



Not All Who
WANDER

Dakota Rebel



Not All Who Wander

A Lost and Found Story

By Dakota Rebel

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Not All Who Wander
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The author would like to thank J.R.R. Tolkien for allowing her to borrow from his quote. Let's all try to remember that, "Not all who wander are lost."

This book is dedicated to Chris, Chel and Tiffany for giving it, and me, the time we needed.

XoXoXo

D

Chapter One

“It’s her,” a man’s voice said softly.

“You can’t know that,” a second man said from the other side of my body.

Body. The thought brought me back to myself. I was laying on my back, and I could feel sand under my fingers, so I assumed I was on a beach, but my eyes didn’t want to open, no matter how much I wanted to look around me.

“I knew about you, didn’t I?” the first man asked.

“This is completely different.” The second man’s voice sounded huffy, even to me.

My mind cleared with every second that passed. I heard water lapping over the sound of the men’s voices and wondered if I had been in a surfing accident. I didn’t remember going surfing lately, but the last time I had woken up confused on beach was after smashing face-first into my board on a trip to Hawaii. So the thought was not out of the realm of possibilities.

“She’s moving,” the man on my left whispered. “Ma’am, can you hear me?”

“Ma’am? Is my mother here, too?” My voice sounded raspy, but it was working, so yay me.

“If you can make lame jokes, that’s an improvement. How about opening your eyes?”

I concentrated on that small movement until I began to blink against the sunlight. My eyes were open, my voice was working, and after a few seconds, I was even able to wiggle my fingers in the sand.

“Hey there, baby blue,” the man on my right said. He was very tan, very muscular and very shirtless. His dark hair was long enough that the breeze blew it into his eyes. The sun was so bright that I couldn’t clearly make out the features on his face, but his jaw line looked strong, and I could see that his five o’clock shadow had hit about six-fifteen.

“Sara,” I said with a steadier voice. “My name is Sara.”

“Nice to meet you, Sara,” the man on my left said. “My name is Gabe. And that’s Toby.”

I looked over at Toby. I could see him much more clearly, and it took all of my strength not to stare open-mouthed at him. Like Gabe, he was tan and shirtless with longish dark hair. He was also muscular, but Toby was more leanly muscled, less showy but still impressive. His features weren’t as hard as the other man’s outline had seemed. He wasn’t at all feminine, just softer. His lips were full and turned down at the corners as he watched me. When I met his eyes, I saw that they were almost the same shade of pale blue as my own

“Hi.” I struggled to sit up and finally had to let Gabe help me with an arm around my back to keep me steady. I looked around and saw the remnants of a scuba suit ripped into pieces on the sand a few feet away. Next to it was my backpack, which seemed to have survived the trip. We were on a beach, and the ocean was calm off to my left. There were lush tropical trees further up the shore, but nothing pinpointed where I’d washed up.

“Where am I?”

“You’re on an island called Wyspa,” Toby said.

“I’ve never heard of Wyspa. Could you be a little more specific?”

“You mean like coordinates?” There was a bite of humor to Gabe’s voice, but it was exactly what I’d meant.

“Yes. Like coordinates. Where on a map is Wyspa?”

The men exchanged a look I couldn’t read, but I didn’t like it. Finally, Gabe turned back to me. “Look, Sunshine, you’re hurt—”

“I’m fine,” I interrupted. “And my name is Sara.”

“Okay, Sara, well, you’ve just washed up on a beach and don’t seem to have all of your shit together, yet. Will you please let us take you to Dr. Carpenter and have you looked at? After we make sure you aren’t concussed or anything, we can talk map coordinates. Okay?” Gabe looked down at me with a smile.

His frankness stunned me into silence because I found myself nodding as they helped me to my feet. Standing, I could see that they were both about the same height. I’m five-foot-seven, and they didn’t seem to tower over me, which made me think they had to be around five-foot-nine or ten.

The world didn't seem even slightly off kilter so I knew their worry about a concussion was probably unwarranted, but I had agreed to go to the doctor and I would go. It would give me an opportunity to get my bearings and think about what had happened.

They helped me over to my bag, which had lived up to its waterproof claims. Toby held me steady while I pulled a pair of jeans over my wet bikini bottoms. I was already wearing a slightly damp shirt over the top and decided to keep it on. It felt better to be covered. Confusion doesn't mesh well with half-naked.

When I was dressed and had flip-flops on my feet, I let the guys lead me to the doctor. Every minute that passed made me more and more sure the exam would be unnecessary, but it seemed important to them. It's hard to disappoint attractive men when they appear to have saved your life.

As we walked, I started to think about where I had been when I'd lost consciousness. I remembered the hotel in Florida where I'd been staying and going out on a chartered scuba dive...

My mind drifted from that train of thought as the beauty of the island surrounding me demanded my attention. Huge palm trees stretched toward a flawlessly blue sky, and thick ferns lined the path we walked. Birds cawed in the foliage around us. I had traveled all over the world and couldn't remember seeing anything as beautiful as what I saw as we walked. Even the air seemed cleaner than anything I'd ever before breathed.

"Doc, are you home?" Toby's voice snapped me back to attention.

"Come on in!" a voice yelled from inside.

The men led me into the house where an attractive young man sat on the sofa with a book in his hands. I didn't want to come across as an ageist, but I really hoped he wasn't the doctor. He looked entirely too, well, young to be an experienced doctor.

"Wes is in the shower," the man on the sofa said. "Is everything all right?"

"Probably," Gabe said. "Sean, this is Sara, our new arrival. Sara, this is Dr. Carpenter's fiancé, Sean."

"Hi, Sean. Nice to meet you," I said with a smile. "Nice to meet you, too." Sean grinned back.

"How is the wedding planning going?" Gabe motioned for me to sit as he talked to Sean.

“Good!” Sean’s face lit up as he said it. “I can’t believe that in a couple more months, he will legally belong to me.”

I sat on the small sofa and hugged the armrest as Toby dropped down next to me, a little closer than I felt was conversationally polite. He acted as if he didn’t notice my reaction as he slung his arm over the back of the couch and made himself comfortable.

“We can’t wait!” Gabe said enthusiastically as he sat on the floor at Toby’s feet. “It’s going to be a blast.”

“Thanks. So Sara,” Sean turned his attention to me, “how are you feeling?”

“I’m fine thanks,” I replied. “I really don’t think we should even be here bothering you and your fiancé.”

“Speaking of fiancé,” Sean said as the water stopped in the other room. “Hey Doc, you’ve got company!”

“Is that code for ‘don’t come out here naked’?” Toby asked with a laugh.

“More like code for ‘hurry up old man,’ ” a voice called from the bathroom.

Sean turned toward that voice and smiled. The look on his face caused a lump to form in my throat. I didn’t even really understand where it had come from or why, but all I could think was that no one had ever smiled like that in the direction of *my* voice. The love Sean felt for his doctor was obvious and strong. He didn’t even try to contain it or hide it—not that he should have. I couldn’t help wondering if anyone would ever look at me the way Sean looked at that closed door.

“I have never called you an old man,” Sean called back, rolling his eyes, but he was still grinning.

“Hey,” Toby whispered in my ear. He had moved even closer, and I’d been so caught up in my own head that I hadn’t noticed. “Are you all right?”

“Yeah.” I cleared my throat and blinked back tears. “Maybe my head is starting to hurt a little.”

He looked at me for a minute, disbelief plain in his eyes, but he was smart enough to let my lie go. I glanced over to find Gabe also looking at me with concern. A sigh escaped my lips before I could stop it. It wasn’t that I was frustrated exactly, but having just met them, it didn’t seem fair that they already read me that well.

The bathroom door opened and a very attractive man stepped out, wearing only a pair of jeans, water still dripping down his muscular chest. This must be Wes. His hair was wet, making it look dark, but I saw touches of gray at his temples. His eyes had slight creases at the corners, but it didn't age him at all. In fact, he looked as if he laughed often, and it made him even more attractive.

"Wow, you weren't kidding about company," Wes said with a chuckle as he looked at the extra people in his house. He caught my gaze, and his face grew serious.

He walked over to me quickly, and I blushed as I realized he must have taken my slack-jawed staring as a sign of injury. I didn't know how to explain that I had been so in awe of him and his wet body that I'd forgotten where I was.

I kept my mouth shut and let him look me over. The exam was short, thank goodness. I wasn't sure how long I could sit with his chest in my face while he felt around my head. I was glad my shirt had dried and my nipples weren't obvious against the fabric. I think I'd been surrounded by too much testosterone for way too long after a traumatic experience.

"I'm Wesley, by the way," the doctor said as he looked down into my eyes.

"Sara," I said with a weak smile. "Nice to meet you."

Dr. Wesley smiled and patted my cheek. "Well dear, you look fine to me."

"You, too." The words slipped out before I had even thought about it. A blush burned at my cheeks, and I wished for the sofa to swallow me up, but it didn't. I was left sitting there like an idiot while the doctor gave me a pitying smile and Gabe chuckled softly next to me.

"Sorry," I mumbled.

"Don't be." Wesley crouched down to meet my gaze directly. "I appreciate the compliment. You've had a pretty hard day. You're allowed to say whatever you want."

"I wouldn't be so quick to give her that much permission," Toby said with a laugh.

I shot him a dirty look and shared it with Gabe when he, too, started to laugh.

"Do you have a place to stay?" Wesley asked me, completely ignoring the reaction of my companions. "We have an extra room if you'd like to stay here for a few days."

"Oh no!" I said quickly. "I really appreciate the offer, but I would never think to impose on you. I'll figure something out."

"We'll take care of her, Doc," Toby said as he placed a hand over mine.

I tried to jerk my hand away, but his grip tightened, and he gave me a pointed look. If he was trying to tell me something, I wasn't getting it, so I shut my mouth and let the guys finish talking. If I had to, I could always beat Toby senseless when we left from the nice doctor's house.

"Yeah, she can stay with us until she figures something else out," Gabe said.

"Well, if you need anything, let us know." Sean stood up.

I stood, too. Toby let me pull my hand away from his so I could shake Sean's. "I hope you're not mad at me."

"Mad?" Sean laughed. "Not at all. I know he's gorgeous. In fact, the only person in this room who doesn't think he's hot is him."

Wesley rolled his eyes at Sean, but that look of love and adoration never left his face. They were beautiful together, and I felt the tears build up again.

What the fuck was wrong with me?

I smiled and turned toward the door. I was leaving. I couldn't take anymore of this emotional confusion. It didn't even matter if Gabe and Toby followed me or not. I was so out of there.

I called back another "thank you" as I walked out the door.

A soft breeze blew the trees, and I stood at the bottom of the porch and started to cry. Gabe slung my backpack over one shoulder, freeing his arm so he could lace his fingers through mine, and Toby did the same with my other hand. They started to walk me back through the woods. I didn't fight them, and they didn't ask me what was wrong.

I don't know if I could have told them what was wrong, anyway. It wasn't just my lack of love. That had never bothered me before. Maybe it was the combination of being lost somewhere I'd never even heard of, having gorgeous, half-naked men in my face since I'd opened my eyes, and the complete uncertainty of what was happening in my life.

My tears had stopped, but the guys continued their silence. I was more grateful for that than for anything else they'd done for me since I'd woken.

More and more of what had happened came back to me as we walked. I remembered chartering the scuba trip. It had been my first call after hanging up from my boyfriend who'd just broken up with me. I hadn't even been concerned by the end of the relationship. It hadn't been

true love—it hadn't even been much fun. We had sort of fallen into relationship status by accident, and when it was over, it was just over.

The trip had been a coping mechanism like every trip prior to that had been. My parents had been less than thrilled when I graduated high school and my summer in Europe had turned into a nineteen-month tour of the world with a group of homeless kids with credit cards. But they'd always been supportive so they'd done as all the other parents had done and had sent a gold card with their love.

I'd learned to sky dive, BASE jump, scuba dive and all sorts of other activities that sounded dangerous. The more scary it sounded, the more I had wanted to do it. When I'd finally returned home, I'd realized that there wasn't much of a home there. I love my parents, but I was never going to be their nine-to-five corporate princess.

I took a job as a travel writer for a magazine so I could continue to travel and learn new, exciting things that might or might not result in my demise. But I was never scared of dying. I didn't have a death wish or anything. I figured if it was going to happen, it was better that I be eaten by a great white shark than to be hit by a bus crossing Madison Avenue.

But this scuba trip had been different. It hadn't been remotely dangerous. It had been a safe little charter between Miami and Bermuda for a fluff piece my editor had requested as filler. I was not fluff or filler. My friends and the few people I bothered to keep in contact with called me "Danger Girl." I liked the nickname and did my best to live up to their expectations of me.

When the boat had stopped and all the little tourists had gotten into the water I'd waited until the instructor was busy and took off into the ocean on my own. I'd swum too far out, but it had been so peaceful I'd kept going. Honestly, they never should have given me such a large capacity tank. Why would I go back as long as I had air to breathe and water to swim in?

"Home sweet home," Gabe said quietly against my ear.

I blinked a few times as the memories in my head gave way to real life again. I'd been so focused on how I'd ended up here that I hadn't noticed we'd come to another house. It was the same style hut as Wesley and Sean's house had been.

They led me inside and stood behind me as I looked around the room. It was similar to the Doctor's house, too. It had wood furniture and was sparsely decorated but still homey.

"It's so clean," I said finally as I figured out what seemed off about the place.

“Yeah?” Gabe said, and I heard the smile in his voice. He ran a finger up my arm, making my skin break out in goose bumps. “Did you think we’d be slobs?”

“Not slobs, just boys. Boys aren’t this clean.”

“Some boys are clean,” Toby said. He was close behind me, and I couldn’t help shuddering at his breath on my neck. My nipples hardened again, and my pussy grew wet.

Gabe moved to stand in front of me. I stared up at his face and smiled at the heat in his dark green eyes. His gaze shifted from me for a moment, and he and Toby shared a look I didn’t understand until Toby moved closer against me.

“And some boys are very, very dirty,” I whispered at the feel of Toby’s cock pressing hard against my lower back.

Chapter Two

Gabe lowered his head, and I met his lips with my own. My arms slid around his neck as his tongue pried my mouth open. Toby started kissing my shoulders while his hands moved up under my shirt to run fingers up and down my ribcage.

The sensation of being pressed between the two of them was too much. I had never been with two men at once, and it had been quite a while since I'd even been with one man. My pussy was soaked at the feel of them both rubbing against me. My knees buckled, but the men held me tightly, helping me to stay on my feet. I pulled away from Gabe's mouth so I could lean back and kiss Toby over my shoulder.

Gabe took advantage of the small space between us to pull up my shirt. Toby stopped kissing me long enough for the other man to pull my top off completely before he attacked my mouth again. Gabe dropped to his knees in front of me and started to kiss across my stomach while Toby licked and bit and sucked on my lips. The combined feeling of their mouths on me was amazing. My pussy ached with the need for them both. I wanted them to fill me and show me pleasure I had never known before. There was never a thought that what we were doing should be wrong, that I barely knew them or that I wasn't even sure where I was. I wanted them, and they wanted me. That was all that mattered at that moment. The three of us were the only people that existed in the world. I opened myself to them and gave myself over without a worry of what would happen. Everything would be fine if I could just get both of these men inside me as quickly as possible.

Toby moved away from my mouth and I opened my eyes to look into his. The heat level matched what Gabe had shown me earlier and it made my knees weak again. This time, without Gabe's weight to balance us, we slid to the floor in kind of a heap with Toby on top of me and Gabe off to the side.

“You have too many clothes on,” Toby growled.

“Then one of you should take them off,” I said.

Gabe moved out of my line of sight, but I felt him undo the snap on my jeans. I raised my hips so he could pull them down my legs, and when I dropped back onto the floor, I felt that he had taken my bikini bottom with the pants.

They sat next to each other and looked down at me until I started to feel uncomfortable. I had asked them to undress me, but I hadn't thought about the fact that they would want to look at me. I'm not ugly or anything, but I'm highly insecure. And my collection of scars doesn't help that at all.

“You're beautiful,” Toby whispered as he continued to stare.

Gabe reached out and traced one of the worst scars across my stomach. “Gorgeous.”

It was as if they'd read my mind. I felt a little unnerved by it. Before I could say anything, Toby leaned over and kissed me again. I moaned into his mouth as Gabe started to caress my inner thighs. His knuckles brushed against my clit, making me writhe on the floor under Toby.

Having had no experience with multiple partners at the same time, I wasn't really sure how it would work. Toby and Gabe moved together as if they'd shared a woman before, but I didn't know that for sure. And while I had assumed the two of them were together, as a couple, I hadn't had that confirmed, either.

We'd rushed into this so quickly with no thought or conversation about how we would all fit together. Now that I was the one completely naked on the floor, it seemed more important to find out what everyone wanted before we went further.

But with Toby's mouth covering mine, and Gabe's breath getting warmer and closer to my pussy, I wasn't sure my brain would function enough for a conversation that consisted of words other than “ooh” and “yes.”

I tried to push Toby away, wanting to speak up, but Gabe chose that moment to plunge his tongue inside of my cunt, and the world exploded around me. Their hands gripped me tightly to keep me from sitting up, pinning me to the ground with their strength.

My voice was muffled into Toby's mouth as I cried out. I wasn't sure if it was in protest or pleasure. But when I didn't push either of them away, they continued their exploration of my body.

Toby's hands slid over my breasts, massaging them and rolling my nipples between his fingers. Finally, he pulled away from my mouth and lowered his lips around the stiff flesh, sucking at my tits with almost the same fervor as Gabe sucked on my clit.

When Gabe slid a finger inside of me, I wasn't expecting the orgasm that hit. My back bowed upward, thrusting my chest into Toby's face as the other man started pumping his finger in and out of my pussy, making my orgasm last as long as he could. My nails dug into the floor until I felt one of them break under the stress of it. It hurt, but the pain during such an amazing rush was just a new kind of pleasure.

I fell back to the floor with a loud thud that made both men move forward to see if I was okay. After a minute, I started to laugh, and they both relaxed.

"You should be more careful," Toby admonished, but it was ruined by his broad smile. "If you're going to hurt yourself when we've barely started, I don't know if we should do anything else to you. I wouldn't want to be the cause of any permanent damage."

"I think I'll be okay," I said with a laugh. "I just need to catch my breath."

Toby looked at Gabe, and they shared that guy smile that meant they knew they were going to get lucky. It wasn't a cocky expression, just a very happy boy face.

I looked at the two of them watching each other. They really did love each other. I could see it now. I hoped I wouldn't come between them, then I realized, if I did, it would be because they put me there. Gabe leaned forward and met Toby across my body, kissing him softly on the lips. Toby flicked his tongue over Gabe's mouth and smiled.

"I like the taste of her on your mouth."

"I like the taste of her on my mouth, too," Gabe said with a grin.

"Have you caught your breath yet?" Toby asked, gazing down at me.

"Why aren't you naked?" I asked in response.

Gabe flew over me to tackle Toby, rolling them both to the floor. He wrenched at Toby's pants until I heard the button hit the ground somewhere off in the distance. Soon both men struggled to get each other's clothes off.

I turned on my side to watch them run their hands over each other's bodies as they finally got undressed. They were beautiful, and something about them being together made them even more amazing. After a minute, they turned their attentions back to me.

"How would you like to do this?" Gabe asked me.

“I don’t know,” I admitted. “I mean, I’ve never...um...”

“You’re not a virgin, are you?” Toby asked, his face worried.

“No, no, I’m not a virgin. But I’ve only ever been with one man at a time. I don’t know...” I trailed off, suddenly embarrassed by my lack of experience. I’d been to the tops of mountains for goodness sake, but I’d never fucked two guys at once.

“Oh, baby, don’t worry.” Gabe kissed my hand. “We’ll be careful, and if you want us to stop, just tell us. I swear to you that we won’t hurt you or make you do anything you aren’t completely comfortable with.”

I hadn’t really thought they would, but hearing it out loud made me feel better anyway.

They reached out and helped me to my feet. We walked in a line to their bedroom where they eased me onto the bed.

“What do you want to do?” I asked. “I mean, how do you usually do this?”

“There is no usually, love,” Gabe said. “This is our first time, too. We’ve been with each other, and we’ve been with girls, but the two of us have never shared anyone.”

So none of us knew what the hell was going on. That wasn’t really what I’d wanted to hear. I’d been hoping to leave it up to them and trust that they really wouldn’t hurt me. If none of us had ever had a threesome before, it could get a little interesting.

“What do you want to do?” I asked again, hoping it would spur one of them to take charge of the situation.

“I want you to suck my cock while I watch Gabe fuck you.”

Toby said it so matter-of-factly, I don’t know that it ever occurred to Gabe or me to argue. That’s what he wanted, and that’s what we would do for him. It was a plan, and he was the only one who had one. The situation sounded perfectly logical to me.

We shifted on the bed a few times before we all agreed on a position. The only way I could think of to accomplish everything was to have me on my hands knees with Toby kneeling in front of me and Gabe behind me. It might not have been the most dignified of positions for our first time, but it was the best compromise we could come up with.

I sighed at the feel of Gabe running his finger over my clit. My cunt was still slick, and the firm circles he rubbed over me made me even wetter.

“Gabe, please,” I begged.

“Please what?” Toby asked, looking down at me. “Tell him what you want him to do.”

“I want you to fuck me, Gabe.”

Gabe pushed the head of his cock against my pussy, sliding slowly inside of me. When his body met mine, he put his hands on my hips to hold me still, then began to stroke in and out of me. Toby looked at him and nodded before moving his cock closer to my face.

I wrapped my hand around him and slid it up and down his shaft a few times before dropping my head to take him in my mouth. One of his hands wound in my hair, but he didn't try to move me, just held me while I found a comfortable pace.

It soon became clear that I wasn't the one setting our speed. It was Gabe. He had started slowly, but before long, he started pounding himself inside of me, and I matched him with my mouth. My lips slid up and down Toby's shaft so hard that the top of his cock hit the back of my throat. We were moving so fast I didn't have time to worry about gagging. The second he hit my throat, he was gone again.

My body started to tremble as the orgasm built. I flicked up my gaze to see Toby watching Gabe over my back, and it hit me. Both men inside of me, watching each other fuck me, pushed me over the edge.

My hands clawed at the bed as my cunt tightened around Gabe's cock. I screamed around Toby in my mouth until he came too, and I had to stop screaming so I could swallow him down. Gabe cried out behind me, and I felt him pump his seed inside me.

We all collapsed together on the bed in a big, sweaty, happy heap.

It didn't take me too long to start feeling uncomfortable and untangle myself from the pile. I was sticky and felt a little uneasy about what had just happened. It had been nice, and even though it hadn't felt inappropriate at the time, now that I was naked between two men, what should have been afterglow was replaced by something like after-shame.

I had never been the kind of girl who was comfortable...about anything really, but certainly not about sex. And sex with multiple partners was a little off my grid of comprehension.

“Can I use your shower?” I asked. I was hoping that the hot water would help to clear my head and give me time to put the night into a better prospective.

Both men mumbled something that sounded like a yes, so I left them each with a kiss on the cheek and headed out in search of the bathroom.

* * * *

The guys were sleeping when I checked on them after my shower. I grabbed a shirt from one of the closets then went out to the kitchen. I helped myself to a banana before walking out onto the back deck.

I sat on the wooden porch swing, enjoying the quiet for a few minutes though my mind churned. I had hoped to organize my thoughts, but instead I'd realized in the shower that I hadn't made either of the boys wear a condom. And what bothered me most was that I wasn't all that bothered by it. All I could do was assume they were clean. I suppose, when I'd agreed to trust them, I'd trusted them completely. And I wasn't worried about getting pregnant because the timing was all wrong for that to happen. It was confusing that the thought hadn't crossed my mind earlier. I'd wanted them so bad that my brain had shut down regarding the most basic elements of safety.

What really scared me, though, was that I'd fallen in bed so easily with them at all. It had felt so right to be with them—both of them. For the first time in a long time, I felt as if I was home. My editor had once told me that when I found the right place to settle down, I would know and I would do it. Of course, I'd told her she was full of crap and she should mind her own business. But I was starting to understand what she'd meant.

"Hey, Buttercup, what are you doing out here?"

I jumped at the sound of Gabe's voice behind me. "Nothing."

"Sorry, I didn't mean to startle you." He sat down next to me and put a hand on my leg. "We didn't scare you away already, did we?"

"No," I said with a smile. "You guys are clean, right? I mean, I didn't even ask about condoms, but—"

"Not a single disease," he interrupted. "My hand to God. We would never, ever, do anything to hurt you. That includes everything—physically, emotionally, or medically."

"Thanks. Is Toby still sleeping?"

"Yeah, he's down for the count. He hasn't been sleeping well lately, so I didn't want to wake him yet. Do you want me to get him?"

"No, no, it's fine. I just wondered," I covered his hand with my own, "why me?"

The question was so out of nowhere I hadn't even realized I was going to ask it. For a minute, the words hung in the air like something tangible.

Finally, Gabe turned to look at me "Why not you?"

“I don’t think that’s a good answer.”

“I was giving you a chance to take the question back. But if you really want to know...”
Gabe blew out a sigh and turned his whole body toward me, taking my hands in his before continuing. “‘Why not you’ is actually pretty accurate. Toby knew when he saw you that you had come here for us. Not intentionally, of course, but still, here you are. And there we were.”

I looked at him quizzically. “How did he know?”

“He always knows. He found me pretty much like we found you. After a few weeks of fucking my brains out, he finally got up the courage to tell me that he’d fallen in love with me the moment he’d seen me on the beach. He knew that I’d belong to him.”

“How long have you two been together?”

“I came to the island about six years ago, and I met him the day I got here.”

“When did you know he was the one?”

“I sort of knew right away, but I fought it—I fought a lot of things when I first came here. Still the island teaches you to accept stuff you wouldn’t normally accept. There may be science behind magic, but it’s not any less magic because of it.”

He was speaking in riddles now. I didn’t want to ruin the conversation by admitting I had no idea what the hell he was talking about but I nodded as if I understood. We’d been discussing Toby then somehow moved on to magic and science and the island.

I hoped he’d either elaborate or change topics, but he just stared off into the trees, lost to whatever thoughts swirled in his brain. Since I couldn’t follow him before, there was no way I was going to offer a penny for his musings. I could do silent just fine, and I turned to look into the distance, too.

The sun had started to set when my stomach growled loudly. I blushed and wrapped an arm over myself, but Gabe looked over at me worried.

“What an asshole I am!” He got to his feet and held out a hand for me. “You haven’t eaten in God knows how long. Come on, we’ll get Toby up and make dinner. I’m sorry.”

“Don’t worry,” I said with a laugh. “I had a banana, but I guess it wasn’t enough. I’m a big girl. I never said I was hungry.”

To be honest, I hadn’t really thought about it. With everything else that had been going on, food didn’t seem that important. Apparently, from the continued churning in my stomach, my body disagreed.

We walked into the kitchen to find Toby was already there, cutting up fruit and vegetables and arranging them on a big plate. At the sight of all that food, my stomach grumbled again.

“Hey you,” Toby said as he walked over to kiss my forehead. “Sorry I passed out for so long.”

“From what I hear, you needed the sleep.” I snagged a chunk of green pepper. “Are you all right?”

The guys shared a look over my head. That was really starting to tick me off, but I didn’t feel we were close enough for me to bitch about it. They’d been together for so long, they probably weren’t even aware they did it most of the time. I wasn’t big on secrets though, and I knew it wouldn’t take me long to blow a gasket over their private signals.

“Yeah,” he said. “I’m all right. I haven’t been sleeping well. Lots of nightmares lately, I guess.”

“You guess?” I raised an eyebrow at Toby. “You don’t remember?”

“Not really. I just know that I wake up every twenty minutes when I try to sleep. I don’t remember dreaming, but nothing in the room is waking me. I guess I’ve always assumed it’s nightmares so I’d have a reason behind it.”

Gabe grabbed the heaping plate of food from the counter, and we followed him to the small table in the kitchen. We ate in silence—okay, *I* ate in silence and they watched me. I hadn’t meant to eat as much as I did, but I was hungry, and the fresh produce was good. I was so lost to the flavor of the food that I didn’t even mind that the guys were staring at me.

“Thank you,” I sighed, slumping back in my chair. “That was amazing.”

“The way you went at it, I think you found the food better than the sex.” Gabe raised an eyebrow as he said it.

I laughed. “Not quite.”

“I want dessert,” Toby said suddenly.

“What’s for dessert?” I asked excitedly.

“You.”

Chapter Three

“You can’t be serious,” I whispered. My heart pounded in my chest at the thought of them fucking me again. For a moment, I almost wondered if they could hear it as loudly as it sounded in my head.

“Sugar, we would never joke about you,” Gabe said, getting to his feet.

Toby stood, too, and they both walked toward me. I jumped up and backed away from them slowly. It all seemed like too much, too soon. The sex had been amazing, but exhausting and more than a little overwhelming.

“Guys, I’m flattered, really. But I couldn’t possibly go another round with you tonight.”

“Sick of us already?” Toby raised an eyebrow.

“Of course not,” I said quickly. “But I’ve had kind of a hard day, and I just don’t think I could make it enjoyable for either of you.”

“How about if we go to bed, take off all of our clothes and see what happens?” Gabe asked.

I gave Gabe a disbelieving look, but he just gave me ‘innocent eyes’ back. To be honest, lying in bed, naked, between them sounded pretty damn good. I nodded and let them lead me back into the bedroom.

We stripped off our clothes before climbing under the covers. The bed was wide enough for us to lay on our backs and still be comfortable. Gabe and Toby each took one of my hands in theirs. The moon was full and bright outside, bathing the room in a beautiful white light. I sighed as I snuggled closer to Gabe, pulling Toby tighter against my other side.

“It’s so peaceful here,” I mumbled.

“It can be,” Toby agreed. “When Gabe first got here, it took him a while to get used to the quiet. He was a city kid at heart, and the lack of traffic was hard to adjust to.”

“Gabe, you said that Toby found you like you’d found me. What did you mean by that?”

“My boat had blown off course in a storm, and I ended up crashed on the island about six years ago. When I opened my eyes, I saw Toby leaning over me. He was grinning like an idiot. I remember thinking his happiness was completely inappropriate for the situation.”

“You still think my reaction was inappropriate,” Toby said with a small laugh. He reached over me and stroked the other man’s arm. “But I have been thrilled about finding you since the moment it happened. And you still make me grin like an idiot.”

“So you stayed because you fell in love with him, too?” I asked Gabe.

Both men grew very still. I waited for one of them to say something, but they stayed silent.

“What’s going on?” I finally asked.

“I stayed because I couldn’t leave,” Gabe whispered.

Wasn’t that what I’d asked? Suddenly, I realized he hadn’t said he couldn’t leave Toby. He’d just said that he couldn’t leave.

“What do you mean you ‘couldn’t leave’?”

“I mean the island doesn’t let anyone leave. Once you come here, you stay here.”

“That’s ridiculous. You talk about the island like it’s alive. It’s just a chunk of dirt in the middle of the ocean. Just build a boat or flag down a plane and go home.”

I really didn’t like the direction this was going. Toby and Gabe had seemed so normal. If they were crazy, it was going to put a big wrench in our relationship. I don’t deal well with crazy people.

“Sara,” Toby said softly. He moved his hand back to my arm and started making those useless circles people employed when trying to calm someone down. “There aren’t any planes, and a boat will only take you so far. Gabe’s right, no one can leave.”

“This isn’t funny.” I pulled my arm free of Toby and crawled over Gabe to get out of bed. I grabbed the shirt I had been wearing and pulled it on as I ran out of the room.

I had to get out of there. I refused to believe that I was stuck on this godforsaken island. And there was no way I could stay in the same room with the guys right then. If they were crazy enough to believe they couldn’t escape an island, who knew what other crazy thoughts, or actions, they were capable of.

“Sara, come back!” Gabe yelled from the bedroom.

But I never slowed down. I hit the front door at a run and took off into the night. I didn't know where I was going, but I knew I had to get away. They were obviously insane. Going back was out of the question.

I didn't hear Gabe and Toby behind me, but they probably wouldn't be far behind. Sprinting as quickly as I could, I fought my way through the tangle of brush off the main path, hoping that if they came the same way they wouldn't see me through the dense jungle.

With no idea where I was headed, I just kept pushing through the dark, trying to get away from the crazy men I assumed would be chasing after me. I still didn't sense them, so I prayed they'd gone in a different direction, not that I had any idea where I was in relation to their house anymore. The forest had me completely turned around. I said a silent prayer that I hadn't gotten confused and would end up right back where I had started.

Fortunately, I finally saw moonlight glinting off the ocean ahead. I broke through the trees and found myself back on the beach. After a quick glance around to make sure I was alone, I threw myself into the water, swimming as fast as I could. From somewhere on shore, someone yelled at me and my heart sank. I hadn't seen anyone, but I figured it had to be Gabe or Toby. I started paddling harder. I was afraid to turn around to see how far I'd gone or how little distance I had made, not to mention my complete lack of desire to see who was actually calling me.

My leg started to cramp, making me think I'd probably drown. It wasn't painful enough to stop my escape attempt, so I tried to push through it. The water was cold, and my muscles were giving up on me. I could get a little further on my terror and stubbornness, but it was no use. I was sinking with every breaststroke I tried to take.

Finally, unable to fight my body anymore, I let go. My head had just dipped under the water when I was yanked up violently, gasping for breath and clinging to a person who had come after me.

I blinked water out of my eyes and coughed it out of my lungs as my rescuer dragged me back to shore, back to the island which two strangers had informed me would be my prison. The thought of going back there brought back my fear, and I started to struggle against the arms holding me.

"Hey, it's not very heroic if I save you then drop you on the way back to land," the man carrying me said through clenched teeth. He sounded familiar, but I couldn't place the voice. It definitely wasn't Gabe or Toby.

I stopped fighting him, letting him drag me up onto the beach. He dropped me to the sand before flopping down next to me. I opened my eyes to see Sean looking quite pissed at me.

“What the fuck?” He stared at me as if I should know how to answer his question.

“What the fuck?” I repeated through a coughing fit. “I could ask you the same thing.”

We lay on the sand, both fighting to catch our breaths. I knew I was going to have to thank him or something, but at the moment, I really wasn’t feeling very thankful at all.

I glanced around but saw no signs of Gabe and Toby. Hopefully, they hadn’t stumbled across me yet. If they were looking for me, maybe they’d gone in the wrong direction.

“So was that a suicide attempt or were you trying to escape?” Sean asked finally when we’d both stopped coughing and wheezing.

“I couldn’t have just been going for a swim?”

“No.”

Well, there went that excuse—not that I would have believed me either. The way he said “escape” bugged me. It was as if he knew Gabe and Toby had spewed their nonsense to me about the island.

I looked over at him again, waiting for him to say something, but he gazed calmly back. He looked almost pleased with himself. Of course, he *had* just saved my life, so I suppose that was a pretty good feeling.

Maybe I was losing my mind. I’d never thought of myself as suicidal, but perhaps my need to be danger girl was just a by-product of my extreme unhappiness with my life. I’d never given much thought to actually living my life before. I’d flitted from one place to another without any real purpose and shunned any close relationships that could tie me down to one area for a long time. I suppose I hadn’t been living much anyway. The only times I’d ever felt alive were when I was doing things that could kill me.

“Sara, will you please talk to me?” Sean asked softly. “Why the hell were you out there? Gabe and Toby showed up at our house desperate to know if you were there, when I told them you weren’t, they said you’d run off and they didn’t know where else you would be. So I agreed to help them look for you and then I find you trying to drown yourself in the ocean.”

“I wasn’t trying to kill myself,” I whispered. “Not really. I just... I’m scared.”

“Of what?”

I sat up and started to cry. I wasn't sure whether it was because Toby and Gabe were the only men I knew and had trusted, but they seemed to be insane, or because I hadn't wanted to be saved from the ocean in the first place, or that part of me really believed I was trapped on this island, but once the tears started, it didn't matter anyway.

"I should really get you back to the house," Sean said. "We all agreed to meet back up there in an hour. The guys are really freaked out about you. Do you mind if I ask what happened?" He put his hand on my shoulder.

"I don't want to go back." I wiped strands of hair off my face as I cried. "You know, you could have warned me that Gabe and Toby are insane. It would have been easier to take if I'd had some clue earlier."

"They told you about the island, didn't they?"

"Not you too!" I moaned. "Does everyone here have some sort of *Lord of the Flies* complex? Should I ask you to take me to your leader?"

"I wouldn't," Sean laughed. "He's kind of a dick."

Lying back on the ground, I looked up at the stars and blew out a sigh. "Now would not be a good time to fuck with me, Sean."

"I wish I was," he said, lying next to me. "I didn't want to believe it either. But there's no way off this island."

"How is that even possible?"

I listened in amazement as Sean explained that the military had created a sort of force field around the island a long time ago. Apparently, it had been originally planned as protection from atomic weapons, but something had gone wrong. Once the field was up, they couldn't bring it back down. The nature of it sometimes allowed people to come in, but no one could ever get out.

Twice during his story he tried to talk me into going back to look for Gabe and Toby, but I refused. I was not going to search them out until I knew exactly what I had gotten myself into on this island.

I don't know why I trusted Sean more than I had trusted the guys, but at that moment, I did. Maybe it was because Sean didn't seem to want anything from me. Gabe and Toby had me in their bed, and if they wanted to keep me there...well, I didn't know them well enough to be sure they wouldn't make up stories to do it.

“Since you’re already freaked out, this would probably be a good time to mention that time seems to move differently on the island. It moves slower than it seemed to where I came from anyway.” Sean continued. “It could just be that something to do with the magnetic field. It kills all diseases as people come through, so there are no illnesses here, which mean life spans are longer. Unfortunately, it also sterilizes us all, so no one can have children.”

“I suppose that’s actually a good thing,” I said. I had gone numb from the information overload. It was as if my mind couldn’t comprehend it enough to react to it. I just took it all in to process later. “If no one can get off the island and people started having kids, you’d get overpopulated pretty quickly.”

“We,” Sean whispered. “We would get overpopulated.”

“Right. We. ’Cause I’m stuck here now, too.”

“You’re taking this pretty well.” Sean propped himself up on his arm and looked down at me. “You’re not going into shock are you?”

“Sort of,” I admitted. “It’s a bit much to take. I think my brain is just refusing to compute anymore tonight. Tomorrow, I can freak out again. Tonight, I just need to know what the fuck is going on.”

“Okay,” Sean said slowly. “Well, right now the military doesn’t know you’re here. But they’re going to find out.”

“Why do they care?”

“No one really knows,” he said with a sigh. “But they insist on all new arrivals going through their training sessions. From what I hear, it’s pretty pointless. The only useful thing they do is set you up with a sponsor who shows you around the island and helps get you settled. I was hurt when I got here, so I didn’t have to go through the program. I was able to stay with Wes and let him get me acquainted to living here. Most new arrivals aren’t that lucky.”

“Well, can’t Gabe and Toby take care of me like Wes did for you?” I asked.

“Unfortunately, no. They don’t want the sponsors being in relationships with the new arrivals. It’s why they ask your sexual orientation during the interview process. They’ll insist you be with someone who won’t take advantage of you.” He held up a hand to stop me from interrupting. “I know Gabe and Toby aren’t taking advantage of you, but the military won’t see it that way. They think that sponsors and arrivals being together is a form of rape or something.”

Now there was a thought, not that the guys had raped me—that was ridiculous. But was it so farfetched that I had fallen so easily into bed with Gabe and Toby because I viewed them as my rescuers? Or was I just trying to justify my actions with them now that I had learned a convenient excuse?

“So if the military finds me, are they going to take me away?” I asked Sean, trying to push the other thought away.

Sean laughed. “It’s a small island, Sara. Away won’t be that far. But no. I think that we should take you to Jasper and tell him that I want to sponsor you. You might have to stay with Wes and me for a while, but you’d still be able to see Gabe and Toby whenever you want.”

“Who’s Jasper?”

“He’s our leader, you know, the dick,” Sean said with a chuckle. “He’s the head of the sponsor program. Jasper isn’t really that bad, but he and Wes had a thing a long time ago so, you know, he’s not my favorite person.”

“Yeah, I can see that.” I took a deep breath and thought over what he’d said.

As far as I could tell, I really was stuck on this island. After spending my adult life roaming the world, never spending more than a few weeks in any one location, I’d found paradise, yet, was terrified of being tied to it forever.

“You’re not trying to steal my guy are you?”

I turned to see Wesley walking down the beach toward us.

“I don’t think I could even compete.” I laughed, standing up. “Even in the real world, no one would pick me over a handsome doctor.”

“The real world?”

“Sara and I have been talking about the island,” Sean said.

“Are you okay?” Wesley put a hand on my shoulder. “It can be pretty hard to take at first.”

“Yeah, it wasn’t pretty. But Sean’s been great.”

“He is that.” Wesley smiled over at his fiancé, and I felt that lump grow in my throat again.

What the hell was wrong with me? In the past, I’d never felt jealous of people in love. In fact, I wasn’t sure I’d ever really thought about it before. I’d been around plenty of married people, but I couldn’t say for sure that I’d ever seen any two people react to each other the way

Sean and Wesley did. I chalked my reaction up to stress and put the thought into the “deal with it later” category. There was no sense in getting caught up in things I didn’t understand when there were so many other things that needed my attention. Like being stuck on an island full of strangers.

“Are you sure you’re all right?” Wes asked me again.

“I have to go find Gabe and Toby,” I said. “I ran out on them when they tried to explain what was happening here.”

“They’re waiting for you at our house,” Wes said with a smile. “They were hoping you would end up there since it’s the only place you really know.”

“I never made it that far.” I sighed. “Are they mad?”

“Not at all, just very worried about you. We should get you back so they know you’re okay.” Wes offered me his arm, which I took with a grateful smile.

I glanced back at Sean, worried he would tell everyone what had happened on the beach. As if he’d read my mind, he made a motion like he was locking his lips and throwing away the key. I grinned at him, thrilled that he wouldn’t mention my “incident” to anyone.

We walked back to the doctor’s house together where the men I’d accused of being insane waited for me. Wes had said they weren’t mad, but I couldn’t help feeling apprehensive about seeing them. They had every right to be angry at me. I’d accused them of being crazy and run away from them as fast as I could. It would serve me right if they weren’t even there anymore.

I wasn’t even to the porch when Gabe and Toby rushed toward me. Gabe pulled me into his arms, and Toby hugged us both, kissing my head and mumbling something I couldn’t understand.

“I can’t hear you,” I said with a laugh.

They were both sweating and I could feel that their hearts were racing in their chests, the quick, steady beatings pounded against my skin as they held me. It was as if they had run around the whole island and just missed the part of the beach I had actually been on. I was glad to see them, but I was also kind of happy Sean had been the one to find me.

Toby pulled back a little and repeated himself. “I said, ‘don’t you ever fucking do that again.’ You scared the hell out of us.”

“Gee, I’m sorry,” I said, puffing up slightly. “I’d just been told about the scariest thing I’ve ever heard. I apologize if I didn’t take it the way you would have liked me to.”

“Simmer down, pumpkin,” Gabe said. “We were just worried. You had every right to react the way you did. It’s a big shock. No one is saying what you did was wrong. Toby was really scared you’d get hurt or...”

“Taken to a military base,” I finished for him.

“Sean told you that, too?” Toby looked over at Sean who didn’t seem the least bit embarrassed.

“Someone had to,” he said with a shrug. “And I offered to be her sponsor.”

“Dude!” Gabe said. “That’s awesome. Are you sure you don’t mind?”

“We would both be honored for Sara to stay with us,” Wes interjected. “However, if this is going to work, Sean will have to take Sara to the base tomorrow. If they find her first, Jasper won’t let us have any say in where she goes.”

“Sort of like turning yourself over to the police in hopes that they’ll go easy on you?” I asked.

It might have been an apt analogy, but it was also a pretty scary one. I didn’t appreciate being made to feel like a criminal just because I’d had an accident. This whole thing was insane, and now, I had to report to a military base to get permission to... I wasn’t even sure what.

I’d been to foreign countries, and I knew they could lock you up for nothing. Hell, some of the distant prisons were full of people who’d done nothing but wash up on foreign shores.

“Hey there,” Toby said, hugging me. “You’re thinking way too hard right now. What are you so worried about?”

“Well, I just realized this isn’t exactly my home country. I think I might have assumed treatment I didn’t deserve. I was getting angry that I had to report to this base and ask permission to stay with Wesley and Sean, but then I remembered that I’m not home.”

“It won’t be that bad,” Gabe said. “Once you get through the initial introductions with the military boys, they pretty much leave you alone. The islanders are very free. But, I think, Jasper wants to make sure no one freaks out and kills someone. We all get along and try to make the best of what we have here. The military wants everyone to be safe.”

“Yeah.” I blew out a sigh. “I suppose that makes sense. But I don’t have to like it.”

“You guys should go home. I’ll come by in the morning and take Sara to the base to talk to Jasper. Agreed?” Sean at each of us.

I walked over and hugged him. “Thank you so much for everything.”

“You’re very welcome.” He kissed my forehead. “I’ll see you in the morning.”

“Get some sleep,” Wes said as he hugged me too. “It will all be fine.”

I could only hope he was right.

Chapter Four

I was exhausted. The guys led me straight to the bedroom when we got back. Without needing to talk, we all stripped down and climbed into bed. We ended up in the same positions we'd been before I'd freaked and run out on them earlier.

"I'm sorry," I said when the silence started to bother me.

"Hey, sweetie," Gabe whispered. "You don't have anything to be sorry for. It's a scary thing to hear for the first time. We totally understand. We were just worried about you."

I'd apologized for so much more than I could put into words. It felt wrong to keep what had happened on the beach from them, but I didn't want them worrying about me every time I was out of their sight. I had no immediate plans to kill myself, so I figured they didn't need to know it.

"It was really scary. I mean, you don't know me that well yet, but trust me, being told that I am stuck in one place for the rest of my life isn't a good thing."

"Do you travel a lot?" Toby asked.

I laughed, but not as if the question were funny. "Yeah, I travel a lot. In fact, I haven't really had a home since I graduated high school."

Once I started talking, my past just sort of spilled out. I lay in the dark between my two new lovers and told them about my travels and my adventures through the years. It was kind of nice to share the stories with them, and they listened well.

"So why didn't you settle down somewhere?" Gabe asked.

"No place ever felt right. I'd find some place I liked, and I'd stay for a while, but eventually, I always got bored and took off again for somewhere new," I answered with a shrug.

“I can’t believe some Arabic sheik or crowned head of Europe didn’t try to rein you in and make you stay. You’re too beautiful to be wandering around alone.” Toby kissed my palm and smiled.

“Yeah, well, real life isn’t like a romance novel.” I laughed. “There were always men trying to get me into bed, but there has never been anyone who wanted me to stay.” I didn’t say out loud that there had never really been a man who’d made me want to stay anyway.

I’d always thought I liked my life. Roaming the world, meeting new and interesting people. Then being able to pick up and leave when my interest waned. Now that I was stuck on The Island of Misfit Boys, I wasn’t sure what would happen if and when I became apathetic to my surroundings.

“I don’t think you give yourself enough credit,” Gabe said softly. “You’ve probably broken hearts all over the world and just don’t realize it. There’s no way anyone who’s met you didn’t fall in love with you immediately.”

“Being loved and having someone be *in love* with you aren’t exactly the same thing, are they?” My tone had gone bland. I’d never been good at talking about love and relationships. It had never really been my thing.

“I guess that’s true,” Toby said slowly.

He looked sad for me, and I felt anger boil up inside of me. I didn’t need their pity. My life had been working fine until these guys had come along. It scared me that I kept feeling as if something had changed, as if staying on this island in their arms would be the best place on Earth.

“So there’s never been anyone special in your life? Not one man, or woman even, who’s made you feel like you were home?” Gabe asked.

“Not really. The closest I ever got was in Hawaii, I guess. There was a guy there, Robert, who treated me well. We had a lot of fun for a while. But one day, we went out surfing and I was trying to catch this huge wave and he got scared. I ended up in the hospital with a few fractures and a concussion. When I was released, he broke it all off. He said he couldn’t settle down with someone so dangerous.”

To be honest, Robert had been a complete pussy. And I never would have claimed to have loved him. He was just a cool guy, mostly, and we’d hung out for a while. Love wasn’t

something that had been on my radar—not until I'd washed up on the shore of Wyspa, been surrounded by happy couples and found myself bursting into tears because of it.

"Is that where the scars came from?" Toby asked, trailing a finger over my ribcage, tracing the rough skin left over from my surfing accident.

"Some of them," I whispered. I didn't add that the scars on the inside might have been deeper than even I'd realized. "I've done some pretty crazy things."

"What about this one?" Gabe asked softly, his fingers playing lightly up my arm over a small scar I'd forgotten about.

"That was from falling off my bike in middle school." I smiled at the memory. "I was on my way to see some kittens at a neighbor's house and my shoelace got caught in my wheel spokes. I wiped out pretty bad, but for some reason, the only scar I got was that tiny one there from landing on a rock just right."

Gabe shifted and leaned over me. His hand turned my head back toward Toby so he could kiss my collarbone.

"And this one?" Toby mumbled, his lips pressed to my shoulder.

"Knife fight in a bar in Mexico," I said.

"Really?" He sounded surprised.

"I swear it. The sad thing is I wasn't even in the fight. I was trying to break it up and caught the blade as the bitch was trying for her boyfriend again."

Toby slid down the bed and rolled over my legs. His licked a line across my stomach that made me squirm.

"This?" he asked, his eyes looking up at me.

"Appendectomy." I shuddered as he licked it again. "Did you guys memorize every scar already? You've only seen me naked once."

"Every time I close my eyes, I see you naked," Gabe whispered against my ear.

Whatever response I would have had was gone at the feel of Toby rubbing his finger between the folds of my pussy. My breath caught so sharply it was audible. Mentally, I was exhausted, but my body reacted to his touch anyway. If he didn't stop, my need would grow to overpower my exhaustion.

He didn't stop, and Gabe helped him rouse me. He resumed his kissing on my collarbone, moving his mouth up my neck then sucking on my ear. His hands roamed over my breasts, lightly massaging them until my nipples became pebble hard under his fingers.

Toby continued his exploration of my cunt, rubbing and pinching softly until he drew small whimpers from me. I could feel that I was wet and ready for him—for them—but neither of them moved to change their pace or their positions.

"Let us take care of you," Gabe mumbled against my ear. Again, it was as if he'd read my mind, that he knew I wondered why they weren't fucking me yet.

"What about you?" I asked, my voice barely a whisper.

"We can take care of each other later," Toby said.

I started to protest, but my words were drowned by the moan Toby's fingers sliding into my pussy brought from me. He maneuvered his hand until he found that special spot inside of me, then he concentrated on a slow, rhythmic pumping motion against it.

My orgasm gradually built, just a pressure between my legs that steadily climbed until I thought I would go crazy if he didn't change his pace, if he didn't finish it. But he didn't stop, he just kept on pushing over and over again, soft and slow.

Gabe finally kissed his way to my lips. His tongue softly entered my mouth, licking and exploring against mine. He bit my lower lip just as Toby moved his finger harder against me and my body felt as if it had blown apart.

They'd said they'd never shared a woman before, but they worked so well together, it was as if they'd spent years perfecting it.

Toby and Gabe lay next to me on the bed, each holding me and running their hands over my skin until my breathing returned to normal. When I could think clearly again, I realized I was happy. Really happy. And it had nothing to do with the orgasm.

Being there with the two of them gave me a peace I had never known. I might have just met them, but they were the closest thing to friends I'd ever had. When they'd asked about my scars, they hadn't been looking for amazing stories. They'd just wanted to know about me. I'd run, screaming, from them, yet they'd still searched for me to make sure I was all right.

"What are you thinking about?" Toby mumbled.

"I was just thinking I don't deserve to be here with you," I whispered.

“Well, love, we don’t deserve to be here with you. So I guess that makes us all pretty well matched.” I heard the smile in Gabe’s voice.

“Is tomorrow going to be horrible?” I asked.

“Not any more horrible than a knife fight in Mexico,” Toby said with a yawn.

“It will be like a brisk run with the bulls,” Gabe mumbled, his voice sounding as if he were already half asleep.

“You haven’t even seen that scar yet,” I teased, but I was falling to sleep, too.

Pressed between my new best friends, I exhaled, and it felt as if the air had been trapped in my lungs for a decade. My body melted into the curves of theirs as I fell into the deepest, most comfortable sleep I’d ever known.

* * * *

“Hey, sleepyheads!” a voice yelled from another room while I was being suffocated. I struggled against the weight on top of me, trying to keep from screaming in panic. When I finally remembered to open my eyes, I realized where I was. I tried to catch my breath as I shoved Gabe off of me.

I’d slept so hard that I’d completely forgotten where I was. It had felt as if I were drowning under the weight of Gabe and Toby. Not a good start to the morning.

“I’ll be right there,” I called to Sean, realizing that it was him hollering for us to get up.

Hands protested my getting out of bed by grabbing at me, both men trying to get me to stay. I laughed as I batted them away.

“I have to go,” I said, climbing over Gabe.

“Where’s she going?” Toby complained from the other side of the bed.

“She’s off to see the wizard,” Gabe grumbled as he flopped back on his pillow.

“Where?” Toby asked, confused.

“Jasper. She has to go see Jasper, you lazy fuck.” Gabe shoved him playfully.

“Is it morning already?” Toby sat up, stretching. The blanket fell down his body so that I could see that he was definitely a morning person.

Gabe caught me looking and smiled. “You have somewhere to be, doll face. We can’t have you all distracted. Besides, we have company.”

I nodded, though I was sure the disappointment was plain on my face. I looked around the room and realized that, once again, I had no clothes of my own there. I grabbed another shirt

from the closet and buttoned it over myself before searching for the jeans I'd had when I'd first gotten to the house.

When I remembered where my jeans had been removed, a blush crept up my cheeks. I didn't usually embarrass easily, but I'd certainly blushed more in the last twenty-four hours than I could remember doing so in awhile.

My jeans, of course, were out in the living room where Sean waited for me. Oh well, he'd seen me in just a shirt last night. One more time wouldn't hurt either of us.

I walked out to the living room and discovered things could be more uncomfortable in the light of day. After a small finger wave at Sean, I searched the room until I found my jeans. Pulling them on, I tried not to think about the fact that, sometimes, getting dressed was a more intimate production than getting undressed.

Sean was polite enough to ignore my awkwardness. He was all smiles when I turned to face him.

"Are you ready?" Sean asked.

"As ready as I'll ever be."

"Do you need to say goodbye to the guys?" he asked politely.

"If I go back in there, we'll never get out of here." I laughed. "We can go. With any luck, I'll see them in a few hours."

It was incredibly wishful on my part to think that everything would go smoothly with the military people. I'd never had to deal with anything like this, so I didn't even know where to begin thinking about the bad that could happen. The good was all I knew, thanks to Sean and Wesley. I didn't know if they'd left out details on purpose, but I was grateful as hell.

"Did you talk to Gabe and Toby about last night?" Sean asked.

"No," I sighed. "I don't want them to worry about me."

"You like them," he said with a small smile.

"Well, yeah." I laughed. "What was your first clue?"

"No, I mean you like them, as in you *really* like them."

I stopped walking and stared at Sean.

He turned back to look at me, grinning widely. "What? You hadn't thought of that?"

"I don't know," I admitted. I knew that I liked them. They were good guys and had taken care of me since I'd washed up on shore. But I hadn't considered that I would have an emotional

attachment to the men I'd just met. And having feelings for two men at the same time, wanting us all to be together as one... Couple? Unit? I didn't know. It seemed so foreign to me.

"Not to get too personal, but you came out of their bedroom. I assume that means you and they had..." He trailed off as if he knew he'd crossed a line. "Sorry. Look, I just don't want any of you to get hurt. Toby and Gabe are my friends. And I like you. You seem like a really nice girl—even if you are slightly crazy."

"Hey!"

"You threw yourself into the ocean last night, Sara. Sane people don't do that."

I shrugged. It was a fair assessment, I supposed. But he didn't really know me. Actually, it was a pretty typical reaction for me. I didn't feel the need to share that with him. I had been scared and had needed something to take my mind off of it. I don't deal well with surprises. Or emotions. Or anything really.

"Fuck," I said aloud before I could stop myself.

"What?"

"I am crazy." I blew out a sigh. "I just don't know how to deal with stuff. I've always been this sort of loner girl just wandering around life not really feeling the need to live it."

"You know," Sean said, cupping my chin in his hand. "Not all who wander are lost."

"Ugh, don't quote that Tolkien crap at me." I pulled away from him.

"It's not crap, Sara. Sometimes people have to bump around for a while before they find their place in life. Most of us who've ended up here didn't have much of a life to go back to anyway. We found what we needed here. Maybe you aren't crazy. You just never had a place to call home."

"So I ended up here, and I can't leave? That's sort of like being forced into a decision. I don't think I can just accept that as fate."

"No? Well, think about this then. You washed up on a beach and opened your eyes to see two men who adored you before they knew your name. They took you in, they took care of you, and they want to fight to keep you. Who's the last person who fought for you?"

The answer, of course, was no one. Even my parents had let me go, not that I doubted they loved me, but they'd never once asked me to come home. When I had, they'd never tried to get me to stay. I'm sure they thought they were being open and accepting. But maybe what I'd really wanted was someone who needed me.

Sean was right. Gabe and Toby had wanted me since the first time they'd seen me. Hell, Toby believed I'd washed up to answer his dreams. I only hoped that the dream he thought I'd answered didn't end up being the nightmare that had been keeping him awake at night.

Sean and I walked onto the base with our fingers entwined. It took more control than I'd like to admit to keep from clinging to him. I felt ridiculous being so nervous since there was nothing happening at the moment. There were no guards walking around with rifles. Hell, there weren't any people outside at all.

Sean let go of my hand so he could open the door to one of the office buildings littering the lot. Even in the middle of a tropical island, an office looked like an office. There weren't any cubicles, which actually kind of surprised me. If it had been a corporation running the island, they probably would have learned to make half walls out of thatched grass or something, but I guess the military didn't sweat stuff like that.

"I have a new arrival to meet Jasper," Sean told the woman who sat at a small table near the door.

"Has she enrolled in the program?" The woman's voice was pleasant, and she even smiled at me.

"Not yet."

She looked from Sean to me then back again. "You know he's not going to like this."

"She isn't with me, Carol. She's just...with me. Can we see him?"

She nodded as she stood and walked us to a door on the other side of the room. It surprised me when she didn't knock, but then I guess a good secretary, or whatever Carol was, knew her boss well enough to understand what was acceptable.

"Jasper, I have Sean here to see you with a new arrival."

Carol motioned for us to go in. She patted my arm and gave me another friendly smile as I walked by, then she shut the door behind us.

"General Collins, this is Sara..." Sean trailed off, looking at me with a smile. "I'm sorry, I don't know your last name."

"It's Collins, actually," I said with a laugh as I turned to look at the general. "It's a pleasure to meet you, sir."

"And you," the man said, standing up to offer me his hand.

He shook my hand firmly, not treating me like a girl, and I appreciated it. He motioned for us to sit.

“So, Ms. Collins, when did you arrive?”

“Yesterday.” My tone was cautious. I didn’t want to piss him off right away, but I’m not very good at lying. Usually the truth ends up getting you in less trouble in the long run.

“Yesterday?” Jasper looked at Sean suspiciously.

“Yes, sir.” Sean met the man’s gaze directly and unafraid. “Toby and Gabe found her on the beach and brought her to Wes to be checked out.”

“I hope everything was okay,” Jasper said, his voice sounding genuinely concerned.

“Oh, I’m fine,” I replied. “But I was pretty tired and a little overwhelmed.”

Sean and I were still telling the truth, which relaxed me. Jasper Collins seemed like a man who could smell a lie on a person, so the more honest we were the better.

“I’ll bet.” Jasper smiled at me. The meeting seemed to be going pretty well so far. “I’m glad you’re all right. So you stayed with Dr. Carpenter and Sean last night?”

“No sir,” I said. “Gabe and Toby let me stay with them. I didn’t want to impose any further on the good doctor, and the boys were kind enough to let me bunk over until Sean could bring me here.”

“I’ll bet they did.” Jasper’s gray eyes narrowed at me. “Did they tell you about our island?”

“Actually, I explained it to her,” Sean interjected. “Since I’m the last one who arrived here, I figured it might be helpful for me to talk to her. I still remember, vividly, what it’s like to be new here.”

“So you’ve been helping Ms. Collins quite a bit?”

“Yes, sir,” Sean said. “In fact, that’s why I came here with her today. I’d like your permission to be her sponsor.”

“And why would I allow that?” Like the flick of a switch, Jasper went from warm and friendly to snide and cold.

“Because she’s comfortable with me, I’m pretty sure she trusts me, and I don’t think she needs to be locked up on base for the next three months.”

“Plus Gabe and Toby could stay close to her,” Jasper said.

“That really has nothing to do with this,” I interrupted.

Sean and Jasper looked as if they were two seconds from attacking each other across the table, and I didn't want any part of it. I also didn't appreciate the general assuming things about me and the guys. Frankly, it was none of his business.

"Look, we came here first thing this morning to talk to you about this. I would appreciate it if you would at least think about it." I was borderline begging, but I didn't care. When Sean had said something about me being locked up for three months, it had freaked me out. "I'm already trapped on an island. Please don't lock me up here. Sean's right, I do trust him. I know that he and Dr. Carpenter can help me adjust. You don't care about me, but I think they do. Please, General Collins."

He studied me for a few minutes, his eyes searching my face until I felt the need to squirm under his look. I refused to give him that satisfaction, instead raising my chin and meeting his gaze until he finally backed down.

He turned to Sean with a sigh. "Fine."

"Thank you, sir," Sean said, standing with his hand out.

Jasper shook it then turned to me. "You understand that I'm giving my permission for you to live with Sean and Wes? I'll be checking up on you, all of you. I know people think I'm a dick, but we really do have these rules for a reason. The safety of everyone on the island depends on the sponsor program. Not everyone adjusts as well as you did, Sean."

"I know that, sir." Sean looked flattered. "I think Sara will be fine, but I do understand your caution."

"I think she'll be fine, too. She looks like a fighter." Jasper smiled at me, and his gray eyes went soft at the edges.

He really didn't seem like the big, bad jerk Sean had made him out to be. In fact, he kind of reminded me of my dad. Sure, he could be a hard ass, but it seemed he had everyone's best interests at heart.

The thought of my dad gave me pause. I hadn't been home in years, but I still talked to him occasionally. Now I would never see him again, never hug him after climbing off a plane, never hear him tell me he loved me. I felt the tears well up in my eyes and turned away before Jasper saw them. His hand on my shoulder told me I hadn't been quick enough.

"That will happen a lot," he said softly. "There's no shame in it, Sara."

I nodded, not wanting to talk. He turned me to face him. He moved as if to hug me then stopped himself, visibly shaking his head.

“Sorry.” He cleared his throat. “There’s something special about you, Sara Collins. I don’t know what it is, but I do know that Sean is right. You’re going to be just fine here.”

“Thank you, sir,” I whispered.

“Call me Jasper.”

“Thank you, Jasper.”

“Thanks, Jasper,” Sean said, taking my hand.

“You can keep calling me sir,” Jasper told the younger man.

“In your dreams,” Sean laughed. “Are you still coming over for dinner tonight?”

“Wouldn’t miss it.”

“Are you bringing your stud?”

I watched their conversation in fascination. After the way Sean had talked about Jasper, I assumed he wasn’t fond of the man. But here they were talking about dinner plans like old friends.

“Don’t call him that,” Jasper said with a pretty impressive eye roll. “You know he hates it.”

“Fine, I’ll play nice.” Sean grinned. “Do you mind if we have Gabe and Toby over, too?”

“Shouldn’t you check with Wes?” I interrupted. “I don’t want to impose. If you guys already had plans tonight, I can have dinner with Gabe and Toby and they can bring me over later.”

“Don’t be silly.” Jasper waved his hand at me as if swatting my words away. “The more the merrier. And Wesley always loved a party.”

Sean was still smiling, but I couldn’t help noticing his eyes flinching slightly. It made me wonder if Sean was as comfortable having Jasper around as he acted. But it wasn’t any of my business. If he didn’t bring it up, I could just let it go.

“Well, Sean, if you’re sure.” I touched his arm lightly to get his attention back from wherever Jasper’s comment had taken him.

“Of course. We’ll talk about it on the way back. And I’ll have to stop at Jesse’s and order more food. Do you mind?”

“I’m all yours,” I said. “I guess we’ll see you later.”

Jasper nodded to us and moved aside so we could walk out. On the way through the outer door, Sean gave Carol a thumbs up and she beamed at us both.

When we got outside the grounds of the base, Sean picked me up in his arms and hugged me as he spun in a circle. There wasn't much I could do except hold on and laugh. It had worked. It had really worked. I wasn't going to be locked up like a prisoner, and I could continue seeing Gabe and Toby. It was certainly worthy of a few spins.

"You really made an impression on him!" Sean exclaimed as we walked. "I've never seen him like that with anyone. He was going to hug you back there."

"I know. That was kind of weird. But who cares? I'm a free woman." Or at least as free as I would ever be on this island.

While we walked, Sean explained about the barter system on the island. Money was worthless, so they worked out things in trade. He told me I should figure out what I could contribute then do things in exchange for goods and services.

I thought about that as I waited outside the little café-type restaurant called Jesse's. Sean had promised I'd meet the owner later that night, and it wouldn't be rude of me if I stayed outside to wait. I think he wanted to be alone with the guy, but was too polite to ask me to wait outside.

Fine with me. There was too much going on to have to worry about meeting more people. The quiet couple's dinner Wesley and Sean had planned was exploding, and I'd get to acquaint myself with all kinds of people later.

The more I thought about my skills, the more I realized they weren't really good for anything. The only things I'd ever bothered to learn outside of a classroom were things that would put me in controllable danger. I couldn't sew. I couldn't cook. I couldn't do anything that seemed helpful.

Sean came out of the restaurant. He smiled as he informed me that everything was all set.

"Be prepared. People can make a fuss over new arrivals."

"That sucks."

"It shouldn't be too bad tonight, but no one warned me. New people don't wander here very often, so when someone washes up on shore, it excites the natives."

"Oh boy."

Chapter Five

“Honeys, I’m home,” I joked as I burst through the door.

Gabe and Toby jumped to their feet and both rushed me, pulling me between them in a tight embrace. I relaxed into them, sighing at the feel of their mouths pressing to my throat and cheek.

“So?” Gabe asked after a minute.

“So I’m officially living with Wes and Sean. And they would like us all to come to a dinner party tonight.”

“Does this living with two *other* men start tonight?” Toby asked, his face pressed to the back of my neck.

“Yes. And Jasper will be there so we need to behave.”

“Jasper? I didn’t think he and Sean got along.”

“I don’t know what’s going on there,” I said. “But it’s really none of my business. Jasper didn’t make me go to military prison or whatever for the next few months, so he’s in my good graces.”

“Mine, too,” they said in unison.

“I should probably get going,” I sighed. “I’d like to help them with the party since they’re being so incredibly nice to me.”

“You’re leaving now?” Toby pouted.

“Yes. Listen, guys, I don’t want to do anything to fuck this up. And to be honest, that doesn’t just mean not getting to see you. Being locked up doesn’t really sound like much fun, and I’m not going to piss off Jasper if I can help it.”

“We understand,” Gabe said, cutting off whatever Toby was about to say. They shared that look of theirs, and whatever Toby saw in Gabe’s eyes made him back down. “We don’t want to screw this up for you.”

“Thank you.” I turned to Toby and kissed his cheek. “I’d better go.”

“Think about me,” Toby said with a wink.

“About us,” Gabe murmured as he kissed me quickly on the lips.

I gave them a small wave as I walked outside. I didn’t want to go. I wanted to run back to them and beg them to strip me down and fuck me until none of us could move. But I’d meant what I said. I wasn’t going to risk this. The next few months were going to require all of us to be on our best behavior. I would apparently have the rest of my life to play with the boys. We could resist testing the military for a while.

I walked slowly toward my new living quarters, enjoying the feel of the sun on my face and the soft breeze rustling the trees. It really was a beautiful island—what I had seen of it anyway. As I meandered down the path, I started thinking about what it would be like to have the guys make love to me outside with the fresh air and the warm sun on our skin. I could almost picture them naked and hard, ready for me, Gabe lying on his back on the deck while I took his hard shaft in my mouth.

My pussy constricted and grew damp at the thought of Toby pushing himself inside of it while I milked Gabe’s cock with my tongue.

“Careful, lass,” a voice called out from my left.

I froze, my face flushing as I realized I had been interrupted from my sexual daydream by a stranger. He was an incredibly tall, older man who was completely bald on his head but had a bushy beard and mustache. The man stared past me toward the trees on the other side of the path. I started to turn to see what he looked at, but he called out again.

“I wouldn’t look if I were you. Take a big step toward me, and keep walking.”

“What is it?” I asked, proud that my voice didn’t sound panicked.

“Don’t run,” he cautioned, moving cautiously toward me. “How do you feel about snakes?”

I stiffened, taking an extra step to the left just to be safe and keeping my eyes on the man the whole time. “I’m not fond of them. Is it a big one?”

He stopped a few feet from me. “We don’t have small ones.”

I took his outstretched hand and let him pull me even further away from the side of the path where I'd been walking.

"I didn't mean to startle you, but I saw you reach up like you were going to swat a branch out of your way, but it wasn't a branch."

I felt the blood drain from my face and tried to concentrate on my breathing so I didn't pass out. It was going to be close.

"Let's get you to the doc," the man said, putting an arm around my shoulder and squeezing in a sort of half hug.

"That's where I'm going," I said through the static in my head. Everything seemed to have gone fuzzy around the edges.

Okay, so maybe being "not fond" of snakes was an understatement. I fucking hate them. Years of sleeping on the ground will do that to you. If the British gentleman hadn't come along, I would have touched it, and since it was apparently a large snake, I probably would have passed out when I'd realized it, and the fucking slithery bastard could have coiled itself around me and suffocated me to death.

"Are you feeling better?" the man asked.

"Um, sure," I said, my voice calmer and more steady, but my heart was still pounding in my ears. "Thank you so much. If you hadn't come along..."

I didn't really want to focus on what could have happened. If I had been killed by a snake because I'd been imagining naked men, I would have been really pissed. And dead, but still really pissed.

"But I did," he said with a shrug. "My name is Jesse Ackerman."

"I'm Sara Collins. It's lovely to meet you." The further we walked away from the snake pit, the better I started to feel. Okay, it might not have been a pit, but he'd basically told me it had been a monster snake that wanted to destroy me and everything I stood for, so I think I can get away with dramatics.

"Are you on your way to the party at Wesley's? I mean, Dr. Carpenter's?"

"Sort of. I mean I will be at the party, but apparently, I also live there now. I suppose you could say that I'm their new ward. Sean's my sponsor."

"Wonderful!" He gave me that half hug again. "Welcome to Wyspa."

“Thank you.” I’d meant it to be sincere, but I think the words might have held a smidge of bitterness because he stopped trying to talk to me.

We walked in silence the last hundred yards or so to my new home. I was totally grateful to Sean and Wes for letting me stay with them, but I couldn’t keep a thread of disappointment from creeping into my stomach when the house came into view.

I wanted to stay with Gabe and Toby. It was ridiculous and impossible, but that’s what I wanted. I could try to deny that I cared for them, but it seemed pretty useless. Pouting wouldn’t change the situation, so I would have to put on my brave face and push through my remorse.

A warm greeting from Sean and Wesley helped a lot. They seemed genuinely glad to have me there. I would hate to think I was imposing, even if they’d offered. This situation was awkward for me to say the least.

“Where’s the food?” Wes asked, turning to Jesse. “You’re still catering this party, aren’t you?”

“I thought I was a guest,” Jesse said, sounding wounded. “You expect me to cook the food you’re serving me? What a bloody wanker you are.”

“Piss off,” Wes said with a laugh. “You’re making your woman do all the work, aren’t you?”

“Aye, but only because she wants to.”

“So I take it you two have met?” Sean asked, looking between Jesse and me.

“Yeah, he saved my life then escorted me over here.”

“What happened?” Wes asked, his concern obvious.

Jesse and I told them the story of the snake from hell, which I’d fortunately never seen or I’m sure I would have had nightmares for a month.

The guys all laughed, and I smiled, trying to play along. But it still creeped me out that I’d come that close to touching a snake that in my mind was now gargantuan and poisonous and personally after me. So much for no nightmares.

“How can I help you guys?” I asked in hopes of changing the subject.

“There isn’t much to do. Everything’s pretty much set up out back except for the food.” Wes glared at Jesse. “You should relax, Sara. You’ve had a couple rough days. Honestly, we’re all set for tonight.”

Even under good circumstances, I suck at relaxing. I wanted to do something, go somewhere, run, run, run. Standing still was not one of my strong points.

“Maybe we could go help Alexa,” Sean said to Jesse.

“You can try,” Jesse said with a shrug. “She’s pretty determined to do it all herself.”

“We’ll be back later.” Sean put a hand lightly on my back, urging me to start walking back down the path.

“Do we have to go this way?” I asked, hoping I didn’t sound too scared.

“I’ll keep an eye out for you,” Sean said.

I really wasn’t looking forward to another encounter with Attila the Snake, so I let him walk in front of me so he could warn me to run for my life if anything showed itself.

“So have you thought about what I said earlier? About sharing your talent with the island?” Sean asked as we walked.

“Sort of. I thought about it enough to realize I don’t have any talents. Nothing marketable anyway. I mean, if anyone wants to learn how to jump off of high places with no parachute then I’m your girl. But I can’t cook, I can’t sew, I can’t really do much of anything useful.”

“Back home, did you watch a lot of movies?” Sean stopped and faced me.

“I’m sorry?” I blinked at him in confusion. It was such an abrupt change of subject, I wondered if I’d missed a segue way.

“Movies? Did you watch movies?”

“Yeah,” I said slowly, still not sure where he was taking the conversation.

“I’ve been thinking lately. There isn’t much to do on the island. There are some books that people happened to have with them when they came here, but nothing so elaborate as a library or anything.”

“You want to set up a library?” I asked, believing I’d almost grasped his concept.

“No, although that would be cool. If we could get everyone to let us take their books and put them in a central location, that would be pretty awesome. But no, that’s not my point.”

I was lost. He wasn’t making sense, and I gave up trying to figure out what he was talking about.

“Does this conversation have a point?”

“Plays.”

“Plays?” I repeated.

“Plays. You and I—and anyone else we can get to do it—should put on plays for the islanders. And the best part is we don’t even have to write our own material. We can start out with movies we’ve both seen and just act them out. And we could do classics like Shakespeare and musicals and—”

“Plays?” I asked again with a smile. “So my job, the thing I do in exchange for food and clothing, would be to act out movies in front of people?”

“Yes!” He confirmed it as if it were the most normal idea ever.

“You’re fucking crazy.” I laughed. “Who the hell would give me a shirt just so they could sit and watch me make an ass out of myself?”

“Tons of people.” Sean put his hands on my shoulders and stared into my eyes. “Sara, you don’t know how fucking boring it gets here. I’ve read *Treasure Island* so many times I could act it out. I would love to have something new to do. And I’m betting, so would everyone else.”

“Well what do you do now?” I asked. “Don’t you already have a job that you should be focusing on?”

“I do odd jobs around the island sometimes. Mostly carpentry and stuff. But lately, I’ve been playing the doctor’s wife and letting Gabe and Toby have all of the work. They’re better at it than I am anyway.”

That didn’t sound like much fun. In fact, it sounded completely boring. I thought about Gabe and Toby trying to make me their housewife, and I actually shuddered.

“Are you cold?” Sean asked.

“No, just scared of being dependent on someone.”

“That’s why you need a job. We can put on shows, and it will work out for everyone.”

“I like the library idea,” I said hopefully. “I could do that.”

“No, come on! At least, promise me you’ll think about it?” He looked so excited I couldn’t outright dismiss him. And the hug he gave me when I nodded was worth a thought or two on the subject.

It wasn’t the idea I had a problem with. It was the being involved in the project that worried me. One, if it failed, I would be back to square one with no clue what to do for a job. Two, I wasn’t very fond of being in front of crowds. The fear wasn’t horrible, but it wasn’t something I’d jump at doing either.

“Shouldn’t we be helping with food?” I asked.

“Yeah, I suppose we should. Oh Sara, I’m just so excited. I really hope you decide to help me with this. I think it would be so fun.”

“I’m glad you think so.” I laughed. “Let’s go so we can get back.”

We started walking again, Sean still leading so he could fend off any wildlife that happened across our path.

“I have to say,” he said after a minute. “I find it ridiculously adorable that you’re afraid of snakes.”

“Bully for you,” I said, shoving him playfully on the shoulder.

“No really. You’ll throw yourself headfirst into the ocean with no worries about dying, but you see a little snake and you panic.”

“First of all, Jesse said that there are no little snakes on this island, so don’t patronize me. Second, I am not panicked.”

“What was that?” Sean stopped abruptly, and I clung to him as I searched the ground and the trees around us.

He started laughing, and I realized he’d been fucking with me.

“You’re an asshole.”

“And you’re really cute,” he said through his laughter.

He took my hand and led me down the trail again. I couldn’t help smiling. His teasing sucked, but it was pretty funny.

Fortunately, we made it to the café with no more “incidents.” Inside, a woman worked, furiously chopping vegetables at a table.

“Sean!” she exclaimed, grinning ear to ear. “Did Jesse send you to check up on me?”

“Not at all. We offered to come help since he so rudely abandoned you.” Sean walked around the table and kissed the woman’s cheek. “Alexa, this is Sara. She’s our newest arrival.”

“Nice to meet you, Sara,” Alexa said, turning her smiling face to me. “Did you come to help, too?”

“I sure did. What can I do for you?”

Alexa put us to work chopping and arranging food on large platters made of bark and leaves. We got down to business with Sean babbling to Alexa about his plan for starting a playhouse on the island.

“Sean, I think that’s fabulous. The islanders would love having something new to do.”

Alexa gave Sean another big smile.

“Tell her about your library idea,” I urged him.

“Sara, you have to let go of the library thing. I don’t see you being happy sitting behind a desk all day anyway. Look, I’ll stop bugging you about the theater—for now.”

“Thank you,” I said with a sigh.

We worked a while longer in silence, each finishing up the tasks Alexa had given us. When the last of the food was arranged on trays, Sean and I started to clean up.

“Stop!” Alexa called to us. “Don’t clean a freakin’ thing. I agreed to do all the prep for tonight, but Jesse is going to come in and clean it all up. In fact, if you’d like to drop some stuff on the floor and mess up the kitchen a little more, please feel free.”

We laughed, but part of me wondered if she was kidding.

“Well, I think that’s everything. Now, we just need to load up the carts and get everything over to the house,” Alexa said cheerfully.

* * * *

When we got back to Wes and Sean’s, there were already quite a few people there. Jasper and another man were talking with Wesley. I smiled at the sight of Gabe and Toby laughing hysterically at something Jesse was talking about. Off to the side, a small cluster of people I didn’t know chatted casually. Everyone seemed to be having a great time, but when they noticed the food, the conversations gradually broke up as everyone made their way to the large dining table that had been set up behind the house.

Toby and Gabe both took one of my hands and led me to a chair, each sitting to either side of me. They both rubbed their legs against mine as trays of food were passed around, and everyone helped themselves to plates full.

“So,” Sean said loudly from the end of the table. “Sara and I are going to start putting on plays for the islanders.”

There was a moment of stunned silence, no one more shocked than I, then everyone else at the table erupted in excited babbling. I glared at Sean, but the damage had been done.

“Why didn’t you tell us?” Toby asked, hugging me.

“That’s so cool!” Gabe said, kissing my hand.

Everyone was talking so quickly that I couldn't hear most of them. There was too much going on for me to focus on any one voice. Sean beamed, apparently immune to my anger. He had announced it as fact, and he was so smug since he thought he'd trapped me into doing this with him.

"Oh, how I miss movies!" someone exclaimed from the other end of the table. His voice was loud enough to carry over the others, and the words made everyone grow quiet.

"I miss cheeseburgers," Wesley said softly. In the sudden deafening silence, he might as well have screamed the words.

The mood of the party had changed so quickly. One statement had turned everything. I could feel the sadness crushing at everyone. It was almost as if we were reading each other's minds. Every person at the table had gone from happy, joking excitement to remembering our lives before we'd landed on the island. Someone should have reined them all in. I didn't know anyone well enough to feel comfortable doing it, and all the other guests were already starting to wallow in their memories.

In that moment, I knew I would do this asinine plan of Sean's. I would act out movies in front of everyone if I could keep this from ever happening in my presence again.

"I miss Guinness," Jesse said. "There are still nights that I sit in the brewery for hours almost sobbing because I can't recreate it here. A tall pint with its thick foam. Fuck, I miss it so bad."

"I miss driving," Gabe said.

I jumped at the sound of his voice. I don't know why I was surprised he'd join in the pity party, but I was. I raised his hand to my lips and laid a kiss on his knuckles.

"Driving?" Toby asked, reaching behind me to touch Gabe's shoulder. "Really? You never told me that."

My eyes welled up with tears at their tenderness. Gabe and Toby loved each other, and now they cared for me too.

"I loved to drive. Whenever I was bored, I'd jump in my car and take off. Just me, the radio and the open road."

"What kind of car did you have?" Sean asked.

"A 1966 Pontiac GTO." Gabe's voice was wistful as he talked about it. "Her name was Sheila, and she was cherry red. My dad and I rebuilt it together. Damn, I loved that car."

I squeezed his hand, and he gave me a small smile. I wanted to hug him, to kiss him, to hold him until that pained look left his face. I'd heard men talk that way about their cars before now, but anyone could tell Gabe's sadness wasn't just about his GTO. It was just as much about the loss of his family, giving up the life he had before, and I'm sure the car had something to do with his feelings as well.

"I miss chocolate," Alexa blurted. When we all looked at her, she blushed as if she hadn't meant to say it aloud.

"I miss chocolate, too," the man next to Jasper said.

"I miss tacos," Sean said. "Tacos are the best food ever invented. We need to get a shipment of cattle washed up on shore."

A few people laughed, but the mood had turned so dark that even jokes wouldn't bring people back. The only thing to save people from depression of that depth was anger. Fortunately for us, Jasper decided to show off his talent for being an absolute dick.

"I fucking hate when we do this!" he yelled, jumping to his feet. "No good ever comes of talking like this. We can't go back."

"We know that, Jasper," Wesley said, putting a hand on the angry man's arm. "It's just cathartic to share. It's not like we never think about it. Are you telling me, you don't?"

"I didn't say that. But I don't think airing out such thoughts is a good idea."

"Then feel free to go," Sean said coldly, glaring at Jasper.

"You want to know what I miss?" Jasper asked, his voice empty of emotion as he turned back to Wes. "I miss my family. I miss the son I had to leave behind. I miss my wife. I miss the lie I lived for so long, pretending to be a good husband, a decent father and a straight man because it brought me more happiness than I have ever found on this godforsaken island."

"We don't talk about family, you arrogant son of a bitch!" Sean stood up so violently his chair toppled over backward. He started toward Jasper, but Jesse jumped up and grabbed him. Sean leaned as far toward Jasper as the other man would allow as he continued to scream. "That's the rule! That's always been the fucking rule! It's not fair to bring up people. We all miss our families. And our friends."

"That's enough, Sean," Wes said calmly. "His point was made."

I realized in that moment that Jasper's speech had been more about hurting Wesley and dismissing the relationship they'd had than it was about bringing family into the conversation.

And while Wesley's voice was empty, his eyes were slightly red rimmed and his cheeks had flushed alerting the entire table that Jasper's plan had worked.

Unfortunately for Jasper, his diatribe seemed to have had a similar effect on his dinner companion. The man stood and stalked off, not saying anything to anyone. Either Jasper didn't notice or didn't care, because he didn't say word to stop the younger man from leaving.

The rest of us were left to stare at the strange triangle of anger going on at the end of our dinner table. Food was forgotten as we all dealt with our inner curiosity. I was certainly torn between watching in fascination and excusing myself to give the men some privacy.

Gabe squeezed my hand, and I leaned over so he could whisper in my ear.

"We should go."

I nodded and stood up, Gabe and Toby standing with me. We started to walk off, but Jasper yelled my name and stopped me.

"I believe you live here now," he said coldly when I turned to him.

Fuck. He was right. The boys could escape back to their home, but the only place I could only go was in the house. That didn't afford much privacy for the rest of their discussion. Of course, Jess and Alexa as well as a few others still sat at the table, watching the show with rapt attention.

"You're right. And Sean, so were you. This island is certainly in need of some new entertainment," I said rather pointedly, and the people at the table all had the decency to look admonished. They started to mutter goodbye and leave the yard. Everyone except Jesse. He kissed Alexa and promised to meet her at home, but he stayed where he was.

"Do you want us to stay with you tonight?" Gabe whispered in my ear. "We can sleep on the floor or something. I'm sure Wes and Sean wouldn't mind."

"No, I'll be fine," I assured him. I hoped it didn't sound as if I were lying. There was nothing I wanted more than to have them with me, but we couldn't risk angering Jasper, who was already in a foul mood.

"Are you sure?" Toby asked. "Do you want me to kick his ass?"

I wasn't sure who "his" referred to, and I didn't think I wanted to know. I just shook my head and gave them both a sad smile.

"You'd better just go. If you want to come by in the morning that would be good."

“All right, love bug,” Gabe said. “If things get too bad here, please come to the house. I don’t want you caught up in something that has nothing to do with you.”

“He’s right. We can deal with the military,” Toby whispered in my ear. “There are men in higher rank than Captain Douche Bag if we need them to protect you.”

I kissed them both, meaning for it to be gentle and demure, but Toby wasn’t taking a chaste kiss. His tongue parted my lips, and he gripped me tightly against his chest. Gabe moved in behind me and pressed wet kisses to the back of my neck. I felt their cocks growing hard against my body and wanted nothing more than to go home with them and fall into bed. I wanted their hands and their mouths on me all night, but I knew that would be a bad idea.

Gabe sighed against my skin before backing away from me. Toby slowed his mouth on mine and finally broke the kiss. My pussy was soaked at the thought of being with them again, and for a moment, I seriously considered just sneaking away to their house. The rule had been I couldn’t live there. That didn’t mean I couldn’t spend a few extra hours with them.

The voices of Sean and Jasper grew even louder, and I knew that I wasn’t going anywhere. I smiled sadly at the guys and shook my head. They looked as depressed and frustrated as I felt, but they nodded.

I watched disappointedly as they left me with the drama queens whose argument seemed to have escalated even more.

“She’s not a fucking child, you asshole,” Sean screamed at Jasper. “For fuck’s sake, why do you treat the new arrivals like this? She’s a grown woman, and if she wants to adjust to life here by getting her brains screwed out by two men, then what business is it of yours or anyone else’s?”

Chapter Six

“All right, that’s enough!” I hadn’t meant for it to come out as loud as it had, but it got everyone’s attention, so it didn’t bother me or slow me down in the least. “This...this...whatever the fuck this situation is between the three of you has nothing to do with me. I’m stuck here, and I don’t want to hear it. If you insist on acting like squabbling fucking children, then I’m going home with Gabe and Toby.”

“Sara’s right—” Sean started.

“Don’t. I don’t want to hear a single word from you, either.” I was pissed, and I was sexually frustrated. I didn’t appreciate people talking about me as if I wasn’t there, and I certainly didn’t like being made to feel as uncomfortable as they made me. My fight or flight response was highly tuned, and since I wasn’t allowed to leave, that left fighting. I would do it on my own terms and not get sucked into whatever the hell these men were doing.

“Look, the three of you have issues. That’s great. Bully for you. But it has nothing to do with me, so don’t even bring my name into the conversation. For any reason. You do not use me to prove your points.”

“She’s right,” Jesse said. His tone was cautious as if he were afraid I’d turn on him, too. When I stayed silent, he continued. “Emotions always run high when we fall into the ‘what I miss about home’ discussions. But Jasper, you know they can’t always be avoided. Most people like to talk about what’s bothering them. And knowing there are others who understand and feel the pain makes it easier to take. We’re all sorry you don’t agree. And in the future, if we try this again, we’ll all try to keep the conversations light.”

Jasper sighed and ran his hand through his hair. He looked from Jesse to Wesley. It appeared as if he’d say something, then he shook his head and started to leave.

“Jasper,” Sean called after him.

We all tensed, afraid Sean would throw one last barb at the dejected man.

“I’m sorry.”

It was almost tangible the way the tension drained from the scene. Jasper’s shoulders visibly relaxed as he faced the younger man.

“I’m sorry, too. I truly am.” He turned to me. “Would you allow me to escort you home?”

“I beg your pardon?” I asked, wondering why he’d want to walk me into the house.

“Sean’s right. There’s no reason to make you stay here. If you truly wish to stay with Toby and Gabe, I see no harm in it.”

My heart leaped in my chest, and I fought not to emit an overly girlish squeal of excitement. I wasn’t sure what had just happened, but I wasn’t going to pick at it. If he was really going to let me stay with the guys, then I would nod and go with it.

“Thank you for a lovely evening,” I said to Wesley and Sean.

They both laughed and walked over to hug me in turn. I mouthed a quick “thank you” to Sean before going to Jasper.

Jasper offered me his arm, and I took it, allowing him to lead me around the house and down the path to my new home. I was so excited to tell Gabe and Toby our good news. If Jasper hadn’t been with me, I probably would have run all the way to the house, but I tried to control myself and be polite as Jasper led me down the path.

“I’m very sorry you had to see that,” Jasper said as we walked. “I swear to you, I usually behave better at parties.”

“You’re just trying to get an invite to the next one,” I joked.

Thankfully, he laughed. I hadn’t been sure if he was in the mindset to appreciate humor.

“Well, I do love a party,” he chuckled. He grew quiet for a minute before blurting out. “It’s Wesley.”

“I know,” I said softly. “Are you going to be all right?”

“Of course, I’ll be fine. To be honest, the closer we get to their wedding, the worse it’s getting. What pisses me off the most is that I left him.”

“It happens.” I tried to pay attention to him and not search the path for snakes. I didn’t want him to think I wasn’t interested in hearing his story. He seemed to need to talk about it. Since he was allowing me to stay with Gabe and Toby, he could talk about whatever the hell he wanted, and I would listen with rapt attention.

“Do you mind?” he asked suddenly as if he had just realized he was about to pour out his heart to a stranger. “I mean, you barely know me, but I just feel like I can talk to you. I don’t know why. My mind is in a strange place tonight.”

“You can talk to me whenever you want.” I truly meant that, and I hoped he knew it. I’m a great listener. Mostly, I have an insane curiosity about everyone and everything. The more someone wanted to open up and spill about their personal life the better.

Jasper seemed like such a hard ass on the outside, but I saw that deep down he wasn’t a bad person. To me, he just appeared to be really lost, both in his own head and here on the island.

“Thank you,” he said, patting my arm. “Obviously, before I came to the island, I was married with a child. Wesley was the first man I’d ever been openly gay with. It was terrifying and wonderful. Not hiding was great, but it didn’t feel natural. I railed against it until, finally, I shoved him away with both hands. By time I realized the mistake I’d made, it was too late. I’d hurt him, and he had no interest in giving me a second chance.”

“That must have been painful,” I said.

We walked slowly, and it was fine. I knew the guys would be at the house when I arrived, and though I eagerly anticipated seeing them. I knew there was no real need for me to rush. Jasper obviously had never had anyone he felt he could open up with. The problem was I didn’t know if I was supposed to talk too or just listen. So when I could, I offered a kind word or squeezed his arm in comfort, but mostly, I just let him share.

He told me about his anger at meeting Sean for the first time, his fury at the news of them getting married, and his depression at the realization he’d never win Wesley back.

We got to the house, and I urged him to sit on the porch with me. I heard the guys talking inside and wondered if they’d come out when they heard us. I hoped they were smart enough to stay inside and wait for me.

“I really do miss my son. He was so young when I left. I think about him all the time.”

“What’s his name?” I asked. I wasn’t sure if I was helping or not, but he’d seemed to want to talk about his family all night. As Jesse had said, some people liked to talk out such things. Maybe Jasper was secretly one of those people.

“Jeffrey.” A smile spread across his lips as he said it, and I was glad for a moment that I’d asked.

Suddenly, something clicked into place that made me stare at Jasper. He looked back at me curiously, but before he could ask what was wrong, I realized what had just occurred to me.

“Jeffrey? Your son’s name is Jeffrey?” I continued to stare at him in amazement. “Jeffrey Jasper Collins?”

“Yeah.” He laughed. “Do I seem like the kind of guy who would give his son his middle name? It made sense when he was born, but it makes me wonder if it was really a sign of arrogance.”

“Jeffrey Jasper Collins is my father,” I whispered.

“I beg your pardon?” Jasper asked, staring back at me.

“Your son is my father.”

“That’s not possible. I’ve been here forever. My son would have been dead and gone by now.”

“Jasper, I was born in 1980. It was 2009 when I left, when I... I don’t even know. At home, right now, it’s 2009. My grandma’s name was Iris.” My voice was neutral with almost the same emptiness in it as my dad’s had when he was asked to recall something from his childhood. “She died in a car crash when he was in his teens. He never talked about his father.”

“Iris was my wife. She was a good woman, and she deserved better than me.” A slow smile spread over Jasper’s lips. “I can’t believe this is happening. You’re...you’re my granddaughter?”

“I guess so.” I shrugged.

We looked at each other for a few minutes, both of us suddenly out of words. The world is a strange place sometimes. It didn’t seem possible that I would wind up on an island talking to my estranged grandfather.

I remembered being in his office and thinking that he had reminded me of my dad. But I hadn’t thought he was related to him—to *us*. I wondered if it was a coincidence that my dad was named the same as Jasper’s son, that his mother’s name was Jasper’s wife’s name. But no, that wasn’t going to happen. Jasper really was my grandfather.

“Wow,” I whispered, finally allowing myself to believe it. Having run out of alternatives, only acceptance left, no matter how farfetched it seemed. And knowing that I had a real, blood relation here made some of the tightness I still held in my chest ease. It had gotten easier every

hour on the island, but there was always that nagging fear of being trapped alone in a strange place. I had Gabe and Toby, but this was different. This was family.

“I was thinking that, too,” Jasper said. “What are the odds of this?”

“I don’t think there are odds. I believe this is one of those things that will never be understood.”

I was suddenly exhausted. The weight of everything that had happened pressed on me heavily. I wanted nothing more than to go into the house and crawl in bed between Gabe and Toby and go to sleep.

“It’s been a really long couple of days for me,” I said after a minute. “I think I need some time to process everything.”

“Of course.” Jasper stood and offered me a hand up. “I’d like to talk to you more, if you don’t mind.”

“I don’t mind at all.” I smiled weakly. “Feel free to stop by at any time.”

He started to walk away then stopped and came back to me. He took both of my hands in his and looked sternly down at me.

“I don’t know if things like this are hereditary, but I know that my father, my grandfather and I have always taken the road that’s no good for us. We preferred stubbornness to happiness.” He glanced toward the house before looking back at me. “Don’t give up out of fear.”

“It very well may be hereditary.” I laughed. “I *am* quite stubborn. I don’t know what’s going on with the three of us, but I don’t know that the option is mine anyway. We just met. It’s a bit soon to worry about my happiness being dependant on them.”

“Sara, I see the way they look at you, *and* the way *you* look at them when you think no one is watching. You’re scared, but you care for them. Just promise yourself you won’t walk out on them for no good reason.”

He gave me a short bow then walked off into the night. I almost called out for him to keep an eye open for snakes, but I let it go.

I climbed the few steps to the front door. My legs felt as heavy as my eyelids. I wasn’t sure I could even make it to the bedroom by myself. I wondered if I could get one of the guys to carry me.

But when I walked in the house, the front room was empty. They must have gone to bed while I'd talked to Jasper. I made my way to the bedroom and stopped at the sound of the guy's voices on the other side of the door.

"You can't be serious?" Gabe growled.

"What? Come on, it's been forever," Toby whined.

"It's been a couple of days. I'm sorry if you feel neglected, but we've had Sara here, and I didn't want to scare her."

"She knows we're together," Toby said with a laugh.

"That's not the same as her seeing us together," Gabe hissed.

"I don't think you give her enough credit," Toby said. "Besides, are you suggesting we'll never be allowed to be have sex together again?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," Toby sighed. "With Sara here, do you think that we're going to stop being us? Will the three of us just always be together and never have separate time—us with each other or one on one with her? Do you think that she won't accept us touching while we're all together?"

"I don't know. I hadn't really thought about it."

But obviously, Toby had. I wasn't sure what to do now. I didn't want to fuck up their relationship. They'd loved each other long before I'd landed on the island. And I refused to come between them.

Toby was right. I'd known all along that they were a couple. It hadn't really dawned on me that they hadn't done much more than kiss in my presence. It must have been very stressful for both of them to stay apart since they'd brought me to their home.

"Please," Toby begged. "Baby, I need you. I miss being with you."

I chanced a quick peek through the crack in the door. Toby was naked and straddling Gabe's waist. Probably, neither of them would have noticed if I'd opened the door all the way. They had eyes only for each other.

I watched the muscles play over Toby's back as he slid his hands over Gabe's chest. My hands itched to smooth over that skin, to touch both men, to be touched by them.

"I miss being with you, too," Gabe admitted softly.

Toby leaned over and placed a kiss on Gabe's lips before sliding down the bed. He covered Gabe's body in kisses as he traveled.

I remembered the feel of those lips on me. Biting my lip to keep from sighing aloud, I moved slightly to get a better view of the men.

From the door, I couldn't see everything, but when Toby's head started to move slowly up and down over Gabe's crotch, I knew what they were doing. Gabe's fingers wound themselves into Toby's hair as a small groan escaped his lips.

The sound made my pussy wet. I wanted to go in there. I wanted so badly to be a part of the love making, to watch the two men I cared about pleasure each other and to pleasure them myself, as well. But they didn't want me there. Not really. I'd just end up between them, and neither of them would get what they wanted—to be alone together.

"Come up here and fuck me," Gabe said, his voice raw with emotion. "Toby, I want you. I want you now."

Guilt crept over me. I felt sort of perverse, standing in the doorway spying on them. My only options were to interrupt or leave.

"Do you love her?" Gabe asked quietly. I didn't wait to hear Toby's response. As I snuck back out the door and started to wander into the night, I told myself there was no way either of them could love me. Not yet. We were certainly fond of each other, but it had only been a couple of days. I might not have had a lot of experience at love, but I knew it couldn't happen that quickly.

Jasper had said not to walk out on them for no good reason. I couldn't think of a better reason than to let Gabe and Toby be happy.

I told to myself all way to Wes and Sean's that we would all be better off if I stopped this. Walking away from them now would be less painful for everyone than in a month or a year when it all fell apart around us.

Chapter Seven

“So have you just decided to adopt us then?” Sean asked with a laugh.

“I really appreciate you guys letting me stay here,” I said, accepting the cup of tea Wes offered me.

When I’d shown up at their door the night before, they’d welcomed me warmly. They hadn’t pried, but I found myself spilling my fears to them anyway. I could tell Sean wanted to tell me I was stupid, but he was too polite to say it aloud. Instead, he glared at me as I talked about my need to not come between Gabe and Toby.

Wes and Sean let me sleep on their couch and told me I was welcome to crash at their place as long as I needed to. I had spent most of the night crying as quietly as I could. I hadn’t wanted to wake them with the sounds of my heart breaking.

Several times through the night, I’d thought about going back to Gabe and Toby, telling them my worries, but I’d stayed where I was, afraid that if I told them what I was feeling about splitting them up, they would convince me that it wouldn’t happen. But I knew in the end it would. I cared for them too much to allow my own happiness to ruin theirs.

“We’d expected you to be here anyway, Sara. It’s not like you’re putting us out. We enjoy your company,” Wes said, placing his hand over mine. “I just wish the situation wasn’t so hard for you.”

“It’s better this way. The guys will be happier without me in their way. They’ll see it eventually.” I hoped that they would anyway.

Sean opened his mouth to say something, but a knock at the door interrupted him. I knew who it would be, but I wasn’t ready to talk to them. It was cowardly, but after I glanced at Sean, he gave me a soft smile and went to talk to the guys for me.

“You can’t avoid them forever,” Wes said. “It’s not fair to any of you if you just run away. Don’t you think you owe them an explanation?”

“Probably.” I blew out a sigh. “But not today. I know it’s childish, but I just can’t face them yet.”

“I understand, but they won’t.”

He was right, of course. I could tell from the escalating voices at the front door that Toby and Gabe weren’t too pleased with my change of plans. After a few minutes, Sean returned to the kitchen alone.

“Were they mad?” I asked lamely.

“They aren’t happy. But they agreed to give you time to figure out what you want. Gabe said to tell you that you’re welcome to go home whenever you’re ready.”

Great. I hoped they’d keep their word and stay away until they realized that things were better without me around. If enough time passed, they might even forget about me.

“So, as long as you’re here,” Sean said. “We should start figuring out what movie we’re going to act out first.”

“Ugh!” I groaned. “You’re still going to make me do that?”

I appreciated him changing the subject. Knowing that he wanted to yell at me for being obtuse, it meant a lot that he was willing to let it go for a while and make me focus on something else. Even if it was yet another topic I wasn’t completely comfortable with.

“It will be good for you. And besides, you’re going to need food and clothing and, eventually, shelter of your own. We love having you here,” Wesley said quickly. “But if you are going to make a go of this on your own, then you need to start working toward that goal.”

“Fine.” I looked back at Sean. “How long have you been on the island?”

“Not that long,” Sean said slowly. “A year, I guess. Like I told you before, time moves differently here. The better question would be what year was it when *you* got here?”

“2009. What do you mean ‘time moves differently here’?” I asked. “You never really explained that part very well.”

“I mean, Wesley was on the island when the field went up.” Sean raised an eyebrow at me. “You didn’t know that?”

“Uh, no. There is no way he has been here since the forties.”

“I was born in 1906,” Wesley said quietly.

“That’s not possible.” I shook my head as if I could make it go away. “Look at him. You can’t honestly expect me to believe he’s...” I trailed off as I tried to do the math. “He’s a hundred and three years old?”

“Aging slows to a crawl,” Sean said with a shrug. “Whatever it does to sterilize us and obliterate disease also affects aging and time in general.”

“I still don’t understand,” I said in frustration.

“I don’t think it can be explained,” Wes sighed. “I’ve been here since the beginning, and no one has ever figured out why it works this way. The only deaths we’ve ever had on the island have been due to injury.”

“So what, everyone here is like some weird kind of vampire? Will we all live forever as long as we don’t bleed to death?”

“We don’t know,” Wesley said. “We certainly aren’t vampires, but it seems that dying of old age could take centuries. I’ve changed in the time I’ve been here. More gray hair, a few wrinkles, but obviously, I don’t look as if I’m a century old.”

“This is crazy.”

“This is the Bermuda Triangle.” Sean shrugged. “I don’t mean to make light of it or act like it’s not a big deal, because it is. But sooner or later, you’re going to have to accept that you’re stuck here, and life’s going to be much different now. Sooner would be better, especially for you. It’s a shock, and it sucks real bad, but there are good things on the island.”

“Well, the people are certainly pretty great.” I smiled. I knew he was right, and I’d have to come to terms with this place soon. If everyone was right, and they probably were, there was no escaping the island. Wyspa was my home, and I had to learn to accept it.

“Most of us anyway,” Sean said with a smile. “Jasper can be a dick.”

“Hey, I can’t have you talking about my grandpa that way.”

I laughed at the twin looks of shock on the men’s faces as they turned to look at me. They had gotten to spook me, so I suppose it was my turn to give it back to them. I told them about the conversation Jasper and I had gotten into the night before.

“You’re sure?” Sean asked incredulously.

“Pretty sure,” I laughed. “How crazy is that?”

“Actually,” Wes interjected. “I can sort of see it. He always threw himself headfirst into anything he wanted to do. The farther he got from home, the crazier the adventure and the

happier he was. I see a lot of the same traits in you. Yes, it's strange that you'd end up on the same island, but now that you've pointed it out, I can see how it would be possible that you're related."

"You're not going to turn out to be a raging asshole, too, are you?" Sean asked.

"I guess you'd have to ask Gabe and Toby. Am I being incredibly stupid about this?"

"Yes," Sean said simply.

"Not at all," Wes said at the same time.

"You're being cautious," Wes continued as he playfully hit Sean on the shoulder. "I think you should talk to them about it instead of running from them. But I don't see any harm in taking things slow."

Sean coughed, and it barely covered his laughter.

"What?" Wes asked innocently.

"Nothing." Sean didn't bother to hide his laughter anymore. "You preaching to someone to take it slow just amuses me, that's all."

They shared that look, the one Gabe and Toby often shared. The look of lovers and friends. Sadness crept over me, and I forced myself to remember I was saving Toby and Gabe's relationship. There was no use getting upset over leaving them. In the end, we were all better off.

"So, about these plays," I said, trying to sound cheerful. "I think we should start with something classic. Something we've both seen enough times that we would remember all of it."

"You're right. I don't know how many movies all of us would have memorized. But as long as most of us remember the lines, we can help the others with their parts."

"Others?" I asked. "What others?"

"Well, I mean, I haven't asked them yet, but I know quite a few people who will love to be a part of this. It's going to be a lot of fun, and it'll be easier to do with more people."

"I guess that's true," I said slowly.

"What about *The Wizard of Oz*?" Wesley asked. "I always loved that book as a child. And they did make it into a movie."

"Oz," I said with a laugh. "That's what this place is. It's fucking Oz. I got caught up and carried away over the rainbow to Oz."

"Do you...*not* want to do it?" Sean covered my hand with one of his.

"Of course, I want to do it!" I said. I was even excited about it. "I think it's perfect."

“Great!” Sean jumped up and hugged me tightly. “I’ll arm wrestle you for the part of Dorothy.”

“No way, I want to be the witch.” I smiled.

Wesley laughed. “Trevor should be the Scarecrow. He would be perfect.”

“You’re right.” Sean laughed, too. “Maybe Sara and I will tour the other side of the island today, and I’ll talk to him about it.”

“That sounds like a great idea,” Wesley said. “I have some things I need to do anyway. Why don’t you two head over there, and later, we’ll all go to Jesse’s for dinner.”

“It’s a date,” Sean said. He walked over to Wes and kissed him deeply.

I looked away to give them some semblance of privacy. Not that they cared, but I just wasn’t up for watching the happy, loving couple at the moment.

As I stared off through the window, I wondered if Gabe and Toby were in their kitchen kissing right now. Were they lying in bed together enjoying each other’s company? Or were they feeling as crushed and beaten down as I was?

Once again, I found myself wanting to go back to them, wishing I could beg their forgiveness. But I would never be able to ignore the fact that I was coming between them, that I was ruining their relationship with every touch and every kiss we all shared.

No matter how badly I wanted them, it was selfish to think of going back to them. Hurting them now would help them in the long run. I could only hope that I would recover before I died from the pain of losing them.

* * * *

Sean and I had walked around meeting people for a couple of hours before we ran into Trevor.

As soon as we were introduced, I knew Wes had been right; Trevor would be a great Scarecrow. He’d pulled me into a big hug and kissed my forehead after barely learning my name. His red hair and freckles coupled with an insanely outgoing personality would play perfectly to the role.

“Why don’t we head over to Gaspoda for some drinks and lunch?” Sean suggested. “Sara and I have something we want to talk to you about.”

“Great, because I have something I need to talk to Sara about, too,” Trevor said happily. He linked arms with Sean and I and led the way to the bar.

We ordered a few beers, and I let Sean pick out food for me. I wasn't much of a seafood lover, so it looked like I'd be a vegetarian from now on. Sean had been right, a herd of cattle washing up on shore would be a happy day indeed.

"So what do you guys want to talk about?" Trevor asked after draining half of his beer.

"What do you have to talk to me about?" I asked him in reply.

"Later." He waved a hand in the air as if what he had to say wasn't important. Since he had just met me and said he needed to talk to me, I felt it was quite important, but I wasn't going to drag it out of him. Yet.

"Sara and I are going to start putting on plays for the island," Sean said.

"That's really neat!" Trevor exclaimed. "Can I play?"

"Funny you should ask," Sean laughed. "We need you for our very first one. We're doing The Wizard of Oz, and we'd love for you to play the Scarecrow. Do you know the story?"

In answer, Trevor stood up and started singing loudly and badly.

"I was just a nothin', my head all full of stuffin', my heart all full of pain..."

"I guess he knows it," I said. I laughed so hard I almost fell off the stool. His gestures had been emphatic, and his enthusiasm far outweighed his lack of singing skills.

"This is bad ass!" Trevor's face was flushed, and he did a quick bow for the smattering of applause that had burst out from the other bar patrons. "Thank you, guys, so much for thinking of me. This is going to be great."

"So Sean keeps telling me." I rolled my eyes, but I couldn't hide it anymore. I was excited. They were right. It was going to be a lot of fun. I would have a hard time overcoming my fear of standing in front of people and making an ass of myself, but with the help of my new friends, I thought I could manage it.

"When do we start rehearsing?"

"Soon," Sean and I said at the same time. Apparently, he felt Trevor could use some help, too.

"Great!" Trevor drank the rest of his beer, seemingly oblivious to the fact that we'd half insulted him. "Now, Sara, I have a message for you."

"A message for me? From who?"

"Gabe and Toby."

Of course. Who else could it have been? Even when meeting strangers for the first time they seemed to be involved in my life. I blew out a sigh.

“I guess they came to me because they figured I would run into you eventually. Sean is pretty much my best friend, and since you two seem to be all tight, they must have decided I was the best gap between you all.” Trevor glanced over at Sean before turning back to me. “Toby said to tell you that when you’re ready to pull your head out of your ass and come home, you’re more than welcome. And Gabe said not to tell you Toby said that, but to tell you instead that they want you to come talk to them when you’re ready.”

“Thanks...I think.” I shook my head but couldn’t help smiling. I really liked Trevor. He seemed like he could be a good guy. And with a message such as telling me to get my head out of my ass, I could see Gabe and Toby trusted him to pass it on uncensored. “Well, as fun as this has been, I think I’m going to head back and lay down. I’m pretty tired.”

Actually, I was angry and needed to go for a walk and clear my head. Gabe and Toby had no right to share our issues with the entire island. I was getting messages from strangers now? It wasn’t fair. It had been hard enough to walk out on them. I didn’t need them trying to make me feel worse.

“Do you want me to walk with you?” Sean asked, sliding to his feet.

“No, I can find my own way, thank you,” I said. “You two should hammer out more details about the play. I’ll go along with whatever you want. Just let me know.”

I waved to them before turning and walking back toward home. The path had seemed to go straight through the center of the island, I was pretty sure I could make it on my own.

As I walked, I tried to stay angry at Gabe and Toby. They must have chosen to give the message to Trevor because he and Sean were friends. Or maybe they’d wandered around telling anyone who might happen to cross my path. Unfortunately, their tenacity was less infuriating than it was sweet. They really wanted me. I supposed I needed to talk to them. Though they didn’t understand it, they already knew our relationship wasn’t going to work. I’d have to be blunt about it.

It had been *their* conversation that made me realize it. Obviously, they hadn’t actually listened to themselves.

“Sara!”

I turned to see Jasper jogging up behind me.

“Hi,” I said as he caught up to me. “What’s up?”

“Nothing much,” he said smiling. “Can I walk you home?”

“Sure. You can watch for snakes for me.”

He gave me an inquisitive look, so I told him the story as we walked. He laughed, but it didn’t feel as if he laughed at me. I had to admit it would have been pretty funny if it had happened to someone else.

“So no snakes,” Jasper said when I’d finished. “Do you want me to get you a gun so you can shoot them?”

“No, but thank you.” I laughed. “Can’t you and your scientist buddies just come up with snake repellent or something?”

“I’ll see what I can do.” He sounded serious, and when I glanced at him, he wasn’t smiling. Maybe having family in the military would be a pretty cool thing.

“Where are we going?” I stopped abruptly as I realized we weren’t headed toward Sean and Wes’ hut.

I’d been so caught up telling my story that I hadn’t paid much attention. Jasper had taken the lead as we’d talked, and I didn’t recognize the area we’d ended up in.

“I thought I was walking you home. Didn’t you take this route on your way across the island?”

“No, Sean must have taken me down a different path.” I wasn’t sure how many paths there could be cutting through the center of the island. But it was my own fault for not watching where I had been going.

We turned a small bend, and my heart sank. Jasper had, of course, led me to Toby and Gabe’s house. He’d no idea I’d run away after he’d left me on the porch the night before.

I sighed when I realized the guys sat on the front porch talking. I tried to turn and walk back toward the trail, but they saw us and called out.

“Sara!”

I turned back to them, smiling despite of myself at the sight of Gabe running toward me with his arms out. He crashed into me, pulling me tight against his body as his hands ran up and down my back.

Toby didn’t look as happy to see me as Gabe seemed to be. Not that I could blame him. He’d probably been relieved to find me gone, perhaps even thrilled that he and Gabe could go

back to being the way they'd been before I'd shown up. Now here I was again, even if by accident, and Gabe had thrown himself at me.

"Well, that's quite the warm greeting," Jasper said. He smiled at me, oblivious to everything that had taken place in the last twelve hours or so. "You're awfully fond of my granddaughter, aren't you, boys?"

"Granddaughter?" Gabe pulled away from me to look into my eyes.

I smiled weakly, not at all sure what I was supposed to do or say. Glancing back at Toby, I was more relieved than I'd like to admit to see him walking toward us. Before I decided whether or not it would be a bad idea to hug him, he made the decision for me.

His arms went around Gabe and me while he laid a gentle kiss on my forehead. We stood like that until Jasper cleared his throat to remind us he still stood there.

"So," Gabe said as he disentangled himself from us. "You're Sara's grandpa, huh? How crazy is that?"

"Quite," Jasper said with a smile. "But it's a welcomed surprise."

Toby still held me, his mouth pressed against my shoulder as he mumbled something I couldn't understand. I didn't need to hear him to know I'd been wrong. He had been unhappy when I *hadn't* come back.

"Well, congratulations," Gabe said as he shook Jasper's hand. "What are you guys doing here together? Are you going to let her stay with us?"

"Well, of course," Jasper laughed. "Didn't she tell you last night?"

Everyone went still, and for the briefest moment, I thought about murdering my grandpa. Not that it would do any good. The cat was out of its proverbial bag, and the guys were going to be wicked pissed at me. Even more than they already were.

Jasper glanced around and must have quickly gotten the gist that he'd said something he shouldn't have.

"Well, now that Sara is safe and sound, I think I'll be heading off. Lots of paperwork and...things to attend to. Goodnight!"

"Coward," I muttered.

"So you were given permission to stay here *last night*?" Gabe asked, his tone harsher than I'd ever heard it. "Is there any particular reason you decided to stay with Wes and Sean? I mean,

you've all been pretty close since we took you to the good doctor's house. Is there something going on with you three?"

"For fuck's sake!" I pulled away from Toby and glared at Gabe with my hands on my hips. "You cannot be serious?"

"Well," Gabe said. "It seems strange that you'd stay there last night instead of with us. And then we come to see you, and Sean tells us you don't want to talk to us. It's just weird, Sara, don't you think?"

"When you put it all together like that, it does make it sound all suspicious." I probably wasn't helping my case, but I was thrown that he'd accuse me of sleeping with two other guys. It had been hard enough for me to wrap my head around one threesome, let alone trying to get into some kind of love...not even triangle. What? Love octagon or something?

"Why don't you tell us what's going on, then," Toby said. "We aren't going to understand until you explain it."

"Fine." I took one of each of their hands in mine and led them back to the porch so we could sit down together.

"Look," I started. "First of all, there's absolutely nothing going on with Wes and Sean. I'm very sorry that you ever thought there was. I'm also sorry for running away, again." This was turning out to be harder than I'd thought it would be.

"Sara," Toby said as he rubbed my knee. "Just talk to us. Please."

"I'm sorry I accused you of that," Gabe said. "I was really worried when you refused to see us this morning. I couldn't figure out what happened."

"It's okay. The truth is I came back here last night. Jasper walked me over and that was when we realized he and I are related. After he left, I went inside, and the two of you were in bed together."

Gabe stiffened next to me, but it was Toby who spoke.

"We're allowed to be together, Sara." He sounded hurt, and I knew I had to explain faster.

"I know that. That's why I left. It had nothing to do with me being upset about you two. You guys were a couple long before you met me. I totally understand that. But it's the reason I left—not because I have a problem with it, but because I don't want to screw up what you guys have together."

“Baby,” Gabe said as he let out the breath he’d been holding. “We want you with us. You aren’t going to mess up anything.”

“I already have.” Tears welled in my eyes, and I didn’t bother to stop them. “You’ve barely even touched each other in front of me. It’s like you’re hiding your relationship around me, and it’s not fair to any of us. I won’t come between you. I refuse to.”

“But we want you between us.” Toby grinned at me. “We like you here.”

“And I like being here, but you know this isn’t going to work. It can’t work. I care about both of you very much, and that’s why I can’t stay. I’d love to be your friend, but the three of us just isn’t going to happen.”

“Please don’t do this. Don’t run away. We’ll figure this out,” Gabe said.

“I’m not running.” I put a hand up to stop him from interrupting. “I’m really not. This is so complicated, and we just fell into bed so fast. None of us stopped to think about the consequences. If we do this and we all end up alone after it’s all said and done, I’ll always wonder if it’s my fault. I can’t have you both blaming me because your relationship became a casualty of *our* relationship.”

“So we can’t be with you?” Toby asked. “Just like that, you get to decide what’s best for all of us.”

“I just want everyone to think about it.”

“We love you,” Gabe said.

I gave him one of those slow blinks that’s only supposed to happen in romance novels. The utterly disbelieving, weak heroine look.

“You barely know me,” I whispered. “You can’t know that you love me.”

“I’ve dreamed about you since long before you got here, Sara.” Toby turned my face toward him again. “I knew when I saw you washed up on the beach that you were meant to be with us. We understand your hesitation, really we do, but I have to admit I don’t care. I don’t want you to go.”

“Can we slow things down just a bit please?” I was begging, but I didn’t know what else to do. “This is crazy. You guys cannot honestly believe that you’re in love with me.”

“Are you going to tell me that you don’t love us?” Gabe asked.

“I don’t...no. No, I can’t love you.” I wasn’t sure if that was true or not. Even if I did, it was way too soon to say it. We’d just met. I didn’t know what my feelings for them were.

“You’re lying,” Gabe said. “You do love us.”

“Stop it.” I crossed my arms over my chest.

“No. You do,” Toby said as he moved to the step below me. “You lurrve us. You really do.”

“Guys, please.”

“Please what?” Gabe asked as he kissed my neck.

“Don’t do this,” I whispered.

“I thought you liked it when we did this,” Toby said. He pushed my knees apart as he ran his hands up my thighs. “We like when we do this. You make the yummiest noises when we do.”

“I think we should take her inside and tie her to the bed so she can’t run away again.” Gabe’s eyes shone mischievously, and I was pretty sure he wasn’t kidding, but the small shred of doubt in my mind made my pussy grow damp at the thought of him binding me.

“You wouldn’t dare,” I said coldly, secretly hoping he might.

I shouldn’t have been surprised when Toby stood and pulled me to my feet, but I was. A small gasp escaped my lips and turned into a full-blown squeal when he picked me up and threw me over his shoulder.

It’s very strange to be angry, sad and aroused all at once. But that was what these men did to me. I’d meant every word I’d said about us being better off apart, but as Toby carried me into the house and Gabe followed with that menacing look in his eyes, I realized that I didn’t know anything. I’d been more wrong than I could ever explain when I’d said I didn’t love them. I did love them, and I loved what they did to me. I just didn’t know how to love, and it scared me.

There was just one thing they had to do to prove that everything would be all right. The problem was, I didn’t know how to ask them to do it for me.

Chapter Eight

They did not tie me to the bed as Gabe had threatened. But within minutes of reaching the bedroom, we had all ended up naked together.

Gabe and Toby took turns kissing me, one with a hand on my breasts and one working his hand between my legs. Gabe slid down as if he were going to go down on me, but I stopped him.

“Wait,” I said, my voice breathy with need for them.

“What’s the matter?” Toby asked.

“I want you to do something for me,” I said slowly.

“Anything you need,” Gabe said, climbing back up to sit next to me.

“I want you to kiss each other. *Really* kiss each other.”

They looked at each other for a minute before looking down at me.

“Sara—” Toby started, but I interrupted him.

“No. If you two can’t even kiss passionately in front of me then I have to go. You know I’m right. I heard you guys, remember? You aren’t getting what you need out of this relationship because you’re scared of how I’ll react.”

“How do you think you’ll react?” Gabe asked.

“Last night, I watched you two a little bit.” I felt a blush creep up my face. “It...it excited me. I...liked it.”

I was almost ashamed to admit it, but the twin looks of relief on the men’s faces washed away my embarrassment. We had to be comfortable together, and I needed them to understand I wanted them to be together. I wanted us to be together. I wanted everything that meant.

Toby leaned over me to take Gabe's face in his hands. I watched in awe as they closed the distance, and their lips met. Toby's tongue pushed into Gabe's mouth, and they both groaned in unison.

The kiss intensified until the men practically fed at each other's mouths. I was stuck between them and couldn't imagine anywhere else I wanted to be. My pussy flooded at the sight of them together like that. I wanted more. I wanted to watch Toby's soft lips slide up and down Gabe's cock, to see Gabe fuck Toby until they both lost control.

"Jesus," I whispered.

They stopped, looking down at me in concern.

"Sorry," I mumbled.

"That's okay. If it bothers you, we'll just work around it," Gabe said soothingly.

"Bothers me?" I asked, incredulous that he'd think that. "It didn't bother me."

"Sara," Toby said in disbelief.

I blew out a sigh. There was only one way I'd them to believe seeing them together excited me, but I wasn't sure if I was brave enough.

"It's okay, sweetness. We'll figure it out."

I grabbed Toby's hand and pressed it against my wet cunt as I looked into his eyes. "It didn't bother me."

Toby's eyes widened then narrowed as he slid a finger inside my soaked channel. He pulled his hand away and pressed his finger to Gabe's lips.

Gabe sucked the other man's digit into his mouth as he stared down at me. The look in his eyes made me squirm.

"What else do you want us to do for you?" Toby asked. "I don't know if we can get you any wetter, but I'm up for the challenge."

"You know, Toby, I haven't sucked your cock in ages," Gabe said, his gaze never leaving mine.

"You're right," Toby replied playfully. "It has been a while. And if this relationship is going to work, we're all going to have to make sure we take care of each other's needs."

"I agree," I said, my voice choked with need.

Gabe slid over to press a kiss against my ear. "Would you like to watch me suck Toby off? Would that excite you, too?"

I bit my bottom lip as I nodded. Once again, it seemed as if they could read my mind, but I was glad for it. I couldn't have asked them for it aloud.

We all shifted so that Toby could lay down with Gabe on top of him while I found a position from which I could watch. As Gabe moved down Toby's body, I leaned over to give Toby a kiss. I'd meant it to be quick, but Toby didn't.

He wrapped his hand in my hair and pulled me tight against his mouth. Our tongues wrestled for a moment before he moaned. I broke the kiss to look down the length of his body.

Gabe had taken Toby's cock between his lips, watching us as he slid up and down the shaft. My breath caught in my throat at the sight of it. Toby tugged at my hair trying to get me to kiss him again, but I wanted to kiss him somewhere lower.

I slid down to lay on my stomach next to Gabe. He let Toby's cock fall from his lips and pulled me to kiss him. I tasted the salty remnants of Toby's pre-cum on Gabe's lips and licked at his tongue get more.

Gabe shifted our heads so that we kissed just above the head of Toby's cock. I let go of Gabe's mouth to trace a circle over Toby's rod with my lower lip. Gabe started licking his shaft so that our tongues ran over each other on Toby's length.

Toby cried out as we did this, his hands clenching into the mattress. Gabe and I took turns sliding our mouths down Toby's cock.

"I want to fuck you," Toby cried out.

I raised an eyebrow at Gabe. "Who do you think he's talking to?"

"I don't know if he cares," Gabe laughed. "I want to watch him fuck you."

I was relieved to hear that. While I would have loved to see the two of them together, I was so turned on it almost hurt.

Gabe and I shifted so I could straddle Toby. Gabe positioned Toby's cock at my entrance, and I was so wet he slid easily inside. I started to move up and down slowly, clenching my muscles around Toby's shaft as I dropped to his base.

Toby gripped my thighs as his hips caught my rhythm and helped me move. Gabe moved behind me, his cock pressed against my back while he kneaded my breasts. He kissed my shoulders and neck.

"Sara," he whispered against my ear. "I want to fuck your ass."

I was so caught up in the moment that I just nodded. I wanted to feel them both inside of me, wanted them to take me completely.

Gabe pushed me forward so that I leaned on Toby's chest. Toby kissed me while Gabe pressed a cool, wet gel against my ass. He gently pushed a finger inside of me, and my muscles instinctively clamped around the intrusion.

"I won't hurt you," he said softly. He worked the digit in and out of my tight hole a few times, then added a second with some more of the lube.

Toby kept kissing me while Gabe loosened me up. I focused on the feel of Toby's tongue against my own until Gabe pushed the head of his cock inside of me.

My body tensed until I forced myself to relax. Gabe was right. He wouldn't hurt me. I lay as still as I could while he pushed himself completely inside my ass. Toby caught my gaze, and I nodded.

They started to move together, their cocks alternately sliding in and out of me. The sensation of them both inside me at the same time was like nothing I'd ever felt before.

"I can feel you moving against me," Toby moaned, looking past me at Gabe.

"She's so tight," Gabe growled behind me. "Like a vise gripping my cock."

Gabe pinched my nipples and the world exploded around us. I screamed, my nails digging into Toby's hands as I came. And came. And came. My body shook with pleasure, every muscle contracting and releasing with the orgasm.

Toby and Gabe cried out together, each of them pumping their seed inside of me. I collapsed completely on top of Toby and yelped in surprise when Gabe fell on top of me.

We lay there for a minute before Gabe rolled over, pulling me with him. Each of them took one of my hands and kissed it at the same time. I was sticky, sweaty, and happier than I had been in a long time. I was home.

* * * *

After we all showered, we ended up in the kitchen, eating everything the guys could find to put on the table.

"So no more running right?" Gabe asked when all the food was gone.

"Smooth," Toby said, punching him playfully on the arm.

"I promise to talk to you before I run away," I replied. "Thank you for being so patient with me."

“Sara, we’ve had a lot longer to get used this than you have. We understand how difficult this has all been for you,” Gabe said.

“What do you mean you’ve had longer?” I asked.

“I told you I’ve been dreaming about you,” Toby said as if that explained everything. Which it did not.

“We knew you’d come to us,” Gabe said. “Toby told me months ago that he’d been dreaming of a woman who would be our missing link.”

“Your missing link? What does that mean?”

“We’ve been together for years, but we both knew something was missing. You were missing. I fell in love with you in my dreams,” Toby said softly. He reached across the table to take Gabe’s hand.

“And I fell in love with you when we found you on the beach. I told you Toby knew you’d been sent for us. But I knew it, too. As soon as you opened your eyes, you were ours. It was unfair of us to assume you’d feel the same way.”

I didn’t know what to say. After everything that had happened, I was still afraid of coming between them. It had never occurred to me that they’d needed me as much as I’d needed them.

I was terrified. I didn’t know how to be in love. My whole life had been spent in a selfish pursuit of my own happiness. Relationships didn’t work that way. Everyone had to look out for the other person—or people.

“What are you thinking about?” Toby asked.

“I’m scared.” I looked at the floor, unable to face either of them as I blinked back tears.

I wanted to be with them, I wanted to love them but I didn’t want to get hurt. It was silly to have spent so many years throwing myself into terrifying situations but to run away from the scariest thing I’d ever faced.

“We’ll give you all the time you need,” Gabe said softly. “If you want to go back to Wes and Sean’s, we understand.”

“You’re kicking me out?” I asked.

“No, of course not. We want you to stay here. Stay forever. But we aren’t going to force you.”

“I want to stay,” I whispered.

What I longed to say was that I loved them. I didn't care how crazy it was, didn't care that it was way too soon to be in love with anyone. But I bit my tongue, afraid to spit out the words.

"Sara, it's all right." Gabe pulled me into a hug. "We love you."

"I love you, too," I mumbled into his shoulder.

"What?" Toby asked. He walked around the table and hugged me too, pressing a kiss to the top of my head. "I didn't catch that."

I took a deep breath and pulled away from Gabe. "I said, I love you, too."

"Well, it took you long enough!" Toby exclaimed.

"You're right," I said solemnly. "Three days is entirely too long to go without falling in love."

Toby nodded seriously, and Gabe burst out laughing. I kissed Toby then turned to kiss Gabe.

"Knock, knock!" Sean's voice called from the living room. "Are you guys home?"

"We're in the kitchen," I yelled back. "Come on in."

"There you are," Sean sighed as he walked in. "I got back to the house and Wes said he hadn't seen you. I was hoping you'd come back here."

"Yeah. Thank you, guys, for everything," I said.

"We appreciate you taking care of our girl." Gabe got to his feet.

"Anytime." Sean grinned.

Toby looked down at me sternly. "And by 'anytime' he means never again. If you run off on us, you'll have nowhere else to go."

"I'm not going anywhere," I promised with a hand to my heart.

"Not right now, anyway," Sean laughed. "But rehearsals start tomorrow. Trevor and I will stop by in the morning to get you."

"Joy," I mumbled. "I can't wait."

After Sean left, the guys led me back to the bedroom. We stripped down and climbed into bed with me between them. I was exhausted and completely happy. As I drifted off to sleep, I smiled to myself.

There's no place like home.

Epilogue

After weeks of rehearsals, it was finally opening night. The beach was packed with people, and I was terrified of making an ass of myself in front of them all.

“You’ll be great!” Sean told me as he ran by to do whatever the hell it was he was doing.

He had been buzzing around all day, talking to people, running lines, checking then re-checking the stage to make sure it wouldn’t collapse. That last was much appreciated by all of the actors.

We hadn’t found enough people to play all of the parts, so many of them were doing double and triple duty. I refused to be anything more than the witch. I’d tried to be the Wicked Witch of the East, swearing to Sean that my feet could act under a house much better than I could, but he’d refused.

“Hey there, witchy lady.”

I turned to see Gabe and Toby walking toward me. Toby held a bag, and I grinned to see him with it.

“Sorry it took so long,” he murmured, handing it to me with a kiss. “I’m not very good with the sewing.”

“I’m sure they’re perfect.” I grinned at him.

“We’d better get our seats,” Gabe urged. He kissed me quickly on the lips. “Break a leg.”

“Thanks. See you guys after,” I said.

They walked away, and I watched them for a minute before going off in search of Sean. I found him begging Trevor not to adlib.

Personally, I had loved what Trevor added to his part as the Scarecrow. It was hilarious. But Sean wanted to stick to the movie script, so we’d all agreed to behave. Well, most of us. Trevor refused to promise anything.

“Sean!” I called. “I need you. There’s a problem with...”

I couldn't think of anything, but it didn't matter. He heard the word "problem" and came running toward me.

"What happened?"

"Here, I think you need to take a look at this." I handed him the bag.

He reached inside and pulled out a pair of bright red sequined flip-flops. He stared at them for a minute before looking up at me, beaming.

"You got me ruby slippers?" He hugged me tightly for a minute before letting go to admire his shoes again.

"Yeah, well Gabe and Toby did all the handiwork. I mostly begged for materials. I couldn't believe someone had a sequined dress on this island. It worked out pretty well though."

"This is so great!" Sean put them on and twisted his ankle around to look at his foot from all angles. "You guys are so sweet."

"Well, what would Dorothy be without her slippers? She'd never get home."

We had decided early on to forgo costumes, not wanting to waste island resources for a couple of plays. But I'd known I had to get him those shoes. The look on his face was worth all the begging and pleading in the world.

Sean had been such a great friend to me since I'd landed on the island. He and Wes and Trevor had helped me so much during all of this play nonsense—not to mention helping me realize I belonged with Gabe and Toby.

There was no way I could ever repay them all for what they'd done, but I was hoping the "ruby slippers" would be a good start.

"Well, what do you say we get this show on its yellow brick road?" Sean linked his arm through mine. "You know, you're not *quite* wicked."

"No, I suppose I'm not," I replied. I kept the fact that Gabe and Toby would disagree with that statement to myself. I could be as wicked as I wanted to be with them, and it was none of Sean's business.

"This is going to be great," Trevor said, running up to us. "My aria is going to bring down the house."

"Damn it, Trevor!" Sean kissed my cheek quickly and took off after Trevor who was screeching something semi-operatic at the top of his lungs while making a beeline for the stage.

I wandered over to glance out into the audience. Gabe and Toby sat next to Wesley in the front row. When they saw me, they stood and came over to talk to me.

“Are you all right?” Toby asked, kissing my cheek. “Not too nervous, are you?”

“I’m a little nervous,” I admitted looking back out at the crowd. It looked as if most of the island inhabitants had come to sit on the beach and watch us put on the play.

“Doll face, you’re going to be fantastic,” Gabe said with a grin. “Just like you were last night.”

I blushed as I remembered the way they’d made love to me the previous night. Every time they touched me, they found a way to make it new and exciting. I knew I’d never be bored or grow tired of being with them.

“Sara, help me!” Sean yelled over his shoulder. He struggled to keep Trevor from running out on stage.

“I guess I’d better go,” I said with a sigh. I kissed Gabe then Toby and watched wistfully as they headed for their seats. I would have loved to go with them, to hold them and watch the show go on without me.

“Sara!” Sean yelled again.

“For fuck’s sake, Trevor!” I called as I ran after them. “You’re going to give Sean a heart attack.”

The show might not have gone off perfectly, but it was sure as hell fun. And when it was all over, my two amazing men took me back to the house and proved that there really was no place like home.

About the Author

Dakota lives in Detroit, Michigan. She loves the city at night and the shopping during the day. She loves David Bowie and vampire movies, The Beatles and Dolly Parton. She is partial to pixie sticks and cannot stand nuts...in her food. She will always believe that pizza is the perfect food.

She is as much in love with her partner as she is with herself. And she will be the first to tell you how incredibly witty she is. She doesn't believe in lipstick but won't leave the house without eyeliner. She is fiercely political and can often be found ranting around her house and the internet on any given topic. She still won't admit whether or not she really believes that vampires exist. And if you let her, she can convince you she doesn't know how to ride a bicycle.

For more information about Dakota visit her website at www.dakotarebel.com or her blog at www.dakotarebel.blogspot.com.

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***Tropical Hedonism* by Dakota Rebel**

After a boating accident, Sean Harris wakes up staring into the eyes of a handsome doctor. Even when he discovers that he is on an island within the Bermuda Triangle, and there is no way for him to get back to his old life, he can't be too disappointed if it means being stuck with the doctor.

Dr. Wesley Carpenter cannot believe that the younger Sean Harris would want anything to do with him. After half-heartedly turning down the advances of his patient, he realizes that resistance is futile.

The men find themselves falling for each other quickly, but ghosts from their pasts and outside influences try to get in the way of their happiness. Sean and Wesley may be on the island forever, but neither is sure if that guarantees they'll be able to continue their *Tropical Hedonism*.

***Lust, Lies, and Tinsel Ties* by Mia Jae**

Bree Connor thinks she's volunteered to be a cocktail waitress at a benefit party for the homeless, donating her tips to the shelter—until the end of the night when she gets auctioned off to the highest bidder. The buyer? A man who has been giving her eyes all evening. He also happens to be the partner of the man Bree had an extremely unforgettable sexual encounter with a few months earlier, and has been avoiding all evening.

Oh, what a tinsel web we weave...

With 24 hours to do her buyer's bidding, she finds herself draped in tinsel and bound to a humongous antique bed, awaiting her Christmas Eve fate, only to find that she's been purchased as a gift for the man she's been trying to avoid. Unfortunately, her buyer orders them to 'get each other out of their systems' so they can go on with their lives...or not. Thing is, while blindfolded and securely bound, Bree is pretty sure she feels two sets of hands on her body instead of just one...

***Nuit Aux Trois* by Melinda Barron**

Quinn's two roommates, lovers Fletcher Covair and Devlin St. Giles, have the perfect idea: Quinn will accompany them on a Halloween ghost hunt at a haunted plantation. Quinn agrees, knowing there's no such thing as ghosts and thinking the time away will give her time to assess

her future job prospects, and if nothing else, a chance to relax.

But the plantation's resident ghost, Alison, has other ideas. She wants help in righting a long-time wrong, and it seems that the ghost has chosen Quinn, Dev, and Fletch to assist her. While Quinn's mind is reeling from the knowledge that there are really ghosts, she comes to another shocking realization: Dev and Fletch have more on their minds than ghost hunting, and Alison isn't the only restless spirit who wants to make contact.

***Oriana and the Three Werebears* by Tia Fanning**

Oriana Ricci has taken over the family business—flying cargo and rich tourists around Alaska's barely inhabited Kodiak Archipelago. When her plane malfunctions and she's forced to make an emergency landing, she finds herself stranded in the middle of a National Wildlife Refuge. With no civilization for miles and no hope of rescue, she thinks all is lost...

Until she stumbles upon the entrance to an underground bunker.

Jack, Jordan, and Jonathan McMathan own and operate a secret intelligence firm contracted by the US Government. Hidden away in an old Cold War spy station located in the middle of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, the brothers are not only able to do their top secret jobs safely without fear of discovery, but are better to protect their other, more personal secret: they have the ability to shift into Kodiak bears.

Like a fairy tale gone bad, the brothers return home to find their lunch tasted—or eaten, their computer chairs adjusted—or broken, and a beautiful blonde sleeping in one of their beds. This situation poses a big problem for the brothers...

Their location is now compromised. But more importantly, what are they to do with the lady?

***Two Plus One* by Brynn Paulin**

College math teacher, Briony Swift, lives life on the straight and narrow. After all, one plus one always equals two. But when two of her adult male students visit her office one afternoon, she soon discovers that one plus two might be a new and better equation to explore...

***Cuffed and Dangerous* by Bronwyn Green**

When a bounty claim becomes a fight of five against one, Jude Caulfield and Gideon Wells step in to help hunter, Wrenn Saunders, before she's mortally injured. Wrenn soon learns that three is a good number whether in a fight or in the bedroom. Especially in the bedroom—and that's just where Jude and Gideon want to keep her.

***Eight Erotic Nights* by Catrina Calloway**

The holiday season is a time for joy, but Laney Taylor couldn't be more depressed. She's selling the last piece of her grandmother's exquisite antique china to feed the hordes of 'new' homeless living in their cars in an abandoned parking lot on the outskirts of town. But on the way to the shop, an accident lands her in the hospital—and into the arms of the two hot, hunky Samaritans who saved her life.

Josh Goldman and Zach Brenner share a successful construction business, and a secret longing. They can't believe their good fortune when they save Laney Taylor from a freezing to death. Both men have desired Laney since high school, and made a pact that if they ever had the chance to have a relationship with the sexy, full-figured woman of their dreams, they wouldn't mind sharing.

When a winter storm gives Josh and Zach an opportunity to share the pleasures of the 'festival of lights' with Laney, and a chance to fulfill their long-held erotic fantasies, they can hardly believe the good fortune the Hanukkah holiday has brought them. While fate and circumstance may require their eventual separation, all three are determined that they will not waste a moment of their...

Eight Erotic Nights.

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