

Francesca Hawley

Red Stilettos, Book Two.

While a stand-alone, books are best enjoyed if read in order.

Erika Bergstrom is shopping in an upscale adult boutique when handsome Rodrigo Torbellino asks for help finding a gift. Just her luck! As he flirts with her, she discovers he's shopping for a bridal shower gift for a *friend*, not a lover. So when he asks her to model a beautiful negligee then seduces her in the dressing room, Erika gives in to her urge for a wild new experience...a one-night stand.

The next morning, Erika's body is sated from pleasure. Rigo obtains a promise she'll call him and tells her that if she doesn't, he'll find her. She's intrigued and thrilled with his obvious interest until she discovers Rigo is the head of the company her brother wants the family to partner with, so she doesn't contact him. A month passes. When they meet again, the fire between them burns just as bright as ever, but does Rigo want the business deal or her?

Can the red stilettos live up to their legend to provide the wearer with her heart's desire?

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



www.ellorascave.com

Whirlwind Affair

ISBN 9781419927577 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED Whirlwind Affair Copyright © 2010 Francesca Hawley

Edited by Mary Moran Cover art by Syneca

Electronic book Publication March 2010

The terms Romantica® and Quickies® are registered trademarks of Ellora's Cave Publishing.

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

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

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

WHIRLWIND AFFAIR

Francesca Hawley

Acknowledgement

Thanks to Paris Brandon, Maggie Rivers, Sandy Campbell and Ashlyn Chase for critiquing this manuscript. I learned something from each of you.

My deepest gratitude to Judi Fennell and Melissa Arroyo for reviewing the manuscript and editing my Spanish. I'm grateful to you both. Any errors which remain are mine alone.

Valda – as always – your love and support mean the world to me. Thank you!

In loving memory of my mom Gerre. Without you, none of this would have been possible. I miss you and love you always.

Trademarks Acknowledgement

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

Jacuzzi: Jacuzzi Inc. Corporation John Deere: Deere & Company Corporation Waldorf-Astoria: Hilton Hotels Corporation *Wizard of Oz*: Turner Entertainment Co.

LIFE Magazine, July 1959

When Ava Darling and her new husband Charles Stratton III returned from Italy, we were lucky enough to catch up with them in their suite at the Waldorf-Astoria. They said they were spending the weekend recovering from jet lag, but one could surmise from the way they cuddled together on the brocade sofa that their visit was more of an extended honeymoon.

We asked Ava and Charles about their courtship and heard a charming story about the two literally bumping into each other on a crowded street in Rome – but that was just part of the story. Ava treated us to a surprising account of the moments that led up to their "accidental" meeting. If one believes in fate, their romance may have been no accident at all.

She blushed as she admitted to gaining a few pounds after succumbing to a number of tempting Italian pastas and mouthwatering desserts. Apparently, this led to discomfort when she walked the cobblestone streets in her unforgiving high heels. Her Italian costume designer urged her to seek out a cobbler named Giorgio in his shop Desiderio del Cuore, which is Italian for Heart's Desire. She said he could create a pair of shoes that would fit comfortably regardless of any changes in her size or shape.

Meeting Giorgio was a delight, Ava said. His eyes crinkled with mischief as he promised the red peep-toe stilettos she ordered would be everything she wished for and more. It was just after she picked up her comfortable new shoes and wore them out of the shop that she met Mr. Stratton.

Coincidence? Perhaps, but not the way Ava sees it. She's convinced the shoes are responsible for granting her heart's desire...

Chapter One

His dark eyes caressed the curves of her buttocks like a warm hand. Erika Larson-Bergstrom shivered as she glanced at him out the corner of her eye. She licked her lips as his gaze captured hers and he smiled, unnerving her while at the same time arousing her until she ached with need.

A part of her wondered if her mischievous twenty-two-year-old twin daughters had set this up. After all, *they* were the ones who'd given her the \$100 gift certificate for Erotically Bound, the upscale Minneapolis adult store she shopped in right now. But the man eyeing her was no twenty-two-year-old kid. He was all man and she wanted to explore every inch of him...intimately.

Erika looked down at the lingerie she fingered, trying to clear her lust-filled mind. Her biggest problem was that she'd spent the last twelve years rearing her daughters as a single mom. She could count on one hand the number of men she'd dated during that time. The number she'd slept with was even less. She was just horny and needed to get laid, and he was the answer to a horny woman's prayer.

"Miss, could you assist me?" His voice was warm and deep with the hint of an Antonio Banderas-style Spanish accent. She looked up into the warmest brown eyes she'd ever seen. At least he'd called her "miss" and not "ma'am".

"Assist you?"

"Yes, I must buy a gift for a lady and I have no idea what she might want."

"Oh." Erika forced a smile to her tight lips. "Sure."

Well, that certainly burst her bubble. He had a woman he was shopping for. It figured. Of course it should have been a relief he wasn't buying undies for himself since he was shopping in the women's lingerie section, but she'd been dreaming he might possibly be as attracted to her as she was to him. No such luck.

7

He wanted a buddy to help him shop for another woman. Shit. *Buddy* seemed to be the only way men viewed her – especially lately – and it was almost always because she was a plus-size woman. Women with big butts liked sex too. Damn men, anyway.

"So what's the gift for? Your anniversary? Her birthday?"

"Anniversary? No." He laughed. She liked his laugh...a lot. He threw himself into it. His head back and his hands running through his hair. Thick, black hair. Yum.

Focus, Erika. Do not notice the full, wide lips and straight, white teeth. The high cheekbones. She swallowed, her gaze skimming over him. The broad shoulders, narrow hips and tight ass. Forget how *hot* he is. But no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't ignore his appeal. Her pussy was damp and swollen...as if she had a chance in hell of taking him inside her.

"I'm shopping for my administrative assistant."

"Your...?" Oh geez. Sleeping with an employee. Could it get worse?

He waved his hand as he read her expression. "No, she is getting married and this place has a bridal registry."

"A bridal registry? You've got to be kidding." Erika raised her brows.

"I know. It sounds insane, and so I told her. But she assured me it was so." He pulled out a piece of paper and handed it to her. "Here is a list of things the clerk printed for me that have not yet been purchased for her. My assistant is very organized and wants no duplicates."

Erika looked at the list he held and realized he was telling the truth. It consisted of lingerie, loungewear, dresses, shoes and, good grief, sex toys and movies.

"It's...um...comprehensive."

"Yes. I refuse to buy her some of these items. I am her friend, yes, but her employer first. Can you imagine if I showed up at the office bridal shower with," he took the list back, glaring at it while shaking his head in disbelief, "a Rotating G-Spot Rabbit Vibrator?"

8

"It would certainly be the talk of the party," Erika agreed dryly.

"Yes, laugh at me. Sofia certainly has done so."

"Your wife?"

"No, my assistant. I am not married."

"Oh. Well, there are some clothes on here."

"Crotchless panties? I ask you—in what universe should a boss give his assistant crotchless panties?"

"What do you *want* to give her?" She fought her laughter. He looked truly distressed. His dark brows were drawn together and his mouth tight.

"A toaster." He nodded decisively, once.

Erika lost her fight, laughing in delight. "No wonder she sent you here instead. No woman wants a toaster for a wedding gift."

"There is nothing wrong with a toaster. I would get her an expensive one that does everything but grocery shops for her. Does she want this? No. Instead she wants sexy clothes. X-rated films. Bah..." He shook his head, slashing his hand in front of him in disgust.

She liked his attitude. It was kind of old-fashioned, but then she was pretty traditional too. *Most* of the time. But not right now. Right now she wanted to throw him up against a wall and kiss the shopping frustration off his face. She wanted to peel his black suit jacket off his muscled body and rip his white shirt open so she could get to his broad chest to taste it. Oh geez. *Down, Erika.*

"Can I see the list? Maybe we can find something palatable to you."

"By all means." He handed it back to her, his fingers brushing hers. She inhaled, fighting a moan as the touch went right to her pussy.

Erika shook her head slightly. What the heck was wrong with her? She couldn't remember any man affecting her like this in...years. Had it really been that long since

she'd had sex with something other than her long-suffering vibrator? Yes, unfortunately it had. Erika dragged her eyes off him with effort and forced herself to read the list.

"There's a pair of shoes here that might be okay."

"I don't think so."

"Why? Shoes are okay - even if they are stilettos."

She glanced down at her feet, surprised they didn't hurt in the fancy heels she'd just received in the mail from Bella. They were gorgeous. She'd forgotten how much she liked them during the three months they'd belonged to her childhood friend. But now they were hers. She just hoped they lived up to the auctioneer's spiel about them. *Ruby slippers to make your heart's desire come true. We'll see.*

"Did you notice the manufacturer of them?" he asked.

"My shoes?" Yeah, he *was* damn close to her heart's desire.

"Although your shoes are quite attractive, I meant the shoes on the list."

"Oh right." A little too self-absorbed there, Miss Erika, she chided herself. Erika ducked her head to read the listing, but she sure didn't recognize the company name. "Fukkeme? Are they Japanese?"

"Um...I don't believe so. Think about the company name for a moment and it will become clear. Or perhaps my mind is—how do you say?—in the gutter inappropriately—however, this *is* an adult store." He waved around them.

Fukkeme? What was the problem? Oh *hell* no. And she'd said it out *loud*. To *him*. Her face went hot and she knew without a doubt she was blushing from her head to her feet.

"Sorry. I didn't get it at first," Erika muttered.

"I understand. No worries, miss. I actually grabbed up the shoes, intending to purchase them until I looked at the box. When I saw the company logo, I finally understood."

"What's so terrible about the company logo?"

"Two shoes having sex. I must admit to being envious of the stiletto on top. He has quite an impressive...heel."

Her gaze flew to his and she saw his lips twitching. Erika giggled, and when he chuckled, they both bent double with laughter.

"Oh my goodness. The mind boggles. Truly," she gasped around her laughter, wiping away tears.

"And well it should."

"Hmmm. Perhaps some lingerie then."

"Not..."

"No, not crotchless panties. Let's see. There's a negligee on the list. That might work." Erika looked for the right gown and blinked, blushing as she stared at a revealing red lace negligee. It was beautiful and one she might buy for herself with the \$100 gift certificate her daughters gave her.

He lifted the delicate fabric in his large hands and eyed her as if he was imagining her wearing it. "This might work. Sofia is curvy and sexy like you."

"Sexy? Like *me*?"

"Yes. She has beautiful, dangerous curves like yours." He smiled at her.

"You aren't her fiancée, are you?"

"Heavens no. She's much too fierce for me."

"Oh." Did he *really* call her sexy?

"Perhaps you would try the gown on so I might know if this will truly suit her."

"Me? You want me to try it on?"

"Is it not in your size?"

"Yes it is, but I'm not exactly Heidi Klum."

"If I wished this Heidi Klum to wear lingerie for me, I would ask her."

Erika swallowed, staring into his eyes. Mesmerized by the heat smoldering there. Good God, he wanted her. He really did. And she wanted him too. Was she brave enough to do this? She didn't have to show him what she looked like in the negligee, after all. She just had to try it on. She glanced down at her shoes. Yes, they seemed to be working their magic, just like the auctioneer promised.

"Okay. I'll try it on and let you know if it fits me."

"I'll wait outside to hear."

As Erika took the lacy confection from him and walked away, she swore she heard him mutter that he'd much rather wait inside and watch her change. She blushed and pretended she hadn't heard him. Erika glanced back once to see him staring at her wide ass with a half smile on his face. When he licked his lips, she stumbled and walked into a clothing rack. He rushed to her aid.

"Are you all right, miss?"

She nodded, feeling like an idiot. "Yeah. Just clumsy, I guess."

"If you are trying clothing on for me, perhaps I should know your name?"

"Erika." She paused. Should she tell him her last name? He tilted his head. God, he was cute when looking curious. Hell, he was *cute*...full stop. "Bergstrom. Erika Bergstrom."

"It is a pleasure to meet you Erika Bergstrom. I am Rodrigo Torbellino, but my friends call me Rigo."

"Well, I'll put this on and let you know if it fits." Erika rushed to the changing room and latched the door. She was crazy. She had to be.

"Does it fit?" he asked through the door.

"I'm not even undressed yet. Give me a minute, okay?" Was that a growl or a groan outside the door? Either way he sounded interested.

She took off her suit jacket and skirt then stripped off her bra. She left on her panties, thigh highs and shoes. Erika pulled on the negligee. She tugged at it, settling

12

her breasts into the filmy lace cups. She turned and caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror and came to a dead stop. The curves of her full breasts rose from the translucent cups, which lovingly held her in place, just hinting at her pale skin and pink nipples. The skirt of the gown was opaque so her panties didn't show. Somehow, she looked hot. Combine the negligee with her spicy stilettos and she was sex on wheels. She turned to look at her backside, surprised that she still liked what she saw.

Erika sighed. She'd let her ex-husband's opinion taint her self-image. She wasn't slender, but she wasn't bad. In fact, she was a wet dream...at least a wet dream for men who preferred plus-size women.

"Does it fit?"

"Definitely."

"Tell me."

"Tell you what?"

"Describe what you see."

"Are you kidding me?" His growled command turned her on, but she was no good at talking dirty -if that was what he wanted - because she was just too shy.

"Erika, I want to know that it fits well and would be a good gift."

"It fits fine."

"That is hardly descriptive," he purred through the door.

"Can't you just take my word for it?"

"If I must, but I would rather see for myself," he sighed.

Erika opened her mouth to respond then looked back at the mirror. If she opened the door he would either run screaming from the store, never to return, or lick his full lips again. Either way, she'd know if she stood a chance in hell of getting laid. And if she wanted to get laid, he'd have to see her naked anyway. She studied her image. Erika Bergstrom was sexy. At least the one in the mirror was. She unlatched the door and opened it, framing herself for him to see.

He had his back to the door, but when he heard it open, he turned to look. He blinked and his jaw dropped. For one second, she decided this had been a very bad idea. Then he started to smile. It was the most lethal, sexy smile she'd ever seen.

"I think you said you wanted to see for yourself that it fit?" she asked, her voice husky as she wondered where her courage had come from.

"It fits perfectly. Exquisitely."

He moved toward her like a jaguar stalking prey. She smiled and stood her ground because she *wanted* him to capture her. Rigo settled his hands at her waist and herded her back into the changing room before pushing the door closed behind him.

"So, do you think your assistant will like this, Rigo?" Erika gestured at the negligee while she met his warm brown gaze.

"I like this. Sofia's opinion is irrelevant," he sighed. "You are a stunning woman, Erika Bergstrom."

Her nipples tightened with excitement and hunger. There was nothing she could do to hide it as his gaze caressed her. After finishing his perusal of her body, his eyes returned to hers as he slowly lowered his head, giving her ample time to draw away.

Instead, she skimmed her arms along his chest to circle his neck. She pressed herself against him and lifted her head for his kiss. Rigo smiled down at her, cupping her jaw with one large hand. He brushed her lower lip with his thumb as his head dipped down. He paused just before their lips touched—their eyes locked and their warm breaths mingled.

"I want to kiss you, Erika. May I?"

She smiled. Erika couldn't remember the last time a man *asked* permission for a kiss. It was old-fashioned...gentleman-like...chivalrous – but also sexy as hell.

"You may kiss me, Rigo," she murmured, softening her lips to accept his mouth on hers.

14

Erika sighed as their lips met. His mouth was soft and his kiss felt like a drink of champagne. Sparkling. Tingling. Heady. She shivered against him as the hand curved against her cheek began to trail down her neck and bare shoulder. She slipped her fingers into his thick, black hair, marveling at the silky texture as his tongue traced the seal of her mouth, beguiling her to open and let him inside.

When she did, his tongue dipped into her moist mouth. Their tongues swirled together. Tasting. Teasing. She sighed, closing her eyes, as one of his hands found her wide bottom and cupped it, squeezing gently. With his other hand he stroked her bare arm – first up to her wrist along the top of her arm then back down along the sensitive underside. She lifted her right leg up along his hip, anchoring herself there to press against his rising erection. He groaned into her mouth, his tongue dipping deeper, teasing hers.

His hand caught her just under the knee and started the inevitable slide underneath the silky negligee. Erika moaned, wanting more of him than just the stroke of his fingers against her thigh. She wanted to take him inside her and feel his thick length buried in her pussy until she sobbed with climax right here in the changing room. When he reached the spot where her stockings ended, he growled and pressed himself against her.

Feeling his large cock pressing into her wasn't enough when what Erika really wanted was to feel him pounding into her long-unused pussy. She was wet and ready to take him. He held her leg up along his hip and brought his other hand to her pussy. His fingers inched upward, brushing against her covered mons. He pressed his finger against her hard little clit and she whimpered with excitement.

Rigo lifted his head and her eyes slowly opened as he continued to stroke her. She swore his dark eyes were lit by an inner fire as he watched her body tighten for orgasm. She was so unbearably close.

Erika tugged his head back down. "More, Rigo." He responded by edging his fingers under her panties and into her wetness. She sobbed, fighting to stay upright as

his touch sent her nerves sizzling like an overloaded electrical outlet. It wouldn't take much for combustion to occur right now.

"More? Like this?"

"Yes..." she hissed as his fingers slid into her wetness, filling her tight channel the way it hadn't been filled in far too long.

"So tight and wet," he purred, slipping his long fingers farther inside...burying them inside until his thumb rested on her quivering clit. She grasped the lapels of his jacket, thrusting herself onto his hand.

"Rigo, press harder."

"Press what harder, querida?"

"My clit. I'm so close. So very close..." She whimpered when instead of pressing harder, his thumb left her clit to circle around it. "No, I need..."

"What do you need? *Díme…*"

She thrust toward him, off balance with her leg held to his hip, but so aroused she would fall without his support. He kissed her jaw. His breath against the curve of her neck made her shiver as she fought to get closer to him.

"Díme, querida. Qué quieres? Qué necesitas?"

What did she want? What did she need? Everything...

"Qué?" His soft murmur against her throat left her shuddering as his thumb danced slowly around her aching clit.

"Oh God. I need to come. I want to come."

"Then you shall, *querida*." He nipped her throat and his thumb connected with her clit while he thrust his fingers deep inside her heated wetness. She gasped, riding his hand with her head thrown back.

There it was... "Oh yes. Harder, Rigo. Please."

He kissed her chin then took her mouth once more, strumming against her clit like a flamenco guitarist. Her juices coated his fingers and Erika couldn't believe she was doing this. Spread open for a man she'd never seen before. Taking his fingers inside her, begging for more. Who the hell was this woman she'd become?

He nipped her lips and her eyes blinked open. "Quit thinking and just enjoy. Feel the pleasure. Immerse yourself in it."

She stared into his dark eyes as a third finger joined the two already penetrating her. Stretching her. His thumb played her clit faster until she panted with excitement. His fingers curved inside her, hitting someplace new.

"Oh my God." Erika gasped, feeling a sudden urge to pee and clamping down to prevent the embarrassment.

"Don't fight it."

"I can't do it. Not here." She moaned.

He nodded once and concentrated his attentions on her trembling clit. He teased her, building the tension. Her hips jerked as she strained, yearning to give her body to him.

"Come for me. Relax and come..." He nipped her earlobe as she jerked her hips.

Just when she thought it would never happen, his thumb hit the right spot and she began to shake. Erika's pussy clenched on his fingers as waves of pleasure streaked through her, setting off explosions of pleasure shooting along her nerve endings.

"Sí, me encanta. Give me more."

Erika shuddered, whimpering as she wished it was his cock buried in her to the hilt. She buried her face in his chest. She wanted him to fuck her...long and hard.

"Take me, Rigo." She reached for his firm erection, rubbing him. She tried to unzip his zipper.

"No, Erika. Not here. Not now."

Sliding down from her sexual high, she froze in horror. He didn't want her. He could have her for the asking right here and he didn't want her. It was her ex all over again, damn it. Erika tried to pull away from him, but he wouldn't let her.

17

"If you don't want me, just let go," she hissed. "I'll get cleaned up and throw this damn negligee out to you."

He chuckled softly, taking her hand and rubbing it over his erection. "Doesn't my hard cock tell you how much I want you?"

Erika looked up at him. "Then why not take me here?"

Rigo smiled down at her, sexy crinkles at the corners of his eyes. "Because I want more than a quickie in a changing room. I want you to join me for dinner. If you still want to make love to me then, I would be honored to have your company in my condo for a long night of pleasure."

"Oh. Well, yeah. That would be nice too."

"I think so. I will wait outside while you change."

"Why? We're pretty intimate here – you still have your fingers buried inside me."

"Because my appetite has been whetted and I wish to stare at you throughout dinner and imagine how I will feel when you bare your flesh to me. To lay you on my bed and taste of the honey between your legs. Honey, which I have brought to you."

"Wow." Erika blinked, unable to say more than that.

"The night is young, querida, and the anticipation is just beginning for us."

He gently eased his fingers out of her pussy and helped her to stand. Then he brought his slick fingers to his mouth to taste her, licking her juices with enthusiasm while he closed his eyes and groaned softly the way she did when she was eating some particularly good chocolate ice cream. He smiled at her.

"You taste sweet. I look forward to burying my face between your legs later to drink the nectar directly from the flower of your womanhood instead of this secondary source."

Good God, was he for real? Did men really say stuff like that? He smiled as if he knew what she was thinking and winked at her. Then he slipped out the changing room door and pushed it closed behind him.

Chapter Two

Nerves twisted his gut as Rigo approached Erika's parked car outside his favorite Spanish restaurant *Cocina de Abuela*. Erika remained in the driver's seat of the idling vehicle, tapping the steering wheel and staring into space. Somehow, Rigo knew she wasn't waiting for him to open her car door – she was going to make a run for it. To beg off dinner and speed off into the night as if the world hadn't shifted on its axis the minute they'd met. But it had.

His father and grandfather both told him that he'd know the woman he should marry as soon as he met her, but he hadn't believed them. He'd thought love at first sight was bullshit. They must be laughing at him from their place in heaven because Erika was his future wife and he'd known the truth as soon as she walked into the store. The problem was how to convince *her*.

Rigo walked into her line of sight before knocking on her window so he wouldn't startle her. Rather than opening her door, she lowered the window. Shit. He bent and leaned on her door, meeting her face-to-face. She licked her lips, her mouth tight with unease.

"This is my favorite restaurant in the Twin Cities. The food is authentically Spanish."

She paused, finally meeting his gaze with reluctance. "Rigo, I don't think – "

"I'm looking forward to introducing you to my native foods."

Erika bit her lip, shaking her head. "I shouldn't-"

"Grant me just a bit more of your time." He opened her door and held out his hand while he pressed the power button to close her window. "*Por favor, querida.*" She sighed and turned off the engine. When she set her foot on the pavement outside the car and took his hand, his gut unknotted. She was his...for now. If he could just convince her to be his for tonight and for the rest of time, all would be well.

Rigo assisted her out of her car and shut the door then led her into the restaurant, hoping it wouldn't be busy. He hadn't called ahead for a reservation because he'd been too worried Erika would turn off and lose him in traffic along the way so he hadn't pulled his cell phone out. On some level he'd sensed her growing tension. Her fear of the intense attraction between them.

"Señor Torbellino, welcome. You would like a table?" Javier Medina, the owner's grandson greeted him.

"If you have one available."

"For you, always. *Abuela* has ordered it so. As she says, who better to appreciate Spanish cooking than a Spaniard?"

"Indeed." Rigo grinned. He adored *Señora* Medina and she fed him as well as his own *abuela* had back when he'd still lived in Spain.

Javier led them to a comfortable, secluded table. Rigo helped her take off her coat then held out a chair so Erika could sit before he settled beside her. He took the offered menus and handed one to Erika.

"We'll start with a carafe of sangria and some coffee."

"I'd like ice water please," Erika added.

"Sí, señorita."

Javier left them alone and Rigo watched Erika stare pointedly at the menu, ignoring him. He waited. Finally, she looked up.

"What?"

"I'm still seeing the vision of you framed in the dressing room door. It's distracting me."

20

A deep rose crept into her cheeks. "I can see how it would be...distracting. Might put you off your meal," she joked faintly.

Rigo raised an eyebrow. "No. It whets my appetite and makes me hungry for more."

"You had quite a taste in the dressing room, yet you want more?" She blushed when he chuckled.

"Yes. Much more."

"Okay...if you say so."

"I do. Now, have you ever eaten Spanish food before?"

"Tacos and things."

"Spanish and Mexican are different cuisines."

She cocked her head. "Really?"

"Are Norwegian and Swedish different cuisines?"

"Of course."

"My point exactly."

"Related but not the same, in other words."

"Sí. Are there any foods you don't like?"

"Weird stuff."

"Weird? Define weird."

"I don't know...squid. Octopus. Like that."

Rigo grinned. "Would you trust me to order for us?" He reached across the table and took her hand, stroking her fingers with his.

She blushed, smiling at him. "Yes, I guess so. Just remember, I'm Swedish and most of our food is white."

"You mean not highly spiced?"

"Very few hot peppers ever found their way to Sweden that I know of. Or at least not to the Swedish immigrants who moved to Minnesota."

Rigo laughed, squeezing her hand gently. "I'll keep our meal on the mild side."

Erika shivered. His gentle but insistent touch was making her pussy wet again but she left her hand resting within his. Erika admitted to herself that she wanted more of him—more than she'd had in the dressing room. She wanted to explore him from head to toe. To touch him. To taste him.

When the waiter stopped at their table, Rigo placed their order entirely in Spanish and the hair on the back of her neck stood on end. She could almost imagine him murmuring in her ear in lilting Spanish while he drove into her body. Her face warmed as she fought to remove the image from her overheated brain, but it wouldn't leave. She could see him undressed. His broad, dark chest damp with the sweat of steamy sex.

"Erika? Are you all right?" he asked.

Even though he wore a suit, she guessed his abs were as hard as a rock. She wanted to trace every ripple with the tip of her tongue. Would he have hair on his chest? She hoped so. A light covering of dark hair arrowing down to his groin where his long, thick cock would rise...just for her.

"Erika? Is there anything wrong?" He squeezed her hand to gain her attention.

She took a gasping breath, sure her face was flame red from the heat she felt in her cheeks as she met his eyes. Why did she keep visualizing him naked and thrusting into her or her licking him all over? It had just been too long since she'd had sex. That's all. This wasn't anything special. Just desperate need. And if she was brave enough, she could fulfill that need tonight...after dinner.

"I'm fine. Everything's fine. Why?"

"The way you looked at me. I was concerned you might be very hungry." He smiled. "You looked like I might be on the menu tonight."

"Aren't you?" She blushed when he laughed.

"I certainly hope so."

Their order arrived and she felt a loss when Rigo released her hand so the food could be placed on their table. The waiter presented several plates that smelled like heaven in addition to their coffee and a carafe of sangria. Rigo poured her a glass of sangria to keep her ice water company.

"Enjoy your meal," the waiter said, and left them to it.

Rigo forked some of the rice dish and held it out to her. "Try this."

Erika opened her mouth and his gaze held hers as he fed her a bite-size portion. The flavor burst onto her tongue...saffron, peppers and chicken. She chewed while he forked a mouthful for himself before lifting another morsel to hers.

"What is it?" Erika asked.

"Chicken paella. Paella is a very traditional Spanish dish. Now try this."

Again he fed her and this time she purred as she tasted what was essentially a potato omelet. Each bite he fed her was an adventure in flavor and she stared into his dark eyes, which were warm with seduction.

"This is *tortilla de patatas.*" Rigo forked another taste of the potato omelet into her mouth and she closed her eyes to savor the flavors. "You like?"

"I do." She nodded. "It's really good. I like the paella too."

"Try this now." He spooned some soup from a bowl for her, holding his hand under it to catch any drips.

Erika licked her lips and gazed into his eyes as he fed her. This time the acid of tomatoes filled her mouth. It was like eating a liquid salad and she smiled at him as the cold soup slipped down her throat.

"Nice. What is it?"

"A traditional gazpacho. *Señora* Medina is a marvelous cook. Eating here is like eating at home."

She grinned. She could see why he adored this cuisine. The flavors and textures were like a party for her taste buds. Erika would never have expected that she'd like being fed by someone, but Rigo made it a pleasure. All she had to do was to stare into his deep brown eyes and open her mouth. Something she hoped she'd have plenty of opportunity to do later when they were alone.

He leaned close to whisper in her ear. "You like the food of my country?"

The deep purr in his voice sent chills down her spine and his breath against her ear and neck made her nipples peak. He was setting her on fire. She turned her head so her lips grazed his jaw, and she nipped him gently.

"Yes, I do. Very much. It reminds me of you – full of life and color."

"Gracias, querida." He flicked his tongue lightly against her earlobe before pressing a soft kiss against her neck.

As they made their way through dinner, Erika didn't even touch her silverware. Rigo fed her. Twice she got something on her lips or the corner of her mouth—at least that was the excuse Rigo used to lick the food away. Her nipples were still tight from the pleasure she felt when he used his tongue to clean the messy spot.

She sighed as she leaned back in her chair, replete from the tasty meal but not overfull. She'd never eaten a meal where someone took care of all her needs. Her exhusband Hans had never been so attentive.

Of course, he'd never wanted to marry her either. He'd only married her because he'd knocked her up and his father was the Lutheran minister in town. Doing anything *but* marrying her was unacceptable as far as Pastor Bergstrom was concerned – do the crime, do the time. Thank God the old man had been moved to a different church. Within a week of getting his father settled in his new parish two states away, Hans had filed for divorce. She'd been devastated at the time, but now she knew it was the right thing for them both.

"What troubles you?"

Erika looked up and smiled at Rigo. "Nothing important. Not anymore."

"Would you like dessert?"

She smiled. "Everything was wonderful, but I'm stuffed."

He leaned close. "Perhaps I can persuade you to join me in my home for an afterdinner drink?"

Erika blinked. "Do you live nearby?"

He grinned. "Just down the block. I have a condo."

"Here?" Whoa, this was a *high* rent district.

"Sí. So, may I interest you in a short walk to my home?"

This was it. Once she said yes, she'd be on the road to doing something impetuous – something like spending the night having wall-banging sex with Rodrigo. Then tomorrow morning, just like Cinderella – poof – she'd return to her drab existence as a small-town librarian in her hometown of Larson, Minnesota with nothing but a sexy pair of shoes to show for it. Erika swallowed, gazing into his eager, sexy eyes and decided...what the hell. She would only live once and she wanted this man. She wanted to be wild tonight, and if any man could deliver wild monkey sex, Rodrigo Torbellino could.

"I'd like that, Rigo."

"Excelente. No puedo esperar saborearte."

He waved over the waiter and produced a credit card—Lordy, it was platinum. How wealthy was this guy? *No*, she did *not* want to know. She just wanted the fantasy of a night with the sexiest man she'd ever met. After all, tomorrow would come soon enough. If her past experiences were anything to go by, the morning after would bring with it a cool goodbye.

After he signed the credit card slip, he helped her put on her coat. He made a beeline for his car and grabbed the purchase he'd made at Erotically Bound then he held her hand as they walked down the block. It was a chilly early May evening so when Rigo drew her close against his warm side, she slid an arm around his waist. It amazed her how well they fit together. Her head was just the right height to rest on his shoulder and his large hand curled around her waist as if it had been made to fit there. Hmmm...what else might fit perfectly, she wondered.

He steered her to a tall building just across the street from the city block in which they'd started. A building emblazoned with a sign that read *Torbellino Enterprises*. Oh good God. He owned a building...in *downtown* Minneapolis. Erika came to an abrupt halt, staring from the base to the tip of the building. It wasn't the tallest building, but it wasn't the shortest either. He tugged on her arm.

"You own a building? *Here*?"

"Sí. It is nothing, barely ten floors."

Erika turned to him in shock. "Barely ten floors is nothing? Are you kidding me?"

He tugged harder while she glared at him then a car honked. Erika looked around and realized she was standing in the middle of the road, holding up traffic. She scuttled for the curb with Rigo at her side. Once they were safely on the sidewalk, she glared up at him.

"What the hell?"

He grinned. "I do well and so does my company."

She waved at the building. "Where is your *condo*?"

"I am on the top floor. The business holds the next three floors down and the three floors below that are apartments. The lower floors are office space. The building also has amenities for the tenants and staff."

"Amenities?"

"A gym, a swimming pool, laundry services, things any upscale tenant would expect."

Erika noted a parking structure adjacent to the building. "Do you own that too?"

He shrugged, which obviously meant he did. She noted the signs indicating that the structure was a private parking ramp. She rubbed her eyes in disbelief. Her family was well off, particularly in their rural setting but this...this was ridiculous.

"I think I should go...now." She moved to retrace her way back to her car, but he held her hand, not letting her leave him.

"Erika, I want to spend the night with you. And until you saw my home, you wanted it too. Why does this change anything?"

She shook her head. Men who were this good-looking and this wealthy did not look twice at little old small-town girl Erika Larson. Or at librarian Erika Bergstrom either, come to that. *Especially* not Erika Bergstrom. A forty-year-old divorcée? She wasn't tall. She wasn't slender. She just...wasn't anything.

He tugged her gently into his arms and held her close, looking down into her eyes. Rigo smiled warmly at her.

"You are the first woman I've ever met who tried to run *away* from me when she found out I had money. Do you know how rare that is? How rare *you* are?"

"I...I don't know what to say."

"So, don't think about it tonight. Think tomorrow. Please." He nuzzled her neck, his warm lips undoing all her good intentions to get the hell outta Dodge.

She sighed, tilting her head to allow him better access. He nipped her earlobe then slowly pressed warm, wet kisses behind her ear. He set her on fire and she couldn't prevent herself from relaxing in his arms as he gently herded her toward the front entrance of the building. Suddenly, they were inside the warm lobby. Wasn't there supposed to be a door somewhere?

Erika glanced over her shoulder and a doorman smiled and tipped his hat in her direction as Rigo continued guiding her across the lobby. Her gaze took in the lush interior. Marble and dark, rich woods decorated the space. Art created by up-andcoming local artists graced the walls. A discreet receptionist seemed absorbed in her computer screen as Rigo continued his tender assault on her senses while he enticed her farther into his lair.

"Do you do this often?" she muttered as he tugged her around a corner and away from the main bank of elevators, out of sight of their audience.

"Do what, Erika?"

"Bring women home to your...castle."

He chuckled. "No, you have the distinction of being the first."

She stopped and growled at him. "You've never brought a woman home before?"

He smiled. "No. On the rare occasions I indulge my desires, I usually stay with the lady, not the other way around."

"Oh."

Again he tugged at her, this time to a solitary elevator labeled *Private*. He hit the button and the elevator opened. He pushed a key into the slot beside penthouse and unlocked their way into his home. Erika leaned against the wall as the doors closed. She had to be insane to do this.

Her younger brother Andy would kill her for going somewhere alone with a man she'd just met. Hell, he gave out *references* to new lovers so they could check him out. What was she doing?

Erika glanced at Rigo, expecting him to continue his seduction on the elevator ride, but instead, as they ascended, he stood on the other side of the car and watched her. She gasped as the skyline of Minneapolis came into view when the elevator slid past the second floor. The setting sun lit the sky with pinks and purples and the lights of the city began to twinkle as night fell.

"It's so beautiful. That's Lake Calhoun, isn't it?"

"It is."

"You have this view every night?"

"When I think to look at it, sí. I do."

She turned to him. "You should look at it every night, Rigo. Life is too short to let the beauty all around us pass you by."

He smiled and crossed the elevator to her. Rigo stroked his fingers along her jawline and nodded. "You are right. I will do my best to remember and when I forget, you may remind me. *Sí?*"

She grinned. "Sí."

The elevator doors opened and reluctantly she turned to face his home. She breathed a sigh of relief that there was a small entryway here. He pulled her along and unlocked the door to his place. He threw open the door and Erika blinked. If she thought the lobby was impressive, it was nothing on his condo. Polished wood floors filled the space and warm earth tones colored the walls while amazing Spanish antiques were arranged in pleasant groupings to make the most of the open floor plan. His Spanish ancestry was evident in everything here.

"Wow."

"You like my home?"

He waved her inside and reluctantly she took the required steps to enter his condo. Rigo closed the door and she felt a shiver run down her spine. Like it or not, she was committed now. Why the heck had she agreed to this?

"Erika? You may leave if you truly wish to, but I hope you stay." He turned her to face him instead of the understated opulence of his living room. "I ask you to stay. *Por favor, querida.*"

She swallowed. Hard. Then she nodded.

He smiled. "Would you like something to drink?"

"I don't really want any alcohol."

"Perhaps some cold bottled water then?"

"I might be able to drink that."

He reached for the buttons on her coat and undid them. *Oh my*. Her nipples tightened as she imagined him unbuttoning more than her serviceable heavy spring coat. He eased her out of the coat and hung it in a closet in the foyer.

"Come."

He led her across the expanse of hardwood floor to the spacious, richly appointed kitchen. As he set the bag with the sexy lingerie on the counter and pulled open the stainless steel front of a large refrigerator, Erika shook her head in frank disbelief. He pulled out a bottle of water and handed it to her before taking one for himself.

"Are you a gourmet cook or something?"

He raised his brows as he took a long drink of his water. "No. At best, I make an excellent box of macaroni and cheese or canned soup. I usually eat out."

"Even for breakfast?"

He grinned. "Yes."

"Then why this elaborate kitchen?"

"Because the architect insisted—for resale value." He shrugged. "And because I may have harbored the hope that one day I'd find a wife who would enjoy the use of this kitchen."

Erika frowned at him. "What if she can't boil water?"

Rigo threw his head back and laughed. "If I find a wife as incompetent in the kitchen as I, then we could hire a cook."

Erika looked around and muttered, "Yeah, you can definitely afford it."

"Sí, I can. Now let us go enjoy the Minneapolis skyline from my *uncomfortably* large living room."

"Yes, let's." Erika's lips quirked, unable to prevent a smile.

How the dickens had he known what she was thinking? Well, she hadn't made a secret of how overwhelming she found this place. Rigo led her across the room to the broad expanse of glass filled with the lights of Minneapolis.

"This must be amazing in winter...especially when it snows."

"It is. I love to watch the snow fall from here. I sometimes put on my coat and boots and sit out on the balcony to enjoy the weather. There's just something soothing about the bite of the cold air and the soft sound of the falling snow. It clears my head."

Despite her nerves, when Rigo stood behind her and wrapped his arms around her, setting his chin on the top of her head, Erika relaxed into his warm embrace as if she'd finally come home. It felt so good to be here—with him. It wasn't his elaborate condo that felt like home. It was him. *He* felt like home. As if they were meant for each other.

Erika closed her eyes and imagined herself in this same spot with him in five years. Ten. The truly frightening thing about it was that she *could* imagine them just like this...growing old together. Her tummy tightened in fear because she realized she never wanted to leave him. This was dangerous. *He* was dangerous to her. Not because she thought he could ever be a serial killer, but because she wished for a relationship with him. More than that, she wanted a lifetime, but he wouldn't.

She stiffened and shook her head. No, this *had* to be just about great sex. Anything else was a dream. A fantasy. She spun in his arms and reached up to remove his jacket. He let it fall without a protest, his dark eyes following her hectic movements. She expected him to complain about his fancy silk jacket getting creased or dirty, but he showed no concern the way Hans would have in the same situation. Her ex used to bitch if she ever showed the tiniest bit of eagerness in their lovemaking by trying to undress him. Erika paused.

Rigo tipped up her chin. "You think too much, querida."

She swallowed as he slowly lowered his head to hers. Finally she stood on tiptoe and caught his head in her hands, tugging his mouth to hers.

Chapter Three

Ah, this woman. This mercurial, strange woman with her odd and negative fixation on his finances. She fascinated him. Rodrigo sighed as she opened her mouth to taste him. Her aggressiveness and hunger for him made his cock tighten with need. But no, he wanted this to last. If he let her take the lead, he'd be coming like an inexperienced teenager in no time. He lifted his head to look down into her drugged eyes.

"Would you indulge me, *querida*?" Her brows furrowed, so he smoothed them with his fingers.

"How?"

"Would you wear the negligee for me? Please. I would love to see you in it again."

"It might get messed up. Are you going to take it to the dry cleaner before giving it to Sofia?"

He smiled. "I have no intention of giving it to her. It is for you."

"But what about the bridal shower you told me about?"

Rigo laughed. "I'm going to buy her a toaster and let her complain bitterly. It will make her happy."

Erika laughed. "She enjoys complaining?"

"Not usually. Just when she can't manage me."

"There's actually someone who *can* manage you?"

"Only with regards to business."

"You know you could just buy her a gift certificate for the store. Then she can't complain."

"True. I shall consider it but you're avoiding my question. *Will* you wear the gown for me?" She tensed in his arms, her expression twisting with reluctance as she glanced

down at herself, almost covering her body but stopping before she could. "Ah, Erika, you are beautiful to me. But if it will ease your uncertainty, I'll light some candles and the fire. The romantic lighting will enhance your beauty."

As she chewed on her lip uncertainly, he wanted to kill the man who'd made her feel homely. Erika was stunning. Full-bodied and exciting. Lush with promise. If it took him the rest of his life, he would prove it to her. One day she would believe in her own magnificence, utterly and completely. Just as he did.

"Okay." She left his arms and crossed to where the small bag rested on the kitchen counter.

"And, *querida*..." She turned and cocked her head. "You don't need bra and panties under the garment."

"Why not?"

"They leave lines?" he asked teasingly.

She chuckled, blushing slightly. "So where can I change?"

"Do you want to use a powder room or my bathroom?"

"The powder room, I think."

Still shy then. She'd find her way to his bathroom soon enough and he'd enjoy introducing her to making love in his Jacuzzi bathtub or his large shower. Rigo showed Erika to the powder room off the living room. After she closed the door, lingerie bag in hand, Rigo turned off the lights in the living room. He lit candles and he turned on the gas fire then toed off his shoes and removed his socks. He eased off his tie and picked his jacket off the floor before throwing them into a chair while he waited. And waited. Rigo frowned. What was taking her so long?

She would *not* hyperventilate. Erika glared at her reflection in the long mirror on the back of the door. She looked okay. Didn't she? Was she crazy to go out into Rigo's living room looking like...this? The top of the gown clung to her breasts but the skirt flowed around her legs. She'd left on her thigh highs. And the shoes. The special, supposedly magical shoes.

She hoped that Ava Darling's shoes really did possess some sort of magic. Erika needed all the help she could get to carry this look off. In the dressing room, she thought she'd looked amazing, now...anticipating sex with Rigo, she wasn't so sure. Being naked with him scared her because she wanted him to *want* her the way he had when they were in the store dressing room.

She took a deep breath. It was now or never. Either she put on her clothes again and ran out the front door, or walked out into the living room in this negligee. She adjusted her boobs, making sure they at least looked high on her chest, sighed, forced a smile then opened the door. She took two steps out of the bathroom and he was there. Leaning against the kitchen counter. Waiting patiently with anticipation vivid on his handsome face. She licked her lips and walked toward him.

God, what did he think of her? Was he disappointed? Did he wish he hadn't brought her here?

"You take my breath away, *querida*," he murmured, taking her hand and lifting it to his mouth.

He placed a soft kiss on her knuckles then turned her hand over to place more kisses. First on her wrist and then in the center of her palm. He looked up at her from where he began to nibble gently at her palm. She shivered, her nipples tightening and her clit starting to throb. She shifted her stance as she stared into his heated, dark gaze. Oh God. His expression was just what she'd always wanted to see when a man looked at her. An intoxicating combination of lust and tenderness. Desire and care. This man could steal her heart and never know he'd done it. Unfortunately, she acknowledged, he already had. She took a step closer to him.

"You took off your tie. I wanted to do that for you." Erika straightened her back and decided she wanted him. It was time to put away her fears. Just enjoy tonight. Whatever the morning brought her, she'd still have this time with him. "Should I put it back on so you can remove it?" he teased.

She laughed. "No. I like you like this. Unbuttoned."

The neckline of his shirt was open a little, but she wanted more. She lifted her hands and reached for the buttons, slowly unbuttoning each one, yet she left his shirt closed. She shivered when Rigo cupped her bare elbows in his hands, caressing the underside of her arm with his fingertips as she continued her task.

"Soft. Such a beautiful, soft woman," he murmured.

Erika smiled and finished unbuttoning his shirt. She longed to rip his clothes off and jump him, but realized she'd have time for that later. Now she wanted to compare reality and her imagination. Did they match? She tugged open his shirt, sighing. Rigo was hotter than her wildest visions of him. His natural dark-tan complexion would have marked him as a hunky Hispanic man in any location, but it was especially true in Minnesota where so many men were pasty white after a long, cold winter.

Starting at his collarbone, she trailed her fingers over his hard chest, smiling as she caressed the light covering of hair on his chest. His body hair tickled her hands as she caressed him and she liked it.

"You like what you see, *mi* angel?" He chuckled.

"I do." She lifted her gaze to his. "I love the dark hair. It makes me want to pet you."

He pulled his shirt off and dropped it on the floor behind him. "Pet me as much as you'd like," he growled. "Your touch is burning me."

"If I'm burning you, perhaps I should stop?"

"No. I love this long, slow burn."

He slid one hand into her hair. Gathering it gently in his grasp to hold her head in place, he lowered his head and took her mouth. Erika sighed. The kiss was tender yet masterful and she never wanted him to stop. When he lifted his head, she followed, but he gently held her head still while he traced the seam of her lips with his tongue. She opened her mouth, groaning when he lightly bit her lower lip then released it. Running her fingers over his tensed muscles, she tweaked his nipples.

Rigo growled, brushing his lips over her cheek and along her jawline before dipping lower to taste her neck. Erika wrapped her arms around him, whimpering when his free hand slipped around her waist and he stroked his way up her back. When he hit bare skin, she shivered.

"Are you cold?"

"No."

"Are you sure?" He kissed her shoulder. "I see bumps here. What is it called?"

"Gooseflesh?"

"Sí. Sexy little bumps...all over." He cupped her breast, running his thumb over her erect nipple. *"I* must warm you up."

Erika groaned as he continued to tease the hard peak. Back and forth went his thumb, drawing her tighter and tighter with arousal. His breath teased her collarbone before he moved lower to press a light kiss to the rise of her breast.

This was frustrating because she'd wanted to explore *him*...make *him* moan. Instead she was like putty in his hands. Pliant and submissive. Letting him have his way with her and yet it was exactly what she needed. A strong, confident man who knew what he wanted and he knew how to get it. Rigo nipped at the soft flesh of her breast, tugging it with his teeth. When she thought he couldn't make her feel anything more, he slid his hard thigh between hers. He let go of her head and curled his hand over her ass, lifting her onto his leg. Erika drove her hips into him.

She clung to him, barely able to stand. He was doing it again, just like he had in the dressing room. Pleasuring her... Playing with her until she was shuddering and on the edge of a soul-shattering orgasm.

"I want us to come together," she moaned, kissing his throat.

"No, querida. This time is for you."

"But..."

"Quit fighting it. You are a woman who always gives. This time I want you to take. Allow yourself to grasp your pleasure and revel in it."

He squeezed her ass then sucked one nipple through the lacy fabric covering her breast while he continued to caress the other with his thumb. Erika jerked, gasping at how quickly he'd taken her over and how intensely her desire had swamped her. She clung to him, hips grinding closer and closer to climax.

He released her nipple from the intense suction of his mouth and nudged aside the fabric with his rough chin. She shivered when his flattened tongue swept over her taut nipple. Her eyes flew open and she looked down, meeting his dark, teasing gaze.

She moaned as she watched his tongue swirl over the rosy tip before he sucked her back into his mouth. Their eyes locked while he drew on her. Erika sighed as he lifted his head away yet maintained the suction on her, pulling her nipple outward. Stretching her. He moved his hand from her breasts and then both hands kneaded her ass. Erika groaned, jerking.

Rigo continued to cradle her ass with his left hand while he used his right to tug the skirt of her gown up as his hand returned to the familiar territory he'd explored earlier. He slipped his hand between her damp thighs and smiled around her nipple when he found her pussy naked as he'd requested. His fingers parted her and he teased her clit with his middle finger. Her nipple finally popped out of his mouth—released from the vacuum he'd created and she shuddered on the edge of release.

He sighed. "Always you fight your climax, Erika. Relax and come for me."

She whimpered as he rubbed firmly against her clit, giving her the pressure she craved. Her head fell back and her eyes closed as she concentrated on his fingers. His mouth. His tongue found a bead of sweat nestled between her breasts and licked it up.

"Salty but sweet, *querida*. I want to taste more of you. Feast on you."

Erika quivered as he lapped at her nipple and fingered her clit. "Oh yes. Rigo, don't stop."

"No. I won't, but I think you want more. Sí?"

"Yes, fuck me, Rigo. Please!"

He chuckled. "So eager, but no, I won't fuck you...yet. I want you to cream on my hand. Shake in my arms while I watch you reach your peak. *Come* for me."

Erika jerked as his fingers slid deep into her pussy. It was as if his fingers had never left, they fit so well inside her. He used the heel of his hand to rub her clit while he slid three long fingers in and out of her dripping cunt. Her fingers dug into his biceps as she rode his hand.

"Ah, sí. Estás hermosa, pequeña," he purred.

"I'm not little."

"You are to me," he chuckled.

Erika thrust faster, riding him. Driving herself onto his large hand. She couldn't catch her breath as her belly muscles tightened. She clutched him, sobbing when he returned to licking and sucking her nipples as she arched her back to lift her breasts enticingly.

"More. God, Rigo. More!"

Erika clenched her pussy around his plunging fingers, propelling her hips faster and faster. She groaned.

"Sí, querida. That's it. Give in to your climax. Take it," he purred in her ear, nibbling her neck.

She shuddered. Her hips rolled faster and faster. Driving onto him. Every muscle tightening as pleasure spiraled through her body.

"Oh God. Yeeees. Harder."

"Faster?"

"Yes. Rigo, yes!" Erika shook, finally letting go—shaking as waves of pleasure radiated outward from her clit and cunt. She clamped hard on his hand, riding him while she clutched his strong arms.

He kissed her earlobe, holding her close as he continued to lightly stroke her quivering clit. Drawing out her pleasure with his gentle, sure touch.

"You're beautiful when you come. You should do it more often."

Erika's eyes fluttered open and she gazed into Rigo's brown eyes, warm with pleasure and accomplishment. She blinked. Somehow he knew she rarely came when she had sex with a man. How the hell did he *do* that? He was either really experienced or psychic.

"Why don't you think I come often?"

He dropped a light kiss onto her parted lips. "Your look of intense surprise each time you've given me your orgasm today. As if you couldn't quite believe what had happened."

"Oh." Unfortunately that sounded about right. She just wished she wasn't so damn transparent.

"Don't look so annoyed with yourself, *querida*. Your pleased surprise does wonders for my machismo."

"Like your masculinity needs any help at all." She sighed as he gathered her close. She laid her cheek against his shoulder, breathing him in. He smelled *good*.

"Perhaps my masculinity needs no help, but a man's ego always benefits from success."

"Success at what?" she teased, smiling up at him.

"Giving you pleasure. Can you walk yet? I want to lay you down in front of the fire and inflate my...ego just a bit more."

She chuckled, reaching down between his legs to softly caress his hard-on through his suit pants. "Your ego feels plenty inflated to me." Rigo groaned, pressing against her hand.

"A man's ego can never be large enough."

He withdrew slightly and assisted her across the room to the big, soft rug spread before the blazing fire. He eased her down to her back, smiling tenderly at her, his large hand resting on the full curve of her breast. She reached up to stroke his cheek.

"How can any man be so beautiful?"

"It is entirely the fault of my parents. I had nothing to do with it."

Erika grinned. "Your parents must have been very good-looking."

"My mother was an angel and my father a devil. I believe they balanced each other out and gifted me their best and worst traits." Rigo leaned down to nibble at her neck making her shiver.

She reached up and ran her fingers through his hair. "Which best traits and which worst traits?"

He chuckled. "I'll let you tell me in the morning."

Chapter Four

Erika sighed as Rigo continued his leisurely tasting of her upper body. She felt completely relaxed and ready for anything with this man. How had this happened? Normally, she was a bundle of nerves when she contemplated sex with a man—terrified of what he'd think of her. Was she too fat? Did her breasts sag? Would he notice her stretch marks? But she felt none of this with Rodrigo. The irony was he was the handsomest man she'd been with, yet he made her feel more beautiful than she'd ever felt.

"What are you thinking about?"

Erika smiled. "How comfortable I am."

"Comfortable?" He lifted his head to frown at her, his eyebrows raised. "Should I be insulted? I want you wild with passion not...*comfortable*."

She laughed, stroking his cheek. "In order for me to get wild with passion, I need to feel comfortable. So believe me, the way I feel is a good thing."

"Ah. Well then, I'm glad you're comfortable. How can I increase this feeling for you?"

"By letting me explore *you* for a while. I want to touch you...taste you."

He grinned and melodramatically rolled onto his back, his arms out to the side. "Then take me. I am yours to discover. To touch. To taste."

Erika sat up and straddled his waist, setting her hands on his bare chest. "Excellent. I'll start at the top and work my way down."

He settled his hands at her waist, kneading gently. "I'm in your hands. Be gentle with me, *querida*."

"I will be. Now close your eyes, Rigo."

He raised his brows. "Close my eyes?"

"Yes."

Erika waited until he finally closed his eyes then she leaned forward to trace the curves of his face with her fingertips. He smiled, his hands caressing her back while she stroked him. He was so incredibly beautiful, like the finest sculpture created by Michelangelo. Erika traced his forehead, enjoying the way he crinkled his brows as she touched him. Using her lightest touch, she caressed his soft eyelids then trailed her fingers over his nose. Her fingers found their way along his cheekbones and followed the curve of his strong jawline. She finished her touch tour with his full lips. Like his eyelids, his lips were soft. Tempting. She stretched over him and followed the same territory her fingers had claimed with her mouth.

Rigo groaned, pressing a kiss into the curve of her breasts as she dropped soft kisses on his forehead. His hands tightened against her upper back, coaxing her closer and she let him. In the vee of her crotch, she felt his erection press closer against her as if seeking entry into her wet passage. She wanted him to fill her, but not just yet.

His skin was warm under her mouth as she dropped light kisses on his brow, cheeks. Teasingly, she nipped the tip of his nose and he chuckled. She finished with his mouth and he opened for her. Erika sighed, sinking into his kiss. His hand grasped the back of her head, holding her in place as she licked at the soft curves of his mouth. Rigo's tongue snaked out to twine with hers so Erika lifted her head, determined to be in control. At least for a little while. He let her sit up, running his fingers down her bare arms.

She wiggled lower and leaned down to press hot, wet kisses against his neck and along his broad shoulders. At the same time, she caressed his chest, playing with his tight nipples. He groaned, closing his eyes.

"You will drive me insane, querida."

"Will I?" She kissed his pec then flicked her tongue over his nipple.

"Sí. Loco de deseo."

She chuckled. "Now you know how I felt."

Erika ran her hands over his bare skin, loving the feel of his chest hair brushing against her fingers...her cheeks...her lips. She rubbed her face against his warm chest, stroking his taut belly before working his belt open and pulling it off. She opened his fly, easing his thick cock out so she could finally see him. She sighed with pleasure, scooting farther down his body and settling herself between his thighs.

As she caressed him, she realized he was uncut. Other than in photos, she'd never seen an uncircumcised cock, but she loved the way he looked...tan, like the rest of his skin. She played with his foreskin, easing it back off the head. Erika sighed as she slid his foreskin back and revealed the beautiful pink crown. Rigo shivered and lifted his hips as her breath teased him and the pink head glistened with pre-cum. She licked her lips, longing to taste him.

Erika looked up and her gaze met Rigo's. His eyes were filled with desire, but there was also a tenderness in his expression that she hadn't expected. He reached down and ran his forefinger over her cheek.

"*Chúpame,*" he murmured.

She cocked her head. "What?"

"Suck me, querida."

She smiled. Oh yes, she had every intention of exploring every inch of him with her mouth. But first she wanted him naked. "I will, Rigo...soon."

He chuckled. "Will you torment me first?"

"If you want me to." Erika grinned as she reached up to tug his pants and briefs down.

Rigo lifted his hips to allow her to pull his pants off. Erika ended down by his feet and let her gaze roam from his feet up his calves and thighs. She sighed as she surveyed his erect cock and finished her perusal as she took in his muscled chest. Rigo smiled wickedly. Erika couldn't stop the heat from warming her cheeks, frustrated by her

ready blushes. She dragged her gaze from his and gently took his right foot in her hands. He tensed when she began to rub the arch of his foot. Her gaze flew to his when he twitched.

"You're ticklish," she laughed with surprise.

"Sí," he agreed dryly, his face pained.

Rigo gently but firmly tugged his foot out of her hands as his face reddened and suddenly everything was okay. He might be gorgeous, but he was still human. And ticklish. She hadn't expected that one. She ran her hands up his calves instead and he relaxed. So it was only his feet. Erika crawled back upward, following her hands as she trailed them over his inner thighs. He groaned, spreading them to encourage her touch to linger. Erika caressed the sensitive flesh, enjoying his response. His sigh of pleasure. She skimmed past his cock to stroke his flat belly, smiling when he groaned with frustration.

"My cock aches for you, querida."

"It does?"

"Sí. Tocame. Touch me."

Erika grasped him, sliding her hands up and down his hard shaft. "Is this what you want?"

"Dios mío." He shuddered. "Sí, Erika. No pares."

She smiled as she pumped his cock, enjoying the way his hips lifted in response to her touch. "You like this?"

"Tú sabes que sí," he groaned.

Erika sighed happily as Rigo thrust into her hands. She couldn't remember the last time one of her lovers showed this much enthusiasm.

"Chúpame, querida."

Whirlwind Affair

Erika leaned down. Sliding his foreskin back, she tasted him. He jerked, lifting his hips toward her. Emboldened, she twirled her tongue around the head of his cock as if she were enjoying a particularly tasty ice-cream cone.

"Joder! Qué bueno."

"It's good?"

"Sí. Lameme."

"What?" Her Spanish was pretty good, but she was getting out of her depth. He laughed.

"Lick me. Take me in your mouth. Por favor."

Erika chuckled and did as he asked. Opening her mouth, she held his gaze while she slowly eased his cock into her mouth and sucked him.

"Dios," he groaned, arching his hips and reaching down to run his fingers through her hair. *"Más,* Erika."

She lapped at his cock while she pumped him, enjoying the way he encouraged her. Just like everything else he'd done since she'd met him...laughing...eating...he threw himself into pleasure with single-mindedness.

Erika looked up at his face as she sucked him and slowly his eyes opened and he looked down at her. Adoringly. With approval. It was heady stuff and it made her want to give him even more pleasure, so she released the head of his cock to lick his shaft. At the base, she sucked and licked his balls. He thrust himself toward her mouth and her hand while she tongued his balls.

"No más," he growled, gently pushing her mouth from his balls. When she went to stroke his cock, he clasped her hand to still her touch.

"Am I doing something wrong?"

"No. Nooooo." Rigo looked down at her. "Está magnífico pero me vengo."

Erika shook her head, confused. "My Spanish is kind of rusty, Rigo. What did you say?"

"You were doing everything right, querida, but I was going to come."

She smiled. "Oh."

"Come up here." He waved her to draw closer to him so she crawled up his body.

When she lay on him, he quickly flipped her onto her back, rising over her. "*Mi* doña peligrosa."

"Dangerous? How?"

"Dangerous to my sanity. Beautiful and sexy, yet you don't seem to know it. What could be more dangerous than that?"

He dipped down and took her mouth. Erika raised her arms to his shoulders, embracing him. She lifted her thigh along his side and gently hooked her foot into the small of his back. Shivers rose from her now-throbbing pussy, tightening her nipples in expectation while butterflies attacked her belly.

Rigo kissed her shoulder and the rise of her breasts. Erika tried to press her pussy upward to connect with his erection, but he held her hip in place with one of his hands. With the other, he slid the strap of her negligee aside and cupped her bare breast. He sighed with pleasure. Erika whimpered when he brushed her nipple with the pad of his thumb.

"Ah, perfecta," he purred. "Peligrosa y hermosa. Una combinación mortal."

He lowered his head and flicked his tongue against the tight peak. Erika sobbed, clenching her fingers against his muscled shoulders.

"God, Rigo, that feels so good."

He growled and sucked her into his mouth. He released her nipple and the air cooled her before he sucked at her again. As he teased her nipple, he reached down and eased the negligee up her thighs. Erika quit thinking about whether her body was perfect or not. She just wanted to be naked and get Rigo buried in her pussy up to the hilt. The sooner the better. She raised her ass and he pulled the gown up to her waist. She let him go so she could grab the flimsy bit of lace in her hands and tug it over her head. She threw it to the side.

"Fuck me, Rigo. I want you inside me. Now."

He looked down at her, smiling as he surveyed her. It was only as she lay there, naked except for the thigh highs and shoes, that she realized he was staring at her. Her gaze flew to his cock, but he didn't shrivel up. If anything, he was harder. A droplet of pre-cum on the head of his cock acted like an exclamation point for her. He wanted her. Very badly.

"Not just yet, *querida*. I intend to worship every inch of you with my hands and my mouth before I finally bury my cock inside your tight, wet *concha*."

Erika licked her lips as his words acted like an aphrodisiac. Turning her on as few things ever had. She arched for him, spreading her thighs wider so he could see how wet she was.

"Dios mío," he growled. "You are so sexy, Erika."

He trailed his hands over her breasts and down over the curve of her belly. She sucked in her tummy and held her breath. Rigo looked up at her, clicking his tongue at her. Scolding her. Blushing, she relaxed and breathed.

"Much better, *amante mía*." He stroked her belly, leaning forward to plant a gentle kiss right on her bellybutton. "I like you the way you are. *All* of you."

Erika sighed with pleasure, giggling as his breath tickled her belly. "You're not the only one who's ticklish, Rigo."

He winked at her. "I shall take care with you, *querida*. I know how fiendish tickling can be."

Rigo kissed his way lower, his hands stroking the inside of her thighs. She shivered as his breath teased her aroused pussy. "So wet for me." Erika quivered when he gently stroked then parted her pussy lips. She let her thighs fall farther open.

"Taste me, Rigo."

"Quiero comerte por siempre," he breathed.

His tongue snaked out and her previous orgasms paled in comparison to what she knew she was going to feel now. Rigo shrugged her legs over his shoulders and flicked his way over her wet, throbbing flesh.

Erika cradled her breasts and played with her nipples as Rigo ate her. She arched. Whimpering as he tugged her pussy lips farther apart to feast on every inch of her. He sucked her clit, nibbled her lower lips and drank from her womanhood, just as he'd promised to. When he eased his fingers into her and stroked in and out, she moaned. She was so close. Erika strained, rocking her hips frantically as she felt her climax start to stall. She fought to come but her body tightened against her release.

Damn it. This wasn't fair... Maybe she should fake it. It wouldn't be the first time. But before she could, Rigo lifted his head. She met his gaze then looked away in embarrassment. This was horrible. She wanted to curl up into a ball and hide. She thumped the floor in frustration and brushed away a tear then she tried to tug herself away from him. But he wouldn't let her go.

"*Querida,* you must relax. We are in no hurry and I am not judging you. Just feel the pleasure I give you. Will you do that for me?"

Erika looked down at him. He wasn't angry with her. She blinked. He didn't look impatient...not the way Hans used to. If she didn't get off right away when her exhusband had sex with her, she had to forget about having an orgasm at all. Her ex just hadn't had the patience for making her come. Rigo was different...in so many ways.

"Just relax and enjoy, mi doña dulce. Will you do that?"

"Yes. Okay. I'm so sorry."

"Don't apologize." He shook his head. "There is *nothing* to be sorry for." He pressed a gentle kiss to her mons. "Now close your eyes and keep them closed." Erika followed his instructions, but she covered her breasts. "No, let your hands fall to your sides."

"All right." Erika did as he asked, feeling weird to lay with her eyes closed, her body exposed with her legs draped over his shoulders.

Whirlwind Affair

"Finally, I want you to take a deep breath and let it out." She did. "Now another." When she did, he chuckled. "*Muy bien, mi* angel. Continue just like that. Slow, deep breathing with your eyes closed. Keep your body relaxed and just focus on my touch. All right?"

"Yes, okay."

At first nothing happened, but then she felt him move...rising over her. Was he finally going to take her? No. His breath brushed tantalizingly against her breasts, making her nipples tighten with excitement. Instead of his smooth tongue, he rubbed his rough chin against the sensitive tip. She shivered, reaching for him, but she kept her eyes closed.

"No, Erika," he whispered. "Just lie back and enjoy my touch."

"But I want to touch you too."

"Soon." He pressed a soft kiss against the rise of her breast. He gathered her hands in his and gently laid them at her sides again. And she waited.

His fingertips traced a light path of discovery over her rib cage, delineating each rib with a stroke of his finger. Erika sighed. It felt so good. Again she felt him lean over her and she tensed, hoping he'd suck on her nipples.

"Relax."

"But I want you to suck on my nipples," she moaned.

"Ah. As you wish," he chuckled, leaning forward to kiss and lick her left breast.

Light strokes teased and promised so much more. Erika tilted her breast toward his mouth in encouragement and Rigo took the hint. He swirled his tongue around her areola then sucked her. He nipped the taut nipple, making her groan with desire. Never had she wanted to open her eyes more, but she'd promised to relax and just feel. Her breath caught in her throat as he stroked her body, raising the heat level once more. If only *this* time, she'd come. She was always so afraid she'd stall out...like she had so

many times before being with Rigo. Times when she'd ended up faking it so she didn't hurt her lover's feelings.

"You're thinking again." His low growl caught her by surprise. *How* did he know? She opened her eyes. He was smiling, tantalizing her. "Concentrate only on my touch, Erika. Wait for it. Relax and enjoy it. Now close your eyes again."

She did and each time he touched her, her arousal grew. A kiss on her belly, a finger stroke on her thigh. Erika lifted her hips to give him a hint that she wanted him to play with her pussy, but he ignored her. Damn. Then she froze as she felt his breath against her clit. Yes... She spread her thighs and raised her hips again. Instead of obeying her unspoken order, he kissed her inner thighs and she groaned in frustration.

"Rigo, please."

"Please do what?"

"Eat my pussy."

"All you had to do was ask, amante mía."

Gently he parted her folds and this time when his tongue hit her clit, she didn't freeze. Her hunger didn't stall. She moaned as her nerves vibrated.

"Yes. Again, Rigo. Please."

Again he licked her, and again. He fluttered the tip of his tongue against the underside of her trembling clit, sending her soaring toward orgasm. Oh God, this was amazing.

"More. Please don't stop."

He swirled his tongue around the nub and nipped it then returned to the fast flick that had driven her crazy in the first place. Rigo slid two of his fingers into her and she clenched on him. He growled with pleasure. She expected him to surge up and enter her, but he didn't. Instead, he thrust his fingers in and out of her wetness while he played her clit with his mouth.

Rigo alternated between lapping at her with the flat of his tongue and flicking the tip of his tongue against her straining clit like a laser. She thrust onto his hand and pushed herself toward his mouth in equal measures as she again made the climb to her peak.

"Harder," she panted. "Faster."

He followed her orders with a low chuckle. Then he added suction, and when he sucked her clit, she whimpered, tightening. Her insides were twisting like an overwound rubber band. Something had to give...soon.

It did. Rigo pressed against her G-spot. Erika instinctively started to clamp down...stop the feeling. But Rigo didn't give her a chance. Instead, he concentrated his tongue on her clit. She lifted herself to him...pushing outward. And suddenly, before she expected it, Erika shattered. She shrieked, arching and quaking with pleasure while Rigo continued to eat her. She reached up to clench her fingers in his thick hair to hold him in place.

"Yes! Oh God, yes—" As her release crashed through her body, she felt tears leak out of her eyes, sobbing with the excitement Rigo gave her. He slowed his touch and gentled his mouth on her, easing her down from her peak, just slightly. Finally, she let go of his hair and opened her eyes. He was smiling tenderly.

```
"Eres hermosa cuando te vienes."
```

"I'm what?"

"You're beautiful when you come, querida."

"Am I? Really?"

```
"Sí."
```

He continued to slide his fingers in and out of her pussy while he stroked her clit softly...keeping her desire bubbling nicely. She sighed and lifted her pussy to him.

"I want you inside me, Rigo. Will you fuck me now?"

"Sí, angel."

He drew away from her and she whimpered until she realized he was reaching for his pants. He dug into a pocket and pulled out his wallet. She grinned as he found a condom tucked inside and peeled it open to slide it on himself.

"Are you ready for me?"

"Oh God, yes."

She spread her thighs, sighing as she felt the head of his cock pressing into her moist opening. Erika lifted her arms and wrapped her arms around his torso, her fingers pressing into his back as he rose over her.

"Sí. Tómame, Erika. Take me."

Erika encircled his waist with her legs, pulling him closer, and sighing as he sank into her...slowly...drawing out their shared pleasure with the slow drive into her pussy. An inexorable slide that left her gasping and on fire.

She clenched her internal muscles on his cock. He shuddered and shook his head, freezing in place. Erika drew her hands over his body, caressing his warm flesh as he settled deep inside her. Feeling his belly and chest brush against hers had her sighing. This felt so good. It was another feel of coming home – of *being* home. And Rigo was the one she'd always looked for. Erika blinked her eyes open to meet his warm brown gaze.

"We fit well together, don't we, amante?"

"Amante?"

"Lover. You are my lover, Erika, and we fit as if made for one another."

"Sí, Rigo, mi querido. We fit together very well."

"Ah, you *can* speak an endearment." He grinned down at her, flexing himself inside her. She shuddered, loving the feel of him buried in her. "We make progress."

"I can speak many endearments, but right now we need less talk and more sex."

"No, we need more lovemaking, amante mía."

He captured her mouth with his as he slowly withdrew then drove back into her. Their mouths and bodies merged, creating a rhythm as fiery as a salsa dance. Erika

Whirlwind Affair

sighed into his kiss, caressing his chest, his back, his ass—whatever she could reach as he plunged into her. Their breaths mingled as they gasped, the pleasure twining around them both.

The glide of his cock in and out of her sensitized channel had her climbing the peak to release yet one more time. Please let her not stall out...not now.

He kissed her ear. "Quit thinking and just enjoy."

Erika slid her fingers through his hair, sighing as he cradled her ass in his hands, altering his penetration angle. She shuddered because with that subtle adjustment, it was even better now. She thrust back, forgetting everything but joining with Rigo. Each thrust of his body drew an answering surge from her. Striving together.

"Yes, God, Rigo, faster. Please, *querido*," she gasped, planting fevered kisses on his shoulders and his neck, clutching him close.

"Dios. Estás apretada. Aprieta más – clasp me tighter in your pussy, querida."

"Oh yes. More, Rigo." Erika clenched on him, thrusting faster. Taking him deeper. Climbing higher with him.

"Sí. Aprieta más," he groaned.

She could hear the slick sounds of his thrusts and it drove her higher. Erika raised her hips in time with his thrusts. Meeting his desire. Her body tensed as her orgasm beckoned. Their mouths met, both struggling for breath as he pounded into her pussy. She felt his muscles begin to clench under his skin, his belly grew stiff. They were both so close... Rigo rolled his hips against her and used his thrusts to stroke her clit. Each lunge teased her, sending her over the edge. She cried out, digging her fingers into his shoulders as waves of pleasure rocked her as he drove into her.

"God, Rigo. Yes," she moaned.

Erika shuddered, arching up to him. Wide open. Welcoming his frenzied stabs. He plunged deep one more time and began to shake in her arms. He spasmed and threw back his head with a shout of release.

"Oh *Dios mío*!" Rigo jerked, holding her tight as his orgasm tore through him.

Erika stroked his chest as he came, sighing with a sense of infinite rightness when he collapsed against her, still shaking. He pressed his face to her neck. Finally, as his gasping breaths subsided, he pressed a soft kiss to her shoulder and lifted his head. His gaze was uncertain for a moment and she smiled.

"Did you...?"

She laughed. "Oh yes, and it felt so good, Rigo." She pressed a kiss to his chin as he smiled down at her, relief filling his eyes.

"At the end, I was so trapped in my own pleasure I forgot yours, *querida*. Forgive me."

Erika stroked his face. "There's nothing to forgive. You gave me the best orgasms of my entire life. How can I forgive you for that?"

"*Que bueno.*" He leaned down and brushed her mouth with his. "I think we should move to my bedroom now."

Erika tensed. "I should go..."

He shook his head. "It's too late for you to drive home, and we haven't yet begun to find the limits of our pleasure with one another." He stroked a strand of her hair from her forehead. "Stay, *querida*. *Por favor*."

Erika cradled his cheek and tried to read his eyes. He was in earnest. Rigo really wanted her to stay, so she nodded.

"Okay. I'll stay."

"The night, sí?"

He sounded so pathetic and hopeful that she laughed. "*Sí, querido*. I'll stay the night."

"Fantástico. Now let me show you my bed. And my bathroom. And the kitchen..."

Whirlwind Affair

Erika laughed again and quieted his list of places to make love with a kiss. He held her close, kissing her back. Could this be the beginning of something more than just a night? She hoped so. She really did.

Chapter Five

When Erika escaped from his bed this morning, Rigo was still snoring softly. It was almost a purr, like a big cat lazing in his magnificence. She stared at him for a full five minutes, marveling that she made love to him at all, let alone most of the night. But she had and it had been the most amazing night of her life. She'd never had that many orgasms before, and Rigo enjoyed her climaxes as much as he enjoyed his own. She'd never known men could be like that. Giving as well as passionate.

She looked around his bathroom as the mist from her shower hung in the air. Like the rest of his apartment, this place was huge and high-end. Marble shower enclosure, huge bathtub, double sinks. The space was beautiful, but she was almost scared of breaking something, and as she looked around, reality hit her full in the face. She might wish for a relationship with this man, but he was plainly out of her league on just about every level. Too good-looking. Too passionate. And just too damn rich. She was a smalltown girl used to simple pleasures. Not a city girl used to the finest of everything.

Erika finished touching up her makeup and clothes, picked up her purse and turned off the light. Hopefully, she wouldn't wake him on her way out. She didn't want a big scene. She eased open the bathroom door and slipped into the bedroom then headed for the exit. She paused before she opened the door, unable to prevent herself from looking at Rigo one last time.

She met a pair of brown eyes filled with irritation. "Were you going to just leave without saying goodbye, *amante mía*?"

Erika licked her lips and turned completely around, pressing her back to the door. "Um...yes."

He threw back the blankets and stood, walking across the thick carpet on silent feet. She barely noticed the fact he was stalking her because he was stark-naked. Gloriously bare. Deliciously nude. No one should look that good after a night's sleep. His hair was sexy and tousled instead of looking messy. His five o'clock shadow made him look devilish, not grubby. And his stiff cock beckoned her like a magic wand. No doubt if he had morning breath it would taste good, not foul. Damn him anyway. It just wasn't fair.

He set his hands against the door on either side of her head, leaning into her. "Well, I don't believe in making love then running off before dawn."

"It's well after dawn."

"Regardless, it's still rude. We should enjoy breakfast together at least."

"I thought you didn't cook."

"I can manage eggs and toast. I will cook for you." He waved her aside and opened the door.

"Aren't you going to put on any clothes?"

He gave her a half smile. "No, I don't believe I will."

"But..."

"If you aren't hungry, I suppose we could go back to bed." He stepped toward her, motioning toward the tangled sheets.

"No. Breakfast is fine." As she scurried down the hall, she winced when he chuckled.

He followed her in a leisurely fashion. Erika couldn't stop herself from looking back at him, almost tripping over her feet every time she got a glimpse of his hard cock. He padded into the kitchen and the cooler air beaded his nipples. She licked her lips as she watched him move around the kitchen.

Rigo pulled out a carton of eggs. "Scrambled okay?"

"Yeah. That's fine. Can I help?"

"No. Just enjoy the show." He winked at her, laughing when she blushed.

Why couldn't she tear her gaze away from his bobbing cock? It's not as if she didn't get to know him and his gifted cock quite intimately last night, yet still she blushed like

a teenager. And he obviously enjoyed making her blush because he didn't bother to hide his self-satisfied grin. The rat. Damn, why did that have to be so endearing?

His movements were economical as he moved around the kitchen – popping toast into the toaster, turning the coffee on to perk, pouring her some orange juice, and cooking their eggs. Rather than serving her at the kitchen bar, Rigo waved her to the dining table. He handed her silverware and placed their food on the table. He was going to eat breakfast naked too?

"Aren't you going to get some clothes on? A robe? Something?"

"The food is hot now, querida. Dig in and let me know if it's all right."

Reluctantly, Erika took a bite. It was good. Really good. "You're a much better cook than you claimed you were."

"Gracias. I am most relieved you find breakfast edible."

He set the napkin over his bare thigh then dug into his own serving of eggs, washing it down with a swallow of hot coffee.

"Do you eat naked often?"

He grinned. "No. I believe this is actually the first time."

She blinked. "You mean..."

"I'm naked just for you, *mi doña dulce*." She started to stand, embarrassed to be dressed while he was naked. He stopped her, catching her hand. "Stay. Enjoy your breakfast. Is my nudity so offensive to you?"

"It's not offensive," she sighed. "Just really distracting."

"Then stay and eat, Erika. I will make myself less distracting."

He stood and went to the bedroom. When he returned, he was wearing a bathrobe. Now that he was dressed, she wasn't distracted any longer but she kind of regretted asking him to cover himself up. How contrary was that? Now that he had some clothes on, she wanted him naked again.

"So what are your plans for the day?"

She looked up at him. "Family obligations."

"What kind?"

"Sunday dinner with my family."

"Family?" He froze, finally meeting her gaze, looking a little ill. "I did not think to ask earlier, but you are not married?"

She blinked. "Oh God, no. I've been divorced for years."

He let out a breath. "Bueno."

"That's good?"

"No, I mean..." He swallowed. "I mean I am pleased you are not currently married. I'm not pleased you suffered the pain of a divorce. Is that more clear?"

Erika smiled at him. "Yes, it is. Thanks."

"So, if not your husband, what family do you share Sunday dinner with?"

"My parents, brothers and sisters..." She stopped. Erika didn't want to explain about her girls. It was too complicated to discuss with a semi-naked man sharing breakfast with her.

"It is nice to have family nearby." He smiled. "My own parents passed away many years ago and I had no siblings."

She reached out and set her hand on his arm. "I'm so sorry."

"Gracias, querida. I have cousins, one of whom is involved in my business. I'm not all alone."

"That's good."

They finished breakfast and she helped him carry their dishes to the sink. He gently pulled her into his arms and kissed her.

"I shall miss you when you leave." He stroked his fingers over her cheek. "But I will call you soon. Let me write down your phone number." When he went to grab a pen and paper, she stopped him, shaking her head. "What is wrong?"

"It's okay. I know you don't really want my number."

He raised his brows. "You read minds, do you?"

"No, but..."

"Then..."

"Look, we had a great night together. An amazing night." She paused, surprised that he tensed and looked unhappy. "But that's all it was, Rigo. A night."

"No, it wasn't just one night. It will never be just one night."

"And if I want it to be?"

He frowned, stepping back and crossing his arms across his broad chest. "*Do* you want it to be?"

She bit her lip. If she was honest she didn't, but...

"Well, do you?"

"No, Rigo. But..."

He cocked his head. "Why would you think I wish for only one night when I clearly want to pursue you?"

"I don't want you to feel obligated."

"Obligated?" His eyebrows almost disappeared they rose so high. "*Querida*, last night was," he paused, as if searching for words, "beautiful. As you said, it was amazing. Such a thing is once in a lifetime and I don't want to lose contact with you."

"I need time to think."

"Time?"

"Yes. This is happening so fast, Rigo."

Suddenly he smiled. "But I need your help, querida."

"Help? How can I help *you*?"

"My assistant is having her bridal shower soon. I need your help with it."

"I'm sure she won't want me there."

"But I'm sure she will. After all, I still need to purchase her shower gift and you could help me shop for it."

"Not if you're giving her a toaster."

He shrugged. "All right, we will go back to Erotically Bound...but only if you join me. Will you help me shop and attend the shower with me? *Por favor*?"

Erika laughed. "Oh all right, but I still need some time to think."

"I'll give you two days before I call."

"Why don't you give me your number instead? I could call you."

He frowned, clearly unhappy with her compromise. "Is that the best I can get from you?"

"For now."

He nodded. "Very well, Erika." He stalked across the kitchen and into the living room. He picked up his wallet from the floor and pulled out a card. He returned to her and placed it in her hands. "Here is my card. You can contact me whenever you wish. This card includes my business number and my private cell phone number. I don't give this particular card to many people, but I want you to use it. Also, I will tell Sofia that if you call she should put you through...immediately. No waiting."

Erika licked her lips and studied the card. *Rodrigo Torbellino. President and CEO of Torbellino Enterprises.* It included both phone numbers and both his business address and the address of his penthouse. She met his intense gaze.

"I'll call you soon, Rigo."

"If you don't, I'll find you. Even if I have to contact every Erika Bergstrom in Minnesota."

He pulled her into his embrace and their mouths meshed. She wrapped her arms around him, holding him tight. Giving as good as she got. It felt as if she'd never left his arms last night. Meeting him like this had to have been fated, and she wanted to explore what fate had in store for them both. She would call him...soon.

Chapter Six

"I'm sure you'll enjoy these, Mrs. Lindquist." Erika smiled at her former English teacher as she checked out her books.

"I hope so, dear. I'm tired of reading those tame romances they have at the senior center. One little kiss on the last page of the book. What's the good of that, I ask you? It's like they think I've never heard of sex or something. I have five children and twelve grandchildren. I don't need protecting."

"No, ma'am. I'm sure you don't." Erika laughed as the older woman walked away with her latest armful of erotic romances while she shook her head, muttering grumpily to herself. She narrowly avoided running into Erika's brother Andy as he barreled in the front door.

"Anders Larson! You watch yourself. You almost mowed me down."

He paused. Nodding, he swallowed hard and took his John Deere cap off respectfully. "Yes, ma'am." He watched the older woman stalk out and let out a breath.

Erika sighed. Her big, bad, thirty-eight-year-old brother reduced to his *Aw-Shucks Andy* persona in a heartbeat by a little old lady. A feisty little old lady, but still...

"I can read your expression, sis, but Mrs. Lindquist is one scary lady and you know it."

Erika glanced around to make sure no one was within earshot. When she saw the coast was clear, she shot him a zinger. "Are you sure you're a Dom, Andy? You don't act like it."

He grinned. "Oh yeah. Controlling my lovers is *way* different from tangling with our former high school English teacher."

"You were one of her pets – an A student in English, as I remember. You never had to *tangle* with her," Erika teased him.

"She scared the crap outta me in high school. She still does." He grinned. "Dominating my lovers isn't the same as dealing with someone who knew me when I was a snot-nosed brat."

"You mean you aren't one anymore?"

"Very funny, Eri. Now—enough about Mrs. Lindquist. I need your help. I'm just relieved you're still open." He settled himself on her desk, brushing his blond bangs off his forehead.

"The library closes for the day in about fifteen minutes, so make it fast."

Erika crossed her arms over her chest. Her brother was always coming up with unorthodox businesses to get involved in and asking her for help in one way or another. The crazy thing was, the guy had a Midas touch.

"Dad's still being a pain in the ass about this Whirlwind Energy stuff. I need something definitive to convince him."

"You mean Dad is standing his ground and not going along with your *progressive* ideas."

"Wind energy is the wave of the future. If we lived in corn country, I'd be growing it as a cash crop for ethanol in addition to the sugar beets. We need to diversify."

"I know. I know. So what do you need from me?"

She happened to agree with him about the wind energy stuff. The family needed to get in on the ground floor and work with Whirlwind. The only problem she had with this business deal was Whirlwind Energy itself. Right after she came back from her wild night with Rigo a month ago, she'd been curious about him, wanting to know more before she called him to make contact again. She found a wonderful portrait of him on his company's corporate *About us* page...along with a listing of corporate divisions. A

listing that shattered her burgeoning dreams of a future with Rigo because Whirlwind Energy was one of his company's divisions.

As soon as she saw the web page, she'd known that all she could ever have with Rigo was that one night. If she called him again and the family pursued the wind energy business, Rigo might think she'd bedded him in order to further the deal. She couldn't—wouldn't—let him believe that, so she hadn't called. No matter how badly she'd wanted to. Even so, she'd kept his card safely tucked into her purse. Wishing for something that could never be.

"You have access to databases and stuff, right? Well, give me some statistics about wind energy."

"I've already done that. Whirlwind provided information too."

"You know Dad. He doesn't believe anything Whirlwind has to say. He wants something independent."

"I'm independent?"

"You're a librarian, aren't you? Well, who's more objective than a research librarian?"

Erika laughed. "Baby brother, I'm no research librarian."

"Okay, reference librarian. It's the same thing, isn't it?"

"Not exactly. But let me see what I can do. Maybe I can find something else. If I can't find anything, I can probably make some contacts at other libraries in the state to get some help. How soon do you need it?"

Andy looked at his watch. "About five minutes?"

Erika's jaw dropped. "What?"

"The head of Whirlwind is meeting me here in five minutes then we're going to go out to the farm to talk to Dad."

"Rigo is coming here? In five minutes?" she squeaked. "No way." Erika stood up, intending to run for the bathroom to brush her hair and put on makeup.

"Rigo? Holy shit, you know him, don't you?" Erika froze and turned to glare at Andy, who grinned like a cat with a fat canary. *"He's* the hot guy from Minneapolis you told me about. The one you had the wall-banging one-nighter with."

"Andy, if you tell anyone I'll—"

"Oh, I won't tell anyone. Maybe."

"Anders Olaf Larson, don't you *dare* threaten me!"

He burst into laughter. "Had you going though, didn't I, big sister?"

"Oh really. You're such an ass." She glared at him with her hands on her hips. Then she heard the door open.

Erika turned. Please let it *not* be him... But it was. Rigo stood on the threshold, staring at her and she stared back. Her nipples hardened immediately, her pussy dampened and her clit began to throb. All in reaction to a man she hadn't seen in a month.

Damn it! She finally saw him again and she looked like hell. Sloppy red-checked shirt and blue denim capris. No makeup and she probably had ink or glue on her somewhere. Even worse, she smelled of *Eau de Goo Gone* because she'd been cleaning books just before Andy came in. The only thing she had on that looked good were her Ava Darling heels, but he couldn't even see those with the desk between them and right now, she wanted to crawl under her desk to hide.

"Erika?" He walked slowly over to the desk, his eyes wide. As if he'd seen a ghost. "Erika Bergstrom, is that you?"

She nodded wordlessly.

"Do you know how many Erika Bergstroms live in Minnesota?"

She shook her head.

"Hundreds. My assistant is only halfway through the list."

"Halfway through *what* list?"

"The list of Erika Bergstroms. I'm having her call them...one by one."

Erika's mouth dropped open. "Call them? All of them?"

"Sí, querida. I meant what I said when you left."

That if she didn't contact him after she got home, he'd find *her*. She couldn't believe it. He'd really *meant* it. Rigo wanted her. Not just for sex but for a relationship. What was she going to do?

"What did he say when you left, Erika?" Andy asked. Her brother always had a dangerous curiosity about her life. She turned to tell him so when Rigo interrupted.

"Of what business is it of yours, Andy? You know the lady?"

Andy glanced back and forth between them. "You mean he doesn't know?"

Erika bit her lip and shook her head.

"Well, shit." He turned to Rigo. "Yeah, I know her, and it's my business because she's my sister."

"Sister?" Rigo looked at her in surprise, a frown building between his brows. "You're a Larson?"

She could almost hear him wondering if she'd sought him out. But how could she have? He'd hit on *her*, not the other way around.

"Larson is my maiden name. I'm divorced and I have two adult daughters."

"Adult?"

Oh God. This was *so* bad. If he wanted her before, he didn't now. He couldn't because he looked horrified. Erika straightened. She was proud of her girls and proud of herself for rearing them mostly alone. "Yes. My twin daughters just graduated from college last weekend."

He frowned. "You must have been a baby yourself when you had them."

Erika shrugged, gratified that he didn't think she looked old.

"She was. Erika was eighteen when they were born. Her asshole ex divorced her ten years later." Andy answered the question she hadn't. "*She's* amazing."

"I know that," Rigo agreed.

"Andy, would you please shut up?" she growled, blushing in reaction to her brother's staunch support but pleased with Rigo's agreement.

Rigo continued to study her as if he was trying to figure her out. This was what she'd feared – that he'd think she'd screwed him to seal the deal. Could this get worse? Andy watched Rigo, out-frowning him, if that was possible. Andy crossed his arms over his chest.

"If you think my sister knew who you were a month ago, you couldn't be more wrong, Torbellino."

"How do you know? How do I?"

"Because it's just not something Erika would ever do. You ever wonder why she didn't call you back when you asked her to? She's curious as a cat. If you think she didn't research you after she got home, you're a freaking idiot. And I don't think you're an idiot."

Rigo sighed, rubbing the back of neck then looked at Erika. "Is that the truth?"

Erika nodded. "I don't want you to think..." She shrugged. "It was special. Okay?"

"*Sí*, it was."

Was. Past tense. Erika looked away, blinking tears back so he wouldn't see. "I have to lock up and finish the closing routine." Erika picked up her door keys. "Andy, you know how to search the databases. Go get started while I lock the doors and make sure all the readers have left."

Erika almost ran away from the two men. She'd known Rigo would think the worst. With his money and power, how could he not? In his place, she would. Still, it hurt. Her night with Rigo was the most wonderful of her life. She'd never been that in tune with a man before. Hell, she'd never had that many orgasms before either.

Erika locked the door and followed closing procedures on autopilot. She checked the stacks to make sure no one was still looking for books or napping in a corner. She

Whirlwind Affair

made sure the bathrooms were empty then she took the money to her office and balanced the cash drawer.

When she finished all her closing tasks, she went to find Andy and Rigo. They were huddled together at a catalog station. Andy looked frustrated as hell.

"What's the problem?" she asked.

"Damn it, you gave me copies of all of these articles before."

"I know. I told you that. My resources here are limited, Andy. Especially with the damn budget cuts the council put through in January."

"Well, crap. I wanted to have something new for Dad. He's being stubborn."

Erika laughed. "He's a Swede, Andy. Stubbornness is genetic."

"Very funny."

"It's true. Look, just marshal your arguments and keep hammering at him. That's the only way it will work. You have to be the stream that wears through his stony disposition."

"Come out there with us."

"Dad doesn't listen to me about business."

"But mom does and she'll be there too."

"She never naysays him."

"In front of *us*. But if you really believe she doesn't give him a piece of her mind when they're alone, you don't know her very well."

Erika smiled. "Yeah, I'm sure she does. But I won't be able to help you."

She glanced at Rigo, worried about what he was thinking, but he was enjoying the exchange. One corner of his mouth quirked with humor and his eyes twinkled.

"If you share your brother's enthusiasm, you would be a *great* help."

Erika studied him. "Enthusiasm? Maybe...maybe not. But I agree with him about going forward with the project. The town needs jobs. Jobs *other* than those associated with the sugar beet co-op. Larson needs to diversify. One bad sugar beet year and the town's economy could collapse. Argue from that standpoint, Andy, and Dad might cave."

"You really think the turbine factory would have more impact on him than the importance of green energy?" Andy rubbed the bridge of his nose.

"Putting people to work is important to him. And you know if you get him on your side, he'll speak to the city council. We could get some tax concessions in place to help."

Erika turned to Rigo. "How many people will this factory employ?"

"A couple hundred to start. If things go well, we can add staff."

"Will the jobs pay well? Good benefits?"

"Yes. We can negotiate it into any contract, but I consider it important that my people are taken care of."

Erika turned to her brother. "Two hundred people with jobs. Good-paying jobs with benefits. *There's* your hook. Quit with the green-energy, wave-of-the-future crap. Dad's practical. Always has been and always will be. Sell him on the jobs."

Andy nodded. "Good. Really good. Okay, come on you two. Let's go."

Erika shook her head. "No, you two can do this. The girls are coming home to stay with me for Sunday dinner at Mom and Dad's. I have to clean house."

"You can clean later tonight," Andy complained.

Rigo smiled. "No, she cannot."

Erika blinked at him. "What?"

"You promised to attend Sofia's bridal shower with me. It's tonight...at my condo. Did you not remember?"

"Tonight? Um... I didn't think. You didn't tell me a date, and anyway, I haven't called you."

"But now that I've found you, you can act as hostess for me."

"Hostess?" she asked faintly. "What will I have to do? Have you made any plans for it?"

Whirlwind Affair

"I hired a caterer and a party planner. All we need do is attend and smile kindly. Surely that can't be too hard."

"No, I guess not. But..."

"You made me a promise. Did you not?"

Erika blushed as he gazed at her. "Yes, I guess I did."

"Then you will accompany me to Minneapolis this evening." Rigo paused, considering her. "Do you have other plans for this evening?"

"You mean besides cleaning the house?"

"Yes, besides that."

"No, I guess not."

"Then there will be no problem, will there?"

"No."

"Good. What is your address, Erika? I shall pick you up at five p.m."

"I…"

"I'll tell you how to find her place after we talk to my father." Andy looked back and forth between them, his frown lightening and a wicked smile blooming instead. "You know...you should come out to the place for Sunday dinner, Rigo."

"What?" Erika jumped, glaring at her brother.

"He should come to Sunday dinner at Mom and Dad's."

Erika opened her mouth to argue, but Rigo beat her to it. "*Sí*, that sounds like an excellent idea. I shall bring Erika back from Minneapolis tomorrow morning and then we can attend the midday meal."

"Andy, everyone will be there. Our family can be a bit overwhelming."

"Yeah, I know, but he'll survive." He grinned. "C'mon, Rigo. Let's go tackle the old man."

Andy walked toward the front door, and Erika called, "If Dad hears you call him that, he'll gut you like a catfish."

"He'll have to catch me first."

"That's what you always say."

"And I've never been gutted, have I?" Andy asked as he left the library.

"One of these days, Dad is going to catch him." Erika shook her head.

"Not if his luck holds out," Rigo laughed, gently stroking her cheek. She smiled up at him.

"Let's hope so."

"I'll pick you up at five, *querida*." He leaned over and kissed her lightly before following Andy out the door.

Erika sighed. She'd wished to see him again, but she'd never really expected it. Having him find her now seemed too good to be true. She really didn't have to clean the house when she got home, but she needed to shave her legs. Cocking her head with a smile on her face, she started to whistle.

Chapter Seven

Rigo looked at the address Andy had scrawled for him and compared it with Erika's house. This was definitely the right house, but this wasn't the house he'd been expecting. But then he hadn't been expecting Erika either, so if he intended to have her in his life – and he did – he'd better get used to expecting the unexpected.

Her house was in the Victorian style circa the early 1900s. Square with an exotic exterior paint job and fancy wood trim. The whole homey picture was enhanced by the spring flowers in the front yard, which framed the house. The house was a bright red with dark green shutters and a clean white door and white trim. Granted she'd used traditional colors, but when every other house on the block was white or cream-colored, the vivid red screamed, "Look at me!"

The better he got to know her, the more Rigo realized that Erika Bergstrom was a mystery he'd like to spend the rest of his life solving. He reached over to the passenger seat and picked up the roses he'd bought at the grocery store in town. He'd been surprised to find a floral section but relieved because he wanted to do this right. Impress her. Woo her.

It hadn't taken him long in discussion with her parents Harald and Annika Larson to know that their daughter would never have hunted him down to sex him into a business deal. Her attitude should have told him the same when they were together, but he'd missed it. It was obvious to him that he'd spent too long in the city. Too long among people who used sex as a tool. A weapon. And not enough time among people who would be shocked by the very idea. People like the Larsons.

Rigo climbed out of the car and walked up to the front door, his gut tight just as it had been when he'd feared she wanted to cancel their dinner date. Was she getting scared again? He hoped not because no way was he leaving. Rigo knocked. He waited and knocked again. Damn it. He knocked once more. Louder. When he heard running feet, he smiled. The door flew open and Erika stood there in a plain black dress, stockings and no shoes. He raised his brows and she blushed.

"Sorry. I was sure I'd have plenty of time to get everything done until my girls called. They wanted to *talk*. I tried to explain they were going to be here for dinner tomorrow and there'd be plenty of time to talk but..." She shrugged. "Well, what do you do?"

"What do you do? You talk to your daughters." He laughed. "What are their names?"

"Kersten and Katarina."

She stood in the doorway, curling her toes, and he smiled. It was one of the most adorable things he'd ever seen. He wanted to cradle her feet and plant kisses on her instep. Rigo fought a laugh. When he wanted to make love to a woman's feet, he had it bad.

"I look forward to meeting your daughters."

"Well, that was part of the problem, you see."

"What was?"

"I had to tell them about you. I didn't want them blindsided at Sunday dinner and once we'd gotten started, they wouldn't let me hang up until they'd dragged every last detail out of me. Well, *almost* every detail," she blushed, "but even then, they kept asking questions. I finally said I had a date with you and you'd be here in half an hour. They let me go then."

"What a relief, indeed. May I come in?"

"Oh God. Yes. I'm sorry." She backed up and waved him inside.

He avoided walking on her stocking-clad toes as he entered and turned to hand her the bouquet of red roses. Her eyes widened. She stared at the roses then at him then back at the roses. "For me?"

"Sí, querida. Beautiful flowers for a beautiful woman."

She took the roses reverently and smiled, lowering her head to sniff the blooms. "No one has ever given me flowers before."

"Never? But what about when your daughters were born?"

She lifted her head. "You're right. Mom and Dad sent flowers."

"And your husband?"

She frowned and her eyes dimmed. "No. He wanted a boy."

"Were I fortunate enough to have a woman give me children, boys or girls, her hospital room would be a garden. It would be the least I could do to show my gratitude."

Erika's smile brightened. "Sounds like you'd be a good husband. Come on in."

She let the door close and led the way into her living room. He was impressed with how homey yet beautiful her house was. Golden oak covered the floors and the living room welcomed in warm tones of browns, greens and golds. He was drawn to a wall of photos. He pointed at recent pictures of young women who bore a striking resemblance to Erika.

"Are these your daughters?"

She grinned. "Yes." Erika stood beside him. "They're fraternal twins. On the left is Kerry, the slender blonde. Kat, the curvy brunette, is on the right."

"They look a lot like you."

"A bit. But they have a bit of their father in them too. Around the nose, and with Kerry especially along the jaw. Hans always had a stubborn chin."

She pointed at a picture of two men wearing suits hugging one another. It looked like a wedding picture. Rigo tilted his head and realized it was. One man was slender and blond and the other a tall black man.

"That's Hans and his partner Jaydon. They got married not long ago."

"Your ex-husband is gay?"

Erika smiled. "Yeah. It explains a lot about our relationship, let me tell you."

"But why do you display his picture here?"

"For the girls mostly. But it also reminds me that Hans would have been a lousy husband for any *woman*...it wasn't *my* fault that he didn't want me."

"How does his family feel about him coming out?"

"He didn't come out until after Pastor Bergstrom passed away. His mother died when he was ten."

"Pastor?"

"Yeah. I didn't mention that?"

"No, I would have remembered."

"That's why Hans and I getting married was such a big deal. Pastor Bergstrom had his reputation to think of. Of course that's why Hans decided to have sex with me in the first place. The pastor's reputation. He knew Pastor Bergstrom wouldn't accept having a *fairy* for a son." She shook her head in disgust at her late father-in-law.

"Is that what a minister would have thought?"

"Yes, Pastor Bergstrom was painfully conservative about sex."

"It must be hard to be different in a small town."

"Different in any way but especially being gay." Erika shrugged. "Even so, my brother Stig manages. But then he's a Larson. Because our family founded the town, we're given a bit more leeway. Well, when we're not held to impossible standards we could never live up to, that is. I'm going to go put the flowers in water."

Complicated woman, he decided, watching her ass sway as she walked to the kitchen. When she disappeared from view, he looked around and could almost see himself living here. Was he crazy? Could he live in a small town and commute to the cities? He rubbed his jaw. She had mentioned a need for jobs in Larson and the

Torbellino building was becoming quite a pain to maintain. There was probably land here to build on...

"What has you so deep in thought?" she asked, hesitating as she reentered the living room.

He could see her yearning to hug him, but she held back. Probably because her exhusband hadn't enjoyed being held by her. Well, Rigo did. He held out his hand. When she took it, he pulled her close, tucking her into his shoulder and laying his cheek on the top of her soft hair.

"Just considering business possibilities."

"Oh business." She laughed, patting his back. "You're as bad as Andy. He's always thinking about the next big deal."

"So, he'll be a millionaire someday?" Rigo teased.

"I'm sure he already is. He doesn't share *personal* business deals with the rest of us. Only the family ones."

"Like the wind business."

"Yes." She leaned back to look up at him. "So, how did the meeting with Dad go?"

"Very well. He said he will consider the matter until Sunday dinner. He wishes a family discussion before he decides."

Erika groaned. "Plan to be grilled. All of us will be at Sunday dinner."

"How many is 'all'?"

"My parents, my seven siblings and my two daughters. I don't think any of the cousins will be there though. This isn't a *full* family business deal."

"Your parents had eight children?" Rigo remained still but inside he was reeling. He couldn't imagine having so many siblings.

"Yeah."

"What would a *full* family business deal entail?"

Francesca Hawley

"My father has two brothers. Ingmar has five children and Georg has six. All of them live in or near town. Some of my cousins are married and have children too. A full family *corporate* dinner is a large event," she concluded dryly.

"Goodness." Rigo shook his head.

"Scared yet?" she teased.

"Perhaps. But I shall soldier on bravely." He looked into her eyes. "Because you're worth it."

"Oh." She blinked rapidly, biting her lip.

He traced the curve of her cheek, now pink and warm with his compliment. "You are, you know."

"I am what?"

"Worth it." He lowered his head to kiss her, but before he could, she tugged out of his arms.

"I need to get my shoes on or we'll be late." She ran from the room and up the stairs.

"We won't be late, we have over two hours before the shower," he murmured softly to the empty room a half smile on his face.

Erika ran into her room, breathing fast. Do *not* panic. No. He was just being nice. Don't assume anything. Just because he said his assistant was calling every Erika Bergstrom in Minnesota didn't mean she really was. And just because he said she was worth facing her huge family didn't mean he was falling in love with her. She groaned. No, it just meant she was falling in love with *him*. She wanted to beat on the walls and scream with frustration, but he'd hear her.

She took a deep breath, trying to calm down. It was just a bridal shower...and hopefully some decidedly excellent sex afterward. Erika took more calming breaths then grabbed her red stilettos from the closet. As she slid them on, she realized she'd be

Whirlwind Affair

sad when she had to send them on to Lexie in July, whether they really were magical or gave her "her heart's desire" or not. These shoes helped her to feel beautiful and sexy. Confident enough, *most* of the time, to attract a man like Rodrigo Torbellino.

She studied herself in the full-length mirror on the back of her closet door. She hated this dress. It was conservative. Dull. She opened her closet and pulled out the dress she'd bought right after she came home from Minneapolis. Still in a haze of sated sexiness. It was a stunning red dress with a wide sweetheart-style plunging neckline, tight three-quarter sleeves and a skirt that dropped from just below her breasts. Dressy enough but not *too* dressy for a bridal shower. As she studied herself, she decided it was just the sort of dress Ava Darling might have worn back in the day. But Erika needed a different bra. She looked at her bedroom door then threw the dress on the bed.

Erika took a deep breath and called down to Rigo. "I'll be down in a couple of minutes. I need to get some makeup on too."

"That isn't necessary," he called back.

"I won't be long. Make yourself at home."

With that, she shut her bedroom door and tugged the boring black dress off. She dug into her dresser and found a daring red lace underwire bra. Something to lift the girls up and show them at their best. She pulled off her serviceable black bra and replaced it with a red lace bra then she changed into a sexy red lace thong to match. Finally, Erika took the red dress off the hanger and pulled it on, but no matter how hard she fought she couldn't get the zipper up in back. Well, she did have a man downstairs. Erika started to grin. Yes, she'd make him useful before they left and he just might enjoy it.

She sat down at her vanity and quickly finished her makeup. One light spritz of perfume completed the effect. Erika sighed. Part of her wished she could go down looking complete instead of holding her dress together to keep it from ending up in a pile on the floor, but part of her looked forward to Rigo's reaction.

Francesca Hawley

"Erika, are you coming?" Rigo called. "There is no need to make any changes. You look quite lovely."

She smiled at the exasperation in his voice. He sounded just like her father when he was waiting for her mother to get ready. But then her mother would come down the stairs with a teasing smile on her face and he'd almost swallow his tongue and all complaints would go right out of his head. Yes, this was the right dress. She threw her other clothes in the closet and shut the door on them. She'd hang them up later.

Erika grabbed her clutch purse and headed down the stairs. Rigo looked up at her and all irritation disappeared in favor of hunger. Hunger for her. She walked as gracefully as she could, considering she had to hold her dress up.

"Well, I wasn't expecting such a transformation," he commented softly.

"I'm glad you like it."

"I do."

"I have one little problem."

"What is that?"

She turned her back to him but twisted around to see his reaction. "Can you zip me?"

Erika hid her grin as his eyes arrowed to her bare back and he licked his lips. "You want me to...?"

"Zip my dress. I couldn't get it closed."

"Do we have to zip it?"

"I'm not going to a bridal shower with my dress hanging open, Rigo. Zip please."

He chuckled. "No, I suppose a bare back might be inappropriate for such an occasion."

Erika shivered as he trailed his fingers along her spine. He took hold of the zipper and slowly tugged it upward, leaning forward to drop a soft kiss at the curve of her neck. "We could stay here," he purred, his arms circling her waist. His warm breath against the back of her neck made her quiver.

"We could, but then I might wonder if you were ashamed of me and didn't want me to meet your friends."

He stiffened. "Never. You are gorgeous and any man would be proud to have you with him. Especially me."

She turned to face him. "Then I guess we should get going."

Rigo chuckled. "You are a sneaky lady, but yes, let's go."

Chapter Eight

Erika smoothed her dress as she paced Rigo's condo. She should be doing something, but the catering crew had everything under control. There was nothing for her to do but stand around and try to stay out of the way. She hated this. When Rigo went down to his offices, she asked about going with him but he'd encouraged her to stay up here and supervise.

"Ma'am?"

Erika blinked and looked at the caterer's assistant. Lord, was she in the way again? "Yes?"

"I believe we've completed the arrangements. If you'll follow me, I'll show you where everything is."

"Okay. Good." Erika swallowed hard and forced a smile.

The assistant showed her several warming trays arrayed on the counters. A table nearby had been set up with bite-size desserts to match the warm hors d'oeuvres lined up on the bar. Carafes of sangria, iced water, iced tea and a pot of coffee were carefully arranged for easy access. Erika smiled. The coffee was probably for Rigo.

"We put extra trays of hors d'oeuvres in the oven set on warm. Extra desserts are in the refrigerator. Will you need anything else for now?"

Erika opened her mouth then closed it. She swallowed. "No, I think that would be fine. Thank you."

"Very good, ma'am. Enjoy your party."

With that, the crew cleared out and Erika finally had time to panic. What was she thinking of? She'd been entertaining thoughts of a future with Rigo, but a party like this would be nothing to the woman in Rigo's life. He must have business dinners all the time. He probably even had to organize parties. Maybe even galas or something. She couldn't do this.

Just before she ran screaming from the condo, a knock sounded on the door. Erika jumped and turned to look. Had the caterers forgotten something? She opened the door and found herself face-to-face with a stunning redhead. Plus-size, tall and with curves enough to make her brother Andy trip over his own feet. Andy loved big girls. The woman looked her up and down, but Erika sensed no animosity. If she sensed anything, it was excited curiosity.

"You're Erika Bergstrom?"

"Yes."

"Do you know how many Erika Bergstroms there are in Minnesota?"

"I've been told there are quite a few." Erika smiled. This had to be Sofia, Rigo's assistant and the guest of honor for the bridal shower.

"Rigo's been going crazy for the last month trying to find you." She cocked her head and grinned. "Good work, girlfriend. Can I come in?"

Erika backed up. "Yeah, sorry. Congratulations on your upcoming wedding."

"Thanks. I'm lucky to have found my Francisco."

"Francisco?"

"Yeah. It's crazy, but Rigo and I are going to be cousins soon. Who would have guessed, you know? Cisco came over to the States to work for Rigo and there was fire between us from the first."

"I can relate to that."

"Yeah, Rigo's a hottie, isn't he? It's too bad he and I never had any heat between us. But it was like brother and sister from the first moment we met. Even so, I was surprised he was cool with me marrying into his family. Especially since I'm ten years older than Cisco."

"Is he twenty or something?" Erika blurted. Sofia didn't look a day over thirty.

"Oh honey. You and I are going to get along great. No, I'll turn forty in about three months. Cisco calls me his *puma pequeña*."

"Little cougar?"

"Yeah. I love that guy."

The door opened and Rigo walked in. He dropped a light kiss on Sofia's forehead then wrapped his arm around Erika's waist.

"So, I see my ladies are getting to know one another."

"We are. I love her. She thought I was thirty."

Rigo laughed. "I told you no one would be gossiping that an old woman was marrying Cisco."

"I know but...well, sometimes I worry."

"My cousin adores you and would fight with anyone over you...even his mama. When a Spaniard is willing to fight his mama, he is in love."

Sofia laughed. "Yeah. You're right." She glanced around. "Everything looks great. Thanks for hosting this for me."

"Isn't that what maids of honor are supposed to do?" he asked wryly, and Erika turned to stare at him.

"You're the maid of honor?"

"Sí, but I have categorically refused to wear some fluffy dress in an appalling color. I will wear a suit."

"In an appalling color?" Erika teased.

"Oh hell yeah. I really like her." Sofia laughed.

Rigo looked down into her eyes. "I do too."

"So when will Cisco arrive?"

"Cisco? The groom will be here?" Erika knew she sounded shocked but when she'd gotten married she couldn't have gotten her future husband or her brothers to a bridal shower with a crowbar. "It was a condition for me to host this shower because I refuse to be the only man in a room of women with sex on the brain."

"Rigo, you're such a chicken," Sofia laughed.

Just then the bell rang and the guests began to arrive. Cisco arrived fifteen minutes after the other guests, but Sofia lit up like a Christmas tree the moment he walked in the door. The family resemblance was obvious. Same dark hair and eyes, but he was a little thinner than Rigo and not quite as tall. Cisco joined Sofia, pride and adoration shining from him. It was obvious they were deeply in love. They couldn't quit touching one another, even after they began opening the gifts. Cisco groaned when he realized that all of the gifts for this shower were from Erotically Bound, yet he was intrigued enough to examine several of them more closely.

"Eh, *primo*, surely you know how these items work without such close examination," Rigo teased.

"Sí, but one must always show appreciation for gifts given in friendship."

"Ah, is that what you're telling yourself?"

Cisco grinned wickedly and winked. "I don't see your contribution to the gifts."

"The caterer isn't enough?"

"Ah, but I know Sofia sent you to EB. She told me so. In fact, she told me in full detail your dismay at being sent there, but she said you hinted you'd found something extraordinary while you were shopping."

Rigo looked down at Erika. "I did."

Erika blushed and nudged him in the stomach. "Stop it," she whispered.

"Why?" he murmured in her ear. "I did find something...someone...extraordinary there."

Cisco picked up a flat box. "This is it. Rigo's gift, open it next, mi corazón."

Sofia tore into it, curious. Inside was a silk blindfold and an envelope. She opened the envelope and gasped. "Rigo, we can't accept this!"

"Of course you can. You're family."

"What is it?" Cisco asked, looking over her shoulder.

"Plane tickets and an itinerary for a trip to Hawaii. Everything is booked for our honeymoon."

Cisco blinked. "You are flying my family here for the wedding and you give me a honeymoon too?" He shook his head. "It's too much, Rigo."

"You're family, Cisco." He looked at Erika and smiled. "Family is everything, *si*?"

"Yes, it is," Erika agreed.

Cisco hugged his cousin and Sofia did too. "You're the best."

"I know," he chuckled as she nudged him. Then she hugged Cisco. "This is going to be amazing, honey."

"It is indeed."

Erika looked up at Rigo. His expression was tender as he watched the happy couple and she felt warm inside too. A man who would do for others when he could was definitely a keeper, just like her daughter had said when they talked on the phone. Rigo reminded her of her own family. They'd go out of their way to help each other in any way they could. If one suffered, they all did.

Damn, despite the short time they'd known one another she'd fallen in love with him. He seemed to want a relationship with her but she'd been wrong before. So what if he didn't want her for the long term? The rest of the shower went by quickly and was filled with fun. As she, Rigo, Sofia and Cisco saw the last of the guests off, they all sighed in relief.

"Rigo, you are a wonderful maid of honor. Thanks for a lovely shower."

"Even though I didn't buy you sex toys?"

Sofia laughed. "Even then. I just can't believe you paid for our honeymoon. You really don't have to, you know. We were going to just book a stay at a bed and breakfast here in Minnesota."

Whirlwind Affair

"Minnesota is a lovely place, but sunning lazily on a beach is a much better honeymoon. Enjoy it. And think of me while you're gone. I'll have to rely on Irene for my day-to-day needs." Rigo shuddered.

"It will do you some good. I spoil you too much."

"Who's Irene?" Erika asked.

"She's a frightening dragon of a lady." Rigo shuddered dramatically.

"Ah, *primo*, she's a kind woman and you know it." Cisco nudged his cousin as he sipped his sangria.

"Kind to you. She grumps at me and orders me around like a ten year old."

Erika frowned. Why on earth did he keep her around then?

"I can see by your expression, you're confused." Sofia grinned. "The truth is that Irene was Rigo's first secretary."

"She was never a secretary, and so she will tell you if you ask. She was my office manager." Rigo sighed, shaking his head as he took a drink of coffee.

"And when she decided to retire, she hired me to replace her. But on special occasions she comes out of retirement."

"It is those times I dread."

"You're such a liar. You adore her and you know it." Sofia elbowed Rigo lightly and turned to Erika. "She was a tough act to follow."

"Sí. Cisco, could you come down to the office with me for a few minutes? I need to discuss business with you before you and Sofia leave."

Cisco stood. "Certainly. Let's go. I have contracts ready for your review as well as plans for you to present should things go favorably."

"Excelente. Erika, I hope you don't mind. We won't be long."

"Sofia and I can keep each other company."

"I'm sure you can. That is what I'm afraid of," he teased, kissing her lightly then the two men left. Erika glanced at Sofia, who looked thoughtful.

Francesca Hawley

"You know about the Whirlwind Energy deal, don't you, Erika? Rigo mentioned that he told you."

Erika pursed her lips. "Yes, I know." Did Sofia know she was a Larson and the deal involved her family? Should she say something?

"I hope this thing goes through. If it doesn't I'm not sure what Cisco will do." She sighed, getting up and started to put away the dishes left by the caterers.

"What does it have to do with Cisco?" Erika asked, following Sofia's lead in cleaning the warming dishes and putting away the leftovers.

"Cisco is the head of the Whirlwind Energy Division. He put together the deal but when he couldn't get the Larson family to sign, Rigo went in because the family patriarch demanded it. Seems like Harald Larson isn't so keen on this business."

"No, he's not. He has some concerns about selling family property."

"It's not selling the land in the case of the turbines, but only leasing it. I wish he and his family understood that. This can only help the town and the state."

"I understand. But why are you so concerned?"

"Because the energy division is riding on this. If this deal doesn't go through, Whirlwind Energy will probably close its doors. I know Rigo wants it to succeed, but if it doesn't it won't break him. Cisco has much more riding on this." She rubbed her hands.

"Maybe you shouldn't share anymore. I need to tell you..."

Sofia smiled. "Sorry. I'm just so worried for Cisco, you know? I love him so much and I know his sense of self...his *machismo*...is tied to doing well. Making his cousin and his family proud. It really upset him that the Larson family wanted to deal with Rigo and not him."

"Sofia, I don't think..."

"I shouldn't talk your ear off about this, but I know Rigo never would have had me spend hours on the phone calling Erika Bergstroms if he wasn't serious about you."

"But he and I barely know one another."

Sofia laughed. "It doesn't seem to matter to men in the Torbellino family. Cisco was the same way. He took one look at me and decided I was the one. From then on I couldn't get rid of him, and I tried."

"Don't you love him?"

"Oh yes. But I thought I was too old for him. I thought he couldn't possibly be serious. That he'd tire of me since I was older. Just everything. But I was wrong and you'll find out the same. Torbellino men meet a woman and they just...know she's the one. It sounds crazy, but don't try to fight it. I did and wasted a long time refusing to let Cisco into my life. Now I'm glad I let him in."

"You're happy?"

"Very. And Rigo is even more determined than Cisco. He's a force of nature." She laughed. "Well, the last name says it all doesn't it?"

"Last name? I don't understand."

"Torbellino translates roughly to whirlwind. Getting involved with a Torbellino is like taking a trip to Oz in the middle of a tornado. Exciting and scary all at once. But what a ride!" The front door opened and the men returned. Cisco gave Sofia a hug and Rigo slid his arms around Erika's waist.

"Ah, ladies. You were industrious while we were gone."

"And I'm ready to take my haul home." Sofia slanted a teasing look at Cisco. "I really think we should try a few items to make sure nothing needs to be returned."

Cisco smiled. "What a brilliant woman you are! Let's go immediately."

Sofia turned to Erika. "It was wonderful to meet you. I'm sure we'll see each other again."

Erika smiled and gave Sofia a hug. "I'm sure we will." Cisco kissed her cheek, gave Rigo a hug and then he and Sofia left, loaded down with gifts.

Francesca Hawley

Erika sighed with relief when the door shut behind them. Maybe she should have stopped Sofia from talking about business. She actually was really surprised that Sofia shared the information. Erika glanced at Rigo to find him smiling warmly at her. Maybe he really did want a committed relationship with her. She couldn't imagine any other reason Sofia would be so open with her about a business deal. Rigo trusted Erika and that was enough for Sofia.

"What are you considering so solemnly, querida?"

"Life. The universe. Everything."

"Ah, a Douglas Adams fan?"

Erika grinned. "Yes. You?"

He nodded. "It's pleasing to find you have good taste in reading."

"I read most anything." She shrugged. "I'm a librarian, after all."

Rigo pulled her into his arms, holding her gently. "Reading is not at the forefront of my thoughts just now."

Erika looked up at him. "Nor mine."

He kissed her and Erika sighed into his kiss. This felt so very right. Had it really been a month since they'd last made love? It felt almost like last night. Rigo lifted his head and smiled down at her, brushing his fingers along her cheekbone.

"Such a thinker. Even in the middle of a kiss, you think."

Erika blushed. "Sorry, that's just the way I am."

"I shall have to get used to it...or give you a reason to quit thinking so hard."

Rigo took her hands and led her down the hall to his bedroom. Erika followed him through the door and into his arms. She pulled his head down for a deep, long kiss.

"I've missed you, Rigo," she purred. "I'm sorry I didn't call you, but I didn't want you to think I was trying to help my family with the energy deal."

Whirlwind Affair

He brushed a strand of hair off her face. "I understand...now...and I have missed you, *amante mía*." Rigo unzipped her dress and let it fall to the floor. "Ah, I have thought about your red lace bra and panties all evening."

"Have you?"

"I have. You are such a sexy woman."

"When you zipped me earlier, I don't think you got the full effect of the panties." Suddenly, she felt brave. Erika turned briefly, flashing him a view of her tush.

His eyes widened and he groaned. "A thong? I am in heaven."

Erika laughed when he tumbled her onto the bed, grasping her foot to remove the red stilettos she'd worn the last time they were together.

"Estás hermosa, mi amor," he breathed, his tone reverent.

"Gracias, Rigo. But now you're wearing too many clothes."

Quickly he stripped off his clothes, his gaze never leaving the curves of her body. She knew just how much he liked what he saw when he knelt between her thighs with a steel-hard erection. She sat up and grasped him in her hand, pumping his shaft and drawing a ragged groan from him. Erika bent forward to lick him, loving the feel of his hands cradling her head as she sucked him. He made short, shallow thrusts into her mouth.

"Sí, querida. Eso se siente bien." She smiled and ran her fingers over his balls as she sucked him. Before she could take him all the way, he stopped her. *"No más por favor."*

Erika sat back and looked up into his beloved face. "Are you sure you want me to stop?"

"For now, *sí*. Another time, I'll let you suck me to climax, but tonight I want to bury myself inside you."

"I want that too, Rigo."

He reached toward her and eased her bra straps off her shoulders and leaned forward to kiss her shoulders.

"Quiero adorarte, mi amor."

He pressed her back onto the bed. He licked his way over her curves as his fingers traced a pattern of rediscovery over her ribs and breasts, easing down to her hips. He tugged at her panties. She helped him pull them off and they laughed as they had to rearrange themselves to get them removed. He grabbed a condom from the bedstand and pulled it on before he finally settled himself between her thighs, rubbing his condom-encased cock against her moist folds.

Erika moaned as the head of his cock made contact with her clit. Rubbing. Teasing. She tilted her pelvis and lifted her hips, adding to the friction as she trailed her hands over his chest. She pulled him down to her, on fire for him. Rigo pressed feverish kisses to her breasts, sucking her nipples while he rubbed his cock against her. She met his strokes with her own, moaning. Erika grabbed his ass and pulled him toward her, spreading her thighs wider.

"Fuck me, Rigo. Please."

"Dios. You try my restraint."

Erika smiled. Reaching up to tug on his hair, she drew his mouth to hers. The meeting of their mouths released a firestorm in them both. Rigo slid his fingers inside her to make sure she was ready to take him. When he felt her wetness, he groaned into her open mouth and Erika clenched her pussy on his fingers.

"Then don't be restrained. Lose yourself in me," she moaned into his mouth.

Her pussy throbbed with need and her nipples tightened. Rigo eased his thickness into her and she sobbed, thrusting upward to take him deeper. He took her with one slow...torturously slow...slide. They both gasped when he stopped. Erika wrapped her thighs around his waist and her arms around his torso. Rigo cradled her bottom in his hands then he withdrew as slowly as he'd entered. Their gazes locked as he stopped just shy of pulling out then he advanced again. Slow, deep thrusts that set her heart racing with excitement. The intimacy of sharing her body with this man brought tears of happiness to her eyes. She never wanted this to end...ever. Rigo stared into Erika's large blue eyes as he pulled out of her clasping pussy then drove slowly back inside her. With each stroke of his cock, she took more and more of his heart. Piece by piece and stroke by stroke she owned him. He never wanted to let her go.

She shuddered beneath him and her pussy clenched him tight as he sank into her again. Her eyes fluttered closed as her arousal began to peak.

"Sí, querida," he murmured. "Dame tu clímax, mi amor."

"Harder, Rigo," she begged breathlessly.

Rigo tightened his muscles to halt his rising orgasm, but still he answered her request, increasing his speed...his depth inside her. He held her ass in place so she could feel the power of his thrusts and she whimpered.

"Yes, Rigo. Again." She thrust upward, meeting his downward plunge.

He closed his eyes as his balls began to tighten...pulling up against his shaft. He forced himself to hold back his pleasure. She would come first. She must. Rigo rolled his hips, determined to provide her as much pleasure as he could while he pounded into her wetness. Hard and deep. Her tight nipples beckoned, making his mouth water. He lowered his head to take her. Suck her. Her whimpers of excitement went straight to his cock. Drawing him tighter.

He kissed and licked from one breast to the other while he thrust and withdrew...thrust and withdrew. Rigo growled as she clenched on him, sobbing with her pleasure. When her fingernails dug into his shoulders, he cried out. Excitement tore through him.

Rigo fucked her harder. Short, fast stabs into the depths of her. He reveled in her gasping breaths then he kissed her. He explored her mouth, twining his tongue around hers. Nipping gently at her lips.

Francesca Hawley

"*Venides para mí*," he murmured, kissing her again as he continued his quick, deep thrusts into her body. "Por favor, querida."

"Come for you?" She stroked his face, barely able to open her eyes.

"Sí. Come for me, Erika. Now."

"Oh God. Yeeees."

She threw her head back and began to shudder with release. He'd never seen a more beautiful sight than his woman climaxing. Erika raised her hips, impaling her pussy on his cock, over and over again. Suddenly, it was too much for him to deny. He pulled her tight against him. Burying his cock deep inside her, he came. Quaking with the intensity of his orgasm. Over and over, he spurted his cream until finally he came to rest against Erika's shoulder, still trembling. He kissed her damp neck, shaken to the core by how much he felt for her. How deeply he loved her. Rigo lifted his head and looked down at her. Her eyes fluttered open and she smiled.

"Wow," she purred.

"Wow, indeed," he agreed. "Shall we do it again?"

Erika laughed, throwing her arms around him and planting kisses all over his face and shoulders. "Let me catch my breath first, okay?"

"Then can we?"

She leaned back and wiped sweat from his brow. "You know, I think I'd like that."

"Me too." He grinned and kissed her. "Me too, mi amor."

Chapter Nine

Rigo shifted in the car seat as he drove Erika to Sunday dinner with her family. She was quiet. And in Rigo's experience, when Erika was quiet, it meant she was thinking about why they shouldn't be together. He didn't want her to make excuses for them to part. He wanted her to feel. Each time they made love, it just got better between them, and every time they touched, he was more certain Erika was the woman God made for him. Or he was the man God made for her. Whichever way, it worked out the same. He cleared his throat and she turned to look at him, her brows raised in query.

"So, tell me. What will I find today?"

"Find? You mean do I think my father will accept the deal?"

Rigo frowned. That was the last thing on his mind. "No, I mean who will I be meeting? What are they like? What are your daughters like?"

Erika smiled. "Well, my girls are the best. Kerry tends to be the leader. Outspoken and opinionated. Kat is quieter. More thoughtful. Kerry's emotions are on the surface, there for anyone to see. She was the one who had tantrums when she was little. Screamed herself red in the face sometimes. It terrified me at first." Erika cocked her head. "Kat doesn't talk about herself. She wouldn't tell me when she was feeling ill. I had to try to read her mind."

"That must have been a challenge."

Erika laughed. "It was." She looked at him seriously for a minute. "You're worried that they might not like you?"

"They might believe I'm handsome, yes, but shouldn't I worry? They may think I'm not good enough for their mama." He shrugged, wincing slightly at how well she read his expression.

"Oh Rigo, you have nothing to worry about. They'll adore you. If you were Cisco's age, I'd have competition for you," she laughed.

"So, I'm an old man in their eyes?" He grinned.

"You're almost my age. That makes you ancient, even if they're too polite to say it out loud."

"I see." He laughed. "But there is one correction I must make, Erika. I'm older than you. I turned forty-two on my last birthday."

She blinked. "You are? I thought you were thirty-eight or so. Andy's age."

"No, querida."

"Oh." She pursed her lips. "That's probably just as well. I really don't want to fight my daughters for your interest."

"You'd win. Hands-down." He reached over and squeezed her hand softly before returning his hand to the steering wheel. "This is the turn off, isn't it?"

"Yeah. Make a right."

Rigo slowed the car and turned right into a long drive. "Your brother's house is on the left, correct?"

"Yeah. Andy lives in his own place. He helps Dad farm the land. None of the rest of us had any interest in farming. Andy designed the house himself and hired Larson Construction to build it."

"Larson Construction?"

"Yeah, two of my other brothers, Ivar and Stig, co-own the business. Andy's place was their first job. They've done pretty well for themselves and now they do renovations and new construction."

"Really? Good to know." A construction company in the family would be a good thing for him...and them.

Whirlwind Affair

She studied him quizzically as he pulled his car into an open space near her parents' house. It looked as if most of the family was already there with half a dozen cars parked nearby and people milling around in back.

"We're eating outside?"

"It's a warm day. Dad probably fired up the grill."

"Warm. You Minnesotans have an odd view of warm."

"Compared to Spain, yes. But it's early June and it's in the low seventies today. Perfect outside weather if you've grown up around here." She patted his arm and opened the car door to get out.

Rigo hurried to get out and made it around the car to hold out his hand to her. She smiled, tucking her arm in his. He walked her to the crowd, hoping to see a friendly face. Rigo saw a group of adults playing touch football and Harald was manning the grill. A typical Sunday dinner in Minnesota, yet he knew there was more here than met the eye.

Andy separated himself from the crowd. "Rigo. It's good to see you. How did the shower go yesterday?" They shook hands then he glanced at his sister. She smiled and winked at her brother.

"It went well. Your sister was the perfect hostess."

"I'm sure she was. Erika is the best." Andy leaned close and kissed her cheek. "The girls are here, eager as hell to talk to Rigo."

"The poor man has no idea what he's in for."

"I shall be brave, *querida*. For you." He lifted her hand and kissed her knuckles.

Andy laughed and led the way while Erika snuggled against Rigo as they went to meet her family. Two young women looked up and wide grins covered their faces.

"Mom!" Both young women ran to Erika and grabbed her for a hug then they turned to study Rigo.

"Aren't you going to introduce us?" the brunette asked. That was Kat, he remembered from their discussion the night before.

"Yeah." Kerry smiled appreciatively at Rigo, looking him up and down. "Way to go, Mom. I told you shopping at EB was a good idea. He's hot."

"Kersten Annika! I didn't raise you to be rude to a guest."

She laughed unrepentantly. "It's rude to call a guy hot?"

Erika frowned at Kerry, relaxing only a bit when Rigo chuckled and touched her arm lightly. "It's all right. I'm complimented."

She shook her head, glaring at Kerry. "It's still rude."

"It would be far worse, *querida*, if your daughter had said I was an ugly old guy instead of a hot man," he chuckled.

Erika smiled up at him, grateful that he seemed understanding about Kerry's comment. "I suppose so."

"Truly, it is a pleasure to meet your beautiful daughters, amante mía."

"Wow. I love that Spanish accent. Can you just talk in Spanish for us for a while?"

Erika's gaze snapped around to glare at her daughters. Kerry shrugged and pointed at her twin. "It was her this time, not me, Mom."

"Katarina Lucia!"

"What? I love his accent. I dated a Hispanic boy when I was in college and when he whispered in my ear in Spanish, I-"

Erika waved her hand and Kat stopped talking. "I don't want to know. You are both my innocent babies, and in my mind, that's how it's going to stay."

The two young women exchanged wicked glances then faced Erika. "Yes, Mother," they said in unison as if they'd rehearsed it.

Erika groaned. "Never mind. Just be polite and leave me my illusions about your innocence."

Whirlwind Affair

"Illusions it is," Kat agreed. She walked over and grasped Rigo's arm and her twin captured the other arm. "Come with us, we'll introduce you around." They exchanged grins. "We have so much to talk to you about, Mr. Torbellino."

Erika smiled as her daughters dragged Rigo away from her. He gave her a pitiful "rescue me" look, which she ignored. Better for him to find out how big families worked now rather than later.

"So, Erika. I see Andy brought you in on this business too."

Erika turned to face her father. She often thought his sky blue eyes could see through concrete, but this time he was dead wrong.

"I have nothing to do with the business deal."

"No? That's not why you spent the night with Torbellino?"

Erika's jaw dropped and her eyes widened so far she thought her eyeballs would pop out of her head. How dare he accuse her... Suddenly, he smiled.

"Good. I'm glad."

"You all but called me a..."

"Your reaction was all I needed to see."

"But how could you suggest...?"

Harald Larson smiled at her then he leaned forward to kiss her forehead. "Because I prayed you'd react exactly as you did."

"Didn't it occur to you it would hurt my feelings?"

"Yes, honey, it did. But I had to know. Andy can be persuasive when he wants to be."

"Not ever like that. He'd never ask me to do that and I never would."

Harald nodded. "Good."

"But you don't believe me about Andy, do you?"

Francesca Hawley

Harald's eyes narrowed. "The relationship between your brother and me is between us."

"Not if you really believe he'd ask me to get friendly with a man to advance a business deal."

"There are a few things you don't know about your brother," he snapped, turning to glare at Andy. Andy lifted his head to meet his father's gaze as if sensing parental disapproval. Andy frowned.

"Maybe, maybe not. But I know Andy would never... He just wouldn't."

Erika was more shocked than she could express. Andy had told her his relationship with their father was strained by their father discovering Andy was a Dom years ago. Harald had assumed that meant Andy abused women. He didn't, but their father didn't get it. Even so, she hadn't expected this. Now she knew why her brother was still in the closet about his lifestyle.

"If you say so, Erika. I think I'll go have a chat with Mr. Torbellino."

As their father walked away, Andy came over to her. "What happened?"

"Dad asked if you talked me into sleeping with Rigo to get the deal to go through."

Andy winced, ducking his head. "I should have figured he'd believe that. God knows, there's probably nothing he thinks I'm incapable of."

"Andy, can't you explain to him? If you sat down to discuss it rationally..."

"Years ago he told me that if he found out I hit another woman he'd disown me. You know that I've been in the closet ever since. He never understood and he never will."

"He really doesn't know you go to a club in Minneapolis?"

"No, and, for God's sake, don't tell him."

"I won't, but maybe if you'd try again – "

"I tried. He refused to listen. You know him. Stubborn."

"Just like his son."

Whirlwind Affair

Andy smiled sadly, watching their father talk with Rigo and her daughters. "Maybe we're both stubborn. He accepted Stig with good grace. When Stig came out of the closet and admitted he was gay, Dad embraced him. I tried to talk to him then, but he wouldn't hear it." Andy shrugged. "Come on, let's pretend to have a good time. Mom looks confused."

Erika hugged her younger brother and he smiled down at her, ruffling her hair. She slugged him gently in the shoulder, making him laugh, then he went to hug their mother who pointed toward the football game. Andy nodded.

"The food's ready!" Andy hollered, making sure everyone heard. The football hit the ground, forgotten as a herd of Larsons swarmed the tables to get their share.

Rodrigo hung back, waiting his turn, and Erika laughed as she joined him. "Rigo, dive in to get some food or it will be gone."

"Dive in?"

"Yeah. It's kind of like a wolf pack. If you hang back you don't get any." She tugged him toward the food. Her sister Gitta nudged her back but Erika shoved her sister out of the way so she could dish up some potato salad for herself and Rigo.

"Hey, watch it Erika," Gitta complained.

"I'm older than you are."

"Yeah, age before beauty."

"Age and beauty before rudeness," Erika retorted, and Gitta laughed.

Erika continued forward, edging one her of brothers away from the meat and skewered two pieces of perfectly cooked steak, one for Rigo and one for herself.

"Meals appear to be a contact sport in the Larson family," Rigo murmured.

"Yes, they are. Keep going. We want to get some of Mom's apple pie before it's gone."

The two of them fought their way through the throng to get more food before sitting side by side at the picnic table. Andy and her daughters were seated directly across from her and Rigo. She looked up when her father pulled over a chair and settled at their end of the table. Erika glanced across at Andy and he rolled his eyes.

"Is everyone served so we can begin?"

"Yes, Dad. We all have food." Erika sighed. He always loved to make such a production of things.

"Then this family meeting is called to order. As you can see, Olivia and Gretta won't be here, but they shared their wishes with me. For this vote I hold their proxies."

"Which means you have three votes." Andy frowned. "They didn't talk to me about this."

"They didn't need to. I'm the head of the family, Anders."

"Harald, really," her mother Annika sighed.

"I'm sorry, my dear." He nodded to Annika contritely before continuing. "Your brother Anders has been in discussions with Mr. Rodrigo Torbellino about the family doing business with him."

"In what way?" One of her brothers, Axel, asked.

"Torbellino Enterprises has a division called Whirlwind Energy. We are seeking to expand alternative energy markets," Rigo explained.

"That's a good thing," Stig agreed. "We need to preserve our environment and get more green."

"They want to use Larson land to do it." Harald growled, his eyes narrowing.

"Sell the land, Dad?" Gitta asked.

"No, we would lease the land for the wind turbines. We want to develop a large wind farm here in west central Minnesota. It would not interfere greatly with the crops being grown here. We can peacefully coexist with the farm operation."

Erika smiled at him. He was so calm in the face of her father's need for drama.

"But you want to buy land for a factory," Harald growled.

"We would prefer to buy the land, yes. But leasing is an option."

"What kind of factory, Grandpa?" Kerry asked.

When Harald remained silent, Andy spoke up. "Two manufacturing plants. One for the towers, the other to build the turbines."

Erika watched the reactions of her siblings and her daughters. Most looked curious and interested. All of them believed in alternative energies and green technology. Stig and Ivar used green building materials with their construction company and were well versed in building passive and active solar aspects into both residential and commercial spaces.

"That would mean a lot of jobs," Axel mused.

"Yes, it would. First in building the facilities then in manning them," Rigo agreed.

"It would be good for the town. We'd have an influx of jobs—cutting-edge jobs and it would increase the town's tax base," Erika argued.

"Which would help the library..." Gitta commented.

"And the fire department." Axel agreed. As a firefighter, anything that would benefit the department was a positive in his eyes.

"All of the city and county departments would benefit. And it would be good for the businesses in town too. It might even keep our young people here rather than leaving for the cities so they can find work," Erika pointed out.

Erika looked up to find her father studying her curiously and she blushed. Damn him anyway. Now she was almost afraid to say anything because he might believe her capable of sleeping with Rigo to gain this business deal. It made her feel...tainted.

"I like this idea, Dad, and I trust Andy to protect the family interests," Stig stated to murmurs of agreement from everyone else. Harald looked down at Annika.

"You know how I feel about this, Harald."

"Yah, I do. So it's still up to me then." He looked from Erika to Rigo and back, his brows furrowed in thought. Finally, he turned his gaze to Rigo. "I'll agree to this on one condition, Torbellino." "Which is?"

"If you move forward, you don't pursue a relationship with my daughter. I won't have our neighbors gossiping about her."

"Gossiping, Dad?"

"Yes, Erika. People saw you go out with Rodrigo on Saturday night. I heard about it from any number of people at church this morning. I don't want people lying about how our business was conducted."

"Lying? How, sir?" Rigo asked, looking confused.

"By suggesting I slept with you to seal the deal," Erika told him dryly. He colored a deep red and she knew it was because he'd briefly entertained the idea himself.

"She did not do this thing," Rigo said earnestly, leaning toward Harald.

"I know that," Harald said with a decisive nod.

"Well, I'm so glad, Dad. Since you accused me of it the minute I walked up here."

"He what?" Annika asked, standing abruptly and glaring at her husband, her hands on her hips. Harald raised his hands as her brothers and sister spoke in her favor, but all at once so no one could understand anything.

"Children, Annika. Please. I was only repeating what was being told to me."

"Mr. Larson, I will happily tell anyone who asks that your daughter is a good woman," Rigo vowed.

"Thank you, but people in small towns gossip. And it doesn't really matter if the gossip is true or not. So...I will agree to this business deal if you and Erika refrain from pursuing a relationship."

"This is the only way you will approve? If I stay away from Erika?" Rigo leaned back in his chair, his eyes narrowed as he steepled his hands on the table in front of him.

"Yes."

Whirlwind Affair

"Very well. Now where is some of that excellent apple pie Erika suggested I try." He took a bite of pie and smiled. "Yes, this is really excellent."

Tears sprung to Erika's eyes and she bit her lips. She meant nothing to him. It really had been just a couple of great nights of sex. How could she have been such a fool? She stood up but was wedged in to the picnic table by Rigo on her left and Axel on her right. God, it felt like her marriage to Hans but worse, because at least Hans was gay and he had a reason to be repelled by her. Rigo had spent time making love to her but even so, he was ready to dump her for a business deal. This was horrible and she'd never been angrier at her father in her life.

"You'll really drop my sister, Rigo?" Andy asked in disbelief.

Rigo lifted his gaze from the pie. "No, I will not, so there will be no business deal."

Erika sank to her seat and looked to her left, meeting Rigo's calm gaze. "W-what?"

"We will put the wind farm and turbine factories elsewhere and do business with someone else. I'll get Cisco looking on Monday."

"But Sofia said the division would close without the deal."

Rigo smiled and shook his head, reaching up to gently brush away the tears, which had spilled down her cheeks. "I'm sure that's what Cisco told her, but it isn't true. I have alternatives."

"But the business..."

"Is not more important to me than you are. I fully intend to marry you, Erika Larson-Bergstrom." He chuckled and she smiled a watery smile. "Business is business but family is forever, *querida*."

"Family?"

"And love. I love you. From the first moment I looked at you, I knew I would be your husband one day. I've only had to convince you of that." He gently cupped her face in his hands and leaned forward, kissing her gently.

When he drew away, Erika asked, "Are you saying you fell in love with me at first sight?"

He cocked his head. "Yes, I suppose I am. It is a Torbellino thing. Love comes to us like our name."

"In a whirlwind?"

"Sí. A whirlwind of love and desire."

"Oh, that's so sweet," Kat sighed. "Talk to her in Spanish. That always worked for me."

Erika closed her eyes. "Katarina, leave me my illusions please."

Kerry grumbled, "Mom, we're twenty-two, not twelve."

"Just let me imagine you're both completely innocent."

"Whatever..." the girls agreed in unison, and exchanged glances with a sigh.

Rigo leaned forward, pressing his forehead to Erika's. "Do you think you'd want any more like those two?"

Erika blinked then considered while she slid her arms around his waist and grinned. "Maybe."

"Ah-hem."

Erika and Rigo froze. She turned to look at her father. He won, there would be no deal and yet he couldn't leave well enough alone. She frowned at him, but rather than stern, he looked happy.

"So, you'll run off and take your business elsewhere then, Mr. Torbellino?"

"I will do as you requested. I would prefer to run the business here in Larson. It will benefit my family," he waved at all of them, "to do so. But I would rather lose business than lose your daughter."

Harald smiled. "If you really feel that way then I see no reason not to permit both."

"Permit, Dad?" Erika growled. "I decide who I have a relationship with."

He cleared his throat. "Perhaps permit is the wrong word."

"You're darn tootin' it is."

"I want this business to benefit Larson. Not just the Larson family but the city and county too." He rubbed his neck. "And, Rodrigo, if you truly love my daughter I have no objections to you moving forward with the business deal and with your courtship of Erika."

Rigo smiled. "I'm pleased, sir. I rather like it here and the commute might be a bit of a pain after awhile."

Andy raised his brows. "Are you saying what I think you are?"

"Sí. I will consider putting more than just the Whirlwind Energy division in Larson."

Erika hugged him. "I'm glad. The city could use the business...but..."

"But…"

"But maybe you could wait to move Torbellino Enterprises until after you and I develop a closer working relationship."

"Perhaps after our honeymoon?" he teased.

"Perhaps so." Erika pulled Rigo close and gave him a warm kiss.

"Te amo, Erika Bergstrom," he murmured, sliding his arms around her waist.

"Y yo te amo, Rodrigo Torbellino."

She brushed a strand of black hair off his forehead and grinned, feeling complete for the first time she could remember. Rodrigo was the man she'd waited for all her life. Erika felt like clicking her heels together three times because she'd finally come home and her heart's desire really was sitting here in her own backyard—and holding her close in his warm arms.

Ava Darling's shoes must have some magic in them because this couldn't have ended better. Erika decided to call Bella tonight to give her a report before sending the shoes on to her friend Lexie, who was sure to be in for a heck of a wild ride. Erika grinned and gave Rigo a huge kiss, sighing when he cradled her close and the family began to cheer.

About the Author

I earned a Master of Arts in Library and Information Science in 2003 and work as a librarian in central Iowa. I'm a member of Romance Writers of America, including multiple special interest chapters. Even in my teens I wrote romances, spending my lunch hours with pen, paper and characters. I love to weave new tales by embroidering and knitting intriguing narratives for the amusement of myself, my friends and my readers.

My writer's mission statement is to write about exciting, sensual, plus-size heroines who love and are loved by their intense, passionate and seductive Alpha heroes.

Why create a mission statement, other than because I'm a librarian and it's something we tend to do? Because I've been plus-size all my life and I don't know how to be anything else. When I started reading romances, almost every heroine had a slender, girlish figure. If she didn't start out that way, she ended up that way. Plain or pretty, the heroine was thin. I loved those stories and their writers, but I tired of not seeing me in the heroines of my favorite books.

As I started writing, I followed market trends and wrote about slender heroines. Then I thought, am I part of the market? Yes. I am. There must be other readers who want to read about a differently shaped heroine too. Everyone deserves to find love. So now, I write about plus-size heroines who know, or learn, how to live in their skins. My heroines are authentic and that's part of the reason my intense, passionate and seductive Alpha heroes love them. I hope you will too.

Francesca welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her <u>author bio page</u> at <u>www.ellorascave.com</u>.

Tell Us What You Think

We appreciate hearing reader opinions about our books. You can email us at <u>Comments@EllorasCave.com</u>.

Also by Francesca Hawley

Protect and Defend

Seeking Truth



Discover for yourself why readers can't get enough of the multiple award-winning publisher Ellora's Cave. Whether you prefer e-books or paperbacks, be sure to visit EC on the web at www.ellorascave.com for an erotic reading experience that will leave you breathless.

www.ellorascave.com