

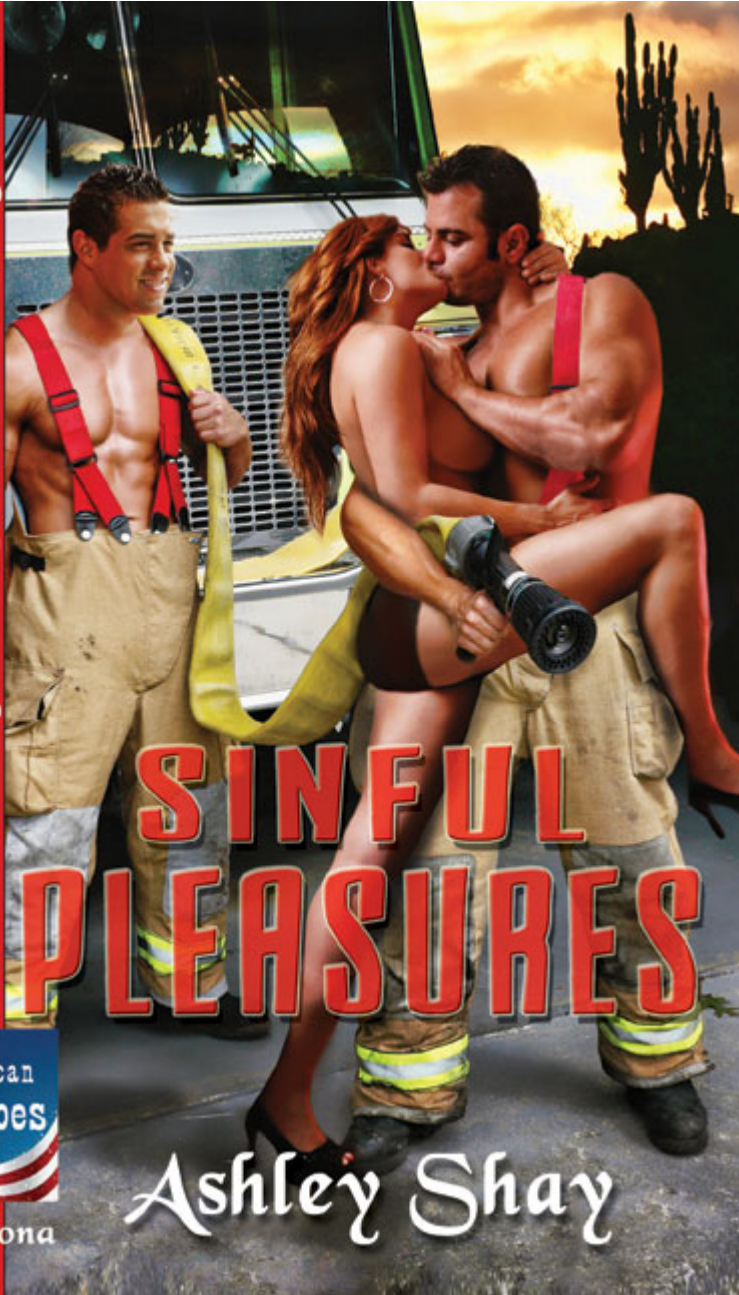
SIREN
Publishing

Ménage Everlasting

The
American
Heroes
Collection
Arizona

SINFUL PLEASURES

Ashley Shay



SINFUL PLEASURES

*The American Heroes Collection:
Arizona*

Ashley Shay

MENAGE EVERLASTING



**Siren Publishing, Inc.
www.SirenPublishing.com**

ABOUT THE E-BOOK YOU HAVE PURCHASED:

Your non-refundable purchase of this e-book allows you to only ONE LEGAL copy for your own personal reading on your own personal computer or device. **You do not have resell or distribution rights without the prior written permission of both the publisher and the copyright owner of this book.** This book cannot be copied in any format, sold, or otherwise transferred from your computer to another through upload to a file sharing peer to peer program, for free or for a fee, or as a prize in any contest. Such action is illegal and in violation of the U.S. Copyright Law. Distribution of this e-book, in whole or in part, online, offline, in print or in any way or any other method currently known or yet to be invented, is forbidden. If you do not want this book anymore, you must delete it from your computer.

WARNING: The unauthorized reproduction or distribution of this copyrighted work is illegal. Criminal copyright infringement, including infringement without monetary gain, is investigated by the FBI and is punishable by up to 5 years in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000."

If you find a Siren-BookStrand e-book being sold or shared illegally, please let us know at **legal@sirenbookstrand.com**

A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK

IMPRINT: Ménage Everlasting

SINFUL PLEASURES

Copyright © 2010 by Ashley Shay

E-book ISBN: 1-60601-707-1

First E-book Publication: July 2010

Cover design by *Les Byerley*

All art logo copyright © 2010 by Siren Publishing, Inc.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED: This literary work may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including electronic or photographic reproduction, in whole or in part, without express written permission.

All characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is strictly coincidental.

PUBLISHER

Siren Publishing, Inc.

www.SirenPublishing.com

Letter to Readers

Dear Readers,

If you have purchased this copy of *Sinful Pleasures* by Ashley Shay from BookStrand.com or its official distributors, thank you. Also, thank you for not sharing your copy of this book.

Regarding E-book Piracy

This book is copyrighted intellectual property. No other individual or group has resale rights, auction rights, membership rights, sharing rights, or any kind of rights to sell or to give away a copy of this book.

The author and the publisher work very hard to bring our paying readers high-quality reading entertainment.

This is Ashley Shay's livelihood. It's fair and simple. Please respect Ms. Shay's right to earn a living from her work.

Amanda Hilton, Publisher
www.SirenPublishing.com
www.BookStrand.com

SINFUL PLEASURES

ASHLEY SHAY
Copyright © 2010

Chapter One

“Wanna take a chance, honey?”

Jude Wheeler smiled at the fireman selling raffle tickets for the firefighter’s ball coming up in a couple of weeks. The gala event was something the town of Parrish, Arizona looked forward to each year.

“I’ll even throw in myself as an escort,” he added, giving her a wink.

Not a bad prize, Jude thought, looking him up and down. Dallas Preston was the epitome of a cowboy. He had long, muscular legs, a wide chest, and rugged features. Wind and weather had put premature wrinkles around his dark eyes, giving him a hard-edged look that made men give him respect and women an extra smile. Jude readily admitted she always had a smile for his earthy charm.

“Then I’ll have to go along, too, and offer my services to protect you from him.” Morgan Kent turned away from the line of kids taking turns climbing into the fire truck, and another fireman took his place.

Parrish was having its city-wide ice cream social, and the public service personnel were out in full force mingling with the citizens and guests. Most of the fire and rescue teams took advantage of the outing to raise money for their respective departments.

“Now that sounds like too good of an offer to pass up. I’ll take two tickets.” Jude dug in the pocket of her tight jeans to pull out a five

dollar bill.

“Trust me, darlin’, you’ll only need one.” Dallas made a point of tearing off her ticket and putting the matching number in his shirt pocket.

“So it’s a date then?” Jude looked from Dallas to Morgan for confirmation.

Morgan took the money out of her hand and pushed it back into the pocket of her jeans. “Yeah, it’s a date. I’ll buy your ticket.”

Unlike Dallas’s hard expression, Morgan’s hazel-green eyes had a soulful look, as if he’d grown world weary by the things he’d experienced in life. Slightly shorter than Dallas, his chest was wider, his hips narrower, and he seemed a rock of nothing more than hard-muscled determination.

Jude’s heart beat a little faster at the prospect of spending an evening with Dallas and Morgan. She knew them from her novelty shop across the street from the fire station. Even though they were frequent customers they hadn’t asked her out until now.

“Let’s get a drink,” Dallas suggested, handing his tickets over to a rookie firefighter. The trainee looked a little lost in the crush of children scrambling around his legs. Up to this point, he’d been manning the table full of gifts and prizes without much success.

“But...what am I supposed to do with these?” He stepped back to avoid an ice cream cone being dumped on his foot by a little boy reaching for a plastic firefighter’s helmet.

“Sell them.” Dallas grabbed a helmet off the giveaway pile, placing it on the boy’s curly hair. “There you go. You’re officially a firefighter now.”

The child shook his head solemnly and didn’t move. “I need a badge.”

Jude stifled a laugh. From the look on their faces they must have thought dealing with the kids was tougher than fighting fires.

Morgan swiped a badge from the table and, with mock formality, handed it to the serious child, who saluted him before running away to

join his family. Morgan watched until the child took his mother's hand, then turned back to give them a half grin.

"I have a feeling we're going to be seeing him in the fire academy one of these days." Morgan said.

Jude linked her arms through both Morgan's and Dallas's as they strolled across the park to the nearest drink vendor. She got a real sense of pleasure seeing the turnout of locals and visitors attending the old-fashioned ice cream social.

Like a relic from a forgotten age, Parrish looked as if it were trapped in the early part of the twentieth century. Despite the invasion of weekend tourists, the town remained chock-full of down-home Southwest character.

Jude served on the restoration committee to make sure Parrish stayed that way. Folks from Phoenix and the larger cities loved spending weekends in the high country. They loved walking among the Ponderosa pines, clear sparkling streams, and meadows filled with wildflowers. The slower pace offered city dwellers a break from their hectic weekday schedules. As a result, tourist money kept the region prospering when other areas of the state had fallen on hard times.

Today was no exception. The town square was filled with people having fun.

"I'll stand in line," Dallas offered. "You two find us a place to sit down."

Morgan led her over to the swings. They weren't seeing much action with all the kiddie attractions sprinkled through the park. Jude sat down on a swing and Morgan moved behind her. His strong arms pulled the swing back before giving her a gentle shove forward.

She felt the wind ruffle her hair, and smelled the scent of his aftershave as the swing nearly touched him on the return. How long had it been since she enjoyed swinging in the park? She and her sister Tracey spent days here as children, but she couldn't remember the last time she'd been here for fun. Lately, she'd been pushing herself too hard. She wished that someone else could take over the

responsibilities. She'd like to be carefree again, for a while.

"You've done a great job restoring old Parrish," Morgan said. "Look at this crowd. They wouldn't be here today if you and your team hadn't revived this part of town."

Jude felt a lump of pride in her chest, but she didn't get a chance to answer. Dallas returned to them with his arms full of soft drinks and popcorn. Morgan reached out to stop Jude's swinging, holding her against his hard body until the swing lost its momentum.

She looked up at him from her seated position, and the back of her head collided with his tight abs. The man was pure muscle, his stomach felt only marginally softer than hitting a brick wall. He smiled down at Jude, then dropped his face to hers, giving her an upside down kiss.

* * * *

Dallas felt a tug on his heart when he looked at Jude. Man he had it bad for her. She looked so damn hot in her tight jeans, and soft, pink top. He didn't know what kind of material the shirt was made of, but the knitted fabric flowed over her firm breasts like it had been molded to her skin. He could see the outline of her nipples and a glimpse of belly when she stretched back to look up at Morgan. The hint of bare skin made him harden inside the confines of his jeans. He twisted his hips, trying to adjust himself without being obvious. Maybe he should just cram one of the cold drinks in his pocket, but he doubted even that would cool him off. Nah, there was only one thing that could calm him down, and it sure couldn't be done out here on the park lawn in front of a thousand people.

"Here you go, little filly." He handed her a drink and a bag of popcorn before taking the empty swing beside her. She smiled at him, and he realized how much he loved her smile, how it lit up her blue eyes like sunshine sparkling on clear blue water. Damn, his hand shook as he twisted the cap off his drink.

Even though they visited her often in the shop, and talked for hours, now he couldn't think of one intelligent thing to say. How could that happen? Dallas was a natural-born flirt. He never lacked for a come-on line or an easy compliment, except, in Jude's case, he'd meant every flattering remark that he uttered.

"Um, so how's Steven these days?" *Way to go, bud, ask her about her ex-husband. That's sure to endear her to you. Stupid. Stupid. Stupid.* "Forget I said that, okay?"

Jude almost managed to smother the smile that crossed her face. "I really don't know. I haven't talked to him lately. He's still working on his campaign to clean up Parrish, which means to kick my shop out of the town limits and undo three-way marriages."

Dallas took a long drink of soda. "Won't happen. Too many people enjoy shopping at your place. If he starts on his morality thing again he's going to try to break up happy families. You know that won't fly. People are content here. They come from miles around just to live with their partners, enjoy the atmosphere, and raise their kids in an open-minded community. Hell, even the mayor has two husbands. Does Steven really think he's going to be able to undo all that? Why doesn't he get his ass out and move somewhere else? He needs to leave Parrish alone."

Jude shrugged one shoulder. "I think it's Mrs. Wheeler's doing more than Steven. You know how she is. She thinks her family founded the city and she still owns it."

"Yeah," Dallas agreed, "and Steven always was a momma's boy. She said jump and he asked how high."

"She's got her sight set on Steven doing great things in the political arena. She's afraid an ex-wife selling sex toys and a town full of ménage couples will taint his sainthood." For the first time he could remember, Dallas heard a faint touch of bitterness in Jude's voice.

He knew she'd married Steven straight out of high school without having much experience. He figured their marriage didn't stand a

chance with Genevieve Wheeler pulling all the strings. Steven probably had to ask when he could fuck his own wife, that's how tightly Genevieve liked to control things.

"There you are, Jude," Nancy Cougan, the mayor, called out. She headed toward them with a baby in her arms and two husbands in tow carrying various assorted diaper bags, strollers, and other infant accessories. "I just had to congratulate you on how stunning the park looks today. Your committee outdid themselves. Thanks for all the work you put in."

"My pleasure." Jude eyed the sleeping baby in the mayor's arms. "You've been a little busy for the past few months."

The mayor looked at Morgan, then Dallas, and her face spread into a wide, approving smile. "Looks like you've been busy yourself, Jude Wheeler."

Jude cast Dallas a playful look and his gut clenched. Then she turned back to the mayor. "I'm working on them."

* * * *

Jude poured the day's first cup of coffee. Taking a cautious sip of the rich morning blend, she uttered a thankful sigh. Still half asleep, she wandered lethargically out of the stockroom and into the entry and check-out area. The strong, hot liquid coursed artificial energy through her veins, perking her up enough to feel human. At least until she needed another fix at lunch. Jude owned *Sinful Pleasures*—Parrish, Arizona's only adult book and toy store. She had a feeling she would soon be seeing more competition, but for now, she had the market cornered in the small town.

Reluctantly setting her coffee aside for a moment, Jude felt under the sales counter. She kept several unusual items stashed in the shelves under the register, one of them being a galvanized watering can filled with her own special mixture of plant food. As part of her nightly store-closing ritual, she prepared the growth stimulant before

closing shop. The odd mix of nutrients worked wonders for the geraniums growing in wooden flower boxes outside the store.

Jude loved geraniums. She particularly loved the bright red ones. But then she willingly acknowledged she had a thing for the color red. Jude thought half of her attraction to this part of town was the historic fire station across the street with its bright red doors and brick façade. Of course, the sexy crew of firemen manning the station just happened to be a major plus.

Tracey, Jude's younger sister, walked in from the street. "Can I have a cup of that?" She didn't wait for an answer. Instead, she headed straight for the stockroom and freshly brewed coffee pot.

"Help yourself," Jude called out. She knew Tracey would anyway.

Jude's store was located in the older part of Parrish, wedged in between a florist shop and bakery-deli. The storefronts had been restored to resemble the popular architectural style of the 1880s. The long row of business façades were all made of hand-worked brick, timber, and flowers. A city ordinance kept advertisements on low-visibility wooden signs. In spite of the sedate approach, or maybe because of it, Jude's store was a lively business. She carried unique gifts and apparel, more than a little Western kink, and a well-stocked video and book store.

The building had once been a brothel too many years ago to count. The fact it had been a house of ill repute made it the perfect location for an adult-themed store. Jude purchased the once derelict building with her savings. She turned the upstairs rooms into subject parlors with each room having its own brand of kink.

Most of the buildings surrounding her in this area of town hadn't changed their products all that much in the last hundred years. The bakery-deli once served as Parrish's saloon and restaurant. The florist shop held dry goods and various other sundries, such as seeds and plants for the local gentry. The tiny brick fire station across the street had even shared the glory days of old Parrish. There were plenty of local stories about what went on between the wicked ladies of the

night and the wild firemen of Station Three. Jude thought those times must have been a sight to see in their heyday.

Breezing back into the entry, Tracey looked pointedly at Jude, then out the window toward the fire station. "So, have you talked to the men?"

"What men?"

"You know who I mean," Trace huffed. "Dallas and Morgan. Have you talked to them since the ice cream social? The ball is tomorrow. What are you going to wear?"

"I haven't gone shopping yet."

"Jude!" Tracey shook her head in exasperation and pointed out the window at the men working outside in the fire station's parking lot. "Look at them. They're gorgeous. Don't you want to wear something enticing and sexy?"

"Of course I want to look sexy for them. I'll find something to wear."

Jude shot an appreciative look through the glass storefront at the well-developed firefighters across the street. Trace was right. They were a sight to behold. Jude allowed herself a moment to enjoy watching the show of muscles as the men vigorously washed down the ladder truck.

Wide shoulders and muscular arms bulged as the men polished brass fittings and lifted heavy buckets filled with soapy water. Captain O'Neil kept his men in shape, drilling them like a Marine sergeant when time allowed.

A few of the guys asked her out, but Jude didn't want to get a reputation for dating her clients. Still, it didn't stop her from enjoying their hard bodies and daydreaming about testing the products with a couple of them. Dallas Preston and Morgan Kent were her personal fantasy material, and now she actually had a serious date with them. Just the thought of it made her giddy.

Dallas and Morgan were the bad boys of Station Three. It didn't escape Jude they were first out for calls, worked hardest at their drills,

and flirted more outrageously than any of the other men. Even with her iron-clad personal commitment to remain aloof from her clients, Jude couldn't help but respond when they visited her store.

She felt a thrill of delight when Dallas threw a wave in her direction. He must have noticed her watching through the windows. She tossed him a wave back, glad he wasn't close enough to see the stain of color on her cheeks for getting caught staring at him.

"That's it," Jude said. "We've been caught drooling, and now I have to get to work."

She was anxious to see the shipment that arrived too late to unpack the night before.

With a delivery of new merchandise in the store, Jude knew the potential for sales would be high over the weekend. The latest toys and videos guaranteed the regulars would stop by to see what she purchased for the shop. When Jude stocked a fresh delivery, she set a white geranium in her front window. For those who frequented Sinful Pleasures, the white geranium alerted the local clientele that new items were on the shelves. It worked better for her than taking out an advertisement in the local newspaper.

"Did you want something in particular, Trace, or did you just come by to hassle me about what I'm going to wear?"

Tracey took one last look out the window and then turned back from the temptation. "I know you, sis. Tomorrow we'll be scrambling to find you something to wear. That's not going to happen this time. I'll pick you up after closing and we'll get a bite to eat, then go shopping. Be ready." She set the empty coffee cup down on the counter for Jude to pick up. "Gotta run, see you tonight."

"Yeah, see you tonight," Jude answered, but her sister was already out the door.

Draining the last delicious sip of coffee from her cup, Jude armed herself with a box cutter and turned on the store's surveillance camera. Picking up the plain cardboard box, she headed upstairs to stock the shelves. Wearing her favorite low rise jeans and softest T-

shirt, Jude felt like rearranging a few displays. She hated to work in stiff, unyielding clothing. Jude always felt like a mannequin when she dressed in suits for the Chamber of Commerce assemblies. She made it a point to wear business clothing for bank meetings when she needed to ask for a higher loan of credit. She supposed she could dress casually for any function in town, but she wanted the community to know she meant business, despite the fact her livelihood was an adult toy store.

Using a box cutter to slice through the large carton, Jude picked up the first item wrapped in thick bubble wrap. Personal pleasure device, she thought, guessing from the weight of it in her hand. Peeling back the protective wrapping to see the merchandise, she immediately thought of Dallas Preston.

Jude held a butt plug adorned with a sassy black ponytail. In her mind, she could hear Dallas's deep voice asking, "How's my little filly?" That seemed to be one of his favorite terms of endearment nearly every time he saw her.

Jude's fingers traced the clear plastic packaging holding the toy. Across the top read the catchphrase—*Fill your filly to the limits of her pleasure*. On the lower left-hand side of the package was a shapely woman's bottom. The playful swatch of mane was depicted to be swishing back and forth over her hips like a horse's tail.

Jude couldn't contain a smile. No doubt about it, Dallas would love this toy. He was partial to the Western room. Not surprisingly, he always wore boots, faded jeans, and a hat during his off time from the fire station.

She couldn't help but wonder what it would be like to wear the plug for him and watch his reaction.

* * * *

An electronic chime indicated the front door of Sinful Pleasures had been opened from the street. Jude quickly finished hanging the

last item from the box, shooting a look up at the corner monitor. Her stomach did a fluttery little dance that made her shiver. Dallas and Morgan had arrived. They must have noticed the UPS truck stop in the alley last night.

Giving another thoughtful glance at the tail, Jude turned away from the display to greet the men. Even though she owned the store, she seldom played with the toys and never had anal sex. In fact, as the proprietor of an adult toy store, she realized she hadn't seen much action at all.

Jude knew her decision to open Sinful Pleasures was, in part, a slap to the face of her stuffy ex-husband. In his mind, sex was something people had behind closed doors, and then only with the lights off.

Logically, Jude knew her husband's sexual hang-ups had nothing to do with her. They were the result of being raised by Genevieve Wheeler. Genevieve was a hard woman, strict and unloving. She ruled her son, Steven, with an iron fist and sharp tongue. She wanted nothing but success for her offspring.

Genevieve certainly didn't care about his happiness. Steven's pleasure didn't matter to her nearly as much as his social standing and success. She taught him that sex was a distraction, little more than a vulgar, messy affair better suited to the lower dregs of society. For intellectuals such as the Wheelers, sex served as a means for procreation, certainly not for mindless enjoyment. The problem, Jude thought, was that somewhere over the years Steven began to believe her.

For a short time after their wedding, Steven's cold demeanor thawed slightly. Jude hoped her love could change him and make him whole. She actually thought he might overcome Genevieve's preaching. In the end, however, he couldn't rise above his mother's influence.

As their marriage slowly disintegrated, Jude thought she had never felt so alone in her life. How odd, she realized, to sleep beside

her husband yet feel as if she were the only person alive in the world. Being lonely with a mate by her side, she decided, was a thousand times worse than being alone.

Steven rarely told her that he loved her. If anything, he treated her with polite indifference, keeping himself emotionally distant. Deep within herself, Jude wondered why she couldn't reach him. What kept him from responding to her physically? On her bleakest days, she wondered if the problem had been her instead of his upbringing, after all.

"Jude?"

"Up here guys," she called. The tread of heavy boots echoed loudly in the miniscule stairway, causing a flutter in her chest. Licking her dry lips, Jude admitted to herself that Dallas Preston and Morgan Kent invoked lustful feelings in her that Steven Wheeler never stirred.

"There's my little filly." Dallas's hundred-watt grin released a flood of butterflies in Jude's stomach at seeing him in the doorway with Morgan looking over his shoulder.

"Hi." It came out a breathless whisper, causing both men to study her curiously. Jude's face burned when she felt her nipples harden under the thin T-shirt.

"We're glad to see you, too," Morgan said, not even pretending to hide his smirk. His eyes focused on her breasts, and Jude felt her pussy clench with a jolt of craving for him. What was it with these two men? She couldn't stop her body from reacting to them whenever they were in the vicinity.

"Playing with the toys?" Dallas looked at the empty box with its packing strewn across the floor.

"A shipment came in last night. I've been stocking for the weekend crowd." Jude began to gather up the brown paper with trembling hands. She crumpled it into the box along with the box cutter and other bits and pieces of packing debris left on the floor.

"Whoa, what are you so jumpy for?" Morgan asked. He took the

box out of Jude's hand and set it aside. When he looked at her again, his eyes crinkled invitingly at the corners. "You *were* having naughty thoughts about the toys, weren't you?"

Jude shook her head but couldn't find enough voice to answer him. Damn. They had her number. She would never hear the end of this.

"I want to have everything put away so Julie only has to take care of the customers tomorrow. We're still going to the ball, aren't we?"

Dallas ignored her question, giving her a thoughtful look. He glanced over at Morgan. "What sort of toy would turn Jude on? What do you think, Morgan?" Dallas lifted up the pony paddle, arching one eyebrow. "Do you think she wants a man to spank her with this cute little paddle?"

Morgan stared at her for a long moment, and Jude felt her breath catch. Would he say yes? She wondered what was going through his mind. Did he see her naked over his knees with his hand on the paddle, spanking her ass till it glowed hot pink?

He shook his head, never taking his gaze from her. "No, I don't think so."

"Me, either," Dallas said, hanging the paddle back on the wall. He took a pair of light nipple clamps down from the shelf. "These look a little painful, but they're well padded. Do you think she wants her nipples pinched while she's getting fucked?"

Jude's heart was beating in triple time. She swallowed dryly, trying to hide her nervousness. Feeling lightheaded, Jude thought she might faint. She knew she should stop the conversation before it went any further. Like a deer in the headlights, she couldn't think fast enough to save herself from the certain proposition heading her way.

"No, not those, either."

"Hmm." Dallas pretended to look over the wall with intense concentration. "Not the horse-hung dildo, not the spurs...wait, what's this?" He took the butt plug down from the hanger, checking out the glossy little tail. He whistled in appreciation. "I bet that's soft." He

held out the package for Morgan to see. “Don’t you think our little filly would look cute wearing that?”

Morgan’s eyes darkened, becoming nearly feral in their intensity. “Yeah, I do. Real good.” His voice had taken on a decidedly husky quality. “How about it, baby? Have you ever worn a butt plug?”

“No.” Jude shook her head to emphasize the no. “I don’t play with the merchandise.” At least not enough to count, she told herself and decided it wasn’t really a lie. She hadn’t got adventurous because she was waiting for the right man, or men, to come along and play with her.

The two men looked at one another in disbelief, or maybe it was disappointment.

“There’s a fantasy shot to hell,” Dallas said. “We lie in the station at night and wonder what you do over here by yourself when you work late. I won’t tell you some of the things we think of.”

“I hate to disillusion you boys.” Jude felt herself gaining a measure of control. Her voice sounded much stronger than she felt, considering her panties were a little on the damp side and her pussy still throbbed from her desire for the men. “I have work to do. Is there something I can help you find?”

“We came in to buy a wedding gift for a friend, but I can’t get you off my mind wearing this little number.” Dallas held up the plug, shaking it back and forth.

“Sorry, you’re going to have to find another filly. Unless, of course, you want to purchase that for your friend.”

“No way,” Dallas said. “I got something special in mind for this. Show us some hot lingerie. That’s what we had in mind for the wedding gift.”

Jude led them into the next room. She had the feeling both of them were concentrating on her ass as she walked ahead of them.

“Were you telling the truth?” Morgan asked, confirming Jude’s suspicions.

“About what?”

“Not ever wearing a butt plug?”

Jude stopped walking. She turned to give Morgan direct eye contact.

“No, I’ve never worn a plug, and I’ve never had anal sex, not that it’s any of your business. I’m basically just your vanilla type of girl that runs a naughty toy store to make a living and piss off an ex-husband. And speaking of making a living,” she reminded them pointedly, “I can’t make money if you aren’t here to buy.”

“Yeah, but we’re two of your best customers,” Dallas spoke up, “so you have to give us special treatment.

“I always do, don’t I?” Jude focused on him with amusement. “Do you think anyone else in town knows half as much about me as the two of you seem to find out?”

“We appreciate that,” Dallas said. “And to answer your earlier question, darlin’, yes, of course, we’re going to the ball.” He looked around him at the variety of toys hanging on the wall. “Seems to me that Morgan and I need to educate you about the products you’re selling, but right now, we want something unique for Tom’s wedding. He’s so fucking crazy over this woman that we want to give him a week of heaven. She’s about your build. If we pick out something, would you model it for us? Just so we can get a feel for how it looks?”

Jude rolled her eyes. “That is *so* obvious, guys. Can’t you do better than that?” Secretly she got a little thrill from thinking about being scantily dressed while the men looked at her.

Morgan took out his wallet and peeled off three one-hundred-dollar bills. “We really want Tom to have a perfect honeymoon. It’s hard for guys like us to pick out outfits without seeing them on.”

Jude looked at the bills he placed on the dresser. She could use the money to help pay for the new shipment. Not to mention the thrill of going along with their charade. It turned her on to think of them looking at her without being able to do a thing about it. She considered it a little payback for their earlier behavior in the toy room.

“You can’t touch.” She looked back and forth between them. “Not to feel the fabric, not to find out if it’s stretchy. No touching at all.”

Both men held up their hands, palms outward. “Promise.”

Jude ignored the butterflies in her stomach. “Okay, pick out the outfits, and I’ll try them on.”

Leaving the two men in comfortable chairs, Jude went into the dressing room with an armful of lingerie. The first outfit she tried on was a hot little rumba number. It had ruffled red panties and a barely-there black lace bra with playful red trim around the bottom. While not exactly a wicked ensemble, it flowed with artistic sexuality. The men’s choice surprised Jude. She imagined they would pick out something more in-your-face seductive.

Turning her back to the mirror, she checked out her rear view and had to admit the outfit was sexy as hell. The flirty ruffles fluttered with every movement she made, accenting the curve of her hips and the length of her legs.

Nice choice guys, she praised mentally, steeling herself to step out of the dressing room.

“Fucking beautiful,” Dallas breathed. He shook his head as if he couldn’t believe what he saw. “We’re definitely getting that one.”

“Turn around.” Morgan spun his finger in the air in a twirling motion. “Baby, that outfit belongs to you. I can’t imagine any other woman looking half as good.”

Jude felt herself blush at his compliment. She knew by the intensity of his eyes he meant what he said. He looked like he wanted to eat her up on the spot, just like the big bad wolf.

“Try on the...”

Before his next words could be spoken, the alarm bells blared at the fire station. Both men jumped up from the chairs without hesitation. “Wrap them up for us, Jude. We’ll be back after our shift,” Dallas called.

Morgan hesitated at the door, calling back up the stairway. “We’ll take ’em all.”

Jude looked at the pile of clothes with a smile curling her lips. The boys wouldn't be getting much change back from the three hundred dollars they left on the edge of the antique dresser.

Dallas and Morgan struck her as the kind of men who didn't care how much they spent as long as they got what they wanted. Jude knew from the look in their eyes they both wanted her. The knowledge gave her a shiver of excitement, but at the same time, it made her nervous. She had talked to each of them about many subjects over the past year, but she still didn't know them intimately enough to guess at the secrets they held behind those guarded faces. She hoped she'd get a chance to find out.

Jude heard the ladder truck pull out of the station with its sirens blaring. She felt a momentary chill of apprehension. The realization of the danger the men faced daily made her think about a relationship beyond physical gratification. Could she handle such a relationship? Could she face knowing that every time her man went on a call his life hung in the balance?

In the distance, the siren still called out its wailing scream, and a chill crossed Jude's heart.

Please let them be safe, she thought.

Let them be safe.

Chapter Two

Ladder Six stopped in front of a five-story apartment building on the south side of town. Morgan could see flames shooting out of a window on the fourth floor. He jammed his helmet on as he trotted toward the building, glancing behind him at the crowd gathering across the street. He could tell by the worried faces that most of the people watching the fire lived in the low-rent apartments. They were seeing everything they owned go up in flames.

Ignore them, he told himself. You've got a job to do.

Trying unsuccessfully to shut down his emotions, Morgan knew he'd be more effective holding his sympathy until they had the fire under control. He almost made it to the door when a frightened child burst out of the building, followed by a hysterical woman carrying a set of twin infants.

Steeling himself not to react to her tear-streaked face, Morgan still thought the little girl's round blue eyes had the most tragic expression he'd ever seen. She ran straight to him, tugging at the hem of his bunker coat.

"Mr. Fireman?"

Morgan squatted down to the child, pulling his helmet off so he wouldn't frighten her. He'd learned long ago not to dismiss children when they had something urgent to say. Kids had an uncanny way of dealing with disaster better than adults.

"What, honey?"

"My brofer's in dere. He went back for Timmy. Mommy couldn't find him. We had to leave." The child looked up at the woman who nodded frantically, sobbing nearly as hard as the two screaming

infants she held in her thin arms.

“Who’s Timmy?” Morgan asked, trying to keep his voice soft. A familiar ache started in his chest, threatening to choke him.

Not another kid, please, God, not another kid.

“Timmy’s our kitty.”

“Okay, honey, I’ll look for your brother and your kitty.” Morgan’s heart beat so hard he felt breathless. “Tell me your brother’s name and what floor he’s on.”

“Jason.” She solemnly held up four fingers, looking up at her tearful mother again for confirmation.

Morgan didn’t know if she meant the fourth floor or if her brother was four years old. Sometimes it was hard to tell with younger kids giving the information. He looked at the woman clutching the howling twins against each shoulder.

She’s in shock, he thought, noticing the unfocused stare.

“Fourth floor?”

She gazed at him blankly.

“Lady!” he said sharply. She blinked her eyes in confusion as if coming out of a deep sleep without recognizing her surroundings. “Fourth floor? Is your son on the fourth floor?”

She nodded slowly. Morgan didn’t wait for more details. He gently pushed her out of his way, running for the door. He wouldn’t be too late this time.

Inside the building, he could hear screams and knew the making of a nightmare was in progress. Civilians were pushing past him as he ran up the stairs two at a time, heading straight for the fourth floor.

He keyed his com link. “Dallas?”

“Where are you?”

“Gotta stray kid somewhere on four.”

“On my way.”

Opening the stairway door, Morgan could see nothing but smoke and flame.

Fuck this, he thought. I can’t take it any longer. I can’t take

another family being torn apart.

He stepped into the hallway, ignoring his fear as he searched.

“Jason! Jason can you hear me?” he shouted.

Morgan heard nothing but the roar of flames in response.

With a sinking feeling, he knew he might be too late. Again.

Another kid that won’t grow up, he thought, another family that will never be the same. Another failure.

“Jason!”

The tears on his cheeks felt hot, and he didn’t care that he was crying.

The hallway wasn’t fully engulfed. Flames leapt upward through open doors, hungrily tracking across the ceiling. It wouldn’t be long until the whole floor ignited, but Morgan still had time to pull off a rescue if he could just find the boy.

C’mon, give me a clue. Tell me where you are.

Suddenly, out of the smoke, a huge tabby cat rushed him, hissing and snarling in terror as he ran from the flames. Morgan heard the stairway door open behind him, and Dallas stepped inside. He held the door open long enough for the tabby to streak downstairs.

“Any sign of the kid?”

Morgan shook his head no, not bothering to hide his tears.

Dallas gave him an understanding slap on the shoulder before walking down the smoke-filled hallway. Morgan stayed abreast of him on the opposite side of the hall.

The thick smoke obscured visibility. Both men trailed their hands down the wall to keep their bearings. Morgan knew it wouldn’t be long till they had to evacuate to protect themselves. His stomach cramped, and he felt like he might be sick at the thought of leaving a kid in this inferno.

“Morgan?” Dallas shouted through the breathing apparatus.

“Not yet.” Morgan held on stubbornly. He couldn’t give up. Not till he found the kid. “He’s gotta be here somewhere.”

At the far end of the hall a wall came down, throwing sparks and

flame in their direction.

“We’ve gotta go,” Dallas yelled. “It’s too late, Morgan. There’s too much smoke. C’mon, buddy.”

“Go, I’ll be right behind you.”

“You sure?”

“Yeah, go on,” Morgan urged. “We don’t have much time. Get out of here.”

Morgan caught the sound of Dallas’s tanks hitting the wall when he turned. He nodded his head, although no one could see him. Dallas would get out. He’d be safe, but Morgan couldn’t leave until...

He stumbled hard, falling over something in his path.

Whatever he tripped over didn’t move. The smoke was less dense on the floor, but still heavy enough Morgan couldn’t make out more than a vague shape. A small lump curled up in a tight ball.

He whirled around and settled himself on his knees. His hands trembled as he gathered up a small boy of no more than five or six years old. The kid stirred when Morgan shook him, coughing violently as his body tried to suck in clean air.

Tearing off his face plate, Morgan put the breathing apparatus over the child’s face, letting him suck in a few breaths of filtered air.

He saw a pair of boots come into view. Dallas had come back for him. Morgan wondered how far down the stairs Dallas had made it before noticing he wasn’t following. Morgan looked up through the smoke, barely able to see Dallas’s head and shoulders through the gloom.

“What the fuck are you doin’ man? C’mon, get your face plate back on.” Dallas’s angry shouts could be heard above the increasing roar of the fire. “Pick up the kid and let’s go.”

“Got him.” Morgan scooped the child up into his arms, running for the stairs with Dallas covering his back.

A roar went up from the crowd when Morgan burst through the door and carried the child straight to a waiting team of paramedics. Morgan knew he’d gotten lucky this time. It had been close up there,

much too close. His hands began to shake with the aftermath of adrenaline. He'd won this time. It made the job worthwhile.

* * * *

"Is the kid gonna be okay?" Dallas asked. He picked up the end of a heavy ladder, helping Morgan carry it back to the idling truck. With a thrust of his powerful shoulders, he hefted his end of the ladder on to specially designed brackets.

"Paramedics think so."

"That's good. No fatalities this fire. It's a miracle."

"Just luck," Morgan said. "It could have been hell. The building wasn't up to code. These people have nowhere to go, and they've lost everything they owned. It's not right."

Dallas looked up from securing the ladder. "You did all you could, buddy. You saved a kid's life. We can't police every landlord in town."

Morgan looked like he wanted to argue the point, but he kept quiet and only shrugged his shoulders.

Always a champion for the underdog, Dallas thought affectionately.

His best friend really hadn't changed much over the years since they first met.

Firefighters filtered past them, carrying equipment back to their respective apparatus.

"Good work," the captain said as he passed. "Let's hope the rest of the shift is quiet."

"Yeah," they both said simultaneously.

Dallas grinned. "Speaking of luck, do you think we'll get lucky with Jude this Saturday?"

Morgan's serious expression lightened. "What the hell, she might give in and let us play with her toys. Do you think?"

"She's hot for us," Dallas said, prodding his friend's mood

upward another notch.

“In your dreams.”

“Seriously, man. We turn her on.”

“Whatever you say,” Morgan answered, opening the door of the ladder truck.

“I’ll bet you next week’s pay she will let us show her how to play with the toys. Did you see that expression on her face? She’s real curious about things.”

“She did seem to have fun modeling those clothes,” Morgan agreed.

“We got to see one fucking outfit.” Dallas groaned. “I can’t believe we missed that opportunity.”

“Probably for the better.” Morgan grinned at last. “I’m not sure I could have kept my promise not to touch.”

“Me neither.” Dallas remembered the way her ass looked under the enticing rows of red lace ruffles. And her legs? He almost groaned at the memory. Jude had the kind of legs that could wrap around a man’s back and pull him into her so deeply he could drown without knowing it.

“Thinking about those long legs, aren’t you?” Morgan asked, hauling himself into the truck.

Dallas climbed in beside him, resting his head back against the seat. “You know it. I can practically feel those legs wrapped around my hips while I...”

The other men climbed into the front of the cab, and Dallas left his sentence unfinished. He figured Morgan could fill in the blanks.

Morgan stared at him for a long moment before glancing away. Something in his friend’s expression made a cold lump of worry form in the center of Dallas’s chest.

“You still with the program?” Dallas asked. He hoped Morgan hadn’t changed his mind. It wouldn’t be a contest between his lifelong friend and the woman he thought he might be falling in love with. That would be a no-win situation. Especially since it seemed Morgan

was falling for her, too.

Morgan flashed him a wicked grin. "You mean the share-and-share-alike plan?"

Dallas felt a knot of tension ease between his tired shoulders. "Yeah. You had me scared for a minute. I thought you were going to say you couldn't do it."

"I know." Morgan gave him a playful thump on the arm that rocked him sideways in the seat.

"Asshole."

John Grayson looked back over the front seat with a concerned expression on his face. It was obvious he was unsure whether they were kidding or not. "Play nice, boys, or we'll have to separate you."

"Everything's under control," Dallas assured him, shooting a sidelong glance at Morgan, who still had a dumb grin on his face but refused to look his way.

Dallas remembered the first time he met Morgan Kent. It had been in the third grade, and they had Mrs. Daniels for math. She made him feel like a loser. Math didn't come easily to Dallas, and it seemed like the harder he tried the more confused he got. Mrs. Daniels liked to make an example of him to the whole class.

Morgan had transferred from Phoenix. He sat quietly while the other kids laughed at Dallas's embarrassment. He hadn't laughed or stared at him. He just kept looking at Mrs. Daniels until she finally asked what his problem was.

"You're a jerk," Morgan had said. Just like that. The class went so quiet he could hear a pin drop. Mrs. Daniels turned a funny shade of scarlet purple. Dallas hadn't ever seen anyone get so mad. He could see her scalp shining hotly through her gray hair.

"You're going to the principal's office, young man."

"He's right!" Dallas countered. "You *are* a jerk."

Mrs. Daniels gave a hiss of frustration and hauled him out of his chair by one arm. "Both of you. Both of you are coming with me to the office."

Pinching their arms tightly, she hauled them down to Mr. Tucker. He listened to her rant for half an hour before asking to speak to the boys alone. Mr. Tucker sat solemnly across his desk from them, paying attention to their side of the story. The principal's gaze frequently shifted from their faces to stare at their bare arms. He frowned at the bruises forming on their tender young skin.

"You shouldn't call your teacher a jerk." He hesitated as if weighing the wisdom of his words. "Even if she is one." The boys giggled, and Mr. Tucker went on. "Dallas, I know your father. He wouldn't approve of you being disrespectful. I also understand that Mrs. Daniels had no cause to embarrass you in front of the class. I'll get you transferred tomorrow."

Then Mr. Tucker turned his attention to Morgan. "Were you allowed to talk to your teachers in Phoenix like that?"

Morgan shook his head no, keeping his eyes firmly on the floor. Mr. Tucker sighed heavily. "Don't let it happen again. I suppose I'll have to transfer you into another math class, too. You boys are dismissed, but don't let me hear about you being in any more trouble. Do you understand?"

In the hallway, the two of them stared at one another in disbelief. Then they started laughing with the kind of lightheaded hilarity that eight-year-old boys get when reprieved from certain doom. From that point on, Morgan and Dallas were inseparable throughout school. They fought each other's battles, sharing the victories and defeats.

Dallas knew Morgan joined the firefighting academy more to watch his ass than to be a hero, but together they made a damn good team.

Morgan turned to give him a thoughtful look. "We should check with Jude after our shift tonight. We can pick up the gifts for Tom and find out what time she wants to leave on Saturday.

"Sounds like a plan to me."

John Grayson whirled around to stare at them in surprise. "You're talking about that hot little number who owns Sinful Pleasures?"

That's who you two are planning to share and share alike? Wooo-eee!"

Morgan nodded. "Yeah, what about it?"

John held up his hands. "Nothing, man, but she's a real piece of work. You really got her to model some clothes for you? Is that who you were talking about? For real?"

Dallas laughed at the memory. "We picked out some things for Tom's honeymoon and told Jude the bride is about her size. We promised not to touch if she modeled the clothes for us so we could decide what we liked best."

John groaned. "She fell for that?"

"Not really," Morgan answered, "but the promise of a big sale sure helped."

John shook his head in disbelief. "She's a class act, guys. I don't know what the hell she sees in you two, but she definitely makes allowances in your favor. The rest of us poor schmucks get the polite-but-distant treatment."

"That's because she knows who the real studs are." Dallas smirked, smacking him playfully in the back of the head.

John raised both eyebrows in disbelief. "Yeah, right." Then his grin turned into a frown, and he stared back at them in the mirror. "Does the old witch know about this?"

"By witch, do you mean Genevieve Wheeler?"

John nodded seriously. "I'm not kidding guys. That woman is evil. I've run up against her in court a time or two over minor ordinance issues. She's got her hand in everything going on in Parrish. It's no secret she's trying to destroy Jude for divorcing her son."

"Jude's not married to her son any longer. She can date who she wants."

"I'm not arguing with that," John answered, "but I think Mrs. Wheeler is going to pitch a royal fit. You know what she's like with all her self-righteous bullshit."

* * * *

Standing in the shower cubicle beside his best friend, Dallas lathered up his chest and arms before speaking. “Do you think Genevieve Wheeler will be able to cause Jude any harm? The Wheelers have friends in high places. We’ve got to think of some way to keep Jude safe. You know they are looking for any excuse to shut down Sinful Pleasures.”

“I don’t see what they can do,” Morgan said. “Besides, all we’re going to do is escort Jude to the ball. It’s not like we’re going to be having an orgy on the courthouse lawn to disgrace her precious Steven.”

“I don’t know why Mrs. Wheeler thinks Jude, or the town of Parrish, is going to hurt Steven’s bid for senator,” Dallas complained. “Three-way marriages are legal here in Parrish and it won’t be that long till other communities adopt the same laws. And no one cares what Steven’s ex-wife does for a living. Why doesn’t she just leave Jude alone?”

Morgan poured a handful of shampoo over his head and stepped under the heavy spray, lathering his hair until the foam ran down his back. “It’s all about power, but I’m going to make this work, bud. I’m not going to let the likes of Genevieve Wheeler stop me from the woman of my dreams. You’re either with me or you’re not, but I want to know which it’s going to be right now.”

“Like I’ve got a choice.”

Morgan turned to him, blinking the soapy water out of his eyes. “Sure you do. You can back off and let me have her for myself.”

“That’s not going to happen.” Dallas felt his heart thumping like a drum. He could count the number of arguments he and Morgan had had on one hand. Not that this was an argument. At least it hadn’t turned into one yet.

“Then we might as well be upfront and honest about this from the

start. She's going to be ours. If we have to fight with the Wheelers then we'll do it. They don't own Jude. She's not Steven's wife any longer."

Dallas shook his head, letting the hot water sluice down his tired body. "And if they get us fired from the force? Or they get the city business ordinance changed and shut down Sinful Pleasures, what then?"

Morgan stepped out of the shower, wrapping a towel around his hips. "Are you that worried about those two? Hell, this is a small town, Dallas. You know these people, the mayor and the fire chief won't be pushed too far. Not many people love the Wheelers. They've been causing trouble since I've been in town. That's nothing new."

"I know, but I worry about them shutting Jude's place down."

Morgan shrugged. "They're going to push their weight around when they see us with her. Now or later, the three of us are going to be the topic of conversation. You might as well get used to it."

Dallas stood under the hot spray long after his partner left. Morgan was right, of course. Trying to stop the Wheelers of Parrish would be like trying to stop the sun from shining. Jude was a hot topic after her divorce from Steven, and the family hadn't forgiven her for standing her ground. She'd defied them at every turn, and so far, she'd managed to prosper despite their attempts to ruin her. Now it would be the three of them against two, and that made the odds a little better.

Dallas was aware that Jude already knew what it felt like to be on the receiving end of the Wheelers's disapproval. She fought tooth and nail to open her business, fighting the mother-and-son team while they tried to implement an obscenity zoning law. It took a while, but Genevieve gradually backed down when she saw the community embrace Jude's store and her tireless efforts to bring business and tourism into Parrish.

Dallas shut off the water and decided Morgan might be right after all. He towed himself off until his skin glowed from the rough

material, and then he dressed in his favorite jeans and old, comfortable Western shirt. It was time to collect the packages from Jude and ask when to pick her up for the ball.

Chapter Three

“What time do you want us to come over on Saturday?” Morgan shifted the packages under his arms and waited for her reply.

Jude thought he looked tired from fighting the earlier fire and maybe a little world weary from all that he’d seen. She found his brooding sexiness a challenge. Could she make him smile?

“Depends on what you want to do before we leave?” she teased.

Dallas stepped forward, running his knuckles across her cheek. “Honey, if we start anything, we sure aren’t going to stop having fun to go to some fancy-assed dance.”

Jude was rewarded by a quick smile flitting across Morgan’s face. He nodded in agreement.

Regardless of the fact they were freshly showered, a faint hint of smoke clung to them like the aura of a ghost. It reminded Jude of the risks they took daily to save lives. These men were real heroes, the everyday kind of heroes who got ignored too often. The kind of men her ex-husband, the lawyer, looked down upon. He ridiculed them for not having white-collar jobs.

“In that case, I’ll be ready an hour early, and you can come over whenever you like. I’m looking forward to this.”

Morgan leaned forward to brush his lips against hers. “We’ll pick you up...”

Once again, like the morning’s interruption during her fashion show, the alarms started ringing next door.

“Gotta go, babe.”

The two men left at a run. So this is what I’m getting myself into, Jude thought. Will there always be an alarm during an inconvenient

time? Yes, she told herself, imagining that was a way of life for most firefighter's families.

Jude watched them rush into the bay of the station, tossing the packages aside and undressing as they went. Peeled down to faded blue department T-shirts and their jeans, they stepped into the turnout gear. The outfits consisted of a boots-and-pants combo, heavy Nomex coats, and their helmets. In record time, they were in the truck pulling out of Station Three. This time it was Morgan who tossed her a wave as they rounded the corner on to Main Street.

The brake lights of Ladder Six were still in sight when Jude's cell phone rang. She fished it out of her pocket while locking the door. She turned her "Open for Business" sign to "Closed, please come back tomorrow."

Tracey's hysterical voice screeched shrilly through the phone. "Jude, the nursing home's on fire. Grandma's inside...Grandma...Oh, God, Jude..."

Jude felt her heart do a dizzy plummet to her feet. Their grandmother had raised them after their mother died of cancer in her late twenties. She was really the only mother either of them could remember. "Tracey, listen to me, don't panic. Station Three is on its way. I'll be there in a minute. Where are you?"

Jude's sister was beyond panicked. Her voice trembled so badly her words were nearly indistinguishable. "I'm across the street. They won't let anyone near."

"Stay there," Jude ordered. She grabbed her purse from beneath the counter, knocking over the partially full watering can. "I'm on my way." Jude ignored the water dripping onto the tile floor. She would worry about that tomorrow. For now, she had to get to her sister and her grandmother. There must be something she could do to help, she thought, but her frightened mind couldn't seem to focus.

Running red lights and ignoring traffic signs, Jude made it to the nursing home in a record-breaking matter of minutes. There were no cops on the road to slow her progress. She knew that everyone

available would be called to the nursing home fire.

Jude maneuvered her Eclipse through narrow streets clogged with emergency equipment. Two blocks away from the nursing home, she found a parking space big enough to fit the compact car in, and she took it. If the car got towed, she would deal with it, but right now, she had to find Tracey. Her sister would be on the verge of a total breakdown by this point.

Forgetting to lock the door, Jude ran the rest of the distance. She didn't stop until she saw Tracey standing apart from the crowd. She was bathed in the orange glare of the flames. Tracey spotted her immediately and dashed to meet her. She collapsed in a sobbing heap into Jude's arms.

Rubbing her sister's back, Jude let her cry for a moment before gently pulling her away to look into her face. "What happened, Trace?"

Scrubbing the tears from her face, Tracey tried to explain. Her words poured out in a confusing jumble of half formed sentences. She was breathing so fast, Jude thought she might hyperventilate. "Calm down. We can't help Grandma unless we know what's happening. Okay? Concentrate, Trace. I know it's hard."

Tracey nodded, making a serious effort to calm herself before speaking. Her body trembled violently with the beginning of what Jude suspected was shock.

"The fire started on the third floor. They have everyone out from the bottom two floors. They've been moving patients from three, but the smoke is getting so bad the medical staff had to leave. No one's on five, it's under renovation, but there are still patients on four. Grandma's on four, Jude."

Jude smoothed back her sister's hair with gentle hands. "I know, Trace, I know."

Jude's grandmother suffered a severe stroke earlier in the year and couldn't care for herself any longer. Reluctantly, Jude and Tracey decided it would be best if she had twenty-four-hour medical

supervision. One of them, and sometimes both, visited her every day. She could barely communicate, but she seemed to recognize them. She also seemed to understand what they said, even if she couldn't respond. Today had been Tracey's day to visit.

"What are we going to do, Jude?"

Jude watched the coordinated, but frantic, rescue efforts by the medical staff, city police, and the fire department. If she could find Dallas or Morgan, they could tell her what was happening inside. Jude thought it possible that her grandmother had already been brought out to safety. Rows of gurneys and medical beds were lined up all the way down the street. Paramedics, nursing home staff, and emergency hospital personnel worked feverishly to calm the terrified patients and help with minor injuries. So far, no serious injuries had been reported. Still, time was running out. The patients trapped on four would be suffering smoke inhalation soon if they weren't rescued.

"Stay here. I know someone who might be able to help."

Jude watched for a break in the ambulances and fire equipment. She dashed across the street and through the momentarily distracted police line to find Ladder Six. If she could reach Dallas or Morgan, she knew they would help her. Running feverishly in the direction of the ladder trucks, she was ignored by the various emergency personnel. They all rushed past her on their way into the building without giving her a second glance.

With the men dressed in their full bunker gear, it became nearly impossible for Jude to recognize anyone. She felt a sob of panic escape her throat. How would she ever find Morgan or Dallas? She had to find them. She had to make sure they would look for her grandmother. Tears streamed down her cheeks, and she bit back the scream that burned her throat as raw as the billowing smoke.

At last, she spotted Ladder Six parked on the edge of the manicured lawn. Jude swerved sharply in that direction and collided with a firefighter, nearly knocking them both down.

"Fuck!" She heard an angry male voice beneath the helmet. "What

the hell...Jude?"

She couldn't believe she'd found Dallas. She grasped the man's coat with both hands. "My grandmother's in there, Dallas. She's on the fourth floor. You have to find her. You have to..."

Dallas peeled her away from him. He pushed her back hard, making her stumble a couple of steps. "I'll find her, sweetheart, now get out of the way. I'm serious. Get out of here."

"But, Dallas..." she began. He wheeled her around and smacked her ass hard enough to get her attention. She took a couple of running steps from the force of his blow.

"I said go. We'll get her out." He made a "follow me" movement with his hand to the men coming up fast behind him. Then he ran toward the building, ignoring Jude as she reached for him one more time.

Jude watched Dallas for a moment with tears blurring her vision. When he disappeared into the smoke, she jogged back to her sister. They huddled together, shivering in fear as they watched the ladder trucks get into position and firemen begin the climb. Smoke billowed out of the windows, obscuring the firefighters as they climbed toward the fourth floor.

Unable to see anything but smoke and the flashing lights of the emergency vehicles, Jude remained silent. She hardly dared to blink for fear she might miss something. It seemed to her as if the men had already been gone for hours, and she realized the rest of the crowd watching must have felt the same. She could hear muttered speculation sweeping across the throng in low urgent tones.

"No one can breathe in that much smoke," Tracey finally whispered. "She's not going to make it, Jude."

Jude hugged her sister tighter. "She'll make it. Morgan and Dallas will rescue her, you'll see." Even as she said the words of reassurance, she felt doubtful. They had been in the building such a long time and no one was coming out.

Suddenly, there was a sound like a muffled explosion. It took Jude

a moment to realize something must have collapsed inside the building. The sound caused a flurry of activity to take place on the ground around the command center. Jude could hear the shouts.

“Call them out. Get them out of there.”

“Oh, God,” Tracey groaned. She dropped to the ground and buried her face in her hands. “This is my fault. I should have stayed home with Grandma. We shouldn’t have put her in the home, Jude. We could have worked out a schedule.”

The lump in Jude’s throat kept her from speaking. Where were the men? she wondered. Were the firefighters trapped, too? She thought she had cried herself out, but fresh tears welled up and rolled down her cheeks. It couldn’t end this way. She wouldn’t be able to handle the guilt for her grandmother or the men she had sent to find her.

In the midst of growing despair, an excited murmur rose from the crowd, then cheers and hand clapping. The crowd surged forward, pushing at the police line in their eagerness to get a better look. The cops held their ground, pushing the crowd back while making half-hearted threats to arrest the next person who crossed the line.

Tracey jumped to her feet, hopping up and down with excitement. The first firefighter had broken through the barrier of smoke. He had a rescue in his arms. Ignoring the calls of the crowd, he carried the frail, elderly man like a small child. Jude could see him talking to the old man as he walked past, gently placing him in the care of the paramedics.

More firemen walked by with patients. The crowd had suddenly grown still. Two firemen had not returned. Ladder Six was missing two of their men.

A search and rescue team geared up, ready to go inside if needed. The captain of Ladder Six huddled with his team of firefighters, plotting the best strategy for reaching the trapped men.

Jude ran to the police line, catching at the sleeve of a fireman as he went past. “Dallas Preston or Morgan Kent, have you seen them?” She knew she sounded desperate, and she didn’t care. Oh, God, she’d

told them to find her grandmother. What if she had sent them to their deaths with that request?

The firefighter pulled off his heavy helmet, his face showing the strain of worry and fatigue. "We're looking for them. They went back for the last patient and the floor collapsed."

"My grandmother," Jude choked. She shook her head in disbelief, as if she could clear it from the nightmare taking place around her.

The fireman's soot-streaked face softened with pity. "We'll do all we can, ma'am."

Through the fire, smoke, flashing lights, and water, the scene turned surreal. Jude felt as if she had stumbled into some foreign war zone. She realized she had crossed into a level of grief and tension that her mind couldn't bear. She felt numb as she watched, like she had stepped outside of her body and couldn't remember how to get back.

Suddenly, the crowd began screaming. Jude's heart leapt into her throat. Bursting from a service door on the west side of the building, two firemen stumbled out. The taller man carried a small bundle in his arms, wrapped protectively in a bunker coat. The second fireman wasn't wearing his coat. He was covered in soot, but no one had ever looked so good to Jude. She recognized Dallas and Morgan.

The firemen headed to the medical personnel in a run. Dallas gently laid his small burden on the waiting gurney. Paramedics immediately strapped an oxygen mask over the woman's face, but not before Jude caught a glimpse of her beloved grandmother.

One of the paramedics caught Morgan's arm when he tried to leave. She moved him to the side, forcing him to sit down on the wide bumper of the ambulance. After carefully examining his arms, she applied antiseptic ointment. Ignoring his protests, she wrapped the burned skin with soft gauze bandages.

Dallas looked over the crowd, then headed straight for Jude. A series of flashes went off as reporters snagged pictures of the man who had risked his life for the last patient. He snarled at them to get

out of his way, effectively backing them up, at least momentarily.

“I don’t know what to say.” Jude put her hand out to touch Dallas. “I can’t thank you and Morgan enough. You know that, don’t you?”

Dallas looked serious. “She’s pretty bad, Jude. I’m not going to lie to you. She inhaled a lot of smoke.”

“You did everything you could. She’s made it this far. She’s going to make it.” Jude looked past Dallas at Morgan. “Is he okay?”

Dallas tossed a glance over his shoulder. “Yeah, he’s going to get disciplinary action for taking his coat off, but he’ll be fine. He got some burns, but nothing deep enough to be more than a nuisance for a couple of days.”

“Disciplinary action?” Tracey had walked up to join them. “Why would he get that?”

“Because we don’t take our gear off for anything,” Dallas explained. “The theory being that if we go down we can’t possibly save a victim’s life.”

Tracey looked at her grandmother lying still and white on the gurney. “He won’t face any disciplinary action. I promise you that.”

Dallas looked skeptical, and then he shrugged. “We made a judgment call. Your grandmother’s skin is too thin and fragile to have made it through the heat. We were trapped and couldn’t get out the window, so we had to come back down the stairs. There wasn’t really a choice in the matter.” He glanced back over his shoulder. “I gotta go now. They’ll be taking your grandmother to Valley View Hospital.”

The two sisters watched him walk away. “I’m going to call the governor’s office from the hospital,” Tracey said. “Heroes don’t deserve to get beat up for doing the right thing, even if it is against rules.”

Jude looked over at Tracey’s determined face. Her sister’s resilience never failed to surprise her. “The governor’s office?”

Tracey winked. “I know his campaign manager. Rhonda can give the governor a heads-up on a wonderful promo opportunity. He should come down here for the fireman’s ball and shake the two

heroes' hands. He could do a little song and dance campaigning at the same time. You know it will get him a lot of local votes to honor a couple of hometown boys. The election isn't that far away."

"You are devious, little sister." Jude laughed, grabbing Tracey in a hug. "Let's go to the hospital so we can be there when they bring Grandma in."

* * * *

Morgan fiddled with the bandages covering his arms. "Do we have to do this?"

Dallas sighed heavily. "Yes, you thick-headed bastard. The governor wants to get a picture of you, me, and him with Mrs. Dolan. It's going to look great on the evening news."

Morgan groaned. "It's shameless to use the old lady."

"Shameless, but effective," a female voice said from the doorway. "That's why we're doing the photo shoot here at the hospital instead of the fireman's ball." She extended her hand. "I'm Rhonda Pearson, the governor's campaign manager. Needless to say, we've talked to the fire chief, and you gentlemen won't be facing any disciplinary action. You're going to be the heroes of Arizona by the time we get finished with you."

Morgan opened his mouth to reply, but the presence of the governor, along with a crowd of news reporters, cut him off. He clamped his mouth shut, staring at Jude, who followed a discreet distance behind the crowd.

Her glossy black hair was tucked behind her ears, and a faint smudge of violet under her eyes gave away the fact she hadn't slept any the night before. Dressed for comfort, she wore jeans and a simple T-shirt, somehow managing to make the outfit look chic instead of casual.

"You owe me," Morgan mouthed at her when she smiled his way.

As the politician droned on, Morgan found it impossible to

concentrate. He couldn't keep his gaze from wandering back to Jude. She really did have exquisite bone structure and an exotic European kind of beauty with her black hair and blue eyes. It didn't stretch Morgan's imagination to see her picking grapes from a vineyard in Tuscany.

He stifled an impatient sigh, wishing the media circus was over. How in the hell could anyone find that much to say about nothing, he wondered. If the guy didn't shut up soon, they were going to miss the ball. He and Dallas had to pick up their dress uniforms at the station. And Jude had already warned him she wasn't sure what she would be wearing since she'd been in the hospital most of the night with her grandmother.

Glancing over at Dallas, he could almost read his best friend's mind from the look on his face. Dallas was focused on Jude's long legs and shapely ass. She was a heartbreaker, one of those women who exuded sex without any conscious effort on her part. Morgan wondered if she'd been telling the truth when she said she had never played with the toys. He got a hard-on just thinking about what it would be like to teach Jude to play sexual games.

A gentle nudge in his ribs brought his attention back to the reporters who now stuck microphones toward him and Dallas. The news hounds asked a few questions to both of them. When neither Dallas nor Morgan offered any juicy details that would increase ratings on the six o'clock news, they ended the interview quickly.

Once the microphones were pulled out of their faces, the whole group moved into Jude's grandmother's room. Morgan felt a stab of guilt seeing the frail little lady propped up against a mountain of pillows. She still had an oxygen mask over her face, and her blue eyes looked pleading, as if she wanted to say something. He walked to her side while the reporters were getting in position to take their pictures.

Leaning down, Morgan looked straight into her eyes. She blinked once, slowly. There was no doubt in his mind that she wanted to communicate with him.

“Are you okay?” He whispered the words, not wanting the news media to make something out of the exchange. He didn’t think it was his imagination that her lips tried to curve into a smile inside the oxygen mask.

Jude came to stand on the other side of the bed. She looked from Morgan’s face to her grandmother. “This is one of the men who rescued you, Grandma.”

The elderly lady gave a soft, unintelligible sound and blinked her eyes once again.

“I think she remembers you.” Jude smiled, smoothing a strand of silvery hair back from her grandmother’s forehead. “If she could say it, she would be thanking you from the bottom of her heart, Morgan.”

Morgan saw a small movement of the woman’s left hand, and he reached down, rubbing his fingers across her hand and gently taking it within his own. He felt her try to squeeze his fingers, and the fragile movement made his eyes burn with unshed tears. He leaned down to whisper in her ear.

“You’re welcome, sweetheart.”

Chapter Four

“I feel like Cinderella.” Jude held on to Dallas’s and Morgan’s hands as they entered the grand ballroom of the Parrish Hotel. A relic from classier times, the ballroom floor was polished marble, gleaming invitingly under the soft overhead lighting.

Several couples were already on the dance floor enjoying the music of a local jazz band. A buffet table ran the length of one wall and an open bar sat at the end of the food tables. Just as Jude expected, the bartender was doing a thriving business.

“You’re the prettiest woman here,” Morgan whispered in her ear, using his finger to tame a wild strand of hair that escaped the chignon she wore. “It makes me proud just to be beside you.”

Jude glanced down at her simple strapless black gown. She knew the fit was perfect for her shape. The dress clung to her curves and flared at the bottom, dancing around her feet with every step she took.

“Thank you, smoke eater.” Jude smiled at him and squeezed both of their hands. “I feel like I’m the luckiest woman here. You and Dallas look incredibly handsome in your uniforms.”

“Incredibly?” Dallas asked, giving Jude a wink. “Does that mean we get a reward for cleaning up so well?”

Jude giggled. “What sort of reward do you have in mind?”

“How about a trip to your toy closet?” Dallas asked in a low voice. “Morgan and I’ve been talking about your lack of play time. You definitely need to play more, and we could help you.”

Jude blushed so hard she could feel the strand of pearls around her neck getting warm.

“You can’t recommend the products if you’ve never tested them,

baby.” Morgan raised one eyebrow as if daring her to challenge his statement.

“We could try out that cute pink paddle on your very adorable ass,” Dallas murmured, snagging two glasses of champagne from a passing waiter.

“Why would I want to get spanked?” Jude’s voice came out louder than she intended. She looked around to see if anyone had heard her, but no one seemed to be paying attention. Her hand trembled when she took the drink Dallas offered her.

“For the fun of it, honey.” Morgan leaned in closer to her. “How do you know you won’t like it until you’ve tried it?”

“Well, I...” She gave up since no rebuttal readily came to mind. Instead, a trickle of excitement shot like an arrow down her stomach to lodge in her pussy. Like a seed being planted in fertile soil, the idea began to germinate in her mind, blooming with the promise of pleasure.

Jude watched Dallas and Morgan exchange a quick glance of triumph before Dallas motioned to a group of people clustered near the bar.

“There’s the chief,” he said. “Let’s go over and say hi.”

Chief Grady stood six foot two with salt-and-pepper hair, cool gray eyes, and a celebrity persona. Jude could imagine him being an anchor for the six o’clock news. He had a look of relaxed authority and intelligence.

“Chief Grady, this is—” Dallas started to say before the chief cut him off good naturedly.

“Of course, I know who this is.” He took Jude’s hand and patted it between his own. “Is your grandmother doing okay, Ms. Wheeler?”

Jude was impressed. Chief Grady knew how to flatter. He was probably a killer with the press. Then she recognized one of the men standing with the fire chief. Roger Dennison, an anchor for the Phoenix news team. Not only did the governor know how to milk a situation for votes, obviously Parrish’s elected officials did too.

“She’s doing quite well thanks to Morgan and Dallas.” Jude gently drew her hand back from the chief. “I’d like to thank the whole Parrish Fire Department for their excellent work at the nursing home.”

She couldn’t help noticing that Chief Grady shifted his eyes to make sure Roger Dennison was paying attention. Satisfied the news anchor had eavesdropped on the whole conversation, Grady visibly relaxed. “We have a good team here in Parrish, Ms. Wheeler. Thank you for coming over. Enjoy your evening here at the ball,” he smiled like a used car salesman, “and save a dance for me, if you will.”

* * * *

Morgan held Jude in his arms as they danced to a seductive, slow number the band played like the old pros they were. Her perfume mingled with the magic of the night to weave Morgan into a spell of love. Just thinking about his feelings for Jude made him tremble. He didn’t think he could ever feel like this about a woman again.

She looked up at him with her blue eyes sparkling from the effects of the lights, music, and champagne. There was a glow about her, something ethereal that tugged Morgan deeper into the enchantment, and he let himself fall without fear.

Holding her in his arms he felt a fierce need to protect her, to keep her safe from whatever might bring her harm. As if she read his thoughts, Jude snuggled closer, laying her head against his shoulder so they were not dancing so much as simply swaying to the music while they held each other tightly.

A part of Morgan wished the night would never have to end.

* * * *

“Are you sure you want us to leave you here?” Dallas asked when Jude insisted they drop her off at the shop instead of taking her home.

“I’ll be fine,” she assured him. “I’m not sleepy and so many

things have happened. I need time to think. I'll change clothes and straighten up the shop before going home."

"Okay," Dallas said reluctantly.

Jude could tell he wasn't happy about her decision, but he didn't have much choice in the matter. After they left, she went upstairs into the lingerie room.

She hadn't taken the time to straighten up the display after trying on the clothes for Morgan and Dallas. A smile curved the edges of her lips as she remembered the looks on their faces. They had both sat mesmerized as she paraded around in front of them wearing nothing more than scraps of lace and imagination. The sexy clothes made Jude feel powerfully feminine and had awakened her body with a vengeance.

She ached to feel a man inside her. It was time to live again, to experience life, and sex, and all the pleasures a man, or men, could offer. Staring at the items of clothing like she had never seen them before, Jude wondered why she hadn't played with the merchandise.

Had the time she spent with her ex-husband made her lose her capacity to enjoy sex? He had been so uptight about any physical intimacy that he gave lackluster performances in bed. Jude couldn't ever remember having an orgasm during her marriage that wasn't self-induced.

Stepping up to the black one-piece body suit with its stretch lace fabric, Jude ran her fingers across the soft material. Wearing it would make her feel totally feminine and naughty.

Why not? she decided.

Feeling giddy with emotion and more than a little adventurous, Jude decided that maybe she would try on the lingerie. She might even break open one of the toys she'd been wondering about, just to relieve some of the sexual tension swirling around inside her like a storm out of control.

The true genius of the outfit wasn't revealed until Jude snuggled herself into the lace. Holes were strategically cut into the bodice so

that her nipples pushed through flower designs, becoming the center of the flower. The slight pressure of the fabric around her nipples made them harden instantly.

The bottom of the outfit looked solid, but it, too, had hidden treats. The crotch was split at the seam, leaving her pussy and ass readily accessible.

Too bad there was no one around to take advantage of it, Jude thought.

She ran her hands across her breasts, drawing in her breath as her fingers skimmed over the sensitive nubs of her nipples.

She felt positively energized, not to mention horny as hell and playful.

Time for the toy room, she decided, padding brazenly into the room dressed only in the sexy one-piece outfit.

She found that simply walking around in the silky fabric made her feel empowered. Why hadn't she tried this before? There was a certain delicious eroticism about dressing in seductive clothes and fantasizing about which toy might feel the most like a lover's tool. Not that she thought for one minute any of the toys could compare to either of the men.

Standing in front of the wall displaying the toys, Jude wondered what item she should select. Which personal pleasure device would suit her needs the best, and what would she be brave enough to try on her own?

A flicker on the security screen caught her eye, and Jude froze in shock. Oh, my God, Dallas and Morgan had just come through the door. Did she forget to lock it? There was no way out of the room to get back to her clothes without them seeing her.

Shit!

"Jude?"

She didn't answer. Like that would help her, she thought, but she didn't know what to say. She could hear their boots coming up the steps. Panic washed over her like a teenager getting caught breaking

into the liquor cabinet.

“Fuck!” Dallas stood in the doorway looking her up and down. “Oh, baby, you take my breath away. Why didn’t you lock the door? Do you know how dangerous it is to be in here with the door unlocked? Especially with you dressed like that.”

“Of course,” Jude managed to stammer. “I just needed some time alone, and I must have forgotten to lock the door.”

“You don’t forget things like that, Jude,” Morgan said. He took a long, leisurely look at her before he spoke again. “Maybe a spanking will make you remember next time.”

Jude swallowed hard, licking her dry lips. “I won’t forget again.”

“You said you never played with the merchandise.” Dallas focused on her nipples peeking out through the black lace. “Did you lie to us, Jude?”

Jude couldn’t find her voice this time, so she shook her head negatively, watching both men advance on her.

“Answer me.” Dallas’s eyes glittered as he watched her face.

“No. This is the first time.”

Dallas glanced at Morgan with a skeptical grin. “Do you believe her?”

Morgan shrugged. “Doesn’t seem likely we’d catch her on the only day she ever played with the products. Especially with the door open so we could find her. Maybe she wanted to be caught. Is that it, Jude?”

“Come on, guys.”

Dallas reached around her to pull the paddle down from the wall. “How long has it been since you’ve been spanked, Jude?”

Jude looked into his eyes and nearly whimpered aloud. Why was she responding? This was her store, and she could do whatever the hell she pleased. Except, from somewhere down deep inside her, a little spark of excitement leapt to life at the threat of a spanking.

“Give that to me.” She reached out to yank the ridiculous pink paddle out of his hand. He was fast. Her fingers came away with

nothing except a few feathers that had been glued around the outer edge.

Before she could think about her mistake, Dallas yanked her over to the desk. He placed her palms on the top of the table, so she had to bend over. Without giving her a chance to stand up, he gave her a hard smack with the paddle. Even with the padding covering the wood, her ass stung from the blow.

He let her stay in that position long enough to feel the full effect of the burn. Then he rubbed her ass with his hand and leaned over her back until his mouth tickled her ear.

“That’s for lying to us, Jude Wheeler.”

She started to stand up, but a warning hand on her back kept her leaning over the desk. She tensed when she realized they weren’t finished with her. Another firm smack landed on her burning ass. She jerked away from the sting, holding her breath for what would come next.

This time it was Morgan’s voice in her ear. “That’s for leaving the door unlocked. Don’t ever do that again, Jude.”

Two sets of gentle hands raised her up from the desk. “We don’t want to hurt you, baby, but you have to understand that we’re doing this for your own good.”

Both of their hands were smoothing her hips now, lovingly caressing over the stinging flesh using gentle strokes to calm her. She realized she should be furious. Instead, she was dripping wet, and, oh God, wondering with shaking anticipation what they would do to her next.

Morgan leaned down taking a nipple into his mouth, pulling at her with a gentle sucking motion that curled Jude’s toes. She arched her back toward him, giving a little gasp when Dallas took the other breast in his mouth. This was so delicious...so exciting. She couldn’t stop now if she wanted. Jude realized she was in way over her head with these two.

She shut her eyes, cupping her hands around the backs of their

heads. She drew each of them closer while letting herself ride on the erotic sensations they were producing. The two men had different styles of sucking at her breasts. Dallas drew her tightly into his mouth, nipping at her with his teeth. He scraped over her puckered nipple until the pleasure turned into an exquisite pain.

Morgan sucked gently, trapping her between his lips while his tongue teased her swollen nipple. With the gentlest of bites, he clamped down on the tip of her breast, adding pressure until she thrust her hips forward. She wanted more than their mouths alone could offer her.

As Dallas's and Morgan's lips and tongues worked at her, Jude felt their hands explore her body. She didn't open her eyes. Riding the wave of pleasure with her eyes shut allowed her to concentrate on what she was feeling. She felt a lot. Her knees trembled, and her pussy gushed as both men suckled her with like-minded determination.

Jude ran her fingers through Morgan's hair, adding pressure to the back of his head when he did those wonderful things with his mouth. Her toes curled into the plush carpeting, and she couldn't stop the moan of pleasure from her lips.

Morgan's hand rested on her waist, but now it traveled her body. She could feel him mapping out the contours of her flesh as he ran his fingertips down over her ass. Within seconds he found the suit was crotchless. Jude felt him hesitate when his fingers traced the seam only to find bare flesh beneath the nonexistent fabric. Neither man had found it earlier when they were rubbing the pain of their spanking away.

Morgan pulled away from her nipple to look at her. Jude opened her eyes to stare back at him. She offered Morgan a hesitant smile, wondering where this would take the three of them. She couldn't believe she hadn't put a stop to this, but it felt too good to deny. It felt natural for her to let both men pleasure her body.

"Is that bed in the other room real or for display?"

Morgan was talking about the tiny room she had restored to look like a late-nineteenth-century-era whorehouse crib. The room held an iron bed covered with a red velvet spread. Above the bed, on flower-patterned wallpaper, hung an antique mirror. Jude added a Victorian dressing screen and an old-fashioned gas lamp converted to electric to give the room an appropriately historical look.

Dallas pulled back, too, waiting on her answer.

"It's real," Jude whispered. Her heart sped up at the looks on the men's faces. She could think of no other term than predatory as they glanced at one another then back at her.

"Come on, Jude." Dallas took her by the hand. "Let Morgan and I show you what it's like to be loved by two men."

"Will you teach me," Jude's voice grew husky with need, "about everything? I want to experience it all. Even if I find I don't like it, I want to experience it at least once in my life."

"Of course we will, little filly. Whatever you want, you just say the word and one of us will do it for you."

Jude nodded, unable to find her voice for a moment. When she did, it came out little more than a whisper. "And the toys?"

"We're going to start that lesson right now, honey." Morgan gave her a breathtaking smile. "We need to get you ready for both of us, so we're going to pick out the tiniest little butt plug and let you get used to how it feels."

He held on to her hand as he led her to the assortment of backdoor toys. Dallas came over to stand beside her, too, resting his hand on the curve of her hips. His fingers trailed into the open fabric as if to remind her he would be claiming that territory soon.

"This should do it." Morgan picked a small jelly plug from the wall. It had light ridges in it like a corkscrew. The plug itself was soft and only about half the size of the one Dallas bought when they were shopping on Friday.

"We need some good lube." Morgan found a tube of ultra-slick personal lubrication specifically formulated for anal penetration.

“This will make it a lot more fun, darlin’. You’re going to love this.”

* * * *

Dallas took his hat off and hung it on the corner of the dressing screen. While Dallas undressed, Morgan used his teeth to break the cellophane packaging on the tube of lubricant. He partially unscrewed the lid, then set the tube aside, turning his attention to Jude.

“We want you to enjoy it when we both fuck you at once. That might take a little while to get you ready so it doesn’t hurt. You’ll have to wear a butt plug for a couple of hours every day. One of us will come over before our shift starts to put it in for you, darlin’. We’ll gradually put bigger ones in each day until you’re able to take us both,” Morgan explained.

“I can’t do that,” Jude protested. Her blue eyes were huge at the suggestion. “Not with clients coming in and running the shop.”

Dallas stopped unbuttoning his shirt. “Baby, this is for your own good. Do we have to give you another spanking to make a point?”

He could see her heart beating like a trapped bird beneath the thin lace body suit.

“Like I was saying,” Morgan continued, “one of us will pick out the right size plug and put it in for as long as we think you need to wear it. Then, when the time’s up, one of us will take it out.”

Dallas took Jude’s chin in his hand, gently turning her to look at him. “We’ll know if you take it out early.”

“Why are you doing this?” Jude asked in a hushed voice.

Dallas glanced over at Morgan. “Because we want to teach you discipline in a gentle way. If you learn to trust us and to do what we tell you, then we can take you to heights you’ve never even dreamed of, Jude Wheeler.” He pulled her up for a hard kiss, and then pushed her away reluctantly. “But you have to let us be in complete control.”

Morgan ran his hand over Jude’s head, cupping her face in his palm. “You’re special to us, Jude. We thought about this long and

hard. Hell, we stayed awake at nights knowing you were just across the street from us. We don't want to hurt you. We're gonna ease you into this slowly so you enjoy it as much as we do."

Jude was trembling as she stood trapped between them and the bed.

"I know you're scared," Dallas said. "This is your one chance to back out. You say no right now, and we'll walk out that door." He glanced over at his friend, then back at Jude. "But if you don't get rid of us, then you're in this till the end. We'll take care of you, Jude. You're going to be well-fucked and satisfied, I promise."

Dallas watched her trying to make up her mind. She wanted them, he knew that much. He also guessed that she was frightened of giving up control. She'd never been tested as a woman, not with a husband like Steven Wheeler. To let him and Morgan take her out of her safe zone would take a leap of faith on her part.

"Time's up, baby," he said, giving her a wicked grin. Dallas knew his smile melted women, and he wasn't above using it to get his way. Women couldn't seem to resist him when he grinned, and Jude was no exception. She smiled back shyly, stepping into his outstretched arms.

* * * *

Morgan took the jelly butt plug out of the package and placed it on the table beside the lubricant. He fought the fluttering in his stomach as he thought about inserting the toy in Jude's ass. Hell, his hands were shaking at the thought. She had him turned wrong side out.

He wanted to do it slowly and take his time watching her learn about pleasure. When the time was right, he would be the one to breach her virgin territory.

Morgan looked at Dallas over Jude's head, knowing the time was right.

“Get undressed,” he mouthed. With a little tug, he pulled Jude out of Dallas’s arms and into his own. The moment he had her in his embrace, he lowered his lips to hers. He loved the sweet honey taste of her as he slipped his tongue inside.

She pressed against him, eager and willing. Her soft breasts mashed against his chest, and she pushed her hips into him, rubbing against his erection. Morgan cupped his hands down over her ass, lifting her up so that his rigid cock thrust against her pussy.

“You’ve got to trust us, Jude.” He dropped his forehead against hers, rubbing up and down the length of her back with his hands. “Can you do that?”

Jude nodded, tightening her arms around his waist. Morgan wanted to take her right then. He wanted to forget about the deal and bury himself inside of her until they became one. Ignoring his passion for her, he made himself go slowly. He knew if they wanted a chance to make this work, it had to be a careful seduction. He wanted Jude too much to frighten her away by moving too forcefully.

“Your turn,” Dallas said. “I’ll take over for a while.”

Morgan stripped out of his clothes in record time, watching his best friend with the woman Morgan thought he might be in love with. Hell, he’d wanted her since the day he first saw her. Jude’s simple beauty could make any man want her. But it wasn’t until he got to know her that he thought he might be falling in love.

Jude Wheeler had it all—looks, personality, and intelligence. He loved the way her blue eyes sparkled with laughter at the shit Dallas spouted to her. He respected the way she campaigned for her causes and fought to keep Parrish a small but prosperous community. Most of all, he loved the way she held her head high despite her mother-in-law’s snide remarks about *Sinful Pleasures*. She held her ground even during her ex-husband’s interference in her business. Jude was a sexy, tough, and beautiful woman, a woman Morgan wanted to get closer to. He’d have already been dating her if he hadn’t known his best friend felt the same way.

It wasn't like he and Dallas hadn't done this before, but it just hadn't meant anything then. They'd spent time with other women who liked a ménage scene, but the women weren't interested in long-term relationships, and neither were they. Everyone involved knew it was fun and games, but Jude was different. It mattered a hell of a lot to him, and he knew it did to Dallas, too.

Morgan watched Dallas ease Jude down onto the bed, kissing her as he pushed her back against the velvet comforter and mound of soft pillows. She lay quietly in the center of the bed, her body beginning to tremble again as she waited. Her fear tightened Morgan's stomach, making him want to protect her from the world.

"Why are you nervous?" Dallas brushed a strand of hair back from her face, dropping a kiss on her forehead.

"I don't know what to do. Or what you expect of me..."

"Shh." Morgan put his fingers across her lips. "We'll teach you everything, Jude. All you have to do is let us pleasure you and to obey us when we ask for something."

"I've never been very good at obeying." Jude's blue eyes held a hint of challenge as she stared back at Morgan.

"Then you'll get a lot of spankings, won't you? Is that what you want, Jude?"

"I don't like to be spanked."

Morgan laughed, reading the lie on her face. "I think it turned you on, darlin', and I think that scares you a little bit. You've always been in control, haven't you?"

Jude nodded her head yes.

"Then maybe it's time for you to let someone else take over."

* * * *

Scares me a little bit? More like a freaking lot, Jude thought as she felt herself squirm with anticipation.

What the hell was happening to her? She'd never been the type of

woman to want a man to dominate her. Yet, Morgan and Dallas had her dripping with their threats of spanking and macho sexuality. Did she really want someone to take charge and take all the decisions out of her hands?

Or maybe, she told herself, this was just another step in her sexual journey. She hadn't been lying when she told the men she wanted to experience everything. Morgan was right, how would she know if she never tried something.

She really hadn't experienced much more than vanilla sex with her uptight husband, and those encounters always left her feeling frustrated instead of fulfilled. Jude thought it time to find out what she really wanted, and these were the two men she trusted enough to teach her.

"What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to roll over on your stomach, darlin'. Then I want you to relax."

"That's not likely." Jude's voice came out a breathless little laugh. She felt her pussy clench and her stomach muscles bunch in a mixture of fear and expectation.

"Okay, then we'll let Dallas help you relax." Morgan shot a look at Dallas. "You want to let our little filly ride you?"

"Fuck yeah." Dallas rolled on to his back, and Jude felt him pick her up as if she weighed nothing. He settled her on top of him, grinning mischievously. "Wanna take a ride, little filly?"

Jude felt close to hyperventilating, but she settled herself on her knees and positioned her hips over his. She felt Morgan's hands behind her, pulling the material of the bodysuit aside and spreading the crotch farther apart.

"She's ready."

"Look at me," Dallas ordered, and Jude stared into his dark brown eyes. He had the longest lashes she'd ever seen on a man. With their gazes locked, he put his hands on her waist and pulled her down onto his cock while thrusting his hips upward.

Jude moaned softly, feeling herself give to his hardness. It had been so very long since a man invaded her body with passion. Her pussy protested for a brief moment, then opened like a flower to sunshine, letting him slide deep within her till there was nowhere left to go. Her channel clamped around him, muscles clenching and relaxing as they became accustomed to his size. He held her motionless for a moment, then he used his back and heels to push upward again. His arms lifted her up and down on his cock in an unhurried stroking motion.

Jude's head fell back against her shoulders. How had she lived without this? She splayed her hands out on his chest. She loved the feel of crinkly male hair between her fingers as he pumped her up and down with a steady rhythm.

"Feels so good." Jude sighed. She pushed down to meet his thrusts, feeling herself hover on a wave of pleasure. She could sense her orgasm building, dancing on the edge of her consciousness, rising with every plunge of his cock as her clit rubbed against the base of his erection. She was so close, so very close, and then she felt Morgan's finger. It trailed down the crack of her buttocks, cool and wet with lubrication.

"Lean over, darlin'. Enjoy this."

Jude leaned down over Dallas, dropping her lips to his mouth. His hips slowed their pace to a lazy stroking tempo. She floated on the edge of her climax, painfully aware of Morgan's finger pushing against the outer rim of her anal muscles.

"She is fucking tight," Morgan said.

"I can't hold out here much longer, bud." Dallas pushed hard into Jude, then held completely still, prolonging the inevitable.

"Get ready for a little bit of wild pleasure, darlin'."

Jude felt Dallas's hand tighten on her hips so she couldn't move, and a solid pressure broke through the barrier of her anus. She gasped, feeling Morgan slowly twist the small plug into her ass. He turned it like a screw, letting her take it in millimeters at a time. He had coated

the plug with lubrication so that it slid easily into her virgin territory, filling her with a delicious fullness that begged for release.

Her pussy began to react to the stimulation in a way Jude had never felt before. Her muscles compressed so tightly that Dallas gave a deep groan, sucking in a breath through his clenched teeth.

“This is it,” he ground out, shoving hard into Jude as Morgan buried the plug and moved away to watch her face.

Jude had never felt anything so intense in her life. She saw a red haze blossom before her eyes as Dallas’s thickness added more pressure to the little jelly plug filling her ass. He jerked in short, hard thrusts, over and over. The movement threatened to drive her crazy with need, and then her climax burst free. She felt a roaring blaze of ecstasy through her veins as she exploded with a cry of release. Dallas met her there in the sexual inferno, filling her with thick, hot bursts of liquid as he whispered her name.

* * * *

Exhausted from her orgasm, Jude was only vaguely aware of the plug still in her ass until Morgan playfully twisted it to get her attention.

“My turn now, darlin’.”

The rich deepness of his voice and the delightful pressure of the plug had Jude’s pussy spasming again in anticipation of another climax. “That feels so good, Morgan. Do it again.”

Morgan chuckled, gently pulling the plug half out and pushing it back in a couple of times. “Wait till I’m in your ass, Jude,” he whispered. “I’m a hell of a lot bigger than this. Imagine what it will feel like with me stretching you to the limit.”

While he lay stretched out behind her, his fingers reached around until they found her clit. He stroked her with one hand while twirling the jelly plug around in her tight little hole with the other. She felt herself building quickly, ready to explode again at the lightest touch.

“You know what will make you come?” Morgan didn’t wait for her answer. He positioned her enough so he could lower his face to her nipple. He bit down gently while his finger rubbed back and forth on the swollen bud of her clit. Just as she stiffened, he pushed inward on the butt plug, shoving it farther into her ass.

She writhed against Morgan, letting him use his hands and mouth to take her to the edge of madness. Whimpering with pleasure, Jude broke into a fresh climax that tore a hoarse cry from her throat. She rode the crest of devastatingly intense sensations pouring through her body for what seemed like a very long time.

“Just ride it, baby. This is only the beginning. It gets better from here.” Jude thought it couldn’t get any better. In fact, she thought she might die if it got better than this, but it was a chance she would be willing to take.

Rolling over to face him, she cupped his cheeks in her hands, stroking his beard shadow with her fingertips. “What do you want me to do? How can I make you feel good?”

Morgan’s hazel eyes crinkled. “Trust me, darlin’, just watching you enjoy yourself makes me feel good.”

“I’ll make you feel even better,” Jude promised.

She began kissing down his body, all the way from his neck, across the hard, muscled expanse of his chest, to his tight six-pack abs. His skin tasted salty sweet. Jude licked her lips, dropping her mouth into the patch of curly hair that held her treasure.

His cock strained upward, as if waiting for her mouth to envelope him. She cupped his balls in her hand, feeling the soft fullness of them. Jude placed a kiss on the head of his penis, and he groaned. She smiled to herself, loving his reaction to her touch. Lowering her mouth over the swollen head of his cock, she sucked lightly. Her fingertips traced the vein on the underside of his erection. Morgan’s body stiffened as she worked her lips and tongue. Jude realized she would never be able to fit his length in her mouth unless she was able to swallow him.

How would that feel? Would he be able to feel her throat muscles working as she consumed him? It wasn't something she'd ever thought about before. Of course, there had been no reason to think about it. Her ex thought any kind of oral sex was disgusting.

Testing her theory, Jude kept taking him deeper, letting herself get used to the sensation of him touching the back of her throat. She forced herself to relax against the gag reflex. Then Jude began to swallow, feeling him edge down her throat.

"Oh, fuck." Morgan thumped his head back against the pillow. "Shit, darlin'. You're killing me."

His response turned Jude on. She let her hand crawl blindly up his body until she found a nipple nestled in the light smattering of hair on his chest. She gently twisted the tight male bud as her mouth put more pressure on his throbbing cock.

Jude could feel his heartbeat thrumming rapidly in the vein of his penis, while she swallowed him as deeply as her throat would allow. Morgan groaned like he was in pain and tried to move her hand away from his chest.

Jude knew how it felt now—the sensations of pleasure so strong they became unbearably painful. She wouldn't give him that release, not yet. Drawing her head back, she began licking her tongue around the thick head of his cock. She grasped him in her fist, holding his erection steady while she worked him over. Her tongue savored the satin smoothness of his salty skin.

At last, knowing he couldn't take much more of her touch, Jude lowered her head back over him, working at his erection with her mouth and throat. Jude hummed as she swallowed him, knowing the vibration would drive him crazy. She was right.

"*Oh, fucking damn.*" Morgan exploded with a hot burst of salty liquid that Jude swallowed in thirsty gulps. She kept bobbing her head up and down until he had released every drop in his sac and she drained him dry.

"I can't believe I came that fast," Morgan said. He raised his head

to look at Jude. “You’re fucking good, you know that?”

Jude felt herself flush. “I enjoyed what I was doing. You make it easy, Morgan, you and Dallas.” She put her hand out to touch Dallas.

“Wait till we both fuck you, baby. You’re going to love that,” Morgan said. He looked from her to his best friend. “I know Dallas and I will.”

“When will I be ready?” Jude looked at Dallas first, then turned her head to Morgan.

“It’s gonna take a few days,” Morgan said, showing his dimples. “But I think you’ll like the lessons.”

Chapter Five

Jude locked the door behind Morgan and Dallas. She knew they were waiting to hear the click of the deadbolt before they left her alone in the store. Morgan had removed the plug for her with the promise they would try a bigger one the next time. Jude smiled to herself, feeling deliciously fulfilled and eager to resume her education. She couldn't get enough of her firemen, which is how she thought of them now.

Her firemen.

Walking up the stairs and into the small bedroom they vacated only a short time ago, Jude stood in front of the mirror and studied herself. She didn't look any different than she had just a few hours ago, but everything had changed. She realized her life would never be the same from this point on. She felt as if she'd grown, as if she were more aware of herself and her needs.

Her cell phone buzzed and Jude dug it from the small purse she'd carried through the evening. Tracey would be calling to find out how the dance went.

"Sorry to call so late, but I didn't want to interrupt if you were having a wonderful time," Tracey apologized. "Are you in bed?"

"Just got out of bed," Jude answered with a trace of humor.

"Just got...oh..." Tracey hesitated. "Do you have time to talk?"

"I need to talk." Jude sighed.

Biting her bottom lip as she looked at her reflection, Jude knew that after today she would never be satisfied in a conventional relationship. She wasn't sure, but she thought Dallas and Morgan might have ruined her for any other man forever. She couldn't

imagine not being with the two of them. She found a dressing gown and pulled it on, moving to the bed where she could stretch out and relax while she talked to Tracey.

"I really don't know what I've got myself into, Trace. Dallas and Morgan want to teach me about everything."

"And the problem?" Tracey's amusement was evident in her voice.

"Spanking..."

Tracey laughed out loud. "Did you let them?"

"Well, I...really, I didn't have much choice," Jude spluttered, feeling herself blush at the memory.

"Good." Tracey didn't pull any punches. "Did you enjoy it?"

"That's the thing," Jude said in awe. "I did, but I don't understand why."

"Always thinking and analyzing." Tracey sighed. "I'll tell you why, because they just proved to you they are alpha males. It's in our female psyche to respond to a dominant man. We're always searching for that man who will take over, and take care of us. Now, be honest, didn't it enhance the sex?"

"Yes. I've never had anything like it," Jude admitted.

"Then, be happy, Jude." Tracey's voice softened with emotion. "If you enjoyed it, nothing else matters."

"I suppose not," Jude agreed, running her hand across the sheets that were still damp from the sweat of their sexual play. She turned her face into the sheet so she could inhale Dallas's and Morgan's scents. "I don't know if I can give up control." Jude realized her voice sounded tense but she couldn't help it. She was way out of her comfort zone here, and she didn't know what to expect.

"You don't have to," Trace said patiently. "Just because you do what they tell you doesn't mean you're not in control. You can use your body to get what you want."

Jude thought about that for a minute. Then she grinned. "Did I ever tell you that I have a brilliant little sister?"

“Get some rest, Jude,” Tracey suggested. “You’re gonna have your hands full with those two, and I want to hear all the juicy details.”

* * * *

Morgan Kent took the bottle of beer Dallas handed him. He dropped down in one of the wooden Adirondack chairs Dallas kept on the front porch. After his best friend had settled his tall frame into one of the matching chairs, Morgan held his bottle up in salute. Dallas returned the gesture and propped his feet up on the porch railing.

“What do you think?” Dallas asked without looking at him. He didn’t have to explain what he was talking about. The two men had been best friends so long they were closer than most brothers. More often than not, they could read what the other was thinking.

“I believe we just found the best thing in our lives, partner.”

Dallas continued to look out over the field of vibrantly colored wildflowers growing at the edge of the well-kept lawn. Owl clover and lupine contrasted sharply with the yellow brittlebush and scarlet blooming penstemon. Morgan knew how much Dallas loved the panoramic scene in front of him, just like he knew his friend had paid dearly for it.

Tearing his gaze away from the rugged beauty of the land, he turned to Morgan. “She’s the kind of woman I could spend the rest of my life with.”

“Me, too, and that scares the hell out of me.” Morgan took a long swig of beer, nearly draining the bottle. “Can we do this, Dal? Can we share this woman and make it work?”

Dallas turned the amber bottle up, drinking it dry. “I’m willing to try. It never meant anything before, but it does now. I don’t want to lose her.” He grinned, looking back over the field of flowers. “It turned me on watching her swallow your dick. She did it like a pro. I kept watching her throat take you a little deeper with each gulp, and I

thought I was going to come again. Damn, but she looked fine.”

“It turned me on watching you pump that cute little pussy of hers. How does she feel?”

“Hot. Hot and tight.” Dallas reached down to extract another beer from the cooler he’d put between them. “I can’t wait till we both...”

“Yeah, me, either.”

“Seems to me that we need to convince her this is the real thing. Not some kind of kinky fantasy we’re going to get tired of in a few months.” Dallas tugged his cowboy hat lower, shading his eyes from the intensity of the setting sun. “Do you think she’ll believe us?”

Morgan nodded, squinting out from under the brim of his hat as he watched the dying sun spill its golden-red blood across a purple sky. “We need to bring Jude out here to the ranch. Look at this, it’s paradise.”

* * * *

“She would love it. At least I think she would.” Dallas said. He twisted the top off another bottle. Dallas could feel a slow buzz working pleasantly through his veins. He seldom let himself get too drunk to drive, but tonight would be an exception. He wanted to relax and relive the time they had spent with Jude. He had no intentions of leaving the ranch until tomorrow.

Once Morgan left for his own place, Dallas planned to get a few hours of sleep. The two fires they fought and making love to Jude had left him pleasantly exhausted.

Out of the blue he thought of Tina and wondered where they went wrong. After living together three years it was like they woke up one morning to find themselves little more than strangers. He remembered the tears of regret at the time, along with the relief they both felt at their parting. He’d helped her move to Flagstaff, and for a while they kept in touch. Over the years their communication dwindled away to an occasional phone call around the holidays. Tina married an ad

executive, had a little boy, and now she had another child on the way. Dallas hoped she was happy, because after making love with Jude tonight, he finally felt he knew what he wanted in his life.

Chapter Six

Jude answered her cell phone with a smile when she saw the incoming number was Dallas's phone. A flutter of excitement settled in her stomach and refused to go away.

"Got any plans tonight?" Dallas asked.

"Not unless you want to resume my studies," Jude hinted. Since her first lesson, she could think of nothing else. Morgan and Dallas seemed to be the only thing she could focus on. When the shop was empty, she found herself going upstairs to study the toys, wondering which one they would pick next. She constantly relived the taste and feel of them and the way her body responded like it never had before. She felt safe in their arms. Jude trusted them with her heart and her body.

Dallas chuckled. "We'll be doing that real soon, babe," he assured her. "But tonight we thought you might like to go to the carnival with us. We could walk downtown, check out the action, and maybe go to a movie if you'd like."

Jude didn't have to think about it. "I'd love to," she responded. "I can be ready in fifteen minutes. Give me time to close shop and empty the register."

Slipping the cell phone back in her pocket, Jude hurried to finish her nightly chores. She had just flipped on the upstairs security system when Dallas and Morgan came through the front door.

"Are you ready?" Dallas asked. He wore faded jeans, black cowboy boots, and a button-down shirt hanging open over a blue T-shirt. Jude couldn't help noticing the bulge inside his jeans. The constant pressure of his cock pushing against the material left a worn

spot next to the zipper.

In contrast to Dallas's disheveled good looks, Morgan's chambray shirt was tucked neatly into the waistband of his jeans. He gave her a brooding look from under the brim of his Stetson, and Jude felt her heart flutter.

"Ready when you are."

Morgan reached out to take the keys from her hand, grabbing her wrist to pull her into his chest. He leaned down to give her a heart-stopping kiss before he slipped the keys out of her grasp.

"I don't trust you to lock the door," he said, eyes twinkling.

"Hmm, missed your chance to spank me again."

Morgan's eyebrows shot up. "I thought you didn't like to be spanked."

Jude gave him a coy look over her shoulder as she stepped out the door. "Maybe."

"Don't be talkin' like that, little filly, or we won't make it to the carnival." Dallas put his arm around her shoulders, drawing her to him for a kiss while Morgan locked the door.

They walked down the street side by side. Both men reached out occasionally to touch Jude as she walked between them. A block down the street from Sinful Pleasures, the three passed a man standing on the sidewalk talking into a cell phone. Jude noticed that he barely glanced at them as they strolled by, hardly getting out of the way enough they could maneuver around him.

* * * *

The man on the phone waited until the threesome walked past far enough so they couldn't hear his conversation. "Yes, I verified it's her, and she's with two guys." He kept his voice low, watching their backs as he spoke. He would bolt if any of them turned around to look at him.

"Did you take pictures?" The disembodied voice on the other end

asked.

“I’ll send them as soon as we hang up. Do you want me to follow?”

“Of course I do,” the voice snapped. “What do you think I’m paying you for? I need evidence she’s sleeping with both men.”

“That might be a little harder to get,” the man drawled, fishing a pack of cigarettes out of his shirt pocket. “Cost you more.”

An annoyed sigh hissed into his ear. “Don’t try to blackmail me, Mr. Matthews. You’ll get a reward if you deliver the verification I need.”

Matthews took a deep drag on the Camel, holding his breath and enjoying the smoke. Tilting his head upward, he exhaled before speaking. “Is that all you want me to do? Get proof she’s fucking both guys?”

“Please keep your vulgarities to yourself, Mr. Matthews. This can’t be allowed to continue. She will ruin everything.”

“So, are you telling me to eliminate the problem?” Matthews asked impatiently. He listened to silence while taking another leisurely pull from his cigarette. The long pause told him his question was being considered.

“Not yet. For now, proof will be enough.” The phone disconnected before Matthews could speak.

“Fuck you,” he whispered. Matthews slipped the phone into his front pocket after sending the pictures he had taken of Jude, Morgan, and Dallas. With a flick of his fingers, he tossed the butt onto the sidewalk, grinding it out with his heel. Glancing around, he made sure no one seemed to be taking an interest in his movements. Satisfied he hadn’t attracted attention, Matthews continued to follow the woman he’d been hired to spy on. She didn’t have a clue. Some jobs were easier than others, he reflected.

* * * *

Morgan felt uneasy. Something didn't feel right, but he couldn't put his finger on what was wrong. Jude seemed oblivious to his sense of unease, and Morgan meant to keep it that way. He wanted her to enjoy herself tonight.

Like a man feeling a predator stalking him, Morgan turned around to glance behind them. The street had its normal volume of pedestrian traffic, and no one looked out of place. Still, his feeling of apprehension couldn't be shaken. He squared his shoulders, waiting for whatever trouble lurked in the shadows.

Jude put a hand on his arm, looking up at him with concern on her features. "What's wrong?"

Morgan winked, smiling at her for reassurance. "Nothing, sweetheart."

Dallas looked at him over Jude's head. His expression let Morgan know he wasn't buying the lie. With a quick flash of understanding, Dallas did a sharp-eyed appraisal of their surroundings before returning his gaze to Morgan. He gave a little shrug as if to say he didn't see anything suspicious.

Jude looked back and forth between them. "Tell me what's going on."

"It's probably nothing," Morgan answered. "I got this weird feeling that we're being watched."

Both Dallas and Jude swiveled around to look at the crowd of people behind them. Jude focused on one man in particular, biting her lip with a frown of concentration as she watched him. "Isn't that man the one we passed talking on the phone?"

Dallas studied him for a long moment. "Yeah," he agreed, "I think it is. Did you see him, Morgan?"

Morgan willed the bastard to turn around. He had taken a sudden interest in the window display nearest him. He kept his head turned enough that Morgan couldn't get a positive identification on him. Not that it mattered, he told himself. What if it turned out to be the man they had passed? That didn't mean anything. A lot of Parrish citizens

walked about town on a pretty evening. Until the man did something suspicious, he couldn't confront him.

"Might be," Morgan admitted, "but he doesn't seem interested in us. Let's find the beer concession. What do you say?"

"Sounds like a plan," Jude and Dallas said in unison, causing the three of them to laugh.

Jude linked her arms with both men, strolling down the midway until they reached the beer wagon. Dallas bought her a large pretzel to go with the draft she ordered. Morgan tried not to look conspicuous studying the midway pedestrians while waiting for the vendor to retrieve two cold bottles from the cooler.

"See anything?" Dallas asked, keeping his back turned away from the crowd.

"Nothing." Morgan reached for the two long-necked bottles the beer seller handed him. "Gracias." He waved off the change and smiled at Jude. "What do you want to ride first?"

"How about the merry-go-round?"

Dallas opened his mouth to speak, shot a look at Jude, then decided he was thirsty.

Morgan stifled a laugh. "Oh, sure, Dallas loves to ride the merry-go-round."

"Too macho to ride?"

"No," Dallas answered.

"Yes," Morgan said.

* * * *

Jude felt like she was on top of the world when the enormous Ferris wheel stopped their car at the top. She could feel Morgan's leg touching her own, and Dallas had his arm around her shoulders. He drew her to him for a kiss, and Morgan's hand crept between her legs to stroke the inseam of her jeans. She gasped her pleasure into Dallas's mouth, giving his tongue room to slip inside.

Dallas ran a hand down the front of her blouse, gently squeezing her breast as his lips worked against hers. Morgan's finger rested on the bud of her clit, playfully circling the awakened flesh through the denim fabric.

Jude groaned with need. She couldn't believe they were making out on the Ferris wheel in front of half the citizens of Parrish, Arizona. She fleetingly wondered how exposed they were at this height, but the soft press of Morgan's finger distracted her concerns. She leaned into Dallas and spread her legs wide for Morgan. She could feel her body working up to a climax as both men stroked and pampered her.

Don't let us move. Don't let us move.

Jude repeated the mantra in her head as she filled with the yearning pressure of her need for the men.

"I want you," she whispered desperately against Dallas's lips.

Morgan sped up the motion of his hand until she stiffened with a little cry of release and clutched at him with her hand. "Oh, Morgan."

The simple words floated on the air between them, and he gathered her into his arms just as the car lurched and the wheel began to turn. Jude rested her head against his chest, reaching over to take Dallas's hand in her own. She stayed in that position until the ride attendant unlocked the bar for them to step out of the car.

Jude danced on a wave of happiness. She could swear the colors were brighter and the smells were stronger. Had she ever felt this alive? She didn't think so, not in her happiest adult moments and not since she'd been a child.

* * * *

Matthews had seen enough. He took pictures of the three of them together like his client ordered him to do. Jude Wheeler didn't seem to mind showing public displays of affection to both men. No way he could get pictures of what they were doing up there on the top of the

Ferris wheel, but he would be willing to bet they weren't playing twenty questions.

Fishing out his cell phone, he moved back into the shadows, standing beside a kiddie ride filled with shrieking children. He would drop his surveillance for the night. The men could feel him. He sensed that when he watched them at the beer concession. Flipping open the phone, he sent a text message to his client. They needed to meet soon.

Chapter Seven

Jude unlocked the door to Sinful Pleasures, heading straight for the coffee pot before beginning her morning chores. Last night had been wonderful. She hadn't been to a carnival in years. By the time the three of them left the midway, Jude had an armful of stuffed animals. Dallas and Morgan were good at the midway games. Jude ate too much, drank too much, and laughed at Dallas's antics until they dropped her off at home. The slight headache she sported was a small price to pay for an evening of fun.

Jude sipped on fresh coffee while she watered the plants. She kept glancing over at the station, but it remained quiet. No one came outside and the bay doors stayed closed. This meant the firefighters were probably watching training videos on new methods and equipment.

She wasn't sure Morgan and Dallas were working. Shifts at the fire department changed frequently to give the men time with their families. It would be a letdown if they didn't show up today, but Jude reminded herself that she had plenty to keep her busy. New inventory needed to be entered into the computer, and she should check the catalogs to find new merchandise. Unusual toys and videos held the key to her success. Sales nearly doubled when she put the white geranium in her front window. Jude tried to have at least one new shipment a week during her heaviest traffic seasons.

She also had to find time to visit her grandmother and make sure Tracey didn't need help in her search for an assisted living facility. They would need to have one available when the hospital discharged their grandmother. Knowing Jude spent long hours with the business,

Tracey had shouldered the burden of calling possible homes and touring the facilities. She wanted to make sure the residents were well taken care of.

Later, Jude would drop in at the Chamber of Commerce. She had worked up a proposal for a new ad campaign involving the local businesses. Maybe Julie could watch the store for her while she ran errands. The outgoing college student usually worked evenings on Friday and Saturday when the store stayed open until nine o'clock. Jude knew she could use the extra money from additional hours during the week.

Sitting down at the computer, Jude worked through most of the morning without getting up. She seldom had customers before lunch, and it gave her time to take care of the necessary paperwork. She had just stood up to take a break when the business phone rang.

"Sinful Pleasures," she answered.

"Hey, darlin', do you miss us?"

Jude's heart sped up, and she couldn't keep a smile from her face. "You know I do," she said in her softest voice. "Are you going to resume my lessons today?"

"We'll be over later, but for now, you go into the toy room and pick out the next plug you want to feel in your ass, something a little bigger than last time, but not too big. Make yourself ready for us, sweetheart."

"Okay." Jude's voice came out a little breathless. "I'll be ready."

She hung up the phone with trembling hands. Ready? What exactly did he mean by that? Naked and waiting on the bed? Wet and eager? She guessed she would find out when they stopped by.

Glancing at the stairs, she felt a hot flush over her body as she thought about the next toy she would sample. Should she pick one that vibrated? Was she ready for that yet? Just thinking about one of the men inserting it into her ass made her wet. She knew Morgan liked to take his time and watch the toy slip into her body an inch at a time. She wondered if Dallas would be so patient. Thinking such

thoughts made her pussy leak in anticipation. There wasn't much doubt she would be geared up for them by the time they arrived.

Jude had just placed her foot on the first stair, prepared to pick out a toy, when the door opened and a laughing couple stepped inside. They looked a little embarrassed at finding themselves in an erotic toy store, but they were curious at the same time. Jude guessed them to be in their late thirties, probably married, and wanting to heat up their sex life. From the inquisitive looks on their faces, she figured neither one of them had been in an adult toy store before. She loved customers like them. After their initial reluctance to openly look at the merchandise, they tended to come back often and buy excessively until the novelty wore off.

"Welcome," Jude said in her friendliest voice. "We have movies in the parlor," she gestured to the room adjacent to the entry, "and upstairs we have a lingerie room, a toy room, and a bondage room. If you have something particular in mind but can't find the item on our shelves, I can order it for you. It can be shipped direct to your home in an unmarked package or delivered for pick up here at the store. Please feel free to browse."

The couple passed up the videos and headed straight upstairs. They clung to one another like children on a dare. Jude smiled to herself. She would soon be hearing giggles and the low rumble of a male voice. Glancing at her watch, she gave them less than five minutes before they began speculating about the more exotic toys.

Right on time, the woman gave a nervous laugh and began speaking to the man in a voice too soft for Jude to hear what she said. The man answered with a coaxing quality to his voice. Jude wondered what he was trying to talk her into. She knew that whatever he wanted her to do, the nervous blonde would eventually give in to him. They all did. Husbands, wives, lovers, or casual fuck buddies, they all managed to coax their partners into whatever fantasy they desired once they got them through the door.

In less than half an hour, the man and woman reappeared, carrying

a leather dominatrix outfit, along with a riding crop, male nipple clamps, restraints, and a cock harness. Going all the way, Jude thought. They would be back soon to purchase more items. As the woman gained confidence, she might return on her own or with the support of a girl friend. Women often shopped in pairs while the kids were in school.

Jude rang up the couple's purchases and threw in a free video, wishing them a night of sinful pleasures. Pleased with the large sale, she immediately entered the items into the computer while the codes were fresh in her mind. It would save her the time of having to look them up in an online catalog tomorrow. As she typed in the last number, she heard the door chime and glanced up to see Dallas and Morgan in the doorway.

"How's my little filly?" Dallas asked with his usual grin.

Jude ran to give them a hug. "I'm great now that you're here."

"Did you pick out your toy?" Morgan asked, giving her an extra squeeze before letting go.

"I haven't had time. I had customers, and then I entered the items into the computer so they would automatically ship when I place another order."

Morgan took her chin in his hand, looking deeply into her eyes as if he were trying to read her thoughts. "Didn't we tell you to pick out a toy and be ready for us?"

Jude's heart gave a desperate little thump of excitement as she stared back into his serious green eyes. "I had customers."

"Did you have to enter the inventory immediately, or could you have waited until after you picked out the plug, like we asked you?"

Feeling like she was back in school and explaining to the teacher why she hadn't finished her assignment, Jude stumbled over her words, looking back and forth between the two stern-faced men.

"I could have waited, I guess."

"Honey, when we tell you to do something, we need to know we can trust you to do it."

Jude huffed. “Well, it isn’t like this is something significant. Now we can all go up and pick out the toy together.”

“Doesn’t work that way,” Morgan said. “If you disobey us on the little things, how do we know you’ll obey us when it’s something important?”

Jude put her fists on her hips, backing up from them. She could feel her patience growing thin at their heavy-handed attempt at dominance. “You know I will.”

Dallas shook his head. “No. We don’t.”

“The little things count, Jude.” Morgan explained. “We want to know that no matter what we ask, you’ll do as we say.”

“I can assure you that will never happen,” Jude retorted. “I have a brain, and I use it. I’ll do what you ask within reason, but you can’t control me. I’m not a child.”

“No, honey, there’s nothing childlike about you,” Dallas admitted. “This isn’t like punishing a child. You don’t understand right now, but you will. It’s our job to teach you how this works.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Jude asked, wondering at the thrill of excitement somersaulting in her stomach.

Morgan took hold of her arm. “Come upstairs and find out, Jude.”

They stood on each side of her as she picked out another plug to prepare her tight anal muscles for Morgan’s thick shaft. A little flutter of nervousness tickled in Jude’s belly, and her pussy clinched tightly when she thought of the invasion in her ass so soon after the first lesson.

“How about this one?” she asked. The new model was shorter and thicker than the previous beginner’s toy. The advertisement on the package claimed it to be a good choice for intermediate fun and games.

Dallas took it out of her hand. “Good choice. You’ll be wearing it for a while.”

Jude swallowed and dropped her gaze to the floor. She really wasn’t comfortable with this yet, but she couldn’t resist the

temptation. She felt as if the two men had woven a spell of seduction around her. She could do nothing more than follow their whims as they taught her body to accept the sensation of dual pleasure.

“First, you have to pay the price for disobeying us,” Morgan said. He took a paddle down from the wall. It had no padding on it to protect her skin from the smack of the hard leather, and Jude felt her mouth go dry with apprehension, but the flash of dampness between her legs told another story. Morgan slapped the leather against his palm, looking at her with a serious expression. “You get spanked until you remember it the next time.”

“I remember the last time.” Jude’s voice wavered. “I won’t do it again, Morgan.”

“Too late, babe. You already said you were going to do whatever you wanted, no matter what we say.”

“I said I would obey you within reason.”

“Everything we ask is within reason,” Dallas said. He took her trembling hand in his, leading her into the bedroom. “Get undressed, Jude.”

“What if someone comes in?”

“I’m going downstairs to lock the door and hang the ‘Out to Lunch’ sign.” Dallas shot her an impatient look as he stopped in the doorway. “See what we’re talking about? You’re challenging me right now.” He pointed a finger in her direction. “I said get undressed.”

Jude didn’t hesitate this time. She quickly pulled off her T-shirt, tossing it across the top of the dressing screen. Next, she unhooked the front opening on bra, flinging it over the shirt while she kicked off her sandals. Without looking in Morgan’s direction, she unbuttoned her jeans, pulling them down her legs and stepping out of them where they lay on the floor. By now, her pussy quivered with anticipation while her mind screamed at her to stop this game before it went too far.

She knew it had already reached the point of no return when Morgan sat down on the bed and patted his knees. “Come over here

and lay across my lap.” He held up a finger to silence the protest she started to utter. “No arguing, Jude.”

Torn between excitement and humiliation, Jude reluctantly positioned herself over Morgan’s knees just as Dallas returned to the room. Holding herself awkwardly, she tried to look at the men. “I don’t deserve this.”

Without warning, Morgan’s hand came down across her bare flesh with a smack that made her stiffen and try to stand up. He put an unyielding hand in the middle of her back, holding her firmly in place. “You’re not going anywhere, little darlin’. You keep that cute ass right where it is. You might as well get used to being sore until you decide to listen to me and Dallas.”

The stinging inflamed Jude’s pussy with a rush of blood. She felt herself responding to the pain in a way she never thought possible. Her traitorous body grew wetter, and her pussy fairly throbbed for attention. She wondered what it would feel like to have the sting of his fingers across the lips of her labia. Would it be unbearable? Or would it hurt so good she could barely stand it?

Morgan handed Dallas the paddle. “She needs to learn both of us mean business.”

Jude tensed, and the paddle landed on her flesh with a burst of flame. She whimpered, unable to keep from squirming at the sensation “I’m sorry. I’ll try to do a better job listening to both of you.”

Morgan’s hand caressed her stinging hips, feeling cool as he slowly traced the line the paddle left on her skin with gentle fingers. “You know this is for your own good, Jude. You need to let us take care of you, and you have to learn to trust us.”

Morgan dealt the blow this time, and despite the gentleness of his touch a moment before, he didn’t spare any pity on her during the spanking. He measured each stroke, holding the paddle against her skin for a fraction before he drew it back for another blow against her exposed skin. She felt like her ass was on fire when he laid the paddle

aside and dropped a kiss on her shoulder.

“I’m going to put the plug in, honey, and you’re going to leave it in until we come back. Got that?”

Jude started to protest that she couldn’t watch the store and wait on customers with a toy stuck in her ass, but she was stinging too much to take a chance on being spanked again. She knew for certain that if she protested wearing the plug she would get paddled until she complied.

One more hit, she decided, and she would have been sobbing like a baby.

With that in mind, Jude caved in to the demand.

“Okay.” She knew her voice sounded submissive and obedient, and she could feel Morgan’s erection pushing at her through the fire department uniform he wore.

A trickle of lubrication ran down the channel of her butt, pooling with the juices of her pussy. Morgan’s fingers lightly twisted her nipples as Dallas stuck his finger into her tiny back hole, easing the lubrication into her ass so the insertion would be comfortable. Driven by the pressure of his finger, she felt it coming, the orgasm that built and flowed within her even as the pain of her discipline stung her flesh with red-hot anger.

“Oh, damn,” she cried out as her body crested a wave of gratification. When she gave the first jerk of her orgasm, Morgan pinched her nipples and Dallas’s fingers parted her ass, shoving the butt plug gently into her body until it could go no farther. The sensation was so utterly intense she couldn’t help herself from crying tears of release as she rode wave after wave of a climax so sweet it stole her breath.

When her body stopped shaking, Morgan gently lifted her off his lap, drawing her close to place an urgent kiss on her lips. “We’ll be back after our shift, and this time I’m going to fuck you while you give Dallas a blow job like the one you gave me.”

Tears still glistened on Jude’s cheeks from the intensity of her

orgasm, and Dallas wiped them away, rubbing his thumb over her bottom lip. "I'll be thinking about you all afternoon, Jude, and about this beautiful mouth of yours."

"I'll be thinking about you, and Morgan, too." Jude looked at them a little desperately. "This isn't like me to be so needy. What are you two doing to me?"

"We're teaching you what pleasure is. Now get dressed, darlin'," Morgan said. "We've got to get back to the station, and the door will be unlocked when we leave."

* * * *

Jude dressed carefully, gingerly pulling her jeans up over the tender cheeks of her ass. She could feel the toy invading her as she finished dressing and walked to the stairs.

Can I sit down comfortably? she wondered.

Larger than the other plug, this one made her feel full and touched something pleasantly sensitive inside her body. The sensation felt forbidden and erotic, making her wonder what it would feel like to have both men inside her at once.

Walking down the stairs reminded her of the spanking she had received. Her ass protested the rub of her jeans as she maneuvered the steep narrow steps. Why were the two men so adamant she follow their every instruction? Did they really believe she wouldn't do what she thought best for herself? Or was it a control thing? Maybe it was a male thing, needing to dominate the woman, sort of like caveman mentality, except Jude found herself being turned on by their macho display. It was a mystery to her. She couldn't understand herself, let alone comprehend the men's motivations in this sensual game of dominance.

With a feeling of surrender, Jude made her way back to the computer. She would look at the new products available from her favorite wholesaler and see if any Internet sales needed to be filled

and shipped. Maybe that would take her mind off the self-analyzing she couldn't seem to stop. Until now, Jude thought she knew herself quite well, but obviously, she had a hidden side that had decided to come out and play. It would take a while before she felt comfortable with this new person she found within herself.

The phone rang, and Jude picked it up, thankful to have the distraction. "Sinful Pleasures."

"You're the one that's sinful," a breathy male voice said. "A whore. You need to leave Parrish. We don't need a pornography shop in our town, Jude Wheeler. If you don't leave, bad things will happen to you."

Jude took the phone away from her ear and looked at it. Who the hell did this creep think he was? Still holding the receiver at a distance, she gave him her standard answer for crackpots before dropping the handset onto the cradle.

"Thank you for calling. We appreciate your business."

She could still hear the man talking as the phone clattered down, disconnecting him in midsentence. It wasn't the first call she received that threatened her or told her she was sinful. She had been subjected to insults, threats, and long-winded sermons about how she should repent her wicked ways. In the beginning, those judgmental tirades bothered her, but not any longer. Jude had come to the conclusion that if they weren't hassling her, they would have some other victim to harass.

Putting the caller out of her mind, she concentrated instead on the need she felt for Dallas and Morgan. Did they know she would feel this way? That every move she made and every breath she took seemed to make her eager muscles clench around the foreign object invading her body?

She wanted to feel them inside her with a need so raw it hurt. Maybe she could convince them she was ready when they came back to remove the plug.

Chapter Eight

In the fire station, Dallas sat at the kitchen table across from Morgan with a cup of coffee in his hand, waiting to finish out their shift. The other guys were doing their own thing, working out in the weight room, watching TV, or reading. Dallas glanced around to make sure they were alone before speaking what was on his mind.

“You think we might be pushing her too much?”

Morgan shrugged one shoulder, looking into his coffee cup as if it held all the answers in the universe. “I don’t think so. I think it turns her on against her will.” He looked up at Dallas with a grin. “She likes it at the same time she hates it.”

“Yeah.” Dallas nodded his head in agreement. “That’s what I thought, too. She’s scared of who she really is. She wants to push the limit, but she’s afraid of taking it too far.”

Lifting his cup from the table, Morgan’s index finger traced random patterns in the ring of water the cup left on the wood. “I think we need to establish a pattern of control. She needs someone to take care of her, and we want to do that. She’s used to calling the shots and taking care of herself, but once she understands how much easier it is to let us handle certain things...”

“She’s afraid to give up control.”

“Exactly.”

Dallas drained his coffee cup, stretching as he got up to wash the mug. “How long should we leave her like that?”

Morgan glanced at the clock hanging on the kitchen wall. “Less than an hour till our shift’s up. I think she can handle it that much longer.”

“Give her one more day and she should be ready for us.”

“She could take us both now—” Morgan’s words were interrupted by the clanging of the alarms. “Fuck!” He shook his head in exasperation at the same time he headed toward the brass pole running floor-to-ceiling through the center of the station. Grabbing the three-story post with both hands, he slid down easily, running to the waiting bunker gear the moment his feet hit the floor. Dallas stayed right on his tail, already yanking up the turnout pants and slipping his arms through the suspenders as Morgan slid his feet into the boots.

They gave each other a look as they piled into the cab of the ladder truck.

The lieutenant briefed the crew as they sped toward the blaze. “There’s an apartment fire at 3560 Sundown Lane. The house is fully engaged. No reports of anyone trapped inside so far.”

Dallas felt his stomach relax a little bit. He hated residential fires where children might be involved. It was heartbreaking enough to see people lose everything they owned, but losing a child made it unbearable. Several months ago, they hadn’t reached a child in time and it had left a scar he didn’t think would ever heal. He knew Morgan still struggled with the weight of his guilt, but they didn’t talk about it. Some things were just too painful to talk about.

* * * *

Jude watched the fire trucks scream out of the station and knew the men wouldn’t be back for several hours. Disappointment made her shoulders sag. Their shift would have been over soon. She had been looking forward to having Morgan make love to her while she gave Dallas the blowjob of his life.

After the menacing phone call earlier in the day, she needed something to lift her spirits. She thought it was unlikely the guys would come to see her after the fire. They usually returned exhausted

from a legitimate call. She guessed they would be more interested in a hot shower than sex, especially if they ended up working a double shift.

Heading for the bathroom, Jude remembered Dallas's warning that he would know if she took the toy out before she had their permission. Her step faltered. This wouldn't count as disobedience, would it? She couldn't wear the plug forever, and it would be hours before they returned.

Her hands gingerly ran across the tender flesh of her buttocks. Yeah, they were still sore from the spanking.

This is ridiculous. I have a job to do. I need to ship out those two Internet orders and stop by to see Grandma and Tracey at the hospital. I'm just going to have to disobey them this time, and they are going to have to live with it.

Slamming the door to the bathroom, Jude knew it was a childish gesture of defiance, but it made her feel better. She took time to freshen up while thinking dark thoughts about Morgan and Dallas. Despite her attempt to stay annoyed with them, she couldn't stop the sensual fantasies that left her feeling needful and restless.

A few minutes later, juggling two boxes and her purse, Jude fumbled with the deadbolt on Sinful Pleasure's antique door. The oak wood had warped, causing the lock to settle unevenly. Muttering a curse, Jude slung her purse back over her shoulder and repositioned the boxes in her arms. Tomorrow she would call a locksmith to reset the deadbolt. In the meantime, she had to get the key to turn inside the lock. Catching a glimpse of color from the corner of her eye, she realized that she wasn't alone.

Preoccupied by the stubborn door, Jude almost missed seeing the man standing directly behind her. Startled by his closeness, Jude whirled around to face him. She dropped her keys while somehow managing to hold on to the packages without spilling them to the pavement.

"I-I'm closing the store a little early this evening," she

stammered. "Can you come back tomorrow?" She would have backed away from him, but the door kept her from retreating.

Behind the packages partially blocking her view, Jude caught a blur of movement. Belatedly, she realized the man had lifted his arm in a threatening gesture. She felt a shockingly hard blow to her head and then nothing. Her world faded into darkness.

The next conscious thing Jude remembered was the concerned face of Marcie Gray looking down at her. The older woman's hazel eyes were filled with worry.

"Are you all right, honey, or should I call for an ambulance? I've already called the police. They'll be here any minute."

"I...I think I'm okay." Jude reached up to touch her throbbing head. "Did you see the man who hit me?"

Marcie, owner of the bakery next door, squatted down beside Jude to get a better look at her injury. "I just caught a glimpse of him, sweetie. I didn't see his face. It's too bad the boys in the station are on a call. He wouldn't have made it half a block if the men had seen him." She reached a tentative hand to Jude's shoulder. "Can you stand up?"

Jude got to her feet carefully, waiting for the dizziness that signaled a concussion. She didn't feel dizzy or sick to her stomach. He must not have hit her that hard, although it felt plenty hard enough from the pain radiating in her skull.

"Did he take anything? My purse?" Jude looked down at the two packages he'd left lying on the sidewalk. She didn't see her handbag.

Damn.

Her purse had been stolen once before on a trip to New Orleans. She hated trying to replace stolen documents.

A small crowd of curious onlookers had gathered around her now. One of the men standing nearby heard Jude ask about her purse and began a search of the area. Other members of the crowd halfheartedly looked around the building and shrubs, but they were more interested in peering through the windows to see what was inside Sinful

Pleasures.

“Here it is,” the first man called, holding the purse over his head for her to see. “I found it under the bench. Doesn’t look like it’s been touched.”

“Thank you so much,” Jude offered. She took the purse from his outstretched hand and unzipped it. Looking inside with a frown of concentration, Jude did a quick mental inventory of the items she normally carried. “Nothing seems to be missing.” She looked from Marcie to the guy who found her purse. “Do you think he dropped it as he ran away?”

“Why didn’t he pick it up?” Marcie asked. “He would have had plenty of time.”

“Maybe he thought someone saw his face. Or maybe he felt like he’d run out of time and luck. Who knows?” The man gave a shrug, then looked over at the two uniformed officers pulling up to the curb in a blue-and-silver cruiser. “That’s fast response time. Must be a slow day.”

The male officer immediately began asking the crowd if they had seen what happened during the attack, and the woman officer came over to stand in front of Jude. The diminutive cop had to look up at her as she spoke.

“Do you need medical attention?”

“I’ll get checked out later,” Jude assured her, looking at the surrounding area as if seeing it for the first time with fresh eyes. “I don’t understand what happened. He left the packages and my purse. Why would a thief do that?”

“Maybe he wasn’t a thief,” the petite officer responded. “Can we go inside to fill out the report? You’ll be more comfortable there.”

“Of course.” Looking on the ground, Jude spotted the keys she had dropped when the man startled her. She bent down to pick them up, reliving the scene in her mind. “I saw him from the corner of my eye as I locked the door. I thought he was a customer, and I told him I’d already closed for the day. I asked if he could come back

tomorrow, but he didn't say anything. He just hit me on the head and ran."

Inside the shop, the woman officer shut the door against curious eyes. She performed a quick inspection of the premises before settling down across from Jude to take her statement. Sticking out her hand in introduction, she gave Jude a firm handshake. "I'm Officer Sandra Trujillo. Can you tell me why anyone would want to harm you, Ms. Wheeler?"

Jude swept her arm around the room in explanation. "Some people think I'm promoting pornography here in Parrish. I've had calls preaching to me, threatening me, and obscene calls. I don't take any of them seriously any longer. Most people support me in my business, but a few just want to vent or try to frighten me into closing the shop."

Trujillo stopped writing in a note pad she had taken from her uniform pocket. She glanced up at Jude with a thoughtful expression. "Have you had any threatening calls lately?"

Jude looked at the phone. "As a matter of fact, I did have a call today. I wouldn't exactly classify it as threatening. I've had much worse things said to me, but the man told me something bad would happen if I didn't leave town. He called me by name. My full name."

Officer Trujillo looked up from the note pad again, searching Jude's face. "He told you something bad would happen if you didn't leave town? I think that constitutes a threat. Think carefully. Did he say something bad would happen if you didn't leave town, or if you didn't close the shop? Did the voice sound familiar?"

"He definitely said if I didn't leave town." Jude could remember the conversation nearly word for word. "His voice sounded funny, sort of breathless. He may have been using a voice distorter, but, no, it wasn't familiar."

At that moment, the door opened, and Officer Trujillo's partner stepped inside. He took a long look at the parlor, stepping over to the adjacent room holding the videos. "I'm going to take a look around."

"I've already checked it out." Trujillo smirked at him, obviously wanting to say something further, but she composed her face into a neutral expression. "You can take a look around if you want. I might have missed something."

As he headed up the stairs, Trujillo studied Jude to gauge her reaction. "That's my partner, Officer Michael Sutton. You don't mind him making another round, do you?"

"Of course not. Can I make a pot of coffee for you and Officer Sutton?" Jude looked back at the petite cop. She had a feeling Officer Sandra Trujillo took her job dead serious, but she wasn't a hard case, and she seemed to have a sense of humor.

"No, if there's nothing else you can tell us, we'll be going just as soon as my partner gets finished checking out the premises."

Jude's eyes flicked up to the security camera. Officer Sutton had stepped into the toy room and apparently found an item that caught his attention. Jude tried not to smile, focusing her eyes back on Officer Trujillo.

The woman didn't miss a thing. She whirled around to look at the security monitor mounted high on the wall behind her. A huge grin lit up her face, and she couldn't help but laugh.

"You just never know where a perp might hide."

Jude laughed, wondering if Officer Sutton had any idea he was being watched. Maybe he didn't care. Something in Trujillo's face gave her away as she continued to watch Sutton examine the toys. They were having an affair. Jude would bet money on it. It was against police department regulations for two officers emotionally involved to be partnered together, but the evidence plainly showed on Sandra Trujillo's face. She loved Michael Sutton.

Taking her eyes from the screen, Trujillo turned back to face Jude, and the grin faded from her lips. "Do you have someplace safe to spend the night? You might not want to go home if you live alone. At least not without taking precautions to ward off another attack, in case the man knows where you live."

No sooner were the words out of her mouth than the front door burst open. Both Trujillo and Jude jumped nervously as the heavy door crashed against the wall.

“What the hell happened?” Dallas asked. He was still in his fireman gear, and Jude thought he looked sexy as hell. He strode over to where she sat, lifting her chin so he could study her face. “Where did you get hit?”

Jude pointed to a throbbing spot on the back of her head, and Dallas examined the lump with gentle fingers. “I’m going to kill the son of a bitch that did this.”

“Careful,” Trujillo warned, “you’re in the presence of a police officer.”

Dallas looked over at the woman as if seeing her for the first time. He took his hands away from Jude’s head. “Did you call the paramedics?”

“She said she didn’t need them.” Trujillo jotted down another quick note before returning her attention to Dallas. “I was telling Ms. Wheeler she probably shouldn’t spend the night alone. Her attacker didn’t take anything of value, and she received a threatening phone call earlier in the day. The caller knew her name. I don’t think this was a robbery attempt. I would classify it as a direct personal attack.”

“She’s going to spend the night with us,” Morgan said from the doorway.

Officer Trujillo looked a bit taken aback at the statement, but she managed to quickly hide her surprise. Standing up, she shut the notebook and slipped it back into her shirt pocket. “Looks like you’re in good hands, Ms. Wheeler.”

Jude stood up, too. “Please, call me Jude. If you find out anything, will you call me?”

Trujillo gave a slight grimace before answering. “We’ll keep you posted on the investigation, but we don’t have much to go on, Jude. The truth is we may never find who did this. Random acts of violence are nearly impossible to solve unless the perp makes another move.

We hope that won't happen in your case, but you need to be careful at all times. This man may be some sort of fanatic. I have to tell you, extremists are the worst to deal with because they truly believe what they are doing is justified, no matter what the outcome of their actions is. He might very well be willing to risk his own life to get to you and make his point. You can't afford to let your guard down."

When Officers Trujillo and Sutton left, Dallas locked the door behind them. Crossing the room, he bundled Jude into his arms and held her against his chest, holding her tightly and dropping careful kisses on the top of her forehead.

"He won't get a chance to hurt you again," Dallas whispered. "Morgan and I will be here if he comes back."

Chapter Nine

Dallas took three beers out of the fridge, handing one to Morgan and one to Jude. “You scared the hell out of us, honey. Is there anything you can think of that you forgot to tell the police?”

“No.” Jude watched the two men move around comfortably in the kitchen as they prepared a salad, spaghetti, and thick slices of garlic bread. Both were dressed in jeans, dark T-shirts, and cowboy boots. They had taken their hats off in the living room, hanging them on a rack next to the door.

“Do you have a headache?” Morgan asked, cutting up carrots and tomatoes for the salad.

“Stop worrying, guys. I’m fine. Really.” Jude smiled at them to prove she meant it.

They remained silent for a minute, working on the meal with the concentration of bachelors who learned to cook in order to survive. When Dallas measured the last ingredient into the spaghetti sauce, he turned to look at Jude.

“Would you like to go for a ride after dinner? It will be good exercise for the horses.”

“I’d love to go for a ride.” What she had seen of the ranch so far was gorgeous. Jude knew from previous conversations that Morgan’s place connected to the west end of Dallas’s property and they shared the fence line, running cattle on both ranches. It had been one large spread before Dallas bought it and sold Morgan half of the land for the price he’d paid for it.

“Do you always hang out here?” Jude couldn’t help but be curious. The two of them seemed equally at home in the kitchen,

which meant Morgan spent a lot of time preparing meals in this house.

For a moment, a pained look crossed Morgan's face, but he answered truthfully. "We usually hang out here. I prefer it to going home after what happened at the ranch."

Jude shot a look at Dallas, expecting an explanation, but he turned his back, obviously waiting for Morgan to tell the story himself.

When neither man spoke up, Jude reached out to touch Morgan's arm. "Will you tell me what happened?"

He didn't speak as he prepared the salad, and Jude thought he might not answer her at all, but at last, he sat down across from her, reaching over the table to take both of her hands in his.

"My wife got killed in a riding accident."

"Wife?" Jude gasped out the word before she thought. He nodded, meeting her stare with such pain in his eyes that Jude blinked back tears of her own. "I'm so sorry, Morgan. I had no idea."

"It was my fault." He squeezed Jude's fingers and dropped his gaze to focus on their hands, entwining his fingers through hers. "I shouldn't have bought that horse, but she loved it. We saw him while we were on a vacation in Kentucky horse country, and she had to have it. That damn horse had more spirit than I've ever seen. He wasn't mean. He could have been trained if I'd had the time." He raised his eyes to stare at Jude again. "She was stubborn. I told her that horse wasn't ready to ride, but Maria had a mind of her own. She always thought she knew what was best. She waited until I left for work and decided to take him for a ride. The horse shied at a something. Maria hit her head on a boulder when the horse threw her off. She never regained consciousness."

"And that's why you want me to obey everything you tell me to do?"

Morgan looked back at her with an open face, not trying to hide what he felt. "I don't want to lose another woman I love."

Jude got out of her seat to go sit on his lap. She put her arms

around his neck, clinging to him tightly. “You won’t lose me, Morgan. I’ll stay with you and Dallas for as long as you can put up with me.” She wanted to make him smile, but he clutched her tighter, burying his face in her hair.

“I’m going to find whoever hurt you today, and he’s going to be sorry.”

“I don’t want you and Dallas to do something stupid.” Jude put her hand against Morgan’s cheek, feeling the stubble of his beard. “I’ll be careful. Let the police handle it.”

He started to answer, but Dallas threw a dishtowel at Morgan’s head.

“Do I smell bread burning? You’re supposed to be watching the bread.”

Morgan jumped up, nearly dumping Jude off his lap and onto the floor in the process. He opened the toaster oven, squinting his eyes and waving his hand against the heat and fumes.

“Only the edges are a little singed,” he said guiltily. “We can scrape the burnt part off.”

Dallas rolled his eyes and then winked at Jude on the sly to let her know he was kidding. “Give me a break,” Dallas complained. “You can’t even toast bread. That’s why your sorry ass hangs out here. You’d starve without me cooking for you.”

Jude sat back in her chair, listening to the good-natured bantering. The two men gave each other a hard time in the way only long-term best friends, or brothers, can get by with. Sipping on her beer, Jude thought she could get used to being a part of their world.

* * * *

Jude reached out to take the reins of a golden-colored mare that Dallas led forward. “What’s her name?” she asked, handing the horse a slice of apple.

“Tranquility.”

“Hello, Tranquility,” Jude whispered to the horse, offering her another bite of the Red Delicious.

With a snort, Tranquility took the treat out of Jude’s hand, munching loudly as she swished her tail back and forth.

“See what little fillies do with their tails when they’re happy?” Dallas pushed his hat back and grinned. He couldn’t wait to see Jude wearing the horse tail toy. It made his cock stand to attention just thinking about it.

She laughed. “I knew you’d buy that plug the minute I unwrapped it.”

“That’s why you were so jittery when we found you in the toy room. You *were* having naughty thoughts about the toys.” Dallas chuckled as he lifted her up into the saddle. “I saved it special for you, babe. When you’re ready, you can wear it for us. Maybe for a special occasion.”

Morgan leaned over in the saddle to give Jude a kiss. “We’ve got so many things planned for you, darlin’, and you’re going to love ’em all.”

“Of course I will.” Jude’s eyes twinkled with mischief. “How could I not love them with you two stallions teaching me everything you know about kinky sex?”

Dallas groaned. “Too easy, way too easy.”

“What makes you think it’s kinky?” Morgan wanted to know. He sounded serious, but Dallas could see the dimples in his friend’s cheeks giving away the grin he tried to conceal by turning his face away from Jude. He pretended to be checking out the new addition to the barn and stables until he could look at her with a straight face.

Jude raised her eyebrows high in disbelief. “Well, you don’t think it’s conventional sex we’ve been having, do you?”

Morgan gave a laugh that vibrated from somewhere deep in his chest. “All depends on your definition of conventional, I guess.”

Jude snorted at that. “There’s nothing remotely conventional about you two.” She leaned over to pat Tranquility’s neck. “Let’s ride

while we still have daylight.”

Dallas made a kissing sound, and his horse, a black gelding, trotted obediently out of the corral heading toward the rolling hills carpeted with wildflowers. Bluebonnets covered the ground as far as the eye could see. Mixed in with the brilliant blue flowers were stark white cactus flowers and a small yellow ground covering. Occasionally, a burst of scarlet red would peek through the carpet of blue to add brilliant contrast.

Jude looked up at Dallas as he rode beside her. “This is so lovely. I’m not sure I could leave this view every day. I think if I had these flowers to look at, I might play hooky a lot.”

“I never get tired of seeing it,” Dallas admitted. “Every spring it’s like paradise here in these hills.”

“Let’s take her to the swimming hole,” Morgan suggested. He took his hat off, placing it on Jude’s head. “We’ve got to get you a hat if you ride with us. I think there’s a law in the West that says you can’t ride a horse unless you’re wearing a cowboy hat.”

Jude laughed, and the sound of her happiness filled Dallas with contentment. He leaned over to give her a kiss, nearly pulling her out of the saddle. His kiss tilted Jude’s head back, and Morgan’s hat balanced precariously, bouncing up and down when the brim touched her shoulders. Too big to fit her properly, the hat began to slide off Jude’s head toward the ground as Dallas savored the taste of her mouth.

“I’ll take that back,” Morgan said. Snatching the hat from her, he put it back on, twisting the brim to settle it on his head. He gave them a minute before interrupting the kiss. “Quit sucking face and look over this way, darlin’.”

* * * *

Jude gasped with pleasure when she saw the pool of clear water being fed by a fast-running stream. Rocks were scattered randomly around the pond, and tiny purple wildflowers nestled tightly against

their shelter. Cottonwood trees branched out over the water and would provide a cooling shade in the heat of summer. Jude thought it looked so perfect it could have been the set of a big-budget Hollywood movie.

“Did you landscape this?” she asked.

“I added a few rocks in strategically placed locations, but the rest is Mother Nature’s doing.” Dallas looked around at the spread. “My dad always loved this ranch. Some of my earliest memories of him involve this place. He helped out over here anytime Buster McCray needed him. Dad said this was the prettiest spread in Arizona. When he died, he left a big life insurance policy, and I bought the land from Buster. It just seemed like the right thing to do with his money. I know he’d be happy I did it.”

“I’m sure he would,” Jude said tenderly, glad the men were opening up to her. If she thought she loved them earlier at the kindness and bravery they had shown rescuing her grandmother, now she knew she loved them for the tragedy in their lives and for their compassion and their honor. But most of all, for the fact they had stuck together and rode out the hardships without becoming bitter or disillusioned with life.

As they rode deeper into the hills, Dallas pointed out spots of beauty or landmarks where historical events had taken place. Even though Jude knew he had bought the ranch within the last couple of years, Dallas seemed to have in-depth knowledge of the history that had taken place on his property. She could imagine his father riding with him when he was young, telling him tales about the area as his son listened in wide-eyed silence, mentally filing the history away until he grew old enough to explore the places on his own.

At last, Dallas reined in his horse, turning the gelding back in the direction of the house. “It’s getting late,” he said. “Tomorrow we’ll ride over to Morgan’s spread if you want. He’s got just as much history to talk about as I do. This place served as a hideaway for desperados and Mexican banditos, along with a stagecoach stop and

military encampment at one time. It's always been a place people gravitated to. The buildings change over the years, and people come and go, but this land has a lot of tales to tell."

"I'd love to see Morgan's place," Jude answered. "But speaking of getting late, I do have a question to ask about tonight. Where am I going to sleep? And in what? You two didn't exactly give me a chance to pack an overnight bag."

"You can wear one of my T-shirts, and tonight you're in the guest bedroom. We aren't taking any chances with that lump on your head."

Jude couldn't hide the disappointment she felt. Her heart had buoyed at the thought of spending the night with both men and actually snuggling close between them as she dreamed of the adventures they would soon share.

"What's wrong?" Dallas asked. He reached over to tilt her face up, cupping her cheek in his hand. "Did I say something stupid? You know, one of those guy things we say and don't know we've said? You've got that look. Like I just started dragging my knuckles on the ground in Neanderthal fashion."

Jude giggled despite herself. "No, it's only that I thought I'd sleep with you and Morgan tonight. I had these visions of being the creamy center..."

The two men exchanged looks. "Well, umm...babe, Morgan usually sleeps at his place, and I don't think you're up to fun and games tonight."

"I could make an exception if Jude wants us all to sleep together," Morgan said. "It might be better for me to be around if someone wants to harm her. That way she gets two bodyguards for the price of one." He turned to Jude with a stern look on his face. "But it's sleep only until that knot on your head goes down. No attempts at seduction on your part because you know Dallas and I aren't that damn strong."

Jude laughed, shooting a cajoling look in Dallas's direction. "I'll behave."

Dallas made a show of thinking it over. "If that makes our little

filly happy, we'll have a pajama party."

"I love you both," Jude said happily.

The two men grinned, but neither said anything. They didn't have to say a word. Their emotions were written all over their faces.

Chapter Ten

Jude woke in the morning sandwiched between Dallas and Morgan. The three of them were a tangle of entwined arms and legs. Jude had never felt so good despite the heavy weight of male limbs resting on various parts of her body. Easing both of her arms free, she stroked the men with her fingertips while they slept, careful to keep her touch light so she wouldn't wake them. Jude wanted to hold on to this moment for as long as she could make it last. It felt like heaven to luxuriate in the incredible feeling of contentment wrapped in the warmth of the two men she loved. She knew they would soon lavish her body with their attention.

Morgan stirred sleepily, and she dropped a gentle kiss on his shoulder before he rolled over to look at her through half closed lids. His eyelashes were thick and sinfully long, giving him a sleepy, seductive quality that caused Jude's heart to dance with anticipation.

"Morning." She mouthed the words at him, smiling as he blinked a couple of times, obviously trying to rouse himself into a semblance of consciousness. "You don't have to wake up," she whispered, smoothing dark tendrils of hair back from his face. He leaned his head into her touch, letting his eyes close for a moment before he shoved the twisted covers away from his body and sat up, dropping his feet over the edge of the bed.

"Be right back," he mumbled. "Stay here."

"Bring coffee," Dallas pleaded.

Jude started to get up, but Morgan put a hand on her shoulder. "I'll get the coffee. He's always whiney like this when he wakes up. You should hear him at the station."

Dallas flipped his middle finger up before burrowing deeper into the covers, pulling the sheet over his face as he snuggled close to Jude. She ran her fingers through the patch of tousled hair sticking out from under the covers.

“Thank you, Morgan. You get something special for bringing the coffee.” She gave him a wink.

Dallas shot out from under the sheet. “Special?” He looked at Morgan in disbelief. “Just for bringing coffee?”

Jude held back her laughter while putting on her most serious expression. “I think he deserves something extra for getting the coffee while we stay in the nice warm bed, don’t you?”

Morgan gave Dallas a triumphant smirk before sauntering out the bedroom door humming some unrecognizable tune.

“I’ll fix breakfast,” Dallas said, watching his friend’s retreating back. “Do I get something special, too?”

“Depends on what you fix,” Jude teased. She couldn’t help laughing at the expression on his face, and she leaned over to kiss him. “Of course you get something special. You both deserve it.”

“We got you, sweetheart. It doesn’t get any better.”

Morgan returned with three steaming mugs of coffee. “For once, he knows what he’s talking about.” He sat one cup on the nightstand, then handed one to Jude and one to Dallas before settling back in bed and propping himself up against a pillow.

Dallas took a cautious sip from the overfull mug and turned a serious face to Jude. “We need to discuss your safety, babe. Morgan and I pull a shift tomorrow, so we’ve got you covered today, but until we find out who this psycho is, you’re stuck with one of us. We’re going to have to find someone to trade shifts with us till this is resolved.”

“I’ll be fine,” Jude said, knowing her words sounded braver than she felt. She didn’t really want to be alone. With the guys she felt safe, but she knew being alone in the shop would make her nervous. Every time the door opened she would wonder if her attacker had

returned.

“Sure you will, and one of us will always be around to make sure of that.” Dallas reached out to smooth a tendril of hair behind her ear.

“Will the guys be willing to trade shifts?” Jude hoped her concern didn’t come through in her voice. She didn’t want the men neglecting their jobs, or safety, for her. The chances seemed good her attacker had made his point and wouldn’t return.

Morgan nodded. “Bishop will help out and so will Alex. No problem, darlin’.”

“Isn’t Bishop the ex-military guy?” Jude asked. “The one who’s chiseled out of granite and wouldn’t smile if he won a million dollars?”

Dallas grinned. “Bishop’s okay. He’s a badass, but once you get to know him, he’s an all right guy. Got a heart of gold.”

“He has a heart?” Jude asked in mock surprise.

“Be nice,” Morgan admonished. “He’s seen a lot of action and not much of it was anything to smile about. Trust me, he’s a good guy.”

“If you say so,” Jude conceded. “Which one is Alex?”

“Alex is transferring in from Station Two. He’s a rookie. You haven’t met him yet, but he’s a great kid. If I know him, he’ll volunteer to keep an eye on Sinful Pleasures for us too.”

“Especially since he spends all his time looking over there anyway,” Dallas said dryly.

* * * *

Morgan set his empty coffee cup aside and pulled Jude into his arms for a kiss. “How’s that lump on your head?”

She looked up at him with eyes as blue as a cloudless sky, taking Morgan’s breath before she answered. “I think its fine. I don’t feel anything other than a little soreness. No headache, no dizziness. I think I’m ready to resume my lessons, don’t you?”

The immediate ache in Morgan's balls made him squirm, and the sheet tented over his growing erection as he lost himself in the blue depths of her stare. "You sure about that, sweetheart?"

She nodded, never taking her gaze from his.

"This will be the real deal. Both of us, Jude."

Her finger touched his lips lightly. "I'm ready," she whispered. "I want to feel both of you in me. I've dreamed about this since the first night, Morgan."

Morgan cast a glance at Dallas, and Dallas nodded. Bunching the hem of Jude's T-shirt in his work-hardened hands, Morgan peeled the soft cotton away from her body, tossing it aside on the floor. He leaned down to kiss the hard tips of her breasts, giving each one individual attention as he placed a lightly suctioning kiss on her nipples. Jude sighed, putting her hands on the back of his head to pull him closer. She tasted sweet, and Morgan realized it was the natural flavor of her skin, like a confectioner's mix of woman and sex, blended to perfection.

Her hands found him under the sheet. She wrapped her long fingers around his throbbing cock and pumped him up and down in a slow rhythm that made him crazy. He bit down warningly on one of her nipples, making her moan and tighten her grip around his erection.

Morgan was vaguely aware Dallas had opened the drawer on his nightstand, setting out a bottle of lubrication. Damn, he could barely wait to sink his cock in her tight little ass. She was beautiful, everything he wanted in a woman. Sassy, intelligent, sensual, and so utterly feminine she made him feel like Superman. He knew Dallas felt the same about her. It was time to claim the woman they loved.

"Let Dallas kiss you, darlin'. Roll over and show him how much you want him."

Jude let go of his cock, and Morgan felt a physical rush of loss at the removal of her hand. Fuck, he was shaking he wanted her so damn bad.

Dallas pulled Jude down into the bed, laying his body over her as

his hands found the patch of hair between her legs. Morgan watched as his friend buried his fingers and Jude arched her hips up to meet his touch. She moaned softly, dropping her legs apart while she lost herself in the skill of Dallas's foreplay. Morgan reached over both of them to retrieve the bottle of lubrication gel. He squirted a generous drop in his palm and massaged his cock with the thick liquid. The cold fluid did nothing to calm his raging hard-on. He couldn't wait to get inside her.

* * * *

Dallas felt Jude's pussy clenching on his fingers in silent desperation for more. He knew that she needed to be penetrated, to feel a thick shaft of man to squeeze while she worked her way to an orgasm. Fucking damn, she was tight and wet. Her pussy felt like a furnace around his fingers, she was so hot. She bent one knee, giving him deeper access, and Dallas knew it was time for him to take her.

Putting his leg between her knees, he parted her wide, grasping his cock with one hand to guide it into her body. He liked to tease, slipping the head in and holding still until he couldn't wait any longer. Then he took it a step further, watching his lover's face while he slowly shoved himself to the limit.

Jude's eyes darkened with his descent until her irises were nearly black. When he buried himself fully, she gasped his name in a shivering whisper. The tone of her voice sent an echoing shudder through his body. His balls tightened in response to her pleasure. He stroked her hard until he could calm down enough to last.

Rolling onto his side, Dallas pulled Jude with him, holding on to her hips so that Morgan could make his entrance. She thought she was ready for this, but Dallas knew it would be a shock when Morgan entered her. After the initial burst of pain, it would be the most incredible experience she would ever encounter. The feel of both of them shoving against her erogenous spots would have her screaming

with her release.

Dallas pulled halfway out to give Morgan room, feeling his friend begin his entry. Jude stiffened, her body trying to pull away from the invasion. She whimpered quietly, shoving tightly against him as Morgan began his penetration, stretching her so fully that Dallas could feel him through her soft vaginal walls.

Fighting the urge to stroke her, Dallas quivered as he felt the pulsing of Jude's pussy and the pressure of Morgan's cock pushing against the thin membrane of flesh, putting an agonizing amount of force on the head of Dallas's penis. Dallas groaned, fighting to keep from losing control. Jude wasn't ready yet. He needed to stay still, to let her adjust to both of them before they found the sexual dance that would release them into an explosive climax.

Morgan looked over Jude's shoulder at him, holding his gaze. Dallas knew he felt it, too, the strength of their cocks shoving at each other and fighting for space causing their own sensual assault on the other and making the oncoming climax harder to avoid. If Morgan shoved deeper into Jude's ass, then Dallas felt it. If Dallas thrust inward, he could feel the head of Morgan's erection be pushed back so that he could fill the space in Jude's pussy. The feeling couldn't be explained. It had to be experienced to understand the raw sexuality of it. Dallas thought if it felt this good to them, then the sensations coursing through Jude must be mind-blowing.

With a bump of his hips, Dallas began to thrust in and out of Jude's pussy, feeling Morgan return the rhythm. Jude's pussy muscles squeezed him tightly, and Morgan's hard shaft collided with the head of Dallas's cock through the thin layer of Jude's vaginal walls. Dallas began to sweat with his effort not to come. He would hold on for as long as possible, waiting until Jude and Morgan were ready.

* * * *

Jude couldn't believe how good it felt to have Dallas inside her.

He filled her with his hardness while the base of his cock pushed against the swollen flesh of her clit, making her jerk with every grind of his pelvis. She didn't try to stop the soft groans of pleasure that burst from her lips as his hands and mouth worked her with the finesse of a master. When she was feeling the beginning of her climax, he rolled her onto her side, grasping her hips tightly.

She felt a jolt of fear and anticipation when she realized he was positioning her for Morgan. With Dallas holding tightly on to her hips, she felt Morgan part her cheeks and insert his lubricated finger into her anus, and the pressure was exquisite. She could feel him along with Dallas's thick shaft, and the double sensation left her giddy with need. She shoved back against Morgan's finger, wanting to feel more.

"That's right, darlin', it feels good, doesn't it?"

The head of his cock replaced his finger, shoving lightly against the tight ring of muscles. "Push back on me, just like you did with my finger," Morgan murmured in her ear. She felt his breath whisper across her skin, distracting her from the nearly painful pressure of his penis. "C'mon, darlin', push."

Jude tried. She forced her hips backward, unprepared for the jolt of discomfort she felt as his large head forced its way into her body. She halted instinctively, not ready for the feeling of being torn apart. A whimper tore from her throat, and she tried to escape the strain of her anal muscles being stretched too far. Yanking forward, she found herself impaled on Dallas's unyielding cock.

Morgan gentled her. "It's okay. Relax. It will stop in a minute. Remember your first time having sex? It hurt a little, too, didn't it? This is just the same. In a minute, you're gonna be loving this."

Jude nodded, trying to force herself to loosen up. Dallas groaned and began to thrust in and out, shoving her back against Morgan's hard cock. His movements buried Morgan into her ass until she couldn't take another inch from either of them. The tenderness blossomed into a rush of pleasure so intense it was another type of

pain altogether.

Jude could feel herself losing control. She couldn't reach her climax fast enough. Inside her body, the two men warred in a jousting competition to bring her to orgasm. Her anal muscles clamped around Morgan, refusing to let him exit her body while she chased the liquid pleasure pumping through her veins.

Her fingernails sank deep into Dallas's arms as she pulled him closer, begging him with fevered pleas to make her come. Nearly insane with need, she felt Dallas and Morgan meet on opposite sides of her vaginal walls, and she crashed into a burst of release that drew a low scream of pleasure from her lips.

Still connected, Dallas and Morgan held her gently, dropping kisses on her face, shoulders, and back. Both of the men stroked and petted her, giving Jude time to bask in the glow of her climax.

"That felt fucking incredible, darlin'." Morgan's hands gently kneaded the muscles of her shoulders. "Did we hurt you?"

"No," Jude sighed, barely able to answer. "I didn't know it could be like that. I've never been so fulfilled. Never."

Dallas smoothed her hair back, planting a kiss on her forehead. "We want your happiness, Jude. It can be like this forever, you know."

"We'd have to get married if we want it to last forever," Jude said sleepily, tilting her head back for Morgan's upside down kiss.

"I'm willing," Dallas volunteered. "If you want to get married, babe, I'm your man."

Jude's eyes flew open. "You want to marry me?"

Dallas nodded. "Does that surprise you?"

"I guess it does," Jude admitted. "I thought this arrangement was more like a game to you guys."

"No. Not a game, Jude. We talked this over months before we approached you. Why do you think we came into the store every day? I mean there's only so many sex toys a man can use. We came to see you, honey," Morgan said.

Jude looked back and forth at the two men. “You’d be okay with me marrying Dallas?”

“Sure, just as long as you marry me too.” Morgan gave her a heart-stopping smile.

Jude drew them into a hug, tears streaming down her cheeks. She turned to kiss one and then the other. “I want a wedding ring with three intertwining bands to represent us. Can we do that?”

Morgan and Dallas both kissed her at once, making room for each other as they claimed her mouth in a heart-stealing kiss that promised a happy future.

Chapter Eleven

“It’s safe,” Dallas said, coming downstairs from checking the store out. After the attempt on Jude he wanted to make sure no one had vandalized the place overnight.

Fishing his cell phone out of his pocket, Morgan headed for the stockroom. “I’ll make a pot of coffee and call Bishop to see if he’ll trade shifts with one of us for tomorrow.” Fifteen minutes later, the door opened and Tracey walked under Bishop’s arm as he held the door open for her. Tracey looked animated, and to Jude’s surprise, stone-faced Bishop had a smile on his face. Well, she amended, he had a smile whenever he looked at Tracey.

With her usual energy, Tracey ran to give Jude a hug. “Why didn’t you tell me you were attacked? I had to find out from Sandy Trujillo.”

“How do you know Officer Trujillo? Are you both members of the Five Foot Nothing Club?” Jude couldn’t help but tease her sister. She felt guilty she hadn’t called her or stopped by to visit their grandmother.

Tracey drew herself up to her full five-foot height. “Quit trying to change the subject. What happened?”

Jude poured a cup of Folgers for each of them. They went into the video parlor to drink their coffee while she explained to Tracey what had happened the day before.

“Sounds like something Steven would do,” Tracey said without giving it any thought. “He’s a coward, and we both know he feels *Sinful Pleasures* is a stumbling block to his future career in state politics.”

“Who’s Steven?” Bishop Taylor asked from the doorway. He stood with his shoulder against the doorframe, his arms crossed over his chest, looking lethal even though he was in a relaxed stance.

“Jude’s ex-husband. He’s a real bastard,” Tracey volunteered. “He’s so uptight he makes a priest look sexually liberated.”

“Tracey!”

Tracey shrugged unrepentantly. “The man has issues, Jude. You know that.”

Bishop looked like he might strangle on the laugh he choked back. “Has he ever threatened you?”

“No,” Jude answered.

“Yes,” Tracey corrected. “Don’t you remember he told you he would get rid of you one way or another?”

Jude shook her head in resignation. Once Tracey got her mind set on something, she wouldn’t let it go. “He didn’t mean that, Trace. At least he didn’t mean it the way it sounded. Steven is not going to do anything to hurt his chance at a political career. Besides, he can use me as an example of how he distances himself from the wicked temptations of the world. I’m not a threat to him. I’m a bonus.”

Uncrossing his arms, Bishop stepped away from the door. “I’ve got to get back to the station. If you need anything, Trace, give me a call.”

Tracey gave him a sultry look. “What sort of things, fireman?”

“You know, like your cat gets stuck in a tree, or you got a fire you can’t put out by yourself. I’m talking about those types of emergencies.”

“Serious stuff,” Tracey agreed. “Can I find you in the book? I might have an emergency while you’re not on duty.”

Jude stared openmouthed at her little sister.

What an operator.

Tracey had always been a natural flirt, but she was taking it to another level with Bishop. He nearly had the keys to the kingdom in his hand already.

Bishop took a business card out of his wallet and handed it to Tracey. "Call me."

Jude watched his eyes as he looked at her sister. In her opinion, a person's eyes truly were windows into their soul. Bishop Taylor had stormy blue eyes, changeable and dark, the color of a deep ocean or twilight sky. He had an aura of danger about him that gave Jude cold chills, but her sister seemed totally oblivious. When Bishop looked at Tracey, the hardness left his eyes to be replaced by hunger. Jude wasn't sure that made him any safer. In fact, she thought her sister might be fanning a fire she couldn't control.

When Bishop closed the door behind him Tracey turned to Jude with shining eyes. "Isn't he sexy?"

"He's scary."

Tracey rolled her eyes. "Yeah, like Morgan and Dallas are a couple of cream puffs"

* * * *

"I told you today would be boring," Jude said, twisting the key to lock the shop. "No crazed madmen, no threatening phone calls. You wasted a day sitting here watching me."

"Honey, any day spent with you is not a waste," Dallas answered, tucking a strand of hair behind her ear as they walked to Morgan's truck.

"We need to go to the hospital and check on your grandmother before we take you back to the apartment." Morgan stopped at his truck, opened the door, and helped Jude into the middle of the seat.

"You're taking me back to my apartment tonight?" Jude asked in surprise.

Morgan dropped a fast kiss on her lips. "Only long enough to pack an overnight bag."

Before the men had their seatbelts fastened Jude got a call on her cell phone. The caller was Tracey.

"I think I found a nursing home for grams," she said without preamble. "They specialize in stroke victims and they have a room available now."

"That's wonderful," Jude exclaimed. "When can we see the place?"

"Anytime. That's what I like about Shady Acres. Family members can visit the premises day or night. The administrator told me scheduled visits were appreciated, but not mandatory. We should go look it over tomorrow if you want to sign a lease."

"Give me a call when you want to go. Love you, sis." Jude flipped the phone shut with a sense of relief.

"Sounds like good news," Morgan said, pulling the truck away from the curb and into traffic heading out of town.

"I'm going to go with Tracey to look at a nursing home for grandma, so who gets the fun of coming along? Who's babysitting me tomorrow?"

"I get that honor," Dallas said. "And it's not babysitting, it's body guarding. All the other macho guys will make fun of me if they think I'm babysitting."

Jude laughed. "Call it what you will, but it's going to be another boring day for you. I think my attacker made his point. He's probably holed up somewhere terrified the police are going to find him."

"That could be true," Morgan agreed, "but we aren't going to take any chances for a while. Besides, we have a wedding to plan and Dallas can help you with the details." He glanced at Dallas with a grin. "That means you can pay the bills, buddy."

"Great, thanks a lot," Dallas replied in mock frustration. "Just what I need, more expenses."

Jude looked at Dallas and then back to Morgan. "Are you sure you want to go through with this?"

Dallas pulled her into his arms for a long kiss. "I'm sure. You sound a little iffy though, and it's too late to back out now. You're stuck with us."

Jude opened her mouth to answer, but the words never came. The truck was rammed from behind, sending it into a spin that propelled them off the divided highway, across the median, and into oncoming traffic.

Morgan fought the wheel, trying to control the skid as the truck's wheels caught on the pavement. Another vehicle slammed into the back side of the truck bed, keeping the momentum going as the pickup slid in reverse, careening into the guardrail and bouncing back across the double lanes of traffic. A tractor trailer missed them by inches. The driver swerved the rig into the emergency lane, barely in time to avoid the pickup as it skipped across the road to end up on its side in the median.

Jude couldn't move. She was trapped beneath Morgan and strapped in by her seatbelt. Dallas squirmed beneath her, but he had the weight of both Morgan and her pushing him into the door. The only way out of the truck was through the back window or the driver's window, and Morgan seemed to be unconscious.

Jude could hear people running to help, calling out as they ran. She felt the truck rocking and heard footsteps on metal as someone climbed onto the overturned side to reach the door. A face peered in through the windshield to look at them and then disappeared just as quickly.

She heard several male voices shouting orders. The men heaved on the driver's door and managed to get it open despite damage to the metal and the angle the truck lay on its side. Several pairs of hands lifted Morgan out of the vehicle and then returned to help her out. As soon as she was free, Dallas climbed out of the truck without help.

"Are you okay, babe?" he asked Jude.

She nodded, still too shaken to speak. Dallas knelt beside Morgan, feeling for broken bones while he spoke to the crowd gathered around them. "Did anyone see the car that hit us?"

An elderly lady stepped forward timidly. "I saw it," she said in a shaky voice. "It was one of those SUV things, dark green with Texas

plates, but I couldn't read the number. My eyes aren't so good any longer."

Dallas looked at her gratefully. "That's great, ma'am. It will help a lot. Did you see anything else?"

She wrung her hands nervously. "I think he hit you on purpose. It looked like he sped up when he got close. My son said I should keep my mouth shut, but it's not right. You could have been killed."

Morgan stirred on the ground, and Dallas put his hand on Morgan's shoulder to keep him from moving. "Shh, stay put, buddy. There's an ambulance on the way. You did a hell of a job keeping us alive."

"Where's your son, ma'am?" Dallas asked the old lady.

"I'm here." A disgruntled man stepped to the front, casting his mother an irritated look. "Guess you got plenty of time to play witness for the lawsuit that's going to come out of this."

Dallas glared at the man. "Look, asshole, you're a disgrace to your mom. Someone tried to kill us, and you're worried about being a witness? What did you see?"

The man shrugged arrogantly. "I didn't see anything."

Dallas stood up, taking a menacing step forward. "Nothing?"

The guy swallowed hard, backing up while keeping an eye on Dallas. "It was a Suburban, I think. Green, like mom said. I was driving and I didn't see anything else."

"What happened after it hit us?"

"It swerved from the impact but kept on going. I focused on your truck." He spread his hands. "Sorry."

Dallas turned away without thanking the man, centering his attention on Jude. "Sure you're okay?"

"I'm fine, but I think Morgan hit his head on the door when we spun into the guardrail. Where's the damn ambulance?"

On cue, the sound of sirens broke up the crowd. Several people returned to their vehicles, pulling back on the road and driving away, including the reluctant witness and his mother. No doubt escaping

before their names could be taken, Jude thought with disgust.

* * * *

“There’s no evidence of a concussion,” Dr. Liu said, shining the light in Morgan’s eyes one more time. “Do you remember if you hit your head?”

“Hell, Doc, we were spinning like a top going down the road, I don’t remember hitting my head, but I must have.” Morgan looked at the emergency room physician impatiently. “Did you find any lumps?”

Dr. Liu gave a long-suffering smile. “I think it’s possible you may have suffered a whiplash-induced blackout.” He punched a few keys on the laptop in front of him, studying the results of the X-ray. “Since I don’t see any trauma or swelling, I’ll release you tonight if you have someone that will be in the house with you.”

“He’s covered,” Dallas said. “Our fiancée and I will be with him.”

“Then he’s free to go as soon as I get the paperwork printed out. The nurse will be back with a form to sign.” Dr. Liu stopped at the doorway. “I suggest you see your primary physician in the morning, Mr. Kent, just as a precaution. And don’t do anything strenuous.”

“Right,” Morgan growled at the retreating doctor. “No sex.”

On the heels of the doctor’s departure, Bishop Taylor walked into the examination room. As usual, his expression was unreadable as he studied the three of them. “I figured you might need a ride home. I also got a lead on that green Suburban.”

Dallas looked stunned. “A lead? Already? How the hell did you manage that, Bishop?”

Bishop looked every inch the Special Ops soldier as he brushed off Dallas’s question, keeping a vigilant eye on the people coming and going in the hallway. “Let’s get out of here and I’ll show you.”

Even though it was dark, Bishop slid on a pair of amber-colored sunglasses before getting behind the wheel of his black Mercedes.

Dallas, Jude, and Morgan all piled into the backseat, drawing strength from each other. Without a word, Bishop pulled out of the hospital parking lot and turned left, taking the same route Morgan had a few hours earlier.

Jude sat silently for a couple of miles until she couldn't stand it any longer. "Nice car. Did you win the lottery?"

Bishop looked in the rearview mirror for a long second before replying. "I do a little security work on the side. I like to keep busy."

"Security obviously pays better than the fire department." Jude didn't know why she was pushing him. Maybe because he scared her a little, and he had his eye on Tracey. That scared her a lot.

He grinned, shaking his head in disbelief. "You're playing the older sister routine? I didn't figure you for that type. It's all legit, sis. I'll let you check my books anytime you want."

Jude started to come back with a less-than-gracious reply when Dallas put his hand over her wrist. "Let it go, Jude."

"That's a real good idea," Bishop said. Jude watched him glance in his side mirrors to keep check on the traffic around them. He seemed constantly vigilant no matter what he was doing, and Jude wondered if he ever truly rested.

They rode in silence for a few more miles with Jude seething inwardly, but she kept her thoughts to herself. She would talk to Tracey in the morning. She didn't need to get tangled up with Bishop Taylor. The man was an arrogant bastard. And he sure as hell wasn't living on a fireman's salary. Despite his explanation for the car, Jude had a feeling the man wasn't telling the whole truth.

Bishop broke the silence. "This is where you got tapped." He pointed at the skid marks on the left lane. The dark smears were visible under the lights positioned along the off ramp. "Your witness said the Suburban swerved from the impact but kept on going. I figured he would get off the road fast, just in case someone managed to get the tag number, or there was more damage to the vehicle than met the eye." Bishop turned on his signal for the exit ramp. "This is

the first exit he would come to, and over here is a convenience store.”

“Security cameras,” Morgan said. “They have twenty-four-hour surveillance.”

“That’s right. These stores are at a high risk of being held up. They have security cameras all over the place. I called Mr. Saied, and he let me view the digital feed.” Bishop pulled the Mercedes into a dark corner of the lot. “I’ve got a copy of his files downloaded on my laptop.”

“I don’t know how you thought of this,” Morgan said in admiration. “It’s kind of obvious when you think about it, but it wouldn’t have crossed my mind.”

Bishop opened the laptop and punched a couple of keys. “That’s where most people go wrong, Morgan. They overlook what’s right in front of their faces. It’s human nature to make things harder than they have to be.”

A video feed of the parking lot began playing on the screen. Jude realized Bishop stopped the Mercedes in approximately the same spot the green Suburban had parked while the driver made a phone call. A few minutes later, another car pulled up beside the Suburban and rolled down the window.

Jude gave an audible gasp, unable to believe her eyes.

“Do you recognize the car?” All three men asked in unison.

“That’s my ex-mother-in-law.”

“You’re kidding, right?” Dallas asked.

“No. That’s Genevieve Wheeler.” Jude leaned closer to the screen, watching in shocked fascination as Genevieve handed a fat white envelope to the man in the Suburban. “She’s paying him off for trying to kill us.”

“Looks that way,” Bishop agreed. “But why would she want you killed?”

“She thinks I’m standing in the way of her son’s political career. She wants me out of sight and out of mind.”

Bishop nodded. “I’ll take care of it in the morning.”

“What are you going to do?” Jude asked. “We should call the cops. Let them handle this.”

Bishop slowly took the glasses off his face, staring at Jude until she thought her heart would explode from the tension. “You call the cops and this old bitch will fight back. She’ll pull in every favor she’s ever been owed. Trust me, her society friends are going to back her all the way. You’re going to be portrayed as a bitter ex-wife. Who do you think is going to win in this situation?”

“So what are you going to do? I don’t want you to hurt her.”

“Oh, shit, give me a fucking break,” Bishop exploded. “What the hell do you think I’m going to do? Break her legs?”

“I don’t know what you’re planning to do,” Jude retorted hotly. “That’s why I’m asking.”

A muscle in Bishop’s jaw twitched. “I’m going to show her a copy of this video and tell her that if anything happens to you, *anything at all*, this video will find its way to the police and she will be charged with attempted murder. Is that satisfactory to you, your highness?”

Jude felt more than a little guilty for judging him so harshly. After all, he was only trying to help and she hadn’t thanked him yet. In fact, all she had done so far was hassle the man. She decided it might be time for a truce, so she thanked him in the best way she could think of—by giving him a little insight into her sister.

“Trace likes death-by-chocolate ice cream, and her guilty pleasure is werewolf movies. They scare her to death, but she can’t resist watching them. You take a pint of chocolate ice cream and a scary movie when you visit her and you won’t be sorry.”

Bishop grinned, then he chuckled and started to laugh hard. “Chocolate ice cream and werewolf movies? Seriously? You’re not setting me up to get slapped, are you?”

“White wine doesn’t hurt, either,” Jude added, giggling a little herself at Tracey’s uniqueness. Her sister had always colored outside the lines. She would fearlessly face a mugger head-on but go

shrieking under the covers at a phony werewolf with a canned howl. She worked tirelessly for her favorite charities but flitted from job to job when she got bored with whatever new occupation she decided to conquer. Tracey simply danced to a different drummer than Jude.

“Thanks for your help, Bishop,” Jude said. “I’ve got a wedding to plan, and it’s a little hard to do with a death threat hanging over my head. I guess I’m a little nervous.”

Bishop looked back and forth between Morgan and Dallas. “Which one?”

“Both,” Jude answered, looking happily at her husbands to be.

“That’s right, I forgot about the three-way marriage law being in effect in Parrish,” Bishop said. He studied them before speaking. “I have to admit, I’m intrigued. How are you going to make this work?”

“I love them both.” Jude surprised herself she could speak so openly about her unconventional arrangement, especially to a man like Bishop Taylor.

“And you can live with that?” Bishop turned his gaze to the men.

“It’s incredible, man. You’d have to experience it to understand.” Dallas said. “We fell in love with Jude months ago. How are you going to take your best friend’s woman? If one of us won her, it would ruin our friendship, but if we didn’t have her in our lives, both of us would feel empty. So we decided to share and to convince Jude she couldn’t live without us.”

“They make me complete,” Jude said. “I’ve never been happier in my life.”

“Congratulations then,” Bishop said. “I hope you have a lot of years together.” A wistful expression flitted across his face before it once again became an emotionless mask.

“I’ll give you a ride home now. We need to talk about your safety.”

Jude held her breath when Bishop paused and glanced in the rearview mirror. His penetrating stare pierced straight through her. She knew there’d be more, and she wouldn’t like it. Nestled between

her two men, Jude shrank a little farther back in the seat as she held Bishop's eyes. When he continued, her heart sank a little bit more.

"You'll have to stay alert for trouble. This isn't over yet."

Jude gasped. Her hopes plummeted at Bishop's words. She could barely get the words out as her heart did a flip, then began to race out of control.

"Not over?" She reached out to grasp both Dallas's and Morgan's hands. Their fingers curled around hers and held tight, reminding her that she was safe, at least for now. She closed her eyes and began to count, trying to calm the rampaging beat of her heart. She took a deep breath and released it slowly before she looked back at the mirror. "What do you mean it's not over? We know who tried to kill us. You said you'd take care of everything tomorrow."

"And I will," Bishop said. "I can easily take care of Mrs. Wheeler, but it's the man she hired that's a problem. His name is Harry Matthews."

"How do you know that, Bishop?" Dallas asked. "I'm beginning to get real curious here, buddy. I need some explanations. At this point, I'm not sure who I can trust. You seem to know a hell of a lot about what happened."

Bishop sighed, slammed the Mercedes back in park, and turned the radio up a notch as if to drown out his words. He rubbed at his chin as though struggling with a decision. "Look, what I'm going to tell you stays in this car." He looked around the lot before going on. "I'm not a fireman. I'm working undercover on assignment. I can't discuss the details with you, okay? So don't ask. I've tracked Matthews from Hawaii to here. He won't stop until he finishes his assignment. I can call off your mother-in-law, Jude, but I won't be able to call off Matthews. He's going to have to be physically stopped."

"You're an undercover cop?" Jude's mind whirled with the implications.

Bishop gave her a grin, sliding the sunglasses back on his face.

“Something like that. But we didn’t have this conversation, and you need to get a real quick case of amnesia. Understand?”

“No problem,” Morgan agreed. He looked over at Jude, and then at Dallas. “We’re glad for the help.”

“Wish I could say I did it out of the goodness of my heart,” Bishop said, “but the fact is I’ve been after Matthews for a while. He just presented me with the opportunity to take him down.”

“Can I ask one more question?” Jude involuntarily moved closer to the front seat. “You said you followed Matthews here from Hawaii. Where do you live?”

“On the big island.” Bishop’s face didn’t give an indication of what he was thinking when he answered her. “Why do you want to know?”

“So, this thing with Trace is just to pass time? A flirtation?”

Bishop grinned, showing even white teeth. “First, there ain’t no *thing*, yet. And, secondly, I didn’t know she couldn’t leave the mainland if it does work into a *thing*.”

“Men like you always get what you go after, Bishop Taylor, and I don’t want to see my little sister hurt. She won’t leave Arizona, so don’t start something you can’t finish.”

“Might surprise you what your sister will do if she’s given the opportunity,” Bishop answered softly, shifting the car into drive. He gave the premises another quick look then pulled out of the parking lot.

Chapter Twelve

When they arrived back at the ranch, Dallas asked Jude to fix a pot of coffee. He wouldn't be sleeping tonight, not with Matthew on the loose. While Jude was inside, he and Morgan stood on the porch with Bishop. Dallas hoped to glean as much information as he could.

"What did Matthews do in Hawaii?"

Bishop stared out over the dark spread of land. For a moment, Dallas didn't think he would answer. He kept his eyes on the stars overhead and the acres of darkness that surrounded them. An expression of pain flitted across his features, then disappeared just as quickly as it had surfaced. Finally, he turned back to face them.

"He killed a family," he said at last. "Revenge killings are his thing. It's my opinion he's building his reputation so he can move up to the big league. It's not personal vendettas for him now, it's murder for hire."

"How in the hell did Genevieve Wheeler connect with him?" Morgan wondered aloud. "I can't imagine that she'd have much accessibility to criminal elements. When do society matrons rub elbows with assassins?"

"Yeah, I was wondering that myself," Dallas said.

"That will be one of the things I find out in the morning," Bishop said. "It could be that Jude's ex-husband hired him and Mrs. Wheeler is the go-between. I've seen crazier things happen. In the meantime, one of you should get some rest while the other keeps a lookout. You've got my number. Call me if you need backup."

Dallas watched the Mercedes fade into the darkness. "Do you get the feeling he isn't telling us everything?"

Morgan nodded. "I think it's personal between him and Matthews. Did you hear what he said about the revenge thing? Do you know anything about Bishop's background before he hired on at the department?"

"Nope. Only thing I heard the chief say was that he lucked out when Bishop signed on with the arson team. Let's go have a cup of coffee and see what we can find out on the Internet. Gotta be something on there about a family getting killed. That would make news."

When Dallas opened the door, Jude met her with two steaming cups of coffee in her hands. She looked tired but resolved. "I got the pistol out of your nightstand while the coffee brewed. It's on the table for easy access. And I pulled the blinds shut so no one can see inside. Should we do anything else?"

"You did good." Dallas took one of the cups out of her hand and leaned over to brush a kiss on her forehead. "Why don't you go to bed, sweetheart? It's going to be a long night. Morgan and I are staying up for a while."

Jude shot her a stubborn look. "I'm not going to bed until you do."

Dallas shrugged. "Suit yourself, but you better fix another cup, then." Jude turned to go into the kitchen. "Jude?" She turned back to him. "You do realize you're disobeying me again. You'll pay the consequences for that later. Right now we really need you to get with the program. Your life, and ours, might depend on you doing what we tell you when we tell you, and not when you decide."

Her face flushed, and she hesitated before going over to the coffee pot to pour a cup for herself. "Staying up late with the two men I love doesn't put us in danger. I'll listen to you when the time comes."

Dallas nodded. "Okay, babe, I'm counting on you to do that. This situation could get real sticky, according to Bishop."

Morgan carried the laptop to the sofa, stretching his legs out while he booted up the computer. Dallas sat down beside him so he could

see the screen. Jude snuggled up on the other side of Morgan. He tapped a few keys and waited for the search engine to do its thing. It didn't take long.

Jude gasped and gripped the edge of the laptop, twisting it toward her. She felt a little tug somewhere deep inside as she stared at the article that had appeared on the front page of Hawaii's premier newspaper.

"Oh, my God, it's his sister."

"Seriously?" Morgan asked.

Jude ran her finger down the screen. "Look." She tapped a picture of Bishop in a police uniform. He looked a couple years younger, almost happy. Not at all like the Bishop Taylor she'd come to know. Along with Bishop's photo was one of the three victims. They were identified as Glenda, Erin, and Emmie Patterson, sister and nieces of Officer Taylor.

The article stated that an investigation by the Hawaii Police Department centered on suspect Harry Aaron Matthews. Matthews had been arrested by Detective Taylor for attempted robbery and murder. At his trial, he vowed to get even with Taylor, and he had.

Dallas pointed further down the page. "Look, it says Bishop quit the force when Matthews got an early parole. He claimed Matthews called him at home, threatening his family, and the judge wouldn't revoke Matthew's parole."

"Why do you think he quit the force?" Jude asked. "Wouldn't he have the protection of his friends to back him up?"

"I think he would quit if he planned on taking care of the problem himself," Morgan said. "He wouldn't want to drag the police department into something illegal."

"Yeah, and he probably spent every minute trying to look after them. He couldn't very well work on the force and protect his family at the same time."

Jude bit her lip in concentration, obviously thinking over the information. "Okay. He quits the force. His sister and two nieces get

killed despite his protection. What would he do next? Wouldn't he just go after the guy? Why the fire department ruse?"

Morgan typed in a new search. "He's a licensed private investigator. Looks like he got his credentials about a year after his sister's death. My guess is that he lost Matthews after the killings. Matthews must have gone to ground and Bishop realized he'd need a legitimate reason for searching federal and police databases. But it still doesn't explain why he joined the fire department."

"Maybe it does," Dallas said. "If he tracked Matthews here, what better way to look for someone than to be on the streets constantly? He could ask everyone on site if they noticed a man fitting that description. No one would think anything of it. He got himself assigned to the arson investigation team so he could get into any database he wanted without raising a red flag."

"Makes sense. Parrish isn't that big of a place. If he asks enough people about Matthews, someone will eventually know something." Morgan thought about it. "He's working the situation into an advantage for himself. People won't talk to cops, but they'll talk to a fireman."

Jude reached over to take the computer off Morgan's lap. "Let me check out something." She tapped several keys, then turned the computer to face Morgan and Dallas. "Read the rest of this newspaper article. He's not only protecting the police force. He's protecting the rest of his family. They own one of the big cattle ranches in Hawaii. He's got enough money to hire the Marines to take out Matthews, so why is he doing it himself?"

"Because, honey, he was Special Ops. Those guys take care of things themselves." Dallas reached in front of Morgan to cup Jude's face. "I'd want to do it myself. Especially if the system I worked for let me down. I doubt that Bishop Taylor trusts any institution or anyone, these days."

* * * *

Genevieve Wheeler woke to find a hard, cold object pressing against the center of her forehead. She started to lurch upward, ready to lash out at whoever had rudely awakened her out of a sound sleep. Then realization dawned in her sleep-fogged brain as she recognized the shape and texture of the cold metal. She slumped back to the pillow. The object digging into her skin was a gun. She swallowed hard and forced out the words.

“What do you want?” Her normally elegant voice sounded whispery and afraid. She hated sounding so vulnerable. Clearing her throat, she tried speaking again, and this time, her voice was stronger, less intimidated. “I have jewels in the safe, but you won’t get them with me dead. Not without the combination.”

A low chuckle answered her, and the gun tapped painfully against her forehead. A cold and familiar voice oozed out of the darkness. “C’mon, Genevieve, what do you think I want?”

Genevieve’s mind raced nearly as fast as her heart. It couldn’t be, but it was. She recognized the mocking voice.

“Mr. Matthews? Is that you?” Her voice held a blend of outrage and pain she couldn’t disguise. Never one to show weakness, Genevieve got a grip on herself. The man worked for her. She would not allow an employee to treat her with less than respect, even if he did have a gun in his hand.

Suddenly, the lamp flared on, blinding her for a few seconds. She squinted until her eyes adjusted to the brightness. She looked up to see Harry Matthews looming over her with a mocking smile.

“I’ve come to make sure you have no second thoughts about our business arrangement.”

Genevieve had definitely had enough. She practically spit the words at him. “Of course I don’t.” Lips pressed tight, she batted at the gun, knocking it away so she could pull herself into a sitting position. “Put that thing away and explain yourself. Why would you come to my house? You’re not as professional as I was led to believe. You

should be on a plane out of the country by now. I simply can't believe you've invaded my home."

Matthews looked bored, but he couldn't fool her, not even when he lifted the gun and sighted down the barrel toward her. His insolence inflamed Genevieve. She wanted to slap that smug look from his face.

She ground out her words between clenched teeth. "I said put it away. Once again, Mr. Matthews. Why aren't you on a plane?"

Matthews shrugged nonchalantly and lowered the gun. "I would be on a plane, Mrs. Wheeler, except the fucking bitch didn't die. She didn't even get hurt."

Genevieve hissed in frustration. "You told me they were dead. I paid you for dead."

"Now you'll pay me more," Matthews stated matter-of-factly. "I took a chance and it didn't work. There's no guarantee in this business. You pay me for the risks. I'll take care of it tonight, but I want more money. The original price was for the bitch only, but now there are two extra targets. That means extra risk and more money."

"You're trying to extort me," Genevieve said. "I won't be dictated to by the likes of you. Your language is deplorable, and you are nothing more than a street thug and murderer."

Matthews snorted out a laugh. "Well, your highness, you're a killer, too. You may not get your manicured nails dirty, but you're as much of a thug as I am. So don't push me too far. You won't like the results." He pointed the gun at Genevieve again, and this time she felt a tinge of fear course through her veins. Still, she knew she must keep the upper hand when dealing with the likes of Harry Matthews. She had faced difficult situations before. In her opinion, everyone could be bought with cash, and fortunately, she had plenty of it.

"I want more money to kill the men," he repeated.

"Just as I thought. It all comes down to greed. Very well," Genevieve snapped, throwing the silk covers back from her elegant designer pajamas. "I have enough in the safe to cover your expenses.

Don't ask for more, do you understand, Mr. Matthews? I have reached my limit."

Matthews carefully moved back from the bed, keeping the gun trained on her. "I understand. This will be the last time we meet, Mrs. Wheeler. I wish I could say it's been a pleasure."

Genevieve held herself stiffly erect as she went to the safe and dialed in the combination. Making no effort to hide her impatience, she pulled out a banded wad of one-hundred-dollar bills and held them out to Matthews. "Here you are. Does this quite satisfy you?"

"Not even close."

Matthews reached out with one hand and lifted the other holding the weapon. Genevieve saw that the pistol now had a silencer screwed into the barrel. He must have put it on the gun while she worked the combination of the safe. She barely heard the soft *pfft* and only realized she'd been shot when the pain exploded through her chest.

* * * *

Harry Matthews stepped over the lifeless body of Genevieve Wheeler to look at the contents of the still-open safe. He pocketed another load of cash and several pieces of jewelry. There were a few items left in the vault, but nothing he wanted to take with him. In an afterthought, he scattered the remaining contents on the floor as if the safe had been hastily searched. The police would hopefully think it was a burglary gone bad. He grinned at the thought. All the society drones would be quaking in their designer shoes. He reflected that now would be a real good time to invest in a home alarm company. Tomorrow, after watching the news, everyone would want to upgrade their security systems.

Glancing at his watch, Matthews decided he still had time to grab a quick bite to eat before driving out to the ranch. It wouldn't be daylight for a couple of hours. By now, the firemen would be fighting exhaustion. The mental tension of the motor vehicle accident would

be enough to drain them, never mind the stress of protecting the woman and missing work. Matthews knew that emotional anxiety was far more debilitating than physical exhaustion. He would strike just before dawn when they were at their lowest. Then he would leave the country as Genevieve Wheeler suggested.

Patting the thick wad of currency in his pants pocket, Matthews thought about Paris. He needed a vacation after putting up with the old bitch and her ever-changing whims. He told himself he would be careful after this job and more selective of his clients. He could afford to be choosy now with the money he made from Genevieve. This job would be his calling card, his resume when someone needed a hit. He would move up to the international level, picking up clients from all over the globe. Maybe he would even pick up a few government jobs from foreign interests. Sure, they all had their own special operatives, but it wouldn't be the first time a killer worked for a government that didn't want any ties to an assassination.

Only one small detail worried Matthews. He knew the old broad found him through her son, the attorney. She told him that much when she called for his services. Steven Wheeler represented Harry several years ago in a kidnapping case. At that time, Matthews hadn't made up his mind where he wanted to focus his criminal talents. The business of illegal adoptions seemed lucrative and easy. Harry turned his attention to kidnapping babies. He got into an altercation with the law south of the border, and Steven Wheeler saved him from doing jail time. A grateful Matthews told Steven if he ever needed a favor, he should call.

Over the years, Steven occasionally hired Matthews to put pressure on an opposing lawyer or to solve certain problems before they made it to court. Steven didn't have an ounce of integrity. Like mother, like son. Apparently, Genevieve wasn't above snooping in her son's private safe. She called Matthews after finding his name and number with the simple label of "problem solver" beside his name. Matthews had to hand it to the dragon. She might have been a bitch,

but she wasn't stupid.

Steven Wheeler wasn't stupid, either. Matthews knew that given enough time, the lawyer would eventually piece together what happened. Unfortunately, that meant Harry had to tie up all the loose ends before he left town. He hated to kill Steven, but some things couldn't be avoided. Better to be safe than sorry. Besides, there were plenty of other lawyers to take his place.

* * * *

Dallas looked at the clock resting on the mantle. It read four a.m. His eyelids felt heavy with sleep, but he didn't dare allow himself to rest. Jude and Morgan were in bed, both asleep. The loaded pistol lay in easy reach. Dallas wiped a hand across his face as if he could clean the sleep from his fatigued mind. It didn't work as well as he'd hoped.

He stood, crossing to the door of the bedroom. Leaning against the doorframe, he watched Jude sleeping in the arms of his best friend. Two people he loved more than life itself. He would die to protect them, but hoped he didn't have to.

Morgan half opened his eyes. "What's wrong?" he whispered. He tightened his arms around Jude protectively.

"Nothing. Get some rest, bud. I just wanted to make sure everything was okay in here." Dallas turned to go back to the front room, ready to resume his vigilance. Glass exploded across the floor, and he felt the hot sting of a rifle slug crease his shoulder.

"Damn!" Dallas made a dive for the floor. If he hadn't turned when he did, the bullet would have caught him in the chest. Cursing himself for leaving the pistol behind, Dallas crawled across the floor to retrieve it.

He could hear Morgan whispering urgently to Jude. As they had discussed earlier, Morgan would go for the shotgun hidden under the edge of the bed. But first, Dallas knew he would make sure Jude was safe and out of the line of fire. Dallas heard the closet door open

softly, and then he heard Morgan pump cartridges into the double-barreled shotgun. Within a moment, his friend was at his side.

“You’re bleeding,” Morgan said hoarsely. He had the shotgun aimed at the window. That would be the most likely place of attack.

Keeping his head low, Dallas reached up with one hand to snatch the pistol. He glanced at his shoulder. “The bullet grazed me. I’m fine. Stay with Jude.”

“We’ve gotta stop this son of a bitch,” Morgan hissed. “He’s going to—”

The sharp crack of a rifle broke the predawn silence, and a heavy thud jarred the house.

Neither Dallas nor Morgan moved for a long moment.

“I have a feeling the problem’s been taken care of,” Dallas said. “Cover me. I’m going to try to get a look outside.”

“Not with you being shot,” Morgan protested. “I’ll go.”

He opened the door carefully. “Shit, I can’t see for the chairs and the flowers,” he whispered. “There’s a dark shape on the porch. Someone’s down, but I can’t tell if it’s Bishop or Matthews.”

“We’ve got to find out,” Dallas said quietly.

“I know,” Morgan agreed. “I’ll take cover behind the chairs and try to make it to the body.”

Before Dallas could protest, Morgan slipped through the door and crouched behind the furniture, staying in the shadows until he made it to the man sprawled face down on the boards.”

Dallas was about to go after his friend when he heard the snick of a bullet being chambered from somewhere behind him in the darkness. He froze and held his hands up, turning around slowly. Dallas saw Bishop holding a rifle pointed in the direction of the body that was still lying belly down on the porch.

“Don’t shoot, that’s Morgan standing down there, not Matthews. I think Matthews is dead. ”

“Matthew’s isn’t dead.” Bishop answered. He moved like the wind, silent, swift, and invisible as he made his way to where Morgan

was getting ready to bend over Matthews and check for a pulse.

“Stop,” his voice rang out. “Move away from him.”

Morgan hesitated, but he stepped back from Matthews. “He needs help, man.”

Bishop moved closer and motioned for Morgan to distance himself. “Keep your gun on him. I’ll check his vitals.”

Morgan held the gun on Matthews, ready to shoot him if he so much as twitched in the wrong direction. Using the tip of his boot, Bishop rolled Matthews over onto his back. He kicked the gun Matthews had dropped off the edge of the porch before leaning over to put a hand to his neck.

“The son-of-a-bitch will live. Call the sheriff and an ambulance.”

Dallas already had the phone in his hand and was dialing the numbers he knew by heart.

“You okay?” Bishop tossed over his shoulder at Dallas.

“Yeah, it just grazed me.” He looked down at his shoulder. “It’s already stopped bleeding.”

Dallas and Morgan exchanged looks. “He should be the one to take him down after what he did to his family,” Morgan said quietly.

Dallas nodded. “That’s why I didn’t get in his way.”

Bishop dropped down to his knees beside Matthews as if he hadn’t heard the exchange. He leaned down to whisper something in Matthews’s ear and Matthews jerked away, his face becoming a mask of fear.

“Don’t leave me alone with him,” Matthews begged them when Bishop snapped a pair of hand cuffs on his wrists.

“You have the right to remain silent,” Bishop was saying when Dallas heard the first siren in the distance.

Chapter Thirteen

“Paniolo. That’s what they call Hawaiian cowboys,” Tracey said over the phone. “Bishop said I’d love riding at the edge of the ocean. And you should see the pictures of his home, Jude, it’s incredible. There are all these red flowers everywhere.”

Jude broke into Tracey’s speed talking. “Whoa, slow down. So you’re definitely going to Hawaii with him?”

“Well, duh.”

Jude cracked up at her sister’s flippant reply. “You’ll at least stay around for the wedding, won’t you?” She heard muffled talking and knew that Trace had put her hand over the phone to talk to Bishop.

“Bishop said he would love to be a witness at your wedding.”

“I just bet he said that.” Jude laughed again. She seriously doubted that Bishop Taylor had any idea of what he was getting into with her sister. Maybe she’d been wrong to worry about Tracey’s well-being. Maybe it was Bishop she should have been worrying about all this time.

She and Dallas had put off their wedding for a couple of weeks while the town got past the death of Genevieve Wheeler and the near death of her son, Steven. It seemed that Matthews decided getting rid of Steven was more important than breakfast. He’d left Genevieve’s house on Dogwood Lane and drove four blocks over to Corinth Drive. The police said he disabled the alarm system and shot Steven in his sleep, but the bullet didn’t kill him. Steven would live to inherit his mother’s considerable estate, however, he would spend weeks in the hospital recuperating.

To everyone’s surprise, Bishop didn’t kill Matthews despite the

fact it was obvious he wanted to. He explained to the police that he'd tracked Matthews for several states before lucking out and finding him in Arizona. When he realized that Matthews had killed an influential Parrish citizen and gravely injured another he didn't think the man would be getting out of jail this time. Harry Matthews would go stir crazy in a maximum security prison. It would be the ultimate punishment to watch him slowly wither away behind bars.

"Are you sure you don't want a big wedding, Jude? This thing with Genevieve...well, no one is going to judge you. If you want a wedding I'll help you plan it. We can whip something together fast. It will be fun."

Jude smiled even though Tracey couldn't see her. "We'll save the big wedding for you, Trace. Marrying Dallas and Morgan is enough for me and the court house is fine."

"If that's what you want," Tracey answered in a voice filled with doubt.

"Really. Truly. It's what I want. With you there it will be the perfect day."

Chapter Fourteen

Jude looked at the wedding band on her left hand. Made in a Celtic knot pattern, it had one gold and two platinum bands woven in an interlacing design. One strand could not be removed without destroying the others. She thought the interwoven design was an appropriate symbol of the love she felt for both Dallas and Morgan. Although the three of them had been lovers only a short time, she couldn't imagine life without either one of them.

Dallas, Jude, and Morgan were married at the court house. Tracey and Bishop stood with them as witnesses to the simple ceremony. After celebrating at a local restaurant, the three of them returned to the ranch. The men were taking care of the horses, and Jude decided to give them a little wedding gift of her own.

Walking across the thick beige carpet to the nightstand on Dallas's side of the bed, she removed the ponytail plug from the top drawer. Still packaged, she knew he had held on to it in the hope she would wear it for him. For a special occasion he'd once said. Jude thought her honeymoon was certainly a special occasion enough to warrant the toy.

Tonight, Dallas would get his wish. Jude decided she would put on a show that he and Morgan weren't likely to forget. Slipping into the bathroom, she inserted the plug, feeling the silky strands of mane brush against her hips in a sensual reminder she would soon be filled with more than a toy.

Turning to look at her rear in the full-length mirror, she couldn't help but be pleased with the effect. Her well-rounded hips were accented by the sassy tail that hung to the bottom of her cheeks. With

a twist of her butt, she sent the fake ponytail into a flipping motion that would be sure to drive Dallas crazy.

Wearing nothing more than the plug, Jude went into the bedroom, waiting until she heard the men returning from the barn. Judging how long it would take them to make it to the bedroom, she bent over the bed. Pulling the covers down, she made sure her ass was aimed toward the door as they came down the hall.

“Oh, fucking damn!” Dallas gave a groan of appreciation. “Jude, baby, don’t you want your honeymoon fuck to last?”

Jude shot him a playful look, swishing her tail back and forth. “You told me that happy fillies shake their tails. I just wanted you to know I’m happy.”

Morgan laughed a little breathlessly. “Jude, darlin’, you are something else. C’mon and help me take a shower.” He gave her a seductive wink. “I’ll wash your tail for you.”

“Dallas?”

His eyes were riveted on her ass. “Yeah, a shower would be great.”

Jude walked up to both men, reaching up to take the hat from Dallas’s head. She brushed up against him, feeling her sensitive nipples skim the front of his shirt as she tiptoed for a kiss. He held on to her long enough that she thought she might faint from oxygen deprivation before he reluctantly let her go. As he kissed her, his hand swept over her hips, fondling the thick strand of mane clinging to her sweat-damp cheeks.

Turning to Morgan, she saw he had already set his hat aside. She moved to help him with his clothes. Her fingers dropped to his belt buckle, working the firefighter’s emblem loose so her hands could unfasten his jeans.

Jude kissed him while her fingers lowered his zipper. She cupped him in her hand, feeling the weight of his balls and the smooth heat of silken skin stretched tightly over the steel of his erection.

When she finished kissing him, Morgan balanced himself against

the doorframe, kicking off his boots so he could free himself of the jeans he still wore. Dallas had already stripped bare, and his six-pack abs and tight ass distracted Jude for a moment.

“Can we hurry,” she breathed. Would she ever get tired of looking at these two men? They were built like Greek statues, sculpted by hard work and exercise. The more she studied their bodies, the more urgently she wanted them to take her.

Standing close between them, she breathed in the essence of maleness, a light, spicy tang of testosterone blended with the scent of hay, wood, and fresh sunshine. She thought about telling them to skip the shower, but the eager looks on their faces told her they were looking forward to some water sports.

Morgan turned the shower to a hard spray, then stepped inside, pulling Jude along with him. He took the bottle of body soap from the edge of the whirlpool tub and lathered his hands with the citrusy-smelling liquid.

Dallas stepped into the tub behind Jude, placing his hands on her waist and pulling her back so that Morgan could use his soap-slick hands to glide over her wet body.

His hands felt heavenly as he smoothed her skin with firm massaging strokes, gliding across the tips of her nipples, down the curve of her waist, and into the patch of hair between her legs.

Dallas pulled her back into his chest, and Jude could feel the crinkly tickle of his hair against her back. His hand was on the butt plug she wore, twisting it gently around and around, making her vaginal muscles clinch hopefully with every rotation.

“I need to feel one of you in my pussy,” Jude said. She leaned her head back against Dallas’s shoulder, looking Morgan in the eye. “Are you ready for me, fireman?”

Morgan shot her a hungry look before lifting her up in his muscular embrace. Jude wrapped her arms around his neck and her legs around his waist, locking her ankles at his hips to keep from slipping out of his arms. She could feel his cock pushing at her,

spreading her pussy lips.

Holding tight, Morgan yanked downward hard, impaling her on his erection.

Jude gasped at the forcible entry, taking a moment for her body to become accustomed to him. Then, with a sigh of pleasure, she began to bounce up and down on his cock, loving the feel of their wet bodies gliding effortlessly against the other.

"I love you." Morgan's voice came out as a breathless whisper, while he pumped her up and down on his swollen shaft.

"I love you, too," Dallas said from close behind. His hands ran up her back and sides, and Jude felt him help lift her weight so Morgan could keep stroking her deeply without wearing out.

After a few more strokes, Jude felt the plug being gently removed. She groaned in disappointment until she felt Dallas step up to her back and part her cheeks so he could slip his cock into her ass.

The thick fullness of both men filled Jude with raw passion, and she abandoned herself to their whims, pushing as they shoved, thrusting as they withdrew from her, each dancing to the erotic rhythm of three hearts beating as one.

Jude felt the imminent climax roar through her body. It came with a tumbling force that drew a cry of pleasure from her lips. "I love you both." Her words were spoken in a breathless rush as she groaned, stiffening against the intense pleasure that consumed her. Involuntarily her inner muscles clamped hard around both cocks, and the men groaned with appreciation, emptying themselves into her within seconds of one another.

"Jude, honey, you better put your legs down," Morgan said. He still fought to catch his breath as she unlocked her legs from around his hips. Jude could feel Dallas slowly withdraw from her. He held on to her waist until she put her feet on the floor of the shower. When she was stable, she leaned against Morgan for support.

Dallas reached around the two of them, shutting off the water. "Let's take this to the bedroom."

“You’re ready to go again so soon?” Jude teased, running her fingernail down the center of his chest.

“Give me a couple of minutes,” Dallas answered drawing her up for a leisurely kiss. He took a bath towel off the rack, wrapping it around her with a wink.

“A couple of minutes? Will it take you that long?” Morgan challenged. “Hell, I’m ready now.”

“Yeah, right.”

“Look, if you can’t handle it, why don’t you just watch next time.”

Jude giggled at their mock insults. “That’s enough, boys. I need a few minutes to catch my breath, okay?”

“We’ve got the rest of our lives, babe,” Dallas said.

“I can’t think of anyone else I’d rather spend it with,” Morgan answered, looking at Jude and Dallas with a serious expression on his face.

“Me neither, buddy.” Dallas said.

Jude let the towel drop to the floor, drawing them both to her for a long group hug. Then, with a playful shove, she spun out of their arms, racing for the bed.

“Last one under the covers has to make coffee in the morning.”

THE END



Siren Publishing, Inc.
www.SirenPublishing.com