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SEXPLORATIONS

My Fishnet Fetish
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My Fishnet Fetish

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MY FISHNET FETISH

Sahara Kelly

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Godzilla: Toho Co., Ltd

Chapter One

"They're at it again."

"Who?"

"At what?"

Nadine Summers leaned over her drafting table and peered out of her window. "Those guys I told you about."

There was a moment or two of silence from her computer as her two best friends, Fenella Whitfield and Dee Jackson, chewed over the information. They were linked by Nadine's webcam since she had a deadline and couldn't make their wine-and-nibbles evening. Didn't mean they couldn't talk, though—thanks to technology. It probably hadn't been designed with girl-gossip in mind but it worked very nicely for the three of them. On this particular night anyway.

"I hope you're not thinking of doing anything silly, Dini." Fenny's Boston-proper tones came over the speaker, mixed with a hint of worry.

"Yeah. Like mistaking yourself for Steampunk Suzie, grabbing an empty beer bottle or something and going down there to straighten 'em out." Dee's throaty chuckle followed. "You *draw* Suzie, honey. She's got fifty pounds and a helluva lot more muscle on her than you do."

Dini kept her gaze on the activities outside. "Don't worry girls. Much as I'd like to go get a closer look, I'm not a total idiot." She sighed. "Just half a one. What I wouldn't give for a real big rifle with a night scope on it."

"Sweetie, give it to your heroines in your books. Let Suzie play with it in your next cartoon strip. Don't cross the fantasy-reality line, okay?"

Dini giggled and dragged her eyes away from the street. "Only in my work, Fenny. But I reckon I might well have been born in the wrong time or something." She leaned her head on her hand and stared absently at the nearly completed drawing on her work table. "Can you imagine how great it would be to actually man a ray gun and blast a wicked alien ship into smithereens around some poor desperate planet?"

"Shouldn't that be *woman* a ray gun?"

"Is *ray gun* all one word, or hyphenated?"

Dini waved off the questions. "Shhh." Her attention was back on the white van below her on the quiet street. "I swear they're dealing crack or something."

"Frickin' *Christ*, Dini." Dee sounded exasperated. "Did you call the cops?"

"Went one better, Dee." Dini squinted into the darkness. "I dropped by the South Street Precinct and actually filed a report. An honest-to-God real report." She chuckled. "If nothing else, it was good for research."

Fenny's sigh of relief was quite clear. "Thank the good Lord you're a smart woman, honey. For right now, you just stay put, make notes if you must, but let the authorities handle it, okay?"

"Yeah. What she said." Dee added her mite around a mouthful of something crunchy. "Although I swear I'd put my money on you, Dini, if it came to a blow-by-blow."

"Don't see anyone down there I'd be interested in blowing." Dini's chuckle was wicked.

"Uh-oh. Sounds like you got your mind on sex. Suzie's about to get laid."

"She just did, Dee. Gotta have her smiling at least once an episode." Dini looked down again at the colorful drawing of a full-breasted woman reclining nude on a red velvet couch. It spread over the whole of her drawing board and was ringed with assorted pens, pencils, paints and a messy stack of overlays.

"She's stark naked and happy. And I kept her boots on this time. Rather a nice erotic touch, I think." She studied the drawing dispassionately. "Yeah. High-heeled, leather, lace-up boots and nothing else. It works."

"Your fans are gonna eat that up, Dini. No question." Fenny sounded certain.

"Since the majority of them are horny teenage boys, you're probably right." Dini chuckled. "Well, better they jerk off with Steampunk Suzie than some of those icky teen slut websites. At least Suzie's got a personality and a goal in life." She paused. "Along with the requisite full breasts and shaved pussy, of course."

She grabbed a pen and added a speck more detail to that particular body part.

"Yeah. About that..." Dee's voice filled the room.

"Dee. Shut *up*." Fenny's usually calm tones sounded a little stressed.

Dini blinked. "Fenny? You *didn't*!"

"She did." That was Dee, gleeful and wicked. "I haven't seen it, since she refuses to show me, but the fidget's there. That little wiggle now and again that says *I've had a Brazilian wax job and I don't know if I'm horny or itchy*."

Fenny's howl was a thing of beauty to Dini's ears. She loved it when Fenny lost her composure. There was something reassuring about it. Sisters under the skin, as it were.

She glanced at her screen to see Fenny throwing a pillow at Dee, then moving close to the webcam, filling it with blonde hair and blushing cheeks. "Whether I choose to get my pubes waxed or not shouldn't be a subject for discussion. No, I'm not showing Dee because that's...well, that's just wrong on so many levels." She paused for breath. "And it hurt like a *motherfucking sonovabitch*."

All three women were silent for a second or two, then the laughter began. Dini laughed so hard she had to move away from her drawing or get splashes as the tears ran down her cheeks onto the paper.

"You guys just slay me. I love you both," Dini rasped hoarsely, heaving in breaths as she giggled all over again. "Damn this deadline. I gotta go or I'm still not going to get it done. You're too distracting."

"Miss you, sweetie." Fenny sounded sad. "Sorry you can't be here, but we'll pick a better time next week, okay?"

"Absolutely right, babe." That was Dee. "You finish what you gotta do. We understand, honest. Friends are always here. Deadlines come and go." She grinned. "Just make sure Suzie gets fucked really good, okay? Maybe her *mom* should go get a little herself?"

Dini snorted. "Yeah. Like I have time for that right now."

"You never know, Dini. You never know." Fenny winked. "You take care and we'll talk soon. Bye."

"Bye, toots." The irrepressible Dee nudged Fenny out of the way. "Keep thinking positive. And wear that corset next time you go out. If that doesn't get you any action, hell—I give up. Bye for now."

The screen darkened as her two friends disconnected their webcam, leaving Dini with the echoes of laughter and the warmth of knowing she had two such great friends.

She turned back to her work, deftly filling in the remaining colors, adding the few touches that made Steampunk Suzie unique—and popular. It was a blessing in disguise, a casual conversation with one of the college nerds who haunted the coffee shops of Cambridge, an invitation to submit something for their latest web endeavor—and before Dini knew it, Steampunk Suzie was the rage of the Internet.

And bringing a hefty chunk of change along with her, thank God. Dini couldn't see herself as an administrative assistant. Her typing skills were erratic at best, she didn't function well early in the morning and her choice of attire was hardly appropriate for some office environment.

She grinned as she glanced down at herself. She was trying out a new corset tonight, something she was thinking of putting on Suzie in her next adventure. Deep

purple with lots of sequins, it sparkled like crazy in the light of her desk lamp. There was a long sort of black lace frill at the bottom that barely covered her tiny matching thong. She'd thrown on black fishnet tights and her favorite grungy boots, finishing it off with a big pair of purple wings leftover from last Halloween and pointy fake elf ears. Fantasy meets erotica with a dash of magic.

Kinda like something she'd imagined as a cross between a strip show and *Lord of the Rings*. *Hobbit Hooters* maybe.

Suzie was going to wreak havoc in Fairyland for her next adventure and maybe get into a little bondage action. Dini believed in doing her research. At least when it came to visuals for her comic strip. For her I.M. Blue novels—well, the research was in books filled with cosmological theories, the Internet and her dreams. Sadly, nobody was hiring a freelance mercenary gunner for a small attack shuttle traversing the vastness of space toward Alpha Centauri.

Still, in spite of science's utter failure to keep pace with Dini's imagination, she'd finished her latest novel and sent it in to her editor last week. And now—she signed the drawing in front of her with a flourish—Steampunk Suzie was all set to enjoy another adventure and bring thousands of teenage boys some sort of vicarious satisfaction.

Leaning back, Dini stretched her arms high, enjoying the rasp of the corset across her nipples. God, she could use some satisfaction herself. It had been months since her last “night of delight”, a phrase she used to describe the occasional dalliances that ended in bed.

They never went any further, of course. Nope. One night only. Dini considered herself a star in that regard. She never repeated her performance. *Diva Dini rule number One*. And mostly that was okay. She wasn't going to invite a guy over for more than sex. He wanted anything else, well go find somebody else.

Was she a user? Maybe. She worried about it occasionally. But then the small photo on the wall reminded her what could happen if one gave away more than just a few hours of physical pleasure.

Dini sighed and eased off her stool, leaning from side to side and unkinking a few of the knots brought on by a couple of hours leaning over her drafting table. Unbidden, her gaze drifted to that same photo, black and white, mounted in a plain silver frame and hanging inconspicuously to one side of her workspace.

Alan.

Lieutenant Alan Summers. How young he looked to her now. He would always look that young. He'd never age, never wrinkle or lose his hair or develop a paunch. He'd always be the young officer who swept her off her feet, who took her into the world of military wives and who she'd loved beyond reason for barely more than a year.

As always, Dini turned away from the photo with a smile. She'd promised herself she'd remember the good things. Dwell on his laughter and his charm, not the—other things.

Alan was gone and nothing she could do would ever bring him back. He'd been a gift to her, she'd decided. A gift that was so special she hadn't been permitted to keep him for very long. And she had also promised herself never to accept a gift like that again, since losing it was...*unspeakable* agony.

She was very fortunate in her life, right now. The addition of Fenny and Dee to her tiny social circle had enriched it. Suzie was going gangbusters, I.M. Blue was comfortably settled in the midlist and showed no signs of slumping.

Yep. For Nadine Summers, aka I.M. Blue and Steampunk Suzie's mom, all was good overall, except for one irritating damn thing—her fucking *toilet* was on the fritz again.

Stalking across her living space toward the bathroom, Dini hissed with annoyance and ended up staring at the offending porcelain contraption.

"Listen, you." She jiggled the handle. "You're pissing me off. You can be replaced, you know."

The contents continued to trickle in an annoying plumbing version of a Chinese water torture.

“I’ve called a plumber. It’ll serve you right if he guts you to your ballcock.”

Threats seemed ineffective, even when Dini ran a hand through her spiky blonde hair, yanked her corset into place, shook her wings and muttered what she hoped was an incantation or a prayer to the Flushing Functions deities.

Her plea was answered by a loud knock at her door.

“Oh thank God. The plumber at last.” She glared one last time at her toilet. “I warned you.”

Chapter Two

Detective Jonas Smith needed a beer. Or maybe even two. It had been a long shift and he'd only taken this follow-up call as a favor to a buddy whose wife was sick. But that's what cops did for each other – cover their backs.

He'd got more than ten years in on the force, five of them here in Cambridge. He loved his job most of the time, hated it occasionally and now and again it overwhelmed him. But mostly he was content with his life. He had girlfriends, women who were just friends and one or two fuck buddies just for fun. He knew he wasn't hideous, enjoyed female companionship but kept it casual. He wasn't ready for the "C" word – commitment. A few of these thoughts drifted absently through his mind as he waited for the door to open.

It was probably going to be some nosy biddy with nothing better to do than spy on her neighbors. She'd seen someone moving in a new TV and thought they were stealing, or more cars than usual and figured somebody'd set up a whorehouse across the street. He liked public involvement in crime prevention, but sometimes it brought out the crazies.

All part of the job. There wasn't much he hadn't seen and very little left that could surprise him.

So when the door opened, Detective Jonas Smith was not prepared for what he saw. And he did something he hadn't done in quite some time.

He lost his breath.

She was a vision from every man's fantasy – petite, blonde, soft hair haloing her head in the backlight from the room behind her. She was wrapped in some sparkly purple stuff that barely covered the tips of her small breasts where they were pushed up into a cleavage he'd like to lick for an hour or two.

The rest of her was even better. A lacy something drifted over the tops of her thighs, and her legs — oh dear God in Heaven — they were encased in *fishnet tights*. Jonas felt his cock stiffen at the sight of one of his favorite erotic dreams.

With difficulty he dragged his gaze back to her face, absorbing the sight of purple wings and pointed ears. Okay. He needed more than two beers. He needed a vacation.

She was staring at him too, with a flicker of interest in those unusual grey eyes. However, her first words weren't quite what he'd expected.

"About time. The toilet's through there." She nodded over her shoulder and held the door wide.

Jonas blinked. "Thank you, but I don't have to go."

She obviously didn't listen. "The water won't stop running, no matter what I do. I've jiggled and twisted and tapped. Nothing worked. So every night I gotta turn it off with that valve thing underneath."

Jonas stepped back, pulled a slip of paper from his pocket and compared the apartment number to the one he was supposed to be visiting. Yeah, he'd got the number right, but she'd gotten his number wrong, apparently.

He sighed. "I seem to have stumbled into the sexed-up branch of fairyland here. Forgive me but I left my magic wand in my other pants."

To his astonishment, her lips twisted into a wonderfully wicked grin as she dropped her gaze to his crotch. "Pity."

Jesus fucking Christ. He was getting a hard-on. With difficulty he recalled himself to business. "I'm looking for a Nadine Summers?"

Sex-Pixie tilted her head to one side and frowned. "That'd be me." She looked down to the floor beside his feet as if checking for something, chewed her bottom lip and then looked back up. "You're probably not the plumber, then, are you? He just wants to know where the leak is."

Jonas shook his head and reached into his back pocket for his ID. "Detective Jonas Smith. I'm following up on that report you filed down at the South Street precinct."

She raised her eyebrows. "Well damn. Color me surprised. You'd better come in then." She closed the door behind him. "Gotta tell you I wasn't expecting such prompt action. Or any action at all, to be honest."

Jonas barely heard her as his brain attempted to sort out the colorful chaos surrounding him. It was a huge loft apartment with few walls—a draped area in one corner barely concealed a mussed bed and there was the requisite furniture, but it was filled with oddities and stuff he hadn't seen since an ex-girlfriend had dragged him to a new-age antique show. Which was an oxymoron but he'd gone anyway.

His gaze fell on a huge stuffed moose head high on one wall. It looked flea-bitten and mangy and for some reason its eyes were crossed. A piece of Christmas tree tinsel dangled from one antler.

There were a few chunks of sparkly rock, some posters for obscure bands, an ottoman about to disgorge its intestines, candles everywhere, masses of brilliant pillows scattered like peacock feathers here and there—he didn't know if this was enchanting or nauseating.

Oblivious to his confusion, Ms. Fishnets grabbed his arm and led him to the window. "Look. Here." She pointed. "This is where I've seen them. Not any regular pattern, but always just after dark. Sometimes once, sometimes twice a week. Last week I didn't see them at all, but they were back yesterday and I saw them again tonight."

He nodded. Then his gaze landed on her drafting table. "Holy *shit*."

"What?"

"It's—it's—" He was at a loss for words.

"Yeah. Suzie." She shrugged.

"You're *her*?"

Nadine snorted, glanced down at herself then looked back at Jonas with a wry lift of one eyebrow. "Only in my dreams."

Jonas couldn't quite get his head around it. "God, we *love* Suzie. We've got posters of her in the pigpen."

"I'm flattered." The tone was dry.

"No seriously. The pigpen's the detectives' briefing room. We all read her. Can't wait for the next episode. Shit." He shook his head in amazement. "Wait 'til the guys hear I've met the *real* Steampunk Suzie."

Nadine cleared her throat. "Just to clarify. I'm Nadine Summers, Detective. *Not* Steampunk Suzie. I create her. She's a cartoon character." She straightened her shoulders. "Could we get back to business here?"

Jonas grinned. "Sure. Sorry—you'll have to bear with me. I'm just having a star-struck moment here, Ms. Summers."

She was silent for a moment, then smiled back. "Okay." She stuck out her hand. "Call me Dini."

"Thanks, Dini. Sorry again. I'm Jonas." He took her hand and shook it.

"So you said."

Her hand felt warm in his, tiny and delicate. He stayed holding it for a few seconds longer than he should have, wondering if the spark in her eyes was reflected by the heat in his. The heat which soared from his balls to the base of his skull and threatened to make his eyes water.

He cleared his throat, letting go of her reluctantly and turning back to the window. "So, show me where you saw this again?"

She ran through the details, white van, three men, ages, clothing, race and so on. She was thorough, observant and might not realize it but was describing a small group they'd had on their radar for some time. It was useful information, but Jonas couldn't reveal how useful it was to a civilian.

No matter how good she looked in fishnet tights.

Trying his best to ignore his arousal and maintain the “professional” thing, Jonas took out his phone and jotted a few notes into the memo function.

“Oh, cooooool.” She leaned over and watched him. “I really wanted one of those, but I didn’t know how good they were.”

He glanced up, trying his best not to notice the top of her purple corset, which had crept lower and even now threatened to expose a nipple. If she breathed any deeper or leaned in any further — Jesus, he’d come in his jeans.

“It’s great. I like it. Good technology and really useful.” Which was a helluva lot more appropriate answer than *can-I-tug-that-top-down-and-suck-your-tits?*

He heaved in a breath and focused on his phone. “Got it. You have a good eye for details, Ms. — Dini.”

“Thank you, Jonas. Glad you approve.” She stepped back, without — unfortunately — revealing any more breast.

“Okay then.” His head was clearing. A little. “I guess that’s it.” He pocketed the cell phone. “Unless you want me to take a look at the toilet issue?”

“Detectives know anything about toilets?”

“We pee in ‘em occasionally.”

“Seat down afterwards, I hope?”

“Of course. We’re public servants. We protect and serve. Up to and including putting the seat down.” He grinned. “Sometimes.”

“Well, if it’s not too much trouble...” She paused and glanced at the clock. “Doesn’t look like the plumber’ll be showing up now. Too late, I guess.”

“And since my shift’s over, I’m free to take a look for you. Dunno if I can fix it, but I’ve run into a few handle-jigglers in my time.”

“Haven’t we all.” She laughed and turned away from him. “It’s over here.”

Jonas let his eyes wander over her rear view, which was just about as appealing as the front one. That black lace didn't do a damn thing to hide her ass cheeks, rounded and full and one helluva handful. There was a tiny purple strip delineating her butt where the matching thong panties rose beneath the fishnets.

God help him he was getting hard all over again. Plus she smelled sexy. Something womanly and tangy in the air around her.

Maybe he ought to fix her toilet then put his head in it and flush. Perhaps he just needed a cold shower. He was going way off track here on what should've been a simple follow-up.

But damn. It was *Suzie*, for Chrissake. Jonas was only a poor mortal male with a thing for fishnets. What was he to do?

He followed her into the bathroom, his lungs seizing as she bent over the john and turned on the water. He got an eyeful of her ass, her thong, her thighs and a brief glimpse of soft pussy lips where the lace tugged tight between them.

He gasped. He couldn't help it, since the lust that grabbed him by the cock was harsh and immediate.

She didn't move, merely grinned over her shoulder. "Got a thing for ass, Detective?"

"Last time I checked, I had a pulse although I'm not sure if I'm breathing right this second." He swallowed. "Sure I've got a thing for ass. Got an ever bigger thing for an ass in fishnet tights, if you want the truth."

He felt his eyes widen as she shamelessly parted her legs a little, widening her stance and letting him see her tights were—Lord save him—*crotchless*. Then she wiggled her ass.

"Dini, it's a capital crime to kill an officer of the law." He clutched his heart and leaned against the doorjamb. "No matter *how* you do it."

She giggled naughtily. "Thanks for telling me."

"It's an official warning. You do that again and I'm dead. The number for the Coroner's office is in my phone's address book."

She straightened up, a wicked smirk still lingering around those pouty lips of hers. "There you go. Have at it."

"Huh?"

"The toilet, Jonas. It's dripping again."

"Yes."

"You said you'd take a look at it?" Dini nudged him gently in the ribs.

"What? Oh. Yeah, sorry." He moved past her. Carefully. He was really afraid that if he touched her his gun might go off. Or his service revolver. Either one wouldn't be good.

Lifting the lid off the tank, Jonas sighed. "Forgive me. I'm a certified victim of fishnet-itis. I see gorgeous legs in 'em and portions of my brain shut down. I've been known to faint."

He heard her laugh as he began to fiddle with things inside the tank. "Thanks for the compliment. And I'm sorry I teased you. I wouldn't want to be responsible for killing anyone, that's for sure."

"That's okay. I'll do my best to hang on to my sanity, but it won't be easy..." He delved down and unclipped something that caught his attention. "Aha."

"Aha what?"

He could feel her heat as she stretched over to see what he was doing. His mind struggled valiantly to keep on topic. "Here. Here's your problem."

"Good lord."

Dini watched him in fascination as he produced the flapper and removed a tiny bit of gold. "*That's* the problem?"

"Yep." Jonas nodded. "It was lodged in the rubber here, see? It was just enough to stop the flapper from seating properly and sealing the tank."

“Well I’ll be damned.” She took the little gold ring from him and stared at it as he replaced the bits and pieces. And sure enough, there was blessed silence as he finished the job.

Absently, she passed him a hand towel. “Thanks. I can’t believe something this small caused all that trouble.”

“An earring?”

She shook her head. “Nope. I wondered where this had gone, as a matter of fact. It’s my nipple ring. I wonder how it got in there?”

Jonas couldn’t stop his gaze from drifting to her corseted cleavage. He gulped. “Beats me.”

She giggled, a light sound that charmed him. “Well, hey. You fixed the tank. You’re my hero of the hour.”

Turning, she left the bathroom, once again seriously damaging Jonas’ cerebral matter with a flash of her curvy buttocks and her fishnets. God, those things were lethal. Helpless before such an attack, Jonas followed her.

“You know, I owe you something for this.” She held up the ring. “The plumber would’ve charged me an arm and a leg. Would you settle for a beer?” She looked hopeful. “There’s a real neat bar just down the street. Quiet, cozy—I go there now and again. Think you’d be violating any law enforcement rules if you joined me?”

Jonas considered the invitation. He’d been planning to head home, grab something from his freezer, nuke it, and eat it while trying to find a channel on TV that had a few positive comments about any of his favorite sports teams. He’d also been planning on indulging in a beer or two.

So his choices were a frozen entrée alone in his apartment—or more time with an erotically-charged fishnet-wearing pixie. Who happened to be Steampunk Suzie’s mom.

Duh.

“Sounds great.”

“Cool.” She fluttered purple wings at him as she strode across the large living room. “Turn around and close your eyes. I gotta change before I go out.”

Doing as he was bid, he grinned. “Don’t dress up on my account. The wings—maybe. But those ears? Pretty damn sexy.”

Her giggle drifted suggestively around him. “Who said I was dressing *up*? I might decide to take something *off*...”

Jonas squeezed his eyes tightly shut and offered up a prayer. *Not the fishnets, Lord. Please not the fishnets.*

Chapter Three

Dini pushed the two empties to the side of the table and lifted her third beer to her lips. She enjoyed moments like these, places like these.

Nothing fancy, nothing up-market, this little corner bar pretended to be nothing other than what it was—a place to sit, enjoy a few drinks and maybe catch a game on the big screen TV on the wall amidst the liquor bottles. There were some neon advertising signs, photos of old Cambridge on the walls and an air of comfortable contentment.

And Jonas sitting across the table.

He wasn't part of the comfortable thing at all. He was definitely making Dini itchy in all the girl places. "Handsome" wasn't a word she'd use to describe him, but he had the most gorgeous hazel eyes. Eyes were a turn-on for Dini, along with a good laugh which Jonas also possessed. It rang out a lot as they started on their first beers and the little private journey that she knew would end up with them both naked.

She could see heat in those eyes, desire, arousal—all the good stuff. His body was lean, his legs long and his hands well shaped. Yeah, he was probably *really* good with his hands.

She made him laugh as she related her adventures with Suzie. And he returned the favor by sharing some of his experiences as a cop. The air around them seemed to grow warm as it rested on Dini's neck. She shifted in her loose black sweater, the corset beneath cutting more sharply into her breasts as her own arousal notched its way up the scale to "wet and ready".

The conversation shifted into other channels as she told him about I.M. Blue and her writing. For his part, Jonas talked about the decision to go into law enforcement over his family's objections.

Dini realized he was a wonderful listener when, to her surprise, she found herself touching on Alan and her widowhood. And appreciating that he didn't offer pity or sympathy, just an acknowledgment of her pain. She didn't share personal stuff on a whim. It was out of character for her.

Time to steer the conversation back to where it was supposed to be.

"So now I've spilled *my* guts, I have to ask." She glanced at him from beneath her eyelashes. "You married? Seeing anyone? In a—" her fingers lifted into little quotation marks, "*relationship*? You gay?"

Jonas blinked then snorted. "No, not at the moment, no and *hell* no."

Dini nodded. "Good. Next question. You into kink?"

He considered the question. "Define kink."

"I believe it falls into the *non-vanilla sex* category."

"Bondage? That sort of thing?"

Dini nodded again. "Yes."

"A time or two." Jonas' eyes were intense, fixed on her face.

"Cool. I need to do some research. How about we go back to my place and you can help me figure out a few new scenes for Suzie?" She lifted an eyebrow at him.

He watched her. "Just so we're clear here, and in the interests of full disclosure, you're inviting me back to your place so we can indulge in some decadent kink that will probably lead to sex."

Dini grinned. "Really *hot* sex."

Jonas stood up, his chair scraping on the floor as he motioned to the waitress. "Check please."

Following his lead, Dini stood and grabbed her bag, trying hard to suppress the growing bubble of excitement. Her jeans were clammy between her thighs, her breasts aching and her palms damp. She wanted this man, wanted a night of no-holds barred lust. She knew he'd be good and she'd enjoy it.

And if there was a little voice telling her she might want it more than once, she ignored it. Dini never repeated herself. But she sure was going to make the most of this opportunity.

Jonas tossed some bills toward their waitress and grabbed Dini by the wrist. "One thing." He held her tightly. "I have to know. Did you take anything off other than the ears and the wings?"

She flashed a wicked glance at his face, noting the concentration in his gaze and the color dusting his cheekbones. "Only my thong. *I hate* wearing panties under my jeans."

His gulp was audible and Dini stumbled as Jonas rushed her out of the bar.

* * * * *

"Jesus, you weren't lying."

Jonas' hands were full of Dini's ass, their heat burning past the fishnet and into her skin as he delved inside her jeans. They'd barely made it past the closing of her apartment door before his mouth was on hers, fierce and harsh and forcing her lips apart so that he could plunder her mouth.

It was just what she wanted, everything she'd hoped for.

"I never lie," she mumbled past his tongue, then bit it gently, sucking on it and pulling it deeper against her own.

His taste was all man, tangy with beer and flavored with something uniquely him, a hint of power buried within the savory blend. His arms were banding her tightly to his chest, her clothes an annoyance that was growing by the second. She wanted him naked against her own flesh, his hardness crushed into her softness.

Desire rose to claw at her throat. "Fuck me, Jonas. Hard."

"I will." He pulled back a little, reached into his back pocket and stared at her, a pulse fluttering at the base of his neck. "But you said you wanted research. How about these?"

He lifted his hand to show her his cuffs.

She sucked in a breath, the excitement screaming through every vein, every nerve ending. "Oh *yes*." It was barely a whisper, which surprised Dini since a scream would have better suited her emotional state.

Jonas' head jerked once in a taut move indicating his approval. He stepped away from her body and gestured with his hand to her sweater. "Take that off."

Eagerly Dini stripped away her sweater and tossed it aside, revealing the purple corset. Jonas drew in a breath then reached for her wrists. With a sharp snap he fastened the cuffs then glanced at her. "Okay?"

She nodded. "Yes." There were more words, more thoughts screaming through her head but the one affirmative was all she could manage to utter past the lump of arousal clogging her throat.

Looking around, she saw Jonas notice her jacket hook, a sturdy wrought iron affair high up on one wall. She used it in the winter to hang snowy outer garments since it was beyond her reach for practical purposes.

"Come with me." Jonas grasped one arm and drew her beneath the hook, then frowned and dragged a nearby footstool beneath it. "Stand on that." He noticed the embroidered elephant decorating the top. "You Republican?"

"Hell no. I'm an Eccentric Independent. I write in *Zaphod Beeblebrox* every time I vote, but he never gets elected."

Jonas chuckled. "You take your towel into the booth?"

She flashed him a surprised glance as she stepped onto the stool and choked out a laugh. "Yes. Good Lord. How on earth—"

"I do read, you know."

Jonas lifted her arms then raised her body a little, hooking the cuffs over the black metal knob. The distance was perfect. Dini was suspended, helpless, feet resting on the stool and hands above her head.

She considered her position. Not something she'd like to maintain for several hours, but definitely – given the way Jonas was eyeing her body – arousing.

"Jonas? Now what?" Her breath was catching in her throat as he reached for her jeans and with one smooth move pulled them down to her boots, hobbling her.

"This, for a start."

"Oooh." The cool air wafted around her pussy, bared to his gaze beneath the fishnet pantyhose.

"Yeah. Sweet, Dini. Very sweet."

She ached, yearning for his touch between her thighs. She couldn't part them thanks to the mess of denim tangled around her boots. Frustration mingled with lust as she fidgeted and watched Jonas staring at her crotch. "Do something, Jonas. Please?"

"I'm thinking about it." He slipped off his jacket and casually tossed it onto a chair. "Might need some time to consider my options."

"Jesus *Christ*." Dini was getting hotter by the second and all Jonas could do was stroll around and stare at her pussy.

"Patience."

"Easy for you to say." Never one to willingly wait too long for anything, Dini rattled her handcuffs. "I'm here. I'm ready. You gonna do something about it?"

"In time." He neared her. "But you know, now I come to think about it, I might need some extra inspiration."

Strong hands reached for the snaps at the front of her corset, undoing them, slowly, one by one until Dini could cheerfully have sunk her teeth into his ear and ripped it off if it would get him to move more quickly.

Halfway down, he stopped. Biting back a scream, Dini simply watched as he reached for the two halves and spread them wide, then lifted her breasts free to lie on the unfastened corset.

“There. Much better.” Jonas casually flicked a fingertip over one nipple, bringing a cry to her throat. “There’s a lot to be said for corsets. They keep things right where a man wants them to be.”

He leaned in and fastened his mouth to her breast, delicately licking around the taut nub then opening his lips wide and sucking as much of the small mound into his mouth as he could.

Dini whimpered at the exquisite sensation of warm wetness enveloping her and the feel of his tongue abrading her nipple. He let her go and repeated the procedure on her other breast, leaving them both wet and swollen, nipples rigid and sensitive to every tiny current of air.

Then he walked away again.

“I’ll—I’ll kill you if you don’t get back over here. Felony or not.” She hissed the words at him, almost blind with desire. Her hips were moving of their own volition, an inviting sway and thrust, an encouragement and a plea for attention.

Jonas watched her as he slowly removed his shirt, revealing a well-toned body with a soft dappling of hair arrowing down to below his belt buckle. “Well, we can’t have that, can we?”

He prowled back to her, blew softly on her breasts then knelt in front of her, blowing again—this time on her pussy.

Dini whimpered. She was aroused to the point that the fishnet was pressed tight into swollen folds, she was dripping wet and every tiny breath forced her even higher.

“Pretty. Such a pretty pussy.”

The whimper turned into a shriek when a slick hot tongue began to delve between the woven strands of net, toying with the sensitive rippling lips that wept hot juices down the inside of her thighs. Dini found herself straining against her bonds, helpless to do anything but stand there and let Jonas fuck her with his tongue.

Breathlessly she waited, wanting something inside her, whether his finger, his tongue, his cock or his pistol—at this point she was too far gone to care what it was just as long as it filled her the way she desperately needed to be filled.

“I— I...need to come, Jonas—” She choked out the plea as his mouth toyed with her, taking her so far—and then withdrawing.

“And you will.”

He walked away again, damn him to Hell and back.

Making sure he was in her line of sight, Jonas reached for his belt and unfastened it. The hard bulge beneath was reassuring—he *was* going to fuck her. Dini held her breath as the belt fell away, the zipper parted and Jonas lowered it with all the skillful teasing of a seasoned male stripper.

Pausing before she could see any more than the flash of white briefs, he toed off his shoes and peeled away his socks, taking his time to put them next to the chair holding his coat. It was aggravating, frustrating, seriously annoying and probably funny. Or would be when she wasn’t hanging mostly naked by her wrists and desperately horny.

He pulled down his jeans and briefs and finally—*finally*—released his cock.

Dini’s jaw dropped as it sprang free, hard and red, thick and swollen, rising in a slight curve away from his groin. The hairs there were a little darker than the light brown of his head, tight curls nestling at the base. The head was flanged, ringed and nearly purple as a tiny drop of pre-cum sparkled at the tip.

She sucked in air. “God Almighty, Detective. You’ve got one splendid weapon there.”

Jonas’ mouth twitched. “Thank you. We aim to please.”

“Well aim that thing over here and please me, for God’s sake, or you’re gonna be calling the Coroner yourself. And I’d like to see you explain the cause of death.”

“Nobody’s ever died from waiting for an orgasm, Dini.” Jonas stood naked and apparently unconcerned.

"Until tonight." She glared at him ferociously.

He lifted an eyebrow and reached for his cock. "So you want this, huh?" He casually ran his hand over his length, stroking himself with evident pleasure.

"Jesus, Smith. Are you dense or what? Yeah. I want that. Here. Now. *In me.*"

"How do you feel, Dini?"

"What?"

Jonas grinned. "This is *research*, baby. How do you feel?"

"Christ." She dragged her mind out of her pussy. "Horny. Frustrated. Angry with you and desperate to get fucked."

"Good. Now you've got something to work on next time Suzie's in the same fix."

Gritting her teeth and mentally promising herself never *ever* to put Suzie into this position, Dini glared at Jonas. "The hell with research, Jonas. Get over here and fuck me. *Now.*"

* * * * *

Jonas paused for a moment and let the wonder drift over him. He was living out a fantasy, drowning in a pool of hotly sexual lust that threatened to overwhelm him. He'd hung on to the tattered remnants of his control thus far, but his cock and his balls were perilously near detonation.

Just looking at this amazing woman, dangling by his handcuffs, her breasts framed by glittering purple fabric and her pussy wet for him, encased in fishnet tights – well, it was almost more than a mere mortal could bear.

But he was driven by a fierce determination to see this night through and make it one Dini would never forget. And of course it would be part of *his* dreams for the rest of his life. He had a strong suspicion that Dini wasn't one to get "involved". She presented an image of being all about the sex, but Jonas was a cop with a cop's instincts and a very well developed ability to read between the lines.

What he'd picked up from Dini over a few beers was that she thought of herself as the original "free spirit" when it came to men and sex. And he believed that beneath her façade was a woman who ran scared of anything resembling a relationship.

A guy's wet dream, right? Jonas wondered at himself for his lack of enthusiasm when it came to being Dini's *dude for the night*. She was so much more than she knew and Jonas wanted to explore *all* of her, not just the really tasty bits he was currently staring at.

But in order to do that, he first had to fuck her senseless. Well, hell. A guy's gotta do what a guy's gotta do. He would give her a night to remember then deal with tomorrow when it arrived.

She was trembling, hobbled by her pants, tethered at the wrists and licking her lips as her gaze darted from his cock to his face and back again. He grinned, mentally summoned what little control he had left and strolled toward her.

"How ya doin', honey?"

"Jonassss..." she hissed as her brows snapped together in a frown. "I can't stand much more of this."

"Sure you can." He knelt and freed her legs and feet, tossing boots and pants aside and running his hands over her stockinged calves. "God, that feels so fucking good, Dini."

She moaned in response as his hands drifted up to her thighs. They parted for him, wide and inviting, her pussy shining and her scent rich and heavy. Delicately, he let his fingers drift over her mound, stopping short of touching her clit or pushing into her cunt—he wanted her like this, shuddering on the brink, waiting for that orgasm, not knowing when he'd allow it to explode inside her.

He knew something of how to play these games. What knowledge he had, he intended to use to the fullest on Dini.

Rising, he unfastened the rest of her corset, ignoring it when it dropped to the floor.

“Mmm.” Those breasts — perfect. Small and round, but perfect. He dipped his head and once again suckled, amazed at the sensation brought on by having *all* a woman’s breast in his mouth. He could pull on her flesh, toy with her nipple and tease the other one if he felt like it with a minimum of effort. There was a lot to be said for small breasts.

She sighed and arched into his caress, her skin softly dewed with sweat, her heart pounding rapidly close to his ear. He let his hands drift down to her ass again, this time hooking his fingers into the top of her fishnets. He really didn’t want to take them off, but his delight in them was being rapidly surpassed by his need to have her naked and touching him, skin to skin.

Slowly, sensually, he peeled the hosiery down over her buttocks, letting his fingertips slide down the cleft, feeling her muscles ripple as he pulled slightly, parting her cheeks and adding some tension to her tightly clenched muscles.

She groaned aloud. “Jesus, so good...”

He touched her then, pressing into her ass, watching her response. She closed her eyes and her head fell back a little. Oh yeah. She liked anal play. He’d keep that in mind.

But for now, he wanted her nude. Quickly he stripped off the fishnets, sparing nothing but a passing instant of regret as they too fell to the floor. She was finally as he desired. Naked, ready, wet and more than willing.

His cock throbbed painfully at the sight. He ignored it as best he could and closed the distance between them, letting his body rub hers, abrading her nipples with his chest and kissing her neck, her ears, her cheeks — then holding her tightly and plunging between her lips with his tongue as his cock rose hard, crushed between them.

This time the moan was his. She felt — *perfect*.

Jonas fought for control as Dini’s mouth melded passionately with his. Their desires and lusts were peaking, her body moved urgently in his embrace. He tore his lips from

hers and watched as her eyes opened, vague and unfocused as the sexual heat ran through her. "Dini."

She blinked. "*Jonas.*" Again a tremble shuddered her slender frame. "I want you."

The battle to keep from thrusting into her and granting her wish was a mighty one but Jonas fought it. Instead, he reached down with one hand and grasped her pussy firmly, holding it tight enough to make her gasp. "When I'm ready, you'll have me. This is kinky, Dini. This is what you wanted. I'm going to let you come, honey, and if you say the word I'll do it now. Or you can let me control it. You got the guts to wait?"

It was a challenge Jonas guessed she wouldn't turn down. He was right.

"I can take anything you can dish out, Smith." Her voice wavered, but it was enough for Jonas.

He pulled his hand from her pussy roughly, knowing his palm would scrape across her clit. She cried out then thrust her hips toward him. "Not enough—oh God, *more*—"

Knowing he couldn't last much longer, Jonas stepped away, walked to his jeans and retrieved the essential condom he always carried with him. Sheathing himself was an exercise in requisite delicacy since he was so close to the damn brink his toes were starting an orgasm of their own and he knew he had to get this show on the road or he was going to come all over her non-Republican footstool.

He walked back to Dini, sheathed, harder than he could ever remember being in his entire life and with an orgasm screaming for release. It would have to be soon or he'd make a liar out of himself and die from wanting her.

"What do you want, Dini?"

Close enough to see her pulse fluttering, but not touching her yet, Jonas stretched out the seconds as best he could.

"I want you." She muttered the words.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Fuck me."

"How? Tell me. Specifically."

She groaned and her eyelids fluttered down over eyes that were glazed with desire. "I want your cock inside me, Jonas. I want you thrusting deep in me. I want to feel you hard and stretching me. And when you come I want to feel that too."

He bit down on the inside of his mouth. Her words were fuel to his already scorching fire. "Where do you want me to fuck you, Dini? In your cunt? Up your ass? You want to suck me until I come in your mouth? You have to tell me."

Jesus. Where am I getting this shit?

"In my c-c-cunt," she stuttered, color flooding her cheeks and spreading over her breasts. "Oh God, Jonas. *Pleeeeeeease...*"

"Okay." He gripped her hips savagely, not caring if his fingers left marks on her skin. "Put your legs around me."

"Yes, oh yes..."

Silken limbs clamped around his hips, her ankles locking at the base of his spine and digging in as she tried to draw him closer. He held her easily, she was a tiny bit of a thing and he had no problem reaching between them with one hand and thumbing his cock into the right position—cuddled between her swollen pussy lips.

"You ready?" He glanced at her. The furious glare he got in response made him smile.

And then he thrust—once—*hard*.

She exploded on a shriek, the angle of their bodies permitting his groin to crash roughly against her clit. Massive spasms rocked her and rippled up and down the entire length of his cock, straining his already-tenuous hold on himself to the maximum.

He pulled away from her cunt then thrust again, knowing that was all he had left in him.

Even as she shuddered and sobbed her way through her climax he was there, balls tight and hard and trembling as he let go and felt the sizzle of his orgasm detonate low in his spine. He groaned harshly, their voices mingling in the silent room, cries of fulfillment and celebration—the ultimate moment two people can share.

Her legs squeezed him fiercely as he held her against his chest, straddling the footstool in an effort to keep her plastered to his body. Her neck was stretched as her body arched into his, her mouth open, her eyes closed. She was lost in her ecstasy and at that moment Jonas lost himself in his, pumping hard, emptying his balls, most of his guts and probably half his soul into this amazing woman.

How long it lasted, he couldn't say. He was adrift on an ocean that smelled like Dini, steered by a hand that belonged to Dini, clutched inside a slick and silken volcano that looked like Dini.

He'd come before. He'd had massive orgasms before.

But he'd never experienced anything quite like *this*.

Chapter Four

Dini was dreaming, a wonderfully erotic dream about her current favorite movie star. He was between her legs eating her out.

“Oh, Brad, yeah—right there. Do that again.” Her hips shifted and she woke to find the dream a reality.

“Who the hell’s Brad?”

“Jonas?” Dini blinked, surprised to find herself in bed with a man between her thighs.

“You were expecting someone else?”

She could see his grin in the dim light of her apartment and groggily tried to piece her brain back together. But then he dipped his head, licked her clit and she gave up trying to think at all.

Hot and wet, his tongue seemed to have a tracking device built into it, one that was tuned to her most sensitive places. He knew which side to tease, how long to tease it, when and—more importantly—when *not* to suck her clit.

She sighed deeply and sank into the pleasure of his attentions, letting everything fade away but for the slide of such exquisite slippery tenderness around her pussy.

“Mmm.”

Feeling like a well-petted cat, she stretched, languorous limbs sprawled wide, open to whatever Jonas chose to do. She was all his. He could devour her, suck her toes, bite her ears—Dini didn’t care. She was, for that moment, one supremely content and sensual sex machine. And Jonas was oiling the cogs.

Why he was there, in her bed, she wasn't sure. Vaguely remembering him carrying her to the mattress and freeing her from the cuffs, Dini realized she must have fallen asleep within seconds.

Unlike her, she mused. Sleeping next to a man? She hadn't done that since—well, this was a first for her in a long time. She hadn't shown Jonas the door and thanked him. He hadn't given her his phone number nor had she promptly thrown it away, as was her usual routine.

Instead, he'd taken her to bed and tucked himself in beside her, only to wake her from the most delicious dream by doing something even more erotic than Brad probably would've done if it *had* been him tucked between her thighs.

"Oh—oooh—" She gasped a little as Jonas' teeth gently grazed her clit, a ripple of sensation tightening her buttocks and forcing her hips up into his face.

"Wanna come, Dini?" Jonas licked around her mound and the tiny bud he'd found with amazing accuracy.

"Yes please." *Duh.*

"No problem." Jonas shifted a little. "One of my favorite things, making a woman come like this."

Idly, she let a hand riffle through his hair. "You're a rare treasure, Jonas Smith."

"That's me." He chuckled. "Now, if you'll excuse me, I have work to do here."

"Don't let me hold you back."

He took her at her word. Dini's pulse accelerated as Jonas delved between her pussy lips, lapping and licking with increasing enthusiasm. Knowing she was getting wetter by the second, she let her breath out on a slight moan, enjoying every second, anticipating every soft swipe and determined touch.

"Oh *yesss...*" He found one place that gave her exquisite pleasure and sent a shiver of arousal through her entire body. He paid particular attention to it, running his

tongue lightly over it a couple of times, leaving to suck and lick other places, then coming back and doing it all over again.

Responsive to her every move, Jonas was learning to play her body, she realized. And he was a helluva quick study. Her breasts ached and she lowered her arms from above her head to find her nipples and toy with them, electrifying her body with the twin sensations of pleasure.

“Attagirl.” Jonas encouraged her, sliding his hands beneath her buttocks and lifting her as her tension mounted.

Knowing she was drowning in the pleasure, Dini simply surrendered and let her body take over. The room faded away, her brain took a nap and her world narrowed down to one man, one tongue and what he was doing with it.

The sensations built, overlapping, each one driving her higher. Closing her eyes, Dini relaxed into the wave, knowing she was riding it steadily upward, relishing each second but eagerly anticipating the moment it would crest.

Tiny tingles began, deep within her body, stimulated by Jonas’ tongue as it slid ever deeper between her pussy lips, probing and withdrawing then sliding over all those wonderful places he’d discovered.

She tensed as the tingles turned sharper, her muscles contracting with the feel of one finger, then two entering her. In concert with his tongue, Jonas stoked the fire, touching her clit as his fingers gently moved in her cunt.

Dini jumped in surprise as he touched—*something*—some extraordinarily sensitive spot that set off a tiny explosion of pleasure.

“*That’s* what I wanted.” He sounded very satisfied and did whatever it was again, with the same exquisite result. “Hang on, pixie girl.”

Hang on to what? Dini didn’t know, but with the ripples of arousal threatening to swamp her, she clasped her breasts tight just in case this wave turned into a tsunami and washed them away.

And within seconds, she knew it was a distinct possibility. More than just a simple orgasm was rushing toward her. Jonas kept up his gentle stroking deep in her cunt and put his mouth back on her clit. His tongue, his fingers—the dual assault catapulted her toward a blindingly high peak.

She opened her mouth to shriek but managed only a whimper, since at that very moment she broke—and the air left her lungs in a rush.

Blind, helpless and swept away, Dini flew into a place where there was nothing but stars, galaxies and a vortex of interdimensional pleasure. Her entire body shook with spasms that defied description.

She could feel her womb contracting, her legs shuddering, her toes curling and the rest of her trembling as she flew down into a spiral that seemed endless. The heat of Jonas' face as he buried himself in her pussy added to her wild ride, almost as if he was sharing her madness, drinking her climax—pushing her higher with soft touches of his fingertips on that one particular spot.

She couldn't possibly survive this much pleasure. She'd die, a victim of orgasmic overload.

Dini was astonished that she didn't at least pass out, but as the wave finally diminished to mortal proportions, her body unclenched and an amazing feeling of peace replaced the tension that seemed to have held her in its grasp for an eternity.

"Oh *wow*." She whispered the words through a throat that felt hoarse from screams she'd been unable to release.

The bed moved as Jonas slid up beside her and pulled her against his chest. "Hi, pixie girl. How you doin'?"

Dini thought for a moment. "Hello. I wondered where you'd gotten to."

"Sorry. I had a project to attend to."

"Did it work?"

"You tell me."

She grinned and snuggled into his neck. "Oh yeah. You do good work, Jonas. Very thorough with amazing attention to detail."

"Like I said earlier. We aim to please."

Dini sighed sleepily. "You pleased. You *definitely* pleased." She closed her eyes. "This has been real fun, Jonas. Thanks. Goodbye."

And she drifted into sleep, missing the frown that crossed Jonas' face at her words.

* * * * *

"Whoa. Wait up a minute."

Fenny Whitfield reached out across her kitchen table and grabbed Dini's arm before she could help herself to a chunk of cheese. "You're telling me that that's *it*? The man gives you fabulously decadent sex and then it's *goodbye, don't let the door hit you in the ass on the way out?*"

Dini nodded. "Of course. You know that's the way I am. Diva Dini. Never give a repeat performance when it comes to men and sex."

Dee, sitting across from Dini, stared at her intently. "You're full of shit."

"Nope." Dini shook her head. "Full of wine and this really good cheese."

"Dini." Fenny's voice took on an exasperated tone. "He was gone when you woke up?"

"Yep." Dini nodded, refusing to even acknowledge the slight twinge that thought occasioned, someplace deep inside her she wasn't about to explore.

"He left you his number, though, right?" Dee tilted her head to one side.

Dini sighed. These two were not going to be satisfied with juicy details, of course. They'd dig and dig until they got every little drop of information. Because that's what friends did. And right now, Dini was very glad she had them to dig, since she sure as hell didn't want to do it on her own.

"He left me a note." She swallowed. "On my pillow."

"With a rose?" Fenny lifted an eyebrow.

"No. With an ear." She giggled. "Besides, where the hell does one find a rose at six in the morning?"

"He could've swiped one from a garden. There's gardens in Cambridge." Dee wrinkled her nose.

"He's a cop. That'd be theft." Dini smiled.

"I still think it's rather *Van Gogh* of him." Fenny looked skeptical.

"It was one of my fairy ears. I must have left it lying around and he found it."

"So what did he say?" Dee leaned forward, waiting for Dini's answer.

"He said," she took a breath, "he said *If you don't call me, I'll call you*. And there was a number underneath."

"Ahh." Dee looked complacent. "He's got your number, hasn't he?"

"I dunno. I didn't give it to him. I'm anal about giving out phone numbers."

Fenny shook her head. "Dee didn't mean it that way. She meant he's figured you out."

"Huh?" Dini blinked in confusion. "There's nothing *to* figure out. We had great sex. He's a nice guy. That's it. Over and done with."

Dee's snort was loud and dismissive, but before she could follow it up with a pithy comment, Fenny rested her elbows on the table, cupped her face in her hands and stared at Dini. "One thing I don't get."

"What?"

"How the hell did he get up, find an ear, leave you a note and go without waking you?"

Dini fought down a blush. "Well, you see, I'm—er—not real good at waking up in the mornings."

"Damn, girl. You must sleep like the dead, in that case." Dee chuckled. "I thought we outgrew that teenage vampire lifestyle as we aged."

"Some do, I didn't." Dini shrugged. "I live with it and work around it. If I absolutely *have* to get up to be somewhere, I set three alarms. Usually by the third one I'm sort of awake."

"Well, that explains how Jonas snuck out. Probably wasn't much in the way of *snucking* he needed to do." Fenny dismissed the topic with a wave of her hand. "So that was last Thursday. You heard from him since?"

Dini had a feeling that question was coming. But these were her closest friends on the planet. She couldn't lie. "I don't know. I haven't checked my machine."

"*What?*" The outrage was there, on their faces and in their voices as they said the same thing at the exact same moment.

"Why?"

"What the fuck's the matter with you, Dini?"

Oh God. How to explain it? Dini stood and walked to the fridge. "Got any more cheese?" She hoped for a diversion.

It failed. "In the drawer on the right." Fenny answered her question then dived back in. "Bring it here, sit down and stop trying to change the subject. And you might as well bring that other bottle of wine with you. I've a feeling we're going to need it."

Dini did as she was told, mentally girding her loins to face the inevitable inquisition. The three of them had talked about men. They'd talked freely about sex. But it had mostly been focused on Fenny and Dee. This would be the first time Dini had been under the magnifying glass and she wasn't sure she was looking forward to it.

"Okay, babe. Spill the beans." Dee crossed her arms in front of her and waited.

"There aren't any beans to spill, Dee. I have a policy, and you know I do. No more than one night with a guy." She shrugged. "I get bored with repeat performances."

"So let me see if I've got this straight." Fenny frowned. "You get an itch, you find a guy to scratch it. Then it's *hasta la vista*, here's the door and you move on?"

"That pretty much sums it up, yeah." Dini nodded. "Most times it's somebody I run into, we have dinner or a few drinks. If I get that *interested* feeling—you know, the one that heats the pussy and gets the panties damp—then I go for it." She squared her shoulders. "Works for me."

"Efficient, I guess. Saves time and a lot of the fuss and bother." Dee's gaze never left Dini's face.

"Almost clinical, Dini."

"I dunno, Fenny. When you guys put it like that, I suppose it does. But I like these men, don't get me wrong. I don't sleep around. I just don't want—" She paused.

"What, honey?" Fenny leaned forward. "What don't you want?"

Dini made a show of slicing the cheese on the plate and pouring wine into her glass while she considered her answer. She had a pretty good idea of what lay at the root of her "rules for sex". But pulling that out for examination—well, she didn't think she could do it, even with Fenny and Dee.

"I don't want a relationship right now." And that was the truth. Not the whole truth but part of it. "I have two careers, Suzie and my writing. They're both very demanding emotionally—I don't have to tell either of you what it's like getting lost in a story. I won't give Suzie less than my best and I won't compromise on my books either. So between them, there's damn little time left for any kind of long-term thing with a guy."

Again, Dini told herself this was nothing but the truth. "It's not fair to a man to ask him to share me with Suzie and with my muse. I sleep 'til noon if I feel like it and work into the wee hours when the fervor hits or when a deadline's creeping up on me. I need that, I love that—it's who I am and what I do."

"I understand that, Dini. Both of us understand that." Fenny reached out and rested a hand on Dini's wrist. "But I guess what worries us is that all this creative expression you have pouring out of your brain doesn't leave enough time to satisfy your body. Except with some almost anonymous sexual encounters."

Dini frowned. "They're not anonymous, Fenny. Honest. You make me sound like a nympho or a hooker."

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way."

Dee intervened. "She meant that they're *emotionally* anonymous, Dini. You find a nice guy, someone you respond to sexually, you take him to bed and fuck him and you're done. There's more to sex than tab A and slot B. And I know you know that because I've read your books. The sizzle in your sex scenes comes just as much from the emotional passion as it does the physical."

"Exactly." Fenny nodded her approval.

Dini sighed. There was no way to answer that. They were both right.

"So when this really super detective walks into your life—" Dee persisted, "and you tell us he's a *one-off* as well..." She spread her hands wide. "You can see where we have a tough time understanding it."

"Christ, Dini. He found your *G-spot*." Fenny spoke the words with all the rapt awe of a pilgrim at the foot of a miraculous shrine.

"You know, I always wondered if I had one." Dini had to give Fenny a point for that. "I guess I do."

"So logically speaking, turning away the guy who discovered it, who gets to put his flag on it, doesn't make a whole heap of sense." Dee grinned. "After all, it isn't every day a gal gets her own G-spot orgasm, now, is it? Wouldn't you like him to do that again?"

"Puts his *flag* on it?" Fenny sputtered.

"Yeah, you know, like the mountain climbers do when they reach the peak."

"Different kind of *peak*, Dee." Fenny wrinkled her nose at her friend.

"Har har."

"It would have to be a teeny tiny flag, too." Dini thought about it, wondering if there was a way she could work a visual image around that idea into Suzie's next adventure.

Dee rolled her eyes. "Hey." She snapped her fingers in front of Dini's nose. "Was it good stuff? The handcuffs, the G-spot, the whole shebang?"

"Fuck yeah." Dini felt a blush rising over her cheeks and put her palms against them. "It was good sex, okay? Absolutely nothing to complain about. I got off *and* got some experience I'm gonna use in Suzie's strip."

"And what about Jonas?" Fenny's voice was level and quiet.

"What about him?"

"Don't you think he might want to see you again?"

Dini shrugged. "Who knows."

"Dini. When was the last time you were *this* attracted to a guy?" Fenny nailed her with an intense stare.

"Uhh..."

"When was the last time you came not once, but *twice*? When was the last time you were so sexed-out you let a guy crawl into bed with you and *sleep*? And then found yourself waking up to fabulous oral sex and have him climb the impossibly unreal female mountain to plant his flag on your *G-spot*?"

Dini took a moment to unravel the complexity of Dee's monologue. "Uh, never?"

Fenny nailed the point home. "When was the last time you didn't check your answering machine because you were *afraid* he was going to call?"

Dini opened her mouth to deny that assumption—when her cell phone rang. "Shit." She took it out and frowned. "Odd. I don't recognize the number." She shrugged and flipped it open. "Hello."

"Hey, pixie girl."

Dini gulped and took a breath. "Hey. Jonas. This is a surprise."

Fenny and Dee tiptoed from the room, pausing only to grab the wine on the way.

Chapter Five

"A surprise? It wouldn't be if you checked your messages. I've left a dozen or so."

Jonas pressed his cell phone to his ear, blocking out the noise of the restaurant where he'd stopped to grab some food. He'd been on a case—Dini's drug dealers as a matter of fact—and he was tired, happy they'd caught the perps and ready to see the woman who'd haunted him for the last week or so.

And, to all intents and purposes, who had blown him off.

"Uh, sorry. I've been in deadline hell." She sounded...awkward. That was good. He wasn't going to let this one get away without a fight.

"Dini, I want to see you. Tell me when."

"Jonas, look..." She paused.

"Don't do that. Don't give me the line, whatever it is. I refuse to let you dump me, okay?"

"I wasn't going to dump you." It was an irate squawk. "We're not in high school. I don't *dump* guys."

"Then what *do* you call it? You haven't gotten in touch with me. You haven't returned any of my phone calls, or left me a text message or sent up a goddamned smoke signal."

"I know."

"So if that's not an attempt to dump me, I don't know what is. But there's one thing I do know—I will *not* give up on this. I will not walk away from it. I'm sorry but you're under my skin. I need to see you and figure out why."

There was a tiny gurgle of laughter that made Jonas ache from the gut down. His balls tightened at the sound. "It's the fishnets. Get over it."

"*Bullshit.*" Okay, so the fishnets hadn't hurt. But he wasn't going to believe he was *that* shallow. "If it was just the sex, I wouldn't be on the phone right now. I can get sex any time I want it."

"Hah." She snorted. "Not like *that*, you can't."

He grinned. "So you admit it was pretty incredible, huh?"

"I never said it wasn't."

"So let's do it again. And again. Several times. There's no law against having lots of hot sex, Dini. I'm a cop. I know about these things. If we get into areas that might be classed as a felony misdemeanor in this state, I'll be sure and mention it."

There was a second or two of silence. "Exactly *what* constitutes a sexual fel – oh *hell*. Never mind."

"Tell me when I can come see you. We'll discuss the penal code in detail and how it applies to various sexual activities." Jonas uncrossed his legs as his cock lengthened painfully into a constrictive area of his pants. He had no *clue* what on earth they could get busted for, providing they were both consenting adults of legal age.

He was consenting. Damn, he was *more* than consenting. He was ready to run around with a sign on his forehead saying *Gimme hot bondage sex with my pixie girl*.

There was a soft sigh on the other end of the line. "Jonas, I don't do relationships."

"Who's asking you to?"

"You are." Dini sounded tense. "Seeing you more than once would break every rule I've set for myself when it comes to this stuff."

"Rules were made to be broken, Dini. I want you. I want to know more about you, spend more time with you and I've got a whole book of kinky stuff I'm aching to try out. With you."

"Really?" There was no mistaking the undercurrent of interest in Dini's voice.

"Yes, really. I did research."

"Good God. Don't tell me you went to the library and got a book on BDSM."

He laughed. "The Internet, honey. Every damn thing you could ever want to know about anything. Including some incredibly erotic ideas involving— Well, if you don't want to see me, I guess there's no point in my telling you."

"Shit, Smith. You're a bastard, aren't you?"

"If it gets me what I want, yes."

"Look, I wasn't kidding about being on a deadline. I've got some rush edits back and a message that they need a few changes in the next Suzie issue." She paused, made a sound of exasperation and Jonas could almost see her running her hands through her spiky blonde hair.

He waited, scarcely daring to breathe.

"How about Saturday night?"

"Deal. I'll be there at eight."

"God, that was quick. Don't you have to check your schedule or something?"

"Nope. See you Saturday, pixie girl." Jonas hung up before she could change her mind.

And then punched his fist in the air with a muttered "Yessssss."

He'd have gone to her place that very minute if she'd asked him, but this way he got to finish up his research, check out the twenty-seven articles he'd bookmarked but hadn't actually read yet, and also talk to the desk sergeant, whose wife had one of those sex-toy party businesses and call his mother.

Yep, when he saw Dini again, he was going to be ready for her. Ready to counter any arguments she might have about seeing him, ready to strip her naked and do some really wonderful things to her—and ready to lose himself in her, the way he had the first time.

And no way in hell was this going to be the end of it for them. Detective Jonas Smith had a goal. Dini might not know it yet, but they *were* going to start a relationship. All he had to do was convince her it was a good idea.

And he knew that wouldn't be easy. He had to persuade her of something very important. His job had included several psych courses and he'd developed a solid intuition about people. He had a pretty good idea what Dini was afraid of, and it wasn't *beginning* a relationship with him.

It was her fear of *losing* it.

* * * * *

"I did it."

Dini sounded grim as she faced Fenny and Dee, both of whom were watching her with pretended unconcern.

"Did what, Dini?" Fenny sipped her wine.

"Made another date with Jonas for Saturday night." She felt her mouth tremble. "Shit. Shit shit *shit*. I broke my rule. First time ever. I broke my fucking rule." She grabbed the bottle and poured herself a healthy glassful, slopping some over the side as her hand shook. "I'm *so* going to regret this."

"Oh, that was Jonas on the phone?" Cool, calm and collected, Dee blinked at Dini innocently.

"Knock it off. You know damn well it was."

"So what made you change your mind?" asked Fenny.

"He did. I don't know. The devil made me do it. I'm nuts."

Dee bit her lip as she tried not to laugh. "Honey, stop it. You're going to have to admit that you really like Jonas. I mean *reeeeeallly* like him."

Fenny nodded. "And great sex is always great sex, Dini."

"It's not about the sex."

Two snorts and somewhat disbelieving looks greeted her words.

"Okay it's about the sex." Dini ran her fingers through her hair and tugged on the short spikes. "No it's *not*. That's what's scaring the crap out of me." She looked up at

her friends. "It's not about the sex. You're right, Dee. I really *do* like him." Dini paused. "Shit. Shit shit *shit*."

"Repetition. Bad thing for a writer." Fenny shook a finger at her.

"I don't see the problem." Dee frowned. "You like the guy, he's hell on wheels in bed and he wants to see you again. Two and two make a very neat four here, as far as I can tell."

"It's not that." Dini sighed. "It's just I'm breaking my rule, you know?"

"Silly rule, Dini." Fenny's gentle tone took the sting out of her words. "You're afraid of going any further with Jonas, aren't you? Going beyond *liking* the guy."

Staring into her wine glass, Dini nodded silently.

"And this might be the one guy you could — um — *more than like*."

"Yes."

Dini folded her arms on the table and laid her head on them with a groan, missing the glance of understanding that flashed between Dee and Fenny. "I daren't."

Fenny reached over and rubbed Dini's shoulder. "Dini, sometimes things happen whether we want them to or not. You can't decide when or when not to like someone. That decision doesn't come from the brain, it comes from your heart."

Dini snuffled into her sleeves. "I don't want to hurt him. I don't want to hurt *me*."

"Don't be a coward, Dini." Dee's voice was brusque. "You're running away from a good thing here. You're letting your fear get in the way of what could change your life for the better."

"I know." Dini lifted her head. "I know that, Dee. But—" A lump threatened to choke her as she struggled to voice her emotions. She took a breath, let it out and sat up. "Whoever said *'tis better to have loved and lost*—well, they were fucking nuts. I've loved and lost. Too many times. Losing my dad, then Alan—I can't go through pain like that again. I just *can't*."

Dini was horrified to feel the sting of tears at the back of her eyes. She glared angrily at the wine. "And I think I've had enough of *that*. It's making me stupid."

"Aww, sweetheart." Fenny moved to her and hugged her. "We understand. Life is full of things we don't expect and some of them tear our hearts to pieces. But we go on. You've gone on. Not only have you carried on living, you've done it with flair and success."

"That's right, Dini." Dee leaned forward. "Look at what you've accomplished. You've got books out there, you've created every guy's dream date in Suzie – and now you have a chance to create something else. Something more personal. With Jonas."

"Take a chance, honey." Fenny reached for her hand and held it tight. "You're not alone this time. We're here. We'll catch you if you fall. But you have to take that chance first because there's a part of your life that has gone into hibernation. The part that heats up when there's another body in your bed. The part that gets to do stuff with him other than tear up the sheets. The part you need to share with a man."

"And those other parts you share with him are sure gonna get a workout too."

Dini giggled at Dee's words even as she swiped the back of her hand across her eyes. "I dunno, girls. It's not easy."

"Nobody said it was." Dee smiled. "But it's worth it if he's the right guy. Worth taking the risk. None of us know where we'll be tomorrow, Dini. We *have* to make today count."

Dini gulped. "And he's a frickin' cop, too. Talk about a high-risk occupation."

"And librarians don't get hit by buses?" Fenny quirked an eyebrow.

"You know what I mean." Dini shook her head.

"Look, just have fun Saturday night. This is really no big deal." Dee cupped Dini's chin in her hand and stared her in the eyes. "Get yourself laid again. Have multiple orgasms. That's all he's asking. It ain't a proposal of marriage, honey."

"Well, if I must..." Dini managed to slump wearily. "Multiple orgasms, huh?"

"Remember that G-spot."

"Hmm."

"I thought it was *Remember the Alamo*."

"Oh, for *Chrissake*—"

"He got your Hitchhiker's Guide reference, didn't he? The *Zaphod Beeblebrox* quote?"

Dee snickered as Fenny delivered the *coup de grace*.

Dini put her head back down on her folded arms—and groaned. She was caught. Hook, line and sinker.

* * * * *

"Hey, Ma."

"Jonas, darling. What a lovely surprise."

There was a clatter on the other end of the line and Jonas grinned at the possibilities the sound could indicate. "Did I catch you at a bad time?"

"Nope. Just painting the cat."

He paused. "What color?"

"What? Oh—no, silly. I'm using the cat as a feature in a painting." There was another sound, suspiciously like a meow of irritation. "Shit. Get back here you ungrateful feline." His mother sighed. "They make great subjects, but I can't get the little fuckers to sit still for more than two seconds flat."

"Ma." Jonas winced. "You're swearing again."

"Like you've never heard it before." His mother sounded amused. One of the advantages of having ex-hippies as parents. "What can I do for you, sweetheart?"

"Is cousin Lucy still down on the Cape?"

His mother was silent for a moment. "You mean Leather Lucy?"

"Yep."

"Hmm. Last I heard she was up in Hull at your uncle Jake's place for a few weeks. Some issue with her latest lover."

"Oh cool." Jonas sat up. "You got her cell number by any chance?"

This wasn't a casual question, since Jonas knew his mother had every cell phone number of every single member of the family and updated the database regularly. She might have worn love beads and burned her bra in an earlier generation, but his mom took her job as head of the family quite seriously.

She reeled off a number for Jonas then cleared her throat. "So I gotta ask here, honey, since I'm your mother and it's my duty. You looking to arrest a lesbian—or date one?" Since Leather Lucy had publicly announced her sexual preference years ago, this wasn't an unexpected question. "Because no matter how good you are in bed—and being *my* child I expect you to be right up there with the all-time sexual champions—I don't think you can un-lesbian a woman by fucking her, no matter how well you perform."

"Jesus, Ma." Jonas blushed, in spite of the fact he was ten miles away from his mother. "No, I'm not looking to date a lesbian. And I haven't arrested any lately, either."

"Hookay. Then it's the leather and BDSM stuff." She paused. "Right?"

"Couldn't I just want to say hi to Lucy?"

"No." There was a maternal snort on the other end of the line. "Spill."

Jonas sighed then shook his head at himself. "Can't. Not yet."

"Someone special?"

"Maybe."

"Special enough that you'd go see Lucy for tips?"

"Possibly."

"Don't hurt her." His mother's voice was quiet but firm.

"Hey. You know me better than that."

"Yes I do." There was another clatter and a voice in the background. "Shit on a shingle. Your father's burned his finger with that damned soldering iron. I *told* him it wouldn't work on a delicate piece of jewelry, but would he listen? *Nooooo.*"

Jonas grinned. "Go baby him. Tell him I said hi."

"I will, honey." She sighed. "Jonas, if she's special...well, just treat her right. Then bring her to meet us, okay?"

"You bet, Mom."

"I love you, child o'mine."

"Love you too." Jonas heard the phone disconnect and found he was still smiling. Truly his parents were a mixed blessing. Retired, entertaining themselves with a variety of creative hobbies that seemed to differ from month to month, they were anything but the typical mom and pop.

And he adored them. A smile creased his face as he imagined how they'd get on with Dini. Her whimsical and flamboyant personality would fit right in—and God, his mother would be totally enchanted with his pixie girl.

There were none of the uptight New England social niceties about his family. They'd always listened to their own drumbeat and followed their hearts instead of the paths more traditionally available, and they'd encouraged their kids to do the same albeit with reservations about Jonas' choice of career.

His oldest sister was a screenwriter in Hollywood, his youngest was part of an artists' collaborative in the Berkshires, weaving stunning warm things out of wool she personally collected from local sheep.

He had two brothers who ran their own plumbing business and then there was Jonas—a *cop*. The standing joke was that Megan was about to write a movie revolving around a guy who carried a weapon beneath a woolly poncho and had the best bathroom fixtures in the known galaxy.

It always got a laugh at Thanksgiving. And Dini would get it, he knew.

All he had to do was *get* Dini.

He glanced at the scrawled numbers on the notepad and reached once more for his cell phone. Time to pick Leather Lucy's brain. He needed some basic information on this whole BDSM scene. Not the deep stuff, but the basics. Just enough to weave some interesting coils around this ethereal but sexual pixie who haunted him day and night. Enough to bind her to him in more ways than the obvious.

Because the more hours that passed, the more Jonas knew his single days were numbered. He'd found what his Mom would call *the one*. He couldn't imagine living his life the way he'd enjoyed it before that fateful night. There'd be something major missing from it.

He wasn't about to let that happen, even if he had to tie Dini down and spank her white and curvy bottom until she said yes.

Pushing down a surge of lust at the mere thought, Jonas dialed his cousin.

Chapter Six

Saturday arrived far too quickly for Dini's peace of mind. She'd thrown herself into her work in a futile effort to avoid thinking about it—and *him*.

There were two chapters of a new book on her hard drive, and a new Suzie adventure taking shape. The fact that this time Suzie had set her sights on a guy who looked suspiciously like a certain detective was, Dini told herself, sheer coincidence. As was the title, *Steampunk Suzie and the South Street Sleuth*.

The light was dimming as she leaned back in her chair, rubbed her cricked spine and sighed. "Face it, you blind idiot. You're stuck on this guy." She gazed blankly at a mostly naked and seductive Suzie who was about to persuade the villain to part with a vital piece of information and give Suzie the chance to go see her new man again. "You're as obsessed about him as Suzie is."

She pushed away from her desk. Time to shower up and find something non-Suzie-ish to wear so that Jonas didn't think she was some hot-to-trot slut who only wanted his body.

She was lying again. She wanted his body. She'd been dreaming of his body and how he'd made her feel. She'd given her vibrator a workout over the past few days every time she'd written or drawn anything that made Jonas leap back into her brain.

Shit shit shit.

The shower simply invigorated her skin, sending rivulets of water over her breasts and her thighs, reminding her of Jonas' tongue. Every fucking thing she touched reminded her of Jonas.

She turned off the water and grabbed the towel, angry at herself for hiding from the truth. Jonas had touched more inside her than her damned G-spot, nice though that was. Her skin turned pink as she dried off the moisture with a heavy hand, trying to

rub away the fact that there was at last a man in her life she could really fall for in a big way.

Slicking on lotion with an absent move, Dini analyzed her emotions as clinically as she could. There was none of the fresh excitement she'd felt with Alan. She was older now, immune perhaps to that breathless tingle of first love. And she wasn't the type of woman to be overly impressed with sexual skills, fun though they were.

No, there was something more, something deeper she'd found in Jonas. And it was something she'd connected with on a level that surprised the crap out of her. She'd enjoyed his humor, how he'd made her laugh.

He was intelligent, quick with the comeback and challenged her to think—even while he was making her feel.

She'd never be bored with him, that was for certain. And he had a look about him that was almost old-fashioned in an odd way. Something that said once he took a woman to his side, she'd be there forever. *His*.

She shivered as she grabbed a simple, white, man's shirt and slipped it on. No corsets or wings tonight. He needed to see Dini as she was, not through a veil of Suzie-stuff. She needed to show him the simple side of Nadine Summers. Perhaps he wouldn't like her so much and lose interest.

And the dart of distress that shot through her at the thought surprised her into reaching for her fishnet tights. No point in courting disaster. She dug into her closet and emerged with a pair of fire-engine-red spiked heels.

The hell with it. Suzie wouldn't lie down and take a nap just because *Dini* wanted to look as normal as she could. A lot of Dini was in Suzie and vice versa. If Jonas couldn't handle a schizophrenic writer then that was his problem, not Dini's.

The knock on the door startled her out of her internal soliloquy and Dini hurried to answer it. Clad in fishnet tights, red spiked heels and a man's white shirt.

And nothing else at all.

Ooops. Too late. She grinned to herself. *I'm a wicked bitch. I love me.*

Jonas' gulp was audible. His eyes widened and the look on his face was, as they say, priceless.

"Hi, Jonas."

There was a whuff of air as he blew a breath out through his lips.

"Um – are you coming in?"

He blinked, his gaze wandering up and down her body from her damp, curly hair to her red shoes.

"Jonas?" She snapped her fingers in front of him. "Earth to Jonas."

"Wait." He held up a hand. "I gotta regenerate some of those brain cells you just fried."

Dini smirked. She couldn't help it. No makeup, no wings – no overtly Suzie stuff. Just a pair of fishnets and sexy shoes. Men were such – *men*. Simple creatures that could be rendered speechless by a visual image and a woman's legs. She wasn't complaining since not only was that one of the reasons Suzie was a huge success, it had also worked to turn Jonas into a stuttering, staring and nearly drooling worshipper.

Yeah, she wasn't complaining at all.

"Well at least come in so I can shut the door before I freeze my ass off, okay?"

He nodded, swallowing again as he walked in with a bag in his hand and Dini closed the door behind him.

"Probably saying you look *incredible* is a bit redundant at this point, isn't it?"

"Yes, but it's nice to hear anyway." Dini glanced at the bag. "You bring beer or a small polar bear or something?"

"Nah, just a change of underwear."

Dini's eyebrows lifted. "Christ. Whose briefs are you wearing? *Godzilla's*?" The bag was bulging at the sides.

He chuckled. "I'm kidding." Then he stepped in front of her, grabbed her chin and lifted her face as he bent toward her. "Hello, pixie girl."

Dini parted her lips to answer, but his kiss muffled her response. Warm and encouraging, Jonas licked along her soft skin, teasing her into opening her mouth, then slipping inside.

His taste was familiar, welcoming Dini back into the comfort of his embrace. He was damn good at kissing, taking his time, letting their tongues play gently as their lips shifted naturally into alignment.

Her arms slid around his neck even as his hands encircled her, ending up cupped around her butt as he lifted her a little into his body. Dini could feel the smile on his lips and felt her own curving in response.

She opened her eyes a tiny bit, enjoying the nearness of his face, the little crooked hairs on one eyebrow, the slight movements of his eyelids as he deepened their kiss. Then he sucked on her tongue and her thoughts scattered, a heated darkness descending as his fingers squeezed her buttocks and their bodies crushed together.

Someone moaned—yes, it was probably her. Dini sensed the dawning of an insatiable hunger deep in her body. And it wasn't just a hunger for sexual fulfillment, although that was firing up, without a doubt.

This was a hunger to stay locked against this man, to relish the protection of his arms around her. To lay her head on his shoulder and let the world go away for a while, knowing she was safe.

Scared by the intensity, Dini pulled back. "Helluva way to say hello, Detective."

He licked his lips and smiled. "Yeah. Isn't it, though? Beats the crap out of a handshake, any day." He squeezed her butt once more. "By the way, nice ass, Ms. Summers."

It was Dini's turn to gulp. She turned it into a cough and nodded at the bag. "Thanks. So why don't you show me what you got in there, Smith, while I grab us a drink. Beer okay?"

"Beer is always okay. Beer is the creation of the Gods. The manna from the cool streams of Olympus."

"And it was on special. Buy two six packs, get another half off."

"Plebian."

"That's me." Dini walked back from her fridge with a cold one in each hand. "I don't believe in wasting energy washing glasses." She handed him the bottle and clinked hers against it. "Cheers."

They both took a swallow, then Dini watched as Jonas unzipped his bag and delved inside. "Exhibit A." He produced a long bar with what looked like some sort of cuff on either end. "Ankle spreaders."

She blinked.

Next came something long and swishy, furry lengths attached to a leather handle. "High-class flogger. Soft and thuddy, not productive of a stinging sensation, I'm told."

Dini blinked again, knowing her eyes were widening, but helpless to stop them.

"And of course, the essentials—" Red leather, fur-lined handcuffs appeared, followed by several lengths of red silk scarves. And, incongruously, a peacock feather. "Good, it didn't break on the way here." He glanced at her. "Pretty delicate things, these feathers. Dunno how peacocks live with 'em."

"Uh, yeah."

"In case we decide to try something different..." A small rope of varying sized beads appeared, making Dini shiver as she stared at her first up-close-and-personal encounter with anal beads.

"Then there's this." Light flashed off a small tool with a prickly-looking wheel spinning on its tip. "The Wartenburg Wheel. A must for the home BDSM enthusiast."

Dini nodded. "Right." *What the fuck?*

"I think that's it." Jonas closed the bag and turned to her. "Everything an author could want to do some intense research into this stuff. Did I forget anything?"

Dini shook her head and stared at him. "I—uh—"

Jonas smiled. "Dini, I know this is supposed to be a date. I probably should've made reservations for us at some swanky restaurant, plied you with an excellent wine and fed you oysters and caviar." He ran a hand through his hair. "But I've got a confession to make. Since that night we spent together, I haven't been able to get you out of my mind. It's been a long time since I've lusted after a woman so much I gotta go spend time in do-it-yourself mode just to take the edge off." His grin turned sheepish. "And it wasn't much help."

"Oh." The room was spinning a little for Dini as she listened to him bare his soul.

"And all the dinners and all the wine would only lead to one thing, and we both know it. There'll be time for food. Time for all that other stuff. Right now, all I can think of is getting you naked and playing with you. It's all I've been able to think of for the past couple of days." He waved a hand at the toys on the table. "Will you play with me, Dini?"

His eyes were hot and intense, his cheeks flushed a little and Dini could see the pulse beating at the base of his neck. He stood quietly, but an air of tension radiated from him and the bulge in his jeans sang its own song of arousal.

What could she do but follow her heart? She nodded. "Yes, Jonas. I'll play."

He sighed with relief. "Thank God. I *hate* oysters."

She giggled. "Me too. I hate caviar even more." Reaching out, Dini let a finger brush across the fur of the flogger tails. "Oooh. Soft." Then she tapped the ankle spreader bar and looked up. "How do we do this?"

"Hmm. Let's see."

Jonas wandered around the room, turning off some lights and turning on others, leaving the bed illuminated but the rest of the room in shadows. Then he shrugged out of his jacket, toed off his shoes and pulled his socks from his feet. "Better." His shirt followed, and then he flopped down onto Dini's bed, all bare chest and sexy grin. "Now let's get started. I think this is where you entice me with your body."

"Oh really?" She angled a pointed gaze at his crotch and the seriously distended fly. "Doesn't look like much enticing will be required."

"Hey. Get in game mode, pixie girl." His eyes roamed her legs and met hers on the way back up. "I'll never hurt you, Dini. This is all in fun. You do understand that, don't you? I'm not into pain or doing anything to a woman she doesn't like."

Dini nodded. "It sounds stupid, I know, but I trust you, Jonas. Getting into stuff like this should take a lot longer than one night together. I'm not a fool, but I don't know much about it either."

He shifted his shoulders onto her pillow and folded his arms across his chest. "I agree. I had to do some research into it myself. For the record, I don't have any of that stuff around my place. I had to borrow it."

"Really?" Dini quirked an eyebrow. "From the evidence room of one of your kinky arrest cases?"

He snorted. "No. From my cousin. She's into that stuff." He grinned. "She's also a lesbian."

"She sounds a fascinating woman."

"She is. But not nearly as fascinating as the one I'm lookin' at right now. And waiting to see get naked."

It was a pointed hint and Dini took it as such, moving to the end of the bed and reaching for the post. "Hmm. Well, maybe we should see what we can do about that." She let one hand drift to the front of her shirt and began slowly undoing buttons. "If you hit *that*—" Dini pointed at the tiny music player next to her bed, "I can do this to music."

"Hell yeah." Jonas leaned over, fiddled with some switches and grinned when a soft bluesy rhythm surrounded them. "Oh yes, *indeed*."

Dini let her hips begin to sway in time with the music. She loved the subtle sexuality of this song and tended to let it play during her private intimate moments with her vibrator. Having Jonas watch her strip to it was sooooo much better.

And Jesus, it was turning *her* on something fierce.

Dini channeled every stripper's move she'd ever seen. There had been about three, so she wasn't exactly an expert, but she managed to hide her naked breasts as she shrugged her shirt down over her shoulders and glanced behind her at Jonas. He was lounging against her quilt in apparent enjoyment, but she could see his muscles tensing at each and every twitch, every slithering dip of her body and every sway that threatened to reveal her nakedness.

"You are *killing* me, pixie girl." The growl was low and almost shocked Dini, who was busy losing herself in the art of stripping. A bolt of sexual heat jarred her pussy as her shirt fell away and her nipples beaded with arousal and cool air.

Turning to Jonas, she leaned provocatively against the bedpost and struck a pose. "Well?"

"Jesus Christ, woman. You are a miracle of nature." He made a slurping sound as he licked his lips. "Leave the fishnets on for a bit and come here, pixie girl."

Dini slowly lifted a leg, complete with spiked shoe, and rested it on the mattress, knowing Jonas would get a full frontal shot of her pussy as she did so.

It was blatant, sexual and empowering, seeing the effect her moves had on this poor helpless man. He did everything but drool and pant. Okay, he *was* panting. Or at least breathing more quickly as she pushed herself up onto the mattress, standing with legs apart, hands on hips, towering over him. Keeping her balance in those damn heels wasn't easy, but she did it, for the sheer pleasure of this moment. Of being in total control and yet knowing soon she'd surrender all of it.

When Jonas' gaze fell to her pussy, Dini was lost. She couldn't *wait* for his touch all over her body.

It was time. "Jonas? Get the toys."

* * * * *

His fingers felt like overstuffed sausages as he fumbled with the buckles on the contraption that was supposed to turn Dini into his hobbled submissive. Lucy had assured Jonas the ankle spreader thingy was both kinky and a turn-on for the woman.

Jonas had trusted her, but cursed her now for not mentioning that it was also a turn-on for whoever was *doing* the buckling. His cock was on fire, burning and throbbing as Dini's pussy faced him from between legs held apart by the rod affixed to either ankle.

"Is that okay for you?"

Flat on her back, watching him interestedly from beneath lowered eyelids, Dini nodded. "It's...strange. I can't move my legs together at all." She fidgeted. "But it doesn't hurt."

"Good." He leaned back on his heels and surveyed his handiwork. They were both naked, Jonas having regretfully told Dini to ditch the fishnets and the heels. He had enough to think about with all these toys. No need to add the distraction of Dini in those erotic pantyhose. He'd even killed the music. He was determined to make this good for her and try not to come all over her in the process.

"Jonas?"

"Mmm?" He dragged his gaze away from her sweet shining pussy.

"It's...arousing. Knowing I can't do a damn thing to stop you from seeing all my...er...girl parts." Color flushed Dini's cheeks.

Jonas chuckled. "*Girl parts*? This from a woman who creates Suzie Steampunk, the anal sex goddess and do-me star of the hottest comic strip out there?"

She sniffed disdainfully. "That's Suzie. It's different when they're *my* girl parts."

"Yeah." Jonas, helpless to resist a natural urge, leaned over her and licked the aforementioned girl parts with enthusiasm. "You're right. Yours taste like heaven. Dunno what Suzie's taste like."

A squeak, followed by a moan and a shudder, was all the answer Jonas needed. "It's working, isn't it?" He reached for two silk scarves. "Let's kick it up a notch."

Dini's eyes fluttered open. "Hoookay..." She licked her lips. "But I gotta say this whole scene – well, just be careful what you touch. I'm kinda turned on right now."

"Message received and understood."

Jonas allowed himself a moment of pride. He was good at this shit, even though he said so himself. Of course, with anyone else but Dini –

She lifted her wrist so that he could tie the scarf around it and then secure her arm to one of the bedposts. "I think I'm going to have to move a bit if you want to get the other one too." She twisted her head from side to side.

"Shush. You let me worry about the details, okay?" He tied a knot neatly and tested the tension on the scarf. "I want you focusing on all the wicked things I'm planning on doing to your body once you're under my control."

He watched her throat move as she swallowed. "Wicked?"

"Oh yeah. *Very* wicked. I have a lifetime of wicked to draw upon. Not to mention my *Notes on Wicked Things to do to Dini*, a small volume I've been working on for the last few days." He secured the other wrist. "You're not the only one who can write, you know."

She giggled. "Can I read it?"

Jonas stepped away and looked at her, spread taut and open to him. "Hell no. You're gonna *live* it, pixie girl."

Chapter Seven

The bubble of laughter bursting from her throat shocked Dini. She was actually laughing. *During sex.*

She was turned on, wetter than a river between her legs, tingling with arousal from toes to eyelashes – and *laughing*. It was totally amazing.

Jonas was grinning too as he wagged his eyebrows and produced his peacock feather. “You know, there’s a lot to be said for this bondage stuff.”

He proceeded to turn her laughter into moans and the occasional squeal as he ran the feather over all her super-sensitive *girl parts*. It was half tickle and half caress, and all erotic as anything Dini could have created for Suzie.

Her breasts were aching and swollen, the nipples hard buds that tightened even more when swept with the delicate fronds and a cool draft of air. Dini closed her eyes, letting her body send messages to her brain.

Focusing on the sensations, she let go of as many other distractions as she could. There – that was Jonas kneeling beside her, running the feather down toward her hip and making her squirm as he hit a particularly ticklish spot.

And there – oh *God* – her clit, her lower belly, her navel – the feather traveled over the same path again and again, never staying long enough in the one place she wanted it so badly.

She could smell Jonas, a musky man smell that intensified as she felt him move – then all her focus went to hell as his mouth closed around her breast. He’d suckled her like this the last time, pulling her small mound into his mouth, teasing her nipple with the back of his tongue, drawing her heart out of her body as he did so.

She felt surrounded by him, captured by him—to use a four-dollar word she felt *enraptured* by him. The writer portion of her brain nodded approvingly. That was indeed the right word for this moment in time.

When the feather returned to tease her pussy lips, the dual assault on breast and clit drove her nearly insane and she screamed as her hips lifted up off the bed, her legs caught by the bar separating her ankles.

“Fucking Christ.” She hissed as her spine arched. “Jonas, for God’s sake...”

“Mmm.” He released her breast and blew cold air on it.

Dini’s skin goose-bumped in concert with his breath. “I can’t take much more.”

“Sure you can.” He slid from the bed. “This will help.” A third scarf appeared in his hands and Jonas leaned over and kissed her thoroughly. “Trust me.” He covered her eyes. Tightly.

Trapped in darkness, Dini sucked in air and explored the sensation. With her eyes closed she’d been able to sense what Jonas might be doing. But that had been by choice. This? This wasn’t her choice. She was blind to him. Reliant on her senses by necessity rather than curiosity.

It was...different.

And more intense. Something more than her sight had been taken away. Dini found herself in a world where every iota of her being was focused on the man in the room with her.

If he moved, she felt the movement of the bed more clearly or the draft of air against her naked body. She could trace his steps in her mind by the sound of his feet on her floor.

And when there was nothing but silence—she held her breath, only to let it loose in a yell when something thudded loudly onto the bed beside her.

“Christ, Jonas. I nearly wet myself.”

"How could you tell?" Fingers dipped into her pussy, smearing her liquids onto the skin of her thighs. "You're soaked already."

Another thud, another jump. This time he'd hit the sheets between her calves. She could still feel the lash of the air as he flipped the flogger around.

"You ready for this?" One more solid thud close beside her shook her hips.

Dini nodded and gritted her teeth. "Yeah."

She waited.

And waited.

And then cried out as soft furry lashes drifted gently from kneecap to groin and up over her breasts.

"I will never hurt you, pixie girl. I can't hit you with anything. Not even these." He brushed the flogger tails over her breasts. "You're too precious."

His body weighed down the mattress beside her and she instinctively parted her lips for his kiss. He was there, claiming her mouth hungrily, thrusting his tongue deep inside as he shifted, rapping his stiff cock into her skin.

Dini sensed his hand moving, fingertips dancing around her belly and down toward her aching pussy. She moaned into his mouth, lifting her hips as best she could, urging him to touch her where it ached the most.

He pulled back. "Patience."

Dini growled low in her throat. "Jonas Smith, I swear I'll make you regret this." She shook her legs, rattling the cuffs at her ankles. "If ever there was a woman ready for fucking, I'm *her*, you idiot."

"Mmm-hmm."

Agreeing with her wasn't helping his case as far as Dini was concerned. She didn't know if she could get a killer cramp from an unresolved orgasm, but she was beginning to believe it was a strong possibility.

The bed stilled as Jonas moved away from her. Straining her ears, Dini listened for him, detecting some movement nearby then swallowing at the unmistakable sound of a condom being unwrapped.

Thank the Gods – at *last*.

With a little wiggle of her hips, Dini waited eagerly for the touch of his cock against her pussy.

What she got wasn't exactly what she was expecting. A shudder on the bar between her ankles as it was grasped and the next thing she knew, both her legs were held high in Jonas' hand.

"Eeeeek." Lying with her pussy on display was one thing – *this* came perilously close to the one time she'd had an internal gynecological exam.

"Shh." Jonas calmed her. "Relax."

"Easy for you to say." She snorted the words as she felt a hand caress the inside of her thighs. God, he knew how to gentle her, how to stroke her just right.

Breathing easier, she focused on his touch, then sighed when it was withdrawn. And squeaked again when a cold slick finger slid between her butt cheeks and began to massage the tight ring of muscles lurking there.

"Feel good?"

"Mmrffmplfflll..." It wasn't a real word but it did cover the *what-the-fuck-are-you-doing-playing-around-my-asshole-you-asshole* sentiment raging through Dini's brain. It raged even more when she felt the cold touch of a bead against one butt cheek.

Dear God, he'd pulled the anal beads from his bag.

"Tell me if you don't like this."

The slick lubricant had softened her skin enough that Jonas was able to easily press one hard bead past the barrier and into her anus.

"Oh *shit*..." Dini gasped.

"Please don't."

A gurgle of surprised laughter erupted from her throat, and Jonas took advantage of the suddenly relaxed muscles to press another bead home. Dini was lost, lost in laughter, lost in the sensation of having something cool and smooth shoved up her ass and lost in the raging, clawing need to erupt in the all-time champion orgasm to end all orgasms.

And completely lost in Jonas Smith.

Trembling on the verge of a physical cataclysm, Dini was almost relieved to feel Jonas move beneath the spreader bar and lower it behind him as he positioned himself between her legs.

She found she could touch him now, grip him a little with her thighs if she tried hard enough. And she tried, even as Jonas slid his knees close and lifted her body a little, resting her bead-filled butt on his lap.

"Ah, yeah."

The head of his cock nuzzled around in her wetness and came to rest against her pussy lips. His voice was low and a little strained – Dini wished she could see his face.

"Wanna get fucked, pixie girl?"

There were a thousand and one responses to that question. Some funny, some sarcastic, some demanding, some eloquent. And not one of them came to Dini at that moment.

The world had disappeared, only the two of them remained in the entire universe. So she answered from her heart.

"Yes, Jonas. Yes. Please fuck me."

"It will be –" His cock penetrated her. "My –" A little bit more. "Pleasure."

With one thrust, Jonas filled her, his cock stretching her a little in spite of the free-flowing juices that eased his way.

They both groaned, simultaneous sounds of satisfaction and desire. Dini could feel his hot hardness inside her, coupled with the teasingly strange sensation of the beads in her anus.

She moaned as he started to move, slowly at first but picking up the pace within seconds as if he, too, was on the edge.

It wouldn't take long, Dini knew. She'd been holding this orgasm at bay for what seemed like an eternity and if Jonas did — *that* — just a couple more times...

"Fucking *Christ*, Dini—" Jonas rammed into her, a fiercely savage thrusting that told her of a man pushed beyond his limits.

She took him willingly, echoing his moves with answering thrusts of her own as best she could.

His groin crashed against her clit as his cock penetrated deep inside her body and she could swear she felt the hard rippling of the beads as Jonas moved over where they lay, concealed only by a thin internal membrane.

They both surrendered to the inevitable and when Jonas—with what she later realized was incredible presence of mind—ripped the beads out of her ass...

* * * * *

"Well?"

"And?"

Both Fenny and Dee were leaning forward, mouths agape, staring at Dini.

She grinned at them. "I came my brains out. So did he. Must've been the longest simultaneous orgasm on record."

"Wow." Fenny slumped and fanned herself.

"Holy *crap*." Dee grabbed her wine and took a long drink. "You so rock, Dini."

"What happened next?" Fenny made a *tell-me-all* motion with her hand.

“Oh, you know. The usual. Waves crashing on the shore, fireworks exploding, suns going nova. All that kind of stuff.”

Dee snorted. “Not *that*. Afterwards. The post-coital dialogue.”

Dini laughed. “Cuddles. Lots of lovely cuddles. I think by then we were both too damn tired to do anything else *but* cuddle.” She reached for her glass. “Oh and he did untie me too. And that felt nice. We never did get around to trying out that wheel he brought. Not that I don’t like the toy thing and it’s cool for some different fun, but when you get right down to it, sometimes the tried and true ways work just as well.”

“I hear you.” Dee laughed back. “So gimme more deets on this anal bead business.”

Fenny watched and listened to her friends as they did what women had done for eons. Talked about sex and men. The gender-based sisterhood remained intact, in spite of cell phones, the Internet and plastic surgery. There were some things that women could only share with other women.

And a discussion about anal beads was apparently one of them. Fenny smiled to herself. That might have been because Dini was never a woman to hold anything back. And looking at her today, Fenny knew there was a lilt to her voice and a light shining in her face that hadn’t been there before.

Dini was happy. Truly *happy* today – not just content with her life and her world. She’d found that tiny something else, a warmth perhaps, or an ability to share her heart. Whatever it was, Jonas had done it, put that little glow of happiness deep into Dini’s eyes and Fenny would be forever grateful to him.

She took a breath. “Dini? What happens now?”

“Now?” Dini blinked.

“Yes, now, honey. With you and Jonas.”

“And the Diva Dini rules for sexual engagements.” Dee cocked her head inquisitively.

Dini thought for a moment or two, twirling the stem of her wineglass between her fingers. "You know, if it hadn't been for you guys I might have blown him off." She shrugged. "I owe you. Big time."

Fenny shook her head. "No you don't. That's what friends do for each other. And answer the question." A chuckle took the sting out of her demand.

"He's pretty special, Fenny." Dini glanced up. "Incredibly special as a matter of fact. Two nights together and already I know that if I hadn't dumped those stupid rules I'd have missed out on—well, besides anal beads and ankle spreaders—I'd have missed out on learning something about *me*. About how I look at life. And men. And stuff." She waved her hand around to demonstrate *stuff*.

"Agreed." Fenny nodded.

"So." Dini's shoulders rose and fell as she sucked in a lungful of air. "I'm going to keep on seeing him. We're going to see each other. A *lot* if he has his way." She smirked. "I think he likes me."

"No shit." Dee sputtered over her wine.

"And you? Do you *like* him?" Fenny winced. "Jesus. This is worse than high school. Next thing you'll want me to pass him a note in recess."

"I led a hectic life in high school, but I gotta say it never included anal beads." Dee lifted one eyebrow at Fenny.

"Point taken, but don't get me off course here."

"Sorry." Dee looked unrepentant.

"I know what you're asking, guys." Dini let go of the wineglass and linked her fingers together in front of her. "And the answer is *yes*. I'm chucking out the Diva Dini rules. I'm going to stick with Jonas for a while and see where it goes."

As if by mutual consent, Fenny and Dee clinked glasses, took a sip and then put them down to applaud.

Dini stood and curtsied. "Thank you. Thank you verra much."

"That was *not* a good Elvis impression." Dee snorted.

"You got my point." Dini sat again. "Is it going to get serious? I dunno. *Could* it get serious?" She chewed thoughtfully on her bottom lip. "Possibly."

"Well let me ask you this." Fenny gazed at Dini. "If you thought another woman was hitting on him..." She let the question hang in the air.

Dini snickered. "He has a gun. A big one. And probably knows good places to hide the bodies."

"I rest my case." Fenny smiled smugly. "You're stuck on him. You got it *bad*, girl."

"Why, Miz Dini." Dee fluttered an imaginary fan in front of her and channeled Scarlett O'Hara. "You done found yourself a real *liiiiive* suitor, honeychile."

Fenny rolled her eyes. "Talk about lousy impressions."

Dee blew a raspberry at her and continued. "My point is that our Dini has opened up to something new in the way of adventures. And it wasn't easy, was it?" She pointed a finger at Dini. "Scared the crap out of you, huh?"

"A little, yeah." Dini nodded. "A lot actually. But once he touched me—made me laugh—once I stopped worrying about *me* and just let it all happen..." She shrugged. "The scary parts seemed to vanish. It all fell into place."

Fenny watched her friend, noting the flush in her cheeks. "It's supposed to be that way, Dini."

"I was an idiot, wasn't I? All that *one-night-only* crap? Stupid." Dini looked embarrassed.

"No you weren't." Dee leaned forward emphatically. "You absolutely weren't. You were guarding yourself, Dini, protecting yourself. There's nothing wrong with that. It just took the right man to knock down those walls. Jonas looks like he's the right man for the job. If he hadn't been—well, Diva Dini would still be sitting here."

"Sounds like he's well equipped to knock down some walls." Fenny let her lips curve into a wicked grin.

Dee followed her lead. "Man sure sounds like he's got his own personal battering ram."

"Not to mention a big gun."

"And a lesbian leather-lovin' cousin."

"*Anal beads.*" Fenny whispered the words with all the reverence they deserved.

A hushed silence fell as all three women stared at each other. Then burst into laughter.

Dini held up her hands even as she howled. "Dammit, go for it. Gimme your best shot, get it out of your system and let's move on, for Chrissake. I'll never hear the end of this otherwise."

"Okay." Dee hiccupped. "I'm done."

"Me too." Fenny wiped tears from her eyes. "God, it's so funny when you think we're all obsessed with the idea of having something shoved up our asses during sex but it's like asking us to cut an arm off to get us to go get a physical."

"I'm not sexually involved with my physician," Dee retorted.

"Good thing too." Fenny whipped back. "She's a woman, isn't she?"

"Hmm. Think she'd go for Jonas' cousin?"

"*Quit it.*" Dini was holding her sides as she tried to stop the great roars of laughter. "You two should consider a career in stand-up comedy if the writing tanks."

Fenny thought about it. "Nah. She'd want top billing." A glance at Dee confirmed her suspicions. Dee was nodding.

"We need more wine. Christ, we go through a shitload of this stuff without even realizing it." Dini stood and looked at the empty bottle.

"That's because we're having a good time and nobody has to drive home." Fenny pointed at her cabinet. "You know where it is. If you want more, go get it. Oh, and speaking of a good time—"

Dini muttered a few oaths as her cell phone rang before Fenny could finish her sentence. She dragged it from her pocket and frowned. Then grinned. "Gimme a sec. It's Jonas."

She clicked it on, missing the amused smiles exchanged by her friends. "Hi. How's it going?"

"I miss you."

"Hell, dude. You saw me last night."

"Not enough. You're having fun with your friends. I'm stuck here at work. There's no erotic *magic* in a cop-filled Precinct, lemme tell ya. I haven't seen a wing flutter past all day." A breathy sigh followed Jonas' lament.

"Suck it up, big guy. I'll make it worth your while."

"Oh yeah? How?"

Dini became aware that two faces were watching her intently. She turned her back on Dee and Fenny and lowered her voice a little. "Remember that Suzie strip where she tortures the villain in some pretty *interesting* ways?"

There was a second or two of silence followed by a long groan. "You're killing me." He paused. "The corset laces. The fishnets wrapped around his dick. He surrendered and spilled his guts, didn't he?"

"Yep." Dini snickered. "So will you."

"I might resist interrogation."

"Hah. Not likely. Especially when I bring out my secret weapon."

"Oh yeah?"

Dini paused dramatically. "Obviously you've never heard of Suzie's silken spanking technique."

"Uhhh..." Jonas' voice tailed off, to be followed by a choking cough. "Sorry, Frank. Be right there."

Dini couldn't help a giggle. "Gosh, honey. Sounds like you're busy."

"You will suffer for that, pixie girl. Now I gotta finish my shift with a — let's just say I'll have something *more* than ready for you when I pick you up."

"I'm counting on it. See you in a couple of hours."

"You got it. I'll be there."

"Bye." Dini clicked off the phone and turned back to her friends, who were still staring at her with a good deal of interest.

"*Suzie's silken spanking?* What the hell's that?" Dee fired the question at her before she'd put her phone back in her pocket.

Dini shrugged. "Haven't a clue. Now I've got to make something up in—" she glanced at the clock, "about an hour and a half."

"Damn, you're incorrigible. Now the poor guy's gonna wander around the Precinct with an erection. And probably get teased to death by his peers." Fenny shook her head.

"I do hope so." Unrepentant, Dini giggled. "He's done the same thing to me a time or two. Got me all fired up then tells me he's gotta work late. Just because he's coming by here to pick me up doesn't mean I'm gonna get all lovey-dovey."

Dee shot a look at Fenny. "She's good. I have to admit it, she's good."

Fenny nodded. "Yep. No arguments from me. I just hope Jonas knows what he's getting himself into."

Dini sighed contentedly. "He'll be getting himself into me, I hope." She ignored the peal of laughter and looked at Fenny. "Now, before we were interrupted, you were about to tell us about something interesting?"

"Not something, *someone*. Someone I met the other day who's *really* interesting."

"Does Michael know?" Dini rested her hands on two wine bottles. "White or red?"

"White. I don't like to mix 'em," Dee chimed in. "So, Fenny. *Does Michael know?*"

"Yes. He introduced us." She looked innocent.

"You want us to beg? Or are you just gonna sit there and look smug until we start whimpering?"

Fenny laughed. "Okay. Sorry. I had to milk it a bit for the drama. I met S.E. Howard."

"Wow." Dini's eyes widened. "The legal thriller writer? I love his stuff."

"Yeah, me too. How'd Michael know him?"

"He..." Fenny paused theatrically. "Is not a *he*. He's a *she*."

"Huh?"

"You're kidding."

"Nope." Fenny shook her head. "S.E. Howard is actually *Stella Walker*. She's a lawyer with Michael's firm. Somehow or other a conversation got onto writing and Stella spilled the beans. Michael picked right up on it, told her who I was and the next thing you know I'm sitting talking to *S.E. Howard*. It was a hoot. She's a real interesting character."

"Holy crap. A woman. That's edgy stuff in those stories too." Fascinated, Dini flashed a glance at Dee and then back at Fenny. "D'you think we could meet her sometime?"

"You read my mind." Fenny smiled. "What better addition to our wine nights than an edgy legal thriller writer who's a woman and a lawyer? If you're both in agreement?"

"Sure." Dee nodded. "Let's give her a trial run." She winced over two simultaneous groans. "No pun intended."

"She's single too." Fenny's voice turned mischievous. "Think she'll tell us about her sex life?"

"She'll be a great legal resource for some complicated questions."

"Hmm. Are anal beads legal in all states?"

"If you're injured during a BDSM scene, do you sue your partner or the maker of the flogger?"

Fenny leaned back in her chair and let Dee and Dini run with the legal jokes. Oh *yeah*. She had a feeling that Stella was going to fit right in.

Provided she had a well-developed sense of humor, of course...

About the Author

Sahara Kelly was transplanted from old England to New England where she now lives with her husband and teenage son. Making the transition from her historical regency novels to Romantica™ has been surprisingly easy, and now Sahara can't imagine writing anything else. She is dedicated to the premise that everybody should have fantasies.

Sahara welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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