



TAKE YOUR
Pleasure

JASMINE HAYNES

Loose Id

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Dedication

To Jenn Cummings, Terri Schaefer, Kathy Coatney, Rita Hogan, Lucienne Diver, and Pam Fryer for their support. And to Maryam for giving me a shot.

Chapter One

Lincoln Masters was the epitome of his surname, the master of his domain.

“Miss Beaumonde, in my office, now.”

Striding by her desk, he crooked his finger. Natalie had no choice but to follow, her stomach sinking. Usually she was *Natalie* to him. The *Miss Beaumonde* didn't bode well.

She stood before his massive desk ready for her dressing down. Mr. Masters didn't suffer stupidity, sloppiness, or negligence in his employees. She was guilty of all three. All because of a man.

On the opposite side of his desk, his back to her, he closed his blinds on the magnificent view of Alcatraz and the early afternoon sun sparkling on the bay waters. It was unusually warm, even for a summer day in San Francisco, and there wasn't a puff of fog on the horizon.

It would have been more fitting if a few storm clouds could be seen rolling in. The walls were a dark paneling, the furniture a deep mahogany, and the carpeting a matching brown. Shutting out the light made the closed-door office that much more intimidating. And intimate.

She gulped back her nerves. “I'm very sorry, Mr. Masters.”

He held up his hand, shushing her. “We have several issues here, Miss Beaumonde. Let me enumerate them,” he said in a clipped tone.

Oh God. She was going to lose her job for being such an idiot. How would she make the mortgage payment?

“First”—he raised one finger—“you failed to tell me Jacobson cancelled the lunch appointment.”

Since Mr. Masters had gone out, she'd left a few minutes early for lunch. She didn't even know Mr. Jacobson had called—at the last minute, mind you, but that was an excuse. If she'd checked her messages before she left... But she hadn't.

“Second, I couldn't get hold of you to find out if he'd called with a change of plans.”

She'd returned from her lunchtime walk through the San Francisco streets all hot and sticky. It took her forever to cool off in the ladies' room where she'd ended up removing her pantyhose. So she didn't get Mr. Masters' calls either.

He didn't raise his voice. He was simply stern and forbidding. The way he always was. The way one would expect a strong-willed CEO of forty-three to handle his executive assistant when she'd made a big mistake. With black hair, dark eyes, swarthy skin, and a deep voice that resonated inside her, Mr. Masters could cut a woman—or any man—for that matter, down to size with just a look. He wore command like a tailored suit.

He made her quake in her high heels, yet oddly, he always made her pulse race, too, and that had nothing to do with fearing his wrath. “Mr. Masters, really, I—”

He shushed her again, this time with just a narrowing of his eyes. “When you *finally* called me back, I had to wait on hold for five minutes while you searched your incoming messages.”

She wanted to gag. It had been such a shitty week. He was right about everything. She'd failed miserably. He was a hard taskmaster, but she'd always measured up, always delivered more than required. Until last weekend, when she'd walked in on Van with that woman. Now she couldn't stop replaying those images in her mind, and they seemed to eclipse everything else she was supposed to be doing.

She'd been with Van for two years. At thirty years old with her own home and a solid job, Natalie had even considered taking the next step with him, moving in together. How could he do that to her? And how could he do *that* with some horrible woman dressed head to toe in skintight leather?

There wasn't a single bulge on her lithe form.

Natalie shuddered to think of her own body packed into all that leather. But the worst was the noises he'd made, the sighs, the moans, the cries, the groans of pleasure. He'd never sounded like that with Natalie, never gone utterly wild when she touched him. Not even in the beginning.

“Miss Beaumonde, are you listening to me?”

Oh God. “Of course, sir.” What had he said?

She certainly couldn't tell Mr. Masters all her personal problems. First of all, she wouldn't receive an ounce of sympathy. Second, he didn't believe personal issues should *ever* get in the way of work. Honestly, neither did she.

He rounded the end of his desk and paced behind her in a semicircle. She didn't dare turn her head to look at him despite the itch along her spine. You never wanted Mr. Masters at your back when he was pissed at you. Though when he was on *your* side, there was no greater ally.

"I'm very displeased, Miss Beaumonde, and, quite frankly, shocked." His breath was at her ear. "This isn't like you."

She'd worked for the company for five years and as his executive assistant for a year. She'd always done an exceptional job for him.

"So..." Coming to rest beside her, he lowered his voice to an almost seductive pitch. With his tall form only in her peripheral vision, feeling him next to her rather than seeing him clearly enhanced the effect; his tone, like warm maple syrup, drizzled down her spine and licked all the way back up. "You have a decision, my dear," he finished softly.

She suppressed the urge to shiver. It wasn't the thing to get turned on by your boss's voice, especially when you were on the rebound from catching your boyfriend with another woman. "Yes, sir," she whispered. "I'll do whatever I can to make it up to you."

"You most certainly will, Miss Beaumonde." Facing her, he leaned back against his desk, crossing his arms over his chest. "Now here's your choice." He cocked an eyebrow. "You can tell me what issue has put your job second on your list of priorities." Then, after a pause, he added, "In detail."

Oh no no no. She stared at the desktop rather than meet his gaze. Even now, remembering Van's wild abandon and his total pleasure at the hands of another woman was demoralizing. Natalie had suddenly had it slammed in her face that she wasn't woman enough for him. And she certainly wouldn't describe what she'd seen.

So, uh, no, not gonna tell Mr. Masters a thing.

"Or," her boss went on inexorably when she said nothing, "you can bend over my desk, lift your skirt, and take the spanking you so richly deserve."

Natalie blinked. She couldn't have heard that right. Lifting her head, she locked gazes with him.

He smiled. It wasn't sweet or nice or even offhand. It was completely devilish. "Yes, my dear, you heard me correctly."

She was five six with three-inch heels, yet Mr. Masters towered over her at six two and all that bulk. She'd always admired his powerfully built form, muscles honed to perfection. But with his dark eyebrows knitted together in a glower, he was actually quite frightening. And terrifyingly sexy.

She mustered the nerve to say, "That's a bit inappropriate, sir."

He rewarded her temerity with a throaty chuckle. "Very." He waited long enough to let that sink in.

Good Lord. Mr. Masters wanted to touch her. Here. Now. In his office. Her. His silly little assistant.

He tipped his head, gave her a cocky half smile. "Feel free to accept my other choice and tell me what's going on that took your mind off your job."

He had never, not once, made a sexual comment. If she did say so herself, she had large, firm breasts, and while her body was nowhere near worthy of stepping into tight leather, she did believe she had decent legs. Mr. Masters had looked at neither her breasts nor her legs. At least not that she knew of, though, in view of his demand, maybe she needed to rethink that.

"Does my job depend on whether I accept your spanking?"

"No," he said softly, waiting a long two seconds before he added, "your job depends on how well you perform your work and whether or not you can assure me that what happened today won't happen again." He lowered his voice to a bare mouthing of words. "The spanking is just for my pleasure."

A fire she'd never seen before burned in his eyes.

Beneath her silk blouse, her nipples burgeoned. His gaze dropped for half a second and half a second only. But he'd seen. Deep inside, her body started to hum. Despite herself, even after Van's betrayal, her libido began to rise. Between her legs, she grew wet. Her breath felt shallow, her skin hot. What was wrong with her? Perhaps it was *because* of Van's perfidy and a need to prove she was sexy and desirable.

Whatever the reason, she suddenly saw Mr. Masters in a whole new light. Though he'd never been married, she knew he liked women, hitting the society pages regularly with a

different lady every time. But he never messed with his employees. She'd never heard even a whisper of that.

But he sure was messing now.

“It doesn't matter which choice you make”—he seduced her with that deep, dark voice—“but you *must* choose.”

Her own body's reactions to him were her undoing. She wanted this. More importantly, she needed the affirmation.

Natalie leaned forward, placed one palm flat on the desk for balance, then slowly raised her skirt.

Lincoln felt his breath halt halfway to his lungs. He was a lusty man and he'd lusted after Natalie Beaumonde for more than a year, but he'd never acted on his desires. He didn't mix work with pleasure, especially not with a subordinate. Now, however, he was about to break that rule. A full year had seen lust turn to aching need, and Lincoln Masters wasn't into masochistic denial. Unless the woman in question said no.

With her rump in the air, Miss Beaumonde—he liked thinking of her that way—was most definitely not saying no. Her quickened breath, nipples tight beneath her blouse, her parted lips, and the pulse beating fast at her throat testified to how much she didn't want to say no. Maybe he was deluding himself or grabbing at justification, but for the first time in a week, the spark returned to Natalie's gaze. He'd missed her smile.

She trembled, waiting for his next move, and Lincoln took his time, letting the tension stretch between them. She had such a delectable, heart-shaped ass. Beneath the staid knee-length skirt and white blouse, naughty Natalie wore a miniscule, sexy-as-hell red thong. Who could have known what lay hidden under her attractive yet businesslike façade?

Natalie had always been efficient, diligent, and exacting. This was the only time he'd ever caught her in an error. He was well aware she'd been distracted for days. Something had been bothering her. Once, he'd thought he saw a tear at the corner of her eye. Oddly, it unnerved him. He didn't like seeing his Natalie upset. Now that was the damndest strange emotion he'd ever felt. The possessiveness in it—*his* Natalie. He didn't concern himself with his employees' personal business, but he had a lot of desires regarding Miss Beaumonde. And not just to see her

smile again. Try as he might, on the drive back from his missed appointment, he could do nothing but imagine his hand swatting her behind in punishment. It didn't matter how many times he'd told himself what a bad idea that was.

In total command of his urges, he wasn't used to giving into them unless it was well thought out before he executed. He ruled them; they did not rule him. Yet he couldn't erase the image from his mind. When he'd entered his outer office to find her at her desk, eyes downcast, hands clasped almost in supplication, he knew he would have what he wanted.

His mouth watered for a taste of her. "Are you ready to receive your punishment, Miss Beaumonde?" One last chance to change her mind. Lincoln forced no woman to play his games.

"Yes, sir," she murmured, ending with the slightest sigh of anticipation.

He cupped his hand and at first merely caressed the firm flesh of one rounded cheek laid bare by the cut of her thong. Her body quivered beneath his touch.

Then she moaned, a barely there sound, and a tiny drop of her feminine juice moistened the crotch of her panties, her pussy plump against the red material.

"You've been a very bad girl, Miss Beaumonde."

"I know, Mr. Masters. I'm so sorry." Her voice was low, husky. Eyes closed, her long lashes lay against her cheeks.

He raised his cupped hand and swatted her ass hard. She yelped.

"Does it sting, Miss Beaumonde?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Masters."

She'd never said his name with quite that breathy quality. His cock surged in his suit pants. If he wasn't careful, he'd leave a wet spot. The idea delighted him. He hadn't felt this hot with a woman in far too long. She was unpracticed, unguarded, yet very willing.

He swatted once more, feeling the reverberation up through her buttock. A cupped hand could smart but wouldn't damage the skin. He wanted her flesh reddened and slightly tender when she sat in her chair, a pleasant reminder. He didn't dish out violence, he gave pleasure, but he'd always found that a hint of fear and uncertainty and a dollop of pain enhanced the pleasure receptors.

Slapping her bare butt again, he then allowed himself a slow caress of her thong's crotch, testing the dampness, the heady scent of her arousal rising. She pushed back slightly against his hand, rubbing herself like a cat rubs its head against its master's leg, begging for a stroke.

Lincoln began to spank her in earnest. He punctuated each swat with a caress of her pussy, each time lingering a little longer. She stretched out her arms and put her face down between them, forcing her bottom higher. Then she gasped, moaned, writhed, her breath faster, sharper. Her flesh flamed beneath his ministrations, and her sweet juice soaked her panties, moisture glistening on the inside of her thighs.

He quickened the pace when she began to tremble and shiver, her legs shaking. With one last slap, he buried his hand against her pussy, delving between her legs to the bud of her sex and circled, only the thin fabric of her thong separating him from the prize. She came with a long shuddering moan, her thighs clamping tight, riding his fingers. She flooded him with moisture, perfumed the air with a sexual scent.

He resisted stroking his cock. Right now, she was his, not the other way round. He wasn't ready to come for her yet. That would happen on his terms, at the time of his choosing. There were other games he wanted to play with her before that happened. He was a master of control, and the longer he held out, the more climactic his orgasm would be.

He pulled free of her, raised his hand to his nostrils and drew in a long, deep breath of her. Christ, she smelled sweet. He wanted a taste, but he teased himself with saving that for next time.

"Compose yourself, Miss Beaumonde," he murmured.

Her red-gold hair drooped out of its bun, tendrils falling across her forehead. With her skirt pulled high above her pink rump, she looked thoroughly debauched and luscious.

He smoothed the material down over her bottom, covering her, then helped her to stand straight, holding her arm until he felt she was steady on her feet. Only then did she open her eyes, the green lavishly dark like an Amazon rainforest. She met his gaze for less than a heartbeat, then let it drop to the level of his tie. He hadn't even removed his suit jacket.

"I trust your error won't happen again, Miss Beaumonde." He'd have to find something else to spank her for. Or perhaps more, a trip to the private downstairs room of his house in the woods. Like taking Little Red Riding Hood into the big bad wolf's lair.

She shook her head as if incapable of words. Tipping her chin, he ran his thumb along her bottom lip, fixing the lipstick she'd smudged.

“Now go back to your desk, Miss Beaumonde, and reschedule my lunch with Jacobson.” With that, he dismissed her, pointing one finger at the closed door of his office. She exited on unsteady legs.

She was so damn sweet and fuckable.

Lincoln Masters needed more of her.

Chapter Two

Natalie stepped off the BART train and hurried through the mass of commuters to her economy car out in the parking lot. It would have been lovely to work *and* live in the city, but despite a good salary as an executive assistant, she couldn't afford even a studio flat in San Francisco. Instead, she'd bought her home in the East Bay when house prices had fallen last year with the credit crisis. Even then, she barely had any money left for the work that needed to be done to the place.

Van said he would help, but that had lasted as long as painting one wall of the living room.

Van. She didn't want to think about him.

Instead, the entire BART ride, she'd thought about Mr. Masters' spanking. Alone in her car for the ten-minute drive home, her cheeks flamed. The ones on her face. Though the bottom set of cheeks were still red-hot too. Wonderfully so.

She was awful. The rest of the afternoon had gone by in a daze. Though she certainly hadn't made another mistake. Good Lord, no. Mr. Masters acted as if that interlude in his office had never happened. He'd buzzed her phone, called her into this office, rattled off instructions, handed her filing, signed the letters she'd typed, all without a single altered inflection.

Yet every time she stood before him, her smarting behind reminded her. She'd remained heated and buzzed all afternoon. Her ears had rung for a good half hour after that delicious orgasm.

Stopping at a red light, Natalie put her hands to her face, her skin warm to the touch. How could she have let her boss do that to her? Worse, how could she have loved it?

She wasn't into bondage games. She didn't believe in screwing her way to the top. She didn't indulge in affairs at work. While she should have been thinking about making sure she didn't lose her job, she'd been daydreaming about lifting her skirt again for Mr. Masters to have his wicked way.

She didn't even feel bad about Van. Almost with a snap of the fingers, she was over it. Which made her fickle and shallow. She hated to think she was that kind of person.

Her street was older, the sidewalks tree lined, the houses small starter homes. Tricycles sat in driveways, many of the lawns were choked with weeds, and too many cars lined the curbs. But the two-bedroom, one-bath house was *hers*. At thirty, she didn't want to keep paying rent. She'd dreamed of Van moving in. He, however, had never offered to give up his apartment.

Now she knew why.

She'd trimmed her front walk with pansies, impatiens, and geraniums. A huge juniper grew dead center in her lawn, obscuring the view of her family room window from the road.

She slipped her key into the door only to find it already unlocked. Natalie's heart began to beat hard in her chest.

Van sat in his usual easy chair in front of the TV, feet up, but he dropped the footrest the moment he saw her.

"Honey." He rose slowly to his full five feet ten inches.

Natalie couldn't help the comparison to Mr. Masters. Where her boss was tall, broad, and powerful, Van was average, lanky, and lean. His blond hair was straight, brushing the neck of his T-shirt. His jeans were old and faded, molding to his male package. His feet bare, she noted his toenails needed clipping.

A couple of years older than she was, she'd always liked his bohemian look. He was so nonestablishment, an artist who'd actually had his work displayed in a prominent Palo Alto gallery where he'd had an exclusive show. Even his name, Van Wright, had seemed so artsy and self-important.

Yet next to Mr. Masters, Van appeared an unkempt...wuss. Especially after the act she'd witnessed him participating in.

God, she was harsh. Or maybe she was just being a vindictive bitch. He'd cheated, so she let her boss make the moves on her as payback. Sort of. Natalie wanted to bury her face in her hands.

Instead, she laid her purse and keys on the kitchen table. The house was an L-shape, kitchen and dining area on the right, the family room on the left with a sliding glass door out to

her patio and postage-stamp backyard. The two bedrooms and bathroom made the long part of the L at the back.

“Don't call me *honey*,” she finally said, coming to stand in the front hall, which was really nothing more than faux marble tiles separating the kitchen's linoleum from the family room's beige carpet.

“Let me explain.”

Her jaw dropped in total disgust. “I don't think you can explain away what I saw.”

He had a long face, and it got even longer as he frowned. “You think I was cheating, but I wasn't—”

Natalie cut him off. “That woman was—” She stopped, unable to utter a single word describing the event that had so angered and humiliated her. “I believe what she was doing is considered sex, and therefore you were cheating.” Then she held out her hand. “I would like my key back, please.” She should have felt an ache, or even tears prodding her eyes. Yet after her punishment in Mr. Masters' office, Natalie didn't feel much of anything for Van except anger.

“It was a therapy session.”

Okay. She felt an emotion. Wait, was disbelief an emotion? “Therapy?” Then there was another emotion. Laughter. Oh wait, laughter wasn't an emotion either. How about hysterical laughter? It simply bubbled up her throat. She tried to cover it with her hand, but she couldn't stop, until her belly hurt and moisture trickled from her eyes.

Van's lips thinned and his nostrils flared. Clearly he didn't share her sense of humor. “Mistress Divine is my sex therapist.”

Natalie swiped at her streaming eyes, slashes of mascara on her fingers. “Please. I deserve better than that. I'm not an idiot.” Except where Mr. Masters' lunch schedule was concerned.

Van's face softened, his blue eyes turning soft. “Please. Sit down. Let me tell you.” He tipped his head like a dog begging for a biscuit. “After two years together, you at least have to listen.”

Now *that* made her mad. “I don't owe you anything.” Yet, for the sake of the two years they'd had, she entered her family room to sit primly on the edge of the sofa. Once again, she held out her hand. “First, my key, please.” She'd shoved his key through his mail slot after she left his apartment.

Van pulled out his set and, with exacting movements, worked her house key off the ring. He laid it in the middle of the glass coffee table.

“All right, explain about your therapist.”

He sat cross-legged on the carpet in front of her. His feet were bare, the soles dirty. He was so not for her. She didn't know how she could have thought otherwise, except that she'd loved his carefree spirit. Once upon a time, he'd made her want to be carefree too. Or maybe all her rationalizations were simply because she wanted to deny how much he'd hurt her, how his infidelity had ripped away her self-esteem.

“I have needs, Natalie.”

She snorted. “We all do. I satisfied mine with you.” Then, horribly, her face heated. She thought of Mr. Masters and how she'd satisfied her need right there in his office. She was no better than Van. Except that he'd done it first.

“I have darker needs. I was afraid you wouldn't understand about them. Mistress Divine has been helping me work through this.”

Of all the gall. “She was using a—” She couldn't even finish the full sentence.

“I know,” he said simply.

And they'd been having *therapy* on the bed in which he'd made love to Natalie. She felt violated. All she could say was, “Mistress Divine does not sound like a therapist's name. Does she have a degree?”

“She's a black belt.”

Natalie laughed, but after her hysterical bout earlier, it actually hurt her throat. “She's a dominatrix, isn't she?”

“Yes.” He put his hands together and bowed his head as if he were praying. “She helps me through my needs so that I don't have to foist them upon you.”

“Oh, how magnanimous of you.” Her blood boiled over, and she was pretty sure her eyes were rage-red. “I've never heard a man explain away his cheating by saying he was saving his girlfriend from himself.”

He raised just his eyes. “I never told you because I was afraid you wouldn't understand.” There was a look of condescension, too, an I-told-you-so.

She leaned down slightly. “So what you're saying is that you didn't trust me enough to tell me about your darker needs, so you cheated instead.”

“I wasn't cheating, Natalie.” His voice took on a plaintive quality. “I just never wanted to frighten you. I've been fighting my submissive nature all my life. I've lost girlfriends over it before. I didn't want to lose you.”

“Right.” She huffed out a sharp breath. He'd never trusted her. “You could have asked me.”

“I did.”

She snorted. “You did not.”

“Don't you remember when I showed you those pictures on the Internet?”

She couldn't believe she was having this conversation. As if she were the one who had to do the justifying. “You were always showing me porn on the Internet. How was I supposed to know *that* was something you actually wanted?”

“Everything I showed you was something I wanted.”

She'd refused to let it hurt her feelings, telling herself some men were just that way, visual, and Internet porn got their motors running. She hadn't wanted to read between the lines either—that would require too much analyzing about the situation—and, dammit, she wanted a man to tell her flat out what he wanted instead of expecting her simply to get what he meant.

“You can bend over my desk, lift your skirt, and take the spanking you so richly deserve.”

Her face flushed as she heard Mr. Masters' voice in her head. She realized that while making love with Van had been fine, she'd never gotten quite as hot or wet as she had when Mr. Masters ordered her to bare her bottom for him.

God, maybe *she* was a closet submissive. Not to mention fickle and shallow.

“Van, it doesn't matter why you didn't tell me. It merely shows that you didn't trust in me or our relationship.”

He gave her a whipped puppy look, which might not be far off considering his submissive predilections. God, did he like to be chained up and beaten? Natalie shuddered.

“Please give me another chance, baby. I promise I will tell you everything. I'll even introduce you to Mistress Divine, and she can explain it all.”

Eww. “I do not want to meet your mistress.” She was done feeling betrayed. She'd licked her wounds, now it was time to heal. “I don't want—”

He held up his hand, blocking his face from her view. “Don't say it. Please think about it. Over the weekend. I care about you. I don't want to lose you. I know we can make this right between us.”

“Van, I—”

He shook his head, holding up both hands this time. “I'm sorry I lied. You're right, I didn't trust you to accept that side of me. But if you give me a chance, we can work this out. Think about it over the weekend, and if on Monday, you still want me out of your life, I'll go.”

They'd had two years together. She'd walked in on something horrifying. Well, that was an exaggeration. She wasn't a prude. The horror wasn't in the act itself. Under other circumstances—especially since letting Mr. Masters spank her—she might have found the whole thing titillating. No, the pain was in the fact that another woman was doing it to him and that he'd loved it more than anything Natalie had done with him. Maybe she had too much pride to consider forgiving him. Whatever. The image had been debilitating.

Natalie gave herself one deep breath. “I'll give you the weekend. But if I still say no on Monday, then I don't want to hear from you again.”

She thought he might kiss her feet at the declaration, and there was something oddly powerful in having a man at her feet. She'd been dumped enough times in her life to feel the pleasure of having a man beg for her.

It felt almost as good as Mr. Masters swatting her bottom.

It would have been cleansing to slam the door on Van's butt on the way out, but Natalie didn't. That was just plain petty and beneath her, but the anger did serve a purpose, ridding her of the self-pity she'd been indulging in the past few days.

She'd had a right to expect more from Van. *Sex therapist, my foot*. She had a right to demand pleasure. The level of pleasure Mr. Masters had given her in his office.

Her skin heated. As if he were a magician snapping his fingers, even from afar, Mr. Masters made her suddenly wet, breathless, and needy.

Closing her eyes, she could feel the stinging swat of his hand. All alone in her empty house, Natalie shivered. His scent was all over her. How could that be when he hadn't even removed his clothes?

Natalie stepped out of her high heels, and entering the bedroom, she undid her skirt, let it fall and walked right out of the pool of fabric.

Padding barefoot across the carpet, the swish of her silk blouse against her skin felt sexy, decadent, sensual. She deserved to feel this good. It was her right as a woman. In trying to please Van in all aspects of their relationship, she'd eclipsed her own needs.

On her last birthday, the girls had surprised her with a vibrator. She'd been mortified, which was their intention, of course. Diana, her roommate before she'd saved enough for a down payment on the house, claimed the longer a woman was in a relationship, the more she needed a vibrator. Natalie felt exactly the opposite, that in a committed relationship, you didn't need outside stimulation.

Well, all right, she should have seen the writing on the wall when Van was so fascinated with the Internet. But no, she'd tossed the vibrator in the bottom drawer of the bedside table and forgotten about it.

Hm, did it have great meaning that she knew exactly where it was? Oh yes, it probably did, something cosmic like *don't throw this out because someday you're going to need it badly to take the edge off what Mr. Masters did to you in his office, you dirty, naughty woman*.

What would it feel like now, with her butt still tender, her pussy wet and warm? With fantasies of Mr. Masters running around in her head like the proverbial sugar plum faeries?

Oh, she deserved to find out. In a way, it could even be considered payback for what Van had done. He'd needed so-called help from his sex therapist. Natalie was going to get help from her battery-operated BFF, as Diana had called the purple silicon device.

Natalie dropped to her knees by the side of the bed and opened the drawer. The toy lay buried beneath a few scarves, her 49ers T-shirt, and her Sharks jersey.

Hah. The batteries still worked. Diana had put them in so Natalie could feel the thrum against her hand. Oh yeah, mortifying then, perfect now. Eight inches long, with a little swan-shaped node in a most strategic place, it had three vibrating speeds and two rotating speeds.

Buried beneath the silicon skin were layers of beads designed to caress deep inside as they rotated around the shaft. Who needed a man with all this technology?

Take that, Van.

She removed her thong, undid the front clasp of her bra, but left her blouse buttoned. She liked the feel of silk and lace caressing her nipples. Pulling her hair loose from its bun, she let it float down over her shoulders.

Okay, how did one do this? Flat on your back and let it take you missionary?

She imagined Mr. Masters telling her what to do and she had the most absolutely thrilling idea. It was probably scandalous, maybe even perverted, but no one need ever know. This was just for her.

She crawled across the carpet to the full-length mirrored closet door.

“On your knees, Miss Beaumonde”—she imitated Mr. Masters's deep tones—“and spread your legs so I can see everything.”

Oh my, she was bad. But saying the words aloud made her so wet.

“My dear Miss Beaumonde, you have the prettiest pussy.” She giggled. Yes, he'd say things like that. She dropped her voice and whispered in his dark mysterious pitch. “Now I want to watch you fuck yourself, Miss Beaumonde.”

Lord. She wished Mr. Masters was hearing, watching, saying it all, driving her mad the way he had in her office.

“Do it, Miss Beaumonde.”

Natalie eased the vibrator inside as if it were a cock she was about to ride.

She opened her eyes, needing to see what Mr. Masters would see. “Oh, Miss Beaumonde, that is so hot,” she murmured deeply. “Take it all.”

She slid down slowly, gasping as the toy filled her. The sight in the mirror was sexy and sensual, her nipples beaded against the blouse, her trimmed pussy pink, her clitoris budding.

“Oh, Mr. Masters, you would love this, wouldn't you?”

She flipped the switch to high speed for both vibrate and rotate and sucked a breath deep into her lungs, exhaling in a sigh.

Holding the base, her hand tingled with the vibrations, but inside, oh my. Liquid heat shot out to her fingers and toes and shuddered up her torso to the tips of her breasts.

“Fuck it, Miss Beaumonde, fuck it *now* for me.”

She'd never have said things like that. But mimicking his voice, watching herself in the mirror, it made it all so real. *This* sexy, hot woman was the one Mr. Masters would see.

Leaning back on one hand, she rocked, penetrating deep, biting down on her lip. Her cheeks flushed, the silk of her blouse stroked her like a human touch. The little swan swept over her clitoris with each bounce of her body. She rode faster, sliding over a spot inside that grew harder and more sensitive with each thrust and rumble of the vibrator. She'd never come from the inside. She hadn't been sure she had a G-spot, but, oh God, yes, it was definitely there, along with the insistent rub of the swan on her clitoris. Amazing. Incendiary. Cataclysmic.

“Oh, Mr. Masters.” Her breath puffed, her thighs strained, and watching herself in the mirror was the hottest thing she'd ever done except let Mr. Masters spank her.

“That's it, Miss Beaumonde, I'm fucking you. It's my cock in you.” She needed his voice, needed his words, just the way he'd talked to her in his office. Dirty, naughty, commanding.

The orgasm built deep, shooting out in short bursts, growing, consuming, turning her mindless, until she could almost believe Mr. Masters was right there in the room with her.

Climax hit so hard, so intensely, burning her before exploding. And Natalie screamed. Tears leaked from her eyes. Yet she couldn't stop until the last tremors shuddered away.

She lay at an awkward angle, her legs still bent at the knees, the vibrator humming inside her.

When she rose to look at herself in the mirror, she found her hair a big frothy mess around her face and shoulders. Her skin was pink, her eyes wide, cheeks red, nipples starkly outlined beneath the white blouse, the vibrator nestled against the folds of her sex.

She looked thoroughly wanton.

“Perfect,” she whispered in Mr. Masters' voice.

Take that, Van.

Chapter Three

The next morning, looking sexy in his crisp white shirt and red tie, Mr. Masters passed her desk on the way to the eleven o'clock audit meeting. "Please have the Montgomery file on my desk when I return. I've got a conference call with them at twelve-fifteen. You'll find the individuals participating in my calendar."

"Yes, sir." Natalie had truly been unable to look him in the eye all morning. Every time she tried, her skin flushed. Especially after what she'd done with the vibrator, mimicking his voice to make herself hotter and wetter.

She experienced the naughtiest dreams last night, from spanking to toys to threesomes to foursomes. Sexually, she was a very vanilla person. This wasn't like her, but between Mr. Masters and Van, her dreams had been one sexcapade after another. By morning, Natalie hadn't made up her mind about Van. The dreams and her vibrator episode just made it all more confusing.

The warmth of her face deepened as she watched Mr. Masters leave. What would it be like to do those things with him?

The man was the stuff of fantasies.

He hadn't given her one untoward look this morning. Unless she made another terrible mistake, yesterday was the only time she'd ever have his undivided attention in that manner.

After checking his calendar for the names, she pulled open the second drawer of the metal filing cabinet and flipped through to the Montgomery file. Opening it, she wrote down the phone numbers in order to set up the conference call. It was her job to get all parties on the line before buzzing in Mr. Masters. Closing the drawer once again, she stopped with her fingertips on the cool metal.

What would he do if he found the wrong file on his desk?

Natalie shivered, feeling a phantom swat on her butt. It was crazy. Over the top. Irresistible.

Reopening the same drawer, she laid the Montgomery file on the left side, easily accessible, and pulled out the file in the slot right behind its placeholder. Hugging it to her chest, Natalie carried the incorrect folder into Mr. Masters' office, laying it in the center of his desk.

Then she strolled to the ladies' room to remove her panties.

* * *

Lincoln stared at the folder on his desk. The label did not read Montgomery but Murchison. His lips creased in a slow smile. Whether she'd done it on purpose or through the power of suggestion, Natalie had made another error. Not one as egregious as yesterday's, but a punishable error nonetheless.

He paced to the door and stood in front of her desk, slapping the folder on his hand. His heart beat faster with the thrill of anticipation as he held up his prize for her to read. "What does that say, Miss Beaumonde?"

"Murchison," she whispered, her lips a deep Bing cherry red today. A lively pulse beat at her throat.

"And what was the file I asked for?"

"I—" She gulped. "Montgomery."

"Please bring the correct folder into my office, Miss Beaumonde." He had plenty of time before the conference call to familiarize himself with the contents.

"Yes, sir." Her breasts rose against her blouse with a shaky breath. He felt a corresponding twitch in his cock.

Three seconds after he sat in his chair, she was sliding the folder across his desk, the slightest of coy smiles curving her lips. He allowed himself to be hypnotized by the sashay of her shapely bottom as she exited his office.

The woman knew what she was doing, probably had the right file handy with all the numbers already written down. She deserved a good fucking for trying to manipulate him. Yet he wasn't ready to push the game that far. He wanted to savor each step to her utter capitulation.

The next half hour was interminable. He wanted her so badly he felt lightheaded, and for the first time that he could remember in his adult life, he didn't care a flying fuck about business or his conference call or this new customer. If they signed, fine, if not, he didn't give a damn. The thought of Natalie's ass reddened with the imprint of his hand, her moans, her sighs, took precedence over everything.

He realized that could lead to a dangerous state of affairs, but sometimes a man enjoyed the risk.

His conference call completed, he came to rest in the doorway of his office, gazing at her without a word, until she was forced to say, "I'm sorry, Mr. Masters."

"In my office. Now."

She jumped to her feet, her enthusiasm exciting him to no end. With her following, he stopped at the side of his desk and turned.

"Close the door," he ordered.

She obeyed, and he heard the soft snick of the lock. *Good girl*. He had no illusions that he was dealing out real punishment, indeed, her eagerness signified her desire.

She rocked back on her heels in front of his desk, hands clasped behind her back. The stance brought to mind another delicious element to add to the play. A little restraint device might be in order.

"For this second transgression, Miss Beaumonde, there will be no choice. You will accept the punishment I see fit, *and*"—he glared at her—"you will tell me what's going on in your personal life that is interfering with your work."

Her eyes widened, her lips parted. She hadn't expected that. He detected her mind working, pondering how she could get out of the latter while indulging in the former.

"Your punishment first." Simply because he couldn't wait.

With a shuddering breath, beneath her blouse, her nipples peaked, hard beads speaking to her desires.

"You know the position," he murmured.

Oh indeed she did, going immediately to her forearms over his desk, her pert ass beckoning.

“Raise your skirt,” he demanded.

This time she wore a longer, flared little number, the material silky as it fell in folds to her calves. Her legs were bare, her skin smooth, and as she lifted the skirt to her waist, she revealed the plump, aroused lips of her pussy framed by her buttocks and thighs.

“Well, well, well, naughty Natalie, where are your panties?”

“I removed them in the ladies' room earlier, sir,” she answered, keeping her eyes on her hands clasped in front of her.

“When?” he queried.

“After you left for your meeting, sir.”

“You dirty slut,” he said with a trace of humor slipping through. Christ, she truly wanted this, planned it, set him up for it. The certainty sent his blood shooting through his veins.

For being such a good girl anticipating his needs, she deserved a delicious punishment. “Put your hands behind your back,” he directed.

She slid her head slightly to look at him. He waited. Slowly, she set her arms behind her, crossing her wrists, her breasts squashed against his desk, her cheek resting on the mahogany.

Lincoln reached for one of several cable zip ties he kept in his pencil holder. There was always some electronic cable or other thing that needed securing with the zip ties, not just a woman's wrists. Slipping the plastic tie beneath her hands, he slid the end home, leaving enough room for her blood to flow.

Breath puffed between her parted lips, her gaze following him as best she could. Her ass was right where he wanted it, high in the air.

“Is that comfortable, Miss Beaumonde?” He had no wish to frighten or hurt her. If she asked, he would slice through the zip tie, freeing her.

He counted two beats before she answered. “I'm comfortable, sir.”

Ah. She couldn't imagine what that did to his nerve endings. He was on edge, every sound more distinct, the tick of the wall clock, the hum of his computer, the insistent low-level buzz of traffic noise rising from below, her breath, the beat of his pulse, the rush of his blood.

He laid the flat of his hand against her ass, her skin tantalizingly smooth, her sex fragrant with arousal. “You know what this means, Miss Beaumonde.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Tell me,” he insisted. He wanted the words from her lips.

“You're going to spank me, sir.”

He reached down and pulled her hair from the knot secured at her nape, spreading it over his desk, her shoulders. The texture was like raw silk. For the moment, she was his, all tied up, her pussy wet and ready for him. “How am I going to spank you?”

“Very hard,” she whispered.

His heart bumped against the wall of his chest, not faster, but harder. “Are you going to like it, my dear?” He waited, his breath trapped somewhere between his lips and his lungs.

“No, sir.”

He slapped her sharply on the rump. She squeaked, dragged in a breath, let it out with a long sigh.

“Are you going to deny you will enjoy this?”

With her face planted against his desk, she closed the one eye he could see. And moaned. He was so hard, he could have pulled his cock out then and had her.

“Oh no, sir, this is terrible.” Then the slightest giggle escaped her. “Please don't do it again, sir. It hurts.” She wagged her fingers as if she were trying to free herself from the restraint.

Why had it taken him so long to give in to his urge to enjoy her? It didn't matter that she worked for him. They were a man and woman, wanting the same thing.

“I'm going to make you cry, my dear Miss Beaumonde. It's the only way to make sure you never make another mistake.”

“Yes, sir, I'll take my punishment any way you want to give it to me.”

Christ, the ways he wanted to give it to her.

He cupped his hand and swatted her soundly, then eased his fingers down to test the wetness of her pussy.

Holy hell, she was drenched. He couldn't resist raising his hand, rubbing her moisture over his lips, then licking it away. She was sweet and perfumed, and her taste brought a weakness to his knees.

Lincoln slapped her ass again, harder, then slipped down to caress, tantalize, seduce, and buried his finger deeper between her thighs, grazing the tight bud of her clitoris.

Natalie's body quivered. Her legs trembled all the way down to her high-heeled shoes. The desk was bruising against her breasts and belly, her bottom stinging, her clitoris aching. She was completely at his mercy, and Natalie had never been more turned on, more ready to do anything a man told her to. He whacked her bottom again, and there was such a rush of heat through her, she felt faint. His hand connected again and again, the slap of flesh against flesh filling the office, her gasps and moans and sighs accompanying like music.

He swatted her hard, her flesh rippling, then he slid down the center of her sex, between her legs, rubbing her throbbing clit, and out again. Her body seemed to follow his movements, rising to entice him. His hand came down, smarting, then soothed, heading straight down her cleft, and this time he entered her, pumping her with a blunt finger. He shifted behind her, slapping her butt and working two fingers inside her.

She lost her mind, it was so extraordinary. The sting, the stroke, she moaned and writhed as if he'd buried himself to the hilt inside her. Her pussy ground against the desk, agitating her clitoris, and that's all there was, just sensation and sound. His harsh breath. The slap of his hand. The hungry, wet feel of her pussy. The heat. And she exploded, tendrils of sensation shooting to all her extremities and back to every point he touched her. Her pussy milked his fingers, squeezing, taking.

When she came to herself, she felt tears on her cheek. The desk was wet. Her pussy throbbed.

Mr. Masters leaned over her, whispered in her ear, "My dear Miss Beaumonde, that was too fucking hot for words."

No man had ever said things like that to her, words that made her feel special, desirable. She wanted to curl up and rub herself all over him like a favorite pet. But her shoulders began to hurt. Just as she had the thought, she felt cool metal against her wrists as he sliced through the zip tie with a pair of scissors. He soothed each wrist with a kiss that stole her breath. Then he leaned down to kiss each buttock before he pulled her skirt over her bottom. With steady hands, he raised her from the desk.

She felt cared for, desired, and deliciously wicked, a combination she'd never known before and one she could easily start to crave. Mr. Masters was addicting.

“Sit, Miss Beaumonde.”

She didn't know why she thrilled to her surname on his lips. She never had before. He'd never said it so many times so close together, and usually he called her Natalie. Miss Beaumonde was someone else. Someone special.

Her bottom stung slightly as she sat in the chair before him. He hitched a hip on the desk. “Don't think I've forgotten,” he said. “Tell me why you've been so distracted lately that you've made two mistakes in as many days.”

Her heart dropped to her stomach. She'd played, now she had to pay.

“Is it a man?” he asked.

Natalie nodded.

“Did you catch him cheating?”

She nodded again.

“We're not playing twenty questions, Miss Beaumonde. Tell me everything.” He crossed his arms over his chest.

He wasn't even breathing hard, but then she'd been the one going off like a bottle rocket.

“I can't,” she said. It was cruel and unusual to expect her to bare her soul. The spanking was one thing, telling him about Van was total intimacy. Okay, okay, maybe that was skewed logic, but she was not telling him.

He simply stared at her, and she grew restless and fidgety. He was too much, too male, especially compared to Van. His skin was dark and sexy against the white shirt, his black hair clipped neatly without looking preppy. And he smelled nice, some expensive cologne that lingered on her skin as if they'd made love for hours.

He waited her out without a word, as if he were an interrogator who knew his continued silence would break her will.

“I walked into his apartment,” she finally said, then paused, trying to determine how explicit to get. Until, suddenly, just thinking about Van and that woman angered her. Why *not*

say it? Damn Van anyway. “He was letting some woman use a toy on him while he was sucking a bigger toy stuck to the headboard.”

Why had it been so hard to say to Van but so easy to reveal to Mr. Masters in the moment? She didn't know. Perhaps it was pain versus anger, yet once said, she ached all over again. Mr. Masters had made her forget. Now his questions brought it all back.

Tears pricked her eyes, and the words just fell from her lips before she could manage to stop them. “He never wanted me that way. He never moaned or groaned for me like that, never made all those sounds. He never begged or got all crazy-wild for me...” She trailed off, bit her lip, feeling pathetic for letting all that out. “I'm sorry. That was TMI.” Way too much information to tell her boss, even after letting him spank her.

There was something dark and brooding in his gaze as he asked, “How important was this man to you?”

Natalie swallowed. “Very.”

He cocked his head.

She recognized the question in his gesture. “I *thought* he was very important.” She lowered her gaze to stare at her clasped hands. “Until I let you spank me, and”—she dragged in a long breath—“I liked it so much. If he was that important, how could I have liked it?”

“There's a difference between hot sex and being in love with someone. Just because you enjoyed what I did doesn't mean you cared for him any less.”

She felt very young compared to his worldliness, plus fickle and shallow in the aftermath of what she'd just allowed him to do to her. Good Lord, she'd actually left the wrong file so that Mr. Masters would have to punish her.

“Do you want him back?”

“He came to my house last night and asked me to forgive him.” Another bite of anger nipped at her tangle of emotions, lending a harshness to her tone. “He said he's been afraid to tell me he has *needs*.” She narrowed her eyes, focusing on the images in her head. “He never *asked* me; he just assumed I couldn't handle it.”

“*Can* you handle it?”

She raised her eyes until she was looking up, up, up into his gaze. “Of course I can. I just let you spank me. Why wouldn't I have been able to handle what he was doing?”

“Because you can't even say it.”

That stopped her cold. “I said it.”

“A woman used a toy on him while he sucked a bigger toy,” Mr. Masters mimicked.

True, she hadn't used the evocative words, creating the down and dirty, explicit image she'd witnessed.

He lowered his voice. “Say it like it is, Miss Beaumonde. What was she doing with the *toy*?”

She knew what he wanted. The crude description. The lowdown on Van's needs. Why was Mr. Masters pushing her? Fine. Whatever. He wanted it; she'd give it to him. “My boyfriend was on his hands and knees letting some thin, sexy *dominatrix*”—she laced the word with all the disgust she could muster—“dressed in a tight black leather outfit fuck him in the ass with a dildo while he sucked on a fake cock suction-cupped to the headboard. And he loved it. He called her his 'sex therapist.'” She allowed herself a sneer as she glared at her boss. “There, satisfied?”

He didn't show even the mildest reaction. “Neither of us has been satisfied yet.”

She stood, jammed her hands on her hips. “Just what are you saying, Mr. Masters?” Was he somehow disparaging her or the spanking or that she'd climaxed for him? Just like Van, was Mr. Masters saying she hadn't done something right? She might very well be sick of men. Somehow, that emotion was so much better than the humiliation and hurt she'd felt watching Van.

A sexy grin spread across his face. She'd never thought of his smiles as sexy before, but now it was undeniably true.

“What I'm saying, Miss Beaumonde, is that perhaps you should consider giving your wandering boyfriend exactly what he's asked for.” He was close enough to trace a finger down her nose. “But on your terms.”

Chapter Four

Natalie subsided into her chair. “What do you have in mind?” Her first thought at his suggestion had been turning herself into a dominatrix. Only it wasn't Van she was envisioning. She willed her cheeks not to give away her thoughts with a telltale flush.

Maybe Mr. Masters was saying she should let Van have his cake and eat it, too, as the old saying went. Take him back and let him keep the other woman.

Oh no, not *Mistress Divine*.

“Your boyfriend would like to get back in your good graces.” Mr. Masters crossed his arms over his chest once again and tapped a finger on his elbow. “And he wants you to accept his so-called needs. You can give him both.”

She pursed her lips. “I'm still not getting it.”

He leaned close, bringing his face on level with hers, and lowered his voice. “Tell him you will wield the dildo and he will be restrained while you do it.” He leaned back once more. “And that I'll be there to supervise.”

She laughed, not much more than an embarrassing shaky squeak. “You?”

“I have a dungeon, and I have experience. He's obviously into submission. I'll help you.”

This time she couldn't help the flush of her skin. She might be vanilla in the bedroom, but she didn't wear blinders. She knew about bondage and submission and sadomasochism. Good Lord, Mr. Masters was revealing he was one of *them*. Her heart didn't beat faster; she was simply able to feel it whereas a moment before she'd lacked awareness of her breath, her heart. Even the tingling on her spanked bottom began again.

“Do you have whips and cat-o'-nine-tails and all sorts of weird stuff?” she asked.

He dropped his chin to his chest, shook his head, sighed, and then lifted his eyes to meet hers. “This isn't about getting off on causing pain, Miss Beaumonde. There can be great pleasure

in giving over your will to another. Trusting them to take care of you.” He paused, giving her a moment to ponder that, then came back with the real whammy. “Tell me, did you enjoy your spankings?”

Locking gazes with him, her flesh prickled, and a delicious shiver ran up her spine. She'd relished his spankings more than she could say. There was something enticing and tantalizing in having to submit, in not knowing how far he'd push her.

Is that what Van felt?

It was difficult to separate her anger and sense of betrayal and, yes, her jealousy, from the bare-bones fact that perhaps Van did have needs he feared she'd reject him for. Just as she was torn between her two years with Van and her newfound fascination with Mr. Masters. Emotions were not black-and-white.

“I did enjoy it,” she said, her voice low.

“So did I,” he said in an equally low tone that stroked all her nerve endings from her fingertips to her clitoris. “You see how exciting these things can be,” he went on in that same voice, seducing her, mesmerizing her. “So show your boyfriend your willingness to give him the full measure of what he asks. And you will figure out whether he's telling the truth.” He spread his hands. “Does he need his dominatrix? Or will he allow you to dominate him?”

He'd gone right to the heart of it. Natalie could no longer be sure Van truly wanted her. “So this will be a test.” She chewed on her inner cheek a moment. “Is it the dildo or is it *her* he really wants?”

“Exactly.” His lips curved in the slightest of smiles, as if she were an obedient student.

She tipped her head, spelling it all out for herself. “If he really wants me to accept his needs, and I do, then he can get rid of his sexy little therapist. But if he's lying to cover up my walking in on him, then he still won't get rid of her. And I'll discover his true feelings for me.” It was better to know the truth so that if it was bad, you could heal and move on. It was not knowing that kept a person hanging on, waiting, hoping, and praying.

“Or you can just look at it as his punishment for cheating on you.”

She focused on Mr. Masters, his handsome looks, his enticing smile, the memory of his hand on her bottom and his touch bringing her to orgasm. “What do you get out of this?”

He held her gaze for three heartbeats. “After you punish him, I punish you while he watches.”

He managed to steal her breath. Here was the source of her confusion. How could the thought of Mr. Masters' punishment set her skin on fire, make her body burn? How could she have all these emotions about Mr. Masters and Van at the same time? There was something wrong with her.

But God, how she wanted to say yes. The thought of his next punishment consumed her, sending hot and cold flashes up and down her skin. The very degree of her desire was terrifying. It was vengeance and submission all rolled into one until she couldn't distinguish which she needed more.

“What do you say, Miss Beaumonde?”

Saying yes to Mr. Masters was, to use a tired cliché, like jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire. She was as likely to get burned in a bad way as she was in a good way. *Think, think.* She stalled her answer. “How will this affect our working relationship?”

“It will have only the effect you want it to have. I will treat you no differently at work; expect no more, no less. If you wish our little sessions in my office to discontinue, you won't make mistakes.” Then he smiled wickedly. “But if I keep finding the wrong folders on my desk, I'll know how badly you want it.”

Well, duh, of course he knew she'd done *that* on purpose.

Their working relationship had already crossed a line they couldn't rub out like chalk on a playground. If she did this, at least in the end, she'd know Van's feelings for her.

“All right.” She clasped her hands primly in her lap to hide the slight tremble. “I agree to your terms.”

She thought she heard him sigh.

“This weekend. Make arrangements with him for Saturday night at nine. I'll provide directions to my house. I want you to arrive an hour earlier to prepare.”

Her heart galloped. He was authoritative. A decision made, he acted. She was prone to thinking and rethinking. Right now she was thinking about what would happen in that hour before Van arrived.

Was she agreeing to this because of Van? Or was the ultimate reward the punishment Mr. Masters offered?

* * *

With a combination of both ire and embarrassment, her face had turned as red as her spanked bottom when she recited her boyfriend's misdeeds.

Yet her obvious emotional pain had gotten under Lincoln's skin. Her boyfriend was a complete ass for making her feel less than good enough. He deserved a pummeling. But that wouldn't do much to rebuild her. Lincoln had offered her the only solution he could come up with. To regain her sense of self-worth in the same way it had been stolen from her, by doing to her boyfriend the things that he'd denied her. And seeing for herself how much she could make the guy love it.

Lincoln had to admit his solution was also self-serving. The image of Natalie in tight leather working the dildo set his blood rushing. He wanted to give her that pleasure. He didn't peg her for the dominant type and doubted that her relationship with a submissive man could actually work. Her desire for dominance in this situation stemmed more from her hurt and betrayal. She wasn't quite a submissive either. People were not necessarily one or the other. There were gradations, and some were switches, enjoying the submissive or dominant role equally.

As for Natalie, he had the feeling she wouldn't even consider submission or dominance if she hadn't first seen her boyfriend in action, followed by Lincoln telling her to bend over the desk. Yet she had obeyed like a natural once she ascertained her job wasn't in jeopardy.

Lincoln, on the other hand, had always liked to be in control, but he hadn't realized his true desire for dominance until his late twenties when a lady friend had taken him to a club. He'd found it fascinating. Manacling her to a wall and having the freedom to do anything he wished had fueled his desire to heights never before achieved. Over months, they'd experimented. He took pleasure in a good spanking. He did not like flogging, whipping, drawing blood. He loved all manner of restraint, from scarves to manacles and spreader bars. And zip ties. He had to laugh. That had been a moment of genius.

As far as multiple partners, he enjoyed directing another to give pleasure while he watched. He choreographed and orchestrated. His submissives were generally female, though he'd been

known to dominate males in conjunction with their significant other. He'd found some women appreciated a little help domming their men.

He did not consider himself part of the so-called lifestyle because he didn't adhere to all the tenets. He liked what he liked and found that some in the lifestyle were far too rigid in their thinking. He made up his own rules as he went along. Which allowed him to change them as he had with his dear Miss Beaumonde.

He'd never married. He doubted he ever would. He was incapable of monogamy, and he didn't want his very own submissive. The women he'd met were marvelous sex partners, but he had to admit his own failing. He became bored easily.

Despite his odd benevolent emotions about her, he was sure the only reason he hadn't become bored with Natalie was that he'd prolonged his desire for more than a year. Wanting what you wouldn't allow yourself to have eradicated boredom and raised the hunger to an explosive intensity. He admitted to a heightened level of excitement contemplating how she'd handle her cheating man. She was like a diamond with multiple facets: the efficient no-nonsense executive assistant, the betrayed lover, the horrified prude, and the eager submissive. She'd surprised him today. He'd half expected her to make another mistake but only after days or even weeks of pondering, thinking, planning, until she'd driven herself mad with need. Instead, she'd planted an incorrect file the very next day and even hurried to the ladies' room to remove her panties.

There was so much more to Miss Natalie Beaumonde than he'd ever imagined. And he wanted to expose every facet.

* * *

After leaving Mr. Masters's office, Natalie called Van's cell phone. He didn't answer. She left a message. By the end of the day, he hadn't returned her call. She left work and headed to his apartment. He didn't answer her knock. It was Friday evening; he was probably out at one of his favorite haunts. She refused to troll bars looking for him.

What if he was inside with that woman doing those things?

The thoughts were debilitating, sapping her strength and her self-esteem. She was thirty and still attractive, smart and good at her job, sexy and...gosh, was she fun loving? Van liked fun loving.

Mr. Masters loved naughty. She'd certainly been that.

Rather than put her ear to the door listening for any sounds from inside, Natalie ran down the stairs and drove home.

She'd just inserted the key in her front door when the blood rushed out of her head, leaving her faint.

What would she tell Mr. Masters if Van never called back?

It chilled her that she was more worried about his reaction than what Van was doing with whom.

“Will you stop? You're making yourself crazy and guilty over a man who isn't worth it.” That definitely needed saying aloud. Natalie shoved her key home and opened the door.

Her computer sat on a small desk in the corner of her family room. She booted up, then closed the front blinds, slipped off her high heels, pulled off her blouse and skirt, and left it all in a heap on the floor. She'd pick up later. On the chair, her bottom was still tender enough to warrant notice. Deliciously so.

That was her problem. The things Mr. Masters made her feel. The offhand thoughts that struck her. The way his face popped into her mind, and she immediately wanted to touch herself. It was newness and infatuation as much as the power of the man himself. She didn't fool herself into thinking it was more or that he would ever feel anything significant for her. Yet when his name suddenly appeared in her inbox, her heart just wouldn't be controlled. Her palms perspired as she tapped the keyboard. No, she would not open his e-mail first. Instead she answered her mother who lived back in Chicago, her college roommate who was coming into town, and her best friend, Diana, who wanted to schedule dinner next Wednesday.

Then she clicked on *his* e-mail, and her heart slammed against her chest.

He provided directions to his home in unincorporated Los Gatos in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and reiterated that he wanted her there at eight. “I will dress you as I choose when you arrive.” The thought was ominous, terrifying, excruciatingly exciting.

She typed back two words. “Yes, sir.”

He sent back, “Good girl.”

Her body flushed that they were e-mailing in real time. Had he been waiting for her to arrive home? She resisted replying. She would e-mail again only if Van didn't call or said he wouldn't come.

What if she arrived at Mr. Masters's only to have Van never show?

Oh, how he would punish her. The idea immediately dampened her panties.

After pouring herself a glass of wine and preparing a plate of fruit, cheese, and crackers for dinner, she ran herself a bath. She was drifting in pleasant sensations and fantasies of her boss when her cell phone chirped. She'd laid it by the tub in case Van called.

“Hello?”

“Put your hand between your legs and stroke yourself.”

Chapter Five

Mr. Masters' deep tones were unmistakable.

Natalie's nipples swelled above the bubbles. "Yes, sir," she whispered, barely able to find her voice. Her pussy was creamy, her clit already beating with a pulse of its own.

"I want to hear you moan, Miss Beaumonde." He didn't ask where she was, what she was doing, who she was with. He simply demanded and that made his order all the more titillating, as if he expected her to do herself for him at a restaurant table or on a bar stool or in a darkened theater.

She writhed in the water, gasping, moaning. "Oh, Mr. Masters." She loved the formality of *Miss Beaumonde* and *Mr. Masters* contrasted with the naughtiness of what she was doing.

"Circle your clit with your index finger."

"Oh yes, yes, sir. Ooh." She circled and gave him more of the sounds he wanted.

"Slide two fingers inside, and tell me how tight you are, Miss Beaumonde."

"So very tight." She sighed. "And wet." She raised her hips above the water, seeing what he would see if he was standing in the corner watching her. "That feels so good, Mr. Masters."

"Now go back to that hard little delicious clit of yours." His voice deepened, caressing her nerve endings even as she stroked herself.

She panted. "Oh my." Heat spiraled down right to that spot.

"Pretend I'm licking you, Miss Beaumonde," he murmured, his voice husky.

She couldn't take much more. His voice, his words, the images and sensations. She moaned for him, long and low.

"How close are you, my dear?"

"Oh, oh, I'm almost there." She rubbed harder, her body moving sinuously, matching her hand's rhythm.

“Stop.”

She almost dropped the phone, and her eyes snapped open. She hadn't realized she'd closed them. “What?”

“You are not allowed to come until tomorrow night. And only when I finally give you permission. I want you to touch yourself every half hour until you go to bed tonight.” His voice over the phone was more potent than when she stood before him, commanding, demanding, seducing. “And you will touch yourself every half hour tomorrow, all day, even in the car as you drive to my home. But you will not climax. Do you understand, Miss Beaumonde?”

She was creamy, her breath a series of pants, her heart beating rapidly in her chest. She bit her lip, stifling a moan, her hand hovering just above her mound. She could do it. He'd never know.

And yet he read her mind. “I will know if you have disobeyed me, Miss Beaumonde.”

“Will you punish me?” she whispered, not even sure he could hear her.

“I will. But you won't like it. My punishment will be to deny you what you want.”

Oh God, in that moment, she wanted everything. His spanking, his kiss, the taste of his cum on her tongue, the feel of his cock in her mouth and buried high in pussy.

“Do as I say or suffer the consequences.” His voice thrummed deep inside her.

Her throat was parched, but she managed, “Yes, sir.”

“Good girl.”

Then there was dead air.

She would do exactly as he ordered. She would be mad by tomorrow evening, willing to do anything. Which, she was sure, was exactly what he intended.

But if she didn't have Van with her? Her greatest fear was that instead of punishing her deliciously, Mr. Masters would simply send her home. Well, she couldn't have that.

Natalie hit Van's speed dial again. She hadn't deleted the number yet. He still didn't answer. This time, she didn't care where he was. She left her own demanding message.

“If you want back in my good graces, you will be at this address at nine o'clock tomorrow night.” She rattled off Lincoln's address. Van could map it on the Internet. “Be prepared to let me do exactly what I saw you doing in your apartment.” She paused, thinking, calculating. “In fact,

you should be prepared to do anything I ask.” Her next pause was for ominous effect. “Absolutely *anything*.”

Punching the End button gave her a surge of power. He would be at her mercy.

And she would be at Mr. Masters's mercy.

Natalie could barely wait for tomorrow evening.

* * *

Thank God. Van had left a message while she was in the shower. Yes, he'd said in a fast, eager voice, he'd be there.

Mr. Masters had said he would dress her appropriately when she arrived, but Natalie still spent an hour trying on outfit after outfit. Her bedroom looked like a cyclone had blown through. She figured he'd put her in tight leather since she'd described Van's Mistress Divine's getup. She'd feel fat and unattractive, but she certainly wouldn't tell *him* that, dressing in whatever he chose like the good girl she was.

She wasn't usually messy, but she was so on edge, she couldn't think straight. Her pussy throbbed. In five more minutes, she had to lay down on that bed and touch herself again, bring herself right to the precipice without falling off. She was afraid her body would suddenly take over and do it on its own, she was that crazed.

The two calls from Lincoln today checking to make sure she was following instructions hadn't helped. Or, from another perspective, they'd done exactly what he'd intended, turned her into liquid fire.

In the end, she chose a camisole that bared her shoulders and a long skirt with a scalloped hem, nothing over-the-top, but something she considered too sexy for work. She complemented the ensemble with five-inch platform sandals. They were too tall for a date with Van, but perfect for Mr. Masters.

Dressing for a man was foreplay, something she'd never cottoned onto before. Her pussy was wet, her nipples hard, her clitoris throbbing. Okay, she'd been that way since last night, it just seemed *more* the closer the appointed hour became.

About to leave, she stopped, drew in a breath, then smiled to herself and lifted the skirt to remove her panties. Mr. Masters had liked that yesterday.

It struck her once she'd pulled onto the freeway that all her preparation had been with her boss in mind, not Van. She refused to feel guilty about it.

It was still light as she headed into the mountains, the scenery beautiful, the redwoods majestic. What she wouldn't give to live in a place like this rather than surrounded by concrete and mini-malls, but even with the credit crunch and the drop in housing prices, the homes up here were still over the million-dollar mark. She found his mailbox at the end of a long, winding downhill driveway. The vegetation was natural, not manicured. The house's footprint had simply been carved out of the forest, and painted a slate green, the home fit in like part of the landscape. A low-slung bungalow perched on the side of the mountain—it had been built on stilts—and the path to the front door was a wooden bridge over the sloping hillside.

Her hand trembled as she reached for the bell, her nerves kicking into high gear. She couldn't quite believe she was doing this. Yet she'd never considered canceling the deal.

He wore black jeans and a tight black T-shirt. She'd always admired him in suit and tie, but in casual black, the impact was devastating. She was glad for it, too, because he'd morphed from her boss Mr. Masters to hot, sexy Lincoln.

Her mouth dried up. Her body was a mass of tingles as if all her limbs had gone to sleep at once, coming back to life just looking at him. Like Sleeping Beauty receiving her kiss.

“Did you follow my instructions, touching but not coming?”

“Yes, sir.” She was so wet, she was afraid she'd left a mark on her skirt.

“Good girl.” He smiled, sweeping his hand in invitation. “Your wine,” he said, handing her a glass the moment her shoes hit the marble foyer.

He'd e-mailed about that, too, asking her preference. She'd said sweet and fruity. He'd also requested her shoe size.

“Sip.” He tapped the stem of her glass, taking her small purse from her hands and laying it on the front hall table.

Oh, the wine was good. Sweet, heady, cool, delicious. Just the way she knew *he* would taste. She didn't ask what it was. She knew she'd never be able to afford it. “I like it.”

He bowed slightly, accepting her praise, then stepped back to peruse her top and skirt. “I never knew you had such lickable shoulders, Miss Beaumonde.”

Her face flushed with his compliment.

“This way.” Taking her hand, he brought her down into the living room. His fingers warm and slightly rough, his touch ignited a flame in her belly. The front of the house had been deceptive in that it appeared to be all one level, yet the three steps down allowed for an eighteen-foot open-beamed ceiling and an amazing view through floor-to-ceiling windows.

She had an image of herself, hands on the glass, naked, spread-eagled, Mr. Masters taking her from behind. She almost sloshed her wine over the rim. “Your house is very nice.”

“I’m glad it meets with your approval.” Then he took her hand once more and led her down a hall. “The best is yet to come.” The corridor ended at a set of circular wrought-iron stairs. At the bottom, he swept out a hand. “Welcome to my dungeon.” The slightest trace of laughter laced his voice.

“Oh my.” She’d been expecting manacles attached to the walls, chains hanging from the ceiling, and all manner of sexual torture devices. This was more like a rumpus room. There were no windows, but the last of the day’s sunlight streamed in through a row of skylights above the outside wall. The room extended beyond the upper floor, an addition perhaps. *Of course*. Mr. Masters surely had the room built to his specifications. Dark wood paneled the walls with a flat TV hanging like a painting. Sofa and chairs surrounded a coffee table. Many of the furnishings had dual or dubious uses: a futon bed, a padded folding table like a masseuse would utilize, sturdy rings screwed into the hardwood floor, and two long ballet bars protruding from the wall, one waist level, the other reachable if she stretched her arms.

Her blood raced through her veins so loudly she couldn’t hear a thing.

Mr. Masters crooked his finger, signaling her to follow, and slid open a cabinet door to reveal various devices. Enthralled, Natalie drifted closer, setting her wineglass on the narrow table that stretched beneath the length of the cupboard. She perused the contents. One entire shelf was filled with dildos and vibrators, from glass to rubber to silicon and plastic, some with handles, suction cups, even dual heads. The size and variety boggled her mind. Handcuffs dangled from hooks. There were little leather straps and donut-shaped rings, metal rods with nylon cuffs attached to the ends, ropes, scarves, blindfolds, paddles, and so much more.

Her knees began to wobble.

“What would you like to use on your boyfriend?”

She jumped, squeaked, not realizing he was only a breath away. “Van. His name is Van,” she murmured.

“You will call him *slave*.”

She jerked her head to look at him. A light gleamed in his eyes; a naughty smile creased his lips. She felt herself drowning in his dark gaze.

“You must act the part, Miss Beaumonde, and choose your weapons appropriately.”

Lord. She was actually going to do this for him. Her skin heated, her breath quickened.

“You are not backing out now, Miss Beaumonde. I can't allow that.”

She gulped, swallowed. “I don't want to back out.” She'd come this far. She wanted what he offered. God help her, she *needed* it.

He smoothed a hand down her arm, leaving tingles and goose bumps in his wake. “Then let us choose your tools for the evening. You'll need a dildo.”

She laughed, feeling the slightest edge of hysteria in it. “There's too many to choose from.”

He laid a black silicon dual-headed toy in her hand. “How about this one?” His voice seduced her. His hand, wrapped around hers on the smaller dildo head, mesmerized her. “Does it feel good in your grip?”

“Yes,” she whispered, losing herself in his closeness.

He put his lips to her ear. “Can you fuck a man with it?”

She gasped, a thrill shooting straight to her center, whether from his breath against her ear or the image his words evoked, she couldn't say. “Yes.”

“Good.” He set the dildo on the long-legged table beneath the cabinet, and she realized it was there as some sort of staging area. Then he pulled down a leather ring with snaps. “Cock ring. We don't want him coming until we're ready.”

Oh God, *she* was ready, so ready, her pulse a furious rush, her heart a fast beat, her pussy drenched and needy.

He held up one of the bars with the cuffs attached. “Shall we use a spreader bar to force his legs apart?”

We. She loved the way that sounded. “Yes.” Then she realized he was doing all the choosing. She pried loose a large cock with a suction cup. “Will this stick to the padding?” she asked, pointing to the masseuse's table folded against the wall.

He smiled with a wicked glint. “There's a metal edge at one end. So you want him up high?”

“I want to stand.” To be able to walk around Van, view him from every angle, to maximize his submission and humiliation. Oh yeah, she could really get into this.

Mr. Masters held up a blindfold. “Rob him of sight?”

Natalie felt her own wicked smile grow. “No. I want him to see everything that's being done to him.”

He stroked her cheek. “That's my girl,” he murmured.

And again, his look and touch stole her breath.

“Time to dress you.” He stepped back. “Take off your clothes.”

A wave of anxiety washed through her. “In front of you?”

He shook his head slowly as if to a silly child. “Yes. In front of me. Take it all off. Every last stitch.”

She trembled under his gaze. Swallowing hurt. He'd bared her butt and pussy. It was completely different from *every last stitch*.

“Miss Beaumonde,” was all he said.

She slipped out of her platform sandals, feeling petite next to him without the extra height. Grabbing the hem of her camisole, she pulled it over her head, her hair falling around her shoulders.

“Very nice,” he murmured, one side of his mouth crooked appreciatively.

Her skin warmed. Her breasts didn't make her self-conscious, but she had the worst to go, her tummy. She hated it. Pursing her lips, she pulled the skirt's tie and pushed the waistband over her hips. Letting it fall, she stepped out of the material pooled at her feet and held her breath.

“Holy fuck.” His voice dripped with awe. “Look at me.”

She didn't realize she'd closed her eyes until she heard his words. When she met his gaze, her pulse raced. His dark eyes were somehow gentler, tracing her curves, from throat to breasts, then over her rounded belly and trimmed mound.

“You're a goddess, Miss Beaumonde.”

Her hands went automatically to her stomach. “Thank you.” She wasn't used to compliments, didn't know quite how to react. Or if he even meant it.

Moving in on her, he covered her hand, his pinkie grazing her skin. Slipping his other hand beneath the fall of hair at her nape, he brought his lips to her temple. “The scent of your arousal is like perfume.”

He had such a way with words. She didn't even care if this was something he'd said and done a million times.

“Touch yourself for me. Now.”

So close, he heated her through, made her burn, compelled her. Trailing her hand down her belly, she tipped her head to look at him. His gaze intent, focused, his nostrils flared, he watched her fingers delve into the cleft of her pussy.

“Oh what you do to me,” he whispered against her skin. “How wet are you?”

She opened her mouth, found her throat parched, and swallowed. It wasn't so much her own touch as his voice in thrall. Of her. “Very wet,” she told him.

“You smell sweet and hot and spicy.” He raised her hand to his nose, closed his eyes, drew in her scent, the act so sensual, a rush of moisture coated her pussy. “I remember how sweet you taste,” he said, almost to himself. Then sucked her finger—the one she'd touched herself with—into his mouth.

He groaned, a sound so erotic she felt it go to her head like a long sip of sweet wine.

He tipped her chin, meeting her gaze. “I don't believe I can let this night end without fucking you, Miss Beaumonde.”

She shivered, her heart fluttering.

“Are you going to be all right with that?”

All right? The way he made her feel inside and out, his touch, his male scent, his compliments, she was torn in two, wanting it all so badly she couldn't breathe, yet remembering Van and why this night was happening in the first place.

“Mr. Masters—”

He put a finger to her lips. “The choice will always be yours. But you need to know what you do to me.” He laid her hand over his cock. His very hard, very large cock.

Using her palm, he rubbed himself, pressing her close. “That's for you, Miss Beaumonde. That's how badly I want you. I've imagined you in my bed for a long, long time.”

No man had ever made her feel this way. She'd always been the efficient Miss Beaumonde, good at her job. Even she hadn't known how badly she needed to be a beautiful, desirable woman as well. Not until she'd seen Van at Mistress Divine's mercy, then Mr. Masters had taken his hand to her fanny.

She was in danger of giving him anything he wanted.

Chapter Six

The things this young woman did to him couldn't be defined or explained. His need was simply there, undeniable, be it that he'd craved her for a year or because her vulnerability appealed to him or that he had a desire to cast the shadows from her gaze and show her what a sexy creature she was.

Reasons were unnecessary. She made his heart race, bringing to life every sense; the world was brighter, more focused, intense. He wanted her pleasure completely.

Lincoln pushed a wall panel and a hidden closet door popped open. He withdrew the selections he'd purchased earlier in the day and placed her folded skirt and top on the bureau tucked inside the cubby.

He turned to find Natalie once again covering herself with her hands. Ineffectually of course. He had no clue how she could be unaware of her allure. But then, in his experience, most women, no matter how close to perfection, always managed to find some flaw. If he did nothing else tonight, he would prove to her how utterly gorgeous and desirable she was.

"This is what you will wear." He laid out the pleated skirt and plain white blouse on the sofa, then the undergarments, and finally the shoes and socks.

She stood at attention, feet together, eyes wide, a slight lift to her lips. "A schoolgirl uniform?"

"A little roleplay seemed in order. The schoolgirl being debauched by the headmaster." All yesterday afternoon in his office, he'd played with the image. Shopping for her today, he'd perused leather and bustiers, tight shorts that would barely cover her butt cheeks, lacy lingerie, and sexy evening wear. In the end, the schoolgirl still appealed most to his mood.

She shook her head at him. "Naughty, naughty Mr. Masters." She threw his own words back at him, and he was sure the last of her nerves melted away with her smile.

He waggled his eyebrows. "I'm a dirty old man."

He'd envisioned her dressed like that when he'd called last night. Lying on his bed, he'd stroked his cock to the sound of her voice and the images in his head. The resulting orgasm took the edge off. He hadn't wanted to be so jacked with desire for her that he missed a single nuance of her pleasure. Now he couldn't wait to see her wearing his purchases.

"First the panties."

She stepped into them. Her skin glowed against the plain white cotton, the high cut accentuating the womanly flare of her hips.

"Now the bra." He held out the sturdy cotton lingerie, the only adornment, a small pink flower between the cups. "Turn around, I'll put it on."

He allowed himself a close brush of his cock along the crease of her ass as he slid the straps up her arms. She smelled of gardenia, subtle enough to be lotion or soap rather than perfume. The back clasp done, he dropped a kiss on the delicate skin between her neck and shoulder, her hair caressing his cheek.

He hadn't kissed her lips or licked her nipples. He hadn't sipped the sweet nectar straight from her pussy or buried his cock deep in her. Yet he'd dreamed of these things. She'd given him a wide-eyed, shell-shocked gaze when he verbally staked his claim, the word *no* rising to her lips before he stalled it. The truth was in the scent of her arousal drifting in the air, the peak of her nipples.

"The blouse," he said, taking one more breath of her to fill his head.

She slipped it on, buttoned to the top, then stepped into the short black pleated skirt, zipping it up at the side.

"Socks and shoes."

She sat on the couch, turning over the tops of the bobby socks, then lacing the black-and-white saddle shoes.

Holding out his hand, he helped her to stand once again. "Oh yeah, you are fucking hot, Miss Beaumonde."

Playing her part, she giggled like a little girl. "Are you a dirty pervert playing with little girls?"

People assumed that if you played the role, you craved the reality. He didn't have a thing for children. He had a thing for Natalie Beaumonde. "I'm most certainly a dirty pervert." He pulled her close, lowered his voice, used it to seduce and tantalize. "I'm dying to see the innocent Natalie debauched, doing things she's never dreamed of because I've ordered her to do them. Dirty, nasty, filthy things that will make you so hot, you'll beg me to fuck you."

She trembled, drawing in a shaky breath, her eyelids drooping. Sexy, dreamy, hot as Hades.

They were in the bowels of his home, yet the jingle of the front doorbell drifted down the stairwell.

Natalie jerked, swallowed, stared at him.

"It's time, Miss Beaumonde."

* * *

Good Lord. She was trembling. Mr. Masters had gone upstairs to answer the door. She'd managed to forget all about Van, the supposed reason she was here. How could she have agreed to this? She was stark raving mad.

But she felt oh so *damn* sexy in her schoolgirl uniform. And so in control. Van had actually done what she'd told him to, driven over forty-five minutes to a house deep in the woods, no questions asked. Was it possible he'd been telling the truth, that he'd do anything to get her back, that the woman truly had been some sort of sex therapist or surrogate?

Hah, and she was a gullible fool. Better to keep her anger up and her wits about her.

With their footsteps on the metal stairs, Natalie's skin began to prickle. She grabbed her forgotten wine from the table where it was surrounded by all the sex toys she'd chosen and slugged back a swallow to wet her throat.

Mr. Masters appeared first. When Van came off the last stair right behind him, Mr. Masters' height and toned body almost eclipsed him. Maybe he sensed the same thing because he stepped around the bigger man.

"Your guest has arrived, Miss Beaumonde."

Several inches shorter, slighter in build, next to Mr. Masters in black T-shirt and jeans, Van appeared unkempt with baggy corduroys, wrinkled shirt, and long hair. He glanced at Mr.

Masters, then Natalie, a question in his gaze. Whatever he'd expected, it certainly wasn't a man like Mr. Masters.

"What's up, Nat?" he asked, taking in her schoolgirl guise, from white blouse to saddle shoes, with a slight sneer.

He was giving her attitude. With Mr. Masters looking on, she couldn't allow Van to take control. She was on top now. "For tonight you are my slave, and you will call me—" She glanced at Mr. Masters standing two feet beyond Van. He mouthed the word she needed. "You will call me Mistress. And you will refer to my friend as Master." She widened her stance and put her hands to her hips. "You don't need to know how I met him or who he is or where he's from. You only need to know that he is here to help me administer the punishment you so richly deserve. Do you understand?"

Van's eyes widened, his nostrils flared like a stallion ready to rear, yet he didn't say a word as his gaze flicked between them, his eyes finally settling on Natalie. After another moment's thought, he smiled slightly and gave her what she wanted. "Yes, Mistress."

"Good boy." It had taken him long enough to decide, considering he had supposedly submissive needs. Her distrust welled up again. She tamped it down with an extraordinary act, snapping her fingers at Mr. Masters. "Put out the table," she demanded, pointing to the folding massage table.

Mr. Masters blinked slowly, then grinned and did as she ordered. God, it felt marvelous. Her body vibrated with power. Two men jumping to do her bidding. She knew Mr. Masters would make her pay later, but for now, she didn't care.

"Don't push it," he whispered as he passed her, his aftershave blowing by.

But she knew he liked her take-charge attitude, at least as far as it was directed at Van.

When the table was in place to her liking in the center of the room, she turned once more to Van. "You will ask no questions. You will not meet your Mistress's eyes or those of your Master." This was kinda fun. She thought up some more instructions. "If you do not immediately execute my request, you will be punished. If you make any comment or sound I do not like, you will be punished. If you give me attitude, you will be punished. However"—she tipped her head, scrutinizing him—"if there is something you truly do not wish to do, you will say..." Okay, there

was always a safe word, right? “You will say, 'Mistress, may I please disobey?' In which case, I will stop. But you will still be punished. Am I clear?”

His Adam's apple bobbed, yet there was a hot flame in his blue eyes she'd never seen before. “Yes, Mistress.”

“You are, however,” she went on, “allowed to say that you like something I'm either doing or asking you to do.”

“Thank you, Mistress.” She sensed enthusiasm in his quick answer.

Would he utter those sounds he'd given his dominatrix? Inately, Natalie wished he'd shaved. After gazing at Mr. Masters clean-shaven face up close and personal, she no longer cared for the perpetual two-day stubble.

Sensing his warmth behind her, she wanted to turn and give Mr. Masters a meaningful look. Had she detailed it all correctly? But the very act of eliciting his approval negated some of her power. This was *her* show.

Lifting her arm straight out, she snapped her fingers at Van. “Get naked. Now.” She didn't need a sensual striptease.

Van hopped to, popping off a button in his haste. His bare chest didn't have the power of Mr. Masters' broad pecs. Kicking off his leather sandals, Van shoved his cords over his hips without even unzipping all the way. She preferred tightly fitted over the hanging-off-the-rear look. His boxers came off along with everything else.

Then he stood naked before them. Natalie sucked in a breath. He was hard. *Lord*, was he hard. Stiff, straight up, rising out of a trimmed bush of blond pubic curls. Somehow, he seemed larger, thicker than she remembered. Or perhaps he was more excited than ever before. At least with her. Her stomach turned over. It was both disheartening and exhilarating—the former because she'd never affected him that way, the latter because she had a huge effect on him now.

“Turn around. Face the wall. I want to see your ass.” She liked the word. It was naughtier than any other euphemism.

Mr. Masters heated her back as he stepped up flush against her while she considered Van's rear view. “Contemplating what you're going to do to that ass, my dear?”

“Yes.” Every time he was close, her body reacted. A tingle ran up her spine, her skin warmed.

Van tensed his shoulder blades, flexed his butt muscles, hardened his thighs, giving her a show. She remembered the toy he'd been sucking, a big cock suctioned to the headboard. Maybe the show wasn't just for her. Perhaps Van's *needs* included a little help from Mr. Masters.

She rubbed against his chest, tipped her head back slightly to look at him. "What shall we do to him, Lincoln?" she said softly yet loud enough for Van's ears. She'd always mentioned him as Mr. Masters to Van, never Lincoln. Van wouldn't know he was her boss.

Mr. Masters raised a brow at her use of his name, then his lips quirked. "First, he needs the cock ring." His eyes darkened as he gazed at her. "We don't want him coming until we give him permission."

God, she really did love the *we* part. Her body seemed to liquefy, and her breath caught in her throat all over again. She ordered him to do the unthinkable. "You put it on him, Lincoln," using his name the way he loved to use hers, over and over for effect and impact.

Before her, Van went utterly still, every muscle tensed, and she was more than half convinced it was desire rather than fear.

His face close to hers, Mr. Masters shook his head, a lift to only one corner of his mouth. Then he put his lips to her ear and spoke for her alone. "Oh you do so want me to punish you later, don't you, Miss Beaumonde." It was *not* a question.

She wanted to push him. Everything about this night had become about him, not Van. But before she let that fact tear her up again, she pointed to the countertop beneath the cabinet where he'd laid the toys and tools they'd chosen. "The leather snap-on, I think."

"Christ," he murmured, again just for her, "how I will love making you pay."

Natalie trembled as he crossed the room. She left Van facing the wall, unable to see them, but closed the distance until she was less than a foot from his naked body.

She had to admit that while he was lean and lanky, shorter and less bulky than Mr. Masters, he still had a nice physique, firm, strong. At one time she'd loved the feel of his skin, the hardness of his muscles. Was it her anger and sense of betrayal that killed her physical desire for him?

Or was it all about Mr. Masters?

She was so in danger of putting too much stock in what Mr. Masters could give her. Because he hadn't really offered her anything beyond tonight.

Monday, he could decide to fire her.

Chapter Seven

No, not *Mr. Masters*. Lincoln. She would call him by his first name for tonight, not just aloud but in her mind as well. She would not think of him as her boss, she would not think about Monday or her job. There was only tonight.

He returned with the simple leather strap they'd picked out. "Hold his cock, Miss Beaumonde."

Natalie put one hand to Van's butt cheek and wrapped her fingers around the crown of his cock, holding him aloft. *Oh my God, yes, he was hard*. She knew the feel of his erection intimately, and this was more than ever before.

It wasn't *just* the woman he'd been with. Perhaps Van wanted other things, things he truly was afraid to admit to Natalie.

Wrapping the leather around the base of Van's cock, Mr. Masters—Lincoln, dammit—fastened the snaps. His fingers brushed her hand, a glint in his gaze when he met hers that made her tremble. The act was completed with an economy of motion, yet Van's cock swelled, his balls plumped, and a groan passed through his lips. God, Natalie felt the same reaction in her female erogenous zones. Her face flamed as Lincoln backed off to admire his handiwork.

"He can't come until you release him, my dear."

Lincoln gave her all the control, all the power, just as he'd promised her yesterday in his office. It was simply...exhilarating.

Natalie stepped fully into the game they played, running her finger up the crease of Van's ass and along his spine. He shuddered, gritted his teeth, but just as she'd instructed earlier, he kept his gaze down. She couldn't quite tell if it was centered on the front of Lincoln's jeans.

And Lincoln was hard. But then he'd been that way since he'd had her remove her clothes.

She cupped Van's butt and squeezed. "I'm going to put you on your hands and knees, Van, cuff you, restrain you, spread your legs." Blowing against his ear, she lowered her voice. "Then I'm going to fuck your ass."

She'd used it rarely, but now she loved the word. *Fuck*. It was naughty, nasty, and exactly what she wanted. A week ago, she'd never have guessed she could enjoy these things. Lincoln had opened a whole new and exciting world to her.

This time Van's groan rose from deep in his belly, his legs shook, his buttocks tensed; then he managed to say, "Yes, Mistress, please. I would love that."

She'd said he couldn't ask questions, but he could give her compliments. His moan, his words, and his body's reactions were the highest of tributes. More than he'd given her in their vanilla sex life.

"Good boy," she whispered, because he deserved the reward for the here and now, not punishment for past transgressions. "Now get on the table." She patted the top.

He climbed agilely and assumed the position she'd described, hands and knees, feet spread, eyes on the table. His cock hung down, engorged, the crown purple with need, his testicles bulging.

Standing close behind her, Lincoln caressed her spine from nape to butt, so very *there*. His light touch kept her on edge just as she'd been every half hour since last night.

"What now, my dear? Direct me to the device you'd like next."

A breathless smile rose helplessly to her lips. "Take off your shirt and bring me the spreader bar."

"Whatever your heart desires," he murmured, his voice a sultry, sexy stroke along her nerve endings. Then he stepped back and to the side so she could see him fully. Pulling his T-shirt from the waistband of his jeans, he yanked it over his head and tossed it in one smooth motion.

Oh my Lord. The blood rushed to her head. Lincoln Masters had the most magnificent torso, defined muscles, flat nipples, a smattering of dark hair arrowing down his abdomen to disappear beneath his jeans.

Van's sharp intake of breath matched hers.

Lincoln didn't preen. He held her gaze, slid a hand down his skin to the bulge of his cock. "Shall I take off my jeans?"

She managed a shaky laugh. "I think you better not. Just get the spreader bar."

He reached out to tip her chin, forcing her to meet his gaze. "Remember what I told you earlier."

She knew exactly what he meant. He wanted to end the evening by fucking her. In front of Van?

She glanced at her ex-boyfriend. Eyes on the padded table, he appeared the picture of the perfect submissive. She'd never told Van he was now her *ex*. She'd gotten him here by saying that he could regain her good graces. She wasn't sure that was even possible now.

She pulled from Lincoln's grip. "Van, look at me."

He raised his gaze, his eyes intensely blue. She paused, two quick beats of her heart. "Your Master wants to fuck me after I'm done fucking you."

"Yes, Mistress."

She didn't know what that gaze meant, couldn't read the blazing expression in his eyes. "What did I tell you to say if you didn't want me to do something?"

"Mistress, may I please disobey?" he repeated.

At the time, she'd been referring to an act performed on him, yet the wording still applied. "Do you wish to use that phrase regarding your Master fucking me?"

He didn't even wait the two beats that she had. "No, Mistress."

It shouldn't shock her. She had him up on a table, his cock harnessed, legs spread ready to receive whatever she wished to dish out, another man at her side to help her administer his punishment. She was so much further out on a limb than she'd ever stepped in her life.

Two things were crystal clear. Her boss wanted to fuck her and her boyfriend wanted to watch.

* * *

Lincoln read her thoughts, the doubt written in the tense lines of her body and her unfocused gaze. If the boy—yes, he was definitely a boy—was okay with Lincoln fucking her, then he didn't truly love or want her.

Maybe that was true, but it wasn't necessarily a given. What she hadn't learned yet was that some men and women were entirely different from others. For them, sex and love didn't have the same link. Sex and emotion didn't have to be only between one man and one woman. Sex came in all forms; he'd damn near tried just about all of them he could think of. That distinction allowed a man to get off watching his ladylove pleased by another. It would, Lincoln imagined, be one of the hottest acts a man could participate in.

To his regret, that was something he'd never personally been involved in. Once out of his twenties, when he'd learned to let himself go, he'd never experienced love.

This young man was too much of a boy to realize what he had. Lincoln felt compelled to show him.

"Give me your hand, Natalie." Lincoln held out his, palm up.

Natalie's gaze rose from his chest to his mouth as if she were trying to lip read, before dropping to his outstretched hand.

Finally she slid her fingers into his, and he was stunned for a moment at how *right* her touch felt. Then he gently directed her to her knees in front of Van.

"You have not yet kissed your mistress or gloried in her taste. Beg her for a taste."

The two stared at him as if he'd lost his mind. Lincoln stroked Natalie's cheek. "I want to see him drink from your lips." He snapped his fingers at the boy. "Do as I say, slave."

There was a second's hesitation and a flash in his eyes, as if Van saw a threat he couldn't quite define. Then his gaze settled on Natalie's mouth. "Please, Mistress, may I kiss you?"

"You can do better than that, slave," Lincoln admonished. The boy may have fantasies of being a submissive, but he wasn't good at it.

Van's lips lifted. "Mistress, I will die if you don't grant me a taste of your mouth."

"That's better, slave."

Natalie swallowed, her gaze on Lincoln a moment too short for him to interpret. Then she nodded to Van. "All right, slave. I will grant you one kiss."

Hah. Lincoln smiled. Natalie definitely understood the game.

Van leaned down to cup her nape, bringing her closer. She stretched to meet him.

Lincoln's heart beat faster in his chest as her lips parted automatically and her lids fell, eyelashes dark and full against her skin. He had yet to kiss, to taste, to feast on her mouth for long, lush minutes. Watching whet his appetite. Their lips touched, a hint of her tongue, a sound sharp and sweet with longing. Lincoln couldn't be sure who made it. Ah yes, there was something to be said for watching. It allowed him to savor her beauty. Then Van opened fully and devoured her, a deep taking of her mouth, wet and sloppy in Lincoln's opinion, yet she sighed. Standing over them, her scent rose to his nostrils, the perfume of arousal. Hot, sweet, sensual, intoxicating. She wasn't the schoolgirl he'd dressed her as. She was a woman ripe for fucking. Lincoln was sure the boy had never kissed her like that. What a waste.

Shoving his fingers through Van's hair, he pulled the kid's head back. "Enough. Master's turn."

He helped Natalie to her feet. Her pink lipstick was nearly gone, one last smudge at the corner of her mouth. Lincoln licked it off. Ah, God, how the brief contact made his heart race. He cupped her throat in his hand, his fingers along her jaw, and held her for his kiss, touching her nowhere else.

The first taste was laced with mint toothpaste that could have been a lingering hint of Van. Then it was all her. Christ. She was sweet like the wine he'd given her, her lips soft and moist from the boy's kiss, her breath already quickened. He took her lips, her mouth, her tongue as if she were a battle prize. Grabbing his biceps, she rose on her toes, her breasts to his chest, her moan soundless, vibrating inside him close to his heart.

When he set her down, she gasped for breath, the last of her lipstick gone, and her lips a lush, voluptuous red. He turned just his head to look at Van. "That's how you kiss a woman, slave."

"Yes, Master." Van's eyes flashed.

Lincoln slid his fingers down her arm, his other hand a tad shaky with the aftereffect of her kiss. "The spreader bar, my dear?"

She nodded, her gaze slightly dazed.

"Good, I want to see you truss him up like a pig ready to roast."

That made her laugh, restored her equilibrium. He liked that he'd stolen it from her for a moment. She touched one of the rings on the side of the table by Van's left hand. "And two sets of handcuffs."

Van groaned with anticipation.

"As you wish, my sweet." Lincoln returned to her side with the requested implements. For women, he preferred fur lined. For men, straight leather restraints with buckles.

"We'll do his hands first." She fumbled with the two buckles on the left hand, but her tongue peeped out as she found her rhythm on Van's right.

Lincoln watched the boy watch her. There was a newness, a light in his gaze, as if he were actually appreciating her for the first time.

She stood back to admire her handiwork, smiled to herself. "Perfect." Then she just as quickly looked at Lincoln for verification.

She'd never needed that in the office. At least not until the last week.

Instead of answering, he held up the spreader bar, manacles attached, raised one brow, and grinned wickedly.

She gripped it in both hands, arms out straight, eyeing Van from head to bare ass. "This will fit perfectly, slave," she told him, trailing his side, a manacle sweeping along his spine, then down the crack of his ass until she stood behind him.

Lincoln followed, came up close behind her. The kid's hard cock and bulging testicles hung between his legs like a stallion. His backside was hairless and smooth.

"Spread his legs," Lincoln murmured, caressing her with his voice, his breath, his body so close to hers, and his fingers down both her arms.

She knocked the kid's feet out, and he adjusted his knees, his cock dangling closer to the padded table. Laying the bar between his ankles, she fastened one manacle, then the other. "I hope you have keys for these."

Lincoln laughed. "Maybe I'll let the slave have the key in the morning." He slapped Van's ass, leaving a handprint. "*If* he's a very good boy and pleases you."

Between his legs, the boy's cock jerked.

“Ooh,” Natalie said. “He likes that.” She flipped her hair over her shoulder and looked back at Lincoln. “We’re going to need the paddle too.”

He jumped to, enjoying that she improvised.

“And bring the dildo.”

Grabbing both dildo and suction cock, plus the paddle and a bottle of lube, he turned to find her trailing a hand along the young man’s side, moving to the front once more. Van’s skin rippled and shivered beneath her touch.

Natalie took each offering from his hand, setting them one at a time between Van’s cuffed hands as Lincoln laid the paddle on the table beneath the kid’s belly.

“A dildo for your ass.” She tipped Van’s chin, forcing his gaze to hers. “Do you want the small end or the big one?”

“The big one, Mistress, but please be careful with my ass.” His voice trembled, more from excitement than fear.

She glared at him. “Do not presume to tell me what to do. I asked you a question and I expect only one answer.”

He gulped, then a moan rose from his throat. “The big one, please, Mistress.”

“That’s better.” She forced his head down again.

Oh, she was a quick study.

Picking up the fat rubber cock, she suctioned it to the center of the narrow metal shelf running along the front of the table. “Can you reach that, slave?” Again, she forced Van’s head down. “Open your mouth.” He obeyed and the cock slid between his lips. “Good boy,” she whispered.

Lincoln felt the effect of her voice along his own cock.

“Not too much fun, yet, naughty slave,” she quipped as Van sucked on the fake cock. She pulled him up by his hair.

The kid licked his lips as if he’d tasted real cum, then smiled. Hell, this was becoming fun.

Lincoln wrapped his arm around Natalie’s waist and hauled her up against his body, his cock riding the base of her spine. Leaning his chin on her shoulder, he closed his eyes and drew in a breath, steeping himself in her scent. “So, slave, do you think your mistress is wet?”

Van grinned and wagged his head. "Oh yeah, Master."

"I think we should find out, don't you?"

The kid's eyes gleamed. "Definitely, Master."

Natalie squeaked as Lincoln bunched the pleated skirt, raising it to the top of her white panties. "Like that, slave?"

Van nodded his head, his tongue out like a panting dog.

Nudging a knee between her legs, Lincoln slipped a hand beneath the elastic waistband, tunneling down to her pussy. Natalie squirmed. His cock pulsed, greedily wanting more. Then he slid between her delicate lips, grazed her clit, and drew a finger up inside her.

Sighing, her head fell back on his shoulder, eyes open to gaze at Van's reaction. Lincoln shoved his other hand inside the soft white cotton, rubbing her clit. She moved with his stroke. The kid watched every jerk and twist of her body.

Lincoln withdrew one hand, the other still working her clit, and shoved his finger in the kid's mouth. "Taste her."

Van sucked on his finger like it was a cock. Groaned. Tasting her sweet juice mingled with the salt of male skin.

"Oh God." Beneath Lincoln's hand, Natalie trembled and moaned, her backside cupping his cock. "Oh my God." Her voice rose, then her thighs clamped around his hand, and she came hard.

Lincoln closed his eyes, savoring the feel of her skin and every buck of her body as she collapsed against him. Holding Natalie Beaumonde in his arms as she climaxed was the closest to heaven he'd ever been.

Chapter Eight

“Did you like watching your mistress come?” Lincoln's deep voice rumbled against her back. If he hadn't been holding her, Natalie would have fallen.

“Fuckin' A, Master. It was so fucking hot. And she tasted so sweet on your finger.”

Along with Lincoln's touch, Van's words melted her. He'd never talked that way before. If he'd fed her all along like that, would she have been so demoralized by the dominatrix?

It almost didn't matter. Surrounded by Lincoln's scent, his warmth, feeling his desire at her back, Van's words were just the icing whereas Lincoln was the whole cake.

“Fuck him, baby. I need to watch you.” Lincoln murmured the words into her hair, with Van close enough to hear.

Van's nostrils twitched, his eyes blazed a deep flame blue, and muscles rippled along his body. He was like an animal poised and ready. But she wanted to fuck him because Lincoln needed it. Even as she had the thought, Lincoln ran his hand down her arm, leaned their bodies forward as one, and closed her fingers around the black dildo she'd chosen.

“Big end,” he directed.

She allowed herself a delicious shiver, his body caressing her from shoulders to rump, his cock pulsing with a life of its own against the bottom of her spine.

Then she tipped Van's chin with the crown of the big cock. “Prepare to be fucked like you've never been fucked before, slave.” There, that was power. He gulped, then nodded eagerly.

This was new, exciting. Especially with Lincoln as her partner.

She left his warmth for Van's backside. “I have to admit he has an amazing ass,” she said conversationally.

Lincoln laughed. She'd thought he would have taken a seat on the sofa for the show, but instead, he once again stood right behind her, his hand beneath the fall of hair at her shoulder.

"I've never done this before," she whispered, this time for his ears only.

He laid his cheek against the side of her head. "Use lube. Go slowly. You'll be perfect." Reaching around her, he held the bottle aloft, letting lube pour down the crack of Van's ass.

"Ooh, Mistress," Van cooed. "That feels so good."

He'd never been so vocal with her. Gripping the dildo's small end, she spread his cheeks, his ass beckoning her. *Well, here goes.* She ran the fat end back and forth against his hole, coating it in lube.

Van moaned and pushed against the silicon tip. "Oh Mistress, yes."

"He wants it." Lincoln ran both hands up beneath her skirt, caressing her flanks. "Give it to him, baby."

She wanted to close her eyes and relish the endearment. Instead, she gave both men what they wanted and penetrated Van's ass. The head slipped in with a little pop, and Van groaned, going down on his elbows to push his butt higher for her.

"Do you like this, slave?"

"Yes, yes, Mistress. I love it. Fuck me."

She followed Lincoln's instructions, pushing slowly, backing out, going only a tiny bit deeper with the next glide.

"So perfect, baby." Lincoln praised her.

She didn't know which she loved more, the power of taking a man or Lincoln's voice at her ear. She pumped a little harder, a little deeper, a little faster, and a collective moan seemed to fill the room. Under her skirt, Lincoln eased his fingers along the edge of her panties, slowly, inexorably pulling them over her hips. Van pushed back and took the dildo halfway. Natalie's panties stuck to her damp pussy before pulling away as Lincoln slid them all the way down her legs. It was the most erotic, exotic sensation as he lifted one foot then the other to remove the lingerie, all as she fucked Van. Only a couple of inches were left before the black cock would fill him completely. He rocked and moaned. Lincoln's hand stroked down the crease of her butt. He kicked her legs wider, entering her pussy from behind with two fingers.

Oh my Lord. Natalie gritted her teeth. "That is so good."

"Yes, yes, oh Mistress, you fuck me so good."

Did it matter that Van couldn't see what Lincoln was doing? She rocked her bottom in time with her hand. And the dildo went deep, all the way.

"Ahhh." Van no longer had words. Just sounds. Just moves.

"Stroke his cock at the same time," Lincoln ordered.

Natalie reached between Van's legs, her fingers slippery from the lube, and jerked Van's impossibly hard cock in her hand as Lincoln's touch turned her mindless.

"Oh God," she cried, her pussy contracting. "I'm going to come again."

And Lincoln withdrew. She almost shrieked. Then his voice at her ear, "Not yet, baby. The last orgasm took the edge off. Now I'm going to build you back up, over and over before I let you come again."

Just as he had all night and all day by making her play with herself without coming. She'd forgotten she wasn't supposed to do so without his permission. But then he'd forced that climax out of her. That was permission in itself.

Besides, there was something else she was supposed to make Van do. Her mind seemed a little fogged. Oh yeah, he was supposed to suck the rubber cock.

But she wanted to be able to see. She was as ambidextrous as the dominatrix, and she did just exactly what she'd seen that lady doing, holding the dildo while moving to Van's side without missing a beat.

"Oh God...oh God...Mistress, please let me come."

Natalie liked the begging. But that required punishment. At least, she decided it did. "Lincoln, he's not supposed to ask for anything. Paddle his ass."

Lincoln swatted hers once as he passed. Her heart soared. She loved it all. The games, the attention, the sexy banter, the sex itself.

The echo of a solid paddle whack on Van's butt cheek filled the room. Between the paddle and the dildo Natalie pumped, Van groaned, shuddered, bowed his head, then whispered reverently, "Oh Master." He didn't beg for another swat, but they both knew he wanted it.

Natalie eyed Lincoln, gave him a slight nod. His eyes darkened and the corners of his mouth tipped up. He stroked her hand, touching her fingers where she gripped the toy. It was

those little caresses he gave her over and over that set her heart racing. Then he administered another whack that rippled through Van's butt and halfway up his back.

"Oh God." Van moaned. "You can't know how good this is. How perfect. Mistress, I adore you. Thank you so much for this exquisite punishment for my transgressions."

Van's words trapped her breath in her chest. How she'd needed to hear that tone in his voice, his wild sounds. Natalie wanted the game to go on and on. "We're not done yet, slave."

She pushed her fingers through his long hair, forcing his head down. "Suck that cock, slave. I want to see if you can do it as well as I can."

"Oh Mistress, you are so perfect at sucking cock." Then Van devoured the toy suctioned in front of him.

Natalie wasn't so sure about his praise. He'd never said it before, he'd never groaned and moaned the way he had tonight. He usually shoved her away before he came, rolled her under his body, and took her. Sometimes she didn't even have an orgasm.

She knew in her heart that until tonight, she'd never fully satisfied him. And he'd never fully satisfied her.

As if he could read her mind, or the hurt showed on her face, Lincoln slapped the paddle hard against Van's ass, the sound reverberating through room, eliciting another moan.

Natalie turned her face to Lincoln.

He wanted to punch the kid's lights out. Her pretty eyes had suddenly gone bleak, the green washed out of them. Instead of feeling good for her, Van's compliment reminded her of all the times she hadn't been good enough.

He stilled her hand, grabbed her chin. "I'll go fucking crazy if you don't suck my cock right now."

She stared, as if she couldn't quite comprehend.

"I want him to see how a real woman sucks cock, how she takes care of her man."

She sighed, her eyelids drooped seductively, and she smiled for him, even if it was slight. "Yes, Lincoln."

His heart flipped over. “Undo him.” He pointed to the buckles at Van's hands. She relinquished the dildo, and Lincoln held it in place while Van squirmed, trying to take it deep again. Oh yeah, he was going to make the little worm wriggle.

When the kid's hands were free, Lincoln barked the next order. “Sit up and hold this dildo in your ass while I undo the manacles.”

“Why are you undoing his feet?” Natalie wanted to know.

“You'll see.”

The kid rocked back on his haunches, holding the dildo, working it gently to keep himself on edge. Lincoln undid the spreader bar and set it aside. “Get in the middle of the room, slave, on your knees. Do not remove the dildo and do not take off the cock ring.”

Van climbed down, going once again to his haunches, heels to his ass, the dildo secured deftly between his feet as he rocked on it. His cock stood high, his balls tight. Lincoln had used the leather cock ring's loosest snap, but it shouldn't be left on overly long. They had time, though.

He shoved the table against the wall, toed off his shoes, then stood facing Van. “Undress me, Natalie.”

She licked her lips, met his gaze, and he was sure she didn't understand what he intended. Lincoln didn't care. His skin buzzed, his blood burned, and his cock was so damn hard and aching, he wanted to bury himself deep inside her. He'd start with her mouth. He'd start with a lesson for the kid on how to show a woman she was desirable.

Yet her fingers at his waist, brushing his cock, were almost his undoing. Closing his eyes, he tipped his head back, gritted his teeth and groaned. “Christ, baby, you make me crazy.”

There was only the sound of his zipper and harsh breathing—his, the kid's, and her soft sigh. Shoving his jeans over his hips, she gasped, and he was man enough to appreciate the awe in her voice. Then she pushed everything down his legs, her breath fanning his cock, making it jump in anticipation. Just as he had helped her step out of her panties, she raised first one of his feet, then the other, freeing him of his clothes and his restraint.

He looked then, at her, gorgeous on her knees, head tipped back to meet his gaze, at her ex-boyfriend, gently rocking his ass on the dildo. The need to touch overcame him, and Lincoln buried his hands in Natalie's hair. “Take off your blouse and bra, but leave the skirt.”

She followed his instructions, revealing skin pink-tinged with desire and nipples peaked and suckable. She was so beautiful in supplication before him.

Then he narrowed his eyes at Van. "Tell your mistress you need to learn how to suck cock from her because your skills are not worthy."

Something flickered in the kid's eyes. Fear, a little. He most assuredly could read the ire in Lincoln's gaze. Jealousy, yeah. Van hadn't figured out what their relationship was yet, didn't know Natalie worked for him. Didn't understand that Lincoln was her master.

Lincoln was about to show him everything.

He beat Van into submission with nothing more than a look and the boy's own nasty desires.

Van did the perfect downcast gaze. "Mistress, I beg you to suck the master's cock. Please show me how perfect you are, teach me. I will be eternally grateful to you, Mistress. Please, I beg." He glanced at Lincoln for approval.

Lincoln nodded, then stroked his fingers back through Natalie's silky hair, holding her gaze. "I'm begging, too, baby," he whispered. "Please, suck me."

She bit her lip, then let out a sweet sigh. "Oh yes, Lincoln. I would love to."

He'd vanquished her, too, yet, in a way he'd think about later, she was his conqueror.

Chapter Nine

Gazing up at him, Natalie wrapped her fingers around his shaft and squeezed.

“Aw, Christ.” Lincoln moaned.

A drop of precum eased from his slit, and Natalie swiped it up with her tongue. “Oh, you don't know how much I've wanted to taste you,” she whispered for him.

He glanced at Van. The kid's eyes flared. He didn't like his woman loving another man's cum so much. Yet he kept working that cock in his ass, his body rising, falling, legs straining to keep that steady rhythm.

Lincoln eased Natalie's head down. “Suck me, baby, God, please suck me.” He didn't give a fuck if he was begging. She needed a man to beg for her.

Her lips slid down over his crown, and she allowed him to glide all the way in, down to her hand fisted at his base.

“Shit, woman, your mouth is fucking heaven.” He needed Natalie to know. He wanted Van to hear.

She pulled hard on the slide back up, then surrounded his tip with her lips and suctioned hard, working him. His head, both of them, damn near wanted to explode. She caressed the slit with her tongue.

“Fuck, fuck, that's so fucking good.” Breath hissed through his teeth. They weren't just words; they were emotions wrenched from deep within him.

He put his head back, flexed his ass, and pumped, savoring the silk of her mouth. He'd known his share of amazing cocksuckers, but Natalie was more. She was special. What she lacked in technique, if anything, she made up for in worship. Groaning, moaning as she licked and sucked, it was as if his cock were the best she'd ever tasted. When she must have figured she'd teased the head enough, she slid down again, deep throating him for one brief, heavenly moment, then backing off.

“God, yes, baby, you're the best I've ever had.”

Van made a noise, a snort, of disbelief or defiance. That kid was pushing it.

She took possession of his crown again, her tongue teasing just beneath the ridge. Then she glided her fingers up his shaft, using the moisture from her lips to stroke him hard and fast just below the tip.

“God, you're such a sweet girl.” He closed his eyes, savoring her touch. How could she know to stroke exactly that way? Every man had subtle differences in his likes and dislikes. Every man had one special spot that made him crazy. She had found his.

“You're so fucking perfect,” he whispered. He never said things he didn't mean, and Christ, the words came from gut-deep. He trailed his fingers through her hair, the feel of it as erotic as her mouth on him.

He allowed his groans and sighs to well up, sounds to punctuate the words. The noises Van had made for the dominatrix, Natalie craved them. Lincoln's pleasure echoed off the walls of his dungeon.

“Natalie, you should squeeze his balls. He'll love that.”

Lincoln opened his eyes and stared Van down. *What the fuck?* “Do not dare instruct your mistress on how to suck me.”

His command came too late. The kid had already spoiled Natalie's moment. She'd gone still, and his cock slipped from her lips. *Fuck.*

The kid dropped his chin to his chest in a form of supplication Lincoln was sure he didn't mean. “I'm so sorry, Master. I just wanted to help.”

The little asswipe was indeed jealous, trying to manipulate and undermine Natalie's sexual self-confidence.

“So you think you can do better, is that it, slave?”

Van shook his head. “No, Master, I would never presume that.”

Lincoln tipped Natalie's chin up, his cock bobbing close, leaving a tiny smear of cum on her skin. Like a brand, the glisten of it delighted him.

“I believe our little asshole slave is issuing a challenge, baby. What do you think I should do?”

She scanned his face, flitting from one eye to the other as if she would see something different in each one.

“Shall we prove who the more delicious cocksucker is, my sweet?” He let a smile grow on his face. “I’m pretty fucking sure I know who will win.” He stroked a finger along her jaw, ending at the drop of cum he’d branded her with. “I need you to be sure too.”

He’d made a man suck his cock before. It was part of submission: who was master, who was slave. He used the method to demonstrate his dominance. One could always tell whether a male submissive was looking for it too. And Van was.

But more, Lincoln needed Natalie to meet the challenge, to prove to herself that she was better than the boy who had ill-treated her.

She gazed up at him, her eyes a deep green. “You’d do that for me?”

“This whole night is for you, baby.” He didn’t give a fuck if Van heard that, didn’t give a damn what the asswipe thought about it. He cared only for what Natalie needed.

She closed her eyes, breathing deeply. Lincoln stroked her cheek, her jaw.

Natalie could swear she’d never felt a more gentle, caring caress before in her life. Opening her eyes, she trailed her hands down his thighs, gripping the hard muscle. He had the most beautiful, long, thick hard cock she’d ever taken in her mouth. She hadn’t had a plethora of lovers, but Lincoln was far above most men. She’d known and admired him for so long. The last three days had only made her emotions stronger. He was like no other. The way he crooned to her as she sucked, feeding her with words and sounds that filled her to the brim. And offering to let another man suck his cock to prove she was better at it. That was the oddest show of one-upmanship she’d ever heard, yet it made perfect sense tonight.

His taste was ambrosia, the way he’d touched her with such reverence and the sounds he made nipping at her heartstrings. He had catered to her needs, and now he wanted to slam down Van just for her.

“Yes, please, I want this.” She turned her face into his hand, kissing his palm. “We need to see if our little slave can prove he’s good enough for you.” She glanced at Van, smiled devilishly. “We’ll see what he’s made of.” She admired the strength of her own voice.

Playing mistress to Van gave her power, but playing lover to Lincoln gave her self-esteem.

“He'll never compare.” Lincoln bent to take her lips in the sweetest of kisses, short though it was. Then he stepped in front of Van, snapped his fingers, and demanded, “Suck me, you fucking little slut.”

And Van took him, a fire blazing in his eyes. Natalie was sure he'd wanted this all along, maneuvered it.

For a moment, she couldn't breathe, the sight actually closing off her throat. She'd never imagined two men could look so beautiful together, and she knew it was all about Lincoln, his perfect form, hard muscles, strong thighs, thick calves, but mostly the magnificence of his cock. She wanted to touch, stroke, put her hand to the firm globe of his ass and squeeze, bite, own his body. His cock sliding between Van's lips was hard, sleek flesh. She loved his taste still lingering on her tongue. Her mouth watered for more. This was the beauty Van had seen watching her take Lincoln's cock in her mouth, the reason he'd become jealous.

Two men, together, it should have horrified her. A week ago, it would have. Yet this was such an oddly masculine sight. This was Mr. Masters, a man fully in his prime, dominating a mere puppy. A master shoving his cock deep into his submissive's willing mouth. No force or coercion or edge of violence, but powerful just the same.

Finally, Natalie couldn't resist a touch. Shifting closer, she trailed two fingers down the crease of Lincoln's buttocks. “How is he?” she asked softly, mesmerized by the flow of hard, wet flesh.

“Nowhere near as good as you, baby.” Lincoln stroked her hair. She loved the way he touched her, soft caresses. They could almost be nonsexual, yet they heated her.

At Lincoln's negation, Van sucked harder, took his cock deeper, his cheeks concave with suction.

“You know, Van,” she said, sounding casual, “your master likes it better if you suck on the head and stroke right below the ridge at the same time.” She raised one brow. “Would you like me to show you?”

His mouth full, Van merely grunted, glowering at her.

She felt deliciously wicked, bold, and bitchy. It was wonderful, bringing her into the tableau instead of being just a voyeur.

Following the line of Lincoln's butt, she dipped down to the sensitive stretch of tissue between his ass and balls, rolling her finger over it. He groaned, the first sound of pure pleasure he'd uttered since Van had goaded him. "Oh yeah, baby. That's so damn good." He made it all about her touch instead of Van's mouth. "You're fucking outstanding."

She reached between them to cup his testicles, gently palpating them.

"Christ, yes. Baby, your hand is so smooth and soft."

Realizing he was losing control of his master, Van finally heeded her advice, backing off to suck the tip of Lincoln's cock, massaging just beneath the crown with fingers and thumb.

Lincoln tucked her hair behind her ear. "At least he can follow instructions," he drawled; then his voice softened. "Don't stop stroking, baby. It makes up for what he's not capable of."

Oh, they were bad. Perhaps this was the humiliation part of BDSM she'd read about. Van's nostrils flared, but he didn't stop sucking.

She brought her lips next to his ear and whispered, "Run your tongue around the ridge. He *loves* that."

She squeezed and stroked Lincoln's balls. He groaned, and Natalie went on with her whispered instructions. She'd sucked him briefly, yet learned so much from his precious sounds.

"You're a very good teacher, baby. He's actually improving under your tutelage." Lincoln gazed down at her, dropped his voice to seduction level. "You know me so well, fucking better than anyone."

Van tensed, getting the impression Lincoln wanted to impart, that the two of them had been lovers for a long time.

She pushed Van's chest, widening the space between them everywhere but mouth to cock. Leaning in, she held Lincoln's sac close for a long swipe of her tongue, then sucked him into her mouth, licking the smoothly shaven skin. He smelled of fresh soap and clean sweat.

"Oh fuck, Christ." He fisted his fingers in her hair. "God, that's too fucking good, baby, oh baby." She thrilled to every word, every groan, every sound welling up from his throat. He panted, his breath harsh and needy.

She circled his perineum, pushed the sensitive spot harder, all the while sucking and licking his testicles. His legs began to shake, trembling against her shoulder.

“Oh sweet Jesus, baby, you're making me crazy.” He ended with a guttural “Fuck.”

With Van's chest pressed to her arm, his heart thumped fast and hard against her muscle. The moans he made in his throat as he sucked vibrated through her. The bob of his body on the dildo caressed her breasts. It was all so incomprehensibly and utterly erotic. The throaty noises so close to her ear, Lincoln's cock in his mouth, the swish of Van's lips and the motion of his fingers, the taste of salty male perspiration on her tongue, it was near to driving her mad. She wanted more, more, and more, any and every tantalizing act Lincoln would give her.

Then he shoved Van back, holding him away with the grip of white-knuckled fingers in his hair, breath harsh and fast. Gazing down at Natalie, Lincoln's eyes were deep, dark, hypnotic.

“I told you this night wouldn't end before I fucked you.” Releasing Van, he grabbed her chin. “And I'm going to fuck you now in front of the slave. Tell me how badly you need it.”

Her heart swelled, straining against her chest. “Yes, please, I need it now.”

His gaze blazed with dark heat. “*How* badly?”

“I'll die if I don't have you.” In that moment, every word was sacred.

Lost in her emotions of desire and need, Van just seemed superfluous then, the lines of his face tight and strained.

Lincoln grabbed a condom from the open cabinet. His cock hard, throbbing, she had no doubt it was for her alone, and nothing to do with Van. Going to his knees before her, Lincoln tore the package and rolled on the condom in one fluid movement.

Then he lifted her skirt, gazed at her neatly trimmed mound. “God, you're so pretty.” His tone was so awed, reverent, he touched her heart once again with his words.

She couldn't help glancing at Van. His eyes down in submission, she couldn't be sure whether he was masking his thoughts or playing his role.

“Straddle me,” Lincoln said, pulling her thigh up.

She rose above him. Gathering her skirt in his hands, he wrapped it back over her hips, revealing her completely as he held her butt in his firm grip. Then, for a long moment, he was utterly still but for a vein pulsing in his cock.

“Look at me,” he whispered.

She met his eyes and couldn't begin to fathom his thoughts. She wanted to see too much, a tenderness, emotion beyond lust. God help her, she wanted it for more than just this night.

"Take me, baby."

His words reached all the way to her throat. Something prickled in her eyes. She blinked it away, then settled her hands on his shoulders, and drew her other leg over him. His cock rose between her thighs, his heat arcing straight to her pussy. Her body was wet, needy, and yet she was terrified that this was one step she couldn't recover from. His thighs bunched as he lifted slightly to nudge her opening. With his hands on her ass, he pulled her down to meet him.

His whispered, "Fuck me, baby" was like music, elemental with so much honesty in it.

She took him inside her, just his crown, and oh God, he felt so good. Big, thick, stretching her. She dug her nails into his shoulders.

He thrust slowly with the rise and fall of his thighs, going deeper with each pump.

"You're so tight and hot and wet." He groaned for her. "So fucking good on my cock."

She moaned and began to ride, matching his rhythm until she felt him slide high and deep inside her, touching a part of her Van had never even been close to.

"Baby, how you fuck me." His breath caught. "Jesus, you fit like no one ever has."

Closing her eyes, she let her head fall back. If this was a dream, she couldn't let it fade. He held her still for a series of short, fast, hard pumps with his powerful thighs, his cock riding right over her sensitive G-spot. Then he slowed, the friction so intense, she squeezed her eyes shut and moaned. She'd thought the vibrator had taken her to new territory, introducing new sensations, a G-spot orgasm from the inside out. Yet it was nothing compared to the feel of Lincoln's flesh and blood buried deep within her body, his voice caressing her.

He made her feel more than she'd ever hoped for. "Oh God, Lincoln, what are you doing to me?"

The rough hair of his thighs rubbed her bottom. His salty scent clouded her mind, fingers pressing into her flesh, controlling her, driving her higher.

Then his voice rumbled, "Hold her skirt."

Startled, she snapped her eyes open when Van's hand touched her hip, pulling her skirt high. Lincoln's fingers dropped to her pussy. "You're so sweet and wet, baby." He thumbed her clitoris.

Natalie met Van's gaze. "Yeah, baby, fuck him." Not mistress, not Natalie, but *baby*, in the same sweet tone Lincoln had used.

As if it were permission she'd been waiting for, Natalie let go. And the man she gave herself to was Lincoln.

Chapter Ten

Sucking in her bottom lip, Natalie moaned, and tensed her pussy to draw him deeper inside where she needed him.

“That's it, baby, take me.” Lincoln circled her clit, making her burn.

Van added his groans to the erotic mix. “Fuck, that's hot. I never knew it could be like this, Natalie. Fuck him, baby, fuck him hard. Make him yours.”

Lincoln hitched her closer, his hand between them, heart beating against her breasts. He moaned into her hair as he thrust harder, deeper. “Sweet Jesus, Natalie, make me come.”

He pulsed inside her. She cried out as his finger's fast circle on the outside sent shivers all the way to her toes, then crashing right back to her core.

Lincoln's breath puffed at her ear. “So good, baby, so good.” It was almost a religious chant.

“Fuck him, Nat,” Van urged. “Fuck him like he's never been fucked before.”

Between the two of them, she felt enveloped in desire and need. Her whole body shuddered, forcing a gasp from her lips. “Oh God.” Something white-hot built inside her. “Please, please, please, Lincoln, oh my God.”

Van's fingers dug into her butt, the pain as sensual as the pleasure, and she realized in some faraway part of her that this feeling was what Van had searched for with his dominatrix. This overwhelming sensation that was as much emotional and mental as it was physical.

The white heat deep inside seemed to burst, spreading through her like wildfire. She dug her thumbs against Lincoln's collarbone, riding the last few laps hard and fast, crying out as her body trembled beyond her control. Lincoln wrapped his arm tight around her, squeezing the breath from her lungs as the hot pulse of his climax shuddered through him. Holding him equally as tight, his groans resonated in her chest, and she could almost feel the rush of blood in his veins.

“God, Nat, the cock ring, please.”

Her body still throbbing, she opened her eyes to Van's contorted face, his body rising and falling to the dildo in his ass.

“Let him come,” Lincoln whispered.

She yanked the snaps of the leather cock ring they'd made him wear. He shouted, the spurt of his cum involuntary, landing hot against her thigh, dripping down her leg, and Van collapsed in a ball next to them.

Lincoln pulled her face into his neck. Licking the salt from his skin, she breathed in the delicious scent of his sweat. Then he lifted her chin to take her mouth in a long, drugging kiss as his cock spasmed inside her with aftershock.

“God, Natalie. Jesus.” Lincoln held her so tightly, her body became almost one with his. Her heart felt close to bursting.

He'd given her a taste of something more than she'd ever had in her life. She prayed she could have this again.

* * *

Lincoln wanted to beg her to stay. He needed time to make her understand how extraordinary and unbelievable the moment had been. He'd never felt anything like it, the orgasm deep inside her, as if their flesh were fused, as if no condom separated them and he'd filled her being with his essence.

If it was that way for him, he could only imagine her emotions were ten times greater. More than ten years older than her, he was experienced, jaded with the ways of the world. The things he looked for in a relationship with a woman, they weren't what normal people wanted. She was young. She needed marriage and babies and the white picket fence in the suburbs. He'd never been a white-picket-fence man. Hell, he wasn't even a relationship guy in the regular sense of the word. He'd dressed her in schoolgirl clothes so he could debauch her, yet instead of pulling her down, she raised him up to a level he'd never experienced before.

For the first time he actually regretted the kind of man he was. But he also knew exactly *what* he was, and that wasn't good enough for her.

So he pulled out, feeling the loss deep inside, and helped her stand. Her skin was soft, her scent sweet. Rolling off the condom, he tossed it in the trash.

He wouldn't be able to dispose of the lingering emotions as easily.

Yet he could not keep her. He would hurt her in the end. He should never have touched her that day in his office.

Her eyes were a bit glazed, so he tapped her elbow and pointed. "You should change. I laid your clothes in the closet."

She stared at him, then finally swallowed. "Oh. Yes. Okay. Thank you."

There was so much more she wanted to say, he was sure, things she wanted to ask. Yet with his words, he'd shut her down.

Then he saw the kid's cum dripping down her leg. *Shit*. Grabbing a towel from the lower shelf of the wall table, he bent to clean up the mess. She rested her fingers on his head to steady herself. With one hand on her opposite thigh, he wiped, and a need blossomed, to kiss her skin, lick her clean, steep himself in her scent so he would never forget. The desire was so intense, he ached with it. But he'd taken from her all he could and still live with himself.

Anything more would be like making a promise, giving her hope. A woman like her, sweet, ingenuous, unworldly, would have emotions after that cataclysmic coming together. She would harbor expectations and desires that he could never fulfill.

So Lincoln finished cleaning her and tossed the towel beside the trash to pick up later. He couldn't, however, help slipping his hand beneath the fall of her silky hair. "You okay?"

She nodded, smiled gently, and he was sure she was still a little dazed.

He wanted to kiss her deeply, take her lips one last time, but he allowed himself only a peck on her forehead. Then he swatted her ass. "I folded your skirt so it wouldn't crease."

She headed to the closet. Lincoln kicked Van's foot. "Time to get your ass up."

Van rolled to his back, kneaded his eyes, opened them. "Man. That was fucking hot."

"Yeah." Lincoln's blood sizzled. There was something about the kid that rubbed him raw. Van had watched the girl he'd hurt have amazing sex with another man, and he was neither jealous nor solicitous. For whatever odd reason, he'd come round at the end, getting into the act,

giving Natalie the attention she deserved, yet it wasn't enough to satisfy Lincoln. The young man had so much to make up for.

“Get dressed.” He had no compunction about ordering Van to put his clothes on. He wanted the guy gone.

Lincoln grabbed his own jeans and shirt, concentrating on straightening himself so that his gaze didn't wander to her.

Monday would come all too quickly. This was why he had rules about not playing with business associates. It fucked up working relationships. But for the first time, he was the one who didn't want to let go. He could call Natalie into his office morning, noon, and night, every season of the year.

But that wouldn't be good for her.

He rose after tying his laces. Looking at him, waiting for something, Natalie slipped into her platform sandals. It was too awkward for words.

Lincoln wasn't used to fucking up, but he'd sure as hell done it this time. He'd called Van an asshole, but he had to admit he was so much worse than the kid.

* * *

Behind her, the door closed, then she heard the snick of the deadbolt. He'd thrown her out. Lincoln had cleaned Van's cum off her leg, sent her off to the corner like a naughty child to dress in the clothes she'd arrived in, then hustled her and Van up the stairs and out. Just like that.

Natalie's chest was so tight, her breath seemed caught in her lungs. She'd barely remembered her purse on the hall table. What had she done wrong?

“You're in love with him, aren't you?”

It hurt to even look at Van. He represented part shame, part anger, part hopelessness. She crossed the wooden bridge to the driveway. It felt like walking the plank. Van's MINI Cooper sat next to her car, and he was right on her tail.

“I don't want to talk about it,” she said, fishing for her keys in her little bag. The temperature had dropped in the mountains, and her shoulders, bared by the camisole top, chilled her entire body.

He touched her elbow. "When you left me that voice mail, I couldn't decide whether I was turned on, pissed off, or jealous as hell."

Natalie squared her shoulders, then turned on him. "You cheated on me because you had needs I couldn't fulfill. I wasn't good enough for you."

He jumped in. "I didn't mean it like that, Natalie."

Lips pressed together, she held up a finger, waiting until he closed his mouth. "Maybe you didn't, but you didn't trust me to honor who you were. That's the truth."

Van bowed his head. "You're right. I was afraid to tell you." He slowly raised his eyes to hers. "But when I saw you with him tonight, how you accepted him exactly the way he was, letting me suck his cock without freaking out..."

He raised a hand as if he meant to touch her, but dropped it when she flinched. "First I was pissed as hell at the two of you, like you'd invited me to visit a club I could never join. Like you were just out to torture me or make me pay." His honesty was almost brutal. "I couldn't figure out what was going on between you and it made me crazy. But then I got into you fucking me with the dildo, and the game, it was all really hot and exciting. Until you sucked his cock..." He paused, tipped his head back a moment. "I saw how badly he wanted you. His feelings were written all over his face. There was such power and emotion flowing between the two of you that I wanted to smash something, I was so jealous."

He'd misread Lincoln's signals. The flow of emotion was one way only, from her to Lincoln. He desired her, yes, but desire wasn't a lasting emotion.

"I needed to hurt you, crush you. Then somewhere along the way," he went on, nodding his head as if confirming his thoughts to himself, "yeah, when you sucked him with me, I realized how stupid I'd been. You would have accepted me, too, the way you accepted him, if I'd only had the courage to tell you."

She hadn't thought of it that way. Acceptance. But Van had it backward. "I was the one searching for your acceptance, Van. I wanted to please you, make you desire me. The way you were with that woman, you were never like that with me."

But Lincoln was. Every time he touched her, even to spank her, his desire washed over her, brought her to life. It just wasn't enough to make him want her to stay.

“I fucked up, Natalie. And I need to get back into your good graces.” He caressed her cheek, and she let him. “Isn't that how you put it in your message?”

She believed him. About everything. In Lincoln's dungeon, she'd learned how thrilling all those naughty acts could be. She understood how Van could grow to crave them. She knew herself, too, why he would have feared telling her. “I don't hate you anymore, Van. I'm not angry with you. You're back in my good graces.” She squeezed his hand. “But not like before.”

Lincoln had touched her, and there was no going back. Despite how the night had ended, regardless of how much it hurt as Lincoln closed his door on her, she couldn't go back to Van. What she'd felt for him had been so mild in comparison.

Van raised the back of her hand to his lips. “Friends, then, Natalie?”

He didn't seem terribly hurt or broken up. She didn't want that, anyway. “Yeah. Friends.”

He winked. “If you two need a third for a playdate sometime, it would be fucking hot.”

The words hit her like a wrestler's body slam. She didn't have that kind of future with Lincoln. She wasn't even sure how she'd face work on Monday after what they'd done tonight.

“Natalie.”

Van's voice brought her back. He held her hand in both of his. “He's in love with you too, Nat.”

She laughed, then covered her mouth. Not once had Van asked who Lincoln was, how long she'd known him, or what they were to each other. So he couldn't truly interpret what he'd seen in Lincoln's playroom. “Lincoln is my boss, Van. Mr. Masters.”

Van's jaw dropped. He pointed back at the house. “*That* is Mr. Masters?”

“What you saw was part of a punishment he's been doling out because I've been distracted and making a lot of mistakes since...” She shrugged, pursed her lips. “Since I found you with your sex therapist.”

Van cupped her cheek. “Poor, poor Natalie. It doesn't matter that he's your boss. I saw what he felt every time he touched you.”

“Please don't try to build me up, Van.” That would only make it worse. “What we did was a onetime thing only. He just did it for me because...” She couldn't explain anymore, couldn't

say how she'd sat in Mr. Masters' office pouring her heart out about what a bastard Van was. Her boss simply felt sorry for her. "I have to go."

Van didn't release her hand. "Promise you'll think about what I said. Talk to him. Don't let him slip through your fingers the way I did with you. Don't give up."

He was wrong. Lincoln—Mr. Masters—had said it all when he shut the door on her, but she'd promise Van anything if it meant getting out of there. "I won't give up." Then, because she wasn't sure she'd see him again despite saying they'd be friends, she kissed him on the cheek.

She didn't allow herself to cry until he'd disappeared from the rearview mirror as she drove away.

Chapter Eleven

Sunday night, after her head ached from too many tears, Natalie finally decided what she had to do.

Monday morning, dry-eyed, she went in an hour early before anyone else had arrived. E-mail or memo?

A memo was more official. She'd leave it on his desk. He could give it to Human Resources. Booting up her computer and opening a memo template, she typed his name after *To* and hers after *From*, subject, *Resignation*. Effective immediately. He wouldn't have any trouble getting one of the girls from HR to fill in temporarily. In this economy, she ran the risk of being unable to find another job, especially if he refused to provide a reference because she hadn't given him two weeks' notice. Yet the mental anguish of seeing him every day for the next two weeks while her heart broke into teeny tiny pieces was worse than joining the ranks of the unemployed.

She wasn't sure she'd even make it through the next hour. The moment he walked in the door, she'd probably start bawling like a baby, and he'd be embarrassed, and she'd be mortified on top of being devastated, so instead she printed out the resignation memo.

Using her key to his office, she unlocked the door and padded across the carpet to lay the memo in the center of his desk where he couldn't miss it.

In the midst of her self-inflicted misery—or was that self-pity—she allowed herself a spark of anger. Dammit. It really wasn't fair. He'd started it, making her bend over his desk for that first spanking. He'd suggested she punish Van. As for everything else, it had *all* been his idea.

“I don't believe I can let this night end without fucking you.” His declaration had seemed so heartfelt.

“I'll go fucking crazy if you don't suck my cock right now.” She was the one who'd gone crazy hearing those words, willing to do anything for him, giving her all.

Natalie stared at her resignation.

She hadn't done a thing wrong except fall for a man who had no feelings. She deserved better.

Gosh, she should let him fire her—which he surely would do after throwing her out of his house—so she could apply for unemployment. At least that was fair since he'd made the first move. She would *not* be such a wimp.

Natalie snatched up her resignation.

At her desk she retyped with an effective date two weeks hence. She'd be strong. She'd wait for him to call her into his office and tell her he was letting her go. If he didn't, at the end of the day, after he'd gone home, she'd leave the resignation on his desk. *Then* she'd figure out how to get through the next two weeks.

But *why* had he treated her that way? She'd done everything right on Saturday night. When he was buried deep inside her, she could have sworn he felt *something* for her. The way he looked at her, the sounds he made, the words he uttered; how could he have been faking all that?

Van's words echoed in the empty room as if he were standing right beside her.

"He's in love with you too."

That couldn't be true. Yet she stared at her resignation memo.

"Don't let him slip through your fingers the way I did with you."

She'd let Van slip away. Seeing him with that woman, she'd cut and run. She wouldn't answer his calls, listen to his messages, or read his e-mails. If not for the fact that he had a key to her house, she'd never have spoken to him again.

She'd cut him out of her life because she was too demoralized to hear what he had to say.

Now she was cutting Lincoln out. She'd interpreted his actions, decided he didn't want her, and had no intention of confronting him.

What if she'd made the wrong interpretation?

Just as she had with Van, she was giving up Lincoln without a fight.

The truth was blazingly clear. She rolled over instead of standing up for herself. In everything. When she'd walked into Van's apartment, she'd allowed him to destroy her faith in

herself with what she saw. She *allowed* it. Instead of fighting back, she'd let Lincoln rebuild her self-esteem for her. You couldn't lose your confidence if you actually owned it.

Dammit, she would take responsibility for her self-worth. She would fight for what she wanted.

Natalie shredded the second memo and typed a new one.

* * *

Natalie was seated at her desk like always. Lincoln half expected her absence, an e-mail from her in his inbox.

She smiled—again like always. “Your messages are on your desk.”

“Thank you.”

Shit. She was willing to overlook his behavior Saturday night, the callous way in which he'd ended the evening. He'd been telling himself it was for her own good, he wasn't the right sort for her, but the least he could have done was explained. He felt like a total schmuck. And despite it all, he still wanted to take her into his office and bend her over his desk.

“I also left you a memo,” she said as he was almost through the door.

His heart rolled over in his chest, and he knew without a doubt it was her resignation.

He was always in control, always the master of his domain, ruling his emotions and his employees. Until Natalie Beaumonde forgot to tell him a lunch date had been cancelled.

His life had gone to hell. Well, it had gone to heaven first, then straight to hell.

Maybe if he promised never to touch her again. But if she stayed, he'd never be able to keep that promise. Which had been his dilemma the remainder of the weekend. Find her another job so his sanity could return or keep her and make himself crazy?

He didn't have a choice. He'd wronged her. The choice to stay or go was hers. Obviously, she'd made it. He'd find something for her, a good position. Jesus, that made him remember her on her knees with his cock in her mouth, such an excellent position. If she didn't want his help, then he'd make sure he gave her an excellent reference. Oh man, could he give her a reference.

He rounded his desk, set his briefcase on the floor, turned on his computer, picked up his pile of pink message slips, set them down...and finally looked at her resignation.

He tipped his head like a befuddled dog.

The subject line read: "Natalie Beaumonde's Resignations." Not singular, but plural.

Below, she'd typed several bullet points.

- 1. I, Natalie Beaumonde, resign myself to making as many on-the-job mistakes as possible.*
- 2. I resign myself to accepting Mr. Masters' punishments for these mistakes as he sees fit.*
- 3. I resign myself to the severity of the punishment fitting the severity of the mistake.*
These punishments shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Spanking by Mr. Masters with hand or paddle (but not too hard).*
 - b. Submitting to nefarious sexual acts to include but not be limited to dressing in schoolgirl clothes to be debauched by Mr. Masters, getting on my knees to suck Mr. Masters's cock, letting Mr. Masters restrain my hands and wrists and/or blindfold me, asking Mr. Masters to cuff me to the ballet bars in his dungeon and do naughty things to me, begging Mr. Masters to take me from behind (or in any position he chooses) on his office desk, and performing any other naughty act I've forgotten to mention, such as the use of various interesting toys.*
 - c. Considering threesomes and foursomes, with right of refusal if:*
 - I. The man is gross or*
 - II. I'm jealous of the woman.*

I do not resign myself to:

- 1. Hiding my emotions from Mr. Masters, as I have very strong emotions about him.*
- 2. Allowing Mr. Masters to kick me out of his house or my job or his life without a by-your-leave or at least a decent explanation.*

Please sign and date by the X if you agree to these conditions of continuing employment.

Christ. She'd missed fondling, touching, and caressing in her bullet points. He simply wanted to kiss her until he couldn't see straight.

Lincoln closed his eyes. He wasn't an old man too set in his ways to consider a new way. He wasn't a dog reacting on instinct. He could change. He'd considered boredom to be his downfall, yet he realized now that his downfall was never feeling *this* for any woman: desire, respect, need, admiration, and a host of overwhelming emotions he couldn't even define. While he enjoyed good sex, it was his feelings for Natalie that had turned what they shared Saturday night into making love. How the hell could he let her go?

She was too fucking special.

Despite the fact that his door was still open and he could call for her, he pushed his intercom button and said as sternly as possible, "Miss Beaumonde, in my office. Now." He paused. "And close the door behind you."

Then Lincoln signed on the bottom line.

* * *

Her heart lodged in her throat. She might have set herself up for the biggest slam of her life. He could fire her. Worse, he could politely say he wasn't interested.

But if she didn't take the risk, she'd never know.

Mr. Masters stood beside his desk, hands on his hips spreading his suit jacket, legs apart, eyes narrowed, lips a grim line.

He pointed to the desk where her memo lay. "Is that some sort of joke?"

She tried not to flinch. "No, sir." This was worse than when she'd messed up his lunch with Jacobson.

Or maybe this was very, very good.

"Bend over my desk," he ordered.

Her heart fluttered, then started to beat as rapidly as a hummingbird's wings. *Oh God, yes, please.* She did as he ordered, elbows on the desk, ass high in the air for him.

"Lift your skirt."

Natalie felt a tear of sublime happiness prick her eye. She raised her skirt.

As he stepped close, his body heat seemed to sear her bare butt. "Where are your panties, Miss Beaumonde?" he said in his deepest, angriest voice.

Her pussy dampened. "I took them off, sir."

"When?" he barked.

"Right after I left the memo on your desk."

He smacked her hard with his cupped hand.

Natalie moaned, and if she'd been wearing her panties, she'd have creamed them right then.

"You will accept a spanking at any time and in any place I deem it necessary."

“Yes, sir,” she whispered, as his fingers trailed down the crease of her butt to the opening of her pussy.

“You will make mistakes at least three times a day so that you may be punished. Once in the morning before the rest of the staff arrives, once at lunch, and once again after everyone has left for the day. Do I make myself clear?” He punctuated with another tingling swat, followed by a finger's gentle foray inside her. Then he leaned over her, breathed deeply, and groaned. “Christ, Miss Beaumonde, you smell so fucking good.”

If she wasn't careful, she'd either cry or come. “Yes, Mr. Masters.”

He collected himself. “I will keep condoms in my bottom desk drawer so that I may bend you over my desk and fuck you hard whenever one of us needs it.” His cupped hand came down once more, and this time, his fingers caressed her clitoris.

Natalie writhed against him, his cock hard in his suit pants as he pressed into her. “Oh, God, yes, Mr. Masters.”

Covering her with his body, he continued the play as he whispered to her. “You will let me taste your sweet pussy and make you climax with my tongue. You will fill my mouth with all that delicious sexy juice of yours. You will suck me and swallow my cum. You will do every nasty thing I ask, and you'll tell me every dirty thing you want me to do to you. And there's going to be a lot of kissing, touching, fondling, and caressing, too, Miss Beaumonde. Do I make myself clear?”

She moaned, his touch, his voice, his words driving her mad. “Oh yes, sir. Very clear, sir.”

“You will come to my dungeon and let me do everything we both desire.” Now he used his thumb and fingers on her, inside, outside, his whole body a caress along hers. “Say, 'yes, please, Mr. Masters.'”

“Oh, yes, yes, yes, please, Mr. Masters.” He'd given her almost everything she wanted. Almost.

“If we ever invite a third or fourth to play, or even more, we will do it together.” He buried his face in her hair to whisper, “Because no other woman could ever be as special as you, baby.”

His touch on her was rapture, his words heavenly. If he wasn't holding her down, she might float away.

“You will accept my apology for being a complete asshole on Saturday night.”

“Oh Lincoln—”

She would have gone on, but he hit a spot inside her so sweet, she cried out.

“Just say you forgive me, Miss Beaumonde, that is all.”

He'd cut her off on purpose. “I forgive you, Mr. Masters.”

“Thank you, my dear.” He rewarded her with a faster pace. She hummed her pleasure. “One more thing,” he said on a sweet, panting breath as he drove her to climax. “You will never hide your emotions from me, and I will never hide my feelings for my darling, precious, perfect Miss Beaumonde.”

She could barely fathom the meaning of his words, they were too immense, too powerful. Her body burning, she knew what she felt, and she knew it was time. “Yes, yes, yes, I love you, Mr. Masters.”

She fell over the precipice into orgasm, spiraling down into his arms, but she didn't miss one single syllable of his answer.

“Just as I love you, Miss Beaumonde.”

Lincoln meant every word. He adored the sounds she made, her cries, the way her body clamored for his touch, her scent, her taste, but he loved Natalie Beaumonde for the sweet, caring, efficient, sexy, delicious woman she was.

And his body clamored for hers, his blood hot, his cock hard, his heart needy. He'd go mad if he didn't have her. “I'm going to fuck you now, Miss Beaumonde.” The words were part of the game. They would always keep it exciting for each other.

“Oh yes, please, Mr. Masters.” She wriggled her bottom against his hips.

He trailed a hand over her ass cheek. “Stay right there.” Then he swatted her. “That's a taste of what you'll get if you move.”

She gasped, moaned. “No, Mr. Masters. I'll be right here when you get back.” She turned to watch him, her eyes bright, her pretty little bare ass in the air, her sweet pussy glistening with her juices.

He popped his briefcase, retrieved one of the condoms he'd kept there since the day he'd spanked her in his office. Oh yes, he'd had so many plans for his beautiful, gorgeous Miss

Beaumonde. He just hadn't imagined how much better everything would be with the exponential growth of his emotions. His feelings for her added so much more to the pleasure.

Bending over her again, he whispered in her ear. "Feel how hard you've made my cock, Miss Beaumonde." Unzipping, he took himself in hand, then stroked one sweet ass cheek with his crown.

"Goodness, Mr. Masters, you're so big and hard." She reached back to glide a hand down his shaft.

Lincoln shuddered. Donning the condom, he caressed her pussy, coating his cock with her juices. "And you're so wet, Miss Beaumonde." He breached her with just the crown.

"Oh," she whispered reverently.

Holding himself rigid over her, Lincoln lowered his voice until his words were just a whisper of breath against her hair. "I wanted to do this while you were fucking Van with that dildo." He took her hand, laced his fingers with hers. "I wanted to lift your skirt and fuck you until I lost myself inside you."

"Why didn't you?"

"You hadn't completely exorcised him yet." His cock pulsed just inside her opening.

"He's gone now," she said.

Lincoln thrust home.

"Oh God," she cried out, her fingers tightening around his.

He pumped slowly, riding her G-spot. She was so sweet and tight and wet. "You're mine now." He bit her neck lightly.

"I'm yours."

Curled over her body, he captured her other hand, holding both tightly, covering her completely, like a wild animal takes his mate. She purred beneath him, her body hot and alive.

"Fuck me harder," she murmured. "Make it so I feel you long after you're done with me."

"I'll never be done with you." But he gave her what she wanted, fast, hard, deep, groaning, forcing the air from her lungs as he pounded.

She quaked beneath him, the tremors throwing him into high gear. Her pussy contracted, milked him, the ache in his balls reached fever pitch, and with a blinding flash he began to come, an explosion at his very core.

Above it all, he heard her whisper, "I love you."

He buried himself deep in her body, claiming her, their breath becoming one, his blood pumping to her heart's rhythm.

As he drifted down off that perfect high, he gave her the one last piece of himself he'd given no other woman. "I'm yours completely, Miss Beaumonde." He kissed her hair, then tapped her memo on the desk. "And I've signed exactly that on the bottom line."

THE END

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Award-winning Jasmine Haynes is the author of erotic romance for Berkley Heat, Berkley Sensation, and she's now so pleased to join the Loose Id family. Her November 2009 Berkley release, *Yours for the Night*, marks the start of a new sensual series, the Courtesans Tales. Many of you also know her as Jennifer Skully, writing over-the-top (hopefully hilarious) romantic mysteries, and as JB Skully, she's created the Max Starr psychic mystery series. Don't miss her blog at www.jasminehaynes.blogspot.com (where she offers a chance to win free books!) and her website, www.jasminehaynes.com.