



Never venture out of bounds without a buddy—preferably two.

Dara's past four incredible years have been lived to the fullest. Along with her best friends, Kane and Jack, she's left no local wilderness unexplored, no ski slope unchallenged. Yet lately she wonders why they've never seen her as more than a buddy with breasts. When—or if—either man will cross that unspoken line.

It's a line Kane eyes harder every day. Since high school, he and Jack have shared everything. A condo, vacations—and their best girl. Kane's ready to get serious about his wilderness school and outfitter business, and that includes putting down roots. Preferably with Dara.

Wary of the men who've recently been sniffing around Dara, Jack has a growing sense that he or Kane better make a move soon, or they're going to lose out on their perfect match. Question is, who does she prefer...and who's going to bring their easygoing trio to an end?

Overhearing the boys arguing over her, Dara's floored—and torn. Choose between them? No way. Drastic measures are called for, a plan for their annual holiday getaway that will clarify her feelings once and for all—or lose everything in a sexual storm of whiteout proportions.

Warning: Old friends turned lovers can get into the most trouble—exhibitionism, bondage, spanking. Anal sex, oral sex, unauthorized use of ski safety harnesses, icicles in the hot tub... The author apologizes in advance for any melted monitors.

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Falling, Freestyle
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Falling, Freestyle

Vivian Arend

Dedication

For all those people who have a friends-to-lovers story. I think it's a great way to set up a lasting relationship.

And to my hubby, who's my friend first, last and everything in between.

Chapter One

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #1—Always stay in control...

The bright yellow safety marker passed behind them as Dara leaned back on the solid wood boards of the chairlift, easing her skis onto the rests. She relaxed and drew in a deep breath of icy air, turning her face toward the sun to soak in its warmth. Heat radiated off the bodies on either side of her. Jack and Kane—her best friends in their ski-crazy town.

“Which run do you two want to hit next?” Kane elbowed Dara in the ribs, his bright blue eyes flashing with amusement. Dark curls stuck out from the edges of his helmet to frame his boyish good looks. “You warmed up enough yet for something other than the bunny hills?”

The man was merciless. “Screw you. Just because I don’t like starting the day with double black doesn’t mean it’s a bunny hill. And I kick your butt when we ski trees, so chill.”

“She’s got you there,” Jack taunted. His blond hair was hidden under a woolen toque with long braided ties hanging down on either side of his face. Combined with the rest of his features, the image reminded her of ancient Viking barbarians—beautiful, strong.

Dangerous.

Kane winked at her. “Bull. I just like to watch the lines you take. It’s the only chance I get to admire your incredible talent since I spend the rest of the time with you on my backside.”

Dara laughed, tucking herself a little farther into the shelter of Jack’s broad body as their chairlift crested the first major rise. He adjusted his position to completely shield her from the wind.

She was so grateful their local ski hill had a couple of triple chairs. The twelve-minute ride to the mountaintop was never as long, or as cold, when both her guys were there. The ride up was a chance to take a break from the wild downhill rush of swooshing through knee-deep powder, snow flying in her wake. She snuggled in tighter against Jack, nudging the walkie-talkie in his pocket out of her way. While his rule that they each carry one as a backup for if they ever got separated was smart, she didn’t need it poking her in the back.

The chair rattled over another of the tall towers, setting them swinging slightly. They’d all arranged to play hooky from their evil day jobs to take advantage of the lesser crowds midweek. A bad day skiing beat

a good day at work anytime. Kane made a satisfied noise, then turned his grin her direction, obviously as pleased as she was with their impromptu Wednesday getaway. “Your pick, Dara, which run will it be?”

“Diamond Drill. I want to hit the jump.”

Jack swore. “Already? You don’t need to prove anything to Kane. He’s just being an ass, teasing you about being a bunny.”

She had to laugh. “I know he’s a shit, that’s not why I want to do it.” She wiggled her brows at him. “I think you’re the one who’s a bit of a chicken. That jump still freaks you out, doesn’t it?”

Kane laid a gloved hand on her shoulder. “Don’t you worry, darling. You want to sail off into the wild blue yonder, I’ll be there to catch you.”

The banter continued back and forth until they reached the top of the lift. They slipped off and glided to the side where Jack and Dara waited for Kane to buckle on his snowboard. The first runs of the day were always magical. The cloud-free sky allowed the sun to flash blindingly bright off the fresh powder, individual snow crystals sparkling everywhere she looked. With clean uncut snow to track up, the thrill of exhilaration made being out of doors in the freezing weather worth it. Of course, getting to spend the day with her two best buds added to the pleasure.

Four years ago they’d found her struggling to bring her personal items into the apartment unit before a blizzard buried her. They had worked together to carry in all the boxes and bags stuffed into her ancient Volvo, ordered a pizza, and they’d been the three musketeers ever since.

Not only could they keep up with her on the slopes, they were a hoot in the ski lodge. After their time together, they had developed rituals and routines that made her smile. Simple things, like they always brought their own lunches, but splurged and shared the biggest plate of fries the cafeteria made. Hot chocolate from a thermos, and a cold brew or two when they got home. Yeah, life was good and Dara couldn’t imagine any way it could possibly get better.

Well, except having the two of them actually notice she was a girl. That would be nice.

Dara glanced between them—Jack adjusting his goggles to cover his chocolate brown eyes, Kane waving lazily to another local sliding past. Yup—they were the best friends she’d ever had, and if there was a tiny piece inside her that longed for more, well...

There was too much at stake to risk changing their current state of affairs.

Kane whooped as he rose to his feet, propelling himself straight down the hill to pick up enough speed before cutting across the slope to the run they wanted to take. Dara smiled at Jack and they took off after him, their poles and skis making it easier to maneuver at the top of the run. Jack telemarked, with a ski and boot combination that left his heels unattached, forcing him to bend low on each turn. His strong legs moved rhythmically as he bounced between the upper moguls.

Dara was the ordinary one, with her freestyle skis and poles. She didn't have the stamina to spend the whole day doing lunges, like Jack would as he telemarked, and the one time she'd tried snowboarding she'd spent more time on her ass than on the hill.

Kane shrieked with laughter as he raced down the hill and Dara joined in, letting out her own cry of delight. She flew past Jack as she accelerated around the corner and headed toward the jump. The only time she'd seen Jack completely lose his eternal cool was the day he crashed, rolling limbs askew for a good twenty-five meters before coming to a stop at the base of a tree. Luckily nothing had been broken, but Jack still freaked every time she headed for it. She crouched in preparation, then extended her knees at the apex of the jump and let herself soar into the air. She flung her arms to the side to rotate herself in a three-hundred-sixty-degree circle. The dark green of the trees and the blue of the sky blurred together as she spun, the snow-covered ground a million miles away—for all of four seconds—before it rushed to meet her. She absorbed the impact of the landing, catching her balance with her legs wide apart.

Awesome. She let out a howl and Kane answered back from below. One more swoosh and she slid to a stop at his feet, spraying him with a wash of fine snow crystals.

"Holy crap, girl, that was the most height I've ever seen you get on that jump. Some day you might even be as good as me."

Dara punched Kane in the arm and they turned to watch Jack. He wove his way toward them, stopping with an extra bit of flair and coating them both with snow. "Okay, I'm officially pumped for our holiday. Three back-to-back days of skiing? Watching you two is going to put me into cardiac arrest."

Kane gestured down the hill. "Then go first so you don't have to see it, because it's only going to get better from here on."

They spent the next hour assaulting the fresh snow, the crowds slowly growing as people realized the weather had turned for the better. When they stomped into the lodge for lunch, Dara took a side trip for a bathroom break.

Yeah, Jack and Kane were the perfect ski partners, kayak buddies and best friends for watching movies and kicking back but...damn.

Dara stared into the mirror. Ordinary stared back. She was nothing like the women they dated. She was solid and plain, and tended to let other people speak for her far more often than she should. She even had a freaky dusting of freckles across her nose that made people who described her use words like "cute" and "wholesome".

Well, she doubted most people who were considered "cute" spent a day on the hill with her friends before returning home to a vibrator. The last in a long line of toys she'd burnt out in an attempt to tame all the wild fantasies streaking through her mind every time she thought about the guys.

And she was sure those "wholesome" girls would never daydream about what Jack and Kane looked like in the shower when they'd all head home after the day's excursions were done. The worst part was she

didn't have to imagine much, not after dozens of trips together where the guys both stripped to nothing but boxers when it got hot. To say nothing about the time they went swimming in the buff. Not that she'd been looking.

Much.

Ripped bodies, great attitudes. Kane and Jack had been best friends since forever...and that was the kicker. There was no way she wanted to screw up their friendship, not only with her, but with each other. The kind of loyalty they'd shared over the years was precious. Getting involved with either of them would be a recipe for disaster. She patted her face with water. Nope—she could satisfy herself with her fingers and her rubbery friends, and keep her relationship with the guys clean and clear.

Her pocket vibrated and she straightened with a jerk. It took her a second to figure out it was her walkie-talkie—the guys must be looking for her. She should have just told them to go ahead and grab the fries. The hard plastic slipped in her wet hands and she nearly dropped the thing. In her mad scramble to catch it, she hit *listen* instead of *talk*.

Jack's voice rose to her ears, and he sounded pissed off. "Shut up. This isn't the time or the place for this discussion. You really want to mess with what we've got?"

"You know as well as I do that someday she's going to find someone she likes, and we'll be out of luck. You want to sit around and wait until then?"

Dara listened for a minute before she realized the guys didn't know she was on the line. She reached for the call button when her name caught her ear.

"If Dara wanted to get involved with either of us, she would have done something by now."

What?

"You think so?" Kane's deep voice drawled. "I think since we're always together, there's not much chance for the girl to express interest in one of us. Like she's going to come on to me when you're around. She's too polite."

"Yeah, right."

Dara picked her jaw off the floor and glanced around the bathroom in shock, hoping no one else was listening. One stall door was closed, so she turned down the volume and held the receiver tight to her ear. She should turn it off, she really should, but she couldn't resist eavesdropping a little longer.

"What's the solution? You going to step back and let me show her who's the better guy?" Jack's husky voice sent a shiver racing over Dara's skin.

Kane laughed. "Here's where this conversation stalls every time. This is why neither of us is with Dara. We both think we'd be good with her, and that she'd be a good match for either of us."

Jack swore softly. "So why are we discussing this? The day we met her we agreed to keep our hands off."

“I’m saying maybe we need to change our rules. Frankly, I’m getting to the point I’d rather see her with you than with anyone else.”

“Likewise, dickwad, but your timing sucks. With the ski trip we’ve got planned, I think we should just keep the status quo for now and change the dynamics when we get back. I’d hate to upset our getaway if...well if anything does happen. We’ve had this in—”

Loud crackling noise filled the speaker, nearly deafening Dara. Their voices faded, then cut out completely. One of the guys must have moved the receiver and accidentally clicked off the send button.

She leaned back on the wall and fought to catch her breath. *Holy shit*. They were both interested in her. It was every woman’s fantasy to have guys like Jack and Kane interested in her except...

There was no way on earth she could choose between them.

Every memory she had of Jack was wrapped up with thoughts of Kane. All the things she loved about Kane were connected by experiences with Jack.

Jack was her solid rock. Sturdy and dependable, even though he looked like he’d be at home pillaging a village. He fixed her shower, helped her with her computer and brought her chocolates when she got into a funk. They discussed books and movies, and somehow he instinctively knew when she needed a hug. His smile made her darkest day bright.

In comparison, Kane was her laughing buddy, rioting out with his loud mannerisms and boisterous good humour. He wasn’t embarrassed to be caught sniffing during the chick flicks she forced them to watch. She never knew what to expect from the practical joker, except she trusted him to always be on her side.

As she made her way up the stairs to the cafeteria, her mind continued to race a million miles an hour, going down roads better not imagined. Like wondering again what Jack would be like in bed. Cautious? No, thorough, maybe forceful even. Kane, on the other hand, would be the type she could laugh with while they fooled around.

Damn. She shook her head and pushed through the cafeteria doors, clomping in her heavy boots toward their usual table. The swelling volume of voices drowned out her thoughts.

She should confess she’d heard their conversation, but what could she say without it being really awkward? In fact, doing anything about what she’d overheard seemed completely impossible.

If she knew which man she wanted to get involved with, it would be simpler. With her affections spread so evenly between them, that option was eliminated. In fact she couldn’t imagine being with one and not the other.

Being with both of them? *Together*. Oh Lord, yes. As if she hadn’t fantasized about that a million times as well.

Her face flushed hotter. The erotic books she’d read returned to her, and suddenly she wondered if she was brave enough to go through with the idea flashing through her brain. Their annual pre-Christmas ski

trip away to another resort, just the three of them, was fast approaching. If she opened the door just a crack, what would they think of spending time getting to know her better—both of them?

Maybe if she introduced the concept of a ménage as a fantasy, asked them to help her out. She'd be able to see if there was a difference in the way her heart and body felt—see if she was more drawn to one than the other. In the meantime she'd be experiencing a dream come true.

If she could convince them to give it a try.

She stepped next to the table and they both turned their full attention her way. Darkness and light met her, in their eyes, their hair. Something inside her belly tingled with anticipation, and this time she let it build instead of beating it into submission.

Wanting them both wasn't wrong, she was sure of it. Wanting them both, together...that seemed more risqué.

"I thought you'd fallen in and drowned." Jack grinned and pushed the plate of fries toward her. "I saved some from the bottomless pit over there."

"I'm a growing boy. I need to keep my strength up." Kane slid to the side to give Dara room to join him. He had one leg on either side of the bench and as she nestled in she realized just how intimate the position was, her hip inches from his groin.

She choked down the fries, her gaze flicking from one to the other as they laughed and joked. Her guys, their faces glowing with health and energy. Drool-worthy Jack. Invigorating Kane. Daydream inducing—together or apart.

Something clicked inside and she took a deep breath.

They wanted to change the status quo? So be it, but she would be the one calling the shots. She had a few weeks to get everything in place, then come hell or high water she was going to make the most outrageous thing she'd ever dreamed of a reality.

She was going to seduce her best friends.

Chapter Two

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #2—Plan ahead...

Kane slammed his fist against the horn a couple of times. “What the hell is taking him so long?”

Dara sat on the bench seat beside him, her blonde hair pulled into two high pigtails. He forced his gaze away from where her sweater lay open at the top, one button too many open, leaving a gap that showed off the creamy upper swells of her breasts. One button too many, or seven buttons too few.

Ever since he’d mentioned to Jack he thought it was time to make a move on Dara, he’d found it more and more difficult to ignore her. The burning desire to treat her as more than one of the boys threatened to tear loose at any moment. Now that they were headed out for their long-weekend ski vacation, acting as if it was business as usual between them was going to kill him. Her light perfume filled the cab of the truck, and he rocked in place, attempting to adjust his half-hard cock without being too noticeable.

Jack stepped onto the sidewalk and Dara laughed. “He’s traveling light, I see.”

“Bloody fool.”

Their friend carried a large cardboard apple box in his arms. Before Kane had left for work that morning, he and Jack had brought down their ski gear and backpacks from their apartment and stowed it all in the truck. They’d grabbed Dara’s stuff from her place down the hall as well, so they could leave as soon as he and Dara got off work at noon. Kane couldn’t imagine what Jack still needed to bring. He rattled his fingers on the wheel as Jack sauntered past the truck cab, flashing his hundred-proof smile at Dara as he headed to dump his box in the back.

Dara slipped off her boots as she waited, and Kane watched closely as she assumed her usual traveling position, legs curled half under her. The girl never kept her feet on the floor. It was part of her charm that like some pixie creature you could find her up on the counter, or wrapped around a chair. Dara didn’t sit, she perched.

She wore his favourite winter outfit, the one that made him imagine all sorts of dirty things. Velvety smooth stockings of dark crimson covered her long legs, and he longed to touch her. To start at her ankles and run his palms all the way up and under her short flared skirt, the one that was barely respectable when she walked, but lost all semblance of propriety when she brought her knees up on the bench.

His cock pressed painfully against his zipper, and he slid his hips lower on the seat, adjusting the backrest as an excuse.

Jack jumped in, slamming the door on the freezing cold blast of air that followed him. Dara shivered and cuddled closer to Kane's side. Her warm body felt just right next to him. Damn if he was going to survive this weekend.

"We finally ready to roll? There's four hours ahead of us to the resort." Kane peeled out into the roadway fast enough to force their bodies against the backrest. Hell, that had sounded as if he was pissed, but he was mere seconds from begging Dara to sit on his lap and help ease his pain.

Jack snapped on his seat belt and threw his gloves onto the dash. "Drive on. Sorry I'm late, but I've got a great excuse."

"You won the lottery and you were making reservations for us to fly to Hawaii after the ski trip is over." Dara leaned on Kane's shoulder as she faced Jack. Kane casually lifted his arm and placed it along the back of the seat and she settled even closer, her head resting on his biceps. While she was in his arms under false pretenses, he would totally take it.

"How'd you guess?" Jack tweaked her nose and she laughed, her body shimmying against Kane's ribs.

"You have that look on your face. Spill." Dara poked Jack in the side, tickling him lightly.

Kane dragged his eyes off their interplay and focused on the road. They had a long way to go and staring at her was bound to get them stuck in a ditch.

"I got a call from the resort this morning after you left for work. Seems they had a bit of a reservation error."

"Fuck it. Now what? I booked our rooms ages ago." Kane gripped the wheel tighter. He couldn't take much more. Fighting his growing need to tell Dara he wanted her was making him cranky and crazy.

"Don't sweat it until I tell you the whole thing. The guy gave me some long-winded story about how someone mistyped digits and there's a family reunion—whatever. We can't have the adjoining rooms we asked for, but since it's not our fault they wanted to make it up to us."

That sounded more positive. "Complimentary drinks?"

"Better. The only other unit that was free for all of our booking dates is a private cabin—ski in/ski out."

"No shit?" This was either a gift from heaven, or one from hell.

"Seriously. Master bedroom in the loft with a king, a bedroom on the main floor with two queen beds. Full kitchen, a fireplace and a private hot tub on the balcony overlooking the ski hill."

Dara hadn't made a sound since Jack started describing the accommodation change. Kane squeezed her shoulders. "You going to be okay with that, sweets? You can have the loft to yourself, and Jacky-boy and I will close the bedroom door so you don't have to listen to him snore."

There was a slight hesitation before she laughed. “I’ve slept in the same tent as you guys too many times to fall for that load of bull. You’re the one with the volume-control problem at night.”

“Only when I’m horny.”

Shit. He hadn’t meant to let that slip out.

He glanced over and caught Jack shaking his head. “Right, because your dick is so heavy you can’t sleep in any position but flat on your back.”

Dara laughed out loud. “Play nice, boys. Jack, it sounds fabulous, but why were you late? I mean, he didn’t charge you extra or anything, did he?”

“No, he reassured me everything was already paid in full, so unless we watch dirty movies or get room service, we’re clear to go at checkout. I just decided if we were going to have a kitchen we should take advantage of it. I spent the last hour gathering treats.”

Kane let out a whoop of delight. “Tell me you brought beer and nachos.”

Dara’s priorities were clear. “Ice cream? Chocolate?”

Jack grinned down at her. “Even better. Banana-split fixings—chocolate sauce, whipped cream, even a jar of those nasty cherries you love.”

“The ones that are a million calories each? Score!”

She and Jack slapped hands in mid-air and she wiggled closer to give him a huge hug. Over her shoulder, Jack winked at Kane. A grumble of unease flicked through him. When Dara was going to have her own room, there had been a chance of getting through the long weekend without making a fool of himself. Now?

He was going to hit the slopes with a woody the size of his snowboard, constantly thinking of her nearby. Heck, he’d probably have to watch her wander the cabin in her PJs.

And the hot tub? Sheer torture.

“You okay to drive?” Dara shifted, tucking her feet under his right thigh.

“Of course, why?”

“You sighed like you’d had a hard morning or something. If you need a break, make sure you ask. I love driving your truck.”

Jack laughed. “You know you’re going to be fast asleep in under an hour.”

“Am not. It’s only noon.”

Kane and Jack exchanged amused gazes over her head. “Bet you she’s down in thirty minutes flat,” Kane said.

“Guys...” Dara folded her arms. “I am not sleepy. I’m going to stay awake the whole trip this time.”

“Okay, if you say so.” Jack twisted his torso and snuggled her against him and a shot of jealousy streaked through Kane. “Why don’t you stretch out? Kane doesn’t mind.”

No, Kane didn't mind, not one bit. Not even when those crimson covered legs pressed against his groin and he had to bite back a groan.

"So the box is full of food?" Anything to keep his mind off lowering a hand to fondle her thighs.

"Breakfast cereal, bagels, treats. We'll have to pick up fresh fruit and the ice cream, but with what we save on eating at the hill cafeteria, we can splurge a little. And, the *pièce de résistance*?" Jack dug into his pocket and held out chocolate bars.

Dana squealed with delight. "You remembered!"

"Have I ever forgotten?"

Kane waited as Dara unwrapped a 3 Musketeers chocolate bar and handed it to him. The tradition had begun before their first hiking trip years ago.

Kane lifted the candy in front of him, and the others met him, three hands resting together as if they were lofting swords.

"All for one..." he quipped.

"...and one for all." Dara bit into her chocolate bar, closed her eyes and moaned with pleasure. Kane jerked the wheel to the side to put them back in the middle of the lane. Shit, he was going to get them all killed if he didn't keep his mind on the road.

They settled into a comfortable silence, music filling the cab as they relaxed from their daily grind. He could do this. He could keep his mind off her legs resting innocently in his lap. He refused to think about sliding down the stockings and licking her skin from her ankles up to the warm honey between her thighs.

He had to resist. But once this weekend was over, all bets were off. It didn't make any sense for Jack and him to sit back and watch her go out with other men when one of them could be the right one for her. Until now his footloose and fancy-free lifestyle had suited him fine, but he'd always known a time would come when he'd want something more permanent.

No use in ignoring the draw between them anymore. He and Dara had tons in common, and from what he'd seen of the best long-term relationships, that was the most important factor. If they could spend the next fifty years hiking and canoeing and fooling around, he'd be happy as a clam.

At least he knew they were compatible in the first areas, and somehow he thought they'd be just fine in the sack as well. Dara wore her sensuality like everything else she did. Honest, pure. She wasn't an innocent, but pure as in what you see is what you get.

Even now she settled closer against Jack, the asshole's ever-present grin stretching wider when she twisted to lean on him, her head resting on his chest. He cradled her close and she let out a long, slow sigh of contentment.

She wiggled her hips lower as she settled, and her skirt rode higher. Kane gritted his teeth together. He could see the junction of her thighs now, her legs slightly separated as she curled up drowsily.

Kane shot Jack a dirty look. Jack raised his brows and deliberately draped his arm around Dara a little more intimately. She was already slipping off into dreamland—woman never could keep her eyes open when they drove anywhere. Within minutes she was purring, her breath escaping in a low rumble of sleep that twisted something inside his gut. Okay, he wanted her body, but there was definitely something more to their relationship. Once it became a relationship.

“You okay driving?” Jack stroked back a strand of Dara’s hair from where it had escaped her elastics.

Kane glared at him. “What kind of dumbass question is that?”

Jack snickered evilly. “Just thinking if you had half the boner I’ve got right now, I’d hate to have to shift.”

“You know, talking about it isn’t going to make it go away. I’ll live.”

They sat in silence for miles. The skiing was going to be fantastic, the weather forecast fabulous. But the thoughts running through his brain on an endless loop included a king-sized bed and a hot tub on the deck.

So much for a relaxing après-ski time. He was in for a fight to keep his hands off her.

“Wake up, sweetie, we’re almost there.”

Dara stretched and yawned, her mind slow to come out of the fog. “Shit—don’t tell me I fell asleep again.”

She squirmed to sit up and found herself pinned by two sets of strong hands.

“Slow down, or you’re going to hit something important.” Kane lifted her feet from his lap and she flushed.

“Sorry.”

He waved a hand in her direction. “I was okay until you started practicing your drop kick.”

Under her, Jack’s firm chest shifted. “And your right hand is fine, but watch how much pressure you put on the left. I’ll have trouble keeping up with you two as it is without a handicap.”

Dara paused in confusion until she realized she wasn’t leaning on his thigh like she’d imagined. She pulled away quickly, curled into a ball and spun on the seat as she looked for somewhere safe to place her limbs.

She glanced at Jack. He stared back wordlessly. There was a little extra twist to his smile and she licked her lips involuntarily. Ever since Jack had announced the change in rooming for their trip, she’d been nervous. It had taken a dozen phone calls and wad of money to arrange for the “complimentary upgrade” to their rooming situation. When she’d finally thought it through, she’d realized there was no way she could seduce them if they had kept their original booking. She could afford the private cabin, just, and it would be money well spent if in the long run it helped her make a decision.

Everything was perfectly in place for her to work on them both. She'd planned on using the road travel time to her advantage—start flirting a little.

She slammed her feet into her boots and followed Jack out the door, tugging her coat back on. She was worse than a child. Couldn't even stay awake for a couple of crucial hours. Fine. As soon as they hit the room, she was turning up the *oomph* and making her move.

Yet by the time they signed in, grabbed the key and drove over to their accommodations, her already unsteady nerves failed her. She wandered into the cabin, dumped her armload of gear on the couch and slipped onto the balcony. The rest of the cabins and townhouse units spread out along the base of the hill sparkled with Christmas lights, the section of the slope wired for night skiing a brilliant streak of white against the darkness of the hillside. Music floated to her ears from either the bar or the restaurant at the lodge. She grabbed the railing and took a deep breath. Somehow she had to find the strength she needed to make this holiday more than just a nice getaway with her buddies.

She was tired of nice. It was time for fabulous and sexy and smoking hot. It was time to figure out the future.

The glass door *swooshed* open behind her. Kane came and stood by her side. He leaned his elbows on the railing and peered out at the vista. "Damn good view. Much nicer than from any of the hotel rooms."

Dara bit her lip. Kane would be the perfect one to approach first.

"Did you see that?" She reached past him to point out the main swimming pool just visible to the left. The move made her lean against him, brushing her breasts casually against his arm. He didn't react beyond a slight tightening in his body, but he didn't pull away, and she took that as a good sign.

He cleared his throat.

"Did you see what's on this balcony?" Kane placed his hands on her shoulders and twisted her on the spot to face the four-man hot tub gracing the enormous deck. "I don't see any reason why we need to go to the pool when we've got a private one right here. That thing is going to feel awesome when we finish making tracks for the day."

Dara stared at the steaming pool and sudden inspiration hit. She shrugged out of her coat and tossed it on one of the deck chairs. The only way she could do this was to rush forward at full steam.

"Did we get everything in from the truck?" she asked.

"What's that?" Kane seemed distracted. "The gear? Umm, yeah, Jack went back for the last load. Dara, what are you doing?"

She'd already toed off her boots, and as she pulled her sweater over her head she heard his rapid intake of air. One quick snap and unzip, and her skirt fell away. She turned to face him, keeping her chin high. "I'm going for a dip. You coming?"

He looked like he'd swallowed his tongue. His eyes widened as she tucked her fingers into the top of her tights and wiggled them past her hips. When she stood upright clad only in her bra, panties and a deep flush, he covered his face with his hand.

"Dara...shit, woman, you're killing me."

The tightness in his voice—was that because he wanted her or because the thought of seeing her naked was like watching one of his sisters strip? Only one way to know for sure. Dara unclipped her bra, slipped off her panties and tossed both on top of the rest of her things.

She took a step closer. His erratic breaths shook his frame and when she touched the waistband of his jeans he jerked in surprise.

"Are you coming swimming with me?"

Kane's throat jerked, then he reached for her. A gentle touch, tentative and light, as he brushed his palms along her upper arms. "What are you doing, Dara?"

Freezing? Waiting to see if she was going to be totally humiliated? The indoor/outdoor carpet beneath her feet was covered with a thin layer of frost, and the cold night air made her nipples tighten to hard aching nubs. She leaned forward and lifted her face to him, leaning against his warmth and strength, trying to get away from the chill in the air. She saw it, the moment he decided. He leaned closer and their lips touched.

The door behind them screeched open and the usually calm and sedate Jack roared out, "What the hell is going on?"

Chapter Three

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #3—Be prepared for surprises...

It was not a sight he'd been prepared to see—Dara stark naked not even five minutes after arriving at the cabin. Jack snatched a towel from beside the hot tub and wrapped it around her. He'd dreamed for years about having her gorgeous body fully revealed for his enjoyment, but never like that. Not in the arms of another man, not even his best friend's.

"Whose fucked-up idea was this?" Shit, the feel of her in his arms, knowing that underneath the fluffy fabric she was nude, did crazy things to his brain. Jack carried her into the cabin and plunked her down on the couch amidst the bags dumped there.

She glared at him as she clutched the towel, her face as crimson as the tights dangling from the chair on the balcony. She opened her mouth to say something when Kane beat her to it.

"She just wanted to go for a swim, Jack. No harm, no foul." Kane dragged his hand through his rumpled hair and shook his head. "She just was in kind of a hurry, I guess. Forgot her suit. We've skinny-dipped before."

Dara swore at him. "Kane, you're a chicken shit."

Her legs disappeared under her as she curled up on the couch. She stared at the coffee table like there was something of vital importance written on its surface.

"Dara? What's going on?" Jack dropped to his knees in front of her to be able to look into her eyes. His control was a tentative thing at best.

She paused before twisting to dig into her backpack. As she scrambled through her things, the towel loosened and the upper circle of one pale nipple slipped into view. His whole body reacted. Whatever she was up to was going to have far-reaching consequences. He'd seen Kane's expression and felt the lust raging through his own body. She was seconds away from finding out exactly what happens when you poke a guy too hard.

She held out a book to him before rearranging the towel to cover her assets.

"*The Count of Monte Cristo*? What the...?"

She growled at him. “No, it’s a fake cover, you ass. You guys are always teasing me about how I’ve been reading that book forever and never done. Well, take a closer look, because it’s not written by Alexandre Dumas.”

Jack carefully peeled back the edge. Kane stepped forward to peer over his shoulder as he revealed a cover with three naked bodies on it.

Kane swore. “Porn? You’ve been reading porn in front of us for years?”

“It’s not porn, it’s erotic romance. And that’s what’s going on. My sex life up to now has consisted of pretty vanilla sex. I’m curious and I just thought if you guys were interested we could...” She swallowed hard before lifting her chin resolutely. “I thought we could try a few things.”

God almighty. Jack rose in a rush and turned his back on her. The scent of her perfume was having a terrible effect on his libido, and the image of her face along with his and Kane’s on the bodies tangled together on the cover of that book—

His cock pressed against his jeans in a state of urgency.

“I’m sorry, I should have said something first, only I was afraid I’d lose my nerve and so I just acted without thinking. If you’re not interested, that’s fine. Forget I even—”

“Not interested?” Kane kicked off his shoes, letting them fly across the room to slam into the front door of the cabin. “Holy *shit*, Dara, one minute you strip in front of me, the next you suggest your two best friends get involved with you sexually? And then you have the balls to turn around and say forget it?”

She snorted. “Yeah, me and my balls. I’ve got tons of those.”

Jack needed to get this whole situation back under control. It was too close to exploding into something that could tear their friendship apart, and he was sure that wasn’t what Dara had intended.

But he wasn’t sure she’d intended for her suggestion to be anything other than a one-time fling either.

He had already decided once this weekend was over he would slowly bring their relationship to a new level. They were good friends, and he’d always looked out for her, careful never to cross the line sexually. Oh, he’d seen her glimmers of interest toward him, but he’d also caught her checking Kane out with the same expression at times.

Jack wanted her. In his bed, in his life—in his future—and he would do whatever it took to make that a reality.

Including, it seemed, share her.

He returned to her side and cautiously sat beside her on the couch. His body weight made the cushions shift and she leaned against him involuntarily. When she would have scrambled away, he placed an arm around her shoulders and trapped her.

“Just slow down, sweetie. You’ve put both Kane’s and my brain in a bit of bind. We’re not saying no to anything.”

“You’re not?” She whispered the words, her body tense in his embrace.

“We’re not saying yes right off either.”

“Jack...” Kane warned.

He looked up at his best friend. They’d never fooled around with the same woman before, at least not at the same time. And this wasn’t just any woman; it was someone they both cared deeply about. Kane tended to be a lot more private about his sexual practices than Jack had ever expected, maybe from growing up in a house full of women. Still, knowing that Kane desired Dara and cared for her—if he couldn’t have Dara to himself right now, sharing her with Kane while they dealt with this mess seemed the best way out of a bad situation.

“If there are kinky sexual experiences Dara wants to try, you prefer she experiment with us or some nameless guys off the street?”

Dara hit him in the chest. “Yeah, right. Like I’m going to put out an ad in the paper for a threesome, Jack. I’m not an idiot.”

“A threesome?” The flash of lightning her words produced short-circuited his logic center. Every time she spoke she upped the ante. *Fuck this.* She wanted to have a discussion about them getting it on? Welcome to reality. He picked her up and plopped her into his lap. She squealed for a second, then gripped the top of the towel so hard her knuckles went white. He stroked a finger across her smooth skin above her hands, wondering what she would taste like.

He could barely wait to find out.

“No, you are not an idiot. But you’ve managed to freak me out. Sweetheart, we’ve never kissed beyond platonic busses on the cheek and you’re talking about sex. That does things to a guy.”

She wiggled slightly and there was no way she could miss one of the things that it did to him. His cock was at full strength, pinned behind the taut fabric of his jeans. The curve of her ass pressed down on him and her eyes opened wide as she realized what she sat on. “Fuck.”

“Hell yeah, fuck.” Jack wrapped his arms around her and held her close, breathing in the scent of her skin. She whimpered as he brushed his lips against the pulse pounding in the vee of her throat. He was going to explode just from the thoughts filling his head.

A ménage. With Dara. *God damn.*

“Jack, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to mess up our holiday. I just care a lot about—”

He covered her mouth with his to silence her. With her lips open to speak, their tongues met instantly and in a flash her taste filled him. Sweet, with a twist of cinnamon from her gum, the lingering taste of chocolate. He kissed her, leaning back on the couch and dragging her with him so her slight weight pressed on him more fully. She dug her fingers into his hair and suddenly it wasn’t enough. He crushed her closer, the top of the towel sneaking down to her waist as their tongues tangled together. God, the woman could kiss. She took his mouth like she took to the hills, full out, full speed—caution be damned.

The sounds escaping her registered like early warning signs. Little gasps as he nipped at her lips, a long drawn-out moan as he kissed his way down her throat. A whispered plea when he rearranged her on his lap without taking his mouth from her skin. She straddled his hips, the heat of her core resting on top of his erection and damn if he didn't want to strip them both and let her ride him.

Go slow.

His brain shouted it, but his body protested vehemently. He rocked his hips instinctively, rubbing against her center and they both swore.

Fuck going slow. He grabbed her hips and ground her over him, sucking one nipple then the other into his mouth. The sweet tips felt amazing as he rolled them under his tongue, her hands clutching his head to trap him in place.

Closer and higher his climax approached, the tightness in his balls flashing to pain. Moisture from her sex coated the ridge of fabric barely containing his erection, the heat of her cream bleeding through to taunt him. She gave a little cry and called out his name, rolling her hips over him slower as he grunted with his release.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, what the hell had just happened?

The balcony doors clicked shut as they broke apart, gasping for air.

"Well." Dara bit her bottom lip.

Jack panted a few times, waiting for a sign some blood had returned to his brain. He reached up and swiped his thumb over the swollen surface she'd nipped. He could kiss her for hours. Someday, if he had his way, he would. "Bit more than a 'well'. Shit, woman, I came in my jeans."

She glanced down at their groins, a grin covering her face. "Not quite the first time I'd imagined, but I enjoyed it."

"You're just happy you made me lose control." He collapsed back on the couch, his ears still ringing from his climax. Zero points for style, but he didn't really give a fuck at the moment.

Shit...he needed a minute. Responding any further before his brain went back online was a bad idea. He cupped the back of her neck and drew her against him. Dara sighed softly, nuzzling closer. They sat in silence until the pounding beat of their hearts slowed.

She sat up and the brightness of her smile melted most of his lingering apprehension away. "You don't hate me for putting you on the spot?"

"Of course I don't hate you. You're our best friend and you want to have sex with us? If you'd asked us over coffee or something, that could have made it a little easier, but we might not have believed you were serious. All in all, Kane and I are tough. We'll survive being asked for sexual favours." He glanced toward the balcony. Kane sat on the railing, staring at the ski resort. While there was nothing he wanted more than to keep Dara in his arms—and his bed—all weekend long, that wasn't what she'd asked for.

Until the weekend was over, he had no right to demand her to himself.

He swept his gaze down her torso, admiring her breasts and the smooth skin of her belly inches away from him. Her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks were flushed. “You’re fucking gorgeous.”

“Such a poet.” She bit her lip again, glancing out at Kane.

Fuck. Jack hesitated for a second. She was certainly aware of Kane’s location at all times. He gave up. “You’re going to need to go to him.”

Her head snapped around. “You...don’t mind?”

“Hell, yeah, but it’s kind of hard to have a ménage with only two people.” He loosened his grip on her hips, stroking the soft skin under his hands, rubbing his thumbs back and forth lightly. “Dara, if you’re sure this is something you want to try, I’m honoured you trust us that much. At anytime if you want to stop, that’s all you have to say. You understand me?”

She nodded, leaning into him, her head resting on his shoulder as she hugged him close. “You’re my best friends, Jack. I trust you both completely.”

As he skimmed his hand over her bare back, caressing her skin and feeling her shiver under his touch, he wondered. She was trusting them with everything—not just her body, but her heart—and that gift was the most precious thing he could imagine.

He stood, lowering her slowly to the floor. When she fumbled with the towel covering her, he reached out and helped her secure it, his fingers slowing as he brushed the rounded tops of her breasts.

She stared at him for a full minute before she turned to join Kane on the balcony.

He watched her walk away, her hips swaying easily from side to side, and he wondered how in the world he could possibly share her for the next three nights and not be changed.

“Kane?”

He continued to stare away from her as she waited. *Temperamental ass.* Fine. She knew how to handle Kane when he was in a mood. She grabbed him by the back of the collar and pulled hard. He slipped off the railing to land in a puddle at her feet.

“Fuck it, Dara, what was that for?”

She glared at him. “I wanted to apologize for springing this idea of mine on you, and it’s too freaking cold to stand here in my bare feet while you pout.”

“I do not pout, and damn right you should apologize.”

She stuck out her lower lip. “Did I offend your delicate feelings with my wicked proposal?”

He leered at her as he rose to his feet. “Hell no, I was just trying to figure out how you managed to avoid suggesting it a long time ago. Two righteous studs at your beck and call for years, and it took you this long to finally come to your senses?”

She shivered, and he scooped her up, carried her to the hot tub and placed her carefully on the rim.

“Are you going to swim with me?” she asked again. The bottoms of her feet tingled as she lowered them into the heated water and a groan of pleasure escaped her lips.

Kane stared into the cabin. “I think I’m going to skip it right now.”

Dara leaned over to see what Kane was looking at. Inside the living room Jack gestured madly at Kane. She laughed out loud. “You getting his sign language or shall I interpret?”

“Fucker.” Kane yanked open the door. “What?”

“Kiss her already.”

Kane gave Jack the finger and shut the door in his face. Dara fought her giggles as she settled farther into the water, leaning back in the molded plastic of the hot tub. Kane sauntered over slowly and stared down at her. She watched his face, watched his gaze as it traveled over her body, lingering on her breasts. The water was no obstruction to his vision and he seemed to like what he saw.

“You sure you don’t want to join me?” Crap, was that her voice? Breathless, sultry. Kane pulled one of the deck chairs closer and sat beside her, his arms resting along the top of the hot tub.

“All things considered, I think I should stay out here for now.”

Dara deliberately stretched, arching her breasts higher. “So...?”

Kane sucked in a deep breath. “You sure know how to make a holiday special, don’t you, girl?”

“You mad at me, Kane?”

He played with her hair, twirling her nearest pigtail around his finger again and again. “Not mad, just thinking things through. I’m sure Jack already asked if you were sure you wanted a ménage, and I’m not going to insult you by asking again.”

Dara turned and knelt on the seat, raising her torso slightly above the level of the water as she faced him. “Again, so...what you going to do?”

He traced a finger down her nose, along the side of her throat. He carried on the motion until his fingertip scraped her bare nipple. She let go of the little cry of need begging to escape.

When he lifted his gaze to meet hers, she knew everything was fine. He was in—all the way—and he’d do everything to make this good for her. Just like the time he taught her how to mountain bike rails, or the kayak-rolling lessons. All the way, all-out effort, all the time.

The ache between her thighs increased. She snaked out her arms and clasped his neck and pulled their lips together.

He wrapped his fingers around the back of her head to control the kiss, keeping it soft and gentle. Barely a whisper—his lips over her skin, against her throat, over her eyes. He didn’t ravish her mouth, but stroked and teased with his tongue until she shook with need.

He slid a hand down her body to cup one breast, and she moaned. A delicate touch, his fingers against her nipple, stroking and drawing the tip to a tight point. All the while he kissed her, their tongues meshing and exploring. Why had she never taken the chance and done this before? He pinched forefinger and thumb

together lightly, and she squeaked with pleasure. The hard surface of the hot tub against her belly annoyed her. She tried to rise higher but he held her in place, drawing her as close to him as possible with the barrier between them, her naked wet breasts pressed against his chest.

She tore her mouth from his. “Please...” She wasn’t sure what she was begging for.

“Oh, sweetheart.” Kane leaned his forehead against hers. “We gotta take it slow. Trust me, I’ll make love to you, and we can check out all the naughty things in your book to your heart’s content, but I’m not taking you this instant.”

“Bastard.” *Fine*. She tried to regain his lips, but he pressed his finger against them. She growled and muttered against the single digit. “Why not?”

Kane cleared his throat. “Because I’m an old-fashioned kind of guy? One step at a time.”

“I’ll totally let you run the bases before you hit a home run with me.”

“Fuck.” He closed his eyes. “Bloody hell. You got any condoms, woman?”

“In my bag.” Her heart beat like crazy. Was he really going to make a move?

He laughed. “In the same bag as the dirty book? Very appropriate.”

Another kiss, his arms dragging her hard against him. This time he wasn’t as gentle. His teeth bit into her bottom lip, sending a sharp tingle all the way down to pulse in her clit.

By the time he reached into the water and plucked her out she was half-crazy with need. The ache between her thighs grew by the second, her climax with Jack a distant memory. Kane carried her dripping-wet body into the cabin and stormed his way into the back bedroom.

“You kids going somewhere?” Jack lay on the second bed wearing nothing but a pair of boxers. Dara clung tightly to Kane’s neck.

“Grab a towel and throw it on the bed for me, will you?” Kane growled.

Jack put down the book in his hand and darted out of the room. Dara noticed the cover and laughed. “You jerk—that’s my book.”

He paused on his way back to drape a towel around her and kiss her nose. “Consider it research. I didn’t want to miss out on any kinky activities you were hoping for.”

Kane shouldered past Jack and laid her on the bed. The steamy look in his eyes made the goose bumps on her skin disappear as she flushed with heat. He dried her carefully, taking extra time over her breasts and between her legs.

Jack sat on the bed next to her, using his fingertips to join the gentle exploration of her body. “You have no idea how good it feels to be able to finally touch you.”

Dara sucked in air, desperate to maintain her composure and keep things light. “I would never have guessed.”

“You’re our friend first and foremost, Dara,” Kane said. “We don’t want to fuck that up.”

She struggled onto her elbows, blushing slightly under the combined stares of the two most important men in her life. This was it. This was the moment she had to get right to make the ménage work and set the tone for the future. For if she picked one of them, and not the other. Something to keep it light, and keep them together as friends.

“You’re not going to mess anything up. Come on, guys, we’re all grownups. I don’t see why we can’t enjoy another aspect to our relationship and still kick each other’s butts on the ski hill. Or wherever else we want to go together.”

Kane nodded, his dark curls falling around his face as he looked her over slowly. “Friends, and more. You’re right, we can do this.”

“You can do me, you mean.” The guys laughed. Kane stripped off his shirt and Dara hummed with approval as she admired the chiseled muscles before her. A faint trail of hair began at his belly button and led south. “Oh yes, very nice.”

She reached out to help him with the snap on his jeans and found herself blocked by Jack. He eased her back on the bed, pinning her wrists above her head.

“Starting right now, we’re in charge. You want the two of us in your bed? You got it. But you get us, not some idea of who you want us to be. You comfortable with that?”

Her nipples hardened to rocks. She wiggled slightly, testing his hold and something thrilled inside when she discovered she couldn’t move. Okay, this was hot. Hotter than she’d expected.

Kane and Jack exchanged glances. “She likes a little restraint?” Kane asked.

Jack nodded. “Looks that way. You want to get her legs?”

“Hey guys, *she’s* right here, listening to you...holy—”

Kane pulled her knees up and to the side. With no further preamble, he dropped his head between her legs, and suddenly she couldn’t breathe. Her heart raced as he licked her slit, circling the tender area with his tongue. The tight grip he had on her ankles kept her spread wide to him. Rather than being embarrassed, she found the sensation exquisite—mind-boggling even.

Jack leaned over her, carefully checking her response. “You okay with this?”

Dara was sure she responded, but the actual words she said escaped her—a “yes”, and maybe a little pleading thrown in for good measure.

He grinned down at her. “That sounds like you’re more than fine. Get ready, here we come.”

His lips met hers, fleeting but bold, before he worked his way down to her breasts and enveloped one aching peak with his mouth. He suckled, an uneven, erratic draw on the tip that contrasted sharply with the rhythmic pressure Kane maintained between her legs. The tingling fire in her core expanded, spreading fingers of desire through her belly. The flames fanned out to make her skin hypersensitive to each touch of their mouths, and another orgasm rapidly approached.

As her eyes closed, the sounds in the room grew louder. Soft mutters, moans and groans. Music carried in from the still-open door of the balcony. Somewhere in the cabin a fan turned, the constant flicker matching the beat of her heart.

Kane licked harder, releasing her ankles to open her more fully to his touch. He pressed a finger into her sheath and she hissed.

“Yes. Oh hell, more.”

Wet heat touched her clit, his tongue flicking the tender nub and her head shot up. Jack captured her mouth and pressed her back to the mattress, swallowing her cries. Kane added another finger, pumping slowly, massaging the sensitive spot deep inside. Sensory overload approached like a freight train, and she let herself go, knowing they would catch her.

Bright white pleasure rolled over her and she relaxed, letting her body respond as it wished. Her sex clutched Kane’s fingers and he swore softly, stroking slower until her hips stopped rocking. He disappeared and she opened her eyes to stare into Jack’s dark brown orbs.

“Wow.” She wiggled her wrists. He still held her trapped.

“You’re beautiful when you come. I had no idea it was going to be so hot seeing you two together.”

“Why do you think I went out on the balcony?” Kane stepped back next to the bed, clad only in his boxer briefs. “I was about to explode from watching you guys on the couch.”

He crawled on top of Dara and nuzzled her neck. His lips touched the lobe of her ear and he licked it before whispering softly, “I want you. Will you take me?”

Jack released her wrists and she grabbed on tight to Kane, wrapping her legs around his body and urging his groin closer to hers. The thick ridge of his cock pressed against her sex and she rocked into him.

“Is that a yes?”

“Hell, yeah.” She watched in anticipation as he lifted up to strip off the last bit of fabric remaining on his body. He ripped open a wrapper and covered himself, then she couldn’t see anymore because Jack turned her face toward his.

“I’m going to watch.”

Oh God. Totally new sensations dragged through her brain. This was not just her having sex with Kane. It was she and Kane having sex with Jack there. Watching.

The tip of Kane’s cock pressed against her, easing through the moisture built up by her orgasm. He was hot and hard, and he stretched her as he worked his way fully into her passage.

“Fuck, you’re tight. So bloody tight.” Kane pumped again and again, and Dara opened her knees as far as she could to help.

“You’re a little bigger...*Jesus*...than my toys and it’s been a while. Oh, that’s fabulous. So good...” It was hard to concentrate, hard to think with the wonderful sensations pouring through her. Dara stared into Jack’s face, his gaze fixed on where Kane was now buried in her body.

“That’s the hottest thing I’ve ever seen.” Jack shook his head before turning back to her. “Gorgeous woman.”

Kane thrust harder. He filled her to bursting, every nerve taut and stretched and ready to shatter again in no time flat. He adjusted his angle and his groin rubbed against her clit, and it was all she could do to not scream. Every pass drove her need higher, made her call out for more. Dara turned her gaze back to Kane. Seeing the expression in his eyes made her entire body shake with an adrenaline rush. That was her friend making the flaming-hot pleasure rise. A twist of a smile on the corner of his mouth, his eyes rolling back in his head before he grimaced.

“Gotta...slow...down.”

Dara thrashed her head wildly. The last thing she wanted right now was for him to falter. “No, please...”

She lifted her legs again and dug her heels into his butt cheeks to try and force him to resume his pace.

“Christ, Dara. I’m not going to last. Give me a break.” A drop of sweat trickled down his temple and she groaned in frustration. This was probably one of those man things, but right now she didn’t care if he blew quickly. She was so close. So close the fidgety sensation in her clit was ready to overtake her whole body. Bliss slammed through her with each penetration.

“Don’t stop. It’s not a freaking contest. Just a little more. Little more, oh, please.” One last push to drive her over the edge, that’s all she needed. She arched hard into Kane, striving to find the spark.

Jack snuck his hands between them, clasped her nipples and pinched. An explosion ripped through her—the detonation hard and full-body impacting. Tight contractions squeezed Kane where she held him in her depths, and his pace faltered, body wavering over her.

“Fuck, what did you do? *Fuck...*” Kane lost it, slamming into her one last time, his cock jerking as he spilled into the condom. His arms gave out and he covered her with his body. Dara sucked for air, the aftershocks continuing to race through her system. She tangled her fingers in his hair and lifted his head off her shoulder, thrilled to see the way his blue eyes glowed at her.

She purred with contentment. The wild rush of being intimate with Kane for the first time eased as she slipped into a pleasure-filled haze. “Okay, that was more incredible than I ever imagined. I mean...wow.”

Kane kissed her briefly before rolling off and groaning out his agreement. “It’s not even six p.m. and I feel like I put in a full day boarding.”

The bed shifted and the distinctive sound of a condom being opened hit Dara’s ears. Her heartbeat increased as she sat up to watch Jack finish rolling on the latex before lifting his heated gaze to her.

“Turn over and get on your knees.”

Kane disappeared as she obeyed Jack’s command. That’s clearly what it was, and her fading tingle of desire returned in a shot. She rolled slowly to her belly, his hands on her bare hips to lift her. Dara glanced

over her shoulder, mesmerized to watch his cock move closer as he settled in place. The front of his thighs brushed her, the coarse hairs scraping erotically over sensitive skin. Jack rocked between her legs a couple of times, coating himself in her juices. She whimpered as the movement nudged her clit.

“You ready?” Before she could answer, he lined himself up and slid home with one push. Her breath vanished and she collapsed to her elbows, ass high in the air.

“Holy shit.” The different angle, even so soon after the orgasm with Kane, set off a line of small quakes deep inside. Jack retreated, dragging his cock through her tender passage. His girth stretched her, consumed her. He pressed on her upper back, forcing her shoulders to the mattress. He locked her in position before plunging in again, this time deeper than before.

“Oh my God, it’s too much...” Dara whispered as Jack held her hips steady and thrust repetitively, his groin snapping tight to her butt.

“Not too much. You—damn it, you feel so good around me.” Jack surged in hard, but his words were soft. His voice trickled along her spine like the brush of an erotic feather. “Seeing you in front of me like this, so willing, so giving. Welcoming me in, surrounding me. You’re gorgeous.”

“Jack is right, you are gorgeous.” Kane had returned and lay beside her. He smoothed a strand of hair from her face. “Your cheeks are flushed, your eyes sparkling.”

She licked her dry lips and Kane met her, kissing her steadily as Jack powered into her body. Jack rubbed his thumbs against her, pressing into the muscles of her ass, his fingers hard on her skin. “Shit, I’m not going to last either. Watching you two before, and now seeing...”

Jack groaned, long and loud. It was such a primitive sound, so unlike her orderly and pristine friend, she shook as her desire ratcheted up a notch. Dara was beyond caring how much longer Jack could last. Another climax beckoned and she raced to meet it. Kane’s mouth controlled her, his tongue thrusting into her mouth in time with Jack’s possession swirled up a maelstrom, and she was lost.

As her core attempted to lock Jack in place with a series of rhythmic compressions, her breasts, her clit—all of her including her mind—flickered between pleasure and pain. It was too much, and at the same time not nearly enough. She squeezed her eyes tight and let the sensations ride her, just as Jack rode her, forcing her hips back to impale her on his cock.

The reverberations of Jack’s shout as he came echoed off the walls. All she had the energy for was a long happy sigh before relaxing completely into a puddle on the mattress.

Chapter Four

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #4—Know your own limits...

Kane was going mad.

They left Dara snoozing while they unpacked and organized the cabin. Jack did his usual bit of magic getting supper going before burying his nose in her camouflaged book. Other than the occasional grunt and snort of laughter from him, the room grew quiet. Too quiet. The fire crackled, the soft and peaceful sound nowhere near enough to drown out the taunting voices rising in Kane's brain. He busied himself, hauling his portable speakers in from the truck. Even the steady pulse of his favourite songs failed to lighten his increasingly dark mood.

All mention of what they'd done with Dara seemed strictly off limits until he couldn't stand it any longer. Supper was nearly ready, and they'd have to wake her soon. Kane gave the spaghetti sauce one final stir before plopping down on the couch opposite Jack.

"I thought we were going to wait. We were going to let Dara know both of us were interested in her after this trip was over." Jack raised his brows but kept reading the fake classic. Bloody bastard. "You caved damn fast."

Jack put the book aside and leaned back in his chair. "Considering the ménage was Dara's idea, I don't think I caved. I went along with her offer, like any gentleman would."

Right. "Like you weren't instantly all over her when she offered."

"Yeah, well, I claim temporary insanity. I'd have to be a saint to not act when offered what I've been craving for years. What I didn't expect, or want, is you in the picture. Still, I stand by what I said. If she's looking for kink, it's going to be with us and not some asses off the street. Doesn't that make sense?"

"Yes, but this totally changes everything."

Jack sighed. "I'm trying not to think too hard about that. It's true, when this holiday is over, we'll have to figure out what the hell is the next step." Jack rose and peeked down the hall. "We need to wake her in a minute. Funny how she can sleep through anything."

Kane grumbled with frustration. "We're really going to give her a ménage?"

His friend pivoted on the spot and examined him closely. “What’s the matter? What aren’t you saying? I thought what happened earlier proved you were good with this. In spite of claiming I caved fast, I didn’t see you turning down the sex.”

The gaping pit in Kane’s belly grew to monstrous proportions. He struggled to articulate the discomfort that had started in the back bedroom.

Ah, fuck it, this was his best friend. If he couldn’t be straight-up honest with Jack, he was in deeper shit than he thought.

“Sex with Dara is not the problem, but have you ever been involved in a real ménage before? Because an hour ago, that was me having sex with her, then you having sex with her. Kind of like glorified porn where it’s live action and we know the performers.”

A sharp laugh burst from Jack. “I doubt Dara would appreciate being considered a porn star, but what’s your point?”

Damn it. Having to spell it out made his worries seem more and more stupid. “Forget it. I shouldn’t have said anything.”

“Don’t be an asshole, Kane. We’ve got three days ahead to handle being insanely intimate, having sex with our best friend who we both want for much more than a fling. Things are going to be fucked up enough without you having some deep, dark secret hanging over our heads. Now spill.”

“That’s the issue. The insanely intimate part. I’m not into guys.”

Jack choked. “What the hell are you taking about?”

“You don’t turn me on. I’m not into the slash shit I hear about, okay? I mean, there’s nothing wrong with it, but it’s not my thing.” As soon as Kane let the words burst out, Jack relaxed, a bit of a smirk crossing his face.

“*Jesus*, is that all? We’ve been friends since grade school. I’ve seen you naked more often than anyone I know and I’ve never once hit on you. Relax. I’m completely heterosexual, and so are you.”

“Just wanted to make sure, because—I have read a few of those books...” The confession stuck in his throat. Jack held back his laughter and Kane didn’t know if he should thank him for it, or punch him.

“You’ve read erotic romance?”

Kane sighed. “On my phone. There was a reading program included with my latest upgrade and I started downloading freebies off the web. One was this really hot book and...”

“And it was one of Dara’s naughty type. Oh the hidden depths of your soul. Shit, I wonder what other revelations I’m going to discover this weekend? Dara’s reading smut behind a fake cover, you’re not sending a million text messages but getting into kink. All of a sudden my reading habits seem so pedestrian.”

“Don’t be an ass.”

“Don’t be an idiot.” Jack stepped around him to drain the noodles. “You know I’m not into guys. Dara’s the only one I want, and since what *she* wants right now is a ménage, I can handle your ham and eggs on the bed. She can enjoy them, because I’m not going to.”

Kane sat heavily in his chair, relief spreading slowly through his limbs. His fears didn’t disappear completely, but at least Jack knew his discomfort. That should make it easier, shouldn’t it? “Okay.”

A hearty guffaw bounced back. “You’re so damn amusing.”

He gave Jack the finger. “Screw off. I wasn’t the one staring at your dick earlier.”

Jack paused in opening the kitchen cabinets. “No, but maybe you should try it.”

“Shut the fuck up.” Kane whirled a throw cushion at Jack, who deflected it easily and fixed Kane in place with a penetrating stare.

“I’m serious. Usually when I’m watching that kind of action, and it’s my cock in the woman, my mind has already gone numb. It was a serious turn-on being able to appreciate sex without my balls dictating what my brain registered.”

Kane dropped his head into his hands and groaned loudly. “I don’t need this. You’re making my brain crazy.”

The room quieted for a moment before Jack spoke, all trace of teasing gone from his voice. “Kane. This is uncharted territory for all of us. If we’re going to make sure Dara’s comfortable with everything we do over the next couple days, you’re going to have to buy in one hundred percent. Don’t go borrowing trouble. You might discover you enjoy watching Dara and me have sex. Pleasure is pleasure, no matter what the twist. I promise I won’t touch you if that’s going to make it better—”

“It will—”

“Shut. Up.” Jack leaned back on the kitchen counter, his arms folded in front of him. “You need to open your mind. Sex isn’t all about missionary position and blowjobs.”

“I’ve never had any complaints in the bedroom.”

“I’m sure you haven’t. Neither have I, but I doubt what we’re doing is carbon copy.”

Oh man, there was a huge understatement. “Damn right. I put on my headphones as soon as I know you’ve got a woman in your room. I’ve never been into voyeurism.”

Jack flashed his deadly smile. “Looks like you and Dara are both in for an education, aren’t you?”

What the hell have I gotten myself into? Kane dragged a hand through his hair and let out a deep breath. “Fine. So for the rest of it, how are we going to do this?”

“Keep it fun, keep it light. Everything we do is intended to make Dara’s fantasy a reality. We’ve got a ton of skiing to do every day with the evenings wide open for play. I don’t think we need an agenda beyond that.”

The book lay on the table between them and Kane gestured toward it as he rose to his feet. “You enjoying that?”

“Just speed-reading for now. Looks like it’s got all the classic moves, although remember how Dara responded to being restrained? The book’s got a little more along that line.”

“Damn. Fine, I’m okay with that, although it’s not my typical bedroom ploy.”

“I can handle it.” A fairly smug expression crossed Jack’s face.

Kane stared at him. “No shit? Really?”

Jack wiggled his brows. “You should leave your headphones off a little more often.”

“Arghhh...” The images racing through his brain did nothing to ease the ache in his groin. Just thinking about Dara soft and submissive under him made him hard. Maybe he wasn’t being completely truthful to Jack about what he liked in the bedroom, but he’d never gotten into ropes and shit.

His friend laughed. “I think you should read chapter seven. I’m pretty sure you could get into what’s in there better.” Jack slapped him on the shoulder and the weight lifted a little more. “I’ll put the rest of dinner together. You go get Sleeping Beauty up and bring her here. The night is still young, and I think we should enjoy every minute of it.”

Kane strolled slowly toward the bedroom, his good humour returning rapidly. What the hell had he been worried about? Jack was his best friend and Dara his constant sidekick for the past four years. Heck, she’d sat with him when he got blood work done. She’d helped clean his bedroom. If that hadn’t scared her away, and she still wanted this with him and Jack, he could suck up his concerns.

He stood in the doorway for a second, loving how she lay spread-eagle over the entire mattress. She was an admitted bed hog. When they shared a tent, they usually pinned her between them to stop her from stealing all the available space. He sat slowly on the edge of the bed, not wanting to frighten her. She rolled toward him and stretched lazily.

“Umm, something smells fabulous.” Her blonde hair had escaped the pigtails completely and lay unruly on the pillow. The soft tresses framed her face, and he couldn’t resist leaning over and pressing a kiss to her lips.

She latched on, her arms holding him close. When she let his lips go, she moved to tenderly cup his face in her hands.

“You ready for dinner?” Kane kissed her nose and pulled her upright with him.

“Very ready. I can’t believe I slept again. I’m not narcoleptic or something, am I?”

He laughed. “No, you’ve been working full-time and you’re on a holiday. It’s fine to let go and take it easy. Besides...” He stood her on her feet and thrilled as he smoothed his hands over her soft skin once more. “We worked you over pretty hard. We want you to have enough strength for the rest of the holiday.”

She flushed. “Oh, don’t worry. I’ll be up for the double-black-diamond runs first thing tomorrow morning. Give me a second to get dressed and...”

Dara looked around pointedly and he swore. He’d been so distracted by his conversation with Jack, he’d left her bag in the main room. “Shit—I’ll go grab your clothes for you.”

She lifted her chin. “Either that or you strip as well. I’m not into being the only one naked in the room.”

Her arms were crossed and there was the most adorable pout on her face. Kane paused for a minute. He remembered Jack’s comment that she might like to be controlled. Maybe...he could make her fantasy continue.

Kane slipped back to the living room. Jack gave him a questioning look, but he simply headed to the couch and dug into Dara’s bag. *Hallelujah*. Matching bra and panties in the top pocket. He pulled them out and a slim makeup bag followed, snagged on the bra strap. With a quick grab, he caught it before it could fall to the floor. He turned to replace it when the shape of the object inside made him pause.

Holy shit.

Jack came to his side. “Kane? Are you going through Dara’s bag? That’s dangerous. Women have killed for less—”

Kane held the now-open cosmetic bag and let the dildo show. The anatomically correct, life-sized cock made of some sort of purple-and-yellow-striped rubbery material. It was all he could do to not drop the thing back in her bag and race away.

“Fuck—I wonder if it glows in the dark.” Jack took the bag from him and peered intently at the thing.

“There’s a whole side to our girl I’d never dreamed of,” Kane muttered.

Dara’s voice rang from the back room. “You going to China to buy me new clothes, or what?”

Kane snatched up the frilly underthings he’d found and turned to go.

“Hey, aren’t you taking her bag with you?” Jack waved the fake cock in his hand and suddenly it was funny as shit. Kane shook his head as he laughed out loud, walking back to the bedroom. Jack called after him with an evil tone in his voice. “Your funeral.”

Dara sat on the bed, the top sheet pulled across her body like a shield. “What the hell took you so long? I’m starving.”

“You could have come out and joined us.” Kane passed over the dainty bits of lace and she took them, hand extended as if she expected more. “That’s enough. You won’t be naked, and it’s not cold. Jack’s got the fireplace going.”

She opened her mouth to protest. He was sure something rude about his mental capacity was ready to fly when she surprised him. She stood and let the blanket fall, her pale skin shining under the soft light from the bedside lamp.

His mouth watered.

Her full breasts stared him in the eye as she passed back her bra. “Maybe you should help me put this on.”

She pivoted on the spot, her tight buttocks shifting slightly. He responded like a moth to a flame. One step brought him close enough to cup her ass cheek as he leaned against her warm skin.

“You’re full of tricks, aren’t you?” The scent of her perfume filled his brain and all thoughts of leaving the room vanished.

“Only if you want to play.”

He smoothed his hands over the crests of her hipbones, drifting upward an inch at a time until he cupped her breasts. Kane drew in a deep breath, his nose buried in her hair, the tight peaks of her nipples stabbing his palms. He nibbled on her neck and earlobe, massaged her breasts and her heartbeat accelerated under his caress.

Her stomach growled, long and loud, and they both laughed.

“How sexy.” Kane pressed a final kiss to her neck then fastened her bra, helping her settle the straps on her shoulders. He leaned her forward, gritting his teeth as her ass pressed against his groin. Ignoring the contact as best he could, he repositioned her breasts in the bra cups before guiding her upright.

Dara laughed. “Oh my God, Kane, I’ve never met a guy who knew how to do that.”

“I love cleavage, and you’ve got the build for it.” He knelt at her feet and held the panties for her. She braced herself on his shoulder, fingers firm against his muscles as she stepped in. He slipped the tiny piece of fabric up her legs, arranging the thin straps over the smooth rise of her hips. “You know I’ve got four sisters. Nothing was sacred when I was growing up. The things those girls talked about when I was around would have scarred a lesser man.”

He rose and held out his hand to her.

She hesitated. “Kane...”

It wasn’t something he would force, but he didn’t think she’d want to skip even a single experience they offered. “If you want me to grab your clothes, I will. Think about this first—are you really uncomfortable or just turned on? You are simply beautiful, and I’d love to enjoy looking at you throughout dinner. It’s your choice. It’s all your choice, all weekend. But I think you should trust me.”

She licked her lips and his cock reacted, pressing hard against his jeans. Dara slowly lowered her hand into his and together they walked to the dining room.

Chapter Five

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #5—Safety restraints must be used at all times.

Dara stood erect, her breasts like some kind of missile system. Cocked and fully loaded, they aimed forward, barely contained by the wisp of fabric on her skin. It was the sexiest thing she owned and she felt more naked in it than if Kane had insisted she come to dinner in the nude.

She'd packed the scanty lingerie with uncertainty. Heck, she'd bought it during her mad planning session for this getaway, trying to think of what the guys might find attractive. It wasn't her usual attire—having a string up her butt was not what she'd choose to wear most days. Besides, it was scary how much the shop had charged for mere inches of material.

It was all worth it when she saw the expression in Jack's eyes as Kane led her around the corner. His hands skittered over the utensils he was placing on the table.

"Oh sweet thing. Where have you been all my life?" He gave her one of his exaggerated winks.

Suddenly she was comfortable again. These were her buds, her "cuddle in the dark because there's a lightning storm outside the tent" friends.

Her lovers as of an hour ago.

There was nothing to fear from them, not even clad in the most come-hither outfit in the world.

Kane seated her carefully, taking the chair on her right. Jack sat on her left and they all filled their plates with the pasta and aromatic sauce.

Jack placed a piece of bread on her plate and she wrinkled her nose. "Garlic bread?"

Kane pointed with his knife. "He made Caesar salad too. We're all goners, so you'd better eat some in self-defense."

"Garlic breath. Ugh. I guess we're not planning on doing anything else tonight."

The expression in Jack's eyes shot down that idea immediately. Dara took a deep breath and turned her attention to the table. She couldn't maintain his gaze, not yet. Not when he seemed to look straight through her and see what she really wanted.

Which wouldn't be so bad if she knew herself.

Their lovemaking before supper had made it clear she was physically compatible with both the guys. Now she needed to concentrate on her real agenda. Who did she want the most, not just in the bedroom? Who did she have the best chance at forever with?

She reached for her fork and stopped in surprise. “Umm, Jack? The food looks great, but you forgot to give me any utensils.”

“Didn’t forget.”

Okay, now he was getting annoying. She pointed beside her plate. “Hello, nothing to eat with.”

His fingers encircled her wrist and tugged her arm toward him. Jack laid a thin black strap over her skin and smoothed the Velcro fasteners together. The band formed a loop around her wrist, like a sports-watch strap. A longer section, with a locking clip, extended five inches toward the floor. She stared at him in confusion, attempting to pull her hand back. He closed his fingers over the strap and trapped her in place.

Oh my God.

Kane cursed. “You just happened to have handcuffs in your luggage?”

Jack shook his head. “Safety harnesses from my skis.”

Dara’s head spun a little as her heart rate increased in a rush. Pure adrenaline shot into her veins and morphed into desire. The tiny scrap of lace between her legs grew instantly soaked. Jack’s pupils dilated as he steadily returned her gaze. He waited, his hand supporting hers and she knew he’d felt her tremble. She waited, willing the blood pounding through her limbs to slow enough she could stay vertical.

“Dara?”

Jack held out his other hand, a second restraint dangling from his fingers. His unspoken question hung in the air. Did she want this?

Hell, yes.

Slow, unsteady, she lifted her arm and offered her wrist. Kane swore quietly. Jack pressed a kiss to her palm, his gaze locked on hers. “Good girl.”

He fastened the second strap, then rose to his feet. She kept her gaze fixed on the table, sensing him walk behind her. Waiting for his touch. A hand landed gently on her shoulder and she shivered. He kissed her nape, brushing back her hair to whisper in her ear.

“There’s a flush over your whole body right now. Like a glow, lighting your skin. It’s going to make you more sensitive. Make every touch so much richer.”

He drew the back of a finger down her throat and over the upper swell of her breast. The way Kane had arranged her breasts in the supporting cups had forced the edge of her areolas to be visible at the top of the wispy fabric. Jack caressed, butterfly soft, along the dividing line between skin and material, and she swore her heart would explode.

His palms came to rest on her arms, slipping downward until he reached her wrists. Carefully he brought her hands together behind her back, looping the extra material around her lightly. The click of the clips locking together echoed in her ears louder than the blood roaring past.

A moan escaped. She was on fire.

Jack slid a finger inside the strap loops, testing the fit. “They aren’t tight, but you let me know the instant you want them off, understand?”

She nodded, unable to speak. If she truly wanted to escape she could slip free. It was the thought of being restrained that carried her into the fantasy.

Jack knelt and cupped her chin in his hand. He pressed his mouth to hers, his tongue stroking her lips—soft, teasing. When he drew back she would have followed and he brushed his knuckles past her cheek in a tender caress. “Later. Now we eat.”

Dara breathed out slowly as Jack regained his seat. She jumped lightly when a hand touched her right shoulder, Kane seeking her attention. His expression made her whimper, just a small sound of desire escaping as the hunger visible on his face twisted her insides.

“You have no idea what you are doing to me.” Kane’s words drove the need in her core even higher.

She caught a flash of his blue eyes before he kissed her as well, rough and thorough. Sucking the air from her lungs, his fingers tangled in her hair to hold their mouths together. She lost track of where she was, forgetting even that they were in front of Jack. The haze of excitement enveloping her grew until she attempted to clasp him back, and her arms wouldn’t budge.

Another burst of lust shot through her. Oh my God, the restraints. Whatever else happened this weekend, she was already more turned on than she’d been in her life.

A loud rumble from her belly broke through, and she laughed when Kane’s stomach answered back. They separated, only inches apart, grinning at each other.

“We’d better feed the bears before they escape.”

Jack lifted his wine glass in the air. “To us.”

Kane lifted his own glass and saluted Dara with it before touching it to her lips and tipping it slightly. She took a tiny sip before he pulled it away, the rich flavour bolting across her sensitive taste buds.

How she was supposed to eat when she could barely breathe?

Jack twirled his fork in the pasta on her plate and offered it to her. She wrapped her lips around his fork, vividly aware of each individual tine against her tongue as her senses went into overdrive. Each mouthful became more and more erotic as Jack and Kane took turns feeding her. A bite of pasta, a tidbit of bread. A sip of the wine—but it wasn’t the alcohol that made her blood hum.

She tugged lightly at her bonds, just to savour the thrill that shot through her. Okay, she was officially kinky. If this was day one, she could hardly wait to see what Jack could come up with as the weekend progressed.

The sexual tension in the room grew as the food disappeared. Jack watched Dara and Kane closely for any indication the situation was too much. He stretched his legs and adjusted in his chair, attempting to find a more comfortable position. Relieving the ache in his groin was fucking impossible, not with his cock rock hard, and he refused to rush again. Dara had caught him by surprise earlier, and he'd reacted poorly. He really should have had better control. His plea of temporary insanity to Kane wasn't far off the mark. There was no way he would let that happen again, especially now that he had Kane to worry about as well as Dara.

It would take a delicate balancing act to make them all come out at the other end of the weekend unscathed.

There was a touch of a glassy haze in Dara's eyes, and her breathing increased in tempo. Every time she tugged her restraints her pulse leapt, the throb visible in her neck. A hard pulse at the base of his cock answered back. Discovering she really did get off on being submissive thrilled him, but that wasn't the only thing she'd asked for.

A ménage. Jack glanced at Kane. His friend gave Dara another sip of wine, reaching with his finger to catch a drip of crimson liquid clinging to the corner of her lips. Raw possessiveness flashed for a second and he beat it down ruthlessly.

It was time for the next step. "Did you have enough to eat?"

Kane and Dara stopped their quiet conversation. Two sets of eyes turned on him, desire and lust painted on both their faces.

"Yes." Confessional soft. Trepidation and longing in the tone.

He stood and helped Dara to her feet. She swayed slightly and he wrapped an arm around her, pressing her against his body for support. She nodded then leaned her head against his chest.

"I'm full and I'm..." She blew out a long slow stream of air.

"Horny?"

She lifted her head to look him in the eye as she laughed. "Pervert. Yes. Oh my God, Jack, I'm dying here. How can I feel so aroused when no one is even touching me?"

"Don't try to figure it out, just enjoy." He walked her slowly toward the fireplace, keeping her tight against his side. Kane pushed back his chair and rotated to watch them.

A wash of heat from the fire hit them, the rosy glow of the flames highlighting her skin and making her even more beautiful. She wasn't movie-star pretty, but healthy and rosy, and he couldn't wait to taste her everywhere.

"How do your arms feel?"

She wiggled her fingers. There was plenty of room for movement; it was more the psychological aspect he was worried about. "Fine. You know I'm never going to be able to look at your skis without remembering this."

He grinned. "That's the idea."

Waiting any longer was out of the question. He cupped her face in his hands and kissed her. The flavours of dinner, of the wine and the pasta, lingered on her tongue, but the predominant taste was her. Jack savoured the moment. Enjoyed how she participated fully, meeting his tongue with her own. The way she leaned closer, joining in the kiss. Jack eased back and stared at her in admiration. Her breasts welled up, damn near overflowing the bra cups, and he had to stop himself from reaching out to rip the fabric away.

Stay in control. Stay in fucking control.

Even restrained she was a firecracker. She was probably the type to fight just to see if he'd really take charge, and then willingly let him take the lead. God, he loved that type of woman. Had suspected she might have that streak in her, but to see it...

He sucked in air and concentrated. Next step.

"It's time. We're going to give you the next dose of your fantasy. Any requests?"

Her voice quivered lightly. "Requests?"

"This is all about you, sweetie. About what you want, only I'm going to say no more actual sex tonight. You took both of us earlier, and I don't want you too sore to ski."

Kane laughed. "I'd never thought of that as a way to slow her down."

Dara flipped her hair back, her eyes lit with mischief. "Only damn way you can beat me on the slopes."

The tension in the room rose a notch as she stared intently at Kane. Jack laughed quietly. Her devious mind was working overtime and it looked like his buddy was going to get it. "Dara, honey? You got something you want from Kane?"

The goofy smile on Kane's face froze in place as she nodded. "I want to give him a blowjob."

Kane jerked back in his chair, on the verge of tipping over. "Hell, Dara."

"What? The big words scare you? I want to suck you off, taste you, give you head. Ever since I saw..." She dropped her bold posture, biting her lower lip as she glanced away from Kane and Jack paused.

"You been peeking on Kane and his women, or what?"

A flush of embarrassment coloured her face but she nodded. "I didn't mean to, but, yeah. She complained he was too big. Which he is, from what I could tell earlier today but still..."

Jack nodded. "What about me? While you're sucking him off, what shall I do?"

She glanced at him coyly from under her lids. "Whatever you want. You decide."

Pleasure raced through his entire system. Sweet mercy—no other request could have made him react any stronger. His heart pounded like a drum and he turned away.

To hide his response, he grabbed a cushion from the couch and threw it to the floor by Dara's feet. With his help she knelt, the crackle of the fire in the background, the music from the speakers filling the room with a hushed expectancy. Jack stepped back, mesmerized by how fabulous she looked, virtually naked, waiting. Hands behind her back, breasts thrust forward. Lips wet from licking them.

Kane groaned. "You're serious?"

"Please." She tugged the restraints again and Jack gritted his teeth. Moisture at the juncture of her limbs glistened in the soft light of the fire. She was so wet it had soaked through her excuse for a pair of panties and coated her thighs.

Kane glanced in his direction. The inner struggle his friend fought was clear, and Jack was almost sure Kane was going to refuse when he finally rose to his feet.

"Damn, Dara. I'm going to admit I'm over my head here. If you want this, if you're really sure..."

Her lashes fluttered but her chin went up. "I'm sure. Please."

Kane squatted before her and took her lips, kissing her, tangling his fingers in her hair. Pressing kisses to her cheeks and her neck. Then he stood and opened his zipper, reached in and pulled out his cock. Dara moaned as he stroked a few times, his length already fully engorged and ready for her. He held the base and directed the tip toward her mouth, her hands still locked behind her.

"Lick it." The gravelly tone in Kane's voice was completely unlike him.

When Dara's tongue darted out to touch the ruddy head of Kane's dick, Jack closed his eyes briefly in self-defense. The sheer eroticism of watching—he'd never expected to experience this much pleasure. It was true what he'd told Kane earlier. The pressure in his balls rose, but not as urgent as if it was him standing before her. He waited patiently, one hand rubbing his own cock through his jeans. The rigid length pressed against the fabric and he longed to strip off his clothes.

Kane threaded the fingers of his free hand into her pale hair, pulling it away from her cheek and clearing Jack's view.

"Fuck." Kane groaned. His head fell back as Dara opened her lips and sucked the tip of his cock into her mouth. Her tongue flicked out, adding moisture to the surface, and he guided her deeper on every pass. Her lips stretched around his girth as he rocked his hips a bit farther each time until her nose nestled in the curls at his groin.

Her bright eyes stared up at him and Kane stroked her cheek. "You good?"

She nodded slightly and he withdrew, her cheeks hollowing as she sucked. Kane pressed in again and again, supporting her head and fucking into her mouth gently at first, then with increasing force. Jack watched Dara's body closely for any signs of discomfort, but she leaned eagerly into the thrusts.

It was better than any porn he'd ever seen. Fuck, it was better than some sex he'd personally experienced. Jack stripped off his clothes, completely ignored by the others as they continued their erotic dance. Jack stroked his cock, thrusting into his fist in rhythm with Kane's motions.

The wet sounds of sucking, the continual mutters and groans from Kane's lips, echoed in the room. "So close. Damn, I'm so close, Dara. If you don't want to swallow, you got to let me—*fuck*."

Her throat convulsed and Kane arched his back, his cock buried deep in her mouth. The two of them locked together, his body shaking, face screwed up in a grimace of extreme pleasure. Jack moved quickly and dropped his knees behind Dara, catching her body against his as she wavered unsteadily, her hands trapped between them. He wrapped one hand around her torso, shoving aside her bra to cup her breast. His other hand slipped between her legs, under the tiny triangle of fabric and into the wet heat of her slit.

She hummed, her mouth still full of Kane's cock, but her hips thrust against him, seeking his touch. She shook in his arms, reaction to the whole situation obviously overwhelming her.

"It's okay, sweetheart, I've got you." He stroked upward, drawing moisture over the tight nub of her clitoris. Kane stepped away, and Dara let him go, her head falling back to rest on Jack's shoulder. He teased her, fingers light over her clit, and she shivered then laughed.

Kane sat in front of them where he'd collapsed. He stroked a hand up her torso to clasp her other breast. "What's so funny?"

Dara rotated her hands until her fingers cupped Jack's balls and cock. "Holy fuck, woman, not too tight."

"Just keep doing what you're doing. Oh damn, that feels good, Jack."

One finger he pressed into her, then two, the heel of his hand continuing to stimulate her clit. Dara panted lightly, her hips rocking forward in an even rhythm to fuck herself on his fingers.

"Not enough. More."

Another finger slid next to his—and he met Kane's eyes over her shoulder. His friend shrugged and grinned, leaning over to suckle her breast through the thin fabric of the bra.

Dara let out a long moan. "Yes, oh yes, that's good."

She panted lightly, the tiny whimpers driving Jack insane. She maintained a steady pulse with her fingers over his dick, and he bit down on her neck, laving the mark he left behind. He pressed kisses upward to behind her ear, sucking the lobe into his mouth then swirling his tongue around the sensitive tissue. He could eat her alive, every inch of her, and not have enough.

The tight pressure in his balls and cock made him lightheaded, and he'd never wanted more to be deep inside a woman. He fought for the strength to keep his promise of no more sex. The touch of her hands on him was enough and his release edged closer.

"Holy shit." Dara straightened, her body tightened and she came. Her sex tightened around his fingers, a long low keen of delight escaped her lips. She shook in his grasp, head writhing from side to side

until the shaking diminished. Jack swore as his climax hit, strands of semen spurting from his cock to coat her lower back and buttocks. The sticky moisture smeared between them, her fingers wiggling against him and drawing out his pleasure.

Stars floated before his eyes.

Kane's hand withdrew and he pulled Dara forward to cradle her against his body. Jack shook off his own lingering stupor to undo the straps from her wrists, the *ripped* of the Velcro loud in the room, carrying above the harsh sound of their erratic breathing.

Holy shit was right. She'd reacted so beautifully, he was still in a cold sweat from all the possibilities flashing through his mind. If he had his way, he'd pick her up, carry her to the master bedroom, tie her to the bed and start all over. But that would hardly be fair, not to her, not to Kane.

The battle between the bonds of friendship and the desires in his belly was fierce, but short. Tonight, he'd put aside his remaining hungers, but he needed some space if he wasn't going to act on his yearnings.

Jack rubbed her wrists tenderly, massaging her arms and lifting them around Kane's neck. "Why don't you take her to the shower? Have a nice hot one, then head to bed. Tomorrow is going to come early, and we've got a reputation to maintain of setting the first tracks of the day."

Dara twisted in Kane's arms, confusion on her face. "What about you?"

He smiled reassuringly. "Shower's too small for three. You guys go ahead."

Kane stood and jostled her for second, attempting to balance with his open jeans and still carry her.

"Put me down, you idiot, you're going to hurt something."

"Sack of potatoes..."

Dara slapped playfully at Kane as he wiggled until he could flip her over his shoulder. She squealed, Kane laughed, and something warm and tender lit in Jack's belly in spite of the acid bite of jealousy. They were friends—at the root of it all they knew how to care for each other.

He watched Kane walk down the hall, Dara bouncing on his shoulder. She lifted herself up, happy face smiling as she blew Jack a kiss before disappearing from sight into the bathroom.

Jack hauled himself off the floor to collapse on the couch. As the sound of the shower clicked on in the distance, he stared into the fire. Tonight had done nothing but offer more convincing evidence that he truly wanted to be with Dara.

And proof that sharing her was going to be the hardest thing he'd ever done.

Chapter Six

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #6—You must have sufficient physical dexterity to safely ride all lifts...

The distant sound of Kane's slightly off-key singing woke her. Either that or it was the violent shaking of the mattress as Jack threw himself beside her, wrapped his arms around her and tickled. Dara squirmed, attempting to wiggle free.

"Damn it, Jack, stop." The quilt was toasty warm from Kane's body and she didn't want to lose the lazy sensation in her limbs. She'd forgotten how much she loved sharing a bed. No cold toes, cuddles all night long. Relaxed from their shower the previous night, she'd crawled into Kane's arms and promptly fallen asleep. Waking in the night and rolling to find a warm body to snuggle against had been a little bit of heaven.

Still half-asleep, she lost the battle with Jack. Somehow he managed to pin her under his heavy body and she gave up, temporarily. She mock-glared up at his beautiful smile. "Jerk."

"Hmm, good morning, sunshine. I see you're bright and chipper today. Ready for a hearty breakfast? Porridge, eggs, kippers..."

Her stomach rolled. "Good Lord, that sounds disgusting."

Jack grinned at her. "How about a chocolate banana smoothie instead?"

"Now you're talking." One of his legs nestled between hers and she savoured the weight of him against her body. Except for one thing.

"Think you can ease off my bladder there, big guy? I'm going to have an accident."

Jack laughed and rolled, finishing with her on top of him. He nuzzled against her neck and cradled her close. "Sorry."

"No worries. How long until the first chair starts?"

"An hour."

"An hour? Sheesh, Jack, why'd you wake me so early?"

He tugged her against himself, naked except for a pair of plain boxers. "I need a little one-on-one time."

His lips were gentle against her throat and the caress felt fabulous. "Where's Kane?" she asked.

"In the shower."

She dragged her fingers through his hair, loving the soft brush against her fingers. “You didn’t join us last night.”

He was quiet for a moment, his gaze scanning her face intently. “Wasn’t sure how well we’d sleep with three people in a bed. Besides, you and Kane were wrapped up together pretty tight.”

She pressed down on his chest, leaning away from him. “You watched us?”

“Just making sure you were all right. Last night—was everything okay with you?”

Was she okay? Even now the thought of the previous evening made her wet. There was certainly no problem with physical compatibility between either her and Kane, or her and Jack. “I loved it.”

His face softened, the concern written there easing.

Dara rested her head on his chest and listened to his heartbeat. Yesterday had opened her eyes to a side of Jack she’d never seen before. He’d always been her protector. Last night had taken the level of trust she had in him to a new level. Being restrained had been wicked-hot, made so much better by the knowledge she had absolutely nothing to fear. Not with Jack guarding even as he guided her through the experience. She hadn’t realized how much giving control over to another person would turn her on. Reading about it in her books was nothing compared to the reality.

She could get to like it. A lot.

Jack twisted them slightly, resting on his side, pulling his knee up while keeping her leg draped over his. The position opened her, the bottom edge of the oversized T-shirt she wore as a sleep shirt sliding toward her waist. The soft brush of his fingers over her hip and the swell of her butt sent a shiver up her spine.

He kissed along her jaw, over her cheek and up to her ear. “I can’t stop thinking about you. I need to know how you taste,” he whispered.

His hand continued to glide in slow even circles on her body, never moving any closer to her core. Dara threaded her fingers into his hair and pulled their mouths together, licking at his lips even as she opened her legs invitingly.

Jack laughed softly against her mouth. “You’re a demanding little creature, aren’t you?”

“Hmm, sometimes.”

“Me too.” He leaned back, putting space between their upper bodies. “Place your hand on my chest.”

His whole tone changed. It wasn’t cruel or harsh, but it was definitely an order. She dragged her fingers down his throat until she felt the muscular ridges of his chest. Her palm absorbed the heat radiating out from his bare skin. She traced small circles on his skin, relishing the opportunity to explore him so intimately.

His gaze trapped hers. “Don’t move.”

Dara smiled and pressed her open hand to his skin and froze it there. He stared into her eyes, observing, evaluating. Her pulse kicked up a notch as the endless circles he’d been making on her hip

changed and he slid his fingers under the edge of her panties. It was the work of a moment to tug them to the side. A finger parted her already wet curls—just being with him had made her needy. Made her ready, and when he slid two fingers deep into her sex, she moaned aloud.

All motion stopped.

His voice whispered tantalizingly over her skin. “I’m sorry. I forgot to warn you. No noises either. Understand?”

She blinked and squeezed her lips together.

“Good girl.” He slid his fingers in and out a few times, nicking her clitoris with his thumb on every thrust. Dara concentrated hard to remain still, to not pump her hips toward his hand to add to the intensity.

Suddenly his fingers left her and she bit back her protest. She was nowhere near done. Empty, aching. He brought his hand up to his nose and breathed deeply, moisture glistening on his fingers.

Her heart skipped a beat.

“Fabulous. I wonder if you’re as sweet as I think you’ll be?” Jack flipped his hand around and brushed his fingertips against her lips, the scent of her arousal strong in her nostrils as he painted her lips with her own cream.

Then he kissed her. Nibbles and licks, tiny bites to her lower lip before dragging it into his mouth and lapping all traces of moisture away. A heavy pulse beat in her core, along with a throbbing desire to be filled, but she remembered to stay still in spite of the temptation to rub against him. As he kissed her, he returned his hand to cup her mound, holding her firmly, but without enough pressure for her to reach a climax.

She was painfully close from only his kisses.

His tongue thrust into her mouth and she suckled it happily, imagining it plunging instead into her heated core. Wishing there was something filling her up. The kiss went on and on, and all the while she was conscious this was *Jack* she was kissing—her friend, her confidant. He held a piece of her heart, and now he seemed to have found the key to her body.

He drew back, breathless, eyes dark with desire, pupils dilated. He stared at her for a long moment before speaking. “You are very sweet. Thank you for sharing with me.”

When he moved to separate them, she shivered with dismay. Oh my God, no, that wasn’t it, was it? Dara opened her mouth to protest, then paused. He smiled. “You can talk.”

“You’re not going to stop, are you?” Damn, was that her voice? That whining child?

He examined her face, and she wondered if it revealed exactly how hot he’d made her. How close to the edge he’d brought her with a very simple touch. “Anticipation will make the rewards ahead even sweeter, Dara. I choose to wait. Can you?”

The sexual heat raging inside made her want to scream no and demand he bring her to a climax. The woman in her wanted to please him. She'd loved being restrained last night at his suggestion; perhaps this was something else he could teach her.

She lowered her eyes and took a deep breath. "Yes."

Jack lifted her chin and forced her to look at him. He shook his head gently, tenderness in his gaze. "I don't want you cowering before me or hiding your eyes. I may like to call the shots, but you are my equal in all ways. You can always say no. Understood?"

A smile broke free. That's the Jack she knew, looking out for her even as he whipped her world into a frenzy. A shot of mischief skipped through her and she rolled on top, catching him by surprise.

"Understood." She leaned closer and kissed him hard, ignoring the urge to grind her sex against his rock-solid abdomen.

He sat up with her in his arms and tousled her hair. "Come on, sweetheart, it's time to get ready for the day."

When he pushed her toward the bathroom, she went with a final kiss to his cheek, a smile lingering on her lips.

An hour later Dara was still smiling.

"How many runs you think we can we track up before we lose the fresh powder?" She flipped her goggles onto the brim of her helmet. The sun dazzled her eyes, crystals catching and reflecting back on every turn. There weren't many skiers out yet, not this early on a Friday.

"If we keep heading higher, we'll be good for the whole morning." Kane and Jack bumped fists then slid forward to wait their turn for the chair.

"Remember there's only double chairs on the top half of the hill." Dara didn't want to be separated from either of them. She leaned her hip casually against Jack's side and he snuck a kiss from her. The cold air contrasted with the warmth of his mouth and made her lips tingle. She hadn't intended on doing anything physical with the guys while they were on the hill, but they had other plans. They couldn't seem to keep their hands off her. Every time they stopped she got pulled against one or the other of them and kissed thoroughly.

All the attention was making her feel a trifle giddy.

"Don't worry, we'll keep you warm." Kane wiggled his brows at her as they settled on the chair and lowered the safety bar.

"Let me hold your poles," Jack offered, and she handed them over. She twisted on the seat, trying to get comfortable for the long ride up. She leaned on Jack, his right arm that rested along the back of the chair the perfect height to support her head.

Kane pulled off one glove and stuffed it in his pocket. "Lift her leg for me, will you, Jack?"

“What are you doing— Oh my God, are you insane?” Dara found herself spread-eagle, her left leg hitched overtop of Jack’s, her right resting on Kane’s knee. Jack had snuck his right ski under hers and somehow pulled their limbs into a tangle without losing their skis in the process. “Bastard. You know the rule. Drinks for the rest of the trip are on you if they have to stop the chair so we can get off.”

Jack whispered in her ear. “Oh, I don’t think we need to stop the lift for at least one of us to get off. Ready to finish what we started this morning?”

Oh damn. “You’re not serious...”

Kane reached for her. “I love your ski pants. I was telling Jack earlier that seeing you in those things always gives me a hard-on.”

“They’re just backcountry overalls— Hey, no way!”

Kane paused, his hand under her coat as he played with her zipper. “You want me to stop, I will, but there’s no need. The fifteen-minute ride to the top is long enough for a bit of fun.”

Dara sealed her lips as she scanned the slopes below. They were right out in the open, the dangling chair in full view of anyone who happened to ski past and look up. Of course, there were so few skiers out she doubted anyone would bother looking to see what was happening—they’d be more intent on the uncut snow before them.

The sheer naughtiness of what Kane proposed sent an extra thrill through her. This was part of what she’d asked for in her excuse, wasn’t it? Sexual experiences she would never have thought of? It was also part of finding out what the guys were like when they weren’t simply being buddies to her. Dara took a deep breath and deliberately relaxed back against Jack. “Go for it.”

Kane smirked as he leaned over to kiss her. He tugged at her zipper and she sucked in her belly. Her bibbed overalls were designed with one zipper set that reached from waist to the top of the bib, and a second set that slid downward. She supposed if she were a guy she could have used the lower escape hatch as a quick-release method. She’d never dreamed of this possibility.

Kane adjusted the zippers until her pants were open just enough to allow him to sneak his hand under her long johns and into her panties. He stroked through her curls and she jerked at his touch.

“Shit...your fingers are cold!”

Behind her Jack shifted and she twisted her neck to look at him. “Kiss me,” he demanded, taking her mouth with his.

Erotic overload in three, two, one... Jack had turned her on in the morning without giving her release. All the attention and kisses for the past hour had been more than enough to keep her motor running on high, and now, between Jack’s lips and the teasing rub of Kane’s thumb against her clit, she was ready to have a meltdown. Kane’s cool forefinger slipped into her sheath and she cried out. Jack swallowed the sound and thrust his tongue into her mouth. The whole encounter seemed too fabulous to be true. The chair continued

its ascent, the wheels overhead on the long support arm squeaking every time they rolled past a tower. Cold air snuck in with Kane's hand, adding a layer of tension and unfamiliarity to the situation.

Kane added a second finger, the additional stretch drawing her closer to the edge of orgasm. He changed the angle of his hand and a violent rush of pleasure overtook her. She squeezed her eyes shut and groaned. "Oh my—yes, right there. Don't stop—don't...ohhhh."

"Sweet spot?" Jack asked, his warm breath tickling her ear.

"Seems that way." Kane voiced his approval. "Right about...here."

Bright spots floated before her closed eyes and she panted for breath. She'd been longing for this since Jack had left her aching this morning. "Screw...the play...by...play. Kane, please. A little more."

He pressed on her clit on the next pass, repeating whatever mysterious trick he played internally, and it was enough to set her off. She leaned back and enjoyed every second of her orgasm, letting her guys support and hold her up. Her passage clutched Kane's fingers, a sharp streak of pleasure racing from her core over her entire body. He stroked her labia softly as he withdrew his fingers, circling her wet slit again and again until the tremors ceased.

She was glad Kane had figured out how to adjust her zippers back to their proper places because she had no muscles to deal with it herself. In fact, if she didn't pull it together quick she was in danger of buying drinks. The way she felt, managing not to fall the instant her skis hit the slope was long odds.

"God, you're gorgeous when you come." She opened her eyes to see Kane pop his fingers into his mouth and moan with approval. *Holy shit*. He licked his fingers clean, his gaze never leaving her face.

Dara licked her own lips. Kane was a dirty boy and she absolutely loved it. "Holy...damn that was good."

They grinned at each other like fools until the chair wobbled again and Dara finally clued into their surrounding. They were five towers from the top of the hill, now within easy visibility of the lift operator in the safety booth.

"Watch yourself for a second." Jack lifted her thigh and twisted his ski under the chair, returning her leg to the normal straightforward and side-by-side position with its partner. He handed back her poles and lifted the safety bar. "And we're ready for the next run."

Kane leaned past her to speak to Jack. "You wanna do her next trip?"

"You're not serious." Dara flipped her gaze back and forth between the two of them, examining their faces carefully. She should have been embarrassed, but the sexual hormones racing through her bloodstream made it tough to feel anything other than euphoric.

Jack nudged her shoulder. "I think we can keep you entertained, on and off the hill."

Dara focused forward intently, attempting to regain strength in her still-trembling limbs. She was not about to trip and fall flat on her face like some bunny-hill skier. Holy shit...what had she unleashed?

Kane grabbed the edge of his board as he caught air off the jump Dara had discovered on their previous run. His mood was lighter than he expected, in spite of the rumble of need in his belly that grew larger by the second. If the erotic images flashing through his brain didn't ease up, he was going to end up on an emergency stretcher. His cock was hard enough to wax and use as a snowboard.

The snow conditions had never been better, but for the first time ever on a ski fling he found the day dragging. Normally, they'd ski until they were running on fumes, grab a quick lunch then power it out until the final second possible on the hill.

Yet today all he could think about was getting Dara naked in the damn hot tub. Or bending her over the couch and driving his cock into her from behind. Screw the skiing; he wanted to be spending time with her. In her. Now that the craving he'd had for her body had been released, like some Pandora's box, there was no place to hide all his dirty fantasies away.

Even the knowledge Jack would be in the picture didn't freak him out as much as it should. Last night, when Dara had sucked his cock, it was Jack who had ended up saving them both from what could have become a bad situation. There was no way Kane could have reacted fast enough to catch Dara when she wavered, not when she'd virtually sucked his brains out through the end of his dick.

Jack's timely catch had made a potentially bad situation redeemable. If the anxiety he felt having a guy in the room meant fooling around with Dara was safer, he'd just deal with his discomfort.

The sun dipped behind the mountain and the temperature dropped noticeably as they finished their run. Dara yawned hugely, covering her mouth with the back of her glove, and Jack laughed.

"You ready to call it quits?"

She stuck her tongue out at him. "Not until you do. I'm not winning the wimp award the first day out."

Kane cleared his throat. "Last run for me. Let's angle over to the—"

"You're kidding." Dara narrowed her eyes at him. "You? You never give up first. We usually have to haul your ass off the hill and hide your equipment so you don't disappear in the middle of the night."

Colour rose in her cheeks as he stared at her intently. Something in his face must have shown what boiled inside him. He leaned over to whisper against her ear. "I'm not planning on sneaking anywhere tonight that doesn't involve you. And the only place my equipment is going to hide is deep inside your pussy."

Her mouth hung open for a second before she glanced at Jack. "I think I've had enough skiing for the day as well."

Sexual tension shot skyward. By the time they reached the cabin and placed their gear in the storage locker outside the door, their need was a tangible weight. They tumbled inside, shrugging off ski coats, scrambling to remove their heavy boots. Kane dragged Dara against him, one hand on her lower back to

press her stomach into his erection to make sure she knew exactly how much he needed her. She pushed off her suspenders, Jack grabbed the bottom of her long sleeved shirt, and faster than Kane thought possible, she was naked from the waist up.

Screw finesse, he needed her now.

He took her breasts into his hands, cupping the weight of them and admiring the red nipples as they puckered tight.

“All day long I’ve been imagining this.” He sucked one nipple into his mouth, twirling his tongue around the point. Dara arched against him, locking her fingers in his hair and holding him close. He struggled out of his own clothes, tearing off his shirt then returning to the warm temptation of her skin.

The noises she made drove him insane. Each purr of pleasure from her lips, each sharp cry as he nipped, all of it teased him and brought him to the point of no return.

Jack joined in as well. Stripped to just his boxers, he pressed her from behind, kissing her neck, and she moaned out her delight.

“I want...oh God, I want whatever you want to give me.”

Kane managed to tug her overalls past her hips and knelt to bury his face in her crotch. She was wet, her curls slick with moisture as he used one hand to open her to his tongue. He had barely a moment to dip into her warmth before Jack interrupted.

“We need to move. Dara, I want your mouth on me and I can’t wait any longer.” His voice was a growl, primitive and harsh, and Kane couldn’t argue. He couldn’t wait either.

He scooped her up and carried her to the couch. Along the way Jack tugged the overalls past her ankles and suddenly there was nothing but her naked skin everywhere and goddamn if he wasn’t about to explode.

The soft leather of the couch beckoned and the images from earlier in the day leapt to mind. Kane twirled her, connecting her back to his front, his erection lying in the valley between her cheeks. He rocked his hips and it felt so fucking good he was ready to lose it.

Dara whimpered lightly and he loosened his grip. “Sorry, I—”

“Don’t stop. Come on, Kane, I want this.”

That was all he needed to hear for the slight edge of restraint he still had to break.

He pressed her over the back of the couch, bending her at the waist. She shot her arms out to catch herself, braced on the seat of the sofa. Her feet dangled off the floor, the soft smooth skin of her ass shining in the glow of the subtle lighting. He dropped to his knees and nipped one cheek.

“Fuck.” She squirmed and he moved quickly to pin her in place with one hand.

“Uh-uh, you’re not going anywhere. Here’s a fantasy I bet you’ve never experienced. I’m going to fuck you from behind, Jack’s going to fuck your mouth. Two guys at one time—you want it?”

“Yes.” No hesitation. She looked at him over her shoulder, wiggling back against his hand. “Hurry.”

Jack laughed as he moved in front of her. “Bossy chick.”

“Isn’t she?”

His friend squatted and lifted Dara’s chin, gazing into her eyes. “Maybe she was a bad girl today and she’s actually looking for a little punishment.”

In a split second the tension in the room was completely transformed.

Dara sputtered before whispering her response. “Anything.”

Kane blinked in shock. He was still hotter than a fire, but suddenly he was uncertain, glancing at Jack for direction. His friend’s eyes almost glowed with lust. “Spank her,” Jack ordered.

Kane opened his mouth, but nothing came out. His hand already rested on her ass, the pleasure of the touching her naked skin making his dick so hard he was having difficulty seeing straight. And Jack wanted him to spank her?

“Do it,” Jack growled.

Kane jerked upright at the command. He rubbed Dara’s ass, circling gently. He waited until she relaxed, the tension in her body easing off a tiny bit before raising his hand and bringing it back down. The sharp ring of the smack of his palm against her skin echoed in the room. Her moan of pleasure rang louder still. The pink tinge to her skin increased and he smoothed the heated section slowly.

“You okay?” Jack brushed back the hair falling over her cheek.

She wiggled and sighed. “Yup.”

Kane smacked her other cheek and she squealed, a little hitch in her voice.

Jack stood and motioned to Kane. “How ’bout you?”

It wasn’t his normal kink, but damn if seeing how much it thrilled Dara didn’t make this work. “Oh yeah.”

He spanked her again and again, careful to place each strike in a new spot, careful to temper the strength of the blow. Dara rocked back into him, as if welcoming the sensation. Kane brushed his fingers past her slit, and her juices soaked him instantly.

“Oh hell, you do like that, don’t you?”

“Hmmm.” Dara’s words slurred as she spoke. “Now fuck me. I need you inside.”

No arguments from him. Kane grabbed his cock, ready to line up and thrust in when Jack shoved a condom into his hand.

Shit. His brain really was missing in action. It took a second to cover himself and move behind her, the pretty pink of her ass cheeks driving his lust higher. The tip of his cock lodged within her wet opening, he looked up to see Jack already in position in front of her.

“Ready for us?” Jack asked.

“Do it.” Passion deepened her voice, dragging at his senses.

Jack held his cock by the base and pressed the engorged head against her lips. She lapped at him before opening wide. As Jack slid forward, Kane copied the motion, rocking to work his way into her tight passage. He clasped her hips, his fingers digging into the muscles to get a firmer grip. Once he was totally seated, his groin flush with her butt, he paused, enjoying the sensation of being deep within her body. Then the need to move overwhelmed him, and he drew back, stopping with the head of his cock clinging to her opening.

One hard thrust after another followed, the demand to drive into her increasing until he felt nothing but the tight squeeze around him.

Jack groaned and Kane dragged his gaze from where his cock disappeared into Dara's body. Jack held her head carefully, supporting her even as he buried his shaft between her lips. His cock glistened with saliva, and if the tension in his muscles was any indicator, his friend was nearing climax. Kane's own impending explosion threatened, his balls tight to his body.

He was not going over without taking Dara with him. He reached under her body and found her clit.

A muffled cry broke from her lips, blocked by Jack's cock.

There was more than enough moisture to smooth his fingertips over the rigid nub. Rubbing harder as he plunged deep, her gasps turned into a long steady squeal around Jack's dick. Her passage convulsed, squeezing his shaft, dragging his own climax from him as he locked them together with a final drive. His cock jerked, semen flooding the condom until he wondered if he was ever going to stop.

Jack shouted, lost control and came. Dara swallowed eagerly, liquid spilling from her lips. Kane watched in fascination. In his brain-dead fog, it took a while to register that Jack had been right. A little voyeurism wasn't a bad thing. Time blurred for a few minutes before Kane found the muscle to pull from her body. Suddenly Jack was there, cradling Dara against him as he made his way to the balcony.

Kane stumbled ahead to pull open the doors, and moments later they were relaxed in the hot tub, three boneless heaps.

Dara wiggled until she was draped over them both, one arm wrapped around his neck, her hips still resting in Jack's lap. "Oh wow, that was fabulous."

Jack laughed. "You're going to have to speak up, I can't hear past this ringing in my ears."

Kane had to agree. He couldn't even convince his tongue to work to tell Dara... He glanced down at her in his arms. He wasn't sure what he wanted to tell her, but the satisfied glow in his body was nothing on what grew in his heart.

It was just as he'd suspected—they were compatible in and out of bed. Only, while the spanking had been interesting, that appeared to be more in Jack's line of sexual play. And if this weekend was the time to impress Dara, and try to head toward a forever with her, he needed to not just blindly follow anymore. Not Jack's lead, not his dick's. He needed to make sure what he had to offer Dara got laid on the table as well, and he wanted it to fit with her fantasies.

It appeared he had a little speed-reading to do, from her personal fantasy book.

Chapter Seven

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #7—Showboating is allowed within designated areas only...

“You’re not serious.” Dara stared at Jack in shock.

“I’m not? Hmm, I thought I was.”

“But—”

“And wear this. I love this top.” He handed her the undershirt she’d originally brought to wear to sleep in. It was old and worn soft. It was also paper thin.

Dara pulled the garment over her head, that slight thrill of obeying his orders enough of a rush to make her forget to argue. When the fabric brushed her bare skin, she had to bite her lip to stop a moan from escaping.

She’d pretty much been in a constant state of arousal for the past two days. This morning she’d opened her eyes to find Jack wrapped around her in the big master bed, stroking her body to a feverish pitch. They slipped into making love before she finished waking up, her desire building hot and fast. It didn’t take long before his forceful thrusts made her climax so hard she’d screamed loud enough to wake Kane in the room below them.

The last thing she remembered the previous night, she’d been cuddled between her two guys, eating popcorn and watching a video until her eyes refused to stay open. Kane must have disappeared sometime after that. It was almost like an elaborate game of keep away, only she was the ball and they were taking turns tossing her between each other.

Jack growled, a low husky sound, regaining her attention and making her belly quiver with anticipation.

“That’s what I thought. Your nipples show through your shirt.” Jack dragged a finger down the swell of her breast. His fingertip caught the edge of her nipple as it tightened and he smiled. “Very lovely.”

He pulled up the suspenders of her bibbed ski pants and adjusted the strap lengths as she fought for composure.

“Jack, Dara. Hurry up. Aren’t you guys ready yet? The hill opens in ten minutes.” Kane wandered into the master bedroom and jerked to a stop, a lecherous expression drifting across his face. “Holy crap. Dara, you look hot.”

She stood a little straighter. *Incredible*. She was surrounded by Neanderthals. “Damn it, Kane, tell Jack I can’t ski like this.”

He shrugged. “I don’t see why not. You’re going to wear a coat, right?”

“Yeah, but—I’m not wearing a bra.”

Kane grinned. “That, I noticed. Nice one, Jack. I like how you’ve got her ski pants arranged. Kind of looks like one of those old fashioned corsets holding up her boobs. God, you’ve got the most fucking gorgeous tits, Dara.”

She crossed her arms and covered herself. “Thanks so much, oh caveman.”

He wiggled his brows. “I told you before I’m a breast man. Look, it’s up to you, but so what if you’re not wearing a bra?”

“Hello, boobs hanging loose.”

“Again, so? Don’t try to bullshit me and say that teeny thing you wore the other night supported you more than this. You’re not jumping on a trampoline or anything—let the girls be free.”

She shook her head. “You’ve been watching way too much television.”

Kane pulled her close. He crushed her breasts against his torso and kissed her senseless. She wrapped her arms around his neck and dove in for all she was worth. Kissing Kane was rapidly becoming an addiction. He had a way of teasing with his lips and tongue that set every nerve on fire. The way he smoothed his fingers along her jaw made her feel all feminine and cared for. They stood for an eternity and yet it was only a moment before Jack cleared his throat and brought them back to earth.

Kane let her go, the dark expression in his eyes promising so much even as he turned her to face Jack. Again she was consumed, kisses and caresses raining down. If it wasn’t one of them, it was the other. Touching her. Holding her, caring for her. It all felt very right.

And she was no further in being able to choose between them than when she started.

Kane skidded to a stop beside the lift lineup and waited for Jack and Dara to join him.

“I love that run. Simply love it. Can we go again?” Dara’s cheeks were rosy and her enthusiasm poured out like sunshine.

Kane swallowed around the knot forming in his throat and forced out a laugh. “Of course.”

Jack stretched his legs, kneeling in a lunge. “Good Lord, guys, now I know you’re trying to kill me. Those moguls are big enough to disappear between. I’m calling *pax*. I want to do some easier runs through the trees.”

Kane nodded. “No worries. You want to meet up in the cafeteria for some lunch today? My treat?”

“Fries?” Dara grinned at them both.

“Sounds perfect,” Jack agreed. “You got your walkie-talkies? We can touch base once we’re done a few runs and arrange to meet.”

Jack stood and slid next to Dara. She offered her lips without any prompting, and Kane thought how much things had changed in just a couple days. How had they spent so many years together without getting involved? Kissing her seemed as natural as breathing, holding her just as right. They waved Jack off and turned to stand in line for their turn on the lift.

It was time to add a little fun to their day, Kane-style. “So, you enjoying your trip to Big White?”

Dara smiled at him. “Very much.”

“How long you here for?” A furrow appeared between her brows. He hurried on, knowing she’d catch on soon enough. “I’m here until Sunday. Sure hope the ski conditions hold.”

Her eyes widened as she figured out what he was doing and he fought to hide his grin. “Oh, I got here a few days ago myself. Yeah, the conditions are great.”

“Have you found a favourite run yet?”

“There’s a super one to the right of the chair, if you like them hard.”

Kane took a deliberate ogle down her body before looking her in the eye. “I know how I like them. Do you like them hard?”

Someone behind them snickered as they slipped into position for the chair to pick them up. Dara spoke softly. “You’re such a perv.”

“You wanna play some more?” he whispered back.

The look she turned on him was pure Dara. “Come here often?”

The entire ride up they exchanged sexually loaded innuendo until she was squirming in place. “Shit, Kane, you need to stop. I’m already hanging out the front of my ski pants, I don’t need to have a wet crotch as well.”

“People will just think you fall down a lot.”

She hit him on the arm. “How dare you insult me? I don’t fall down.”

“Well, there was that one time I seem to remember you doing a few spectacular wipeouts. Your first day on a snowboard.”

She laughed. “Oh my God, I’d forgotten you were there to see that. Good thing I’m flexible, or I would have snapped something for sure.”

He caught her eye and let the heat he felt for her simmer to the surface. “I think I’d like to see just how flexible you can be.”

Dara stared at his mouth, her pink tongue slipping out to peek between her lips and leave behind a shimmer of moisture. “Hmmm, that sounds—intriguing. But that would require you to catch me first, and I somehow don’t think you’re fast enough.”

They'd reached the top of the lift, slipping off the chair and heading toward the run they'd done earlier. Kane had to stop to fasten on his second boot. As he fumbled for the buckles, she stuck out her tongue and saucily wiggled her ass before poling hard and heading for the trees.

By the time he caught up to her, they were already a third of the way down the hill. He cut her off and laughed as she shouted, pulling out of his path. He herded her closer and closer to the trees, keeping an eye out for other skiers. The run was fairly empty—only expert skiers would take this route in the first place and the closer it got to lunch the fewer bodies remained.

She turned to the right and he paced her, coming in low on her side and forcing her back to the left. Small trails disappeared into the bush, and he saw the moment she made her break, turning sharply and disappearing from the main run. He followed her, staying on a higher trail so he could track her direction. They descended farther, Dara laughing the entire time until she pulled to a stop on top of a small rise hidden in the trees. She leaned over her poles, panting hard.

"Okay, I give up. You win."

Kane glanced around quickly as he released one foot from his board. He maneuvered her back toward the nearest birch tree tucked in amidst all the fir and spruce.

"What are you doing? Kane, are you insane?" She was still laughing as he crowded her body with his. Her skis extended backward on either side of the tree, and he braced himself between her legs, rocking his groin against her core. Dara grinned her approval. "Oh hello, not insane."

She ripped off her helmet and dropped it mindlessly to the snow before fumbling with his chinstrap. The instant it was loose, she shoved his helmet off as well, letting it crash and roll away as she dug her fingers into his hair and hauled his lips against hers.

God, she tasted good. Sunshine and fresh air and all Dara. Sweet and alive and he lifted her up slightly to get a better grip on her ass. He thrust his hips, rocking his erection hard against her body, her legs and skis dangling in mid-air. He didn't care how heavy it was to hold her up, could only think of the violent need in his groin to slip into her warmth again.

She yanked his mouth from hers, a gasp escaping her lips. "Jesus, Kane, why'd you start this out here? I'm going to die if you don't fuck me."

Sweet mercy. "Oh, I can so do that."

He lowered her, frantically scrambling through his pockets to find the condom he'd hidden away that morning in the hopes of just such an event. Dara wiggled, struggling to keep her balance as she unzipped and rearranged her clothing.

"Damn it, Kane, I can't..."

He paused in the process of hauling out his cock. She'd managed to open her zippers but her long underwear stood between him and paradise.

“You like those undies, sweetheart?” *Screw it.* If she did, he’d buy her new ones. He dropped to one knee, snagged the fabric in his fingers and, with one harsh pull, ripped the crotch open.

“Thank you. Hurry.” She stole the condom from between his teeth where he’d placed it for safekeeping, and shredded the plastic wrapper. He stood still as she reached down to cover him. Her warm hands surrounded him, and he hissed, holding back from coming at the mere touch of her fingers.

“Hurry, hurry, hurry—” Dara leaned against the tree and opened as wide as she could, tilting her hips forward.

In an instant he nudged at her core with his cock. After the icy air surrounding him, her scalding heat welcomed him in. He squatted slightly to find the right angle, lined up and drove in with one hard motion.

She gave a cry of delight and clutched his shoulders. “Oh yes, Kane...”

With one wild thrust after another he plunged into her, their heated gasps filling the air with a cloud of fog. The faint noises of the forest and skiers swooshing by in the distance faded away, overwhelmed by the incredible gasps of pleasure from her lips. Wet sounds from where their bodies joined carried up to him, adding to the pleasure rocking his mind. Inside Dara, playing games and laughing, even as he loved her. He wanted this forever.

The heat of their bodies almost crackled in the air. When she grabbed him by the head and pulled their lips together, moaning with her release, he let go, driving his cock as deep as possible as he poured into the condom.

They stood, pinned together like some frozen butterfly specimen, waiting for his brain to resume functioning. He was locked into a half crouch, and if he moved the wrong way, he was likely to end up flat on his ass with his dick hanging out. He dropped his head to her shoulder and sucked for air.

“That...holy moly...that was fucking marvelous.”

He laughed in response. “You’re a dirty girl, Dara. I love it.”

She cupped his cheek in her hand. He savoured the sensation for a moment before they parted and worked to put everything back in place.

Kane caught her looking at him with an amused expression on her face. “What?”

She gestured toward his slowly deflating cock as he dealt with the condom and tucked himself away. “Cold air is supposed to make that thing smaller, not bigger. Oh, and good job on being a boy scout.”

He caught her close for another moment, striving to enjoy every second, every touch.

“The payback for following the motto of ‘Be prepared’ has never been sweeter.”

The cafeteria was packed and Dara looked around in confusion, hoping to spot one of the guys. Kane’s head stuck out above the other customers waiting in the food line, and she headed his direction.

“Dara.”

Off in the corner, Jack waved a hand, and she wove her way to his side. They were in the farthest corner of the room facing the bank of windows overlooking the ski hill. Jack cleared a space on the bench and patted the wood beside him.

“Come here, I have something for you.”

She climbed over, dumped her helmet and gloves on the table and stared at him expectantly. He wrapped a hand around her neck and drew her close enough to kiss. Soft, mouth to mouth without demanding anything else. His tongue nicked her upper lip as they parted and she smiled. “Why, thank you, that was so sweet.”

The boarder dudes on the other side of the table grinned before carrying on with their conversation. With her back to the main room, the rumble of voices in her ears smeared into a wash of white noise and it was like being alone. Her. Jack. The trio of guys across from them rambling about the gnarly jump they’d found on one of the side runs.

Jack leaned closer and nibbled her earlobe. A thrill shivered through her and her nipples tightened, rubbing against the thin fabric of her undershirt. Good lord, she was becoming a nymphomaniac. She’d just had sex with Kane in the trees and she was already panting hot for Jack. This weekend was supposed to be helping her decide between them, and so far the only thing she’d been able to decide was that both of them were excellent in—and out of—bed.

“Unzip your jacket.” His voice tickled in her ear as heat built in her belly. Warmth spread as she lifted her hands slowly to obey his command. She glanced out the windows, taking a clandestine glance at the guys opposite them, wondering if they would notice what she was wearing. Or not wearing.

“Look at me,” he commanded.

She stared into his eyes. His chocolate brown orbs mesmerized her as she inched the fastener on her coat downward. The sound of each zipper tooth releasing rang impossibly loud in the room. How could it be so clear over the rumble of hundreds of people talking and laughing simultaneously?

How could her heart beat louder still?

Jack’s gaze lowered, skimming the edges of her jacket and lingering where she knew her nipples stuck up like headlights on high beam. “Very nice. Take your jacket off completely when I tell you to.”

Dara remained visually locked with him. “But...”

He cupped her cheek and kissed her again, sweeping his tongue into her mouth this time. She melted a little and her resistance failed. As long as he was there to watch over her, she had no trouble with being a little...risqué...in public.

Jack rested his forehead against hers and whispered softly. “Kane and I spoke while you were in the washroom. So, you only met him today, did you? Hussy.”

Oh my God. “He told you about us fooling around on the hill?”

“Of course. And it looks like your *new* friend might come over to our table as well. Want to keep playing?”

Jack role-playing? “Do you want to?”

He shrugged. “If it makes you feel good, I’m all for it. This is all about your fantasies.”

She sucked in a gasp. He’d snuck his hand inside her coat and now tormented the aching tip of one nipple. Small smooth circles with his thumb teased the hard nub and she bit her lips together.

“Dara? Is that you?”

Jack withdrew his hand and turned to face Kane. She played along. “Hi.”

He nodded toward the seat. “That spot taken?”

She shook her head and he plopped his tray down.

Jack nudged her shoulder. “You going to introduce me?”

Dara glanced between the two of them, watching them eye each other like strange dogs vying for territory instead of the best friends she knew them to be. “Jack, this is Kane, he’s who I skied with on my last couple of runs. Kane, this is my...”

“Partner. Good to meet you, Kane.” Jack thrust out his hand and the two shook, Dara trapped between them. Jack’s inner arm brushed her chest, and her already hypersensitive skin drove her need up another notch.

“Same. You’re a lucky dog, Jack. Your girl’s a great skier. I enjoyed myself with her very much.” His tone implied more than just a run down the slope and Dara flushed furiously. This was seriously twisted—how turned on she was getting. Her ruined underwear had no chance of containing the moisture flooding her passage as she considered the sexual overtones swelling around them.

Jack raised a brow. “You did? Well, Dara’s full of tricks. Aren’t you, sweetheart?” He turned her to nestle her back to his front, both of them sitting astride the bench and facing Kane. Jack brushed his lips against the side of her neck and she instinctively leaned to open room for him. He took advantage of her vulnerable position to slip her coat from her shoulders.

Kane stared greedily. Her breasts were displayed like an exotic smorgasbord. Dara concentrated on moving enough air into her lungs to stop from passing out. She grew light-headed. She’d never felt this desired before in her life. Jack’s hands rested possessively on her hips and she ached to have him touching bare skin.

Kane cleared his throat, dragging his gaze back up to hers before looking over her shoulder at Jack. “She’s a very special lady.”

“Definitely. And a hungry one. Dara, you mind if I leave you for a minute? I need to pick up some things for our lunch.”

Dara shook her head, slightly dazed. Somewhere along the line she'd lost track of what was going on. Clarity returned in a rush as Jack slid her forward, closer to Kane. "You seem like a decent guy. She told me what happened, you know."

Kane jerked back. "She told you—?"

"I'm the one who suggested she needed to find someone she liked. Dara enjoys things a little on the wild side. Maybe you want to join us later in our room." Jack stood and kissed her cheek, pausing to whisper in her ear. "You should see the faces of the guys across the table right now. They're listening intently and I think one of them is ready to explode. I'm going to go get us some lunch. While I'm gone, follow Kane's lead." He dragged his fingers through her hair and kissed her one last time, lingering, passionate. He stared intently at Kane, nodded once, then left them alone.

Alone, except for an audience of three who held their breath as Dara peeked at Kane from under her lashes. When in the hell had her guys learned how to act like this? It was like some kind of elaborate hoax, yet they were playing it improv.

Kane cleared his throat. "He knows?"

Dara nodded.

"Good. That's an interesting proposition he just made. You think I should take him up on it?"

Her skin flushed red-hot as he winked the eye on the side away from their watchers. Her mouth was bone dry and she struggled to unstick her tongue from the roof of her mouth. She was as good as naked from the waist up, with the see-through shirt allowing her nipples to peek through. She quickly checked the main area of the cafeteria. It was one thing to pull a stunt like this in front of adults, but she didn't want to freak out any families or kids.

The setting was perfect. No one could see what was going on, tucked into the corner like they were. Well, no one except Kane—and three very quiet young men fiddling with their food. They weren't even pretending to hold a conversation anymore, far more intent on the drama before them.

So be it—she officially got off on being watched and thought a sexpot. Dara squirmed, hoping the seam of her ski pants would provide a little relief against her throbbing clit. She spoke softly. "What do you want to do?"

Kane locked his fingers in her hair, an erotic echo of Jack's movement only moments earlier. With infinite slowness he leaned toward her. "I want to come back to your room and fuck you again."

The audible gasps from across the table slid into white noise as he took her mouth under his. By the time he pulled away, her mind swirled with a mix of passion and confusion. What must the snowboarders think? And could she get any more turned on? Her sex ached to be filled, by Kane, by Jack. Heck she wanted both of them, right now. Hard, pounding into her.

She whimpered. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw one of the boarders rise to his feet, adjust himself quickly and race from the table.

Kane held her chin, his forefingers and thumb cradling her delicately but firmly enough she couldn't move without making a scene. "You need some more of what I gave you on the hill?"

Dara ducked her head and mumbled.

He laughed. "That's not an answer. I want to hear the words. Did you enjoy what we did? My cock in your pussy? Fucking against the tree like animals?"

Her breasts heaved as she panted for breath. "I loved it."

His gaze caught on her chest. Kane reached out to pinch one nipple between his fingers, rubbing the rigid peak where it speared the fabric. "Nice, but not as nice as if you were naked, those tits bare for my mouth. Or your boyfriend's. Jack, right?"

She nodded.

"What about both of us at the same time? Sucking and biting, one on each side?"

"Please..." The images flashing through her brain had nothing to do with cafeterias or ski slopes, and everything to do with being touched by both her guys. Filled by them, again and again, until she couldn't move.

Kane growled in frustration as he glanced around them. He stared for a moment across the table at the boarders. "You guys mind switching sides? We need a little more privacy than this bench allows."

They shook their heads wordlessly and rose to their feet. One of them ogled her shamelessly, his gaze eating her up, and damn if she didn't get even hotter. Kane tugged her against his body, his erection hard against her hip as he guided her around to the far side of the table.

"Kane. This isn't a good idea. People will see my—"

He pressed her down until her back was flat against the bench. Far overhead was the solid wood framing of the open timbers of the roof. Nearer to her left, the edge of the long row table hung inches above her head. Under the table, on the bench she and Kane had just vacated, she watched as the boarders took a seat. One cupped his groin, rubbing himself with a harsh rhythm.

She was completely hidden by the table, tucked away in the corner of the room with an exterior wall at her head and one on her right. Kane's body blocked her from the view of anyone at his back. They could have been alone, except for the continued audience of the boarders.

Kane massaged her breasts, pulling her attention back to him. "No one can see anything. In fact, let's just pretend there's no one here but you and me."

Oh my God, he was messing with her zipper again. He tugged the crotch of her ski pants open, totally ignoring the guys on the opposite side of the table. He slipped his fingers along her soaking wet slit. She covered her mouth with both hands to contain the noises threatening to escape.

"It's too bad there's no one here. Because I think you'd love to have someone watch me do this." He buried his fingers in her pussy and her hips involuntarily rose to meet him. The instant pressure in her core nudged her closer to yet another release, most of it from the sheer wickedness of what they were doing.

"If I had another condom I would fuck you here and now. On this bench. And your drenched pussy tells me that's exactly what you want, isn't it?"

He thrust into her again, his thumb riding her clit hard enough stars formed before her eyes. She was so close to coming, so close—

His pocket rang and he swore violently, fumbling with his coat one-handed, his fingers still buried in her pussy.

"Kane here."

Every breath she took shook her violently and she rocked as best she could against his hand, trying to reach that final bump to push her over. He withdrew his fingers with a long sigh. "I'm on holidays. This had better be a huge emergency, Derrick."

Damn. *No*. She reached for her crotch. She had to come. It was a physical need now. She slipped her fingers into her own body and pushed the heel of her hand onto her clit. Kane grasped her wrist and pulled it away from her body, preventing her from masturbating. The moisture clinging to her fingertips cooled as the air met it. He spoke briefly to his client before hanging up and tossing his cell to the table in disgust.

"Derrick owes me big-time. I have to go for a while and baby-sit a customer through a booking issue. We're not done." Kane leaned over and sucked her fingers into his mouth, cleaning them one by one before zipping her up. Regret and longing covered his face. "I'll join you as soon as I can."

He picked up his drink from the table and chugged it back, his throat moving rhythmically and Dara swallowed in time. Her entire body buzzed with adrenaline. She didn't think she could move if she tried.

"Kane? Where's Dara?"

Dara struggled to a sitting position. Jack stood with a filled tray, his gaze darting between her and Kane. She snatched her coat off the table and covered herself. Her cheeks flamed, her body even hotter.

Kane rose to his feet and grabbed his things. "Emergency work call. Glad you're back. She's a pistol. I thought I was going to have to rip her clothes off again, or tie her up."

"Oh, we can do that later." Jack growled softly. He put down the tray and handed Kane a piece of paper. "When you can make it."

Kane took a few steps away from the table before glancing back at Dara. He licked his fingers, the ones he'd had buried deep in her body and she shivered. She really was going to die.

Jack sat next to her and kissed her cheek gently. Such a chaste touch after the porn-ranked actions of the past half hour. He pushed a plate of fries her direction before eyeing the boarders seated across from them. "Time to hit the slopes, boys. Conditions are good out there."

"You won't believe—"

"Move along."

Dara bit her lip and fixed her gaze on the table as the two guys left without another word. Canadians were so polite. They'd watch, but they wouldn't say anything.

A new group claimed the vacant bench—a mom and dad with their two kids. Dara made sure she was properly covered, then she and Jack ate in silence, her blood pounding through her hard enough she felt breathless. An afternoon of skiing still ahead?

She would never survive.

Chapter Eight

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #8—Before merging, always look uphill and yield to others...

“I can’t believe you made me do that.”

They slipped back into their cabin. Jack held the door for Dara as she rumbled at him.

“Made you? Oh boy, we need to talk about willing accomplices and other things.” He peeled off her coat and paused to admire her breasts. “God, I’m a genius. You’re just dying for me to put my mouth on you, aren’t you?”

Dara whimpered and nodded, reaching up to plump her breasts, tugging her own nipples.

He grabbed her wrists. “Hey, hey, slow down. There’s no need to rush.”

“You’re not the one suffering here,” she complained. “Kane had me on the edge of an orgasm before he left.”

Jack snickered evilly and splayed his fingers against her lower back, rocking her against his erection. “Oh, I’m in pain, believe me.”

He tried to keep it light, joking far more than he usually would, but he *was* fucking suffering. Not only were his balls blue from wanting her so badly, the urge to kick Kane out of the picture rose all the time. He didn’t like the sentiments he’d been experiencing toward his best friend. It was a hard contradiction—being turned on watching Kane and Dara together, and yet feeling jealous he wasn’t the one in charge.

The door flung open behind them and Kane stormed in. “Where is she?” His eyes lit on Dara and his frantic expression calmed. He shook his head sorrowfully. “Fuck it, that went a little farther than I intended. I’m sorry, Dara.”

She grabbed him by the collar and hauled him closer. “Damn right, and now you’re going to pay.”

A rush of lust and a flash of rage hit simultaneously. Jack forced himself to step back as he stripped off his ski coat. Dara was up to something, and she deserved the right to play this one out as she desired. She lifted her chin and her gaze darted between him and his friend. There was none of her usual submissive softness in her stance, just an all-out sensual burn that threatened to ignite the entire room.

“I want you naked, Kane.” Her voice husky, yet firm, made the hair on the back of his neck stand upright. His anger eased—Jack might not enjoy being dominated himself, but watching Dara lord it over Kane was a serious turn-on.

Kane nodded slowly and moved into the living room to comply. She turned her steely gaze in Jack’s direction and he raised a brow at her. Did she really think she could order him around as well?

“Kane and I are going in the hot tub to fuck like bunnies. You want to come?”

All his tension dissipated as he laughed and flicked open the button on his pants. Dara knew just the right thing to say.

“Oh, I want to come more than you can imagine.” Her gaze dropped to his waistline to watch intently, even as she removed her clothing. When she pulled off her snow pants and he saw the tufts of her curls through the ripped long johns he groaned. “Holy crap, Kane, you *did* rip her clothes off.”

“Necessity is the mother of invention.”

Soon the only item remaining on her body was the undershirt he’d given her that morning. The smooth skin of her ass peeked out from under the tails as she pivoted in front of him to check out Kane’s progress. His best friend sported a boner to rival his own as he stood patiently waiting for Dara’s lead.

Jack had to admit he was impressed—Kane didn’t hide himself as Dara strolled around him, one hand trailing over his skin.

“You were taunting me... You knew I couldn’t say anything in public so I think you owe me one. Or two.”

Kane grasped her fingers, trapping her palm against his ridged abdomen. “Damn climbing center. Derrick’s all balls and no brain. He could have waited until I got home to ask his questions but no...I didn’t mean to make you crazy.”

Dara leaned closer, glaring at him. Her threatening pose held for all of ten seconds before her face broke out into her usual brilliant smile. “Yes, you did, and I loved every minute of it.”

She took a deep breath and closed her eyes for a moment. “Guys, you are seriously rocking it in the ‘give Dara her fantasies’ department. But I’ve still got a request and I’m not sure how you’re going to take it.”

Jack leaned back on the wall, giving her a little space. “Try us.”

Dara took a deep breath. “I can’t complain about anything you’ve done, except—it’s pretty much been a lot of one-on-one stuff. I...”

Her cheeks were rosier than they’d been when they came in from the cold.

Kane tugged her back against his body and she purred. He slipped his hand over her belly, fingers wide as he nestled her against his naked skin. “You want us together?”

She hesitated, then nodded slowly. “Does that make me some kind of super-kinky girl? I get so damn hot when I read about it, and maybe the whole experience is one of those ‘better in fantasy than reality’, but...”

Jack paced closer, his cock aching hard. Even though he wanted to rush ahead, she needed them to slow down a little. They’d been racing through everything for the past couple days, and while they’d stopped to watch movies and eat, they hadn’t really talked about their actions.

Frankly, Jack had been deliberately avoiding any discussions. He didn’t want to talk about what they were doing, because that would mean acknowledging he was enjoying the whole situation way too much. Enjoying it, while simultaneously hating it. The more time passed, the more he’d held himself back, forcing himself to not call all the shots.

Taking a backseat in the bedroom wasn’t sitting well. He loved being with Dara more intimately, and other than occasionally wanting to rip Kane’s throat out, things were okay with his best bud. Heck, it was great that Kane had asked him to join in the little game in the cafeteria—and he was happy Dara had gotten a thrill out of it, but it wasn’t his style.

But these were his issues to deal with and this wasn’t about him. It was supposed to be about Dara, and her needs and fantasies. He’d been too busy dreaming about how things could be in the future, when it was only the two of them, that he’d steered clear of the one thing she’d really asked for.

Time to grow a set and put his ego aside.

Dara trembled under Kane’s hands. He stroked her gently, easing her back and nuzzling her neck. “You ever have anal sex?”

“Yes. Not for a while, but I tried it.”

“Did you like it?”

Dara nodded again, guilt written on her face.

Ah, shit.

“Dara, look at me.” Jack tugged her to the couch and sat her on his lap. He luxuriated in the soft skin under his hands. She cupped his face and dragged her fingers through his hair, scratching his scalp with his fingers and sending a shot of pure lust to his groin. “You don’t have to be embarrassed about liking something that gives you pleasure. Anal sex, oral sex—”

“Fooling around in public?”

“Did that bother you so much? I thought you enjoyed it.”

“I did, and that’s the trouble. I shouldn’t feel as hot and needy as I do from making a spectacle of myself.”

Jack schooled his expression. She didn’t need him laughing right now, but damn, if she and Kane weren’t two peas in a pod. “I’ll say it again, anything that gives you pleasure and doesn’t harm another—why should you feel guilty?”

She wrinkled her nose. “Because I spent too many years being told to be a good girl?”

He shook his head. “If you hurt someone, go ahead and feel guilty. But you didn’t, so enjoy the horniness it caused. And if you want to take both Kane and me on at once, I’m game. We’ll go slow, and see if we can match your fantasies. I don’t think there would be so many stories written about it if there wasn’t an inkling of truth in them. In fact, the thought makes me hot as anything.”

Dara turned to look at Kane. “What about you?”

He laughed as he moved to kneel at their side, and the sex-charged tone changed the tension in the room, as if he’d lit a stick of sexual dynamite.

“If you’re asking if I’m up for it, I think you can tell my answer.” Kane wrapped her hand around his cock and rocked his hips slowly.

Dara touched her other hand to his cheek. He nuzzled her fingers for a moment, kissing them softly. His tongue darted out and he licked her, his face shining with mischief. Dara laughed.

Kane winked. “I thought I heard something about fucking like bunnies in the hot tub. It’s getting cold in here. Shall we move the party to a warmer climate?”

Jack opened the balcony door, gliding ahead to pull the cover off the hot tub. Kane cradled her, his fingers caressing and teasing her skin as he brought her to the side of the pool.

Dara clung to his neck as he lowered her in, drawing his mouth against hers. As their tongues tangled a sense of déjà vu washed over her. It felt so right, so proper to be in Kane’s arms. A splash splattered heated droplets on her back seconds before Jack pressed his lips to her neck and bit down lightly.

Having him there was just as proper as Kane.

They twisted her between them, raining kisses on her face. Kane slipped into the water to add his hands and body to the erotic teasing. Her mind fogged as pleasure built within her—the fires stoked higher and higher with every brush of their fingertips. Every caress of their lips. Kane raised her slightly, his fingers exploring and teasing her sex. The chilled winter air floated over her wet breasts and her nipples hardened, a second before Jack latched onto one and sucked the peak into the heat of his mouth.

Another drag of his tongue over the tip. Another circle around her clit by Kane. She teetered on edge, waiting for the moment her body would follow her mind—it was already gone, lost in the pleasures her men provided.

Kane teased a finger down the crease of her ass, pausing to circle her anus. When he dipped his fingertip into the nerve-sensitive area she let out a moan. Jack seemed to take that as an order to increase his assault and suckled harder, one hand cupping a breast, one slipping down to rub her slit. She leaned helplessly on Kane and let the wave break over her.

“That’s a girl. Let go, we’ve got you.” Kane whispered in her ear, his hands gentle, his tone caring. Tears sprang to her eyes in spite of the pleasure drenching her soul.

She panted to regain her equilibrium. It was suddenly too much, too intimate. The long hard length of Kane's body behind her, the tender touch of Jack before her, the heated expression on his face as he ate her up with his gaze.

Dara struggled to her feet and pulled away from them to sit on the edge of the tub, fanning her face and blowing hard.

Kane grinned at her. "Getting a little overheated, are you?"

A nod was all she could answer. She stared at him, the cut muscles of his abdomen glistening in the faint lights reflecting from the hill. The moisture clinging to his skin defined each ridge, each slope, and she wanted to run her tongue along them, consume him in one sitting.

A sharp crack rang out and she snapped her head to the right. Jack stood on a deck chair, a gleaming icicle in his hand. He reached overhead and added another foot-long spear to his collection, then another. He spoke over his shoulder.

"I think we can do something about the heat, sweetheart."

Oh God. The shiver racing over her skin had nothing to do with the temperature outside. She was so hot that melting with desire became a distinct possibility. Jack turned his brilliant smile on her as he climbed back into the hot tub, his collection of icy instruments of torture laid out in a row on the decking.

"Do you mind if I try one?" Kane reached past her to pick one up, the tip glistening with a droplet as the heat rising from the tub hit it.

"More than enough for us both, my good man."

Dara laughed at Jack's atrocious British accent. "You two are— Oh my..."

The words stuck in her throat. Kane slid the wet tip of his icicle down her torso with deliberate intent to drive her mad. He leaned over and sucked her nipple into his mouth, lashing it again and again with his tongue until it ached, fiery hot. When he stepped back and drew circles around the feverish tip, she thought the pleasure of it would set off an orgasm.

"That looks like fun. My turn." Jack copied Kane's actions and the pulse of desire shot from her breast to her sex, and she slipped a hand down to her aching clit.

"What do you mean 'your turn'? If you hadn't noticed, she's got two."

Jack laughed softly. "So she does." He glanced at Kane for a second. "You okay with this?"

Kane nodded. "For Dara? Piece of cake."

She forced her eyes to remain open to take in every second of their united attack. Jack wrapped an arm around her hips to lock her in position while Kane smoothed a hand up her thigh. His fingers inched closer to her needy sex, then she couldn't see anything, or feel anything, but their mouths on her body.

She squeaked as Kane nipped the side of her breast then soothed the spot with the softening icicle. Flashes of heat and icy cold followed, all over her body. Her breasts, her ribs. Kane's finger finally reached her slit and she purred with satisfaction as he slid a digit into her.

“Yes. Oh, that feels so good.” She looked down and tensed. “Hang on a minute. Kane, you’re not really going to—?”

Jack grasped her hips tighter and kissed away her protest, locking his lips over hers. His tongue thrust into her mouth but she knew what was coming. Anticipating the moment—this was either the stupidest thing she’d ever done or the wildest.

Icy coldness brushed the sides of her labia. Kane swirled the tip of a new icicle between the layers of her sex, and melting water poured off her heated flesh. He stooped and replaced the cold with the heat of his mouth, driving his tongue into her sopping-wet depths and lapping eagerly. Hot, then cold, again and again. All the while Jack kissed her, made love to her mouth, locking his fingers in her hair and dragged their mouths together. Kane pushed the now blunt end of the ice into her and she cried out. Jack released her lips, staring down as Kane fucked her with the icicle.

“That is so incredibly hot.”

Dara bit her lip and squirmed. “Hot? I think we need to shove an icicle up your butt if you think it’s hot.”

Kane stopped with the frozen shaft buried in her body. He leaned forward slowly, maintaining intimate eye contact, and gave her clit a deliberate lick. “Up the butt, hey? We can arrange that if you’d like.”

Oh sweet Jesus, what had she done?

He suckled her clit with increasingly harder pulses, once again moving the icicle. Her body had melted the shaft away so there was barely enough to touch her passage. Kane abandoned the chunk of ice and simply ate hungrily at her sex. The discarded pieces of ice swirled on the water’s surface as they rapidly melted away.

“Shove over, Kane.” Jack cracked a new icicle in two, drawing the edges over her body, rotating it to melt the sharper sections into a new smooth-tipped surface. He stood for a moment and held it out to her. “Suck on the tip.”

Dara opened her mouth and let him slip it in. It was freezing against her tongue, flavourless. She would have far preferred to take his cock, or Kane’s, into her mouth. Her saliva moistened it and made the surface slick.

He pulled it from her mouth with a *pop*. Kane increased the motions of his tongue against her clit as he twisted to the side to allow Jack more room. Jack pressed the ice back into her sex and she instantly came. Rocking hard, a quivering mass on the side of the hot tub. Jack’s strong arm supported her upright as she shook with her release.

Jack waited until she stilled before pulling her back into the water, arranging her over top of his body like a blanket. She breathed out a heavy sigh.

“That was incredible.”

“We’re not finished,” Kane warned.

Guilt rushed her. “You guys must be dying.”

Jack dropped a soothing kiss on her forehead. “We’re not done, but relax for a minute. Trust us?”

“Of course.”

He cupped her neck, massaging her shoulders, the tight sections of her upper body easing under his caress. Kane massaged her legs, pulling them into his lap as she sprawled belly down in the pool. Incredible attention, complete tenderness. She was going to break into tears at the emotions flowing through her.

Her best friends. Her lovers. How was she supposed to choose just one of them to go forward with after this weekend?

Kane lowered her legs and sat next to Jack, reaching over his friend’s torso to cup her cheek. “We don’t need to do anything more tonight. You skied like a banshee all day, and we’ve fooled around tons.”

Jack nodded his agreement. “Why don’t I go and make us dinner. We can rent a movie, have a few drinks. Just relax.”

Dara opened her mouth to protest. Kane spoke first. “I know it’s our last night here, but that doesn’t mean there’s an agenda.”

But there was. She squirmed off them to stand in the middle of the tub. Her gaze darted back and forth between them. Light Jack, dark Kane. Both smiling at her, both with heartfelt emotion showing in their eyes. Caring...even love?

Maybe she’d made the biggest mistake ever in even starting this weekend. Maybe when they went home she’d find their friendship would take a long time to repair. She didn’t know at all what tomorrow would bring. She was only certain of one thing.

She’d regret it forever if she didn’t take this opportunity to love them both.

“I want you. Please?”

Jack and Kane stood simultaneously. They didn’t look at each other, simply rose and held out their hands. She took Kane’s in her right, and Jack’s in her left, and let them lead her from the hot tub back into the house.

Kane stripped the blankets off the king-sized bed. Jack wrapped her briefly in a towel to catch the most of the moisture, then turned to start the gas fire across from them. The heat reached out and traced her skin. She sat on the bed and the heat from their gazes wrapped around her, even hotter.

They tumbled over her, hands touching, more and more intimate. Lips on her breasts, lips on her sex. Jack flipped her to her belly and laved from her slit to the star of her anus, and she moaned. His tongue pressed at the muscle. A tingling sensation raced through every inch and made her core ache with the need to be filled.

Kane tugged her to his side, his cock pressed to her thigh. “You need to ride me, okay? Jack’s going to take your ass.”

She smiled, wanting to chase a way a little of the seriousness. “You’re not an ass man?”

He shook his head. “Breasts all the way.” He cupped her neck and drew their mouths closer. “I want to be able to look you in the eye when we make love. I want to see every bit of what you’re feeling. Know every bit of what you’re thinking. I need to be there, with you, for every second.”

Her heart expanded and she kissed him, rolling him to his back and straddling his hips. He’d already donned a condom, so she rocked against his hard length, his shaft brushing her erect clit and making her want this even more. The tip of his cock breached her passage and they paused for a second before she settled, his shaft deep in her body.

Kane’s eyes rolled up in his head for a moment before he grinned at her. “Oh yeah. Now lean forward and kiss me while Jack gets you ready.”

Her heart fluttered as she obeyed. She liked anal sex, but with Kane stretching her full, this was going to be an entirely new experience. Not to mention she was doing this with them. Kane, and Jack, who even now trailed his fingers softly up and down her crease until she relaxed under his touch.

“I’ll go slow,” Jack promised again.

Dara wiggled back, trying to find a little more pressure from Jack’s fingers and Kane groaned. “Not too slow, or you’ll be a one-man show. I can only last so long.”

Jack slicked her up with the lube, teasing the nerve-sensitive area until she was begging for him to do more. One finger. Two. By the time he pressed three into her, the burning pressure carried as a steady pulse in her blood. Kane held her hips up and pressed in a few times, his cock igniting pleasure points deep inside as Jack teased her beyond belief.

“Now. I’m ready.”

“You need a litt—”

“Now!” Dara jammed herself back on his fingers. Wanting more. Wanting it all. Jack withdrew his hand and suddenly the hard tip of his cock was against her. Kane cupped her face and watched closely. She breathed out slowly as Jack pressed in, the flared head of his cock spreading her in two until he got past the tight outer muscle. He stopped and she screwed up her face.

“You okay?” Kane whispered.

“Not enough. Make him move, make him—”

“Do it, Jack,” Kane ordered.

Jack rocked slightly, the lube between them easing his way but the fire... Oh my God, she was going to go up in flames and he wasn’t even halfway in.

“I don’t want to hurt you, sweetheart.”

She groaned in frustration. “It doesn’t hurt. It feels good.”

Jack grunted, continuing his slow progression until his groin hit her ass. He rested his sweaty forehead on her back and groaned. “Thank God, because this is fucking incredible.”

Dara blew out a long breath and all three of them paused. Kane nuzzled her neck. “You ready for the triple chair?”

“High speed?”

“The only way to ride.”

Jack adjusted his stance carefully, allowing Kane to support her hips slightly higher. That opened up enough room for Kane to withdraw, the mushroomed head of his cock clinging to her opening. As he pressed in, Jack pulled out, his shaft teasing the nerves deep within and making her sing with delight. One after another they thrust in, slowly increasing their speed, increasing the pressure. The angle brought Kane’s groin hard against her clit on each drive and the building orgasm notched up another level.

“So. Damn. Tight.” Jack’s words snuck out through rigidly controlled gasps.

“I can feel...” Kane broke off and squinted. He swallowed hard and canted his hips again to drive in still harder. “Are you close, Dara?”

“Umm-hum.” She ground hard on his abdomen on each pass, “Just a—”

She came apart. Her orgasm rippled along her sheath, clutching Kane’s cock. Jack rammed inside her ass, the friction oh so good, and another sudden burst of pleasure exploded. The sensation of her ass pulsing in rhythmical waves caught her by surprise.

“Holy fuck.” Jack crushed her hips against him and locked himself deep as her body squeezed and throbbed around both men.

Dara dug her fingernails into Kane’s arm as she gasped for control. Sexual satisfaction rolled over her, more and more waves, until she couldn’t stay upright and collapsed onto Kane’s chest.

He clasped her close. His hips jerked against her, but he kept his grasp careful even as he spoke softly.

“That was the most fucking incredible experience in my life.”

Dara laughed and turned her head so she could listen to the rapid pounding under her ear. Her own heart slammed in the same tempo. Jack withdrew from her body, returning with a warm washcloth. He cleaned her gently before crawling beside them, leaning over to kiss the back of her neck. Tender. Soft. His words brushed her ear. “Thank you.”

Kane embraced her carefully as he rolled them to the side. His bright blue eyes examined her face, the corner of his mouth cricking up into a smile. “Yes, thank you. For sharing yourself with us. For being an awesome friend.”

She kissed his nose before collapsing back, one arm sprawled over each of their torsos. “What? No thank you ‘for kicking our butts on the ski hill, oh most wonderful goddess on skis’?”

They all laughed. Kane left her in Jack’s arms to hit the bathroom. Jack slid her closer, grabbing the top sheet from the floor and draping it over their naked bodies. “You can kick my butt on the ski slope any day.”

Dara scrambled for words. She wanted to say something. Wanted to tell Jack what was bubbling inside her heart. “Jack...”

He tucked her head under his chin and cradled against his long lean body. “Yeah, sweetheart?”

She slid her fingers over his back, along the muscles that shifted as he protected her and held her close. What could she say? She still had no idea which of the guys was the one for her. Misery tried to intrude, but she fought the emotions down. She wouldn’t let any regrets mar tonight. She was glad, oh so glad, of the opportunity.

“Dara? What’s up?”

She snuggled in tighter. “Umm, can we have burgers for dinner?”

He slipped his hand intimately over her belly and spooned her tight against his body. “For you, anything.”

She closed her eyes and prayed he really meant it.

Chapter Nine

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #9—Venture “Out of Bounds” at your own risk...

Kane drummed his fingers on the steering wheel. He adjusted the volume on the speakers. Glanced out the window at the rapidly fading daylight and flicked the truck wipers off and on.

“Enough already. Your fidgeting is driving me crazy.” Jack adjusted Dara as she snoozed in his arms. They’d skied their hearts out until the final chair stopped running, piled into the truck, and she’d been asleep almost before they left the parking lot.

“I can’t help it. I’m trying to figure out what we’re going to do.”

Jack stared out the front window. Kane gave him time, trying to shove his own chaotic thoughts into order. Was he even sure what he wanted? At the start of the weekend he’d had all these grandiose plans. Dara would fall in love with him, Jack would be fine with it, and they’d kind of carry on like the three friends they’d always been. Stupid really, now that he’d had more time to think about it. And after seeing the way Dara responded to Jack—he wasn’t sure he could deny her being with his friend. There were certainly things Jack could provide for Dara that he just wasn’t into. For a weekend, it had been fine, but if he never saw a set of restraints again, he’d be happy.

Dara wiggled, settling tighter against Jack’s chest. She slipped her legs out and Kane guided her into the most comfortable position. He smoothed her sweat pants over her thighs. She reached out and caught hold of him and damn if his throat didn’t tighten.

He didn’t want to give her up.

“Jack, man, talk to me.”

“You going all girly on me? Want to talk about emotions and shit?”

Kane gave him the finger and Jack laughed softly. Kane tried again. “Jack, I don’t want to lose you as a friend.”

“You’re not going to. Holy crap, what are you thinking about over there? It’s not going to be simple, but for now, don’t make it more complicated than it needs to be. We’re going home after a kick-ass ski trip. We’ve got the pictures and bruises to prove it.”

“And the fact we fucked our best friend silly for three nights doesn’t even come into it?”

Jack grunted at him in disgust. “You eat with that mouth? We didn’t just fuck her.”

Silence fell again. A light sprinkle of snow had begun to fall and the headlamps shone into a hazy distance. It was kinda surreal, holding this conversation in muted tones so they wouldn't disturb Dara as she slept.

Kane couldn't let it rest. "That's what I'm saying. It was more than a sex-fest. She's not just our fuck-buddy, she's our friend. All for one and all that."

"Exactly. So we go home. We give ourselves a bit of time to get settled into a normal routine. Then we worry about the next step. That's the logical thing to do. Simple."

Right. Simple. And impossible. How was he supposed to go home and just let Dara go back to hanging out with them casually when he wanted to have her around 24/7? In his bed, and out of it.

"I don't think that's a great idea."

Jack sighed, his exasperation clear. "Look, you think we should ask her to join us in the sack for the rest of the week? The month? How long you going to drag this out, Kane? She's not a toy for us to play with."

"Don't be a shithead. I know that. That's not what I'm suggesting at all."

"What, you enjoyed being naked around me so much you want to keep that part of it up?"

Kane clutched the steering wheel. "It wasn't so bad. I can handle it."

Jack snorted in derision. "I noticed. I think you more than handled it. In fact, it felt fucking good when we were both inside her. I felt every move you made. Did that turn you on, Kane? Our dicks basically rubbing against each other?"

Kane shot a quick glare at his friend. "Now you're just trying to piss me off."

"Answer the question."

Bloody bastard. "It didn't bug me, okay? That was the hottest thing I've ever done, and it was because it was Dara, and it was you. My two best damn friends in the whole world. If that makes me gay, so be it. There. I was honest. Now, let's hear your confession. You thought the whole weekend rocked, and if there was one thing you'd beg for, it would be for this to be our real life."

"Real life? You're insane. People don't live in trios. People don't set up houses with two guys and girl, not without a lot of shit down the road."

Kane zipped his mouth shut and concentrated on driving for a while. The snow flashed by in sheets, and he had to slow to barely moving to keep on the curvy road. They were obviously at an impasse. For now, getting Jack to admit anything was futile. Stubborn asshole. It was part of the reason they'd always gotten along so well—Kane knew when to shut up and when to push.

This was shut-up time. Jack wasn't ready to listen to reason.

Kane laughed softly at himself. Reason. Really? Somehow in the past thirty minutes he'd come to the conclusion that being with Dara and Jack was a good, scratch that, a fucking fantastic idea.

By the time they arrived home, his eyes were itchy from staring through the increasingly whiteout conditions. Jack woke Dara, her lazy stretch and innocent cuddles as she slowly came awake stirring something inside Kane. He was going to do everything in his power to make sure Dara was happy even if Jack did say no to continuing the relationship.

They carried in their equipment and bags, ending up in Dara's one-bedroom apartment on the final trip. She stepped away from her pile of gear and glanced at them, her hands twisting together.

"So I guess that's it."

Kane cleared his throat. "Awesome trip."

Dara nodded quickly. "We've never had better conditions, have we?" She took a big breath and held it, biting her bottom lip, and Kane wanted to race over and hold her against him. Wanted to pull her lip from between her teeth and kiss the reddened surface.

Her eyes widened as Jack turned to go, panic flashing across her face.

"I have a confession to make," she blurted out.

Jack paused, running a hand through his hair as he turned back. He gave Kane a dirty look. "Seems to be the day for it. What's up, sweetheart?"

"I heard you. Talking about me."

"What?" Good Lord, had she heard them in the truck on the way home?

"A few weeks ago. I overheard both of you saying you were interested in me."

Jack frowned. "You heard us?"

She nodded. "I...I thought that if...maybe. Oh damn it, I thought sex would make it easier."

Kane's stomach fell. "Did you suggest the ménage for our sakes? Jesus, that's fucked up. Why would you sleep with us if you didn't want to in the first place?"

Dara shook her head rapidly. "No, no. That's not what I meant, Kane. I wanted you." She glanced at Jack. "Only I wanted you both, and I thought that if I arranged to get more physical with you I could figure out if I wanted one of you more."

Jack stiffened, his whole body bunched up tight. "And did it work?"

She shook her head. "I thought I could help the situation, but I think I've made a terrible mistake. The past few days have only made it clearer that I don't want to choose between you. I don't want to be with you, Jack, not if Kane's not around. And I can't see loving Kane alone—I'd miss you terribly."

Kane's heart turned over. Holy shit, she was suggesting the same thing he'd been leaning toward. He stepped forward but Jack beat him to her.

Jack took her hands in his, lifting one to his lips and kissing her knuckles gently. He let out a huge sigh. "I'm glad that the ménage was something you really did want, but you're right—in a way it was a mistake. It was a fantasy, and I was more than happy to help you spread your wings, but it isn't something that can continue for the rest of our lives."

“Why not?” Dara’s voice quivered, soft in the hushed air.

“Why not? That’s an easy question to answer. For how long, Dara? How long do the three of us set up house together? I can see it working for fun, for a short term, but if you overheard us talking did you hear the part about trying for forever?”

“Forever?” Her eyes were huge, moisture filling them. Kane moved closer.

“Yeah, as in marriage, get a dog, have a few kids. How do you think that would work with three partners?”

“I don’t know, but I’m willing to try.”

Jack dropped her hands. “I’m not.”

He spun and grabbed his bag from the floor. Utter misery painted Dara’s expression, and Kane wrapped an arm around her as he called after Jack’s retreating back. “I never figured you as a quitter.”

Jack stopped short of the door. He pivoted and glared at Kane. “I’m not a quitter, I’m a realist. Damn it, am I the only responsible adult in this room?”

Before had been time to shut up, now was time to push. Kane goaded him again. “You want this, Jack. Admit it. You’d like to say screw it to the conventions around us and be with Dara and me because it’s the best damn thing you’ve ever had in your life.”

“Fuck it.” Jack growled. “Fine, I’ll admit it. I want to be with Dara so bad my brain aches. And I’d be lost without my best friend. But just because I want a thing, doesn’t mean I can have it. What you’re suggesting is impractical.”

“If we don’t try, we’ll never know,” Dara whispered.

Jack shook his head and grabbed the doorknob. “I can’t lie to myself and wish for the impossible.”

He left the room and Dara burst into tears.

Kane twisted her in his arms, letting her hide herself against his chest. Damn Jack for being a stubborn fool. If he wasn’t interested, fine. But to admit that he wanted the same thing as they did and still say no...

It had been a long time since he’d actually hit Jack, but he was perilously close to remedying that.

He held Dara while she wept, breathing as slowly and calmly as he could to try and pass on some peace. She wrapped her arms around him, hugging him tight, and the image of being with her, having her in his life, hit him like a load of bricks.

If Jack said no, he could have her to himself.

For one awful moment, he contemplated the idea before realizing that plan was more impossible than any of the future paths stretching before them. It would kill Jack to see him and Dara together, knowing that he could have been a part of a relationship. If she’d actually picked one of them, there would have been bruised egos and frustrations to work through, but now?

They were screwed.

Although, there was still a faint ray of hope. Jack had admitted he wasn't totally against the idea, and as far as Kane was concerned, that meant *maybe*. He and Dara needed to figure out how to convince the jerk to get off his high horse and give them a chance. The sooner the better, as well, because once Jack trenched in it would take a bulldozer to move him.

He kissed the top of Dara's head and she looked up at him. He brushed away a tear from her cheek with his thumb, holding her face in his hands tenderly.

"Do you think we can convince him to change his mind?" Her words came out shaky.

"Perhaps. Come here." He led her to the couch and sat her down, squatting before her to be eye level. "Dara, I want you to think about it and tell me the truth. Why do you want this? I mean, I suppose Jack's a good-enough guy. I know I'm a fairly hot catch as well."

An involuntary burst of laughter escaped her. "And oh so modest."

"Exactly." He winked at her and she gave him an unsteady smile. He kissed her cheek. "That's my girl. We'll get through this, you'll see."

She nodded jerkily. "Okay. I just...I want it so bad. I really did try to figure out another way, but it seems so perfect."

"Why don't you pick one of us and we'll find a way to keep our friendship strong. The changed dynamics will be tough at first, but with a little work—"

"Don't you see? That's what's so screwed up here." She shook her head in frustration, jumping to her feet. Kane took her spot on the couch and watched her pace. "So you two are willing to put the work in to stay friends if you don't have me, or stay friends without gloating if you do. Where's the logic in that? Why not put all that energy into making the three of us a reality? Maybe it is impossible, and down the road we'll have to call it quits, but..."

Kane considered. She was right, and damn if she didn't even have enough logic in there to please Jack.

She growled as she stomped across the room, wiping tears from her eyes. She turned to face him, her hands planted on her hips. "Jack's such an arrogant bastard at times. 'Only adult in the room.' More like the only child. He's not even going to take the toy out of the box to play with it because he might break it."

Kane whistled softly. Man, was she calling it right. "He has a couple of collector's items like that at his folk's place."

Dara's jaw hung open. "You're shitting me."

He shook his head. "You know what? I think you hit the nail on the head. He's afraid. He doesn't want to lose either of us."

"And he won't."

Kane held out a hand to her and she joined him, crawling into his lap. He combed his fingers through her hair. "There're no guarantees here, babe, but you're right. If we don't try, it won't happen."

She stared at him, the remaining tears glistening in the corners of her eyes, and he reached up to wipe them away.

“Are you really good with this?”

He shrugged. “I’ve got a few concerns. I’d be an idiot if I didn’t. But Dara…”

There was a crease forming between her eyes, and he smoothed his thumb over it. He’d spent four years coming to this place, and if he didn’t say it now, he’d explode. “I’m in love with you.”

Dara stared at him. “What?”

He paused. “You want to interpret that for me? Did you mean ‘what’ as in ‘I didn’t hear you’? Or ‘what’ as in ‘I can’t believe you said that and I’m going to freak out’?”

She grabbed his face in both hands and kissed him madly before pulling off. “What, as in I really *really* need to hear you say it again. Oh God, Kane, I love you too. At least I think I do. Only…”

He pressed her head to his shoulder. “You love Jack as well, right?”

She nodded.

“Well then. All we need to do is get Mr. Proper to admit what he feels—because I can tell you he’s fucking gone for you as well.”

She cuddled in closer and his tensions eased. He leaned back and settled her more comfortably, rocking her gently in his arms. They sat together, breathing each other’s air, fingers linked together. Kane kissed her forehead, holding her tight to his body and letting her pulse synchronize with his own. Yeah, the sex had been dynamite, but the skiing each day had been just as spectacular. Spending time with her and Jack outside the bedroom—the memories made him smile. Dara racing fearlessly ahead, teasing Jack about his old-fashioned skis. Smiling and joking and telling stories.

They already had an awesome relationship as a trio. The only thing that had changed this weekend was adding a physical relationship. Hopefully they could beat that fact into Jack’s head sooner than later.

Dara twisted to straddle him, bringing her lips against his throat. She opened his collar and touched him with her tongue as she tugged on his shirt. His body was interested, very much so in fact, but he held her wrists and stopped her.

“I think I should go see Jack. Make sure he’s okay.”

Dara unbuttoned his shirt. “He’s being a grump. How will it help to go see him? Maybe we should give him more space to cool off.”

Kane was tempted, really tempted, but giving Jack enough time to rationalize this even more would make their task that much harder. “He doesn’t need to calm down, we need to get him really riled up. Make him mad enough to fight for what he really wants because, Dara, he wants you. I know it.”

She tilted her head and her expression changed to The Look. The one that made him shake in his boots. The one Jack called her Devil Face.

“You want to make him mad? You up for a little acting? Because I think I know one way to get him to react.”

“Oh good Lord, Dara, what are you dreaming up now?”

“It’s kind of poetic justice, really. They got us into this trouble and maybe they can get us out.”

They? Who the hell is she talking about?

She scrambled off his lap and dug through her backpack. She twirled with a cry of satisfaction, holding up a pair of—

“Walkie-talkies?”

Dara’s smirk grew wider. “To the rescue. Let’s see what a little eavesdropping does to Jack.”

Chapter Ten

Alpine Responsibility Code

Rule #10—Share the responsibility for a safe experience with others.

Jack sprawled on the couch and sucked on his beer. He stared at the bottle mindlessly for a minute before focusing on the label. The icy cold local brew—called Faceplant—always made Dara giggle when she handed them out, and he gritted his teeth together and turned up the volume on the television. He flicked through channels and wondered if Kane was even going to come home tonight.

Damn it, why'd he leave? He could have been there with them right now, or better yet, they should have hauled Dara into their apartment and his king-sized bed.

He held the bottle to his temple. Right. For tonight. And tomorrow. But what about after that? What about when he couldn't hold back any longer and started taking charge again, not only of Dara, but Kane?

He couldn't do it. He couldn't put aside his need to lead in the bedroom. For the second half of the trip he'd tried that, forcing down his more dominating urges. Trying to change the way he operated had made him lose something fundamental. Even though he was controlling when it came to sex, he had always connected emotional caring with the physical demands he made. He hadn't even realized that had been missing for the past day until he'd heard Kane as they prepared to take Dara together. Kane had been the one with the soft words, talking about making love. Talking about wanting to be there to support her. Wanting to share the experience so it became much more than just a physical thrill.

Dara and Kane were the ones who deserved to be together, without him coming in and ordering their world. Changing his spots seemed impossible, no matter how much the offer she'd made tempted him.

Maybe I could deal with it if it meant I could have Dara.

Fuck.

No, this was a better way. He'd use the excuse of society, and after a while Dara and Kane would accept it. Somehow he'd find a way to not let them know he was slowly dying as they carried on in front of him.

The door opened with a clatter and he startled upright. Kane entered, his pack on his back. He stared at Jack, looked as if he was about to speak, then turned and headed silently to his room.

Jack stared morosely at the screen. Great. Now all three of them were miserable. He was a fucking genius, he was.

Kane rattled around for a while in the back of the apartment. The shower clicked on and Jack found himself with his hand on the front door before jerking to a stop. His body was ready to return to her without any qualms at all. *No*. He had to give this breathing time. He paced back to the couch.

But there was no reason why he couldn't call her. Just to make sure she was all right.

She answered on the fourth ring.

"Jack?"

"Umm, just wanted to make sure you were okay."

Silence on the line. A soft sniff. "I'm fine."

"You want to come over and watch some TV with me?" Sheesh, pathetic much? Surely he could beg a little harder. Throw in a few grovels for good measure. He'd been away from her for what? Thirty minutes, and he was caving already.

"Kane's coming here." She whispered the words and his heart stopped in mid-beat. "He's just grabbing a shower and some stuff, and said he'd spend the night."

A dagger of pain went through him. His best friend worked damn fast. Still, this was what he wanted, wasn't it? "Okay. Well. Later then—"

"Jack, I love you."

He scrambled for words, but before he could answer, she hung up.

She loved him? He buried his face in his hands. She loved him, but his best friend was going to be the one in her bed tonight.

Because I'm an idiot.

Jack wasn't sure how long he sat there, numb and needy. Wishing he could see a way out of the hellish hole he'd dug for himself. Behind him, Kane cleared his throat, and Jack forced himself to turn and look him in the eye.

"I'm heading over to Dara's. You're welcome to come."

Inside his belly, anger and frustration battled. "I said no."

"You said a lot of things over the past few days, mainly to Dara, but I've been listening as well. You talked about not feeling guilty over what brings you pleasure. About trusting yourself. Not rushing into any decisions."

"So?"

Kane shook his head. "Take your own damn advice. She needs you, and you need her. Hell, I'm the one who should be curled up in a fetal position."

Jack frowned. "Why would you be freaking out?"

Kane laughed mockingly. "Oh, maybe because I found out having you around during sex wasn't nearly the issue I thought it would be?" He held up a finger. "I'm not saying I want to get it on with you,

but you were right. It's a bloody big turn-on to be with Dara at the same time as you. Because it's her, and because it's you—my two best friends.”

Jack broke eye contact to stare at the wall. “I can't do this tonight.”

“She needs you, man. She needs me. Don't throw this away.”

Rustling noises followed as Kane hefted his bag and left. Jack sat miserably for a while before grabbing another beer and returning to the television. He cranked it up loud and settled in to watch something mindless.

Over an hour passed before he hauled himself upright. He'd been flipping through the same damn mental pathways over and over again.

He had to change his ways. If he changed he could be with Dara and Kane. But how much more would it hurt down the road to have to call it off if it didn't work, or if he ruined their friendship in the process?

Jack growled at himself in exasperation as he hit his room. He threw his dirty clothes into the laundry and himself into the shower. The steamy water didn't wash away any of his troubles, and when he made the mistake of picturing Kane in Dara's bed, he had to turn the water to icy cold to deal with his instant arousal. He was not going to jerk off to the memories of being with his best friends.

Not when I could be with them.

He snapped off the water and stalked naked into his room to find clean clothes.

And froze at the sound of voices. Muffled, but loud enough to recognize as Dara and Kane.

“Like that?”

“Oh hell, yes, right there. So good, Kane. More, please, more.”

The words trailed away but the sounds of their lovemaking continued. Jack searched the room in a frenzy to find where it was coming from. The moaning and grunts of pleasure were driving him mad by the time he found the walkie-talkie. It was tucked into the side of his backpack, the listen button jammed in the “on” position. Fuck it. Somehow the two at the other end must have accidentally triggered theirs as well.

Jack smacked the casing to try to get the button to release. It had been bad enough to be imagining them having sex without him, he didn't need a live play-by-play.

“Kane, would you...spank me?”

Oh my God. The image of her bare butt glowing pink flashed to his mind and his dick went instantly rigid.

“I'm not sure.”

“I loved it when you did it the other day. You and Jack, it was so good. Please?”

No. Fucking. Way. Jack couldn't stand it any longer. He cracked open the battery compartment, ready to break the connection when he heard a loud slap and a sharp answering gasp from Dara.

Another slap.

She cried out in pain, not pleasure, and Jack swore.

“Ouch, no. Stop, that hurts.”

“Sorry, I didn’t mean to...fuck that. I can’t. It’s not my thing and I think it’s for freaks anyway. Jack should have known better than—”

The walkie-talkie fell unminded to the floor, the batteries rolling two different directions as Jack saw red. For freaks, hey? What happened to the little lecture about not feeling guilty about things that brought pleasure? He yanked on a pair of boxers and stormed through the apartment. Just because the bastard had no finesse didn’t give him the right to hurt Dara.

He let himself into Dara’s apartment with her spare key and shouted a warning.

“Get your hands off her, you bloody idiot. You were all high and mighty a little while ago, feeding me back my words—”

He thrust open the door to her room, fully expecting to see them naked and tangling the sheets. Or Dara rubbing a sore butt cheek, eyes filled with tears. Instead the bed was covered with a Monopoly board, and Dara and Kane, fully clothed, fists full of popcorn, reclined on either side of the game.

“Hey, just because she asks me to sell Park Place doesn’t mean I’ve got to.” Kane snickered as he glanced Jack up and down. “Nice choice of attire, man. You wander the halls of the apartment like that and Santa’s going to put you on the naughty list for sure.”

“Jack? You okay?” Dara slipped off the bed, concern filling her eyes. “You look upset.”

What the hell was going on? Jack glared at them. “How did you do that?”

“Do what?” She frowned before slipping a few popcorn kernels into her mouth.

Was he going insane? He could have sworn he’d heard them. He scrambled to recall the actual words, but there was no way he could have misinterpreted the sexual sounds for people playing a board game. Kane turned his face away, but not before Jack caught a glimpse of a smile.

Kane...smiling? Even though Jack stood ready to pound the shit out of him for hurting Dara? What the hell was going on? Understanding broke over him, and for a second he wasn’t sure if he should leave, slug Kane like he’d planned in the first place, or burst out laughing.

“It wasn’t real. What I heard wasn’t real. How the fuck did you... Damn it, you set me up.”

Dara approached cautiously, as if concerned he was going to growl at her again. “Kinda?”

“Hey, no ‘kinda’ about it,” Kane gloated from the bed. He leaned back, hands crossed behind his head, wiggling his brows at Jack. “That was a damn good ruse. He fell for it—hook, line and sinker.”

She turned slightly and put her finger to her lips. “Shh, he doesn’t need to hear that yet. We can taunt him later.”

“It’s more fun when it’s immediate.” Kane reached beside him and pulled away a pillow to expose a walkie-talkie and his laptop computer. The open screen revealed a shot of Jack’s bedroom from a high angle.

Jack jerked in disbelief. “You set up a camera in my closet? If you wanted to see me naked, you could have just sat on the bloody bed.”

“It’s my cell phone, and yeah, well, you tell me this didn’t get your attention right where it hurt the most.”

Jack glanced back and forth between the two of them. On his right, his best friend grinned openly. On his left, stood the woman he cared about the most in the entire world. Only these two would have the gall to pull him out of a funk before he could wallow in it, because they were the only two that knew him, inside and out.

To hell with caution, it was time to take a chance. But they needed to know what cards he was laying on the table. If they’d take him, the *real* him, he was willing to try.

He held his arms out and Dara’s face lit up in the split second he had to see it before she threw herself at him. She burrowed in like a nesting animal, tucking tight to his side. “Please, Jack...”

“Spank you?”

From across the room Kane shouted in dismay. “Hey, none of that.”

Jack offered a smirk. “I wasn’t volunteering to spank *you*.”

“Thank God.”

Dara wiggled in his arms with her laughter, and he arranged them so he could look her in the eye. “Please what, Dara?”

She took a quick breath and held it for a second before blurting the words out. “Give us a chance. It might not work, but it might. It’s worth a shot.”

Jack waited, watching the emotions roll over her face. He imagined she saw the same kind of things in his. Some fear, tons of need. Rising hope.

Falling in love?

“Sweetheart, it’s not as easy as that. All weekend I’ve been thinking about how right it felt to be with you. When I wasn’t feeling jealous, I even loved watching you with my best friend, even though he does have a serious issue with exhibitionism.”

“Hey!”

Jack flipped Kane the bird, never taking his eyes off Dara’s face. Kane laughed out loud and she smiled as she lifted her hand to his face. Her touch was infinitively soft against the stubble on his jaw.

“But, Dara, I’ve got to tell you the truth. I like to be in charge in the bedroom.”

“I noticed.” She flushed hard. “I liked it.”

He paused. “What if I get even more bossy? Could you still enjoy it? I toned it down a lot the last couple of days, and if we do this thing, I’m not going to do that again.” Jack glanced at Kane who was sitting at attention, listening to his every word. “And you. What if I start ordering you around as well? Especially when it’s the three of us together?”

Kane grinned. "I'd say hallelujah and pass the plate for more."

Fuck.

"Seriously?" Jack asked. Could the whole issue be solved this easily?

Kane nodded. "When it's the three of us together, having you call the shots was pretty incredible. I didn't mind at all. Of course, if you interrupt Dara and I when we're alone, or try to touch me yourself, I will break your face."

Dara laughed softly. "Jack, we've got a lot of things to figure out while we work through this, but I loved how you had such power over me. The restraints, the spanking you made Kane give me, even making me wait for release... I've never felt more loved and cared for than when I let you take charge."

She turned and pointed to Kane. "And it all balances out nicely with Mr. Showoff here, who made me smile by cutting it up in the ski line, or chasing me down the hill like a sex maniac. I love the unique things you both bring to me, and it's always been that way as friends. Why should I expect you to be anything but yourself when it comes to sex?"

Jack stared into her pretty green eyes. It was true. They'd never asked him to do the changing; it had been his idea in the first place. To find out it hadn't been necessary—the relief hit him hard, although if he could kick himself in the ass right now he would. He'd wasted part of the time they'd had together.

He cleared his throat. "Damn it, you two. I'm supposed to be the logical one of our trio."

Kane laughed out loud. "Right. Like we'll fall for that load of bull."

Dara rested her head on his chest and hugged him tightly, squeezing the final bits of fear from his system.

He lifted her chin until he could see into her face.

"I hoped I'd get a chance to do this privately somewhere down the road, but I suppose what we're entering into means 'private' has new definitions. Dara, you want to move in with Kane and me? I really care about you. I think I love you, and I'd like to see where we can take this."

A mischievous expression flashed over her face. "Hang on..."

She slipped from his arms and out of the room. Jack watched her go, uncertainty seizing him.

"Good one, Jack, you scared her off already."

Jack pivoted slowly, giving Kane a glare. "Freaks?"

"Exhibitionist?"

They both laughed and Kane rose to give him a huge bear hug. They pounded each other on the back in typical guy fashion before Kane grabbed him by the arms. "This only works because it's you. We've been there for each other forever. This is just one more adventure."

Jack nodded. "We're going to have to get a bigger apartment."

"Bigger beds."

"Another ski-getaway in February."

Kane laughed. “Definitely.”

Dara strolled back, her hands tucked behind her back. Jack eyed her carefully. Tricky woman. Between her and Kane, he was never going to get to relax again. “You didn’t answer my question.”

“I thought this would be the best way.” She pulled out three chocolate bars and passed them around. “They’re from the freezer, so don’t break your teeth.”

Kane scooped her up and spun her in a circle. “You’re a goof.”

“Takes one to know one.”

It seemed more than appropriate. Jack held up his 3 Musketeers bar with ceremony. “Ahem. I hereby proclaim we’re all for one...”

Kane lowered Dara carefully, keeping her tucked under his arm. She held out her free hand and took Jack’s in it, linking their fingers together before raising her chocolate bar to meet the other two.

“...and I’m the one for all,” she declared.

The three of them burst out laughing. Jack cupped the back of her neck and drew her in for a long, slow kiss, letting the taste of her wash over him and clear away the remaining concerns. For now, this was all they needed to be together.

Loving, freestyle.

About the Author

Vivian Arend has hiked, biked, skied and paddled her way around most of North America and parts of Europe. Throughout all the wandering in the wilderness, stories have been planted and they are bursting out in vivid colour. Paranormal, twisted fairytales, red-hot contemporaries—the genres are all over.

Between times of living with no running water, she home schools her teenaged children and tries to keep up with her husband—the instigator of most of the wilderness adventures.

She loves to hear from readers: vivarend@gmail.com. You can also drop by www.vivianarend.com for more information on what is coming next.

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Soft shoulders and dangerous curves...

Whirlpool

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Forces of Nature, Book 2

Braden can't deny he's always wanted Chelsea, but getting involved wouldn't be fair. She has college and big dreams ahead of her—he has no desire to leave Jaffrey's Cove. Plus, there's the fact merfolk women often take more than one lover. Share her? Not in this lifetime.

When Chelsea's plans for the future fall apart, the only bright spot remaining is Sheriff Braden Marley. She's been angling for a shot at the gentle giant's heart—and the rest of him—for a long time. Except he not only holds her at a maddening arm's length, he somehow manages to keep other men away, too.

Enter Jamie Powell, a human marine archeologist who's in town for a cataloging Warning: Seductive shimmering lights, a sexy interlude on the strip club floor, mysterious Spanish lovers, and a trio caught in an eddy of intense sexual attraction. Swim at your own risk.project. His instant chemistry with Chelsea inspires her to try a sexy new tactic: make Braden jealous enough to stop dragging his feet and start leaving his shoes under her bed.

The ensuing storm generates a boatload of complications none of them saw coming. A forbidden attraction no amount of merfolk magic can erase. And the danger that their secrets could be exposed to the outside world...

Warning: Seductive shimmering lights, a sexy interlude on the strip club floor, mysterious Spanish lovers, and a trio caught in an eddy of intense sexual attraction. Swim at your own risk.

Enjoy the following excerpt for Whirlpool:

Chelsea licked her lips and let her head fall to the side. Braden kissed his way down her neck, nuzzling behind her ear. Her nipples tightened, one breast held cupped in Braden's hand, framed like an exotic work of art.

Desire threaded through Jamie, then one seam at a time yanked apart his inhibitions.

"Hmm, yes. Feels so good, Braden. Touch me, love me. I need it, need Jamie too." Her husky voice beckoned him, the sound swirling through the room, and Jamie grew lightheaded. The desire to join them, to touch and caress every part of the beautiful woman before him grew irresistible.

He wanted her. It was the plain and simple truth. Jamie lifted his gaze to take in Braden's towering frame, watching the two of them move in a beautiful symmetry together. Smooth, sensual.

So be it. In spite of not completely understanding all the whys, he was willing to accept it for now and figure the details out later.

They met in the middle of the bed and all his saved-up passion broke free. Jamie kissed Chelsea like his life depended on it. Her sweet tongue tangled with his, their naked torsos touching, the tight tips of her nipples hard against his chest. She caressed his shoulders, dragged her fingers through his hair, tugging harder as the intensity of the kiss increased.

Braden joined them. He'd stripped off his shirt and the bare skin of his arm brushed Jamie's side as they trapped Chelsea between them.

She moaned with delight. "Oh yes, this is what I needed."

The breathless confession did something to Jamie's heart. He'd desired her before all the chaos of the day, and for whatever reason he was receiving this gift, he was going to treasure it.

He glanced over her shoulder to see Braden smiling at him. "It really is what we want. She needs us both right now."

Jamie nodded, staring with fascination at the centers of Braden's eyes. Blue flecks of light reflected back at him. *I know what you are, man of mythology.* The temptation to reach over and kiss Braden no longer frightened him. Passion erased his habit of analyzing.

Chelsea wiggled impatiently between them, and Jamie willingly turned back. He sat on the bed to worship her breasts, laving her nipples, nibbling along the soft under curve. Braden slipped a hand over her belly and between her legs, parting the pale curls of her mound to play with her clitoris. He slid his fingers in and out of her passage. Jamie watched everything as he worked his way down her body, needing to taste her as the scent in the room increased.

"Braden, give me room."

Two men making love to one woman—he'd never done this before. There were points of juggling limbs he'd never realized. Braden switched his hold, bringing his hand between Chelsea's legs from behind. As Braden eased his fingers back into her sheath, Jamie covered her with his mouth, teasing her clit with his tongue. Her flavor filled him, made his head spin. He reached down and circled his cock with a fist, holding off to make sure Chelsea was satisfied before he grew too tempted.

They worked in tandem, Jamie matching the pace of Braden's thrusts. Slow now, then quicker, until she cried out, her body quivering between them. Heated liquid rushed his tongue as he lapped, dragging his tongue against her folds. Braden pressed in, again and again, prolonging her climax. Jamie's tongue brushed Braden's fingers as the other man slowly circled her clitoris, teasing the still-quivering flesh under his fingers. Chelsea sighed heavily as she leaned back, supported by Braden's torso, her skin flushed.

Jamie held on to his control by a thread, his aching cock reminding him he wanted much, much more.

"You're amazing, Chelsea, so beautiful." Braden kissed her neck.

"Please..."

The tormented need in her voice made Jamie put aside his caution. No longer waiting to see what Braden would do, he rolled her to the mattress and covered her with his body. Skin to skin, her warmth felt

so right under him. He closed his eyes for just a second to appreciate it fully.

He kissed her again, this time a slow and thorough exploration. Tongues and lips and open mouths. He breathed her in and the darkness and fears he'd experienced all faded away. She was right. It was a celebration—of life and love and a passion that had been far too long unanswered.

The stroke of a hand down his back reminded him Braden was still with them, and yet...he couldn't stop. All his focus was on Chelsea, on the pleasure he found in her, the pleasure he wanted to bring her.

"You should see what I see." Braden's deep voice rustled through the air. He touched them both, his hands skimming Jamie's side. Hovering where Jamie cupped Chelsea's breast. The contrast of their fair skin and Braden's darker coloring—his rougher, beefier hands—showed clearly. "You two look like erotic Greek statues, porcelain fine and breathtakingly beautiful."

Chelsea laughed softly as she snaked out an arm to catch Braden around the neck. "And you're Poseidon, rising from the sea to love us both?"

"Hmm, it's not difficult to love you, baby." He kissed her, lowering himself to lie skin to skin against Jamie's side. Jamie watched in fascination until Chelsea squirmed under him, pressing her breast up into his hand, and he shifted to be able to reach her easier. He nibbled and licked, listening to the soft noises of pleasure she made, hearing Braden's whispered words of love.

Then a hand cupped his own neck, threading through his hair. Braden took control of him and turned their faces toward each other.

"I want to taste you." Braden paused, and Jamie's heart leapt to his throat. Slowly, inch by inch, Braden approached. He gave ample time to retreat, but Jamie wanted this. Wanted it as much as he wanted the woman lying under him.

With a satisfied hum, Braden brought their mouths in contact. Rougher, more forceful than touching Chelsea, but just as right. Jamie ignored everything else and simply felt—the caress of Chelsea's hands as she explored his back, the harsher touch of Braden callused hand trailing over Jamie's lower back and buttocks. The softness of her body under him as she opened her legs and he nestled tighter between her thighs. The curls on her mound were wet from his mouth and her juices, and they coated his cock as he rocked his hips slowly. He was enveloped by both of them. Surrounded and satisfied.

He'd never had such a rich and full experience before in his life and he reveled in it.

"I want you. Want you now." Chelsea pressed upward, her rigid nipples hard against his chest.

Love takes courage. Loving two men takes twice as much.

The Boys Next Door

© 2010 Sierra Dafoe

At seventeen, Tommy Ambinder was Annie Parsons' first love, the center of her world. Almost. There was a secret spot reserved for Judah, Tommy's elder brother. On the day she discovered Judah wanted her, as well, the aftermath drove Annie out of town—and a wedge between the men she loved.

Now, haunted by guilt, Annie has returned to Melgrove, Montana with one hope in her heart—that twenty years has overcome the rift between the Ambinder boys. If they've mended fences, maybe she can repair her own life too.

Tommy's missed Annie all these years, but he never realized how much until one glimpse reignites the passion that time hasn't quenched. Something else hasn't changed, either—half of her heart still belongs to Judah.

Now, with Annie poised to run again, history is threatening to repeat itself—unless one of them has the courage to break free of the pattern and blaze a new trail that's wide enough for all three.

Warning: This book contains all the volcanic intensity of first love, searing-hot sex scenes, and two brothers sharing the one woman they love!

Enjoy the following excerpt for The Boys Next Door:

Judah froze in shock as Annie buried her face against his chest, her arms wrapped around him so tight he could feel her heart thudding. "Oh God, Judah!" Tears were streaming down her face as she babbled, "I thought you were gone, I didn't know what happened, the house was all empty and I didn't know where you were!"

She looked up at him finally, a frantic sort of happiness shining in her eyes. "How are you? How's Tommy? Is he okay? God, I've missed you!"

He wanted to shake her. He wanted to hit her, almost. For twenty years she'd been gone, vanished off the face of the earth, and now here she was smiling at him, telling him she'd missed him?

How in twenty years could she have changed so little? She was still as impulsive, still as heedless of consequences, blissfully unaware of how her actions affected others.

He wanted to kiss her so badly he almost couldn't breathe.

He held himself rigid, not returning her embrace. Uncertainty bloomed like a shadow in the hazel depths of her eyes, and she dropped her arms, looking away.

Judah felt his heart lurch back into motion as her gaze released him, the sudden rush of blood making his head spin.

Annie Parsons. If she'd changed at all in twenty years, he couldn't see it. Oh sure, there were a few wrinkles at the corners of her eyes, and the lustrous brown hair which her mother had always kept neatly trimmed now hung in a careless shag cut he wasn't sure he liked. Unthinkingly, he started to reach out and brush the dust from her hair—then Judah stopped himself, fisting his hand at his side.

What in hell did he think he was doing?

Gritting his jaw, he jerked his chin at the hillside. "Came over to see what spooked the livestock. What are you doing here, Annie?"

She gave him a quick, almost guilty sidelong glance, then shrugged, her gaze tracing the low, weathered hills. "I just...wanted to see how you were, I guess. I'm sorry I panicked. When I saw the house..."

He nodded to himself. He knew that panic. It had flared in his own gut the day she'd disappeared, making him push past her crying mother and storm up the stairs, determined to see for himself.

Her abandoned room, her empty closet, had hit him like a hard punch straight to the stomach. Even now, the memory could still rock him if he wasn't careful.

"It just got to be too much to keep up, after Dad died." His terse explanation didn't begin to carry the weight of grief of those days, the way everything had seemed to fall apart all at once. Even her parents had moved away shortly thereafter.

But Annie must've caught an echo of his emotion anyway—she looked at him, soft concern showing in her hazel eyes. "When did it happen?"

It was his turn to shrug, looking out over the pastures. "Fifteen years ago." *Five years after you left. Where did you go, Annie?* He kicked at a clump of dried leaves clotting the porch, making them rustle. "It's amazing how quick things go to pieces out here."

She was still watching him, her gaze seeming to cut straight through the wall he was trying so hard to keep between them. The warm compassion in her eyes stroked him in a way that both angered and soothed him.

Damn it, Annie, stop looking at me like that.

"I'm sorry, Judah."

"Yeah, well..." He nodded briefly, pushing away her sympathy. "Ma's doing all right. She's sixty-three now, can you believe it? Sixty-three and still gets up at five a.m. to feed the chickens."

"And Tommy? How is he?"

Judah froze at the question. Annie's eyes were wide, direct, the concern shading their hazel depths not only for him now. Her voice was so gentle, damn it, asking about Tommy. As if she still loved him. As if she still cared.

Anger flared inside him, along with the old, twisted jealousy. If she'd ever truly loved Tommy, if she'd cared about him at all, she would never have let Judah kiss her beneath the bleachers. Never would have let him touch her as he'd dreamed of doing. Never would have run to his arms in the night...

Judah cleared his throat. Against his will, his gaze flicked downward, tracing the line of her thighs through her faded jeans. "He's all right. He's in Washington these days. Bought a farm there. He's married now." He watched Annie closely, wanting to see her reaction.

If his words surprised her, she hid it well. "That's great. When was this?"

"Seven, eight years ago. Something like that. He's got kids," Judah elaborated. "Two boys and a girl."

Something flickered briefly in her eyes, but she only smiled. "That makes you an uncle. Congratulations."

"Yeah, I guess it does." He cleared his throat again.

"And you?" she asked. "How about you?"

Her eyes were too soft. Too warm. Too lovely. Judah shifted uncomfortably and pushed back his Stetson. "Me? I'll never leave Montana." He snorted. "You know me."

"Do I?"

Two words, one little question, and suddenly it seemed like there wasn't enough air for his lungs. Never mind the vast blue sky above them, or the miles of open, rolling hills all around. Judah moved closer, his voice dropping half an octave. "I'll always be here, Annie. You know that."

Her gaze rose to meet his, full of shadows. Maybe longing. Something thrummed in the air between them, and Judah stepped away quickly.

Christ, what was he *doing*?

"So, how long you in town for?" He leaned against the porch railing, absently noting the flaking paint. *Ought to do something about that*, he thought, then: *Why bother? It's not like it matters.*

But it still broke his heart.

Annie shrugged. "Just overnight, really. I booked a room at the boarding house."

He nodded. "You drive out here?"

"Yeah. I parked up on the ridge. I...I didn't want anyone to see me."

Which was probably smart, Judah admitted. Even thoughtful. Maybe Annie had changed, if only a little.

Suddenly, he wasn't so happy with the idea.

Then he pictured her sliding pell-mell down the slope, sending dirt flying and scaring the cattle half to pieces. He had to fight to suppress a smile. Yeah, that was the Annie he remembered, all right.

"Well, come on," he said, straightening. "I'll give you a lift."

She was silent as he drove down the long, dusty ranch road, hopping out without his asking to open the livestock gate at the far end. Her hair hung in her face, and in the afternoon light she looked as slim and

nimble as she had at seventeen. She grinned at him as she climbed back into the truck. “Thought I forgot that, didn’t you?”

Judah merely grunted and turned onto Route 32.

But as they rattled up the dirt track running up to the ridge, he heard himself saying, “If you’re bored tonight, go on down to the pool hall. They put in a dance floor,” he added awkwardly. *Shut up, Judah!*

“Are you going to be there?”

“Dunno. I doubt it.”

Hell no, Judah, and what in hell are you thinking?

“Well, maybe I’ll think about it, then,” she answered. “Thanks for the lift. And say hi to your mom for me. I miss her.” Opening the door, she hesitated. “It’s good to see you, Judah.”

He didn’t answer, and after a moment she climbed out. He waited as she walked to what looked like a brand-new Buick, started it up and backed it around. Her eyes met his once through the windshield, and she waved as she drove past.

He didn’t wave back.

Judah watched in the rearview mirror until the Buick was out of sight. He wasn’t going to the pool hall. It had taken too many years for the hole in his chest to stop aching constantly. Too many sleepless nights wondering where she was, how she was. Wondering if she was all right.

She was fine, and that was enough. He didn’t need to know more than that. He didn’t *want* to know more.

And he sure as hell didn’t want her getting anywhere near Tommy.

Unwrapping these gifts could get a girl in a world of trouble.

What She Craves

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Cape May, Book 2

Tory Jeffries likes things simple. A modest home, a web design business, easygoing men. Except there's never one around when she needs one—and she needs a date for *the* event of the year, her friend Con Walker's annual Christmas party. Not that she couldn't go alone, but spending the evening as a third wheel doesn't appeal.

When her old friend Devon Mason turns up dateless as well, she anticipates a fun evening with her flirty, bad-boy buddy. Then Devon and Con offer her a Christmas treat that her inner slut begs her not to refuse. A night with both delicious, muscular men. In Con's bed. Naked.

After growing up together with an up-close-and-personal view of life's ugly side, it doesn't surprise Devon and Con that they've fallen for the same woman. They've watched her date men who aren't nearly good enough for her, and now it's time to show the fiery blonde just how perfectly she fits in their sinful fantasy sandwich. When they take their first long, slow taste, something extraordinary happens. They fall in love.

Now all they have to do is convince their suddenly skittish princess that fairy tales can come true...

Warning: This book contains one sassy heroine getting two tasty alpha heroes for Christmas. Expect some crazy hot m/f/m sex and a Christmas Eve party that'll blow your stockings clean off.

Enjoy the following excerpt for What She Craves:

Tory snorted and sat back in her chair. "You can't be serious, Summer. It's your first Christmas with Gage. I'm not crashing that little party, no matter how many times you ask."

Inwardly, Tory cringed. How pathetic, having her best friend take pity on her on Christmas Eve. It made her feel like a little lost orphan or something. Even though Summer didn't mean it that way, Tory still wanted to crawl under the rug. Or better yet, have some handsome man walk through her front door and sweep her away. Sort of the way Gage had come into Summer's life. He'd brought life back into her friend's eyes. Tory was grateful to him for that. A little envious that she didn't have a guy treating her as if she hung the moon, sure, but happy for Summer. Gage was exactly what Summer needed. The death of Seth, Summer's first husband, had put the woman into a deepfreeze. Gage had come along and thawed her out.

Summer reached across the table and swatted her hand. "Don't be so difficult. Gage said he'd love to have you over, and you know I always enjoy your company."

Tory forced a smile to her lips as she picked up her mug and sipped her hot coffee. The temperature was in the teens outside, and it wasn't much warmer in her drafty kitchen. As she looked around, taking in the nearly fifty year old house, Tory sighed. It'd been her grandmother's house until she'd passed away and left everything she owned to her only granddaughter. Tory knew she should renovate the old two-story, but she couldn't bring herself to change even the color of the paint, as hard as the bright yellow was on the eyes, much less let some construction crew tromp around getting drywall dust all over her Nana's prized area rug. Her grandfather had bought the oval rug when he'd had to go overseas on a business trip. It wasn't the most beautiful thing, with the puke-green-and-rust floral print, but her grandmother had loved it, cherished it. No, Tory thought with fondness, the house would stay as it was, well-loved, if a little drafty at times.

Tory took another sip of her coffee and desperately tried to come up with a logical reason why she couldn't spend the evening with the lovebirds, when the phone rang. Ah, saved! Tory set her cup back down and stood. By the time she'd reached the living room, the phone had rung twice more. She grabbed it from the cradle and said, "Hello?"

"Hey, sugar. What's up?"

Tory smiled as a little tingle skated down her spine. She'd recognize that devilish voice anywhere. One of her best buds, Devon Mason. Sweet, funny, cute as hell and just ornery enough to make her forget the little pity party she'd been throwing herself. "Hi, handsome. Not much, just talking to Summer." Tory walked back into the kitchen to find Summer rinsing her cup and setting it in the sink.

Devon groaned. "Is she still trying to get you to go to her place tonight?"

"Yes," Tory bit out, as she picked up her own cup and brought it to the sink.

"Nothing quite like watching new lovers to make you feel like a total loser during the holidays, huh?"

Tory turned and leaned against the counter, Summer's gaze glued to hers. "Uh, yeah. Something like that."

"So, how about you come with me instead?"

Instantly perking up, Tory asked, "You're going to Con's party?" Their mutual friend Con Walker held an annual Christmas party. The event was talked about for weeks beforehand and months afterwards. No expense was spared when Con threw a party. She'd gone every year and always had the time of her life. This time around, she had no date. Going alone seemed...beyond sad.

She heard what sounded like shuffling papers in her ear, then Devon said, "Wouldn't miss it."

Summer motioned to the other room, indicating she was going to the bathroom. Tory nodded. Once alone in the kitchen, she asked, "And you don't have a date? That surprises me, Devon."

Devon made a tsking sound into the phone. "I wouldn't ask you if I had a date." He paused, then added, "And why should that surprise you? It's not like I'm a player, Tory."

Okay, now she felt bad. “That’s not what I meant. It’s just that you always have a date at Con’s Christmas Eve Gala.”

“So do you, sugar. But I figured since we’re both available this year, it couldn’t hurt to go together, right?”

It did sound like fun. Tory always enjoyed Devon’s company. And Con, though not as playful and flirtatious as Devon, made for some damned interesting company, she admitted to herself. Where Devon tended to be the impulsive jokester, Con’s personality leaned more toward quiet and intense. Together they never failed to entertain her. As Summer came back into the room, Tory made her decision.

“What time are you picking me up?”

She heard Devon chuckle. “Be ready at seven, sugar.”

“Okay.” A little shiver ran through her. Crazy as it seemed, she was nervous. *It’s not a date. He’s one of your best guy friends, nothing more. Get a grip.*

“Good. And Tory?”

“Yeah?”

“I have a feeling this is going to be a Christmas Eve we’ll both remember for years to come.”

Devon’s warm voice uttering such a wicked promise had Tory frowning and staring at the phone. What was that about? By the time she managed to think up a witty reply, all she heard was a dial tone.

“You’ve made plans, haven’t you?”

Summer’s soft voice tore Tory out of her musings. She clicked end on the phone and placed it on the counter beside her. “Devon is taking me to Con’s. He’s picking me up at seven.” Tory mentally ran through her entire closet and cursed.

“What is it?”

“I don’t have squat to wear. I need to go shopping.” Tory grinned and bobbed her eyebrows. “Want to hit the mall?”

Summer clapped her hands together. “I see cappuccinos and sexy dresses in our very near future.”

Tory laughed. “Sweet. Let me get changed and we’ll see if we can’t find something that’ll knock the guys right on their asses.”

“Guys? You and Devon are just friends though, right?”

That stopped her. Friends. “Of course. I just meant, you know, if there are any single guys at the party.”

“Uh-huh.”

Tory turned and nearly ran from the kitchen. She was going to a party with a friend. She’d have a few drinks, laugh a little, then come home. A nice evening out. That’s all there was to it. A little voice in the back of her mind kept blathering on about Devon’s sensual voice and the promise he’d uttered.

That little voice needed to shut the hell up already.

Devon sat back in his chair and stared at the phone, a sense of anticipation stirring his blood. Tonight would be the night. It had to be. He'd waited long enough. He picked up the phone again and dialed another number.

"Tell me you have good news."

Devon smiled at the frustration in Con's voice. "She's coming," he said, putting his friend out of his misery. "I'm picking her up at seven."

He heard Con let out a breath. "Damn. I can't believe it's finally happening."

"Easy, Con." Devon felt compelled to issue the small warning. "She's only agreed to accompany me as a friend. Nothing more."

"I know, but I'm still trying to think positive here. Don't piss on my parade."

Devon chuckled and crossed his legs at the ankles. "No one is pissing on anyone's parade, but we need to take this slow. I don't want her hurt."

"And you think I do?"

Flicking a glance at his office door, ensuring no one was around, he replied, "No. It's just that Tory is going to be shocked when she finds out we *both* want her. That we've both ached to be more than her good buddies for the past three years. If I had to guess, I'd say she's never been with two guys at once. Much less two guys she's viewed as mere friends." The more he thought about it, the more his gut churned. "Christ, she's so damn innocent."

"Especially compared to the two of us, is that what you're saying?"

Con's anger seeped through the phone. "We're a hell of a lot more experienced, and you know it. Already I feel like the big bad wolf luring the sweet little girl with the promise of candy."

"Damn it, Devon, we're not wolves and she's not a little girl. This isn't about getting laid. It's about finally having Tory all to ourselves. This is the best opportunity we're going to get."



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