving just fine and he wasn't even wincing in pain.

"You should get your knees checked," Brandi said.

Cherokee did a grand plié, his knees bending smoothly. "See, they're fine."

"They're bleeding," Dylan said.

Cherokee glanced down and shrugged. "Oh well. I don't need to show them on camera. I'll live."

"I don't think he should drive," Brandi said, "and I also think we should get out of here in case that crazy driver comes back."

"I'll take Cherokee in my car," Dylan said. "We'll follow you home."

"Let's go to my place," Cherokee said. "I need fresh clothes."

"Good point. That okay, Brandi?"

She nodded. They both took one of Cherokee's arms.

"I'm fine," he laughed. "You two are such worriers."

Brandi shook her head. At least one of her new lovers thought he was superhuman, that was for certain.

This time, they waited until the crosswalk signal indicated it was safe to move into the street. When they reached the opposite side, Brandi glanced back and saw the bar door open. A man with a stool exited and sat down next to the door.

Had they left the bar during a shift change or had this somehow been setup? Now, she remembered the strange way the bar owner had looked at Cherokee. Did he have enemies? Was that why he had been so mysterious about their relationship?

Maybe Claudia would have greater insight into Torc's strange behavior. She could ask Dylan to get Claudia's number from Holly tomorrow.

Brandi followed behind Dylan's car to Cherokee's guesthouse. She had to admit Cherokee looked fine when he climbed out of the car and went to his front door. Maybe she and Dylan were in worse shape than he was, after witnessing such a near miss.

Still, just to be cautious, she grabbed the first-aid kit from under her seat and hurried after Cherokee. He was already heading up the stairs. She followed him into his bedroom. While he shucked his clothes, she lit the candles he seemed to enjoy so much.

He muttered, "Thanks," in her direction and headed into the bathroom. She followed him, scooping up his clothes with her free arm and reached the door of the bathroom as he padded across the black-and-white tiles to the tub.

She turned on the lights behind him while he twisted the faucets to mix hot and cold water.

"How do you feel now?"

"I'm fine," Cherokee said.

"Are these clothes yours or do you need to return them to a rental agency?"

"They're mine. Just toss the pants in the kitchen garbage. They're ruined."

"I'll do it a little later. There's something I should tell you—" Brandi started but then Dylan appeared at the doorway.

"I called my sister. She's going to drive your car back to our house."

"How's she going to get in?" Cherokee asked, turning around.

Dylan grinned. "Holly has broken into a car or two in her time. Your car is easy to get into."

Brandi lifted her eyebrows. Holly knew how to start cars without a key? She knew stealing car radios was a bored teenager pastime in some parts of Los Angeles but actually stealing cars was another issue. That timid exterior was hiding Holly's true personality, she thought.

She turned to Dylan, to ask him if he had stolen cars in his day too, then saw his mouth was gaping. "What?"

Dylan pointed at Cherokee's knees. "You don't have any wounds."

Cherokee glanced at his knees. "I heal quickly."

"But there was blood on your pants. You tore your skin."

Brandi looked at the tuxedo slacks in her hands. The knees were shredded and bloody. She placed the first-aid kit on the counter. Apparently she wouldn't need it.

"Yeah, I suppose." Cherokee sat on the tub's white outer lip and felt the water, then pulled the shower curtain forward and pulled the knob to release the water into the shower.

Brandi and Dylan shared a glance. She knew they were equally confused. Was their lover some kind of miracle healer?

Thoroughly nonplussed, Brandi set Cherokee's clothing on a towel rack then reached to her side to undo the hidden zipper in her dress. When he saw she was having trouble, Dylan helped her get it down and then assisted her in pulling the dress over her head. Underneath, she wore a tight black corset that kept everything sucked in and pushed up.

Dylan gave her chest an admiring glance, then started to work on his own clothing. Brandi got her corset off and dropped it to the floor. She stepped into the tub behind Cherokee, rubbing at the red marks the corset had left on her skin.

He turned around and made a face at the marks around her breasts and at the base of her abdomen. Tenderly, he took her breasts in his hands.

While he touched her, she took a look at all of his skin within her sight line. She couldn't see a mark on him. Her skin was in worse shape than his after hours in the corset.

Dylan stepped in behind her. The men crowded the tub, making her feel like she was in a man sandwich, never a bad thing.

"There isn't much water for the three of us," Cherokee said.

"I'm okay," Dylan said. He sat on the far edge of the tub.

"How could you possibly manage not to get hurt?" Brandi asked, running her hands down Cherokee's chest.

"Just lucky, I guess."

"You're a superb athlete," she said, as he bent to her neck and began to nibble gently. "Were you a gymnast?"

"I just like to move," he said, positioning his leg in between hers.

She couldn't help rubbing herself against it and felt her pussy grow wet from more than just the shower steam. "Are you sure you're up to this?"

"Always," Cherokee said. He took her mouth in a deep kiss, then turned her around so that she faced Dylan.

Her other lover grabbed a condom from a pile in a shower caddy and handed it to Cherokee.

Linking Dylan's gaze to hers, she bent down, using his legs as support for her hands and spread her legs. Cherokee ripped open the condom packet, tossed it outside the shower and sheathed himself. He thrust into her, sheathing himself to the hilt with his first stroke.

She blinked, shocked and excited all at once and eagerly pressed her hips against his. "You're next," she said to Dylan.

Dylan found her nipples with his fingers and pinched them gently in time with Cherokee's thrusts. She watched his thick cock lengthen and felt her pussy gush with more cream. If only there was room for both of them inside her. She nearly lost her balance at that thought and Dylan had to hold her up with his hands on her breasts until she caught her breath. Then, she squeezed her eyes shut to capture the sensations. Her ears were still buzzing from the loud club music. She replaced the buzzing with

opera in her mind, soaring, triumphant music that rose with the pleasure these two men brought her.

It really was delicious, the way they all seemed to be in tune with one another. Everything one man did to her increased the pleasure of the other man's actions. Steam rose in the room since no one had turned on the fan. She imagined Cherokee enjoyed the sensation of pulsing water on his back as he thrust into her. Water slid down his arms and dripped warmly on her legs but otherwise didn't reach her, though her feet were soon in a pleasant little pool of water, soothing her sore arches. It was never a good idea to run in four-and-a-half-inch heels. She found the strength to raise her head and kiss Dylan. Their tongues tangled until she gasped and fell away from him too close to coming to keep the contact anymore. She could barely balance herself against Cherokee's movements.

"I'm so glad you're okay," she said.

"Yeah," Cherokee said, the word magnified and distended by the water and buzzing in her ears.

He thrust deeper, sending her senses into overload. Her clit felt enormous, ready to pop. Then she fell into infinity. Her knees buckled as she lost control. She heard him swear as he jerked into her body then Dylan caught her against him. While she balanced herself, Dylan grabbed another condom packet and sheathed his penis.

As soon as Cherokee pulled out, Dylan moved her onto his lap. Half limp with pleasure, she draped her legs over the side of the tub and straddled him, taking his cock into her channel. He filled her with his thickness and she was amazed by how much pleasure he could offer so soon after her first orgasm.

She bounced on his lap, rubbing her feet against the cool outside of the tub, half sobbing with pleasure and exhaustion as he plunged and retreated. Cherokee bent and kissed her on the shoulder, then turned off the water and got out of the tub. She wrapped her arms around Dylan's neck and tucked her head against him, needing to

hold on to him as tiny orgasmic pulses racked her body. She was on fire, her body out of her power.

When he grabbed her hips, holding her in place for one final deep thrust, her mind exploded into stars and her vision went black.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Total overload," Dylan said, looking down at Brandi. Cherokee had come back into the bathroom and picked her up after she fainted, while Dylan was still shuddering with his own intense orgasm.

What a night they'd had. No wonder she was exhausted. It was early Saturday morning, after a long week. They'd already been together at the club and then the stress of seeing Cherokee nearly get killed was a lot to handle, plus Brandi had seemed jumpy even before that.

She was hiding something unpleasant, he'd picked up that much, though he wasn't sure what the issue was. He only knew he wanted to protect her, shield her, defend what was his. All this after he'd only had sex with her on two separate occasions. He barely recognized his own emotions.

"We have to make sure we don't focus all our attentions on her," Cherokee said.

"I know," Dylan said, putting his arm on Cherokee's shoulder.

Cherokee wrapped his arms around Dylan and rested his head against Dylan's. He felt the rough silk of Cherokee's hair sliding on his skin and marveled that they were here together instead of in a hospital somewhere.

"How is it possible that you aren't hurt?" he asked. "I saw the blood on your pants. Your clothes were ripped. I know actors have all kind of cosmetic work to appear more attractive than the average person and they certainly exercise more than most but they still are human."

He felt Cherokee's smile against his ear.

### Cherokee's Playmates

"I've always healed fast. I'm very flexible and I had a second to prepare before the car hit."

From what Dylan had seen, that was a load of crap. "You're saying you chose to leap up on the hood?"

"Exactly. It was more controlled than it looked."

"Were you a stuntman at some point?"

Cherokee hugged him tighter, then stepped back until just his hands were on Dylan's shoulders. "Would that explain things?"

Dylan shrugged. "I guess."

Cherokee clapped him on the shoulders. "Then that's the explanation. It happened very fast but I have the right kind of experience to survive it."

Dylan knew he was missing a big piece of the picture, just like with Brandi. Somehow he'd managed to choose two lovers who were still largely hidden to him, despite drawing him in completely. "Do you think it was a deliberate attack?"

The space between Cherokee's eyebrows creased. "Seriously? It was Friday night. I'm sure the driver was drunk."

"Did you get a look inside the car while you were doing your stunt work?"

"No. My only concern is—"

"What?"

"Brandi seems frightened of something. Almost every time I see her there is a moment—"

"What do you think that means?"

"I don't know." Cherokee glanced at the bed, where Brandi was breathing slowly.

"She's sound asleep," Dylan said.

"Do you know her father is Nic D'Angelo, the famous director?"

Dylan shook his head. "No but it doesn't surprise me. She obviously has money. Her clothes are expensive and those shoes she wears cost more than some of my paychecks."

"She doesn't know but I called her father's office and made an appointment to see him on Monday evening."

"How did you get an appointment with someone so famous? D'Angelo's a legend."

"I told the assistant I was a friend of Brandi's and wanted to discuss a concern with him. He got back to me after consulting with D'Angelo and scheduled an appointment."

"I don't think Brandi's going to like that, though it's nice her father cares enough to see you."

"She doesn't have to know, unless I find out something we should have known all along. I believe she's frightened of something or someone."

Dylan rubbed his hand across his nose. "Maybe she has an anxiety disorder."

"Maybe but I'll find out on Monday."

"Why don't we just talk to her tomorrow? Find out what's going on?"

"So far, she's refused to tell me anything and I've asked, so this is what I've got to do. Let's get some sleep."

Dylan nodded and pulled the towel from his waist and tossed it on the floor. He got in on the near side of the bed and Cherokee crossed to the far side, so Brandi slept in the middle. Dylan stretched out his arm along the base of the headboard and Cherokee stretched out his hand until they were touching.

Dylan thought that he'd never meant to end up in a relationship and certainly not one with both a woman and a man but still, he found himself smiling as he drifted off to sleep. This wasn't bad at all. He hadn't known he could care so much about anyone other than his family.

#### Cherokee's Playmates

Whatever was going on with Brandi, he ventured to guess she felt safe with them. She hadn't woken when they crept in beside her or even moved. Her subconscious had accepted them, even if she wasn't willing to bare her life to them yet.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I loved the script, Dad," Brandi said, placing the paper copy on the coffee table in her father's office. "I think you have a winner here."

"Thanks. Are you interested in being the second unit director when it starts shooting next year?"

Brandi blinked. "Are you serious?"

"I'm not directing this one, just coproducing, so you would be able to spread your wings wider than if I was directing."

Her father was notorious for controlling everything when he directed. This wasn't a bad offer.

Still, it was coming from her father, not from someone she wasn't related to. "I'll have to think about it. My business is doing quite well."

Her father finished his whisky and set down his glass. "You can hire someone to take that over, probably two someones considering how hard you work. But directing is what you want to do, the reason you went to film school."

He had a point. "You're right. When do I have to let you know?"

"Next month. No rush."

"Okay, Dad." She smiled. "Thanks."

"Now, on to other things." He pressed his lips together as if he was hiding a smile.

They'd already discussed his trip, her business and his last date with the widow of a rock star, plus caught up on all the step and half siblings. What else was there? "What other things?"

"Your love life."

Brandi made a face. "Oh, that."

"I had a drink with Cherokee Ares last night," her father said, pouring a second shot into his glass.

Brandi felt a wave of icy cold dash over her body. "Did you run into him somewhere?"

She hadn't seen Cherokee or Dylan last night. They'd spent the weekend together, then had gone their separate ways Monday morning. She'd met a group of assistant directors for a drink last night, which had ended up turning into dinner. It had been such a good time that she hadn't gotten home until late, which wasn't like her these days at all. She knew she couldn't risk losing the fears that shielded her but on the other hand, nothing bad had happened either. Maybe all this sex was relaxing her.

"No, he called the office last Friday and asked for a meeting. Said he was dating you and was worried about you."

Okay, now she just felt angry. "Worried?"

"Yes, he said he had the sense you were afraid of something or someone but wouldn't tell him what."

She grabbed her glass off the table and knocked back the contents. Usually she just had one but she held the tumbler out for a refill. Her father lifted the bottle, then held it over her glass.

"Why didn't you tell him you had a stalker, bella?"

"We've only been dating for a week and a half," she said. "I don't have to disclose everything."

"It's always a good idea to have everyone on the same page." Her father poured half a shot into her glass. "He doesn't strike me as the type to scare easily."

"I don't want to talk about him," Brandi said, setting her glass on her knee, heedless of her Chanel denim pants. "I don't like discussing who I'm dating."

"Why is that?"

### Cherokee's Playmates

"Maybe because I've always known far too much about your love life," she snapped.

"I see." Her father set down the bottle. "I suppose it's been pretty complicated."

"It's hard to have different stepmothers and different siblings." She sighed. The last thing she wanted to do was hurt him. "I know you never wanted me to be surprised about anything but for myself I prefer to be private. Until I'm sure about someone, at least."

"You have that right but I only want to know because I love you."

She fought back tears but knew her voice was going to be rough. "I know. I love you too. I try to protect myself. Sometimes people I want to trust don't have good motives though."

"Sometimes they do and know you need a little help."

She looked down at her glass. "I hate it when guys are influenced by me having you as a father. In this town, that always means they're going to end up wanting something."

"I may be a name in this town but I'm still your father. I would want your friends to come to me if they were worried about your safety. Cherokee did the right thing."

Not from her point of view. She might have forgiven Dylan but Cherokee was an actor. What if his real goal was to get a part? He knew there was a new script, though she'd made sure he hadn't seen it. It was true there was a part in it that would be perfect for him, the second male lead, but he could find out about it and audition for it the normal way. She wasn't going to hand anything to him and didn't want her father to either.

She drained her glass and stood.

"That's it for tonight?"

"Yes, Dad. I've got someone I need to speak to."

"Don't be too hard on him," her father cautioned.

She leaned over him and gave him a hug, then kissed his temple. "See you Sunday, Dad."

Outside her father's office, she trotted as quickly as she could on her strappy sandals and tried to disentangle her hair from her handbag, which she had wrestled onto her shoulder without moving her hair out of the way. She snarled as several strands of her hair floated free on the air and dropped her purse through the open window of her car.

How could her father have trusted Cherokee? How could *she* have trusted him? Clearly, he'd been out to get an audience with her father all along. She wasn't that paranoid. Her constant vigilance wasn't that obvious. Cherokee had really been reaching when he asked for that meeting.

She got into the car and slammed the door shut, then drummed her fingers on her steering wheel. This needed to be nipped in the bud *now*. Dylan was one thing but Cherokee needed a piece of her mind.

She found the Duran Duran section on her iPod and soon her tunes were blasting out of her radio. Yes, she indeed felt like she was going underwater, just like her current favorite song said. How would she come up for air?

Half an hour later she was pulling up to the guesthouse in the autumn darkness. Only then did she consider whether Cherokee might have been only yards from her at the studio if he was still shooting. It wasn't even seven p.m. yet.

The truth was, she didn't see his car here but Dylan's was parked alongside, so Cherokee probably was here too. Hey, maybe after she told Cherokee what she thought of his opportunism, Dylan would leave with her.

*Except.* She bit her lip. Dylan had been with Cherokee first. His loyalty might not be to her.

She had to make her stand though. If she didn't stand up for herself, she might as well hide in her father's compound like a scared kid. And she wasn't going to be that.

She was going to make a future for herself in this town and she was going to be happy. Cherokee needed to hear her point of view and damn the consequences.

After she climbed out of the car she slammed the door shut and marched to the front door. Ignoring the doorbell, she knocked with her fist. If Cherokee didn't answer soon, she thought she might just start kicking, even if it did damage the finish on her Botkier Kiss heels.

She heard footsteps inside and soon the door opened.

"Dylan," she said, deflated.

"Hi, sweetheart! Done for the night?" Dylan smiled widely at her and held out his hand.

He was just as attractive in person as he seemed in her dreams. How often did that happen?

She took his hand and let him pull her into a tight hug. "Yes, I just had my usual Tuesday drink with my father."

"How did that go?" His voice was a bit hesitant.

"He offered me a job on his next movie," she mumbled into his shoulder.

"Is that a good thing?"

"I suppose."

He lifted her chin. "You don't sound sure."

"Oh, Dylan. I found out Cherokee's been to see him. Now I can't trust him."

"Why not?" That odd edge came into his voice again.

She stepped back and dropped her purse onto the console. It clattered and fell to the floor. "Because he's an actor!"

"Whoa there." Dylan held out his hands. "Those gestures are getting a little Italian."

She dropped her hands to her hips. "He knew I had the new script. He's trying to get a part. Using me!"

Dylan shook his head. "He told me he was going to see your father. You wouldn't tell him what was bothering you and he was worried."

Now, she was outraged. He'd known about this? She reached down and grabbed her purse. Maybe she should just go home and forget about both of them. "Why didn't you tell me?"

Dylan walked to the steps leading upstairs and sat down. "Look, Brandi. I'm not good at relationships. I don't have them."

"Oh, please. You live with your sister!"

"That's different and besides, I hardly ever see her. I'm just not used to getting involved past the superficial."

"What's the superficial?"

He looked up at her, a picture of discomfort. "Sex and dinner, I suppose."

He was so adorable sitting there that she sat down next to him and tilted her head at him. "Is that all I am to you?"

He grabbed her hand. She resisted for a second then let him have it. "No. That's the crazy thing. I finally feel like I can commit to something."

"If I tell off Cherokee, are you going to stay with him or me?"

"Argue with him all you want but I think he was probably right to go to your father. I mean, maybe not your father, that's pretty serious stuff. But a relative of yours, or a friend."

She made a face. "Cherokee doesn't know anyone I know."

"Except your father," Dylan said. "Right there on the same lot."

"He could have spoken to Dad's assistant," Brandi said sullenly.

"Maybe that would have irritated you even more," Dylan said. "Hear him out and besides, something is wrong with you, it's obvious. Why are you so nervous all the time?"

"I'm not nervous. I'm vigilant."

"Why?"

Brandi glanced at her thumbnail. It was a good thing her mani-pedi was tomorrow. Her cuticles needed work.

Dylan tugged at the hand he was holding. "Hello?"

She gritted her teeth. "I have a stalker, Dylan. Okay? A stalker. He hasn't done anything except follow me around and call me. He tricked me into meeting him once. Anyway, it's scary. I try to ignore him but it freaks me out. I figure it's better to know he's there than be surprised when he bobs up."

"Have you seen him when we've been out?"

"I think so, at the Halloween show."

Dylan frowned. "Do you think he was behind the wheel of the car that hit Cherokee?"

"Believe me, that thought has haunted me. But I would think my stalker would have contacted me about it. You know, gloating or something? I haven't heard from him though. It's pretty unusual, really."

"Maybe his own actions scared him off. I still can't believe Cherokee didn't get hurt or worse that night."

"Maybe I'm not the only one with secrets."

"He told me a good story about how athletic he was but we were there, Brandi. I still can hardly believe what I saw."

"It was dark except the streetlights. Maybe it wasn't ever as bad as we thought."

"I don't know. I admit it's only been a couple of weeks but he's given me no reason not to trust him. Besides, Holly and Claudia worked with him before we met. They didn't notice anything odd other than him banging every actress that came around. And that's not especially odd."

"Like you said, you aren't good at relationships."

"How about you? Are you usually good at them? Can you read people?"

Brandi rotated her shoulders. She wasn't very comfortable with the question. "I think the whole stalker thing has been kind of isolating."

"How long has he been bothering you?"

"The first time he contacted me was before Valentine's Day. He didn't really register until he sent me a bouquet of dead flowers and a rude jealous note making it obvious he'd watched me with my date."

"What were you doing with your date?"

She punched him on the shoulder. "No comment. Since then I've just sort of dug in, focused on my business, which isn't a bad thing. I used to have relationships. I don't know. They usually lasted at least a couple of months, died out after three."

"Why?"

"I'd get bored, I guess. But I would think that it's harder to get bored with two lovers."

They glanced at each other, suddenly smiling at the sheer absurdity of the situation.

"I'm still furious," she cautioned. "When he gets here I'm going to give him a piece of my mind."

Dylan pointed over his head. "He's upstairs. Go talk to him."

# **Chapter Seven**

Brandi heard the patter of water in pipes then a squeaking noise as the water shut off in the bathroom. Great, she wanted to be furious with Cherokee and he was naked. Still, she needed to resist him and give him a piece of her mind.

She went into his bedroom and sat down on the bed, hoping he had a towel wrapped around his muscled hips when he came in. Sitting there made her think of sex. In fact, the room even smelled faintly of sex and of Cherokee. He and Dylan had been having fun without her.

The bed was not a good spot for her. She slid off the quilt, went to the window and opened it, taking a lungful of November air.

"You're not planning to jump out, are you?"

"No." She sounded sullen and childish even to herself.

"You don't sound...happy," Cherokee said slowly.

"Put some clothes on," she said without turning around. "I want to talk to you."

"How about you take your clothes off?"

"I'm serious, Cherokee."

She heard a loud theatrical sigh, then heard a drawer open and some rustling sounds.

A minute later, he said. "Fine, I'm dressed."

She turned around, then whipped back. "Tiny white bikini underpants that hide nothing are not being dressed."

His chuckle was a low rumble that sent shock waves through her body, softening her legs and dampening her panties. Damn him!

At least he'd opened the closet door after that. When she turned around, his magnificent broad chest was bare but at least he was wearing jeans. Jeans that hugged his thighs. Jeans that weren't buttoned to the top. She hoped he wouldn't turn around and let her see how the tight denim hugged the curves of his ass cheeks. That would be too much and she needed to stay angry.

"Look," she said, walking up to him, her heels rapping on the hardwood floor.

"You had no right to bother my father at his office."

"You weren't letting me in. I needed information to protect you."

"We've been dating less than two weeks," she said. "You don't have much right to anything just yet."

Cherokee pushed his dark hair out of his face, looking confused. "I thought we cared about each other."

"We do but you're being an opportunist, which makes me think you aren't the man I think I'm falling for, just another actor on the make."

"I'm not that," Cherokee said. "My ambitions are limited, to be honest."

"You're moving up too quickly for me to believe that," she said. "I've been around this business my entire life. If you want to work with my father, then just be honest with me."

"I didn't go to him for that. I went to find out why you're so frightened all the time."

"I'm not frightened. I'm vigilant."

"Call it what you want," Cherokee said. "You may have been around the entertainment industry for a long time but I've been around the world a long time. I knew something had you nervous and I was right. You have a stalker."

"That's my business."

"What if your stalker was behind the wheel of that car on Friday night? What if your stalker went after Dylan? Holly could get hurt too."

He knew how to cut her where she already hurt, she had to give him that.

"If he'd made threats against anyone, I'd let them know," she snapped. "I'm not a total bitch or an idiot."

He reached for her then but she stepped back.

"Don't touch me," she cried. "I'm furious."

"Who else was I supposed to ask?" Cherokee said. "I don't know who your friends are. You've met some of mine. I've only met your father. And he was happy to see me."

"That's because he's nosy."

He smiled. "So are you, sweetheart. Maybe I'm nosy too."

"You just want a part," Brandi said, because she had to believe that.

"Calm down," he told her, pulling a T-shirt from an open drawer. "I haven't had dinner yet and I can smell the alcohol on your breath. Let's get some food into our systems and relax."

She narrowed her eyes. "No. I'm not having dinner with you. I'm not having sex with you. I'm upset. And," she said, "I'm leaving."

She stomped out the door and down the hall, ignoring Cherokee's call behind her. Dylan was still sitting at the base of the steps but when he saw her face he stood and moved out of the way.

"Good idea," she snarled. "Call me sometime."

She flung herself out the door and rushed to her car, refusing to let herself cry. If Dylan didn't come after her she didn't know what she'd do, but there were no footfalls after her. She got in her car and gunned the engine, then tore off, heedless of the noise alongside the main house.

There was no point in crying. This had all happened before but she thought she'd learned her lesson about dating people in the business. Cherokee had seemed different but he wasn't.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I told you going to her father was a bad idea," Dylan said as Cherokee clomped down the stairs, hopping as he pulled shoes over sockless feet. He had heard Brandi shouting from down here and applauded her for her spirit, though he didn't like the idea of breaking up their threesome as quickly as it had begun. Could Cherokee explain himself out of this when Brandi had calmed down?

"You don't know the half of it."

Dylan didn't like the sound of that.

Cherokee reached the base of the stairs. "He actually gave me a copy of his new script and said I might be interested in a part."

Shit. Had Brandi been right about Cherokee? "Did you ask him about it before he gave you the script?"

"No. We talked casually about projects we were both working on but I didn't ask him anything specific about that project."

Dylan shook his head. "I'm not liking this."

"Nic said I looked exactly like he imagined the character would. Just my luck, huh?"

"Yeah," Dylan said, moving to the table where his keys were. "Are you going to try for the part?"

"Wouldn't you?"

"Not if it meant I lost Brandi."

Cherokee pushed his hands through his damp hair, then let it fall back to his shoulders. "If her father thinks I'm right for the part, don't you think she'd want me to be a part of it?"

"You're going to have to ask her that." Right now, Dylan thought Cherokee needed to worry more about Brandi than his career. "You know what? I'm heading over to Brandi's place. I'm worried about her and she's going to need a shoulder to cry on."

"Do you know where she lives?"

Dylan dropped his keys back into the dish. He hadn't thought about that. On Halloween they'd never made it back to her place. "Do you?"

"No but if we leave right now maybe we can catch up."

At least Cherokee was willing to go after her. Dylan grabbed his keys again and opened the door. Cherokee trotted out and Dylan followed him, shutting the door, hoping Cherokee had thought to grab his door keys. He started his car and drove as fast as he dared down the winding driveway to the street.

"Left or right?" he asked Cherokee.

Cherokee put his head out the passenger-side window and looked down at the street. "Left, I think."

Dylan shifted and turned left, driving a good ten miles over the speed limit as Cherokee shouted his best guess at directions. At least Brandi's cherry-red car would be hard to miss if they caught up to her.

Fifteen minutes later, Dylan was ready to give up. "I think we've lost her."

"She lives off Wilshire, I'm pretty sure. I'm hoping her building has valet parking. Then we'll have time to see her car before it's parked."

"Wait," Dylan said. "Is that it?"

The building was a pretty rose color and only a few stories high but in impeccable upscale condition. Dylan expected that the condos inside had to go for close to a million dollars, considering the neighborhood. More importantly, a cherry-red sports car was parked to the side of the entrance, next to a black sedan.

Dylan drove right up to the front entrance. Cherokee swore and leapt out of the car before he was able to park. What was wrong? Dylan slammed his brakes and glanced back but Cherokee was already running toward Brandi's car.

When he shut off the engine, he heard a scream and saw a doorman run from the entrance. Dylan pulled his cell phone from his pocket and pushed open his door.

Another scream. This time he heard the word "help"! He recognized Brandi's voice.

Cherokee's arms rose, then a dark figure fell to the ground. A woman stumbled back against the hood of the black sedan, after it tangled with the falling figure. That was Brandi.

Dylan hit the emergency call button on his cell phone and ran toward the fight behind the doorman.

Brandi, spread across the sedan's hood, began to cry, holding her hands to her face as the dark figure came off the ground and ran around the backside of the sedan. Cherokee jumped onto the hood and then off the car to catch up with Brandi's attacker.

The next thing Dylan saw was the dark figure flying up on Brandi's car hood. He heard a crunch as the person, who he saw was wearing a dark sweatshirt, hit the windshield of her sports car.

"Miss D'Angelo?" the doorman shouted. "Are you okay?"

"He shook me and slapped me," she sobbed. "That bastard. He's crazy!"

Dylan reached her, examined her for blood as he spoke to the emergency operator. He was distracted by a crunching sound.

The doorman swore and moved toward Cherokee. "Just hold on to him, don't kill him, sir!"

Brandi wrapped her arm around Dylan's neck, still sobbing.

He put his hand on her head and pulled her into his shoulder. "Your stalker?"

She nodded. "He was crouched in the back seat of that car so I didn't see him. He grabbed me when I walked by."

The doorman helped Cherokee get the man to the ground. Cherokee sat down next to him and held his hands behind his back. Dylan could see a stain spreading past the man's face and bet Cherokee had broken the guy's nose. At least Brandi's car looked like it had survived the violence.

"Why did he come after you now?" Dylan asked.

Brandi sniffed. "He's been jealous that I've been going out at night. I'd been staying home since he started following me. I guess seeing me with other men sent him over the edge."

"How did he pick you to bother?"

"He lived here until about six months ago," the doorman said, returning to the black sedan to check on them. "But he lost his job and his condo was foreclosed."

"I don't remember ever seeing him here," Brandi said, looking up.

Dylan tried to wipe away her tears with the fingers of his free hand. She drew in a breath quickly when he touched her right cheek. That must be where she was slapped hardest. He didn't know how to touch her to soothe the pain away.

"He kept to himself. Strange guy," the doorman said. "I've seen him around here a few times recently but I thought he was visiting friends in the building. Guess I should have known he didn't have any."

The doorman shook his head. "I'm probably the person who told him your name. I'm so sorry."

Dylan saw flashing lights from the street, then two police cars pulled into the long circular driveway. The doorman excused himself and went to speak to the police.

Two officers came over to Brandi so Dylan took her into the lobby to talk to them. Three hours later, after a trip to the police station, Dylan, Cherokee and Brandi were sitting in her soothing oasis of a living room, sipping glasses of deep red wine.

Dylan took a sip of his then noticed how much it looked like blood and set it down.

"I don't want to hear 'I told you so'," Brandi said into her glass. "Just because you were right didn't mean that I'm okay with you talking to my father."

"I'm not sorry," Cherokee said stiffly.

Dylan wanted to clap his hand over the infuriating man's mouth. They had a chance to reconcile here and he could tell that Cherokee was going to mess it up.

"Thanks for being so sweet, Dylan," Brandi said. "I'd love it if you spent the night. I don't really want to be alone tonight, which is unusual for me."

"What about me?" Cherokee said, after drinking the contents of his wineglass as if they'd been shot-sized instead of a full glass.

"You can go home," Brandi said. "I'm not happy with you."

Dylan winced. Was Cherokee going to make him take sides or would he leave quietly? If Cherokee left, Dylan would have time to talk to Brandi when she'd calmed down, maybe in the morning. He could patch things up between them.

"I didn't drive, Dylan did. I don't have my wallet with me either."

Brandi stood and stalked out of the room. A minute later she returned and handed Cherokee two fifty-dollar bills. "Get a cab.

She sat down. "And thanks for rescuing me."

Cherokee stared at her for a minute, then smiled, his expression darkly mischievous. "You must not be that upset with me."

She waved her hand dismissively. "I'm not in the mood to think about you any more tonight."

"Fine." Cherokee turned to Dylan.

Dylan wished he could duck out of sight but Cherokee didn't say anything. Dylan raised an eyebrow at him and Cherokee nodded, then went into the hall. A moment later, Dylan heard the outer door open and close.

Brandi clutched her shoulders with her hands. "I really didn't think the stalker would get violent. I was right in a sense. He slapped me and shook me, like he was disciplining me for being bad or something."

"It could have escalated to much worse," Dylan said. "But let's not think about that."

"I should move," Brandi said. "So he can't find me when he gets out of jail."

"Not a bad idea, if you can afford it."

"Oh sure," Brandi shrugged. "Trust fund."

"You can stay with me for now," Dylan offered. "In case he can afford bail. Holly won't mind."

Brandi glanced around the room. "I run my business out of here but I guess most of it is on my computer. It will be okay."

"Cherokee is a good bodyguard, you know. He could escort you over here when you need to come back if there's any question of whether the stalker is free."

"I don't want to think about either of them any more tonight," Brandi said, draining her glass.

"I can understand that." His girl had been attacked, hadn't had dinner and had argued with Cherokee. She had to be past any ability to think clearly.

"Would you just make love to me? Then we can fall asleep? I know you need to work in the morning and it's close to midnight."

Dylan glanced at his watch. The hours had definitely passed but tired as he was, he wanted nothing more than to be with Brandi. "Are you sure you don't just want to go to sleep?"

In answer, Brandi drained her glass then crawled across the gray-green upholstery until she reached him. He had his feet up at one end of the L-shaped sofa, which was a chaise lounge.

"This couch isn't classy," she said. "But it's damn comfortable."

"It is." Dylan pulled her into his arms. He guessed she didn't want to go to sleep quite yet. When he smelled the shampoo in her impossibly shiny raven hair, still fresh somehow despite the long day, his cock snapped to attention.

"Let's take a shower first," Brandi said. "And I want to throw away these clothes."

"They look expensive," he observed.

She crawled onto his lap.

"Watch your knee!" he gasped, as she came perilously close to grazing his sac.

"Sorry." She moved her knee to his thigh. "You're right about the clothes. Maybe I should just donate them. As long as they're out of the condo."

"I'll take them somewhere," Dylan promised, slowly sliding his legs off the chaise until he was sitting upright with Brandi's legs wrapped around his waist. He stood, holding her.

"Bathroom is that way," Brandi said, holding back a yawn.

When Dylan reached the bathroom, he set her down on the long marble counter and turned on the water in the enclosed shower. "I'd have to check out the kitchen to be certain but your condo sure seems to have all the amenities—even an external shower control so you don't have to walk in before heating the water."

"The carpets are new and I just had it painted two months ago," she said, unbuttoning her blouse.

"Even in this market I think you'll be able to sell quickly," he said. "Is the kitchen as nice as the bath?"

"Oh yeah, total upgrade. Daddy's money buys only the best."

"You're making your own money," Dylan said, his words coming more slowly as Brandi revealed the demi-bra under her blouse. She had incredibly creamy skin, a perfect Snow White. He knew it was shallow of him to love the complete package she offered, breast implants and all but she was complete class all the way and the small enhancements had made her all the more beautiful.

In Los Angeles, it was hard not to become jaded but once you got to know someone you found the beauty was all inside anyway. He adored this vulnerable yet strong rich girl, knew she'd have found her place in the world regardless of her father's success before her.

"I am but now Dad's offered me a job on the new movie, as second unit director."

"What are you going to do?"

She glanced up at him, unconsciously lengthening her neck and tossing back her hair until she looked like a pinup girl. Dylan's hand went to his cock without him even realizing it. He disguised the gesture by undoing his belt and unzipping his pants.

"It's exactly the job I would want. I'd just rather it wasn't my father who offered."

"Another studio offered you a job," Dylan said, pushing down his pants. "It's not like you aren't good enough."

"If I take it, who is going to run my business?"

"You could hire my sister." He was momentarily distracted by Brandi shimmying off her denim while still staying perched on the counter top. "She's an experienced administrative assistant with four years experience working for a producer."

"Would she take the job? She's working now."

"She wants a bigger income." He took the bottom of his dress shirt in his hands, then dropped it to check the shower temperature. "Holly has a shoe habit and wants a new car too. She'd probably work weekends and evenings for you after her current job if you wanted."

"We might manage for a while. Especially since working on any film is temporary too."

"You both hedge your bets then." Dylan pulled off his shirt, pleased at his win-win idea.

He felt hands on his stomach. Brandi had managed to jump off the countertop without making a sound and creep behind him. The hands glided north until they reached his pecs, then slim fingers pinched his nipples before tickling their way down to his shorts. He felt them fall away from his hips, then the tips of his socks were pressed to the floor by manicured feet so he could pull back and out of the socks.

The heat from the shower began to steam up the room and Brandi's actions were steaming him up even more. He knew what she was going to do next even before she knelt.

He rocked for a second, then widened his stance as she put one hand around his sac and the other on his thigh. Her tongue licked at the head of his cock, then she soothed her supple lips around him.

"You don't need to do that," he whispered. "You're exhausted."

She moved back so that he popped out of her mouth. Her velvety cheek rubbed against the side of his cock.

"Mmmm. Just wanted you to stay excited."

He smiled down at her. "That's not a problem, sweetheart. It's never going to be a problem when we're together."

She stood back up, sliding along his body. He put his hands on her perfectly rounded ass and pulled her close.

"I love you, you know," he said. "I never thought it would be this easy but it is."

"This time," she said.

"Yeah, it's easy with the right people." He stopped, not wanting to ruin her mood with the mention of Cherokee. Gently, he turned her and backed her into the shower.

Her hair caught droplets of water until it looked like she had a web of diamonds around her oval face. He bent and teased her full lips with his own until she opened her mouth beneath his. Her light pink lipstick was long gone and her lips were a darker rose shade underneath. They darkened further under his ministrations.

"Let's clean up quickly," Brandi said, pulling away. "I'm a little dizzy and I don't want to slip."

"Deal," Dylan said, pulling a bottle of shower gel from its place in a tiled enclosure.

When they were done rinsing off, Brandi put her hand in his and led him into her bedroom. The walls were wrapped in white silk and her bed was dressed with a rich navy coverlet. She pulled back the sheets and he sat down, unable to keep back a yawn.

"It's late," she said with a wry smile.

"Come here." He took her wrist in his hand and pulled her forward until they were both lying down, her on top of him.

He positioned her so that her hips lined up with his, then easily found her entrance with his cock. "Condom?"

"Yeah." She wriggled around and opened a bedside drawer, then tossed one to him.

"Back where you were," he said after he sheathed himself.

She giggled and moved back over him, so that he could take her hips in his hands and slip into her.

Burrowing into his shoulder with her head, she rocked her hips against his, setting a furious pace Dylan matched.

She was a perfect portal for him, a perfect shape and a perfect size. This was easy lovemaking, uncomplicated, with none of the tension of their couplings with Cherokee, where it was important to make sure all three received equal pleasure.

Still though, he felt so much love for his girl and he hoped she could feel that in the tender ways he tried to touch her.

"Sit up," he said.

She struggled up on her hands, then gasped as he plunged particularly deep. "Yes!" she exclaimed, arching her lovely torso and neck.

He covered her breasts with his hands, loving their fullness and perfect shape, balancing her above his body. She spread her legs apart, allowing him to thrust as deeply as possible.

"Rub your clit for me."

Eyes closed, she complied. Eagerly, he watched the way her fingers played with herself, noticed when her smooth motions began to roughen. He thrust with the rhythm of her fingers, wanting her to have the most amazing orgasm, to wipe out the difficult day.

Anh Leod

"C'mon, sweetheart," he urged. "Let go. Let it all go."

She whimpered now. Her pussy was drenched and he slid in and out of her with ease. Then she clenched around him and he almost lost it.

"Apple pie, grandma," he muttered.

"What?" she opened her eyes and looked at him.

"Never mind. Just trying to distract myself so I can last longer." He smiled and pinched her pretty nipples.

"Hey! Are you trying to hold out on me or something? Let go!"

He slid his arms around her back and pulled her in for a hungry kiss, all tongue and teeth and wet excitement. Her movements grew more frantic. She pulled her hand from between them and up to his face, to hold his cheeks as they kissed.

Her hand smelled of her juices and of her shower gel. The sexy feminine scent set him into overdrive. He flipped her over and let his cock take complete control.

She gasped, mumbling incoherent words as he pounded into her. His sac began to contract.

"It's coming, I'm going to come," he said.

"Yes, please! Oh Dylan, I do love you."

"Great. Now, oh god, now," he gasped, his whole being focused on the sensations in his cock. He spurted into her, shuddering and plunging.

Her pussy tightened, heightening the pleasure. She wrapped herself around him, crying out.

When he was spent, he held her body against him for a second, then used his last bit of strength to flip them over, so she was nestled at his side.

"Did you mean it?" he asked.

"Hmmm?"

"You said you loved me too. Was that sex talk?"

She rubbed her nose against his arm. "It wasn't sex talk."

### Cherokee's Playmates

"Good," he said, satisfied.

She giggled.

"Go to sleep," he said, kissing the top of her head.

"You are amazing."

"But it's not the same without Cherokee," Dylan said, unable to keep from mentioning their lover.

"It was still good though."

"Yes. But you love him too, don't you?"

"It's more complicated with him. I'll straighten things out tomorrow," Brandi said on a yawn. "If he's the man you think he is, it will all work out."

"Good," Dylan said. "We'll talk in the morning."

Her breathing was slow and even. He thought she was already asleep but then a phone rang.

"Where's that coming from?" Brandi asked.

"My cell. Sorry. I'd better get it." Dylan slid out of bed.

## **Chapter Eight**

Late Wednesday morning, Brandi woke with a killer migraine. Dylan cancelled his first two meetings of the day to take care of her but eventually he had to leave and she spent the day in her darkened bedroom trying to sleep it off. Before he'd left, Dylan had verified that the stalker was still in the system and hadn't been released, so she was safe enough. Apparently he hadn't the resources to make his twenty thousand in bail.

On Thursday morning she woke feeling wobbly and worn out but at least her vision was working again.

"How are you feeling, sweetheart?" Dylan asked.

She heard the rustle of the sheets as he sat up. He'd shown up about nine o'clock the night before with a carton of take-out chicken soup.

"Better, thanks." She made a face. "I think it's time for a shower."

"I'll run it for you. If it's okay I've got to get a move on. Early meeting."

"Of course. I appreciate you so much for taking care of me."

He leaned over, caught her lips in a kiss as if he didn't care about morning breath. Now that was love. "It's what people do in relationships."

"I'm glad you're an expert now."

He grinned at her.

She leaned back as he went into the bathroom. People in relationships. Dylan seemed to have one definition of that and Cherokee another. While Dylan couldn't do enough for her, Cherokee was taking advantage. Of course, he had pulled the stalker off her, risking getting banged up and therefore being unable to work but would he even have come if Dylan hadn't decided to go after her?

Maybe she deserved it from Cherokee. After all, he'd pursued her because she'd been about to out him as a gay man. She'd been about to use him to drive traffic to her website. That wasn't very nice. Maybe Dylan had forgiven her and Cherokee hadn't.

"I started the coffee," Dylan said, coming in, already half dressed. "There are English muffins on the counter. Can I get you anything?"

She shook her head slowly. Any stronger movement had her head spinning. "I'm fine, thanks. You're a good lover."

He smiled and held her close for a moment. She clung to him but let him go.

"Next time you're sick, I'm your girl," she said. "Wiping your brow, serving your juice, you name it."

"Holly will be relieved." He smiled. "Take it easy today."

"I will." She stood up slowly, then went to take her shower.

Three hours later, she was perched on one of the oversized chairs in her father's office.

"You look peaky," he observed.

"Migraine." She scratched her forehead over the place where it still hurt.

"You only get those when you're stressed," he said. "Cherokee called me and told me what happened."

"You're giving him a lot of access."

"I'd like to give him more but he decided not to audition for the part."

"Really?"

"He gave me some not-very-convincing excuse about wanting to take time off to buy property in North Carolina. Like any up-and-coming actor is going to give up a chance to be in a Nic D'Angelo film unless they're in court-ordered rehab."

Brandi smiled despite herself. "He probably turned it down because of me. I wasn't happy that he'd called you."

"He was genuinely worried about you."

#### Anh Leod

"I've been acting pretty immaturely," she admitted. "I'm not used to letting people in."

"You've had to be guarded because people do want something from you," her father said. "But Cherokee does seem like a good guy, for an actor."

She smiled at her father's qualifier. "Will the part still be available if I tell him to rethink the audition?"

"Of course. I ran into the director of his current film in the canteen and he raved about the dailies. Have him call the casting director to set something up."

"Okay. And then there's me."

"Yes. I did offer you a job." He held up his hand in inquiry.

She nodded. "I'd love to accept."

"You would?"

"You sound surprised."

"I thought you'd try to wriggle out of it."

"Opportunities like this are hard to come by. And Dylan's sister is an administrative assistant. He checked with her and she said between her and her friend Claudia they can run the website while I'm working."

"Who is Dylan? Cherokee mentioned him too."

"He's another friend of ours." She rubbed the place on her neck where her headaches always began. "He's in the relationship with us."

"Sounds complicated."

"And crazy?" she asked.

He leaned forward and patted her knee. "In this town, kiddo, nothing much sounds crazy anymore. Is he an actor too?"

"An architect."

"Thank god."

They laughed together.

"At least one of them has a shot at being sane," her father said, wiping his eyes.

"Dylan's a good guy. I'm lucky to have found them."

They discussed the prospects that her stalker had in the legal system, then Brandi gave her father contact information for Dylan and Cherokee.

"I want to see them at Sunday brunch," her father said. "For real this time."

Brandi nodded. "If they can come, I'll bring them."

"Good." Her father stood and when she was standing too, he pulled her into a fierce hug. "Take care of yourself, kiddo. Doing this film will be good for you. You're going to be shooting all over the place, so you won't be in town much."

"That's probably for the best," she admitted, though she'd miss her lovers. "See you Sunday."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Go away," Cherokee said, staring moodily into his computer screen. "I last had sex forty-eight hours ago."

Forty-nine, he saw with a wince, looking at the clock on his computer.

"It's getting close," his father said with a smirk.

Ares had invaded Cherokee's screen as he was checking into real estate options in the Snowbird Mountains. There was a bed and breakfast for sale. That would be a good way to have a fresh supply of sex partners when he wasn't acting. It didn't seem like things were going to work out here in the relationship arena.

Dylan seemed to have changed over the past couple weeks. When they'd met he seemed to be the same kind of casual partier than Cherokee had been but now he was talking about relationships. In Cherokee's limited experience, that meant less sex, which simply wouldn't work for him. He'd thought that bringing Brandi into the relationship would make it work but he hadn't heard from her in three days, since she'd been angry with him over his conversation with her father.

Dylan had stopped by Wednesday, giving them both some much needed sexual relief but he hadn't visited Thursday, saying he wanted to spend time with Brandi. Well, Cherokee wanted to spend time with her as well but was pretty sure he wouldn't be welcome.

Especially since Brandi was apparently under the weather and no surprise, with the scare that as shole had given her.

"Where do you want to be posted this time?" Ares asked. "I'm not letting you go to Olympus again. There are too many handmaidens ready to fuck you, despite how you treat them. I'm thinking Iraq, maybe Afghanistan. Any preference?"

"I'm not in the mood," Cherokee snapped at the eternally youthful but wild-eyed visage of his father. "Don't you worry. I'll get laid before midnight."

"Maybe you're losing your touch," Ares taunted. "You're getting up there in age."

"How long will I live, anyway, if your crazy warmongering schemes don't get me blown up?"

"Four or five hundred years," Ares said, widening his eyes.

Cherokee sighed. This searching was never going to end for him. As much as he loved Dylan and Brandi, he'd never grow old with them. Why did he even bother trying to get close, start a career? It couldn't last. They'd get old and he'd have to reinvent himself. It was enough to make a half-immortal despondent.

"I see despair in your eyes," Ares gloated. "Why don't you work some of that frustration out in Baghdad?"

Downstairs, the doorbell rang. Cherokee bolted from the seat, only turning back to snarl at the computer screen. "Better luck next time."

It had to be Dylan. He hit the button to shut off the monitor. Ares' face flared brighter for a second, then faded to black along with the screen.

Cherokee ran out of his den and slid down the banister. When he hit the bottom, he leapt off and landed at the door. It had better be Dylan or he was sunk.

Instead of Dylan, he found Brandi behind the door.

She held up her hand. "Hi."

"Hi." He craned his neck out the door. As much as he adored her, this wasn't the time for one of those relationship talks he'd always heard men were frightened of. "Did Dylan make you come over here?"

"No." She smiled tentatively. "It's just me."

She didn't look ready to make love with him but she did look lovely and vulnerable. His heart softened even as his mind despaired. Would Ares be able to suck him back to Olympus right in front of her or could he at least disappear privately? He hoped it wouldn't vanquish her spirit when he left and that she and Dylan would find happiness together.

"Can I come in?"

"Oh, sure." He held open the door. "Sorry."

"It's okay. You seem really distracted."

"Yeah. I was just talking to my father." He pushed his hair out of his face and braided it back. "That's always unpleasant."

"I'm sorry. At least with him being so far away you don't have to see him often."

"Yeah. I might have to make a visit soon though."

"When the movie wraps?"

He felt his cheek twitch. "I don't know. Maybe."

Brandi folded her arms across her chest and hunched her shoulders. "Can we talk, Cherokee? I mean really have a heart-to-heart?"

"Yeah, sure." He looked around too used to taking company right upstairs to easily find a place to sit with her.

"The living room?"

"Yeah, sounds good." He walked to the left and sat down on a large square chair. It was spectacularly uncomfortable.

Brandi took the chair next to him. She swallowed hard, then said, "I owe you an apology."

"Yeah?" He felt a tugging right over his heart and barely held back a gasp. His father had already begun to play with him. Eventually his experimental grabs would work.

"I've always tried to keep my relationships away from my father. Growing up, I felt like I knew too much about his, with all his wives and affairs and all. So it really bugged me that you went to him. Not only because you're an actor but because I never liked him knowing about my private life."

"I can understand that. I'd like to keep my father out of mine too."

Brandi's dark brows came together. He knew she could tell something was wrong. His father tugged again and he felt his palms go sweaty as his stomach turned over.

"Are you ill?" she asked. "I'm sure you've been under a lot of stress."

He wanted to agree with her, suggest they work out their stress under the sheets, or better yet, right here on the floor. Anything to stop his father. But that wouldn't be nice. She had been through a lot, some of it caused by him. He didn't want her to think he was in her life for anything but the right reasons.

Shit. He dropped his head into his hands. This wasn't what he needed right now.

"What is it, Cherokee?" She put her hand on his shoulder.

He looked up, tortured by the tugs on his essence. "I love you."

She smiled, looking relieved. "Is that all?"

He shook his head, dizzy as the war with his father took its toll. "Love is messy, dangerous."

"You could have been hurt when you pulled the stalker off me," she agreed.

"That was nothing. I can't be hurt easily."

"I know. You're a big, strong man but you really don't look well right now. Maybe I should get you into bed and we'll talk in the morning?"

"Yeah."

"What if you have internal injuries?" she said. "I should call a doctor."

"It's not that kind of pain."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, bed," he said, sweat dripping into his eyes. "Take me to bed."

She put her arm around his shoulder to help him up but then the doorbell rang again. Cherokee squeezed his eyes tightly against the pain inside him, like he could squeeze his essence back into his mortal form.

"I'll get it," Brandi said and hurried out of the room.

Exquisitely sensitive to everything, Cherokee could hear the swish of her silk pants against her legs as she walked away, smelled the remnants of an orange perfume she'd sprayed over her throat that morning.

He heard the door open and Brandi's murmured, "Dylan."

They kissed and hugged, making him want to cry as he imagined the sheer beauty of them in an embrace. He couldn't leave them now. Wouldn't leave them. He stood up, every tendon and sinew braced against his father's assault and staggered into the hallway.

Dylan's mouth dropped open at the sight of him. He raced forward and caught Cherokee before he fell.

"He was fine and then he wasn't," Brandi said.

"Is he drunk? Sick?"

"Not drunk. Let's get him to bed."

Dylan nodded and they both wrapped their arms around him. Cherokee's cock grew hard despite the strain he was under when their scents mingled around him. But that didn't stop his father. Excitement wouldn't change anything. Masturbation didn't do the trick. There had to be another person involved, the hot carnal embrace of a human being.

Somehow, with their help, he was able to struggle into his room and collapse on the bed. It was cold in here. Noticing that helped him focus a little on the outside world instead of the struggle going on inside him.

"That's quite a tent pole in your pants considering the condition you're in, buddy," Dylan said.

"I'm not your buddy, I'm your lover," Cherokee rasped. He heard Dylan chuckle.

"Let's get him out of his clothes," Brandi said. "We'll be able to see if he has hives or a rash or something."

"You think this is an allergic reaction?"

"It happened really fast."

Cherokee felt his face relax into a half-smile as four hands stripped him of his clothes.

"I don't see a mark on him," Dylan said.

Cherokee found that hard to believe. Surely his father's ability to rip his soul right out of his body left a mark? "Make love to me," he gasped.

"You've got to be kidding," Dylan said. "You need to get some rest. We'll leave the bedside lamp on, keep an eye on you."

"No," Cherokee rasped. "I'm serious."

"So am I," Dylan said. "We'll stay right here if you want. I'll bring a chair in for Brandi."

Brandi put her soft hand to Cherokee's forehead. Even her palm smelled good and her touch was heaven. "He doesn't have a fever."

"It's like there's nothing wrong with him except pain."

"And sweat," Brandi agreed.

"Am I disgusting?" Cherokee asked.

Brandi smoothed the wisps of damp hair from his forehead. "Of course not, darling."

"You have to make love to me," he wheezed. "Or I'll go."

"You aren't going anywhere," Dylan said, putting his hand on Cherokee's leg.

Cherokee felt tears well up in his eyes. "You don't understand. I need sex or my father's going to get me."

"Maybe he's hallucinating?" Brandi asked. "Should we call an ambulance? He wouldn't let me call a doctor."

"I'm not," Cherokee gasped. "I'm not like you. Remember? I would have died when that car hit me. I'm different."

"You're the original alien sex machine?"

Cherokee heard the humor in Dylan's voice. The words were coming harder now. "Please. Make love to me, then I'll explain. If you don't it will be too late."

He felt his lovers' breaths commingling in the chilly room as they turned to each other.

"He didn't deny he was an alien sex machine," Dylan said.

Cherokee was afraid he wasn't being taken seriously but the tugging sensation was intensifying and it was all he could do to rein himself in.

Then, as if the sun had suddenly broken free from the November sky, he felt warm lips around his cock. They took him in deep, leaving a trail of sweet moisture in their wake. At the second deep stroke, he smelled a faint hint of female musk.

"I'm not sure this is a good idea," Dylan said.

Brandi lifted her head. Cherokee wanted to howl in despair.

"I just started trusting him again. I can't stop now," she said.

Cherokee heard blessed rustling as Brandi's silk pants dropped to the floor, followed by sleek cotton panties. Then her legs were spread over his, her pussy poised above his damp cock.

"Please," Cherokee gasped, not sure if he was pleading for her or to his father.

"Yes," Brandi agreed and pushed herself onto his cock.

Cherokee began to cry in earnest as she milked him. He'd never felt such pleasure or such pain. The bed depressed as Dylan sat down next to him and used a handkerchief to wipe his face. Then his lover laid a trail of kisses across his forehead and his cheeks, until he captured his lips gently. Cherokee felt his essence draining, yet Dylan sent it back into him.

He reached out blindly, capturing one of Brandi's legs in his hand. Her hands feathered out across his chest.

Dylan kissed down Cherokee's neck, then tongued his nipples, rested his head for a second on Cherokee's rapidly beating heart.

Was it going to be too late, Cherokee wondered. He felt cold, yet his cock was still hot, rock hard in Brandi's core. Could he lift his hips, pump into her? No, it seemed that she had to do all the work.

As if through the noise of a waterfall, he distantly heard Dylan unbutton Brandi's blouse, heard her gasp as he took first one beautiful breast then the other into his mouth. Her tempo increased. He wished he could help but it was too late, he could feel himself going.

Without any effort, his eyes opened. He could see a blue stream, white-capped mountains behind it. *Olympus*. Yet still, he could feel himself still trapped between Brandi's smooth thighs, heard the liquid sounds of her moving herself around and over his body. His loves were at war with his immortal father and didn't even know it. Could they defeat a god?

"His skin is getting cold," Dylan murmured.

"You'd think he'd be warming up," Brandi agreed. "He's still hard but more like marble."

"Pump harder," Dylan urged.

Brandi leaned forward, spreading herself against Cherokee's body. "Wow, his whole body feels that way."

#### Cherokee's Playmates

Distantly, Cherokee felt Brandi shudder against him. She was getting cold too.

"Cold," he whispered.

"I'll try to keep you warm," Dylan said. He moved between Cherokee's legs and put his arms around Brandi.

"Take me from behind," she said.

"Are you sure?"

"It will keep me warm," she said, her teeth chattering.

He was almost out of time, Cherokee thought. With every heartbeat, the mountain was coming closer. He could see the white marble columns in front of his father's temple now, smell incense burning.

Brandi leaned forward and gasped as Dylan inserted a lubricated finger into her small opening, then pulled out.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Please," she whimpered. "I need you."

Cherokee felt the movements over him change, deepen, as Dylan sank his cock into Brandi. Dylan had grounded her, given her power. The temple columns faded from his vision, the mountain seemed a little farther away.

Was it true? Could he really feel his balls again? Were they tightening against his body?"

Then, he felt the hot, lubricated sheath of Brandi's pussy. He gasped, his head falling back as he leaned back on his elbows, rocked his pelvis against hers.

"He's warming up," Dylan said.

"Yeah," Brandi gasped. "Oh, man."

Cherokee smelled the scents of woman and man again, instead of flowers on a mountain breeze, incense in a temple. He pushed up again and felt Brandi groan. Her hands felt like anchors, holding his chest down solidly against the bed.

The muscles of her pussy clenched him tighter, her moisture leaking around his cock, which seemed even bigger now in response.

"Come, dammit," she ordered. "I need you, Cherokee. Oh, Dylan."

Dylan bit out words Cherokee couldn't understand but when he blinked, he saw Brandi's dark head in front of him, Dylan's torso raised behind her. Cherokee lay back, held out his hands to Dylan, who grasped them.

Staring into each other's eyes, sandwiching their exquisite Brandi between them, they let go at the same time, their seed flowing into her. She screamed, her body convulsing with pleasure.

Cherokee's chest heaved with effort. "Take that, Ares," he said, letting go of Dylan's hands and rubbing them over his face. He felt warm, damp skin that would soon chill in the cold room, knew he was safe again.

Dylan dropped to his side a moment later. Brandi merely collapsed on his chest, still holding his cock inside her.

"What was that all about?" Brandi asked. "You feel so normal now."

"I've never heard of a sex cure," Dylan said.

"The gods father all kinds of strange hybrids," Cherokee said. "If I don't have sex, make love, regularly, after a certain amount of time my father can pull me to his home."

"Is that a metaphor or the truth?" Brandi asked.

Cherokee smiled wearily. "This is one scoop you won't be reporting on your blog."

"You're telling me," she said, lifting her head and capturing his gaze with hers.

"Most actors are nuts but somehow I think you're telling the truth."

# **Epilogue**

The day was sunny and the temperature was over seventy degrees, so her father's brunch was being held in his palm-tree-lined courtyard, looking out over the pool. Below was a terraced hillside that looked like it ended at lush forest-green hills.

Brandi sat at a long table between Cherokee and Dylan, holding court with the men her father's age who had adored her since she was a child. Some of them would be working on her father's next movie, along with her and Cherokee.

In this town, no one was surprised when she held hands with both her men, sharing occasional kisses with both between courses.

Her father looked up from a conversation he was having at the end of his table with his date, a woman almost old enough to be Brandi's mother for once. He held his wineglass up to her and smiled. She, in turn, raised her linked hands with both Cherokee and Dylan, as if celebrating a victory.

In a way, she was. Life had smoothed out, even though she now had two gorgeous, unusual lovers in her universe. Her outlook couldn't be brighter and she looked forward to discovering what each day would bring. Eventually, Cherokee might even explain what had happened that night he'd been so sick but she was content to leave the question unanswered for now.

"I'd like to see the interior," Dylan whispered in her ear. "I bet there are interesting architectural details."

"Lots of bedrooms too," she whispered back.

"Beds?" said Cherokee, leaning over her. "Let's go!"

### **About the Author**

Anh Leod is a goddess-in-disguise who hopes readers will enjoy her romantic, erotic stories as much as she enjoys creating them. Her favorite things are love and chocolate. She writes about love because, after all, it's awfully hard to write about chocolate all the time.

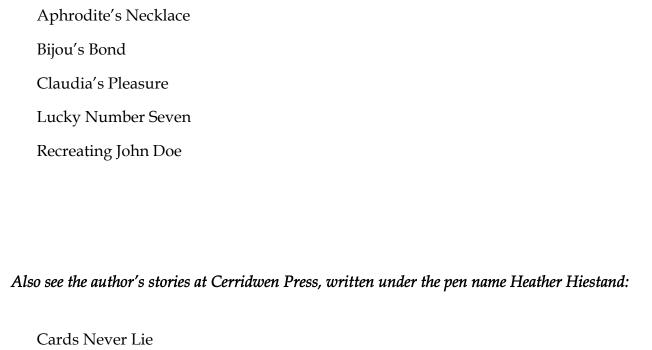
She also writes as Heather Hiestand for Cerridwen Press.

Anh welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

### Tell Us What You Think

We appreciate hearing reader opinions about our books. You can email us at Comments@EllorasCave.com.

# Also by Anh Leod



One Juror Down



Discover for yourself why readers can't get enough of the multiple award-winning publisher Ellora's Cave. Whether you prefer e-books or paperbacks, be sure to visit EC on the web at www.ellorascave.com for an erotic reading experience that will leave you breathless.

www.ellorascave.com