



TO SAVE EMMY
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Warning: This book contains sexually explicit content which is only suitable for mature readers. This story has been rated *Total-e-burning*.

TO SAVE EMMY

Patricia Pellicane

Dedication

To the Ladies of LIPA, Annick, Lydia, Sue the tart, Violin, Mary, Gina and so many more.
Too many to mention. For the laughter that kept me sane. I miss you guys.

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Chapter One

Nick Caulfield, the Earl of Devonshire, found the power to breathe, either in or out, quite beyond his capability. The scalding tea he'd hardly dared to sip had gushed into his mouth like boiling lava. He swallowed the whole of it unnoticed.

He sat in the Redford's second-floor sitting room. The sounds of the city beyond the large front windows were hushed by distance, thick brick walls and heavy drapery. All he heard, over her echoing and totally outrageous proposition, was the blood pounding in his head and the soft constant tick of a grandfather clock in the room's far corner.

Lady Emily Redford sat facing him. Her slightly embarrassed flush proved nothing compared to the growing colour in the man sitting opposite her. Her eyes grew huge as she watched his lightly tanned skin deepen to fire red. "Are you all right? You said the tea was too hot. Why did you drink it like that?"

"What tea?" he almost bellowed as he finally regained the ability to breathe. And slamming the delicate china cup and saucer on the Chippendale table that separated them, he furthered the bellow with, "What the hell are you talking about?"

"Stop shouting!" she returned none too softly herself then glanced around the room as if expecting another to suddenly materialise, even knowing they were quite alone. "The servants will..."

His voice grew low, almost sinister as he mimicked, "Oh, the servants. We wouldn't want them shocked to hear of the lady's plans, now would we? Jesus, if you aren't the most ridiculous, outrageous woman, I'd like to know who the bloody hell is."

Emmy took a deep breath. All she'd wanted was a piece of advice, an idea or suggestion, pertaining to the art of lovemaking. And who better to ask? Granted, she had imagined he might know some surprise at her proposition, but she never would have thought he'd grow this upset. "There's no need for you to use that language, Nicky. A simple no would surely have sufficed."

She should have known better than to ask. Her plan was indeed outrageous by most standards, she supposed, but Nick didn't know, couldn't ever know the loneliness, the need,

the hunger that filled her world. Yes, she had friends, but friends weren't enough when faced with endless nights alone. She wanted, she needed more. Only she couldn't exactly name her yearning. All she knew for sure was she didn't want to marry. No, she'd already suffered through that delightful state and thought she could manage quite nicely without repeating it. "You said I could tell you anything."

"If I remember correctly it wasn't something you told me, but something you asked of me."

"Nicky, calm down and think. Who could do a better job of it? There's hardly a woman in all of London who cannot boast of knowing your expertise in bed. Is it too much to ask that you give your best friend a few pointers?"

He came suddenly to his feet. "I'm leaving. Let me know if or when you come to your senses."

Now that her plan had been disclosed, Emmy hurriedly rethought her proposal and back-tracked. It wouldn't do at all should Nicky contact her brother. Granted, she was an independent woman of more than a little means, and Johnny couldn't stop her once she'd made up her mind. Still an irate brother was bound to cause her a problem or two. "Wait! Don't go off in a huff," she said then hurriedly added a weak, "I was only teasing."

He looked at her for a long moment, studying her poised, delicate and ever so lady-like manner, her wide-eyed, oh-so-obvious innocence and wondered if he hadn't somehow misunderstood. "Were you?"

"Yes," she lied unconvincingly.

"I don't believe you."

"Nicky, it's not the end of the world. I'm a woman full grown, after all," she said, not caring that her words had just proven his suspicions correct.

Nick sat again, slowly, deliberately, conscious of every muscle and joint, suddenly all too aware of his skin, the throbbing of his heart, the dryness of his mouth, but most of all, far too aware of the woman he'd known since childhood. A woman, who was closer to him than his own sister, closer perhaps than if they shared the same blood.

She was a beauty to be sure, with her thick dark hair piled high on her small head, her skin the colour of rich cream and those big, blue eyes. Looking virginal in a white morning dress, with a high, stiff lace collar, no one could have imagined the wicked thoughts

careening through her lovely head. If he lived a thousand years, he couldn't have imagined their scandalous direction. Nothing could have shocked him more than her last comment. He thought nothing ever would.

Nick gave the appearance of a man in calm, cool control. He always did, but today the fire in his eyes belied his usual tranquil persona. The man was on the verge of losing control, perhaps ready to explode, so when he finally managed a soft almost conversational, "Would you mind explaining?" Emmy couldn't keep her grin at bay.

"If you laugh at me, madam," he said stiffly, "I will take you over my knee and give you the thrashing you so justly deserve."

Emmy's blue eyes brightened with interest at the thought, only to find his glare all the more menacing. She thought she wouldn't linger overmuch on the picture his words had instilled. This wasn't the time to indulge in her usual fantasies. This little tête-à-tête wasn't working out at all as she had planned. She bit her lip and wondered how a woman went about convincing a man to see things her way.

He glared his annoyance.

She couldn't hold back her grin. "If you think to frighten me with that look, you'd best try again. I'm not afraid of you." And she wasn't. In truth, she felt closer to him than she did her own brother. She could always talk to Nick. And until today, he'd always seemed to understand.

She'd known him her entire life. As children, summer vacations found her brother, Nicky, and herself frolicking at her father's beach house, turning brown from endless days spent under the sun.

When her father had died, it was Nick who'd comforted. When her brother went off to India, it was Nick she'd turned to. He was more than just a friend. He was her best friend.

Over the years, especially this last year, after her husband had died, he'd become her closest confidant. Except for now, of course. Now, he was acting like a man. Emmy thought she might have made a grave mistake.

"You should be."

"Didn't you say you were leaving?" She took a sip of tea and wondered how she could undo a possibly disastrous blunder. Of course, she was old enough to know her own mind.

She'd made her decision. If Nick wouldn't help her, she had no doubt another would. Still, she didn't need the problems he could bring to her life.

Nick ignored her question as well as the fact that she could look so innocent, while entertaining the most depraved thoughts. Instead, he asked, "Why would you need lessons in lovemaking? You were married for what? Six months?"

"Four," Emmy corrected.

He ignored the correction. "Why ask me?"

"That's obvious, don't you think?"

Again he ignored her response. "But most importantly, why would you give up respectability, something most women hold in higher regard than their lives? And lastly," his voice was rising again, "why the bloody hell would you take up with that rounder Philips?"

She shrugged in an attempt to lighten the tense moment, while deliberately lowering her voice to a near whisper, hoping he'd do the same. "Darien is very sweet." And before he could object which, judging by the stiffening of his body, he was about to, she went on with, "Respectability is not all it's cracked up to be. If a woman is discreet, I imagine her lover will –"

"You imagine wrong," he interrupted sardonically. "I can name a dozen ruined young ladies who thought they could trust the man they loved. I can't believe you're that naïve."

Emmy shook her head. "I don't care. I want to enjoy myself while I'm still young. I'm rich and pretty enough. Despite your obvious objections, I will be taking lovers."

She was mistaken if she thought he was ready to explode before. He was definitely ready now. Still he managed between clenched teeth a calm if biting, "You're not that young. You're twenty-three. A bit long in the tooth for many."

"Exactly," she agreed. "I'd best be at it then, wouldn't you say?"

"Marry again. There must be someone suitable." Judging by his sudden frown and subsequent strained look, his thoughts moved beyond their conversation, searching for the right man.

Emmy wasn't interested in the right man. She'd had the right man once, the perfect man according to her family and friends. And that proved to be a humiliating debacle.

"Actually, I was thinking the blacksmith at our stables is an attractive sort if a bit rough." She giggled when her outrageous comment caused a flash of murder in his eyes.

Emmy wouldn't have believed it possible, but his face grew even darker, his gaze promising untold pain if she continued on in this vein.

"I'm teasing. Don't work yourself into an attack of apoplexy, for heaven's sake." She breathed a long sigh. "Nicky, I've been married, and I'm not interested in a repeat performance, thank you. And since Richard was so kind as to leave me all his lovely money, I don't have to."

"Why?"

She frowned. "Why what?"

"Why don't you want to marry again?"

She shrugged. "Because marriage is not for me."

Nick snapped, "What kind of ridiculous thing is that to say? All women want to marry."

"Perhaps the ones you know."

"No, not just the ones I know. All women want to marry," he emphasised a bit more firmly. "What in the world has gotten into you, Emmy?"

She dismissed his question with a wave of her hand. "Why is it such a horror for me and not you? You never married. You have a mistress, perhaps more than one, yet I must be sentenced to marriage? You travel. You see the world. You live. Why is it wrong for me to want the same?"

"You can travel and see the world with your husband."

"That's not what I mean, and you know it."

Nick was suddenly of the opinion that his lifestyle had unduly influenced his friend. He tried to show her the error of her thoughts. "Emmy, I'm sorry if I gave you the impression that my life was one party and woman after another. It's not." He gave a small sigh and appeared almost reflective. "There are times, especially of late, that I would trade it all for a loving—"

Emmy gave a most unladylike snort. "Now who's talking rubbish? If you marry at all, it will only be to produce an heir, and no doubt, wife or not, you will continue on with the lifestyle you've spent years perfecting."

Nick frowned but didn't deny her words. He'd never given marriage or fidelity much thought and couldn't, at the moment, profess undying love to a woman he had yet to meet. "Whether I stay faithful or not would depend on the woman, wouldn't you agree?"

"Actually, I'd say faithfulness depends on the man. Either you're the faithful sort or you're not."

Nick quickly decided on another course, as the truth made no apparent impression. "Let's get back to the subject at hand, shall we? It's wrong for you because you are a woman, a respectable woman, at that, or at least, I thought you were until today." He watched as her expression closed, obviously unhappy with his last remark. He tried again. "Emmy, a woman like you doesn't suddenly become someone's mistress."

"I quite agree," she said a bit stiffly, "and I have no intention of becoming anyone's mistress. I will choose a lover. I'll never need a man to keep me."

Nick thought that was somehow even worse, although he couldn't have said exactly why that should be. For some reason, it just didn't sit well that a woman should hold all the power. He shook his head. "But women aren't supposed to —"

She interrupted with a disgusted, "I take it a woman's role is to satisfy a man, not the other way around."

Frustrated at her words since they at once proved true and totally unfair, he went on with, "Damn it, Emmy. Instead of filling your pockets, Richard should have filled your belly. If a little one were pulling at your skirts, you wouldn't be thinking of lifting them for any man. Why the hell didn't he?"

"It didn't happen." She shrugged, trying to sound unconcerned and unable to tell him the truth. She wondered if she'd ever be able to tell. "Who can say why?"

"Emmy, you've always been a moral woman. It's not that easy to throw all your standards and principles into the wind."

She laughed sarcastically. "Indeed, my standards and principles are bound to keep me warm at night."

"You'll feel all the colder after he goes back to his wife."

"Who?"

"The man you take as a lover, of course."

"I won't be taking married men."

"Won't you? Most men marry eventually. Suppose you fall in love?"

Emmy laughed again, the sound hard, almost ridiculing. "Love is for poets and young girls."

"And fucking is for whores!" he snapped, hoping to shock her into regaining her senses.

Only Emmy knew this man better than he might have supposed. She knew what he was about. She merely smiled at his ravings and asked, "Is it?" She sipped at her tea and calmly raised her gaze to his as she asked, "Well a woman can't fuck alone, now can she? So I'd wager that makes the man every bit the whore as she."

Nick released a long breath. His dark eyes narrowed as he tried to understand. What had happened to her? He'd seen her often during her marriage and more so since Richard's untimely fall and subsequent death, and never once had he suspected anything to be wrong. Suddenly, a thought occurred. Had Richard abused her? Jesus, had he hurt her? Is that why the thought of another marriage seemed to repulse her?

"When are you meeting him?"

"That's none of your business." There was no way she would tell him. Emmy hadn't a doubt he meant to foil her plans.

"And if I make it my business?"

She hesitated a long moment. Of course, she wasn't about to tell him the truth. She wouldn't put it past him to ruin everything. So she sighed, pretending she couldn't resist his insistence. "Friday night, at the Kensington ball, all right? Afterwards I thought I'd invite him here."

Nick knew a lie when he heard it, especially a lie from her. He knew her too well to believe she'd bring a man to her home for the purpose of bedding him. She had too many friends. Someone was always stopping by. She might want to do something disgraceful, but she wouldn't want everyone to know it. The Kensington ball was five days away. For some reason, he'd gotten the impression that the illicit rendezvous would be sooner. She seemed almost desperate for the particulars he might bestow. Wouldn't that mean time was short? He thought his best bet would be to watch the house, or better yet...

"I have to go." Nick came to his feet.

Emmy stood as well, a worried look clouding her eyes. "You're not going to do anything foolish, are you?"

He frowned and wondered what she was about. "Like what?"

"Like offer him out."

Nick's head snapped back as if the mere suggestion was in need of dodging a blow. "And get myself killed?" He looked aghast at the thought. "I love you, Emmy, but I don't love you that much."

She laughed at his teasing and stepped into his arms for a hug and a brotherly kiss. The light kiss shared since childhood upon every greeting and departure suddenly and surprisingly proved oddly incongruent. Two sets of sensitive, all-too-knowing lips became far too aware of what they were about, and a kiss that should have been a mere peck lasted almost five seconds too long.

Nick's head snapped sharply back in shock. What in hell? He stared at her for several heartbeats, his eyes slightly glazed, his confusion more than obvious. Softly, he groaned, "Damn you," and clearly blamed her for his inability to resist.

His mouth claimed hers in earnest. She never noticed his arms gathering her close. His lips nearly ravished her mouth in his need to search out her taste. The need was overwhelming. He'd never suffered anything like it and vaguely wondered if he might never stop. The instant intense degree of wanting left him shaken to the core. He had to discover the lusciousness that was only hinted at beyond those generous lips.

His mouth was hot, clean, and delicious. His lips moved determinedly against hers and Emmy felt her knees threaten to give way. Her surprise obvious, she gasped for breath and took the scent of him deep into her lungs. A wave of dizziness assaulted her. The feelings that sped through her weren't anything like those she'd known when in Darien's arms. This was more, so much more. Lord, she'd known it could be like this. Somehow, she'd just known that the coming together of lips, in the arms of the right man, would rock her world.

He smelled so good. She'd never realised a man could smell like this, like a faint hint of tobacco, like a scant suggestion of whisky, like a man. She might have wondered if all men smelled like him, but she knew they did not. The few short moments spent with Darien had proven they did not.

Oddly enough, his lips began to pry hers apart. She might have pulled back in surprise, for she wondered what in the world he was about. Only she didn't. Trusting, she forced aside her surprise and allowed the intimacy. Then his tongue touched her. She shivered as it gently danced over her bottom lip to slip just inside, to sip, to sample of her taste.

Lord, she'd never imagined anything like it. Was this a real kiss? Why had she waited so long? Why hadn't she long ago come to know the pleasure of this magic?

She made a low sound deep in her throat, a sound that told clearly of her surprise, a sound that seemed to beg him for more. He didn't hesitate to accede to her wishes as his mouth coaxed her lips even further apart.

Almost immediately, he realised she didn't know how to kiss, not a real kiss, not a kiss between a man and his woman. Not a kiss born of passion, of need. Caught up in a flash of overwhelming desire, Nick distantly realised some confusion at the thought. She'd been married for months. Hadn't Richard taught her how to kiss? How in God's name had he resisted carnal knowledge of this mouth?

Nick dismissed his thoughts. Her mouth felt too good, tasted too good to allow any thought but to know more of this lush enchantment. His lips brushed over hers, back and forth, back and forth, barely touching then touching with purpose then barely touching again, leaving her mouth tingling, aching and on fire.

Her hands came to his neck then his face. She cupped his cheeks, delighting in the feel of his rough cheeks, the hardness of a chiselled jaw, the deliciousness of his silky hair. She couldn't believe a man could feel this good, smell this good. A hunger began in the pit of her belly. She'd never imagined a kiss could be so wonderful. Why had she waited so long to find out? She wondered if he could kiss her enough and only prayed he'd never stop.

Emmy never realised how his play enticed her mouth to open, her lips to soften, and when they did, to his satisfaction, he couldn't hold back yet another groan even as he wondered if he could stop, if he could ever stop.

He claimed her mouth then with a searing kiss as his tongue slipped inside, rolling, searching, sipping at her taste, plundering every dark sweet corner, discovering all there was to know. And Emmy could only gasp in wonder at the pleasure gained by parting her lips.

Could this be happening? He'd tried so hard to ignore his attraction, struggled for years, wanted her forever. And never had he dared believe the possibility of kissing her, really kissing her, of having her.

God, could it be true? Could it be she felt the same?

He gathered her closer, all his yearning hard muscle against her softness. His mind swam with the deliciousness of her. His hands held her tightly against him. Even as he shivered, he knew it wasn't enough. Gently, his hands skimmed over her back, drifting down lower, lower until he slid them under her ass, pulling her, lifting her so their hips might meet. He felt the warmth of her through her clothes. How hot was this woman that he could feel that heat through the many layers of skirt and petticoats? God, he had to know the taste, feel and smell of her. He reached between her thighs and lifted her so their mouths grew even. He wanted to feel her against him. He wanted to feel her more than he'd ever wanted anything in his life.

His body pressed hers hard against the wall, holding her in place with his hips as his mouth ravished hers. And muttering a sound of displeasure as if it was against his will and he was forced to stop, he tore his mouth from her heat and raised her higher.

Her breasts, white, gorgeously round and full were bare to his delight, and she gasped her surprise and groaned in equal pleasure as his mouth suddenly sucked a soft pink nipple deep into a furnace of blazing heat. She hadn't realised her dress had opened. She'd never imagined he could have unbuttoned it without her knowledge. The world spun dizzily around her as she groaned and succumbed to this wildly ecstatic enchantment. Nothing had ever felt like this. Nothing ever would again.

His hands gathered her soft flesh together so his mouth could easily sample one then the other, biting, licking, sucking back and forth until madness threatened. Her nipples ached and she only wanted more of the pain.

"Harder," she murmured. "Oh God, harder please." She couldn't bear another minute of it, yet she never wanted him to stop. Her eyes closed, and her breath hissed between her teeth as her back arched in silent invitation. "Nicky, oh God, Nicky."

It wasn't enough, this meagre tasting of a woman who'd dared to fill his mind, his senses with aching enticement. He hadn't the will but to accede to her siren's call. His need for her was suddenly, desperately, overpowering. Later, he'd wonder how he'd managed to

keep what little sense he had and not take her in a haze of sexual madness, sprawled upon the drawing room floor.

At her lips again, he couldn't get enough. How had a mouth grown this soft, this sweet, and this delicious? How had he not been conscious of the fact? How had a woman come to smell like this, taste like this? Now that he'd touched her, he thought he might never stop. All he could think was he had to have more.

Without thought, his hand slid up the length of her leg, under her dress, over silk stockings and bare thigh, and inside the wide leg of her drawers. He wouldn't be denied. He had to know her, touch her and taste her. Together, they groaned as his fingers slid over the silky smooth skin above her stocking. Her heartbeat tripled, and his gasping came loud to her ears. There was no tentative touching here, the need to know her, the need to have him know her, was raw, aching and beyond all-consuming.

Her cry was muffled against his mouth as his fingers slid through her lush protective curls and, at last, into her pussy. He groaned his pleasure at the blazing heat of her.

His mind swam. Hot, wet. God, he'd thought touching her would be enough, but it wasn't. He had to taste her. "I need..." he groaned into her mouth. "Jesus, I need this."

Emmy was beyond thought, beyond the ability to understand his mutterings. All she knew was his touch and the wild pounding of her blood. She couldn't breathe and thought it would never matter less. She didn't need air. She needed this, his touch, his kiss. He couldn't stop. He couldn't ever be allowed to stop. She'd waited forever to know this pleasure.

A soft cry escaped her lips as he pulled his hand away from her warmth.

"No," she moaned into the heat of his mouth. "Don't stop." She didn't want him to stop. He had to touch her. She'd die if he stopped touching her.

Then his fingers, wet with her juices, were at her mouth and his. In her mouth, he painted her lips, her tongue with her own sweet cream and licked the last of it as his fingers were sucked into his own mouth. He was desperate to know all he could of her haunting scent, her luscious taste. God, he'd never known a woman could taste this good.

The sound of a doorbell ringing and a shrill feminine laugh shocked him from this wildly erotic moment. Nick eased his hold and allowed Emmy to slide the length of him even as he greedily absorbed the luxury of her soft curves against him.

He blinked, once twice then gave a slight shake of his head as if trying to clear a dazed mind, trying to pull himself from the fog of overwhelming passion. His eyes were wide with surprise, his body trembling, gasping for every breath. He moved suddenly, sharply away, only to quickly return to steady her trembling form. What the hell? He cleared his throat and put a finger inside his cravat, loosening the fabric a bit, the gesture telling clearly his shock, while his gaze filled with confusion. "Christ, Emmy!" he gasped unable to catch his breath. Clearly puzzled, he croaked out, "What the hell was that?"

Nick couldn't believe he'd lost all control. She was half-naked, warm and gorgeous. The most beautiful creature he'd ever seen. But he'd hardly gotten the chance to savour the view when he suddenly realised the doors to the drawing room were wide open and anyone could have walked in on them. Jesus, what was wrong with him? He hadn't once thought of her dishonour should her guest have suddenly come upon them.

Emmy staggered under myriad emotions that assailed. Her eyes widened as she watched his cheeks colour and knew she did not suffer alone. She stared into his eyes, her own equally filled with surprise. Emmy was a novice at passion. Still, she knew something had ignited between them. Something different. Something important. What should have been naught but a simple kiss had somehow gone almost instantly out of control as the two, half crazed with need, had suddenly torn at each other. She'd never suffered anything like this before, and by the looks of him, she hadn't suffered alone.

Her hands brought the edges of her dress together, and unsteady fingers soon had her clothes in order again. Both of them looked shaken to the core of their being. Without saying another word, he turned suddenly away and nearly flew down the red-carpeted stairs.

Her clothes once again in place, she stood trembling against the upstairs railing and watched as he nearly tore his hat from her butler's hand. He murmured a quick word to her friend Annie and offered a stiff smile as he backed towards the front door. This was the first time they didn't wave before Jenkins closed the door behind him. This time, Nick never looked up, for it seemed he couldn't reach the street fast enough.

* * * *

An hour later, Nick sat before a fire in the Duke of Northfolk's library. Across from him sat the man himself. Nick had once supposed Darien Philips to be a decent enough chap. He was at a loss to understand why he suddenly hated the man's guts. A bottle of cognac sat open on the table between them as they sipped from snifters and spoke of everything and nothing at all.

Finally, Nick bridged the subject for which he had come. "I was talking to Emmy Redfield earlier. It seems she's set her cap for someone, only she wouldn't tell me who."

"Set her cap?" he asked. "You mean to marry?" The man visibly blanched.

Nick nodded with a knowing look. "Is it you?"

"Ho, not likely my boy. She's a neat little piece, but Miss Mary Talbot is more to my liking."

"Do you mean to marry Mary Talbot?"

"Of course. Where have you been, man? The banns have twice been announced."

"In the country," Nick murmured almost to himself and continued on with, "And returned just in time, it seems."

"When are the nuptials?"

"Three weeks." Darien laughed softly and gave a broad, knowing wink. "No going back now, I'd say."

"There'll be some drastic changes, I'd wager."

The duke frowned. "Why so?"

Nick sipped at the cognac. "A wife usually frowns on her husband continuing his bachelor lifestyle."

The duke gave a small shrug. "Mary shouldn't interfere overmuch, I expect. I think she'll take to country life ever so much more than the city. Wouldn't you agree?" He laughed again. "Can't get enough of country air, I always say."

Nick hid his disgust behind a tight smile just before he downed the last of his drink and nodded in agreement. "A good place to raise children," he murmured without much interest. "A few of us were planning a game of cards. You interested?"

The duke nodded. "There's only one thing I enjoy more. When?"

"Thursday, late."

Darien shook his head in the negative. "Sorry, old man. Have an engagement at nine. I expect the lady will keep me busy 'til the wee hours." He grinned, knowingly. "If you get my drift."

Nick definitely got the man's drift and breathed deeply, knowing his lascivious grin was formed with Emmy in mind. Oddly enough, it took some effort to keep his hands from forming fists, for he suddenly wanted nothing more than to smash that grin off this bastard's face.

Suddenly, he felt an almost overpowering need to bathe. The man was attractive enough, Nick supposed, if one didn't look too closely at the signs of debauchery that slackened well-formed lips, brought small bags under his eyes, and softened a once hard jaw with the not too distinct promise of jowls. He dressed to perfection, but there was slime beneath the faultless attire and almost famous good looks. Slime that had almost touched Emmy.

So the meeting was Thursday. He'd thought as much. Emmy never could lie worth a shit. Nick's gaze hardened with determination as he made his excuses and left the duke to his drink and cosy fire. The little minx was in for a surprise, the surprise of her life one might venture to say, and Nick could hardly wait.

Chapter Two

That kiss. Why couldn't she forget it? Forget it and all he'd done? Why had it kept her awake for most of these last three nights? Why had she tossed and turned, filled with yearning, filled with wanting more of what she'd barely sampled? No one had to tell her there was more to it. No one had to say unbearable pleasure awaited her should they have taken that moment further.

A glance at his pained expression and she knew he was at least equally affected as was she. She saw it in his eyes, in the flush of his skin, felt it in the tremble of his hands, heard it in the gasping of his breath.

Betsy, her maid, knocked and entered her room. She watched her mistress's obvious distress as she hung a freshly ironed dress in the armoire. "Are you all right, ma'am?"

Emmy smiled and sat at last, only realising then that her back ached from hours of pacing. She'd paced almost every waking moment in the last three days since Nick had left. "I'm fine, Betsy. Thank you."

"I thought you might like a bit of tea," Betsy said as she took the tray from the table outside the door and brought it into the room. "A letter just came for you."

A plain white envelope sat propped near the teapot.

Inside was a short note, done in a lavish scrawl. Emmy had never seen the duke's writing before yet the script seemed oddly familiar. It read,

Eight o'clock, please, my love. I cannot wait.

Emmy read the note and shivered. With dread? Certainly not. She'd given her new lifestyle months of serious thought. Only now that the time had come, she might have thought her heart would hammer with excitement, with wonder, with delight. Emmy shook her head. She was looking for something that didn't exist, a fairytale, a dream. But was it?

Those few minutes spent with Nicky were real enough. Real enough to cause her to lose sleep, night after night.

She shrugged aside the thought. She couldn't help but admit there was something special between them. Even so, that didn't mean she had to give up on her plans, did it? Of course not. Nick had run from her. Apparently, he wasn't interested in what was so obviously his for the taking. Emmy shrugged. She was a big girl. Despite his obvious liking for what he'd encountered, it was clear he wasn't all that interested. She forced aside the oddly hurtful thought and ridiculed the possibility of silly tears.

Her spine stiffened with determination. What it came down to was a simple matter of choice. Nicky had certainly made his, and she could either live the rest of her life, never knowing the possible pleasure that existed between a man and a woman, or she could go on with her original plans. The possibility of never knowing, of never feeling the pleasure, was an appallingly dismal prospect. If the truth be told, the duke didn't stir her senses. He didn't kiss, smell, or taste like Nicky. He didn't bring her to a state of ecstasy with one of his kisses and it didn't matter. One day, she'd find a man who did.

Her tea forgotten, she paced again. Mindlessly, she moved from her chaise to her bed to her door, only to return and start the whole process over again. Had she chosen the wrong man? Emmy stiffened her spine and swore she had not. He was perfect for her plans. Cool, composed, a man who knew what he wanted, a man willing to share only a part of himself. The only part she wanted.

There would be no emotional involvement, which suited her. Darien was marrying in a few weeks time. He wanted only to ease the flesh, something everyone, even the most elegant ladies, talked about, something Emmy could only imagine.

After tonight, she'd know the whole of it, and if it didn't compare to what might have been with Nicky, Darien couldn't be held at fault. Tonight, she'd be transposed into a new Emmy. Sophisticated, worldly, knowledgeable, still a lady she supposed, but one who knew something of life.

Why then did the whole idea seem suddenly so cold?

Damn Nicky! It was his fault. Why had he kissed her like that, touched her like he'd never touch her enough? Done the things he'd done and leave her more confused and wanting than ever? Why had he chosen now, when she needed him most, to remember

morals? It could have been so good. Nicky, her best friend, who'd taught her how to cheat at cards, to race her horse, to best any in drink, and the one time she really needed him, he'd failed her.

Emmy shrugged. There was no help for it. She knew what she wanted, and she was going to do it.

* * * *

Perhaps because she wanted the clock to stop, the hours passed faster than she could have imagined. And all too soon, it was time. She buttoned the demure dress to her throat. Beneath it she wore nothing but black stockings, held in place with red garters. Her body pulsed, especially her breasts and between her legs, as if silently pleading for their usual garments. She denied them their wants. Not tonight. Tonight, she wanted nothing to interfere, nothing to bar her from the least pleasure.

She stood before her mirror, her hands like ice and none too steady. In truth, her entire body trembled. Through the mirror, a pale face stared back. A face with huge blue eyes filled with trepidation. Was she doing the right thing? She desperately needed someone to tell her she was doing the right thing. Needed it all the more perhaps because she knew she was not.

The clock in the drawing room chimed eight. And for the first time in three days, Emmy smiled, a frightened smile perhaps, but a smile none-the-less. She was about to do something terribly wicked and was determined she was going to love every minute of it.

Done with thinking, done with her questions, doubts and fears, she turned from the mirror and left her room.

* * * *

At the stroke of eight, a black carriage stopped before the door of Emmy's small mansion. He watched from the dark interior as her houseman stepped before her, opened the carriage door and helped her inside.

She sat opposite him.

The door closed.

The carriage nearly jarred her from her seat as it lurched into traffic over London's cobblestone streets.

Her eyes had not as yet adjusted to the dark, she smoothed her skirt and the cape she wore over it and broke the silence with, "Your Lordship."

Nick chuckled softly. "So formal, Emmy? We've never bother with titles before."

He heard a soft gasp and struck a match, lighting the lamp set to the right of the door. He replaced the chimney and asked with his usual cocky grin, "Surprised?"

The curtains were closed. There was nothing but privacy, exactly what she had expected, except across from her sat the wrong man. Or the right one. She couldn't for the moment think. She couldn't quite grasp what was happening.

To say she was shocked was an understatement, but with that shock came a surge of relief. Only that relief was instantly marred by fear. It took a long moment before she found the courage to ask, "What did you do with him?"

Nick grinned at her obvious thoughts. "He's on his way to China."

"Oh my God, Nicky, you didn't. Please tell me you didn't!"

"All right, I didn't." He grinned again, and Emmy knew he spoke the truth. In an instant, she realised what he was about. He was saving her from herself. Damn the man and damn her for telling him of her plans. He'd gone and ruined everything.

The worst of it wasn't that he'd delayed the inevitable. The worst of it was he'd caused her days of untold anxiety and soul searching all for naught.

Suddenly, it was all too much for her to take.

"Why you..." she muttered as she lunged at him and got in two whacks before he managed to still her struggles. Violence was completely out of character. It took both of them by surprise. It shouldn't have. During these last few days, Emmy had suffered under some intense emotional trauma. She'd made a major decision, one she had no particular liking for, and silently, blamed him for hour upon hour of unnecessary tormented worry. He'd dared to give her a glimpse of what it could be like then, heartlessly, disappeared. She hadn't heard a word from him since he'd run from her home three days back.

Her arms were twisted behind her back. Any movement on her part brought pain to her shoulders. She had no choice but to remain absolutely still, trapped between his hard thighs.

His hands moved to just beneath her shoulders, effectively preventing any movement but doing so without pain.

"I could kill you for this," she gritted between clenched teeth. It had taken months of thought, hours of building courage, only to find him here, her plans in ruin.

He gave her a shake. "I could kill you for even thinking of this."

Her mouth was almost even with his. He felt her panting, sweet breath against his lips and swore to ignore it. He'd thwarted her plans. Nick could understand why that would upset her. What he didn't understand was why her anger should cause an ache in his chest. Quickly, he shook aside the absurd thought. It didn't, of course. He was hungry. The small gnawing he felt was simply his belly asking for food. Nothing more.

He flipped her suddenly over his knee, yanked up her skirt and applied two sharp slaps to her rear. It took two before his mind registered naked flesh. In an instant, her skirt was in place and she was upright again.

Emmy's world swam dizzily around her. He was flipping her every which way, so fast she barely felt his slap. Still, she knew he was aware of her nakedness.

Nick's heart pounded. He hadn't thought, hadn't even suspected. His voice was filled with shock. "You were going to do it. You were actually going to do it." He couldn't seem to stop the nonsensical words, even though both of them knew her meeting with the duke was for one purpose only.

He shook her again. Hard. Hair pins flew every which way. Part of her hair stayed in place while part of it nearly covered one side of her face. Rage bubbled inside her breast. How dare he touch her like this? How did he presume to touch her, to put his hands on her without her permission? "You bastard!"

Nick instantly stopped his maltreatment. Both were breathing hard.

Emmy had never felt so out of control. She wanted to kill him, to scratch his eyes out. Why?

Because she'd been so afraid, because she'd paced her floors for days, because he'd kissed her and something had happened, because both of them knew it yet he had walked away.

Anger guided her, releasing any inhibitions, throwing the last of any caution to the wind. Her head moved forward. Her lips were on his. This was no sisterly kiss, nor one born of passion. It was rooted solely in anger.

Nick gasped his surprise but instantly realised his error, for the gasp only brought her taste and scent deep into his brain. He couldn't stop his low groan or the instant need to kiss her in return.

And kiss her he did. He couldn't stop and thought perhaps he never would. How could he want like this? How could the need be so sudden, so strong?

It took no effort to coax her lips apart. She knew now what was expected of her. Nick couldn't help but feel a measure of pride that he had been the one to teach her. That she knew what she did because of him. They groaned in unison as his tongue slid deep into her heat. He wondered if a woman had ever tasted like this, had ever burned like this?

Emmy felt almost faint with pleasure. He was delicious, hot, wet—hotter and wetter than she had remembered. He tasted so good.

"I love the way you taste," she said against his open mouth and smiled at his soft groan. "The way you move your tongue, the way you eat at me. I can't believe how much I love it."

His tongue was rough then sweetly gentle and rough again. She couldn't hold back her groan. His mouth mastered not only her lips but her entire body as the touch of his lips and tongue somehow pulled at her stomach, causing an ache to form, even as she prayed he would never stop.

Lust shot into his brain and from his brain to his cock. He'd never been so hard. "Emmy, my God," he groaned as his mouth left hers to discover the softness and clean taste of her neck, her small ears. He breathed hard. He needed a second, or this would be over before it had fully begun.

Still he couldn't resist touching her. Just a little. His hand moved under her skirt, up a stocking clad leg to a naked hip.

Naked! And then he remembered. She wasn't naked for him but for another. The knowledge defused his passion faster than a splash of cold water.

Nick flung her back to her seat. Panting still, he strained for control. She was naked beneath her dress. Naked. Every cell of his body called for him to reach out and touch her. He ached to see her, still he sat there, not daring to move, hardly daring to breathe.

This was a mistake. He should have let her meet with Philips and come to terms with it later. Damn! Now, he was in a fix.

It took Emmy a long moment to realise his lips were no longer on hers, his tongue no longer inside her mouth. And when she did, she snapped without thinking, "You, too? The rumours are false then?"

"What rumours?" Nick could hardly breathe, never mind understand what she was talking about.

"You and women. Do you prefer boys, too? Is it something all men would rather?"

The truth came crashing over him. He knew why Emmy hadn't known how to kiss, why she refused to even think about marrying again, why she hadn't gotten pregnant and why in almost a year's time she'd barely mentioned her husband.

"Why did you stay?"

She shrugged, trying to appear nonchalant. "Richard wasn't cruel. Indeed, he was most kind and generous. I was his wife. It was my duty to stay."

"Who the hell told you that crap?"

"My father."

"You told your father about the boys, and he told you to stay?"

She shook her head. "On my wedding day, he told me a wife must permit her husband certain rights. He said, 'Men are different. Some like one thing, some another'."

"Jesus." Nick ran a hand through his hair. She was so damn innocent. No father should send his daughter to a husband this innocent. "He didn't mean boys."

Emmy didn't believe him. "No? Then what did he mean?"

"He meant...he meant..." Nick didn't know how to explain. She knew nothing of the happenings between a man and woman. "First of all, he was wrong. The things that happen between a husband and wife should be agreed upon by both."

"And?"

"And I can't go into particulars."

She laughed, without a shred of humour. "I thought not." A moment of silence passed before she finally said, "All right, let's see if I understand. It's not normal for men to like boys."

"Absolutely not."

"And I misunderstood my father's words."

Nick nodded. "You did."

"And you are a normal man?"

"I like to think so."

"I've been told I'm beautiful. Do you think I am?"

Nick could see where this was leading. He was desperate not to answer even though he knew he must. "You are."

"Then why?"

"Because I care for you. Don't you understand? Men who... Goddamn it, Emmy, you're special. I can't use you like that."

"And the kiss and what happened a few days ago? What was that?"

He shook his head. "I lost control. I'm sorry."

"You didn't like it?"

Nick groaned. He couldn't tell her the truth, and he couldn't lie. Emmy had no self-worth, thanks to Richard. If he lied, it would only lower her already damaged self-esteem. "I loved it. It was perfect," he admitted bleakly.

She laughed again at his wretched look, this time with feeling. "Apparently, kissing doesn't make you happy."

Nick shot her a hard look, a look that forbade her to further her comments.

But Emmy wasn't about to let it go. "You said perfect. How do you mean?"

He smiled. She was so damned sweet. How could any man resist her? "I mean you taste better than shrimp, and you know how much I love shrimp."

Having once watched him down two pounds of the shellfish in one sitting, Emmy was well aware of his love for the tiny crustaceans. She giggled. "Do you want to make love to me, Nick?"

"Oh God," he groaned in obvious misery. "Yes."

"But you won't."

"No," he nearly choked on the word, for at that moment, no matter his wants, Nick was positive he would not.

"Do you think that's fair? You don't want me with others, but you won't make love to me yourself."

"You'll thank me for it one day."

Emmy grinned, knowing without a doubt that she was going to thank him tonight, only he didn't know it yet. It was amazing what a little confidence could do, how brave it could make a woman. She bit her bottom lip and forced a breathy innocence she was far from feeling into her voice. "It's hot in here, don't you think?"

Nick frowned. "No. Are you feeling all right?" He wanted to reach across and touch her forehead but, at the last minute, thought better of coming too close. Presently, he didn't trust himself to touch any part of her.

"I feel fine." She shrugged. "Just a little warm."

"Well, we'll be at the lake house soon. It will be cooler there." Nick gave some serious thought to walking into the freezing water and maybe staying there for the night.

"Oh, are we going to the lake?"

He nodded, suddenly not quite as sure of his actions or motives for that matter as he'd been an hour ago. He was taking her there to keep her safe, wasn't he? He would spend the time talking some sense into her, wouldn't he?"

"It's quite empty, you know."

He nodded, totally missing her point. "I know where you keep the key."

"No servants."

Nick still didn't pick up on her train of thought. "I packed enough food for a spell. We'll manage."

"Alone?"

He shrugged. "I thought it best to get you out of London for a few days."

Emmy laughed. "Saving me from temptation, I take it."

He shrugged again. Nick wasn't all that sure of his plans. All he knew for a fact was it was imperative to get her away from that bastard Darien. "Something like that."

"Betsy and the others will worry if I'm not home at a reasonable hour. They'll send out an alarm."

"About right now, my man is delivering a note to your home. It seems you've been called away. A friend of yours has been taken ill."

She laughed softly. "It seems you are quite a bit more devious than I had imagined."

Nick eyed her suspiciously, wondering at her oddly calm attitude. "Are you planning something?"

"Me? Hardly. I think you've done enough planning for the both of us, wouldn't you agree?"

Nick thought so, as well. Only now that his plans had come to fruition, things looked a bit different. "I would have thought you might offer some objection."

Emmy grinned. "Why? I think you've done a fine job of it so far."

His gaze narrowed, and he felt suddenly uncertain as he said, "I'm not sure about that look in your eyes. What are you thinking?"

She blinked. "I'm sure I haven't a clue as to what you're talking about."

"Rather than the lake house, perhaps I should bring you instead to the first nunnery."

Emmy laughed at that. "Perhaps, but you might take the poor sister's sensibilities into consideration. I'm sure to shock them overmuch with my present state of dress." She pulled away her cape, and Nick, even without firsthand knowledge, could clearly see she was naked beneath the thin material.

"Emmy, Jesus."

Emily grinned at his muttered oath and thought she understood. "Are you afraid of me, Nick?"

"Certainly not," he lied. He wasn't afraid. He was terrified. Every moment that passed, she seemed to grow lovelier, more confident, more impossible to resist. God, couldn't this carriage move faster? It was the candlelight, the close quarters. It was knowing she wore nothing under that dress. He couldn't tear his mind from what eagerly awaited a man's pleasure.

"It is warm in here," she said again, and Nick's pulse began to pound for he suddenly knew exactly what she was about. He groaned as he watched in helpless fascination as her breasts moved unconfined beneath the thin material. *Don't do anything*, he silently cried. *Please God*, he prayed, *don't let her do anything*.

Emmy ignored his silent prayer, as apparently did The Almighty, for she opened a button at her throat. "That's a little better."

Only a little? Nick wondered if he would live through this, for he knew exactly what she was up to. He couldn't breathe, couldn't utter a sound. Just as he knew they would, her fingers moved to the next button and the next.

One, two, three, four...he was dying. Five...no more, six, he tried to close his eyes. They refused to stay shut. He tried not to look. He couldn't stop looking, and she knew it.

"Does this bother you?"

"No." Was that breathless croaking sound his voice? His breath trembled. He was sure his heart couldn't pound any harder. Jesus, was it possible to survive this? His voice was barely a croak, when he implored, "Emmy, don't do this?"

"You said it didn't bother you."

"I lied."

"I know." And she did know. Some primitive instinct told her she held the power. And for the first time in her life, Emmy was going to use it.

He couldn't move his gaze from her fingers and the creamy skin she exposed as each button came undone. He'd seen her breasts before and couldn't get the memory of her lush beauty out of his mind. All he could think was he had to see her again. Blood pounded in his ears, in his head, and his eyes strained through the dim light as the soft inner swell of her breasts came into view. It wasn't enough. It wasn't near enough.

He needed to see more. He was dying to see more. *Move!* He wanted to scream. *Move so your dress will part even more.* And even as the thought crashed through his brain, stealing every thought but one, a glimmer of sanity prevailed, and he silently prayed for a way to stop her. Please God, he had to find a way to stop her.

"Nice sugar loaves, baby," he said trying to shock her into stillness. "Quite the pretty sight, if I remember correctly." Nick bit back a curse at the nonsense just spouted. If he lived a hundred years, a thousand, he'd never forget and the word pretty hardly qualified. She was the most gorgeous creature. He crossed his legs, lest she detect his body's reaction to her loveliness and realise his words were merely a ruse, the cry of a desperate man.

Her fingers did hesitate, and he almost groaned his relief and prayed his next words would bring her to her senses. "Oh, don't stop now, Emmy," he continued his tone as cruel as he could manage, his mouth hard as he forced a thread of disgust. "You might as well get used to it. This is how a man talks to a whore."

"Is it?" she returned, obviously unhappy with his biting words and suddenly crass attitude. "And a whore? How does she talk to a man?"

Nick ignored the question. "If you're going to do it right, let's see a little cunt. A nice bushy one, as I remember. Later, we'll shave it up a bit. I do love shaving a lady's cunt."

Emmy gritted her teeth and wished she knew words equally as unkind and callus. "Make up your mind. It's either a whore or a lady. One can't be both."

"Oh but you can and apparently you are."

His harsh words caused her a moment's insecurity. Her eyes widened with indecision, her fingers stilled in shock.

"They say the Arabs shave off all hair. I prefer a little myself. Just enough to cover the slit. It makes a woman a bit more mysterious. Wouldn't you agree?"

Emmy frowned puzzled then surprised at the picture his words invoked. Shaving? She hadn't imagined such a thing. She watched him for a long moment. A pulse throbbed in his forehead, another in his throat. His mouth was hard, obviously angry, but his eyes were filled with a longing that rocked her senses. He might try to disguise it, but it was suddenly all too obvious that he wanted her.

She grinned, and Nick knew he'd gone too far. She'd taken to the idea or, at the very least, knew what he was up to. He cursed himself for every kind of fool. Why hadn't he stopped at her hesitation?

"I hope you packed a razor then."

Her fingers continued down her dress, disposing of every button. Inch by incredibly lovely inch, her body became visible to him. He was done for. There was no way he could resist.

He shook his head in wonder. Only a few days ago, she didn't know how to kiss, and now, she was artfully, purposely, seducing a man, half exposed a true wanton. She was so good at it she might have been doing this for years. Nick had never known such excitement.

The material lay against her skin, parted but unopened, and he heard some damn fool say, "Is that it? Aren't you going to pull the dress aside? Show a man exactly what he's getting?"

And she did just as the voice suggested.

Nick sucked in a sharp breath as his gaze moved over her. His insulting comment was off the mark. He'd said her breasts were nice. They weren't. Just as he remembered, they were gorgeous. He clamped his fingers into fists lest he reach out and touch her.

"You like them?" she asked while pulling the fabric out and open.

Nick couldn't control his groan. All was lost. There was no going back. "Take your hair down."

Emmy smiled, as she went about the chore. There was no denying she'd won. It was clear in his eyes, his tone.

"Now show them to me, lift them."

She did as he asked.

He had to twice clear his throat. "Now run your hands down your body. Show me how you touch yourself. When you're alone in your room, show me what you do."

Emmy had never touched herself and wondered if she could now. She hesitated at a loss, not knowing what to do.

"You'll need to play with your pussy for me."

She shrugged. Her gorgeous breast shivered with the motion. "I don't...I've never..." She was obviously unhappy at the command. "Nick, I don't know how."

He smiled. "That's my job, isn't it? I'm going to show you how."

Still, she hesitated.

"Emmy, do you want to learn how to seduce a man or not?"

Her cheeks warmed a bit, but she forged on. Her hands slid from her breasts over her midriff and belly.

"Slowly," he counselled. "The slower you go, the more a man wants it."

Nick knew, with every word spoken, he sealed both their destinies. She was his for the taking. She didn't know it yet, but he was the only man who would ever see this. "Now your pussy. That's it." He shuddered as he fought to control his need. "Run your fingers through the hair."

Emmy did as she was directed and knew some surprise that she enjoyed the touch of her own smooth fingers even as she longed to feel rougher skin.

"Now open your legs. Beautiful. Take your hand away and let me see."

She did.

"Scoot your hips forward so I can see more."

She moved forward, allowing him to look his fill, and he loved every minute of it.

With his hands on her knees, he parted her legs further, delighting in the luscious sight of pink, moist flesh beckoning to him. "Very pretty. Now, I'm going to show you how to play." His hand slid up her leg. Aching slow.

Emmy could hardly stand it. A pulse pounded in her throat, stealing her breath. God, but she wanted him to touch her. She ached for him to touch her. She never realised her soft cry of longing as it was torn from her lips.

Nick grinned understanding the eagerness in her cry, feeling it in her tense muscles. "The longer you wait, the better it feels."

She struggled to breathe and choked out, "It couldn't feel better."

She sighed when at last two fingers dipped into her warm juicy tunnel then up a bit to her clit. She jumped and he smiled. "Sensitive, am I right?"

"Very."

He played with her, and very nicely Emmy would have to admit, before pulling his hand back. He moaned his enjoyment as he licked the taste of her from his fingers, and Emmy groaned as he tutored, "Now you touch it, Emmy. Let me watch you play."

"I thought you would," she said, showing clearly her disappointment.

"Oh I will, believe me, only I want to watch you for a bit."

And she did as he directed. It took hardly a second before she smiled, obviously enjoying the fact that he watched. Tentative at first, her movements slowly grew more certain, and the effect was purely delicious. Emmy had never imagined anything could feel so good. Slippery, hot and wet, she loved it.

"At night, when you're alone, you can do this."

Her breathing began to grow stilted, her voice unsteady as she asked, "Do I have to wait for night?"

Nick chuckled softly. "Feels that good, does it?"

"Mmm..." she groaned softly, loving her own touch as her fingers grew more expert at giving herself pleasure.

He kissed her knee, his mouth burning through her stocking. And where her stocking ended, he slid his tongue up her thigh to the sweet beckoning heat beyond.

As she continued to play, he bathed his tongue in her hot juices. Licking at her, sucking, eating of her what he could like a man starved for nourishment. He spread her legs wider, leaving no part of her untouched. His tongue shot deep into her hot tunnel, and they both moaned at the pleasure as he wiggled his tongue and tickled her there.

"Oh my God," she moaned. "Oh my God. I love this. It feels so good."

"All right, that's enough. Let me finish for you. You just lean back and enjoy," he said just before his tongue came to lick and tickle and drive her beyond the edge of madness.

"My God," he moaned, as he moved to the floor to gain some comfort and quickly realised comfort wasn't likely to be had within the tight confines of the carriage floor. He didn't care. He sat between her legs his legs folded as best he could and knew the prize she offered was worth any discomfort. Holding her ass, he brought her hips to his mouth. "I can't begin to tell you how good you taste."

She groaned as his mouth ate at her, drinking in her juices, delighting as his tongue drove her wild. "Nicky," she murmured then instantly forgot what she was going to say. "This feels...this feels...oh God." It was beyond her ability to say more. She felt his mouth curve into a smile against her flesh, and she wiggled her hips, silently pleading for him to never stop.

His mouth and nose and chin were wet. He thought he'd never get enough of her taste. There was never a woman this wonderful, this hot, and this desperate. He'd never known anyone like her, never wanted like this. God, the time they had wasted.

She was struggling for every breath then frowned as her stomach began to cramp. Did that feel good? She forced herself to think on it and thought perhaps it did. She wondered why. Cramps didn't usually feel good. What was happening to her? She forgot her question as the sensation strengthened. Her entire stomach tightened. Something was happening. "Nick, I can't. Wait. Something is wrong."

He lowered her so she knelt over his hips, his folded legs behind her. His finger replaced his tongue, and his mouth was at her nipple now, biting her hard. She gasped again, her head falling back on her shoulders, her mind swimming with glorious sensation. She couldn't take it all in.

"Nick, please," she pleaded as an aching need slowly grew stronger, only she didn't know exactly what she needed.

"Mmm..." he murmured in response, loath to release her nipple. "What?" he asked, while never easing his finger's play at her clit.

"I think you should stop. My stomach is starting to ache."

"Is it?" He smiled into her innocent eyes. "That means you're close to coming."

"Coming?" Emmy questioned with a frown, having never heard the expression before. "Where am I going?"

He laughed as he nuzzled his mouth into her neck. "Trust me. I won't let you get hurt." Nick opened his trousers, releasing a huge, aching erection. He lowered her just a bit, spreading her legs until she almost sat upon him. "Feel that?" he asked as the head of his cock played against her hot, wet tunnel.

She nodded.

"That's my cock. He wants to come in. Only he can't until you're ready."

"He?" she asked with a smile, having immediately picked up on the use of the personal pronoun. "Are you sure it's a he?"

He laughed. "Take my word for it. He's a he."

"So he wants to come in, does he? He's a rude little fellow, I'd say, poking at a lady like that. Where's his invitation?"

He eyed her threateningly. "What do you mean little?"

Emmy laughed and leant back, her elbows on the seat behind her, totally and lusciously exposed to his view. "Perhaps not little, but he's definitely rude."

"And you're a gorgeous woman." His hands slid over her from neck to groin, as if he couldn't decide what to touch first. "And this is his invitation."

She smiled even as she wondered where she got the courage to kneel like this before a man, totally exposed to his view. "Does he know that?"

"I'm afraid he does. And he'll never calm down now that he's seen you."

"He can see? What an amazing little fellow." At his playful glare, she quickly amended with, "I mean he's an amazing fellow."

She felt his erection shift just a bit against her. "I've been told it hurts the first time," she said a bit more seriously.

Nick nodded. "I've heard as much, but he won't hurt you."

"How could you know?"

"I'm going to make sure of it. Once I show you the pleasure, he'll be where he wants to be, and you won't even have realised it."

Her look was filled with doubt. "Being that he's already seen me, do you think I might see him?"

Nick nodded, shifted her so he could rise from the floor, allowing her to see him in the soft light of the lone candle.

Emmy's eyes widened with surprise. "Oh my, he is big, isn't he?"

"Not too big for you."

"Nick, I don't know." She shook her head. "He looks so angry."

"He's not. I promise you, he's not. He only wants to get to know you." Nick sat again and guided her back into place. "Don't be afraid. I promise this isn't going to hurt. Here, let me just put his head inside, and you can tell me what you think." Nick eased his cock into her wet heat, making sure only the head was embedded. "How does that feel?"

"Mmm...lovely."

"Now let me finish what I started, and he can get really comfortable."

She smiled as his fingers returned to her pussy and played. "Will you really shave me?"

"Would you like that?"

"I never thought of it before, but I think I might."

He smiled. "I believe you are the most adorable woman I've ever known." His smile grew a bit more wicked. "Perhaps there is a razor at the cabin."

Her head fell back as she leant away from him. Her words were slightly slurred as she slipped deeper under his deliciously sensuous assault. "I can't tell you how good this feels."

Nick grinned. "Are you sorry I kidnapped you?"

She laughed, her eyes twinkling with devilry and arched her back for his pleasure. "Ask me again later."

"I always knew you were a brat."

"And you're a bully. I think that makes us a perfect pair."

He pulled her against him and kissed her deep, long. His mouth was hot and hungry, his tongue leaving behind her own taste as it ravished her mouth, searching out every dark honeyed corner, drinking of her essence. He was breathing hard and fast as he pulled sharply away. "We might have to get married."

She moaned as he left her mouth aching for more. "I love it when you kiss me like that. And why? Do you think you're expecting?"

Nick laughed. "I'm expecting all right. I'm expecting you're going to love this, and I won't be able to service you as often as you want if we aren't living together."

"It's hard to concentrate on what you're saying when you touch me there." She moaned. "Oh that feels lovely. And you know for a fact that I'll be wanting your services?"

He chuckled softly, knowingly as his mouth sucked in one lips then the other only to leave both and slide to her neck, her chest and finally took the soft flesh of her breast deep into a fiery wet pit of pleasure. "Absolutely."

She gasped as the sucking sensation seemed to emphasise the growing ache in her belly. "And you suppose you're the only one who can do this?" she asked just before she moaned, "Oh my God, I can't believe how good this feels."

"Take my word for it, no one else is ever going to."

Emmy opened her eyes then moaned as they helplessly fluttered closed again. "If you're expecting me to argue with you, you'll have to wait 'til later."

Nick smiled. If she thought he'd let a delicious little piece like her escape him, she'd best think again. There wasn't a doubt in his mind that she was going to marry him.

"Mmm..." she murmured as the pleasure filled her. "I love this, Nicky. I can't tell you how much."

"I know. I love it too." He leant forward and paid equal attention to her other breast, sucking the lovely, pink nipple deep into his mouth.

She gasped at the heat of him. His mouth was so hot. God, she loved it so much. Lights flashed behind her closed lids. Pleasure suffused every inch of her body. She couldn't concentrate, for one delight seemed to roll into another until every inch of her body hummed with desire. She couldn't imagine anything better and frowned as the cramping began again. A tight knot formed over her stomach. It spread, intensified, grew tight, tighter. Surely, it couldn't continue without causing damage. The more he sucked the harder the cramp. And yet the harder the cramp the more she craved it. She leaned into the pain, unable to stop the wanting. The heaviness that settled over her stomach grew to mammoth proportions and slid up her body to her throat. She could barely breathe. Her hips tilted slightly as she groaned, "Oh my God, Nicky."

"Is it happening again?" he asked unnecessarily, for he knew it was. She was burning for him, and he thought he'd never see a more beautiful sight. She'd ruined him for any other.

Her head fell back, her lips parted as she struggled for air. Her body tightened to the breaking point.

"Oh God," she gasped as she was suddenly poised on the agonising edge of explosive ecstasy. "My God," she groaned again even as her breathing grew to short almost useless pants, a guttural sound of pain escaped her throat, and she wondered, albeit fleetingly, who was making all that noise. Her heart was pounding. She couldn't get a deep breath, and she didn't care. She couldn't stop. She needed, needed, oh God, she needed. "Nicky, help me. Please help me," she somehow managed as she mindlessly strove towards the pleasure.

His mouth held firmly to hers, absorbing her cries, her moans of delight, her desperate aching need for something she couldn't name. Her body stiffened. Harder, harder she strained towards the need, unsure if it promised pleasure or pain and knowing it was too late, that it no longer mattered. She had to have it. And when it was finally upon her, she cried out, the sound muffled against his opened mouth as the cramping broke into a thousand shards of white-hot light and the beauty of it nearly shattered her soul as it tore at her in desperate aching waves of wonder. She couldn't bear it, and she never wanted it to stop. Devastated, a mindless craving creature, she could only gasp as wave after wave of tormenting rapture engulfed her body, her mind, her very soul.

She fell against him, never realising she was no longer kneeling but sitting fully upon him, that his cock was nestled deep inside her, her face snuggled into the warmth of his neck as she struggled for every breath.

Long moments passed before her desperate gasps turned into steady, deeper breaths and he asked, "Did you like that?"

"Like what?" she teased.

He tapped her naked rear in warning. "Emmy."

She could only moan for an answer as her muscles continued to contract and aftershocks of pleasure pulled at her insides, driving him nearly insane as they squeezed and released and squeezed his cock again.

"I can't believe it," she murmured sleepily. "Oh my God, do you realise how many years I've missed. I could have been doing this for —"

He cut her off. "No, you couldn't. If you're too young or you're not with the right man, it doesn't feel this good."

She leant back and grinned, her eyes wide with humour. "I suppose you're telling me I'm with the right man."

He ignored her question and said instead, "Kiss me and tell me how much you loved what I did for you."

She laughed. "You really are a beast."

"I thought I was a bully."

"You are." She looked at him for a long moment before she burst out laughing. "I think I'm going to love this."

"Yes, you are," he agreed wholeheartedly.

"I don't know how you did it, but I never felt you and you're all the way inside me, aren't you?"

Nick grinned and moved his hips just enough to let her know he was aware of where his cock was currently positioned.

"You were right. It didn't hurt at all."

"Does it feel good?"

"Very good. Are we finished?"

"Not quite," he groaned in some real distress. "But it appears we'll have to stop for a bit." Nick wasn't sure how he was supposed to manage that particular chore. It took every ounce of willpower he possessed not to finish what they'd been about. "The lake house is just up the road."

"Couldn't we tell the driver to keep going for another hour or so?"

He laughed as his brow wiggled suggestively. "I just might be better than I thought I was."

Emmy frowned at his boasting. She stiffened and tried to pull back. "You're arrogant at any rate."

He refused to allow it. Instead, he again ran his hands over the length of her, obviously delighted to be able to touch her at will. His mouth nibbled again at her luscious nipples.

"It's a good thing I kidnapped you, or I never would have known that I was a bully, a beast and arrogant to boot."

She grinned then as if reading something just over his head, she said, "Wasn't it Chaucer who said, "'Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe'? Personally, I think we all should strive to..."

She burst into laughter as he pulled her tightly against him and growled, threateningly, "I know how ticklish your knees are. Apologise right now."

"I could of course, but you'd never be sure I meant it since I'm to do it under duress."

"I think a few days aren't long enough. Perhaps we'll stay a week." He lifted her gently away from him and placed her back on the seat opposite him, hardly happy to see her about the chore of buttoning her dress as he adjusted his own clothes.

"You didn't bring enough food for a week, and I'm already starving."

"You didn't eat supper?"

She shook her head. "I couldn't."

"Nervous?" he asked, knowingly.

"It's your fault. I haven't eaten anything to speak of in days. If I would have known what you were up to, I wouldn't have been so distraught."

"If you weren't planning to do wrong, your conscience would have been clear and your appetite would have —"

"Don't presume to tell me what I should do."

"Someone needs to do it. You don't have the sense of a newborn baby. Jesus, what the hell could have possessed you to plan an assignation with Philips?"

"How is any of this your business?"

"I'm making it my business."

"Tell the driver to take us back. I'm not staying here with you."

"Yes, you are."

"If you don't tell him, I will."

"You won't."

"I'll walk back."

"You might as well get used to it, Emmy. The days of always getting your way are over. From now on, we'll be compromising."

"We'll?" she asked. "As in you and me?"

Nick grinned. "Exactly. And today it's my turn."

"Then tell him to come back tomorrow. Tomorrow will be my turn."

He laughed. "You're adorable."

Emmy forced herself not to smile.

The carriage came to a stop. After he helped her out, he held her at his side as he spoke with the driver. "I'm going to need you to send someone back tomorrow," he said, and Emmy knew nothing less than astonishment that he had actually listened to her.

Suddenly, she wasn't all that sure she wanted to leave here so soon. Perhaps, she was a bit rash in making that decision. They walked towards the front door, the driver carrying the basket of food.

"We'll need a week's worth of food and several bottles of wine. Have my cook gather it for you. She'll know what I need."

At his comment, Emmy elbowed him in the ribs.

A moment later, he dismissed the driver, brought her into his arms and kissed her breathless. When she was able, she leaned weakly against him, her face snuggled in the warmth of his neck, and asked, "Is that your idea of compromising?"

"What?" he asked as he pulled back and looked at her, a smile teasing the corner of his mouth. "I told him to come back tomorrow. That's what you said, wasn't it?"

Emmy chuckled. "I see I'm going to have to watch myself around you."

"You don't have to. I'll watch you for you." He reached for the key hidden in its usual spot above the door under a loose shingle. The door opened. They stepped inside and dragged the basket in with them before he locked the door. "And the first thing I'm going to watch is you taking off this dress."

She shivered. "It's cold and damp in here."

He nodded. "I'll make a fire. You go upstairs and get all the quilts and pillows you can find. And if you find any warm robes bring them, too."

"Are we going to sleep in there?" she nodded towards the small drawing room.

"I'd wager we won't be sleeping for a spell." He grinned at her soft giggle. "And I'm not making two fires."

Chapter Three

A half hour later, a fire roared, and the room soon grew cosy warm. Emmy had spread five quilts upon each other, creating a comfy bed near the fire. Both wore the soft, warm robes Emmy had found in a trunk upstairs. Pillows supported their backs as they half reclined and shared a meal of cold chicken, bread, and fruit. "This is delicious. Your cook deserves a raise."

"God, don't tell her that. I've no doubt that she's the highest paid cook in London, and she gives me a hard enough time of it as it is."

Emmy laughed. "Does she?"

"The woman is a tyrant who threatens daily that she's leaving. That she can find work anywhere. She taunts me that all my friends have offered for her. And damn every one of their miserable souls, they have."

Emmy grinned as she watched his scowl.

"The truth is I only pretend that the kitchen is part of my house and therefore belongs to me. The woman is a monster disguised as a sweet old lady, and I don't dare cross her. I'm as likely to get a whack to my knuckles as a snack if I'm so foolish as to sneak into her kitchen for something extra at night."

Emmy was laughing at his dismal depiction.

"I swear she hides in a corner, waiting for me."

Emmy's laughter filled the room. "This is hilarious. You're afraid of your cook. I don't think I've ever heard anything so funny."

"You won't think it's funny when you try to get her to make something she doesn't want to make."

Emmy grinned. "Like what?"

"Like cookies, for one. She knows I love her sugar cookies. Does she care? If I'm stupid enough to ask for some, I can be sure not to see a batch for a month."

"Why?"

"Why?" he repeated then sighed, "Because I'm not supposed to tell her what to cook. Because she's the boss and doesn't let me forget it."

"Poor baby," Emmy soothed, while forcing back her laughter.

Nick didn't take her sympathetic response in the clearly unsympathetic tone it was meant and said morosely, "Exactly. I can only hope you'll be able to handle her."

"Me?" she blinked in surprise. "Why should I have to handle her?"

He smiled as his gaze widened, and he grew suddenly aware of an alternative solution. "You might have something there. Perhaps you won't have to. How good is your cook?"

"What are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about the fact that we'll need only one cook when we get married. Is yours any good?"

There was a substantial pause before she asked, "Aren't you making some huge assumptions here? Who said I was marrying you?"

He frowned. "And what is that supposed to mean?"

"It means exactly what I said. Who said I was marrying you?"

"I said it."

"Did you? And here I was under the misguided impression that a man was supposed to ask a lady if she wanted to marry him. And she, of course, had some choice in the matter."

"Are you saying you're not going to marry me?"

"I'm saying I'm not marrying anyone."

"Why?"

"Because no one has asked me."

"Emmy," he managed with a pathetic groan. "Don't I have enough to put up with? Are you going to make me propose?"

She took a deep breath, eyes wide with contrived innocence as a wicked smile played at the corners of her mouth. "I'm sure I couldn't make you do anything you didn't want to do."

"Right," he muttered in weary resignation as he came to a sitting position, put down his glass and took hers from her hand. "I want you to marry me, Emmy."

"Why?"

"Because I need your help controlling my cook," he groaned pitifully.

Emmy laughed. "You really are a wretched beast."

His grin was purely wicked. "So what do you say?"

"I say I'm not marrying any man who keeps a mistress."

"Keep a mistress? Are you serious? Apparently you have some real conviction in my stamina."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning, judging from what I've seen so far, loving you is going to be more than enough to keep me satisfied. I won't be looking at another."

"Ever?"

"Never."

"Are you sure? You haven't made love to me yet."

He grinned. "I haven't, have I? Why don't we correct that oversight right now?"

She laughed at his boyishly eager yet somehow thrillingly, dangerous look. That look alone told her, clearer than words, why half the female population in London was eager to join him in bed. "Capital idea, why don't we?"

"Shall I show you how to go about it?"

"I'm afraid you must. I haven't the experience one might suspect in your average merry widow."

"All right," he said then hesitated while shooting her a wicked grin. "Would you like to take notes?"

Emmy laughed. "I could, I suppose, but I haven't paper or pen on me."

"Perhaps this time you could trust your memory. It isn't all that hard."

Her hand reached inside his robe, her fingers slid around his cock and gently, tentatively measured the thickness and length of him even as she asked in all innocence. "Isn't it? It feels awful hard to me."

"Shall I give you twenty minutes to stop that?"

Emmy giggled, and Nick thought her the most adorable creature.

He took her hand away from him. "Perhaps not. I'll never get on with this lesson if you keep that up."

"It's already up."

He tried to control his grin with a stern look. "That's enough of that talk, young lady. Now where were we?"

"You were going to show me."

"Right, I remember now. First, you should always make sure to wear a robe."

"That's convenient, since we're already wearing robes."

"We are, aren't we? All right, the next step is to open yours."

"Like this?" she asked as she untied the belt and flung the edges of the robe wide.

Nick's heart stumbled and he felt an almost painful thud. He managed only a strangled gasp at her gorgeous display, unable to remember when he was last so enticed by such a heady mix of innocence and enthusiasm. "Lord, Emmy, you're making it hard for me to concentrate here."

Emmy giggled again. "Am I? You did say to open it, didn't you?"

Nick swallowed absorbed in the luscious sight of her, hardly heard her response.

"Didn't you?"

He cleared his throat. "Didn't I what?"

"Didn't you say to open my robe?"

"Did I? Jesus, do you know how beautiful you are?"

She shrugged. The movement shivered her breasts and cause Nick a deep groan.

"Am I? I'm glad that you think so. I would have thought all naked ladies look just about the same."

He might have told her they did not, but instantly thought it best to keep that information to himself. Instead, he said, "You're absolutely gorgeous." He swallowed and cleared his throat trying to steady his voice. "Now we're faced with two choices. I can touch you until we are both out of our minds with wanting, or I can kiss you breathless, bringing about much the same results."

"Only two? I'd hate to have to give up one for the other. Are you sure we can't do both at the same time?"

Nick laughed as he came to lie at her side. His mouth was nuzzled into the warmth of her neck. "It's true what they say then, a brilliant student is indeed a teacher's pride."

Emmy's laugh was muffled beneath the pressure of his mouth. The kiss was gentle, promising limitless pleasure, an exquisite sampling of taste and feel. It took less than a moment for every ounce of humour to fade as an ache came almost immediately to life. A fog of pleasure blotted out all but the two lovers and their enjoyment of each other.

She had first-hand knowledge of the pleasure this man could bring about, and she was eager to sample another taste of the sweet enchantment. She moaned as his tongue sought entrance to her mouth. Thick, hot, and hungry it searched out every mysterious corner, every dark, honeyed nuance of luscious flavour that was hers alone. He acted as if he couldn't get enough, and she thought should he spend the rest of his life kissing her, his existence couldn't have been put to better use.

Her hand slid up the length of his thigh to his waist and chest, and she moaned as she took the opportunity to learn the texture of him.

Nick took her hands and brought them over her head. "No," he said, "don't touch me. I need to concentrate on you."

"But," she began only to be interrupted.

"Later. You can touch me all you want, later."

"Nicky, God, this is so good," she said, her words a bit slurred as she was drawn into the magic of his mouth. He licked and kissed his way from her fingers down her arms to her shoulder and neck, at last to suck with devastating accuracy at her breasts. His mouth played with her nipple, his tongue swirled over it, around it, his lips plucked. He sucked it hard, deep into blazing heat. His soft moans lavished endless praise upon it and its twin and then he bit her. And Emmy wondered at her ability to bear the beauty of it. And just when she thought she could take no more, he bit her again then bit her harder.

It should have hurt, but it didn't. She was surprised at first, and hardly a moment later thought he couldn't bite her enough. She gasped and moaned at the pleasure, the pain, she couldn't tell which.

"Oh, God, I love this," she choked. "I love this so much."

"Mmm..." he moaned in agreement as he licked every inch of her breast. There wasn't a spot left untouched when he settled again on the luscious pink nipple. He sucked her hard into the depth of a mouth whose heat rivalled that of a blazing furnace. Emmy cried out at the sensation then cried out again as his teeth came once more to tease her nipple. Hot. God, she was so hot, hotter than she could ever remember.

She began to fight him, desperate that he should never leave her nipples, never stop licking and biting her. Her hips rose from the floor, her entire body trembled, aching, silently pleading for all he could give. She couldn't breathe as a tight cramp spread over her middle

again. No longer ignorant of the signs, Emmy gasped, knowing the attention paid to her breasts had brought about the need to come again, and he hadn't even touched her below her waist.

"I'm going to come again," she gasped and wondered how she managed the words as the aching, crashing, crushing waves of ecstasy lifted her from a mere human state to a crazed, desperately hungry creature, soaring out beyond the stars to a place where only mindless enchantment reigned supreme.

He bit down on a nipple as two fingers slipped into her hot pussy, his mind reeling at the deliciously wet inferno of heat he found there. Her body curved into the power of his quick, forceful thrusts, unable to stop the keening soft cries that slipped from her lips, even as the sweet, exquisite magic came upon her and held and held until nothing but the wonder of his hands, his teeth and his tongue existed.

He chuckled victoriously as he felt the last of her aftershocks begin to fade. He smiled even as his mouth slipped down the length of her, from her full breasts, over a flat stomach, his tongue at last between her sweet curls to suck up the deliciously thick, creamy cum. God, had a woman ever tasted like this? He moaned as he absorbed all he could. Her legs relaxed and spread beautifully apart, he took one and placed it over his shoulder, allowing him the best access to all he was desperate to sample. "You taste so good. I can't get enough."

And when she was dry again, as dry as his tongue was going to manage at least, he moved up the length of her and whispered suddenly near her ear. "Don't move. I'll be right back."

And Emmy, dazed still from the trauma suffered, willingly obeyed as he left the room only to return moments later with a small bowl, a razor, soap and towels.

Nick was desperate to make this, their first coming together, last as long as humanly possible. And nothing was going to last if he kept licking her deliciously sweet pussy. Damn but the woman was as addictive as opium and beyond delectable.

He sat again this time between her legs and smiled at her slightly surprised but definitely eager grin. Her eyes glowed with pleasure, and he couldn't hold back his laugh. "I take it you have no objections."

Emmy grinned in return. "None that I can think of. Should I?"

He shook his head. "It might itch when it starts to grow back, is all."

She shrugged. Her breasts jiggled with the motion.

Nick groaned. "Don't do that. It makes me crazy."

"Do what?"

"Shrug like that."

Emmy grinned. "You mean this?" she asked and shrugged again.

"Emmy, I'm trying to concentrate here," he warned.

She giggled, realising how deeply she was affecting him. "I'll be good."

"Jesus, I hope not."

She laughed again. "You do have a way of influencing a lady, Nicky. Tomorrow, I'll probably be embarrassed. It never occurred to me that I could be this brazen."

He looked up from what he was about, his gaze narrowed with determination. "Tomorrow you will not be embarrassed. I expressly forbid it. You are a brazen, juicy little piece, and I've never loved it more."

Emmy's smile was purely wicked, and Nick almost stopped what he was about to kiss that adorable mouth. She came up on her elbows so she might watch the goings on and asked, "About the itch, you could always shave it for me again, couldn't you?"

He grinned at her hopeful expression. "Any time you like."

Her legs moved wider apart. She couldn't have looked more relaxed, more sure of his care, more calmly serene, even as her blood began to thicken, her heart to pound loudly in her ears. "Not while we have company, surely."

He shot her a warning look, even as a smile teased the corners of his mouth. "Don't make me laugh, Emmy. I have a razor in my hands."

He worked the soap into a smooth lather and coated her with it. Emmy forced back her moan of enjoyment. This teasing of her senses was delicious. She wanted it to last as long as either could stand it. In her present position, lying before him with her legs spread comfortably, she knew it wasn't likely to be long before things progressed to the next step. She was already growing breathless when she asked, "What about while we're in church?"

"You little witch." Gently, he moved the straight-edged blade over her, easily reforming the triangle of curls into a soft, clean, straight line that covered only the merest portion of her.

Resting on one elbow, she watched his ministrations. Neither seemed to notice the trembling in her voice as she teased, "No? What about when your mother comes for a visit then?"

"Be good."

"You just told me you hoped I wouldn't be good."

"Just for the next few seconds, then you can be as bad as you like. I won't mind."

She gave a knowing laugh. "I'm sure you wouldn't." The trembling in her voice extended to her body as every inch of her ached for more of his touch. Still, she somehow managed to control the need to beg him to continue touching her. And as he finished up what he was about she asked, "Do you think that looks better?"

Nick smiled as his gaze moved to hers. "I think everything about you is gorgeous. Whether you shave or not, it doesn't matter."

She bit her top lip and finally admitted, "Um, Nick, with all your fussing down there, I'm afraid I'm nearly ready to come again."

Nick grinned, quickly wiped away the remaining suds, leaving only a thin line of hair at her slit and, with her legs still apart, gave her a quick rinse. Tenderly, he touched her clit. It was swollen to almost twice its normal size, peeking from between the lips of her pussy. It was hard. She wasn't exaggerating. She was ready to come again. On his knees, he raised her hips, parted his robe and slid his aching cock into devastating, wet heat. "Not to worry," he muttered, delighting in the warmth, the lusciousness of her. "You can come as much and as often as you want."

"Oh, this feels lovely."

"I'm going to stay very still. I want you to come again. This time, like the first, with me inside. I want to feel all of it. Only this time, I'm going to come as soon as you're finished."

She gasped as he played with her clit, teasing it, rolling it gently against his finger. "I can't help it. I can't stop," came a near delirious moan.

He groaned softly as the first wave of her pleasure came upon her, squeezing his cock causing him to gasp for his every breath. Damn, but he'd found a prize in this woman. Could another come this many times? Would another want to?

He rammed himself hard, deeper into her as her muscles again squeezed around his cock. It was incredible. Her muscles were so strong. The pressure surrounding him tore his

breath from his lungs. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he wondered if he could live through pleasure this great. It eased and tightened then eased and tightened again. And he couldn't stop the cry of ecstasy that slipped from his lips as her body sucked his deep, deeper into the exquisitely delicious mystery of her.

He gave up all hope of remaining still and moved wildly, almost viciously against her, into her. He couldn't stop. He wished he'd never have to stop. He heard her cry and knew she was at her limit, only she hadn't a clue as to limits. She was going to come again and again before he was finished. He wanted to hear her cries of delight stretch long into the night.

And he would. Only right now, he couldn't think of what this night offered. Right now he knew only this woman and the heat of her, the lusciously soft, wet heat. He'd already waited far too long. There was no way he could hold back. There wasn't a power on earth that could stop his body from revelling in her deliciously sweet offer.

The two of them raced together towards the magic, aching for the pain, knowing nothing could compare to the tiny glimpse of heaven that awaited their pleasure.

And when they cried out, it was in unison as his body jerked forward, out of control, his wild spasms meeting hers as she eagerly rose towards him. For an instant, all grew terribly still as if hearts stopped beating and breathing ceased, then at last, with bodies shuddering, breaths non-existent, heartbeats a thunder, together they fell into the boiling caldron of mindless sensation and unbearable pleasure.

They lay still for long moments as each tried to regulate their breathing along with the pounding of their hearts. She was stretched out upon him. Her fingers explored his chest and the flat nipples she found there, when she suddenly lifted her head, supporting it with her hand and asked, "Do you realise you roar?"

"What do you mean I roar?"

"I mean just now. You roared like a lion."

He grinned and pulled her tightly against him. "Have you ever heard a lion roar?"

"As a matter of fact I have, and he sounded just like you."

Nick laughed. "You are a delicious little piece of ass. You know that?"

"What I know is a gentleman isn't supposed to talk to a lady like that."

Nick smiled, knowing she'd said the words so primly, so elegantly he might have imagined them at tea rather than positioned together naked their arms and legs entangled. "He is if he's just loved her to madness."

Emmy burst out laughing, her happiness knowing no bounds, as she came to kneel at his side. "What I want is to know why you talked to me like you did in the carriage? Why did you tell me I was a whore?"

"Because I was terrified, because I'm a moron," he groaned, pulling her over him, stealing her breath as he squeezed her tightly to him, and rubbed his face against her soft breast.

"Tell me," she insisted, coming again to his side.

"Emmy, you had to know I wanted you. You had to know I was on the verge of madness with the need to touch you."

"And yet you fought it. Why, when you knew I was trying to seduce you?"

He reached for the wine and filled both their glasses.

As they sipped, he sat opposite her and, unable to resist, began to play with her beautiful pink nipples. He smiled with delight as he licked and blew on them and watched the tips form delicious pebbles.

As he played, he answered her question. "I don't know. I was mad for you when we were young. When we grew up, I forced myself not to think of you in those terms. Over the years, I somehow convinced myself that you were untouchable."

"And you never did? Think of me that way, I mean?"

He shrugged. "I suppose I did a time or two. I got drunk the night you were married."

"Why?"

"I told myself I was celebrating, that I was happy for you."

"But you weren't?"

"I don't know what the hell I was. You thought of me like a brother, Emmy. I didn't know how to get around that. Making you understand that I was anything but a brother appeared hopeless."

"And the other day, when you saw I was interested, what happened?"

"It was too much for me to take in. I couldn't believe it. Then I couldn't resist you."

"But you tried."

"Obviously, something is wrong with me."

Emmy laughed.

"So are you going to marry me?"

She smiled and looked him over with some serious scrutiny, as if inspecting a potential purchase. "You know, I think I might."

It was Nick's turn to laugh. "Might you? Would you care to tell me when? If I knew, I could then make sure to be there."

She ignored his teasing. "We should wait, don't you think, for my brother to get back from India?"

"When will that be?"

"Next month."

"And how am I supposed to live without you, without this," he asked, as his tongue flicked her nipple then blew upon it, "for a month?"

Emmy smiled and made a soft sound of enjoyment.

"Do you think you can live without this for a month?"

"We could take a carriage ride every night."

Nick smiled. "I like the way you think."

Emmy giggled as she reached between his legs. "You know right now I'm thinking about this little fell —"

She laughed as he raised one brow and failed miserably in his attempt to glare.

"I mean this big fellow," she quickly corrected as she reached for his cock. "I didn't get a very good look at him when we were in the carriage. And before," she hesitated, "well, one might suppose I was a bit preoccupied to pay him too much attention." She grinned as she glanced up at his humorous expression and asked sweetly, "Wouldn't you say it's time for us to get to know each other?"

At his laugh she pushed him to his back and moved to kneel between his legs. He gathered a pillow behind his head, so he might watch her at play, loath to miss anything she might be planning. "He's not half as mysterious as you."

"Oh, I don't know. I think he has his own form of mystery. For instance, what are his two little friends about?"

Nick choked on his laughter. "His friends?"

"Yes, these two blokes here," she said while lifting his balls, squeezing gently in her investigation. "I assume like him, they're also male."

"I suppose they are."

"So what are their names?"

Nick gave a bark of a laugh. "I'm afraid I've never thought to name them."

"Why not? Everyone has a name. This guy has a name, doesn't he?"

He shrugged. "Many call him Willy."

She pulled back at his response and frowned. "What do you mean? How many?"

He chuckled, knowing she thought he was talking about women and immediately cleared up the matter. "What I mean is I've heard that most men call their friend Willy."

"Oh," she said then smiled. "That's all right then."

"I know why Willy is there, but why are they there?"

"I suppose they're just there to keep him company."

"Like on lonely nights?"

He grinned. "Especially on lonely nights."

Emmy slid one finger over the length of his cock and knew some amazement as she watched it grow in length and width before her eyes. She smiled in appreciation. "Should I call him Willy?"

"You can call him anything you like as long as you keep touching him."

"Anything except little."

"And Mary."

She laughed. "I wouldn't think of it."

"I take it he doesn't frighten you."

"Not at all, especially since I've now gotten to know him."

"I could have told you he's a good guy and easy to get to know."

She nodded. "Judging from my meagre experience, I'd say he's easy all together."

Nick laughed. "I'm thinking you're probably right."

A moment later, she grinned at the twinkle of humour in his eyes. "He certainly is quick on his feet, wouldn't you say? I mean I've barely touched him, and he's already standing at attention."

Nick gave a low moan at her delicious handling. "He can't help it when you touch him."

"Or when I look at him?"

"Or when he looks at you. Especially when he looks at you."

"Oh yes, you told me once before that he can see me. This must be his eye," she said as she leant down and pushed her tongue against the tiny hole at the tip. "Is he crying? His eye is wet."

Nick couldn't hold back his laughter. She was adorable. "He's crying because he misses you."

"Does he?" she asked with some surprise. "Already?"

"You could take away his tears."

"Could I?" She allowed a wicked grin. "Usually a kiss soothes. Do you think he'd like it if I kissed him?"

"Kiss?" he asked on a shuddering gasp. "Him?" His enthusiasm was more than obvious even as he struggled for nonchalance, struggled to keep his hips from rising towards her mouth. "I'm sure he's never thought of that before. You could try it, I suppose. Perhaps he would like that."

Emmy laughed as she nuzzled her face against Nick's inner thigh. She deposited a dozen tiny kisses over and around his huge cock until finally bestowing an opened mouthed lingering kiss that absorbed the drop of moisture at its smooth tip. He moaned in near delirium.

"Did anyone ever tell you it's a sin to lie?"

"He made me say it," Nick swiftly countered. "I couldn't help it."

She chuckled at his quick response. "Did he? Perhaps he's not as nice as I supposed."

"What?" he asked as she ran her tongue over his cock, sipped at the tip and sucked it into the blazing heat of her mouth. He groaned, his hips rising without thought towards the pleasure. "Oh God, Emmy."

She eased her sucking and, to his unbearable pleasure, began to lick from the base of his cock to the rounded tip. "Judging by the sounds you're making, I have a feeling I could convince you to do or say anything right now."

"I've no doubt you could."

"Tell me what you think."

"I think I'm just about the most brilliant man who ever lived."

Emmy had expected all sorts of praise bestowed upon her present efforts and knew some surprise as he complimented himself. She laughed. "Do you? I wonder why?"

"That's simple. I'm brilliant because I kidnapped you, because I convinced you to marry me. Because I love you madly and realised in time that you feel the same."

Emmy only chuckled softly as she nuzzled her face to his musky warmth. "I thought you were marrying me so I could help you control your cook."

It took a moment, a long moment in fact, before Nick realised her response. The way she responded to his kisses, to his touch, it had to mean she loved him, didn't it? She wasn't a man, after all. Sex had to mean more to her than physical satisfaction, didn't it? He brought her mouth and hands from the impossibly sweet investigation of his cock and balls and slid her body up the length of his. "You do love me, don't you, Emmy?"

"I certainly love the things you do to me," she teased wickedly.

"You little witch. Tell me straight out. Say, I love you, Nick." And at her hesitation he added, "And before you think of any cheeky remarks, remember I know about your knees."

Emmy fell against him in laughter. "You wretch, can you imagine any woman resisting so charming a display of affection?" Then more seriously she pulled back and said simply, "I do love you, Nick. Truly, it seems you've quite stolen my heart."

"Thank God," he muttered, his mouth searching out the warmth of her neck as he breathed in the wonder of her. "Thank God," he repeated as he cuddled her against him.

A moment later, she reached again for his rigid cock and asked, "Nick?"

"Mmm."

"I was thinking rather than just saying that I love you. It might be better if I showed you."

"That sounds interesting. Have you an idea how you might go about it?"

"You won't think me too bold?" And with those words, she hadn't a doubt she had his full attention.

"Ah Emmy, I probably should have told you before that a man loves it when his woman is bold. In truth, the bolder she is the more he'd going to love it. Exactly what have you in mind?"

“Well, it occurred to me that I could sit on you. Would that be all right?”

His heart began to pound, and he was suddenly barely capable of breathing never mind responding to her question. Still he finally managed a distinctly breathless, “I probably should have told you this as well. It’s a well known fact between husbands and wives that should a lady ever feel the need to sit on her husband, especially if she’s naked, she never has to ask. She should just do it.”

Emmy giggled at his supposed nonchalance, during his short tutoring session, especially since he was obviously interested, for his cock grew thicker and harder with nearly every word he spoke. “It’s well known, you say?” she asked doubtfully. “Odd that I’ve never heard of it then.”

“Well, as I remember, you didn’t have the most conventional marriage.”

“While you’ve never been married at all.”

“A friend told me.”

Emmy burst out laughing. “You are such a beast. I’m beginning to wonder why I love you at all. Is there anything else you probably should tell me?”

“Only that now that you’ve brought the subject up, I surely would love it if you sat on me.”

Emmy smiled as she positioned herself upon him, gently, slowly easing his rigid cock deep into her softly pliant flesh. With her hands on his shoulders for balance she smiled into his blissful expression. “Good?”

He tried for a frown but couldn’t quite make it. His words were as tight as his features. while his hands roamed over her at will. “I don’t know. It might be, but to be sure you might have to stay there for a bit.”

Their smiles soon grew into laughter and both knew that the soft murmurs of appreciation and the gentle murmurs of delighted lovers that lasted well into the night was just the beginning.

About the Author

Patricia Pellicane lives on Long Island in New York with her husband and family. She enjoys reading, travelling in her motor home and especially enjoys her grandchildren. "Too bad we can't have grandchildren first. They're a kick." Most of all she loves to write.

Most of all she loves to write. "Life's tough we all need a bit of fantasy now and then. For myself, I love a happy ending."

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