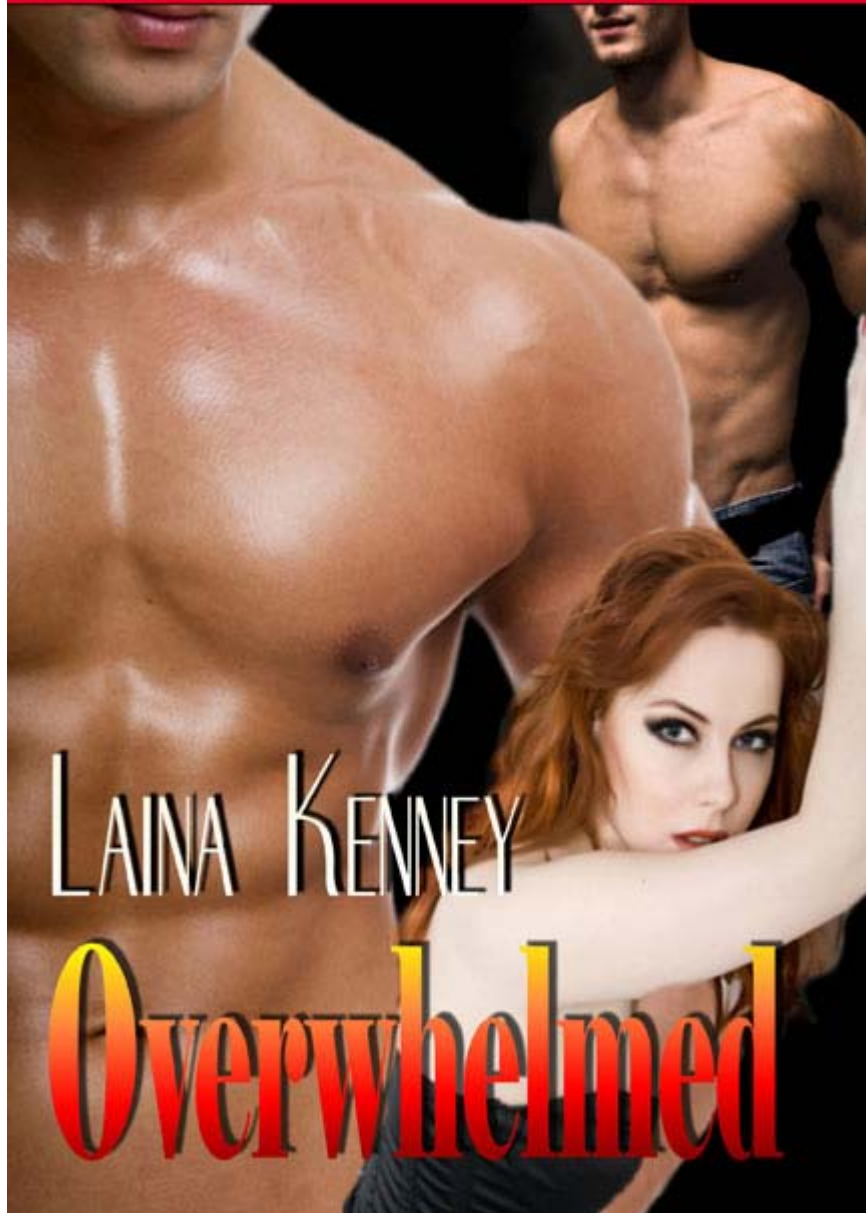


Siren Publishing

Ménage Àmour

LAINA KENNEY

Overwhelmed



DIG Security 2

Overwhelmed

Carolyn Winston has spent years fighting her scorching attraction to her two bosses at DIG Security. It is all she can do to work each day and try to act normal while her heartbeat speeds up in their presence and her knees actually feel weak. Her tender heart tells her that she could never choose between the men, and the alarming rumors say their romantic liaisons only last one night. Better to keep her distance.

Used to sharing everything of importance, Granger Hamilton and Isaac Marks, former Army Rangers turned security specialists, have waited impatiently for years for Carolyn to acknowledge the heated chemistry drawing them all together.

Now, with the threat of danger facing the woman who is the fierce obsession of their wounded hearts, the waiting is over. They've agreed on a plan to save their reputations and finally seduce the girl. And what they get, they keep.

Genre: Contemporary, Ménage a Trois/Quatre, Romantic
Suspense

Length: 25,181 words

OVERWHELMED

DIG Security 2

Laina Kenney

MENAGE AMOUR



Siren Publishing, Inc.
www.SirenPublishing.com

ABOUT THE E-BOOK YOU HAVE PURCHASED:

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

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

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

A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK

IMPRINT: Ménage Amour

OVERWHELMED

Copyright © 2010 by Laina Kenney

E-book ISBN: 1-61034-122-8

First E-book Publication: December 2010

Cover design by Jinger Heaston

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

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

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

PUBLISHER

Siren Publishing, Inc.

www.SirenPublishing.com

Letter to Readers

Dear Readers,

If you have purchased this copy of *Overwhelmed* by Laina Kenney from BookStrand.com or its official distributors, thank you. Also, thank you for not sharing your copy of this book.

Regarding E-book Piracy

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

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

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

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

DEDICATION

To Kelly, a true friend who asked for a story with a spirited redhead.
Words cannot express how much your support means to me.

OVERWHELMED

DIG Security 2

LAINA KENNEY

Copyright © 2010

Chapter 1

Carolyn shifted uncomfortably against the back wall of the conference room while the speaker switched machines. She was trying to take some of the pressure off her ankle. A bad break and four surgeries made it usable but not reliable, and certainly not pain-free. She could always predict a rainy day.

The guest speaker droned on, long past the time when the meeting should have ended, and Carolyn was starting to think longingly of pain pills and a tall glass of water.

Aside from the dull ache, her weak ankle was also a fashion nightmare, preventing her from wearing the gorgeous stiletto heels that used to be her trademark. At five feet seven, she wasn't short by any means, but with soft blue eyes, fine red hair, and delicate features, she needed all the help she could get to hold her own against the testosterone-laden men in the security profession. Being able to stare them down eye-to-eye was something she missed on a regular basis.

A deep voice rumbled softly in her ear. "Sit down, Cara. There's a chair free in the fourth row."

She shivered, but shook her head to discourage him. That dark velvet voice that seduced her every night in her dreams could only belong to one man.

Grange Hamilton, co-owner of DIG Security and one of her bosses, moved up beside her. With his close-cropped black hair, icy silver eyes, and military bearing, he was the original agent, powerful, silent, and cool in a crisis. There was no reason at all why his voice should cause such a heated reaction in her treacherous body. It was all she could do to keep from rubbing her thighs together, but he would notice, damn him. He noticed every detail. It was part of what made him such an impressive agent. Add to that his towering height, his fierce intelligence, and his strong, muscular body, and Carolyn could hardly keep her hands, or her dreams, off him.

“Carolyn, sit down.”

“I’m not your dog,” she whispered fiercely, refusing to look at him.

A hard hand manacled her wrist, and she was dragged through the back doors and out into the bright hallway.

Grange swung her up into his arms, and in three long strides, they were in his office and he was kicking the door shut behind them. Before she could draw a breath to shriek at him, he tossed her onto the big leather couch.

He turned and pulled open a drawer, grabbed a small white pill bottle, and pitched it across to her. She caught it purely out of reflex. He moved to the small fridge, took out a bottle of water, and opened the cap with a harsh motion.

“Take the pain meds,” he said, handing her the water and moving across to the desk.

“Grange—”

“I’m warning you right now, baby, I’ve about had it. Take the damn meds, and don’t bother objecting.”

His voice was no longer calm, vibrating with such intensity that Carolyn sat stunned. Only when he growled and started stalking toward her again did she hurry to shake out a pill, swallow it, and guzzle cold water to chase it down—gazing at him wide-eyed the whole time.

He moved like a jungle cat, all sleek muscles and power, and she couldn't take her eyes off of him.

At her compliance, his shoulders relaxed marginally. "I can't stand to see you in pain," Grange said quietly, rubbing at his short black hair with one hand.

"Grange, I—" She shook her head. "I can handle it."

"Well, I can't." His voice was hard, uncompromising. "I can't see you in pain. God, what you've gone through, the surgeries, the pins, the crutches and the physiotherapy—" he broke off. "Damn it!"

"I appreciate your concern," Carolyn began, desperate to get back on a professional footing when all she really wanted was to curl up against that massive chest and whimper while he soothed her with his dark voice. It was every fantasy of hers to have him care for her that way.

"Don't fucking *appreciate my concern!*" he nearly snarled. "Don't shove me back and pretend we're casual acquaintances who just met, for fuck's sake!"

From such a controlled man, the heat of his anger was stunning. The room seemed too small to hold the force of it.

Carolyn stood up, glancing uneasily toward the closed door, and he stepped forward to block the one exit. Her heart rate accelerated.

"No," he said. "You're not running this time. You know me, you know I'd take a bullet for you, so you can't possibly be afraid that I'd hurt you no matter how pissed I am. And make no mistake, baby, I'm pissed off and ready to do something about it." He crossed his arms over his muscular chest and planted his feet. His posture stated that he wasn't moving any time soon.

"Be sensible," Carolyn snapped, refusing to back down. "There's no reason for you to be angry with me. I don't answer to you for the choices I make outside of work, and I only answer to Dash at work. Whatever the hell your problem is, I suggest you get over it."

"Love to, baby, but you'll have to cooperate. You are my problem, so just name the day and I'll get over you and stay over you until you

can't remember a time when I wasn't."

His tone made the words a deep sexual promise. It sent shivers down her spine and into her dampening sex. His voice was a dark, velvety caress against her heightened senses. Each time he spoke it made her muscles want to melt into a puddle at his feet. His not-so-subtle dominance was pushing buttons she didn't want to acknowledge.

"Grange, stop this." She made her voice as firm as she could, trying to get control of the situation. If he ever knew how appealing she found him, how she fought every day to come to work and speak to him in a businesslike way, he would never back down until she was in his bed. She knew that like she knew her own name.

He shook his head slowly, his silver eyes intent on her face. "It isn't going to stop, and I think you know it. This thing between us isn't going away. It's just getting stronger with time. I'll admit it would be easier if I didn't want you. God knows, just watching you walk by makes concentrating on work impossible some days." His eyes swept over her, lingering with heated approval on her long legs and slender curves. "But, honey, I wouldn't trade a minute of the time we spend together, even if it is torture." His slow grin lit his pale eyes.

Carolyn almost sagged with the relief. He was a big man, but she didn't fear him physically. She knew to her soul that he would never raise a hand to hurt her, or any woman, but his anger was powerful, intimidating.

He noticed the change in her immediately, and his silver gaze softened, brightened. "Cara," he breathed. "Come here, honey."

She was moving before she had time to consider, and he wrapped her up in his warm arms and pulled her against his chest. He tucked her head under his chin and just rocked her.

Grange held her very close. In his arms, she felt small and treasured as he rubbed his hands soothingly up and down her back. Each long stroke pressed her closer to him until she was leaning her full weight on him. He nuzzled his nose into her soft red-gold hair and

inhaled deeply.

“You’re sniffing me again,” Carolyn murmured. He always seemed to stand close to her, and several times, she had caught him leaning toward her and inhaling.

“I dream of your scent,” he said and inhaled again. “I dreamed of your soft clean scent for years in some of the worst, reeking hellholes on this planet.” His voice was low, and she strained to hear. “You will never know how that saved me. It made me want to live when other men just wanted to die.”

His arms tightened around her for a moment before he straightened and began to draw away. Instantly, Carolyn wrapped her own arms around his back and held him to her, refusing to allow him to escape from his own revealing words. She had known of his years with the Army Rangers, but she didn’t know any of the darker details of his life before he became a partner with his fellow Rangers, Dash and Isaac, to form DIG Security. The idea of such a strong man feeling such hopeless desperation shocked her.

“I’m glad you wanted to live. I’m glad you lived,” she whispered fiercely to him, uncaring of her own vulnerability in the face of his.

Grange leaned down and captured her mouth savagely with his. His tongue pushed between her lips as she gasped, and the incredible taste of him made her knees feel weak. One big hand grasped the back of her head, tunneled in her hair, and held her in place for his marauding mouth. Her heart was suddenly racing, and it was difficult to draw breath.

His kiss was no gentle exploration. It was a blatant sex act. It was overwhelming, and it was glorious.

Carolyn’s thoughts spun and whirled to a halt as she was dragged down with him into a world of pure feeling. Her nipples beaded, scraping against the lace of her bra as he moved her back and forth against his hard chest. She moaned helplessly around his tongue, and he pulled away long enough to murmur something dark and seductive before returning to lick deeply into her mouth once more. It was too

much sensation, and she sagged into his powerful arms, whimpering in pleasure and despair.

Supporting her weight and never lifting his mouth from its deep conquest of hers, he turned, pressed her back against the door, and held her there with the full weight of his body between her parted thighs. The sudden heat and hardness against her most sensitive area made her body release a trickle of heated fluid. She writhed against his hot body, riding the ridge of his thick penis through their clothes. His hips took up a firm counter-rhythm, and the delicious rise of sensation caused them both to groan with pleasure.

Still possessing her mouth in an endless kiss, Grange pushed one hand under her bottom and tilted her hips to the perfect angle, rubbing his hard cock against her hot flesh in a faster, harder tempo. The motion was intense, shocking, shooting bolts of sensation through her bloodstream. Carolyn's whole body clenched, and her wild cry as she climaxed was caught in his mouth.

"God, baby, you burn me up," he growled against her lips. He turned with her still in his arms and was moving toward the big leather sofa, when there was a knock on the door followed by a rattle of the doorknob.

"Grange, did you know your door is locked? I can't get in."

The sickly sweet Southern voice on the other side caused Carolyn to stiffen in Grange's embrace, and he cursed under his breath as he felt it.

Carolyn tried to struggle out of his arms, and she felt her feet touch the floor, but Grange took a firmer grip to keep her in his arms. "No way are you escaping now, not after this," he stated, face flushed and still breathing heavily. "We'll just wait for her to go away, and then you and I will finish—"

"Grange, I know you're in there. Aren't you going to let me in, darling?" The female voice outside the door was Nina, the former model so famous that she had been known internationally at the age of fourteen by her first name alone, was definitely not going away.

Carolyn privately thought of her as the office piranha.

“Yes, Grange, *darling*, aren’t you going to let Nina in?” Carolyn hissed as she increased her efforts to get out of his embrace. “I’m sure she would be happy to help you *finish*!”

“No damn way,” he said, easily controlling her struggles by clamping her against him until she could hardly draw breath. Outmaneuvered for the moment, she subsided. “I want more of you, and none of that venomous—”

“Granger? Let me in.” The doorknob rattled, but the lock held.

“Nina,” a male voice called from down the hall, “have you got the interim report for Mr. Jamieson’s reps? I’m meeting with them in a few minutes, and I can’t find it.”

“I don’t have it,” her frustrated voice replied.

“But I gave it to you this morning for approval and—”

“Fine! I’ll get it!”

Carolyn could hear her heels clacking down the hall toward the bank of printers. Grange heaved a sigh that sounded like relief and leaned his forehead against hers.

“She’s gone,” he murmured, “but she’ll likely be back. She must have seen us come in here.”

“Seen you drag me in here, you mean.” Carolyn’s voice was sharp with the humiliation of coming apart in his arms with almost no stimulation. He would certainly think she was easy after that shameful display.

“Easy!” He snorted. It made her realize that she had spoken her fears aloud. She could feel her face flushing, and mentally cursed at having a redhead’s fair complexion.

“Baby, I’ve been at your heels for a solid year, and I wanted you long before that. I’ve waited and held back until I thought I would go mad, first because you were too young and then because of your live-in boyfriend.”

His lip curled around the sneer in his voice at the thought. Carolyn paused. Surely Grange wasn’t jealous?

“There’s nothing easy about that,” he informed her.

His normal cool tone held such intense male frustration that she found herself grinning and tried to school her features into a more serious expression before he saw it. His black brows snapped together in a frown, and Carolyn knew he had seen her reaction.

“Well, you don’t need to be so damned pleased about it,” he grumbled as she stepped back from his loosened embrace. He ran his hands down her arms as she moved, and the feeling gave her goose bumps.

The lock clicked and the door opened. Isaac, the third partner in DIG Security, took in the situation at a glance, lingering on Carolyn’s rumpled skirt and tumbled hair.

“Starting without me?” he asked lightly, but the smoldering look in his dark eyes was anything but casual.

Carolyn flushed. There were rumors that Grange and Isaac shared their women as they shared their large estate. Nina had started one of those rumors herself, telling anyone who would listen that the men had shared her and pleased her until she was too exhausted to scream. In fact, the third member of the business partnership, Dash Williams, had also been said to share women in wicked threesomes with Grange and Isaac.

That part of it couldn’t be true, Carolyn thought, because Dash had just recently found his soul mate in her friend and colleague Sara, and had wasted no time in moving her into his home on the shared estate. Still, the two men standing before her were formidable on an individual basis. She could hardly imagine any woman being able to handle them together.

Even though the thought of being with both of them caused her womb to clench deeply, she was certain that she could never handle such a relationship. As a fantasy, the idea of being sandwiched between those two hard bodies was incomparable, but the reality would be far from satisfying in the long term. As intense and delicious as it would be to take both men as her lovers, when the

relationship ended and they left, as they always did, Carolyn would be devastated. She certainly didn't want to end up bitter and vicious, like Nina, with her incessant bragging about her night with DIG's owners and her schemes to get them back in her bed, as if her entire life centered around the three men and had no meaning without them.

Isaac stepped into the office and shut the door softly behind him.

"I do hate to interrupt," he said, forestalling any comment by holding up one hand, "but Carolyn's father is here. I put him in Room Two with a cup of coffee, but I don't know how long that will hold him. He's determined to see you today and won't take no for an answer. Says we've kept you so busy working that you can't return his calls."

Isaac's tone was sardonic. It announced that he was fully aware of how Carolyn was avoiding her father, even though he didn't push for an explanation.

Carolyn took a deep, calming breath, trying not to show on her face how much she was dreading this confrontation with her father. She knew what he was going to demand of her, and she had no intention of going to the charity dinner her mother was hosting. Her parents would spend the entire evening either listing her many shortcomings or trying to introduce her to every eligible man of their acquaintance. It was a grueling experience. It never changed, always turning out the same way until one party ran into the next in her mind, one long line of champagne buffets and pointless conversation.

Her parents had always made it perfectly clear that the only way she could win their approval was to marry a well-connected man and produce the appropriate 2.5 children. An ex-Army Ranger would not fulfill the numerous conditions set out by R. J. Winston III and his perfect wife, Annalise, San Antonio's most celebrated hostess. *Two* ex-Army Rangers would be even worse.

Something about her rigid posture must have sent a message to Isaac, because his gaze became searching. "You don't have to see him, Carolyn," he said slowly. "I'll tell him you've got meetings all

day.”

“We’ll tell him to get the hell out,” Grange corrected, already moving forward as he seemed to read the depth of her reluctance.

Carolyn straightened her spine. “No, I’ll see him,” she said. Her pride wouldn’t allow her to hide behind these two men, as tempting as that idea sounded to her.

She turned on her heel and walked out with the air of someone on her way to face a firing squad.

Chapter 2

Grange watched Carolyn leave the room then looked over at Isaac.

“Man, what did I miss?” Isaac asked. “And if it was as good as it looked, why the hell didn’t you wait for me?”

Grange shrugged. “You keep telling me that you are going to keep your hands off Carolyn as long as she’s an employee. She’s still an employee.”

Isaac ran his hands through his hair and swore. “Grange, man, I want her, but it’s a mistake to mix business with pleasure. Look what happened with Nina. That situation is bad, and it’s getting worse daily. She follows you, she follows Dash, and yesterday, she cornered me in the men’s room. In the damned men’s room!” He sounded outraged. “I barely escaped those long red claws.” He shuddered.

“She wasn’t our employee when we shared that night,” Grange said through his teeth, an observation that he had voiced many times before. “She wasn’t even a client any longer. The fact that she is an employee now is a problem, but only because of the type of woman she is.”

“The type of woman is an insane woman. Crazy.” Isaac dropped onto the big leather sofa.

“But Carolyn isn’t anything like Nina.”

“Thank God.”

Grange grabbed for his faltering patience. “What I mean is Carolyn is not pursuing us. Nina wanted bragging rights—”

“And our money.”

“—as much or more than she wanted us. Carolyn is attracted to

both of us, has been since that summer at the lake when we were all teenagers, before we left to join the service, before we ever had money, but she's stubborn, and she's fighting it. That makes her different."

Grange looked at his friend. "I'm serious about her, Isaac. I know down to my bones that Carolyn is the woman who could handle both of us. I've known it for a long time. But if you don't want to take the risk, then step aside. I'm willing to share, but I'm not willing to wait for you any longer."

"What the hell does that mean?" Isaac asked angrily, sitting upright.

"It means Carolyn is a beautiful woman, and she's been without a man for over a year. She's ready. I'm ready. If you're not ready, then step out. I'll take her myself, and keep her myself. I'll buy out your half of the house and you can have your own life. You can have whatever you want."

Grange watched as Isaac jumped to his feet.

"No fucking way I'm giving up my house and standing back so you can have Carolyn all to yourself!" Isaac's thick brown hair was in disarray, his face contorted as he struggled internally.

Grange's voice when he spoke was firm. "Then join me," he said. "We've always been partners, Isaac, since the first night we spent in the woods as kids hiding from our drunken fathers. We've kept each other alive in the Rangers in places that would make the devil himself sweat bullets. Forget about all the reasons why we shouldn't do this and think about how you would feel if Carolyn married someone else. Some ordinary guy who works nine to five, never takes a risk, and has no idea how to read the fire in her soul. No idea how to give her what she needs, what she craves. Watching that woman's soul die from neglect would kill me."

Isaac swore luridly. "Yeah," he finally said, "it would kill me, too."

Grange ruthlessly hid his deep satisfaction. "So," he said, "what

are we going to do about it?”

Chapter 3

Carolyn stopped in the ladies room to straighten her skirt, button the top button of her blouse, and pull her hair into some semblance of order before going to see her father. R. J. Winston was a man who would pounce on any perceived weakness, so she was determined not to show any.

As soon as Carolyn opened the door to Room 2, her father started talking.

“Carolyn Jane, your job is too demanding. It’s a man’s job to begin with, and it’s about time you started acting like a female.”

Robert Joseph Winston III looked every inch the distinguished businessman that generations of family money had made him. He was the envy of many of his friends and associates in every aspect but one—he had no son to carry on his name and his fortune. It was a constant disappointment to him that his only offspring was female, and a disobedient female at that.

His daughter had no interest in augmenting his reputation through the charity work that her mother did so well. The fact that she risked her life working in the security business when she could be attending society dinners and working to attract the perfect husband to join the family firm was a source of puzzlement and concern to her parents.

Carolyn repressed a sigh. She had heard this lecture many times, and it always preceded a demand to return to the family home and take up a series of inane hobbies designed to keep her fingers occupied and her mind blank.

“At least you’re wearing a skirt today,” her father continued, smiling as though he had paid her a great compliment. “Your mother

will be glad to hear that you haven't lost all sense of being feminine. And Randall will be glad, too. You remember Randall, Senator Wells' son, of course. He is my junior vice president of marketing, soon to be promoted again. The boy has an absolute genius for making money."

Her father sounded so proud. Carolyn had a vague recollection of Randall Wells from several years ago at a particularly uncomfortable family dinner. She thought he was a nice young man, blond like his own father, who had winced in sympathy when she had come in late for dinner and attracted her father's ire.

"When you come to the estate for the charity dinner Friday, be sure to wear a long gown. Your mother can help you pick out something appropriate for an engagement, in case some members of the press are invited. I can never keep track of all the people your mother invites to these parties."

Carolyn shook her head and refrained from asking which of her brainless, boring peers had "caught" some rich young man with perfect teeth so that her parents could have the pleasure of announcing an engagement.

"I already let Mother know that I won't be coming," she said instead.

Her father continued as if she hadn't spoken. "And if you can bring yourself to be nice to young Randall, he might be persuaded to marry you. It would be the match of the decade. Everyone in our circle would be thrilled. I've got it all arranged with Randall's family. All you have to do is be there."

Carolyn froze in shock as her father's words rolled over her. He had arranged her marriage? Like some feudal lord from the Middle Ages, giving his daughter away in an alliance marriage to increase his own lands. It was barbaric. She could hardly believe that even her father, with all his faults, could do it.

"No, Father," she said, trying to sound firm, though her hands were shaking with anger. "I will not be attending the charity dinner, and I will not be marrying a man chosen by you. If I decide to marry,

I'll choose my own man." She turned on her heel and headed for the door. "I'm sure you know the way out."

Her father's booming voice followed her into the hall. "Carolyn Jane, don't you walk away from me!"

She walked out and closed the door behind her.

She moved quickly down the hall, rounded the corner leading to her office, and ran straight into Nina.

"I need to talk to you about our bosses," Nina began, flinging her long blonde hair over her shoulder in a practiced move.

"Not just now," Carolyn said, wanting nothing more than to be alone.

"Don't brush me off," Nina warned, her soft magnolia accent doing nothing to hide the venom in her voice. "We need to come to an understanding. I had him first, and I—"

"I said not now, Nina."

Carolyn's hands were shaking, and her stomach threatened to rebel as she brushed past Nina and made her way as quickly as possible down the hallway and into her cluttered office.

She moved through the open door and, placing both hands on her desk, leaned heavily against it, feeling the room revolve slowly around her. She tried to focus her eyes on the desktop, but even the familiar items looked wrong somehow in her distress. Her knees shook, and she felt her ankle twinge as she lurched gracelessly to a chair and almost fell into it.

The feeling of betrayal was nothing new after a conversation with her father, but this...It was too much to believe: an arranged marriage, a joining of fortunes and bloodlines, an entire life lived with her needs and feelings masked by a blank, cool smile. That was her mother's life. God forbid it should become her own.

Carolyn had worked so hard to forget that life, but it just kept reappearing like some hideous mirage, promising life-giving water and delivering only dry sand.

Her stomach cramped, and she looked around in panic, knowing

that she would be sick.

An empty plastic bag was thrust at her. Big, warm hands gathered her hair back from her face. Carolyn leaned over the bag, but the urge to throw up passed after a moment, and she leaned back in her chair.

“Are you okay now?” Isaac asked.

Carolyn nodded, and he took the bag from her nerveless fingers and handed her a box of tissues. She pressed a tissue to her mouth, wiping it convulsively. She wanted to cry from the humiliation of nearly losing her lunch in front of Isaac. No doubt he would tell every agent in the building and she would be teased about this horrible moment for months to come.

“Cara, your father’s gone. Sara heard him shouting and had Dash, Conn, and one of the agents escort him out. He wasn’t pleased about that and was very open about saying it.”

Meaning that her father had threatened to have their business shut down and their lives destroyed unless they gave him his way or left the state, or something to that effect. Carolyn sighed. Some things never changed.

Isaac knelt on the floor by her chair. He was a tall, lean-muscled man, and even on his knees, they were almost eye to eye. He stroked her silky hair back from her forehead.

“You should have told us.” His voice was quiet, his tone serious. It was quite a change for the comedian of the office.

Carolyn just looked at him and shook her head. No way was she telling her sob story to him. No way was she having him think of her as the poor little rich girl. She could almost hear his jokes already, with her name as the punch line.

“I mean it, Carolyn. You won’t have to see him again. If this is what it does to you, it’s not happening.” He sounded determined. “I’m not letting this happen again. If he walks in the door at DIG, we’ll kick his ass out.”

It almost sounded like Isaac was angry on her behalf. Carolyn looked into his deep brown eyes, often dancing with some kind of

mischievous, and saw that they were flat and serious. Deadly serious. He looked like the Ranger he had been. He looked as if he wanted to kick her father's ass himself.

"Isaac," she said huskily. Her voice broke and she tried again. "Isaac, I can handle it."

Isaac abruptly switched their positions, and when the world settled back into position, she was cradled on his lap with his muscular arms wrapped around her.

"Honey," he said almost tenderly, "I hate to tell you this, but you are not handling it. Your face is as white as death, your hands are still shaking, and you were almost sick to your stomach over his visit. I've known for a lot of years that you avoid your family as much as possible. Can't fault you for that, since I avoid my family, too. I know I can seem like a clown in the office, but I never give out confidential information. If you need to talk, I know what to tell and what not to."

Carolyn sighed again as he rubbed her back in gentle circles and waited. It was true that Isaac kept secrets well. People in the office routinely told him things that they wouldn't tell their own mothers. Her hesitation in speaking was more her problem than it was his. Her constant unreasonable attraction to him was getting in the way of her judgment. How one average woman could be so deeply attracted to two such different men was beyond her understanding.

"My father wants me to attend the charity dinner that my mother is hosting on Friday," she began.

Isaac nodded to show that he was listening.

"He has arranged a marriage for me with his junior vice president and wants to announce it there." She shuddered just saying the words aloud.

Isaac tensed under her and all at once his arms were too tight around her. He pulled his phone from his belt clip and put it to his ear.

"Grange, Isaac here. Carolyn's office. Now," he said sharply into the device. His voice was hard, and her canary, named after her favorite opera singer, fluttered in his cage, chirping in sudden alarm.

Carolyn pushed against his rock-hard chest and he let her go and rose to pace the room. Carolyn sat in the chair he had vacated, watching him in astonishment. The easygoing jokester was gone and in his place was a soldier, a soldier with fierce eyes and a military snap to his walk. The abruptness of the change was startling. She had seen him in action as an agent, of course, but even on a case, he always had a hint of a sardonic grin. Seeing him now, looking so cold and dangerous, sent a shiver down her spine.

* * * *

“Grange, Isaac here. Carolyn’s office. Now.”

Grange heard Isaac’s words on the receiver, but more than the words, the tone communicated that the situation was dire.

Grange left his office at a dead run, and made it to Carolyn’s door at the opposite end of the hallway in seconds. He burst through the door with his hand on his gun, but his trained eye couldn’t see the emergency. Carolyn’s pet bird was agitated, flitting from one side of his large cage to the other, but no one was being held at gunpoint, and no one was bleeding. Isaac had never yet called a false alarm, however, so something was definitely wrong.

Carolyn was sitting as if stunned, her wide eyes following Isaac, and Isaac was pacing the floor, his back ramrod straight and his eyes hard.

“What?” he asked Isaac, still looking for the threat.

Isaac stopped on the spot and gave his report. “Carolyn’s father has arranged her marriage to some executive boy-wonder, and the news almost made her throw up,” Isaac stated.

Carolyn moaned in embarrassment and covered her face with her hands.

“He wants to announce the engagement at some big party her mom is having on Friday,” Isaac continued, his voice heating with every word.

Grange was appalled. Arranged marriages were common in many parts of the world, but not in Texas. This stunning news was definitely an emergency.

“No,” he said flatly. This was the nightmare that he and Isaac had discussed not an hour ago—Carolyn marrying some manicured executive who wouldn’t see her for the treasure she was, Carolyn forced to keep her zest for living hidden until the flame died out altogether. Carolyn having a child with someone else.

Grange felt Carolyn’s eyes on him and realized that he was cursing viciously. He had a reputation for being cold and contained in a crisis, but his feelings for this woman were too hot to keep behind that wall of ice which had served him so well in the past.

“No, Carolyn,” he said again, fighting to keep his voice even.

She sat up straighter in her chair. “Well, I already told my father that I wasn’t about to attend that dinner,” she replied coolly, seeming to take exception to his command.

“Or get engaged on Friday,” Isaac insisted through his teeth.

“I refused that as well,” she said, “although why that should be any of your business—”

“It’s our business,” Grange and Isaac said at the same time. They looked at each other, and Isaac nodded.

Grange approached Carolyn and crouched before her chair. He took her cold hands in his warm ones and searched her eyes.

“Cara, everything about you is our business.” He held up a hand, forestalling her instinctive protest. “You can argue all you want later, but please do us the courtesy of hearing us out first. Please take the rest of the afternoon off, and we’ll pick you up at seven for dinner.”

Carolyn looked into his wolf-pale eyes and seemed to read the hope in them. He thought her emotions would still be seesawing after the events of the day, and almost expected a quick, negative reply, but when she opened her mouth to reply, no sound came out. He knew her well enough to wonder if the hope that he couldn’t hide from her would give them their chance. Under her tough and capable exterior,

he knew she had a soft spot for both of them.

She nodded slowly, as if she wasn't quite sure about his proposal but couldn't come up with an immediate reason to say no.

Well, it wasn't a resounding yes from Carolyn, but Grange would take what he could get at this point. He squeezed her hands briefly, and rose to his feet.

"Seven," he said, and he turned and walked to the door.

"Seven," Isaac repeated, bending to brush a kiss across her cheek and then another across her lips. Before she had a chance to even respond, he too was rising, and he strode from the office with a grin and a wink, whistling under his breath. The jaunty sound faded as he moved off down the hall.

Grange followed, feeling like he should be whistling himself.

Chapter 4

An hour later, feeling like her world had suddenly turned itself inside out, Carolyn was sitting in a tub full of bubbles in her apartment and contemplating the bizarre events of her brief day at the office. On top of all the other strange things to happen that day, when she had taken Grange's advice and tried to leave early, she couldn't locate her portfolio case. The case wasn't on the little stand by her desk that she placed it on every morning. A careful habit of years broken. It seemed...wrong.

A cursory search of the office had revealed the portfolio case open and on the opposite side of the desk. Indulging her instincts, she gave the office a more thorough examination, but everything else was where it should be and nothing seemed to be missing.

She tried to remember that morning for an explanation as to why she would have left the case in such an unusual spot, but in the flurry of preparations for the arrival of their prominent guest speaker, she just couldn't be sure.

Shaking off her suspicions, she reminded herself sternly that the files in her case were not of a confidential nature and therefore of no interest to any thief. It was probably nothing but her own absentmindedness in the face of one of their twice-yearly conference days, and her current sense of worry a result of her appalling confrontation with her father. In the face of that, the displaced case was nothing to worry about at all.

Still, her instincts were awakened, and she resolved to mention the incident when Isaac and Grange arrived for their date.

Carolyn shifted in the warm water. She couldn't quite accept that

she was preparing for a date with both of her fantasy men. She could well believe that Grange wanted her, he made no secret of that fact, but Isaac? Not Isaac. He sometimes flirted, almost as if he couldn't help himself when the opportunity presented itself, but he didn't really want her.

There were times recently when she felt that Isaac even resented her. He often glared at her for no reason, and sometimes even turned away when she was speaking. It made her job as business manager for the busy security company difficult, as she had once considered herself friends with all three of her bosses at DIG, and in private her heart ached for his approval.

This afternoon was perhaps the first time in weeks that Isaac had spoken to her in a gentle voice. That, in combination with Grange's brief and ferocious lovemaking, had brought the fantasies she had fought against for so long raging back to life as nothing else could have.

Thinking of Isaac and Grange together—Grange, so tall with his massive muscular build and arctic eyes, and Isaac, leaner, more compact, but just as powerful—made her mouth water and her pussy spasm around its own emptiness.

Goaded beyond endurance, she squirmed and rubbed her thighs together under the water, but nothing could get rid of the deep, aching arousal of her body. Grange had done his job well.

In this condition, with her body already hot and wet, she would be irritable, not her usual cautious self, and easy prey for Grange's plan.

She didn't know exactly what his plan would be, but she knew that he always had one. He would take one look at her and immediately know the state of her body, damn him, and his presence would only make matters worse. She tried so hard to hide her reaction to him, but he always seemed to sense it somehow, watching her with his brilliant silver eyes, standing so close that she could smell his delicious masculine scent and feel the heat of his big body. Lord, this afternoon, he had singed her nervous system with his wild intensity.

Carolyn reached down between her thighs, circling her aching clit with her middle finger, rubbing and pressing softly, trying to find the motion that Grange's body had produced. He had shot her into orbit so fast that she was still overwhelmed hours later. She couldn't help but think of the silky feel of his fierce kiss and the way his heated breaths panted in her ear as he jammed her up against the wall. She moaned and circled faster as her other hand moved down her body and pushed two fingers sweetly inside.

Ah, she had wanted him inside her so badly. Her slick pussy closed around her invading fingers and gripped, but it wasn't enough. Never enough. She knew Grange was thick, damn it. She had felt it that afternoon, and her pussy knew it was being cheated by her own slender fingers. She pushed her fingers deeper and rubbed furiously.

The one explosive orgasm earlier in Grange's office wasn't nearly enough to get rid of the heat generated so effortlessly by him. And if Isaac's resonant voice had been the one to interrupt that incendiary office encounter...Carolyn gasped as the deep spasms of her release washed over her, sending her head spinning. She leaned back against the rim of the tub and tried to catch her breath.

She had a sudden thought, and she blew out a soft laugh as a little smile crossed her face.

Whatever faults the two men had in person, without a doubt, they were the best fantasy material a woman could ever imagine.

Chapter 5

Carolyn took a deep, steadying breath and tried to calm the butterflies in her stomach. She gathered her courage and followed Grange and Isaac through one the most exclusive restaurants in San Antonio, then waited for the maitre d' to seat her at their table.

The table was isolated from the others by carved wooden screens on three sides with the fourth side open to the darkened hallway, effectively shielding them from the other diners. Golden candle flames danced merrily in tiny mounted sconces, the soft flickering light adding to the sense of intimacy in the tiny room. There were two rooms like this in the restaurant, but they were in such high demand that reserving one took political pull, a significant bribe, or both.

Seeing the care that had been taken with the preparations, she was grateful that she had worn her best golden silk cocktail dress with the matching strappy sandals, since both Grange and Isaac had shown up at her door wearing tuxedos. The moment she had appeared in the doorway, two pairs of eyes, one dark and one light, had done a slow, appreciative glide down her body and then back up, lingering heatedly at her hips and breasts and then moving up to smile into her eyes. It had the effect of raising her temperature, not with a redhead's quick temper but with something much more volatile and difficult to control.

The sight of the two big, gorgeous men in formal dress was enough to cause a spike in the blood pressure of any red-blooded woman, and Carolyn was definitely susceptible. They left her breathless on a normal day at the office, but in tuxes? And with their attention focused on her like laser beams? She didn't know how she

would be able to put together a single thought or carry on a conversation.

While Grange was speaking with the maitre d', Isaac seated himself close beside her. He leaned in to nuzzle a kiss on her bare shoulder, then skated his fingers along her arm, leaving a trail of goose bumps in his wake.

"You always smell so good, Cara."

Carolyn shivered and pulled away slightly, unsure as always of his true intent.

He didn't take offense, just lifted her crystal glass, and let Grange pour the wine into it. The golden liquid glinted inside the delicate cut crystal, and Carolyn accepted the glass without comment.

Grange must have placed the order already, as Carolyn had barely taken her first sip of the delicious, cool wine before an army of servers began to arrive. The first small tray held a selection of cheeses and sliced fruits, followed by another tray bearing tiny artistically shaped warm rolls with both sweet and savory fillings, and still another tray held warm, creamy vegetable tarts.

Grange chose several and handed Carolyn a small plate. His fingers brushed against hers lingeringly, and her eyes flew to his. His slow smile was hot, and in his eyes was the memory of their decadent afternoon indiscretion.

"Grange," she said, whether in protest or invitation even she wasn't sure, but he shook his head.

"Let us give you this night of fantasy, Cara." His voice was deep and quiet.

Carolyn melted against the back of her chair, beguiled in spite of herself by the thought of living out her darkest fantasy with the two men who had created their own starring roles in her dreams.

Feeling shaky, she smiled and reached for an appetizer just so that she would have something to do with her trembling hands.

During each course, Grange and Isaac kept up a light, bantering conversation, talking about insignificant things, but Carolyn found

that it was beyond her capabilities to concentrate on their words. Every time a powerful thigh brushed against hers under the table, or a hand stroked warmly down her arm on the way to the wine bottle, she lost track of the line of speech.

The stark contrast between the casual, almost meaningless, words and heated physical caresses stimulated her senses until her skin felt too tight and her nipples stabbed against the smooth silk of her gown, begging for more focused attention.

The two men continued their silent campaign of touch, keeping her close between their big, muscular bodies throughout the beautifully prepared dinner, and by the time dessert arrived, Carolyn was enflamed to a maddening pitch. Her pussy was weeping with need, and she was all but squirming in her seat. It was a measure of her desperation that when Isaac finally slid his hand under her skirt and up to her heated core, she opened herself to him immediately with a grateful moan. When his clever fingers discovered her generous wetness, he muttered a reverent curse and slid one long finger up and in.

Grange smoothed his lips up the soft inner flesh of her arm, stopping to nip and suck the tender skin on the inside of her elbow. The sensation was electric. Carolyn gasped loudly and clutched his short hair with her other hand.

Isaac took instant advantage of her inattention to push two fingers inside her creaming heat. He rocked his hand back and forth in a minute motion, and with every shallow entry, he tapped her G-spot and rubbed the tough heel of his hand against her swollen clit.

Grange reached in and tugged her bodice down, freeing her breasts for his hands. He squeezed and rolled her stiff nipples and massaged the soft mounds, moving in time with Isaac's rhythm under the table until Carolyn was panting and twisting, aching for a deeper touch. She was at a desperate precipice, with extreme pleasure just out of reach. She couldn't come with just these torturous caresses.

"Please," she moaned brokenly.

“Tell us what you need,” Grange said, and his normally smooth voice was hoarse and grating.

She rolled her head against the back of the chair and groaned. She felt as if every nerve ending was sensitized, overloaded.

“I—I need more. More of everything. Grange, I’m so close.” She could barely get the words out.

“Good girl, Cara.”

Grange leaned forward and captured her mouth under his, shoving his tongue deep. At that moment, Isaac added a third finger to his penetration and clamped his strong white teeth on her shoulder. The acute, almost painful increase in sensation sent her spiraling up and over, her mewling cries lost in the pressure of Grange’s kiss. Her pussy continued to spasm around Isaac’s fingers, and he gentled his touch, petting her and spreading the silky fluids of her release along her intimate folds for long moments before slowly withdrawing his hand from between her thighs.

Grange gradually pulled back from their kiss and looked at Isaac. Dazed, Carolyn blinked at him, trying to follow the direction of his stare.

Isaac saluted her briefly with the hand that had given her such pleasure a moment before. He grinned at her, then popped his fingers into his mouth, and sucked them clean of her juices, groaning at her taste.

She blinked, startled by the illicit act.

“Let’s skip the chocolate and have more of this dessert,” Isaac growled, and her pussy clenched once more in agreement.

“Isaac?” she said wonderingly.

“Say yes,” he breathed.

There was a deep flush along his cheekbones, and his eyes were bright, almost metallic in the flickering light. “God, I’ve waited for this moment for years. We’ve waited. We’re going to pleasure you all night until you’re so exhausted from coming that you beg for a rest from our hands and mouths and bodies. And then when you’re rested,

we'll start all over again. Say yes."

He pressed his lips to hers, and she tasted herself on his wicked mouth. It was curiously arousing, and she moaned softly, letting him in to swirl his tongue around hers.

"Say yes," he repeated and returned to nibbling and teasing her sensitive lips.

Her one-word response was a mere whisper against Isaac's lips, but he must have heard it because his whole body stiffened and drew back to search her eyes for confirmation.

"We have to get out of this restaurant first," Grange said, grunting when he stood. "I'll get the check." He straightened with a wince. "And bring the vehicle around."

The large bulge in the front of his tuxedo was obvious, and Carolyn's eyes were drawn to it. He seemed to feel the direction of her gaze, and his already impressive erection lengthened farther at the blatant approval in her expression.

"Hurry," she said in a smoky voice, and his eyebrows snapped up.

"Jesus," he said, shaking his head once. "You'd better believe it." And then he was gone.

Isaac didn't speak, just captured her full attention with his mobile mouth and explored her in a searing silence broken only by the sound of their rushing breaths and the whisper of heated silk. Dazed, feeling almost drunk, Carolyn thought distantly that she had barely sampled the golden wine. Ensnared in Isaac's sensual web, she hardly noticed when Grange returned to them.

In moments, they were out of the restaurant and at Grange's black SUV.

"I need to get a taste," Isaac said bluntly, pushing Carolyn into the backseat and climbing in behind her. "Drive carefully, buddy. We won't be wearing seatbelts."

With those astonishing words, Isaac proceeded to arrange Carolyn's body across the bench seat with great sweeps of his big hands. He removed her sandals and tossed them to the floor. He put

her hands above her head, with one of her feet against the side window behind him, the other on the floor, and himself firmly between her splayed legs. She whimpered when he tugged her skirt up and tore her lace panties off. His fierce expression and wicked actions teased her senses unbearably. It was her fantasy come to life.

She was dimly aware of Grange putting the vehicle in motion.

“Oh, baby,” Isaac crooned, and the heat of his stare on her most feminine flesh caused her pussy to weep for him. He leaned in, swiped his tongue across her rosy slit, and caught the drops in his mouth.

“Grange, she’s got a beautiful little pussy,” he said thickly, raising his head from between her thighs. “So pink. So pink,” he repeated, as if captivated by the sight.

Grange swerved, but quickly righted the SUV, muttering under his breath as he pushed the gas pedal to the floor.

Isaac separated her soft folds with his thumbs and ran his stiffened tongue up and down, up and down, which made her gasp and sob. He nibbled gently at her swollen labia and clit with his teeth until she shivered and burned under his mouth. When her cries escalated with her approach to orgasm, he pulled back, licking and kissing, keeping her poised on the blazing edge of rapture with his unholy skill, refusing to let her fall.

Carolyn had never imagined a pleasure like this. It pulled her down into a world of dazzling impulses, where she was a creature of sensation, blinded and desperate. She was reduced to mindless begging, pleading until she didn’t know what she was saying or what she was promising. She only knew that if he didn’t let her come soon, she feared she would go mad.

Then he fastened his carnal mouth over her and sucked strongly, and she went off like a bottle rocket, with shrieking sounds, bright lights and sharp detonations that faded into a velvety blackness.

Chapter 6

Carolyn rose on her elbows with an incoherent moan.

Isaac was grinning. The force of her release still glistened on his swollen mouth, and when he winked and licked his lips, she could feel an answering grin rising on her face.

“You passed out, baby,” Isaac said, his tone a verbal swagger.

“I certainly did not.” Carolyn pushed herself up and tried futilely to pull her skirt down. It was lodged just under her breasts, and the damp silk proved difficult to budge.

“Baby, you screamed, and then you passed out. My mouth is a dangerous weapon. Admit it.”

Isaac brushed her hands aside and, with a few efficient movements, had her skirt back in place, her sandals on the correct feet, and Carolyn on his lap. She pushed his wandering hands away with a huff, clambered off his knee, and slid out the open door straight into Grange’s arms.

“Cara, you smell so good.” Grange groaned into her hair. “And you did seem to faint just at the last,” he whispered in her ear as he swiped his tongue along the sensitive rim.

She pulled away, but he easily reeled her back in and held her against his side as he escorted her onto the porch of the white stucco ranch house. She barely had a moment to notice the new double swing in the far corner before she was through the front door and in.

Isaac was right behind them, of course, whistling a maddeningly happy tune, a musical gloat about his devilish talent.

“Isaac,” she warned, stopping in the hallway to throw a glare back in his direction as she took off her pinching sandals.

“What?”

That deceptively innocent smile had no business being seen on such a depraved pair of lips—lips that still carried the moist evidence of having so recently been used to torture and please her most feminine flesh.

Carolyn flushed and threw her arms up in defeat. “Fine, yes, I admit it. You are a dangerous man. Your mouth should come with a government-issued warning label. You should be a controlled substance in all the states of the union. You are without a doubt the most—”

He grabbed her and stopped her angry tirade midstream with a laughing kiss that quickly turned tender.

“Baby, please,” he said softly and nipped at her lips. “I just want to know that I pleased you. I need to know that I can make you fly like you make me fly.”

His words were whispered against her mouth, and this rare insight into the man stole her anger and made her sigh. He snuggled her against his chest and treated her to another luscious kiss, while Grange crowded in to press his muscled abdomen to her back. The thick bulge pushing at her lower spine was an indication of his advanced state of arousal.

The incredible sensation of being held between their two hard, hot bodies woke her sated libido, and Carolyn whimpered and wriggled in voluptuous need.

She reached down and palmed Isaac’s stiff cock through his tuxedo trousers. He jerked and grunted into her mouth while thrusting, tempting her to add more pressure to her next downward stroke.

Grange’s hands slid down her spine and around to her breasts, and suddenly, her dress was around her feet in a silken puddle. She was left standing naked in the arms of two men, and the dark beginning of her favorite dream had her shivering under their roving hands.

Following the usual course of her nighttime fantasy, she pulled

down the zipper and freed Isaac's hot penis. The skin was velvety soft over the steely hardness, and her vagina clenched in a wave of pleasure at the thought of taking him inside.

He pushed his tongue into her mouth, moaning as she squeezed him and called forth a drop of pre-cum from his swollen tip.

Circling her thumb around and around the crest of his erection, Carolyn spread the little drop of wetness, while Isaac kissed her and Grange cupped and fondled her aching breasts from behind. The pleasure was so acute that the three of them moaned in concert, each wanting more but reluctant to give up the intense sensations they were already creating. They rocked together, bodies rubbing and pressing, hands exploring until their clothes were all on the floor and it was just the maddening seduction of skin on skin.

Grange somehow maneuvered them all into the large living room without breaking the physical connections between them, and when Isaac went to his knees on the soft carpet, Carolyn was pulled down with him because she couldn't bear to let go of his gorgeous cock.

Still stroking a firm hand up and down his length, her mouth watering from her desire to taste him, she put her other hand on his damp chest and guided him to lie on his back.

"Carolyn, wait," Isaac began, only to finish on a startled shout when her hand angled his cock in the air and her lips came down firmly over the big, flared head.

She swirled her tongue around the purple crest and felt a flash of heat pulse through her as the salty essence of Isaac hit her taste buds. She widened her jaw and dropped her head down, taking him in as far as she could and sucking before slowly releasing him with a smack of her lips.

When she engulfed him again, Grange pushed two fingers into her sopping wet pussy from behind while pinching her clit sharply, and the high, shocked moan she couldn't hold back vibrated around Isaac's erect organ. He bucked under her.

"Christ, Grange, what did you do?" he gritted, laughing.

“Whatever it was, do it again.”

Grange braced one large hand on Carolyn’s back and positioned his big cock at her gate and pressed, letting her feel his heat and a hint of his size without entering her yet.

Instinctively trying to capture him, she jerked her hips back to tempt him, to lure him inside. Her soft whimpers gradually escalated to sobs as he continued to elude her. He rubbed the swollen head up and down her creaming slit, torturing her with the anticipation until she was almost bouncing against him.

Carolyn pushed her pursed lips down over Isaac’s knob, creating a slight resistance before she took the whole head into her mouth and sucked strongly. His muscles tensed in reaction, and his head fell back on the carpet with a quiet thump. As she repeated the action, Grange grasped her hips and pushed his stiff penis inside.

He felt massive from this angle, stretching her snug, swollen tissues as he worked himself farther into her slick pussy, and Carolyn gasped even as she pushed back, wordlessly begging for him. His soft rumbling laugh only made her crave more, and she got more as he slowly stuffed her to capacity. He was hot, and immense, and he set up a heavy friction when he began to thrust. The powerful surge and drag against her tender, unused muscles as he moved was almost too much, too intense, and she writhed on the stiff impalement.

Instantly, he changed the angle, and what had been almost painful was suddenly a rush of violent bliss bubbling up through her blood. Grange’s body rocked over her and inside her, which pushed her moaning mouth vigorously up and down over Isaac’s straining cock.

Isaac was red-faced and panting, obviously trying to stave off his orgasm until Carolyn was ready, but she was deliberately making it as difficult as possible for him to resist her.

“Grange, fuck, do something.” Isaac was almost begging. “I can’t hold on. Fuck.”

Grange reached under Carolyn’s body and caught her clit between two fingers as he increased his tempo, stabbing deep again and again.

Carolyn cried out wildly with each new relentless lunge as her climax detonated within her, flinging her into a vicious burst of sensation. She was distantly aware of Isaac shouting and spurting against her cheek and throat but she wasn't able to recapture him in her mouth.

Grange continued to ride her at a breakneck pace, pounding into her gripping pussy, drawing out her orgasm until she thought she would die this way, screaming her lungs out impaled on his monstrous driving cock. On a final urgent roar, he plunged impossibly deep and held himself there at the mouth of her womb, shooting jet after jet of hot seed into her pulsing, welcoming body.

Finally, she collapsed with her head on Isaac's stomach, Grange's big body resting half on her back and half on the floor. They were still joined intimately by his semi-hard penis.

Carolyn's brain was blank as she struggled to draw in enough air to survive.

Isaac was stroking her hair gently, over and over, as if he enjoyed the feel of the long, silky strands. His stomach muscles were heaving with his panting breaths under her sticky cheek.

Grange was pressing his lips softly along the top of her spine, nuzzling her hot skin, offering comfort more than arousal it seemed. Between kisses, he whispered words of appreciation, encouragement, and extravagant praise.

Carolyn felt a surprising contentment, pinned as she was between the two men. She had been convinced that the reality could never be as good as her dark fantasy. Improbably, the men were still focused totally on her even after the act, stroking and petting her like a harem favorite.

To her dismay, the tender aftermath was as delicious to her as the enactment of her dream had been. It would be devastating to have to leave this seductive gentleness behind when they became bored with her, as they inevitably would. Devastating.

Chapter 7

Through an act of sheer willpower, Grange was finally able to get himself to his feet after the most spectacular sexual experience of his life left him feeling like his bones had turned to rubber. He reached down, pulled a limp Carolyn into his arms, and was careful not to jostle her too much while rising. Isaac, he simply prodded with his foot.

She murmured a question against his chest and snuggled her sticky face against his neck.

“To the shower,” he said in her ear, nuzzling the pink rim simply because he couldn’t resist. Her moan of protest made him smile. “This night is far from over.”

He could hear Isaac rise and groan feebly behind him as he carried his prize, gloriously naked and smelling of sex, up the stairs and into the master bath.

Grange turned on the water and stepped into the large shower stall with Carolyn still in his arms. After a moment, the warmth began to revive her, and he let her feet slide to the floor.

By the time Isaac joined them, Grange had lathered Carolyn’s hair and was rinsing the shampoo out. Her acquiescence as he washed her intimately was drawing out an unfamiliar tenderness from him that made his heart hammer in his chest and his eyes burn with emotion. It should have been alarming, but instead, it felt right.

The things this woman did to him!

She effortlessly called on all his most primitive instincts until he hardly recognized himself in the caveman he became whenever she was in pain. His bleak world was filled with color and emotion

whenever he was near her, and he understood now that he was already dangerously addicted. In some unexplainable way, he knew that if this woman was not in his life, his body would continue to exist, he would continue to breathe and eat and work, but his soul would never again be truly alive without her.

He looked up into Isaac's eyes, the cool brown carrying the same faintly shocked look that he was certain covered his own face, and knew that they would do everything they could to keep Carolyn as their own—starting right now.

Grange and Isaac moved in tandem almost instinctively, running their hands over Carolyn, rinsing away lather, bringing pleasure, encouraging her to relax and let them do all the work.

When Grange leaned down to take her lips gently, she sighed into his mouth. That sound was quickly followed by a sharp gasp, and as she jerked, Grange smiled. He knew that Isaac was taking advantage of her inattention to begin his teasing exploration of Carolyn's fine ass.

As Grange looked down into her eyes, they darkened from their usual bright blue into a smokier blue-gray. It was a compelling change, and the dazed expression on her beautiful face as she tried to absorb the foreign sensations Isaac was introducing caused Grange's cock to harden beyond anything he had known before. He could feel a drop of pre-cum bead at the tip, and the sensation was excruciatingly pleasurable.

Carolyn jolted in his arms and then, clutching at his biceps to try to hold herself up, sagged against his chest with a quiet moan. He realized immediately that her knees would be weakening from the power of the dark, forbidden feelings that Isaac was delivering as he played with her anus.

Grange adjusted his grip so that even though she was still standing, he was supporting her full weight. From this position, he could see Isaac's hand moving slowly back and forth, parting the pale enticing globes of her bottom to gain access to the tiny entrance

hidden there. The sight was murderously arousing.

“One finger,” Isaac commented, his voice low and husky. “Just the top joint of my finger, but this little pink rosebud is trying to pull me in.”

“Oh, I’ve never- Isaac, please -” Carolyn’s voice died away.

Grange groaned loudly at the image, promising himself that it would be his turn next. But he was so wide, wider than Isaac was, that it had become their tradition to let Isaac initiate their partners for the first round of anal sex.

Grange slid one hand down to toy with Carolyn’s sweet clit. Her hips started to rock between their bodies until she was moaning almost continuously.

She cried out when Grange slipped two fingers up her damp pussy, strumming her swollen button with his thumb. Through the thin membrane, he could feel Isaac moving his finger rhythmically in and out, teasing the nerve-rich area.

Carolyn’s body clenched hard, her tight inner muscles rippling around their fingers as tiny broken cries pulsed from her.

She clung to him for support, and her delicate face was so beautiful when it twisted with the new pleasure of her first anal orgasm that Grange couldn’t keep his cock from giving one hard spurt in celebration. From the way Isaac’s head fell back as he gritted his teeth, he was having the same delicious problem of trying to hold on to his own faltering control.

Grange and Isaac continued to pet her through the small release, both men using soft, barely there touches to draw out the tiny spasms until she slumped, boneless, between them.

“Shower’s over,” Isaac said under his breath. “Turning off the water.”

That was Grange’s cue to pull Carolyn out of the shower and to dry their bodies. Isaac turned off the stream of water and followed closely as Grange moved them smoothly into the adjoining master bedroom and onto the king-size bed.

The men crowded in close to Carolyn, holding her between their heated bodies, and took up where they had left off in the shower scant moments before, making sure that nothing disturbed the sensual mood.

Grange kissed her softly, repeatedly as Isaac reached into the bedside drawer to retrieve the lube they had stashed there earlier. He squirted a generous amount onto his fingers and began a minute, stroking motion, spreading the lube and working it little by little into the tight pink ring of her anus.

Every tiny thrust was accompanied by an almost imperceptible movement of Carolyn's hips. Her sweet lips pressed against Grange's hard mouth, seeking a deeper connection, seeking reassurance.

This act, so shockingly intimate, made a woman feel vulnerable, the first time in particular. Grange knew it, he understood it, and he gave Carolyn the approval she needed in the most basic way he could. He fitted his mouth to hers and ratcheted up the heat.

Grange used fingers and thumb to softly pluck the tender bundle of nerves at the top of her rosy slit while Isaac continued to prepare her back entrance.

Soon Carolyn was writhing between them, gasping and murmuring as she rode the waves of carnal bliss caused by Isaac's moving fingers.

"Please," she chanted, "more. Please. Grange."

He knew what she needed, and turned them so that he was on his back with Carolyn suspended above him. Isaac's fingers didn't miss a stroke inside her tender ass.

Grange fitted the engorged head of his cock to her hot opening and pushed slowly inside her weeping cunt. He loved the feeling of being inside her body. He could feel the pressure of Isaac's hand on his hard shaft through Carolyn's inner passage.

"Isaac," he said when he was fully seated, sweat rolling down his temples. "Now."

"Now, now," Carolyn echoed, shifting restlessly.

Isaac gripped her hips and moved into position behind her, pushing his hand against her back so that she would lean down to Grange. He tickled her glistening rosy hole with the tip of his penis, then slowly pressed for entrance.

Carolyn stiffened.

“Push out, baby. Just push out a little.” Grange was trying to help her, but God, his voice sounded like he couldn’t drag in enough air. Shit, he wasn’t going to last two minutes.

Carolyn pushed out, and Grange could feel the pop as Isaac’s cockhead made it through the tight ring of muscle. Carolyn reared up, crying out. Her eyes were dark and wide. She bucked once and then held herself unnaturally still.

“Easy, baby,” Isaac soothed, “easy. You can take us. You can take a little more.”

“God, Isaac.” Her voice sounded strangled, the sensations so obviously overwhelming as he pushed in a bit further.

“You’re so good, Cara, so hot and perfect,” Grange said through gritted teeth. He was careful not to move, though the urge to thrust was almost unbearable. He could feel the heat of her pussy scorching his penis, weeping and wetting his balls, could feel Isaac, too, pressing against him through the thin barrier. Every muscle in his body tensed, wanting to move. It was all he could do to remain still.

“It’s too—ah—too much,” Carolyn panted. Her features were strained, her body tense. “It—ah—it burns.”

“Time to stop, baby?” Grange asked. “If you want to stop, say the word and it stops here.”

Grange groaned inwardly. It would damn near kill them to stop at this point, but they would do it for her.

Waiting for the verdict, Isaac was frozen behind her, teeth bared, muscles twitching.

Carolyn gasped, her head dropping to rest against Grange’s chest.

“No—ah—don’t stop. It’s too much, too good. Just—I need a minute. Give me a minute.” She was quivering between them.

It was a moment that felt like eternity, but eventually, Carolyn wriggled, then pushed back against Isaac.

“Okay,” she said. “Okay, Isaac, just move a little.”

Isaac drew out only to push back in with excruciating slowness. He partially withdrew again and repeated his almost delicate entry. Beads of sweat rolled down his temples.

“Ah, yes,” she gasped. “Yes.”

Grange was sure that he would explode any second. The intensity of the pleasure, the fact that it was Carolyn’s sweet cunt clasped around him, clutching him, was defeating his control.

“Isaac, damn it,” he grated, sliding his thumbs down to cover Carolyn’s clit. She jerked in response, strong inner muscles gripping harshly on his dick as she gasped wildly.

“Go,” Isaac said, as if that was the very sign he had been waiting for, and picked up his rhythm.

Grange began to circle his hips at Isaac’s outstroke, working the big head of his cock against the mouth of Carolyn’s womb. He could feel the tiny feminine protrusion and deliberately rubbed his swollen glans against it with each brief circle. The control it took to perform that subtle, wild maneuver was almost beyond him at this point.

Her voice rose high in a feral wail, and the men reacted, redoubling their speed, and when Isaac’s hands pinched her stiff nipples from behind, Carolyn shrieked and clenched around them so hard that Grange swore he saw stars.

Her fierce orgasm caused them to follow, and they writhed, grinding together on the huge bed in an agony of extreme pleasure until, what felt like an eternity later, they all collapsed in a panting, tangled heap.

“Don’t fall asleep, Isaac,” Grange huffed after a moment. “We’re not done yet.”

His outrageous statement was met by heartfelt groans from both his companions.

Chapter 8

Carolyn woke suddenly in darkness with a male hand on her breast and another male's stubbly face resting against the top of her thigh. The digital clock read 5:02 a.m., and she knew she would have to get out of here fast if she was going to preserve any shred of dignity.

Although, after the acts she had both performed and allowed—and enjoyed—last night, she wasn't sure that she had any dignity left.

She carefully extricated herself from the two sleeping men, taking pains to keep her breathing soft and even and her first step onto the floor silent. Her body felt pleasantly heavy, and certain, unfamiliar muscle groups were sore, probably due to their recent uncommon and lengthy exercise. Her nipples ached from being sucked, and between her thighs, she could feel the subtle aftereffects of her darkest fantasy made reality, and the feeling was delicious.

She could feel her face heating and tried to turn her thoughts away from the delicious excesses Grange and Isaac had introduced to her over the course of their long night together. She knew in her own heart that she wasn't entirely successful.

She made her way quietly out of the bedroom and down the long hallway. Just as she entered the kitchen, one bare foot encountered silk, and she breathed a sigh of relief. She didn't want to wear last night's golden dress, but it was better than commandeering Isaac's truck and driving home wearing nothing but a man's coat. Isaac's truck, of course, because he always left the keys in the ignition when he was at home on the ranch.

Shimmying into the silk, she squealed in sudden terror as the

bright overhead lamp came on.

“Just where in hell are you headed at five a.m.? And whose truck were you planning to steal to get there?”

Grange’s voice was cool, but his eyes were hot.

Carolyn shrugged uncomfortably, relieved that she wasn’t the one standing there naked if there was going to be a confrontation. Grange didn’t seem to be bothered by his own nakedness.

“Well, I was—”

He crossed the room in two strides and pulled her in for a deep, violently passionate kiss. By the time he finally let her up for air and stepped back a little, she had felt his long, hard penis pressing aggressively against her belly and wasn’t sure she wanted to be released.

“Isaac’s truck,” she said hurriedly, “because—”

“Because he always leaves the keys in the goddamn ignition,” Grange finished for her, raking one hand through his sin-black hair. “Jesus, Cara, at least have some breakfast, say good-bye if it has to be said, but don’t just sneak out in the dark like you can’t get away from us fast enough.”

Was it her imagination, or did he sound almost...hurt?

“I...thought you would prefer that,” she said, feeling her way carefully through this morning-after minefield.

“What? You thought I’d prefer that you leave without a word? What does that mean?”

He was visibly surprised—stark naked, impressively aroused, which should have been impossible after the exhausting night they had just shared, and surprised.

Carolyn pulled her wandering libido back under control.

“I don’t know how this is done,” she tried again. “I’m trying not to—to cling, or to make things awkward—”

“Nothing would make me happier than for you to cling,” Grange said quietly. “Nothing. God, I want you so bad, Carolyn, in my bed, yes. Fuck, yes. But in my house. In my life.”

He moved in close to her, gripped her upper arms. “Carolyn, I love you. I want you forever.”

Carolyn shook her head wonderingly, having a hard time digesting his words. “But, Grange, you and Isaac only offered me one perfect night.”

“Yes, one perfect night,” Isaac said from the doorway, his mouth twisted wryly. “Followed by another perfect night and another until you wake up between us one gorgeous morning when you’re eighty and realize that your whole life has been filled with perfectly hot nights.”

Carolyn noticed with a distant part of her brain that Isaac at least had taken the time to pull on his tux pants. They were wrinkled from a night on the floor, but they weren’t buttoned, and they weren’t equal to the task of concealing his obvious erection.

“My whole life. W—with both of you?” Her mind was whirling.

“A life with both of us,” Grange confirmed in a deep, vibrant voice. His mouth curved up in a slow smile that turned her knees to jelly.

“Live with us,” Isaac said. “The ranch is very private, and your friend Sara lives just across the meadow with Dash. You can see their place from here.”

She thought that perhaps she was still in her own bed and dreaming a new ending to her favorite fantasy, except that her imagination just wasn’t this amazing.

“Marry us both.” Grange didn’t move. “Marry us.”

“Marry us,” Isaac echoed.

Carolyn raised a hand protectively when Isaac made a move toward her.

“Some days you don’t even like me,” she said to Isaac, her tone daring him to answer. “You glare at me all the time, and sometimes you turn away when I’m talking to you. I know there’s chemistry, I can’t deny it, but sex isn’t everything. It isn’t even the most important thing. How could you say, ‘Marry us,’ if you don’t even like me?”

He groaned and Grange swore.

Isaac took a deep breath. "I'm an ass, baby," he said clearly, "and I'm in love with you. I've always wanted you, since we met that summer as teenagers. You make me feel things. I feel."

He looked at her hopefully, as if this disjointed statement somehow made sense of everything that had gone before.

Carolyn shook her head in confusion and Grange sighed.

"What he means, Cara, is that he's in love with you, has been for years, and doesn't know what to do about it, so he tried to hide it."

If that was truly the case, he had certainly hidden it well!

"Yeah, that's what I mean," Isaac agreed. "And it scares the shit out of me some days how much you mean to me. To us. Marry us."

"But," Carolyn didn't know what she wanted to say. It was too shocking, too unusual, too—"That's illegal."

Both men laughed and then quickly sobered when she glared at them.

"Not to make light of it, but half the stuff we did for the Army Rangers would be illegal for civilians. At least in a technical sense," Isaac stated with a grin.

"In a technical sense?" Carolyn wasn't letting him get away with that. "It is *definitely* illegal for a woman to have two husbands in the state of Texas, and not just in a technical sense!"

"You could marry one of us publicly and have a joint ceremony privately. The only question is, do you want to have two husbands?" Grange interjected smoothly. "Do you want to be our wife?"

Carolyn was stunned. She couldn't possibly form a response to that. That would be as good as admitting that she wanted them, had often fantasized about them, and was inappropriately jealous of any woman they spoke to for more than two minutes...It would be admitting that she was in love with both of them.

"I can't possibly...in Texas...have two husbands." Her voice sounded weak to her own ears.

"Don't think about legal or illegal, or whatever other people say is

right or wrong.” Grange took her hands in his and knelt on the floor before her.

Still very naked, her feminine senses noted.

“For once, please think only about what Carolyn wants. That’s all. Just what you want. I love you, and Isaac loves you. We hope that you love us, too.”

Isaac got down on one knee beside Grange and claimed one of her hands for his own. “We’ve told you what we want. Whatever you want, baby, it’s yours,” Isaac said, his brown eyes serious on hers. “If you want to marry us, we’ll both be thrilled, but if you want us to leave you alone, let you go...we will.”

It was clear to Carolyn that Isaac had a hard time getting those words out, hated saying them, and that meant more to her than any glib speech ever could. It seemed that she really could state exactly what she wanted in her life and that these two incredible men kneeling at her feet would make sure that she got it. Amazing.

“We’ll even step back and let you be with someone else, marry someone else,” Isaac said. Then his mouth twisted. “Even that skinny executive your father picked out, if that’s what you want. Just tell us what you want, baby, and it’s yours.”

Carolyn drew in a breath and grabbed for the courage to take what she wanted for herself.

“Yes, I love you,” she said and dropped to her knees between her men. “Yes, I’ll marry you. Both of you. Yes, yes, yes.” She punctuated each little word with kisses to Grange’s face, then Isaac’s, then Grange’s again, until the men realized that she was agreeing to their proposal and pounced.

Hard, gentle hands peeled her silk dress off and tossed it, Isaac had his tuxedo pants off in seconds, and then they were all completely, blissfully nude.

Mouths met in hunger, soft whispers became cries of need, and bodies rubbed and pressed.

They rolled together, and Carolyn found herself suspended over

Isaac's rampant cock, with his strong hands guiding her hips down to absorb him into her dripping pussy. When he was fully seated and throbbing against her womb, he set up a smooth, racing rhythm that made her sensitive nerve endings shriek in pleasure.

Beside Isaac's head, Grange was on his knees with one fist gripping his swollen erection near her face, and she leaned slightly to the side so that she could engulf the flared head with her hot mouth. His big body jolted at the first soft touch, but he soon settled into her tempo, sinking long fingers into her hair.

Isaac's wicked pace gave her the perfect speed to torture Grange, pushing her tightly pursed lips back and forth over his rim, creating a ceaseless friction. A few heated strokes made him lose his fabled control and groan and curse with reverent appreciation.

As the sun came up over the distant hills, its first rays shone through the living room window to bathe their writhing bodies in golden light. Carolyn, shaking and screaming with blissful ecstasy between her two magnificent lovers, took it as a blessing.

Chapter 9

It was almost eight in the morning by the time that Carolyn pulled Isaac's truck into her driveway so she could change her clothes for work. Isaac had ridden in to work early with Dash, DIG's other partner who also lived on the ranch, planning to meet up with them later at the office.

Her hair was in a ponytail, and she was wearing one of Grange's T-shirts and a pair of his jogging shorts with Isaac's jacket and her strappy gold heels from the night before. It was a bizarre outfit, but still a far superior option compared to her sadly wrinkled silk gown.

She should have just enough time to get ready for work, since she had showered with the men at the ranch, and she lived only a few blocks from the DIG Security building.

As Grange pulled in behind her, she jumped out, instinctively reaching for the gun that she didn't carry anymore. She almost swore when her hand came back empty.

Her front door was standing open, and her front window was shattered.

Conn Reilly, one of the fiercest and most dangerous agents at DIG, limped a bit as he walked out the front door slowly, making sure that his hands were in plain view at all times. His wild red hair glowed like a torch in the bright sunlight. He had been wounded in the leg during an attempted assassination several weeks before, and he was still on light duty.

He really should have his cane with him, Carolyn thought inanely.

"Granger," he said, nodding a greeting. "Carolyn."

Grange had come up fast and stood directly behind her, one big

hand resting on her arm. It was subtle as statements go, but she saw Conn's startling blue eyes flash to that hand, take in Isaac's jacket, then jump to Grange's face. Whatever he saw there had him nodding again in acknowledgement.

He drew himself up and gave his report.

"Carolyn's south window alarm sounded at six a.m., and we couldn't raise her on the cell or the DIG pager," he began, his hint of an Irish brogue somewhat more pronounced than usual.

Grange's hand tightened on her arm, and Carolyn realized that at six, she had been firmly entwined between her two fiancés and enjoying the brilliant Texas sunrise in anew way. Her cheeks warmed, but she said nothing. Looking at the destruction of her beloved wide custom window, she was momentarily incapable of speech.

"Of course, the guys on watch were panicked and planning to start World War Three, so I volunteered to come over immediately," Conn continued. "Her front window was smashed, and there's a big brick on the floor in the living room, obviously used for the smash. Doesn't look like anything was taken, but Carolyn will have to take a good look around."

He shifted his weight, grimacing as he did so. "There's some interesting, though not very original, graffiti on the brick, but the place is clear. No sign of an intruder. Sorry, but I picked the locks on the front door myself to get in. Bloody terrible set of locks, took me a bare few seconds," he said as an aside to Grange, from one talented break-and-enter artist to another.

"I do have a deadbolt as well," she felt compelled to say, but Conn waved off her comment. On second thought, a deadbolt wouldn't have kept him out. It would only have annoyed him until he could finesse it open with his magic fingers. Grange had the same almost spooky gift with gears and tumblers.

"That new Sheriff Ivars and his deputy have been and gone already. He's a right one, but the deputy is a blazing idiot. Made a comment about the graffiti that I didn't like, but the sheriff soon put

him right. I told Ivars that Carolyn was with you, Grange, so he's probably on his way out to the ranch about now. Sorry."

Conn shrugged his wide shoulders. The man was built on a massive scale. It was as if an ancient Celtic warrior had been dropped into Texas clad in denim and leather instead of a kilt. Carolyn thought the modern clothing made him all the more dangerous, camouflaging the serious and aggressive fighter underneath.

"Well, and I didn't figure you wanted everyone at the office to know, but the sheriff was all set to send out a search party to find her, and that would be bloody pointless when I knew precisely where the lady was."

"Thanks, Conn. Fine work, as always. Much appreciated."

Grange's voice followed Carolyn as she walked dazedly up her front steps and into her home.

There was glass everywhere, and the large yellow brick was visible from the entryway, as was the word *slut* painted on it in bright red block letters. It was painted in red to look like blood. It was shiny and it looked like...nail polish?

SLUT.

Carolyn moved closer, careful not to touch anything as she looked at the top of the brick.

BITCH.

The opposite side said CUNT.

Insulting, but as Conn had said, not terribly original.

She heard the men come in behind her, but she didn't turn. Her brain was working, making an unlikely connection, while her eyes seemed to be drawn again and again to that brick.

"Yesterday," she said slowly.

Grange and Conn waited, saying nothing, letting her think.

"Yesterday, my office was out of order. Nothing was missing, no confidential papers touched, but...it felt wrong. I think someone was in there."

Carolyn turned to look at Grange. "I brushed it off at the time

because I was already off my stride. But it could be important.” She gestured to the shattered window.

Grange pulled out his cell and pressed a button. “Isaac, where are you? Glad you’re at the office because—you’ve already heard about her window?...Yeah, and someone was possibly in Carolyn’s office yesterday. Get a team on it. And keep it quiet, if you can. I don’t like this. If it started within our office...”

Conn waved his hand in front of Grange and tapped his own chest.

“Make sure Conn is listed as team lead. He’s here with us now.”

“I want Burgess and Morse over here, if they’re available,” Conn said.

Grange relayed Conn’s request, listened for a moment more, and grimaced. His uncanny silver eyes locked on Carolyn’s with laser-like intensity.

“Fuck, are you sure?” he asked into the phone. Isaac’s response made him swear again.

He passed the phone to Conn and moved to pull Carolyn into his embrace. She hadn’t realized how chilled she was until his warm arms surrounded her. His heart beating against her cheek soothed and distracted her, so that she almost didn’t register his comment.

“I’m so sorry, honey,” he said. “Isaac and Charlotte are in your office right now. Your pet canary is dead.”

Carolyn just looked up at him. “Pavarotti was fine yesterday,” she said, uncomprehending. “He was singing with all his heart. How could he become so seriously ill so quickly? He’s a young bird, only a year old, the poor thing.”

Grange tightened his arms and cleared his throat. “I’m sorry,” he said again. “Isaac says his neck was broken. Someone has been in your office, and he left Pavarotti as a sick message.”

Feeling ill herself, Carolyn shivered and pressed closer to Grange.

Her home, her office, and her pet had all been attacked in a short time.

“This isn’t a business related issue. It can’t be. I’ve made someone angry, deeply angry,” she said. “It’s personal.”

Grange nodded. “Yeah, it’s personal,” he agreed.

“I’m the target this time,” she said softly.

Grange rubbed her back in slow circles but said nothing.

Chapter 10

Isaac finished the team arrangements with Conn and flipped his phone closed. He stood amid the destruction in Carolyn's usually pristine office and swore viciously.

"Yes, I think you said that already," Charlotte said wryly, glancing his way as she moved about the office dusting for prints. Charlotte Morse was one of their longest-serving employees, notoriously close-mouthed and calm in every crisis. In Isaac's opinion, that made her the perfect agent.

"This was personal," he said through his teeth.

"I agree. No way did a professional toss this room. There's no pattern to it."

"And the bird—its neck was snapped. Murdering a pet is personal. Some bastard is after Carolyn."

His voice held a killing fury. Just thinking of Carolyn having to witness the twisted little body of her beloved pet enraged him. The sight of it, its neck broken, its tiny head lolling as he carefully bagged it for evidence, would stay with him for some time.

Criminals who fixated on one person, who tortured and killed that person's pet, were often found to be fantasizing about doing the same to the person. Wanting their victim to understand the threat that what was done to the pet would soon be done to the owner.

Isaac desperately wanted to get his hands on the person who had done this. The Army Rangers had taught him a hundred ways to take out an enemy in order to protect civilians, in America and around the world.

In many ways, he was a product of his extensive training, his

tightly honed body and carefully educated mind making him an intelligent weapon. There was no one more deserving of his protection than Carolyn, the woman who had just spent her first night in his arms, the woman who, if the Fates were kind, would spend every night in his and his partner's arms.

Isaac was not a sentimental man. Although he was retired from the army, he still thought of himself first as a soldier, a Ranger. It was hard to indulge a soft heart in the places the army had sent him, but he definitely held a deep love in his heart for Carolyn. The wealth of tenderness she could make him feel for her tightened his chest and left him off balance. It shocked him some days.

It was hard for him to say it, or even to admit it, but he valued her safety and happiness above anything or anyone else. If this bastard tried to get near her again, he was in for a hell of a nasty shock. He had a reputation for being fair, for giving second chances, but he had a real short fuse where a threat on Carolyn's life was concerned. This was a definite threat.

Isaac wasn't in the mood to take prisoners.

"Yes, poor Pavarotti. He was such a sweet little bird," Charlotte said. "He wasn't just Carolyn's pet. Everyone in the office loved him. Well, not Nina or Josie maybe, but everyone else."

Isaac wasn't aware of it, probably since he spent the majority of his time avoiding Nina, but he wasn't all that surprised. Nina just wasn't a warm, pet-loving sort of person. "People were always bringing in little treats for him. Burgess even talked about putting his cage out in the bullpen, to kind of brighten the place up."

"Yeah, that sounds like Burgess."

Walt Burgess was a merciless hand-to-hand fighter, a hardened, lifelong agent who looked like a thug and had a soft heart for anything smaller and weaker than himself. He taught free self-defense classes for the girls at the local college, starting when his own daughters were teenagers. Over the years, he had roped in many of the other agents to help with that enterprise, including Isaac himself on

numerous occasions. Walt just loved it when he could convince those sweet-faced college girls to beat on Isaac or one of the other agents.

“What about Carolyn’s house? Any major damage?” Charlotte asked now, straightening to press one hand to the small of her back. “Heath and Bran were all geared up to get over there with guns blazing the second the alarm sounded, but Conn pulled rank and went himself.”

“Front window smashed with a brick,” he said succinctly. “There was no one on the premises, and no footprints on the lawn. Conn thinks the perp didn’t even leave the front walk and didn’t enter the house.”

“Anything unusual?”

“The brick was painted with insults like ‘bitch,’” he replied.

Charlotte snorted. “Carolyn might not consider *bitch* to be an insult. She spent years trying to prove herself tougher and smarter than every male agent she ever met. I did the same, so I know. Some days, you only know you’re doing it right because of the number of times some criminal calls you a tough bitch.”

Isaac laughed briefly. He had heard Carolyn and Charlotte talking about that before, laughing and joking and calling each other “bitch” like it was a pet name or a term of respect between them.

“Yeah, but I don’t think she’ll feel the same about the word *slut*, or some of the other terms that were used,” he said, losing his smile.

Charlotte looked at him. “Right. That’s definitely personal,” she said, frowning. “Could it be an angry former boyfriend? What about the angry former girlfriend of a current boyfriend?”

Isaac was startled by that idea. “Why would you think it was a woman, using insults like that?”

Charlotte eyed him pityingly. “Isaac, women call other women sluts all the time. They do it particularly if they’re trying to steal that woman’s man. Didn’t you notice how many times Nina called poor Sara names when she was trying to get Dash into her bed and Sara was in the way? Try to keep up.”

He shrugged and grimaced, rubbing one hand over the stubble on his face. For a truly excellent reason, a glorious morning-lovemaking session with Carolyn where she had burned both him and Grange to ashes, he hadn't found time to shave this morning.

"Yeah, I noticed that," he admitted.

"Everyone noticed that," Charlotte emphasized. "So, all I'm saying is don't limit yourself. Don't rule out a female as a suspect."

Isaac nodded his head once. "Yes, ma'am," he said, saluting sharply, and Charlotte laughed.

Chapter 11

When Carolyn walked into her office at ten o'clock, she was calm, at least on the outside. Inside, she felt angry and upset.

During the most incredible night of her life, she had been systematically targeted. All her training as an agent couldn't have prepared her for being victimized herself. It was an appalling, dehumanizing experience.

Sara and Charlotte, women she considered both colleagues and friends, were busy wiping fingerprint dust off her desk and cabinets. The silver canary cage that always stood at the window was eerily absent.

"Not quite done in here," Sara said cheerfully, slapping at the black fingerprint dust smeared on her sleeve. Her long, fine blonde hair was up in a high ponytail, and she looked about sixteen years old, even in her prim business suit. "This awful stuff gets all over everything. Don't look yet."

Improbably, Carolyn felt like laughing.

Sara grinned back at her. "Well, I guess you can look, since I'm sure you've seen worse, but we did want it cleaned up before you got in. Charly has to get to your place to help Conn and Burgess, but I said I needed her to help me for at least an hour and Dash okayed it."

"Which Conn loved, I can tell you," Charlotte commented, tossing her filthy cloth into a garbage pail set up by the door. Her cell phone rang, playing "Take This Job and Shove It."

"That would be Conn's ring," she said, her bright brown eyes twinkling, and they all shared a laugh. "I'd better get going before he blows a gasket."

“That’s the fourth call from him in five minutes,” Sara said as Charlotte walked out talking on the phone and waving goodbye.

Carolyn shook her head. She enjoyed Charlotte’s irreverent humor, but Conn might not feel the same way.

“I’m so sorry about Pavarotti,” Sara said gently. “I know how you loved that little guy.” She wiped her hands a final time, then sealed up the garbage bag.

Carolyn sighed and blinked back tears.

“His singing was so sweet,” she agreed. “I’ll really miss having him here.”

“I don’t know why these stalkers have to kill little birds,” Sara said, reminding Carolyn that Sara’s own recently caught stalker had killed a small bird and left it in her bed to frighten her. “I said to Dash that there must be a stalker’s handbook, or something, because they all seem to do the same horrible things.”

Carolyn started. “What did Dash say?” she asked slowly.

Grange walked in the door. “Dash immediately asked if Martin Brent was still in custody because it’s a hell of a nasty coincidence,” Grange said.

Carolyn was almost afraid to ask, but she asked the question anyway. “Well, do we know?”

“He’s out on bail.” Grange looked furious. “The trial begins in a couple of weeks and he isn’t allowed to leave the state, but his lawyer says he went to visit his sister just outside of Houston. We’re checking on that now.”

“But Dash said we shouldn’t worry,” Sara said instantly. Her voice was firm, but her soft, pretty features were marred by a heavy frown. “If he doesn’t show up for the trial, half the state will be out looking for him. He won’t get away.”

“No, he won’t get away,” Carolyn said, automatically trying to soothe her friend. She knew how upsetting it was for Sara to think about her flight from Martin Brent or the upcoming trial. Sara put on a brave front, but it had to be bothering her.

Sara gathered up the last of the cleaning cloths, bagged them, and started to pull the big wheeled garbage pail behind her as she left the office.

“Meet for lunch at Morrissey’s?” She asked on her way out.

Carolyn smiled. “Yes, that sounds good,” she said. “Thanks.”

When Sara was gone, Carolyn turned to Grange. “If this is Martin Brent causing more trouble, Dash will strangle him. Nothing could stop him this time. You know that, don’t you?”

“If Dash wants a chance at Brent he can goddamn stand in line,” he growled almost absently as he checked a reminder on his organizer.

She leaned over to straighten some of the papers that Sara had piled high on her chair. The bottom two filing cabinet drawers had been emptied, their formerly well-ordered contents dumped on the floor. She would probably be sorting and filing for the next two weeks to put her office back in order, and only then would she be able to tell what was missing, if anything. What a mess!

Grange had a strange half-smile on his face when she glanced his way. His silver eyes appeared lit from within.

“What?” she asked, suddenly self-conscious.

“I like watching you.”

She could feel a flush climbing her cheeks. She wasn’t some innocent young schoolgirl, but he could make her blush like one. He was so very male.

“Grange.” It was supposed to be a protest, but it came out breathless and just shy of an invitation.

He was close beside her instantly, and she didn’t even see him move. Damn, the man was fast. And he smelled so good. Just the clean masculine scent of his skin, no heavy colognes for Grange, but it was enough to make her well-pleasured pussy throb in recognition.

He slowly ran his big hands up and down her arms, gradually bending his head. The anticipation popped and sizzled in her blood long before he captured her mouth with his. The kiss was just

beginning to heat up when there was a shocked exclamation from the door.

Carolyn broke away from Grange's mouth and gazed in horror directly into her mother's widened eyes.

"Carolyn, this is your place of work," her mother said primly. The perfect society hostess, she was dressed impeccably in classic ivory silk and beige linen, wearing the single strand of pink pearls that was her signature.

Grange stiffened, and Carolyn felt an unexplainable frisson of fear. "Mother, this is Granger Hamilton, one of the owners of DIG. Grange, this is Annalise Winston, my mother." Carolyn was quick to perform the introductions, knowing that her mother would expect the social niceties to be observed.

Drawing himself up to his full height, he stepped forward with Carolyn's hand clasped in his. "You are just in time to congratulate us, Annalise," he said smoothly, wearing his most charming smile. "Carolyn has agreed this morning to be my wife."

Carolyn admired his clever phrasing. He made it sound like he had proposed only moments ago, in a perfectly appropriate setting while wearing tailored wool trousers and a starched white shirt. Instead, he had proposed hours ago, stark naked on his knees beside his partner in their threesome, after indulging in an exhausting, incredible night of total debauchery. Her mother would be shocked.

There was a small silence as her mother openly stared. Carolyn wanted to sink into the floor, dreading her mother's response, but Annalise Winston surprised her.

"Well, that's lovely," she breathed, clasping her hands to her silk-draped bosom. "Oh, Carolyn, you've been keeping a delicious secret." Her eyes roved up and down Grange, clearly approving what she saw. "We'll announce it at the charity ball on Friday night, of course. Your father will be so thrilled."

Carolyn could feel her life sliding out of control, but she was at a loss as to how to salvage it. "But, Mother," she tried, as Grange's

fingers tightened warningly on hers, "I'm not coming to the ball. Father and I argued when he told me he wants me to marry—"

"Yes, that sweet Randall," her mother interrupted, waving one beautifully manicured hand. "Your father quite likes him, but you and I both know you'd be bored with him inside of a month. He's a terribly nice boy, but really, not the type for you. I have my eye on him for Linda's daughter, Chelsea. I've always felt that another agent would be the perfect choice for you, dear. Plus, the announcement will certainly liven up the ball. It's always the same people and the same conversations year after year at these events. They don't even seem to realize it."

Carolyn was sure she felt the world spin off its axis. She looked at her mother and Grange smiling at one another, the society hostess and the former Army Ranger in perfect agreement, and said faintly, "I think I need to sit down."

"Oh, Carolyn." Her mother laughed. "Don't worry about a thing. Granger, do you have a tuxedo?"

"Yes, ma'am, I do."

"Well, that will certainly save us some time." Annalise wore a blinding smile, clearly overjoyed with today's developments.

Grange moved to take her mother's hand. "Annalise, would you favor me with your company for an early lunch? We have had...an issue recently, and I'd like to discuss security with you for the ball."

"Why, I'd be delighted." Annalise tucked her arm in Grange's and let him lead her to the door.

"I'll bring him back safely, dear," her mother said.

Carolyn watched in amazement as Grange glanced back at her and winked before escorting her mother from the room.

Chapter 12

Nearly three hours later, Carolyn walked into Isaac's office and pulled the door shut behind her.

Isaac looked at her face and opened his arms to her. She just kept moving forward, and his arms closed around her with satisfying pressure, pulling her firmly against his broad, warm chest.

"We all have to go to the charity ball," she mumbled petulantly into his jacket. "Grange and my mother are new best friends. It's frightening and unnatural."

Isaac rocked her a little, back and forth, and it soothed her on a primitive level.

"Yeah," he said, laughing a little, "Grange messaged me to get the tuxes dry cleaned, and your gold dress, too. I took them down to the dry cleaners, but he has to pick them up Friday morning," he grouched good-naturedly.

Carolyn laughed, as he no doubt meant her to. She rubbed her cheek against him, openly savoring his heat. It amused her that these ultra-masculine men, so used to the command position, would take care of such a mundane consideration as dry cleaning.

"We'll also be working with your mother's security guards. Conn and Charlotte will be attending as an extra set of eyes. I realize that we won't be able to be public about our relationship, and Grange is the one your mom thinks of as the fiancé, so I'll try to keep the dirty dancing to a minimum."

His words were a tease, humorous, but his tone of voice held a certain resignation. Isaac didn't like taking the second position, but he was trying to make light of it.

Carolyn reached up, nuzzled his ear, and smoothed kisses from there down to the hollow of his throat. She leaned back, letting his strength support her so that she could meet his eyes.

“You’re not second best to me, Isaac. Never think it.” She spoke softly and clearly so her words would sink in. “I was having such a hard time feeling what I felt for you and for Grange at the same time. I couldn’t choose one over the other. I love you, and I want to be your wife.”

“God, baby, I love you,” he said almost desperately. “I love you.”

Isaac pulled her up close and fastened his mouth tenderly over hers. The heat flared between them as it always did, but it was tempered with a deep, swelling emotion. They rocked together, mouths fused and clinging, until Carolyn had tears standing in her eyes and Isaac was in much the same condition himself.

“You’ll never know how much you mean to me,” he grated, pressing kisses to her eyelids, sipping the teardrops. “I’m not good with words, and there are no words big enough to cover this feeling.”

“You’re doing just fine,” Carolyn assured him softly, basking in his focused attention. This gentle and open Isaac was so different from Isaac the office clown, or Isaac the soldier, that she was utterly captivated. He was irresistible to her this way.

He smoothed his lips down her throat, nibbling and tasting, lingering over the sensitive area until her knees felt like jelly and his hard arms supported her weight completely.

He laid her down across the desk and sat in his chair, pushing his hands up her thighs to raise her skirt. Soon, the skirt was bunched around her waist. He slowly pushed her thighs apart.

Isaac sighed gustily.

“God, I love garters,” he said feelingly, and lowered his mouth to her tender thigh just above one pink lace garter. The sensation of heat made her moan in anticipation. He nipped then sucked hard, and her pussy gushed a flood of scented cream as he left his loving mark on her pale skin.

He knew it, damn him, and his fingers trailed up, brushing seductively against her hot folds, and pushing the delicate pink lace of her panties to one side so that he could explore her further, he gently investigated the wetness.

Two long fingers slid inside, and she winced a little at the soreness. It had been a long and vigorous night, and she wasn't used to such activities.

Isaac noticed immediately and pulled his fingers out of her clinging heat, drawing moisture with him. She groaned at the friction.

"I'm so sorry," he said, his voice muffled slightly, his breath hot against her secret flesh. "Are you sore, baby? I should have thought. I'll kiss it better."

The sensation was electrifying. He licked and nuzzled the frilled seam apart, then settled in, holding her open with his big hands. He used his whole mouth, his lips, his tongue, and his teeth in a fevered, wicked assault on her scorching pussy. The man was a connoisseur of all things female, and his own obvious enjoyment of this intimate act made it that much hotter for her until she was writhing and nearly out of her mind.

He lapped and tasted, swirling his stiffened tongue around her swollen clit, flicking and pulling at it with his pursed lips, creating a maelstrom of excitement which threatened to blast apart everything she had known before.

He deliberately drew it out, constantly varying technique and tempo, torturing her with her own ungovernable response, until she couldn't do anything but surrender to his illicit expertise. Only when Carolyn was almost frantic, pleading with him, thrashing between his restraining hands, and begging breathlessly for relief of the exquisite torment, did he fasten his mouth to her and suck strongly.

The resulting explosion was incredibly intense, flashing through her bloodstream in a blast of liquid heat, and a sharp, high scream tore from her throat as every muscle in her body clenched. Isaac kept his mouth on her, staying with her as she bucked and then gradually

gentling the demand from his touch until he was simply nuzzling tenderly, petting, and seeming to enjoy the feminine flesh displayed for him.

Carolyn could distantly feel her own excessive wetness, had felt it as it pulsed out in her climax, but she couldn't seem to dredge up the energy to feel embarrassed by it. If his reluctance to lift his face from her was any indication, Isaac wasn't bothered by her extravagant response. If anything, he seemed quite pleased with her and with himself.

He pulled back after a few moments, leaving her draped limply over his desk, still exposed to his burning gaze. With visible unwillingness, he put her clothing back in order and coaxed her onto his lap.

She could feel his hard cock pressing aggressively against her hip, but when she tried to stroke him through his trousers, he moved her hand up to his mouth to tickle her fingers with his breath.

"Isaac, what about you?" she asked, her voice warm.

"I'm happy right here, holding you in my arms." His smile was genuine, unguarded. "Let me have this. Let me know right now that my woman is limp from the pleasure I've given her. It's enough."

Carolyn lay against him, giving up all control to him and basking in his care. He held her close and silent for a long time, sometimes stroking her back or smoothing tiny kisses into her hair, letting her just drift in the glorious aftermath. It was one of the most peaceful moments of her life.

Chapter 13

“Honey, I’m home,” Grange called as he walked into the ranch house carrying their dry cleaning. Two tuxedos and one golden silk gown clean and pressed, perfect for the charity ball they would be attending tonight, perfect for the announcement that Carolyn Winston would soon become Mrs. Granger Hamilton—and later, in a private ceremony for just a few close friends, Mrs. Isaac Marks.

Grange grinned to himself. They certainly wouldn’t be announcing *that* part of it at the ball. It would please him, and no doubt Isaac, very much to have their relationship with Carolyn openly acknowledged, but she was very conscious of the strictures of the society in which her parents lived, so their unorthodox home life would have to remain a closely guarded secret shared with only a few very close friends.

“Grange, you’re a bit late,” Carolyn said breathlessly as he rounded the corner into the living room. She took the golden dress from him hurriedly, but he reeled her in to plant a smacking kiss on her smiling lips. He lingered for a moment, just until she began to respond, and then he pulled back to nuzzle her fragrant throat.

“You smell great,” he said, growling playfully against her suddenly throbbing pulse. “And you look great.”

She was wearing a low-cut bustier and the tiniest scrap of gold lace panties he had ever had the pleasure of seeing. Stockings with garters completed the picture. And her hair was piled high on her head with a few artful red-gold curls hanging down.

“Hurry up and run,” he said gruffly, “because if you stand there looking edible for another five seconds, I’ll be all over you. Your

beautiful hair will be wrecked, and we will all be very late for this ball.”

Carolyn laughed, flushing with pleasure at his heated teasing. She was shaking her head as she rushed away down the hall.

Damn, she looked good in their house.

Grange felt more than heard Isaac coming up behind him, and passed Isaac’s tux back to him.

“Thanks.” Isaac sounded subdued, thoughtful.

“You’ve been thinking about the security?” Grange asked, knowing well where Isaac’s thoughts would be this close to an operation.

“Yeah, and something Charlotte said has stayed with me. She said that a woman who had her eye on another woman’s man would call her names like slut.”

“Yeah?” Grange made the connection easily. “So, is she thinking that this perp could be another woman and maybe not Martin Brent at all?”

“I think it’s worth considering.”

“Okay, I’ll update Conn. He may take it better coming from me than he would from Charlotte. He and Charlotte are already at the Winston house.”

“What’s with Conn, anyway? He knows Charlotte is a top agent, but he shuts her down every time she has an opinion. She’s just going to stop talking to him at all, and then we’ll lose her expertise.” Isaac sounded aggravated.

“So put her on a different team for a while.” Grange had no intention of getting into Conn’s psych issues, even with Isaac. “Carolyn’s mother has assigned Conn and Charlotte rooms so they could get ready there, and be on-site when the caterers arrive. They’re wired in, of course, and you will be, too. Locke and Burgess are in the van parked at the kitchen entrance. Carolyn will be bugged so that you can pick up her comments, but not wired in. Same with me, but I’ll have my palm unit.”

“There’s a unit at Carolyn’s house, shift rotation every twelve hours,” Isaac added. “Also, we have two extra agents at DIG, along with Heath and Bran on the security desk, just in case we’re undervaluing the business aspect of this.”

His tone stated that the business theory wasn’t working for him. Grange agreed. This felt like a personal attack on Carolyn.

“If it is a woman behind these incidents, it would have to be someone powerfully angry with Carolyn,” Grange mused. “We need to sit down with Carolyn tomorrow and try to come up with a list of suspects, male and female.”

“First thing tomorrow,” Isaac stated. “I want this thing over. We get a team on this list and clear this case in a week.”

Grange was in complete agreement. Carolyn was in danger, and his instincts were setting up a low-level hum. From experience, he knew that things at this stage could escalate into an extreme threat very quickly.

“It’s time to go hunting,” he said grimly, and Isaac nodded sharply.

Chapter 14

Carolyn hung on to Grange's arm and smiled so hard that her face ached. Her mother was right: the faces were the same as last year, and so were the conversations. She could have given the punch line of every joke the jovial Senator Wells told to Grange, since she was convinced that she had heard them all the year before.

She entertained herself by watching Isaac prowl through the crowded room in his tuxedo, his lean form and wavy brown hair drawing more than one interested woman's gaze. Grange, with his inky black hair and flashing silver eyes, had a very similar effect on the female population at the ball, but after her mother had announced their engagement, the ladies had reigned in some of their fascination with Grange.

The obvious physical power and the level of testosterone rolling off these two men set them very much apart from the other businessmen here. These two men enjoyed women, appreciated their minds and bodies, and the women could somehow sense it. It drew them with an irresistible magnetism.

He's with me, she thought more than once. They're *both* with me.

The startling, delicious pleasure of that idea still felt new to her. And yet, there was something so undeniably right about it. She could hardly wait for this party to be over so that she could go home with her men and start creating that lifetime of passionate nights that they had promised her.

Carolyn craned her neck, unwittingly digging her nails into Grange's arm. His warm hand covering hers alerted her, and she pulled back a little.

Nina was standing beside Isaac at the buffet table, running her signature red-tipped claws down his arm.

Carolyn watched with a frown. How had Nina gotten an invitation to one of the most exclusive events of the year?

The answer to that quickly became apparent as Randall Wells, her father's current favorite, tried to retrieve his date, gently pulling her away from her open pursuit of a disdainful Isaac.

Take that, office piranha, Carolyn thought with a smug little smile.

Nina turned and looked across the room, and when her eyes settled on Carolyn, she glared before turning to Randall and draping her thin, flexible body against him. Randall smiled helplessly down at her, and Nina preened under his attention.

"Whoever that woman is, she'd like to set your hair on fire, darling. Watch your back," her mother said quietly.

Carolyn laughed.

"Excuse me a moment," Grange murmured politely and, moving in the direction of the buffet tables, melted into the crowd.

"That creature was falling all over Randall, and he was just eating it up," Annalise said indignantly. "He should know better than to bring someone like that. If your father sees that, he'll have something to say about it."

If her father didn't like the public image Randall's date created, Randall would definitely get a lecture on Monday morning.

Oh, poor Randall, Carolyn thought, feeling sorry for him in spite of herself.

"Since my date has deserted me," she said, smiling, "I think I'll take this opportunity to freshen up."

Her mother nodded absently and patted her arm as Carolyn passed her in the direction of the back hallway. She had no intention of standing in the inevitable long line to use the washrooms designated for public use.

Being a Winston did have its privileges, namely, escaping to the cordoned-off family section of the house to use the washroom beside

her old bedroom.

Climbing the long curved staircase would have been utterly impossible in heels, and Carolyn was glad that she had worn her strappy flat sandals again. Her ankle was already protesting from all the dancing earlier and she could only imagine how much worse it would feel if she had succumbed to her own vanity and worn the glorious stilettos that were the true match to the golden silk gown.

As she passed her old room, she heard a muffled thump. She stopped and carefully pressed her ear to the door, but the sound wasn't repeated. She waited another minute, then two. Nothing.

Curious, she began to slowly turn the doorknob. She knew exactly how to turn it to avoid any sound thanks to the numerous times she had surreptitiously left this very room in the middle of the night to sneak a treat from the kitchen. Just as she started to open the door, she was shoved from behind. She gasped as she twisted her good ankle and fell heavily to the floor to land beside the prone body of Charlotte Morse.

Turning to her back quickly, she was shocked to see Nina leaning against the closed door. She was smiling, so cool and malicious as she held a tiny gun on Carolyn.

Carolyn sat up and checked Charlotte's pulse. Weak. She was unconscious, but still alive.

"What is this?" Carolyn demanded. "What did you do to Charlotte? This is my bedroom, and Charlotte's out cold on the floor."

"Charlotte will live, which is more than I can say for you," Nina said sharply.

Carolyn made a move to get up, but Nina pointed the gun at her face and motioned her back down.

"Nina, I think you'd better explain yourself." Carolyn used her most commanding voice, wanting to make sure that every word was picked up by the receiver she was wearing in her bustier. She had also tapped Charlotte's ear wire when she checked for a pulse, giving the emergency signal. By now, Burgess would be alerting Grange, Isaac,

and Conn that there was a situation. Carolyn just had to keep Nina talking long enough to give the guys an opportunity to get to her.

“Don’t pretend that you don’t know!” Nina snarled. “You know exactly what this is about!”

“Why don’t you tell me?”

Nina kept the gun pointed right into her face.

“You stole my men. You and Sara. Dash, Isaac, and Grange were mine long before Sara even came here, and I’ll have them again. I’ll be the one to console Isaac and Grange when you commit suicide tonight in your old room.”

Nina was nodding and smiling, congratulating herself on her plan.

“Nina, no one will believe that I would commit suicide tonight,” Carolyn said mockingly. “And Charlotte certainly wouldn’t commit suicide in my old room. Your plan is total crap, Nina. How are you going to get out of this?”

She kept saying Nina’s name, wanting there to be no mistake in identification—just in case.

Chapter 15

Grange headed through the crowded ballroom as fast as he could without causing a panic. He had to get to Isaac, to alert the team that he was beginning to suspect that Nina had something to do with the threat to Carolyn. When Annalise had pointed out that Carolyn should watch her back around Nina, something had just clicked in his mind.

Nina had access to Carolyn's office and would know her home address as well. Nina was still chasing both Grange and Isaac, and she had known that Grange dragged Carolyn from their meeting and into his locked office. If Nina had managed to catch a glimpse of Carolyn when she left his office, it would have been more than obvious that something had happened between them.

Nina always painted her long nails bright red, and the brick that sailed through Carolyn's window had been painted with insults in a shining scarlet red.

Nina disliked Carolyn's pet bird.

It was a frighteningly good fit.

The instinct that had kept him alive in some of the most dangerous places the Army could think of to send him was clamoring, pounding with every beat of his heart. He picked up speed without realizing it.

Conn intercepted him halfway. Talking on his own com system already, he dragged out another ear wire and slipped it over Grange's ear. He keyed it to activate.

Isaac was beside them suddenly, and then they were out the side door and on the back stairs, three former soldiers with hard eyes and a shared purpose.

Grange's heart stopped in his chest then started hammering when

his ear wire picked up Carolyn's voice.

"Nina, no one will believe that I would commit suicide tonight, and Charlotte certainly wouldn't commit suicide in my old room. Your plan is total crap, Nina. How are you going to get out of this?"

"Don't antagonize the crazy woman, for Christ's sake," Isaac muttered as they raced up the stairs together. His face was stony, but his eyes were feral.

Grange felt more than a little wild himself.

He heard Burgess on the wire, panting and announcing his location as leaving the surveillance van and entering the kitchen, proceeding up the side stairs.

There was a cry of pain through the wire. Carolyn!

Then Nina's voice came through.

"It is a good plan," Nina said petulantly. "Too bad you'll never see how good this plan is. You'll be dead. It's so easy to kill when you're just ridding the world of vermin. The bird was nothing. Soon, you'll be nothing. Isaac and Grange will be heartbroken, and I'll be there to help them get through it. They'll get over you soon enough."

Nina's voice faded out for a moment, and there was another cry of anger and pain.

"Then, when Sara dies, Dash will be mine again, and I'll have all three men back. Back with me where they belong. They're mine, and you know it. You've always known it, and you just wanted them because they were mine!"

Nina was almost screaming through the wire now, clearly a step away from losing control. They didn't have time for finesse. The crisis was already happening.

The men rounded the corner into the upper hall at full speed. Conn pointed ahead, and Grange zeroed in on the second door. He just continued running flat out, never slowing his pace. He lowered one shoulder in a classic football tackle position, hit hard, and blasted through the solid oak door on the first try, with Isaac and Conn a bare step behind him, just as a gunshot reverberated through the room.

Shards of glass were raining down on them and the smell of cordite was overpowering.

“Please, please,” he found himself chanting, as he staggered over a body. He dropped to his knees, half-blind, and hauled Carolyn, feebly struggling, against his chest. He was almost sobbing for air as he ran practiced hands over her, searching for the bullet wound. He knew he had heard a shot, and Nina had been holding a gun on his Carolyn.

Isaac was on his other side, calling her name anxiously, speaking softly to her, holding her hands to his heart.

“Carolyn, tell me where,” Grange said. “I can’t find—where are you shot?”

“I’m fine, but my ankle,” Carolyn said, moaning. “I’m fine. I haven’t been shot. The door hit her and she shot my lamp.”

Hearing her voice, seeing her clear gaze, Grange finally calmed enough to pull back a little and truly assess her condition. He was deeply thankful to see that she didn’t appear to have any bullet wounds, but there was a bruise forming on her cheek, and her formerly good ankle was swelling rapidly.

“She kept kicking my ankle,” Carolyn said. “I was rolling to take her out while she was off balance, and the door exploded. I would have had her.” It sounded like a complaint.

Grange and Isaac shared a look then they both laughed in sheer relief. If Carolyn could sit on the floor in a silk gown amid the splinters of a destroyed door and complain that the rescue had arrived a little too soon, all was right in their world.

Conn had a dazed but defiant Nina cuffed and handed off to a whistling Burgess, who had sprinted from the van and up the back stairs to take the backup position. Burgess had always disliked Nina and would no doubt be pleased to see her heading off to jail.

Grange fully expected an I-told-you-so from Burgess about hiring Nina as soon as the dust settled. And he would listen to every word without offering any defense. Burgess had been correct about Nina in

every way.

As soon as Nina was escorted out, Conn turned his attention to Charlotte, who was starting to stir. His face was a study in pain, and his hand trembled when he brushed her hair back from her stark white face.

Grange exchanged glances with a startled Isaac. He shook his head sharply, but he knew that Isaac would come back to it at a later date. Isaac was like a bulldog with any kind of puzzle.

Isaac had radioed for a medic team as they barreled up the stairs, and the team carried Charlotte from the room on a stretcher, heading for the closest hospital. She had been hit over the head from behind by Nina, and the medics felt she had been unconscious for too long. She needed to be in hospital for tests.

The remaining medic started toward Carolyn.

“No hospital,” Carolyn said firmly. “I’ll submit to the medic, but I’m not going to the hospital.”

Isaac opened his mouth to protest, but subsided at a look from Grange. If the medic recommended she go to hospital, she would be going. No sense fighting about it until it was necessary.

The medic knelt down and touched her puffy ankle with gentle hands, manipulating it lightly. Carolyn bit back a moan of pain. He looked up at Grange and Isaac hovering, and shrugged.

“She needs to go to the hospital,” he said apologetically. “This will have to be x-rayed. It could be just a bad sprain, but it could just as easily have a hairline fracture.”

Carolyn sat up straighter, obviously intending to make a fuss, but Grange simply leaned down and captured her militant mouth firmly with his, effectively silencing her objection.

“Don’t fight this, baby, please,” he asked against her lips. “We need to know that you’re okay.”

Isaac brought her hand to his chest. “Please, Cara,” he said, and his voice cracked. “Get checked over so that we know there’s nothing to worry about. Please. I need to be able to breathe again.”

Carolyn looked at him then turned to Grange.

“No stretcher. No wheelchair. Help me up.” She was rapping out orders like a drill sergeant, but the men didn’t have the heart to argue.

Isaac kissed her hand, Grange took her other hand, and they helped her to stand up. They watched carefully to see if her bad ankle would support her full weight. And when she wobbled and hissed in pain, Grange swept her into his arms and carried her to the waiting van.

He carried her right through the main hallway and past the glittering ballroom, where the dancers continued with their waltz, unaware.

Chapter 16

Carolyn shifted and gasped at the twinge of pain.

"I'm so sorry, baby," Isaac said softly, wincing right along with her as he re-bandaged her injured ankle.

The sprain wasn't a bad one, and after two days of bed rest followed by three days on crutches, it was looking almost as good as new. It wasn't broken and didn't require surgery, so Carolyn was surprisingly okay with the doctors' strict recommendations. Except for the early mornings, or when one of the guys helped her with the tension bandage, there wasn't much pain at all anymore.

She was getting along quite well on her cane. The doctors had requested that she use one for a few days after coming off the crutches, not because of the sprain, but because of her other already weak ankle.

She had borrowed the cane from Conn yesterday since he categorically refused to use it, even though he had torn open the healing wound on his leg sprinting up the stairs with Grange and Isaac to come to her rescue. The doctors didn't even bother with more stitches for him, just stapled the gaping flesh together and wrapped it tight, and that suited him fine.

"Charlotte was discharged this morning, and she's at home now," Isaac said. "Some of the agents have set up a schedule to take turns staying with her this first night home. And Conn will be supervising, of course."

After spending five nights in hospital under close observation for a cracked skull, Charlotte would be happy to get back into her own home, Carolyn knew.

“Is she going to be okay? A cracked skull is serious. What do the doctors say?”

Isaac smiled, finishing with her ankle and leaning forward to place a lingering kiss on her bare thigh just at the bottom hem of her robe. He sat back, pulling Carolyn up into a sitting position.

“The docs told her to take it easy for a month and she immediately started griping. She wanted to get right back into the office. Then one of the docs called Conn in and told *him* she had to take it easy for a month. He’s watching her like a mother hawk, and if she so much as picks up a glass of water or a pill—these are her words not mine—he gives her proper hell in an Irish accent and makes her put it down again.”

Isaac was laughing as he said it, and Carolyn couldn’t help but laugh as well. She could just hear Charly saying something like that, and it lifted her spirits to realize that her friend would be just fine.

“What about Nina?” she asked now, and Isaac shrugged.

Her emotions regarding Nina were unpredictable, fluctuating from day to day, sometimes from hour to hour. She was frustrated with herself, mostly because she had never considered Nina as a suspect. And yet, looking at the situation in hindsight, all the facts were there.

The only consolation was that none of the other agents had fingered Nina for the crimes, perhaps because they didn’t take her seriously. The only one who had seen a genuine threat in Nina was Carolyn’s mother, who had expressed no surprise at the evening’s event. The only thing that elicited any comment from Annalise Winston was that Grange must be very strong, since no one should ever have been able to single-handedly destroy a solid carved oak door with one blow. Even her father had been impressed with that, albeit unwillingly.

“Nina was denied bail,” Grange said as he came in from the kitchen with a tray of submarine sandwiches and soft drinks. “She’ll be in jail until the trial. Her lawyer has requested a psychiatric evaluation.” He placed the long wooden tray on the little coffee table

and sat on the sofa beside Carolyn.

“Well, she’s crazy,” Isaac muttered. “It wouldn’t take a psychiatrist to figure that out.”

“But she’s sane enough to plan my murder and Sara’s, so she’d better go to trial,” Carolyn said, her anger surging to the forefront.

“She’ll stand trial.” Grange sounded certain, and Carolyn relaxed. “They have the tape of every threat she made to you, every nasty comment about the murders she had planned. She confessed to killing your bird and even sending that letter months ago to Martin Brent alerting him to Sara’s new address. There’s no way that she’ll be able to wiggle out of all that. Every time the DA listens to the tape, more charges pile up.”

His words gave her a sense of reassurance. If Grange wasn’t worried about the outcome, then there was nothing to be worried about.

Carolyn looked at Grange, with his black hair slightly longer than its usual military-short cut. She glanced sideways at Isaac. His bright brown eyes were lit with a deep satisfaction, his hair as unruly as ever. They were two of the most gorgeous, powerful, masculine men she had ever seen, and they were hers.

“And to think,” she said, tongue in cheek, “she went to all that trouble just to get you two back. I wonder why?”

Grange and Isaac shared a look.

“It has obviously been too long,” Grange said. “Carolyn is losing her memory.”

“Maybe we should remind her of just why a woman would crave us every hour on the hour, why she would want us back?” Isaac suggested politely, running his fingers smoothly up the inside of her thigh as Grange lowered her body into a reclining position with her head in his lap.

Carolyn loved their hands on her. She had no desire to resist.

“She wanted Dash, too,” Carolyn said, her eyes sparkling with wicked humor. “Maybe we should call Dash over and—”

“No damn way,” both men said together, and she laughed joyfully.

“This little witch is teasing us,” Grange said silkily, reaching down to palm her breasts and twisting her nipples delicately.

“She won’t need a third man,” Isaac asserted.

“We’ll keep our woman so busy pleasing us that she won’t have time to tease anyone else.”

With Isaac gently insinuating his hand between her legs to discover her damp, hot folds, the mood shifted rapidly.

“I think I like the teasing,” Isaac said.

They had been so careful of her healing ankle the past five days, holding her in their bed but abstaining from sex, with the first touch Carolyn was thrown hard into the white hot whirlwind they were so easily creating.

Grange pulled the tie belt of her robe, and Isaac lifted her out of it and carried her naked into the master suite. When he placed her tenderly in the center of the huge bed, he and Grange both followed her down to feast, pressing burning, biting kisses to nipples and belly, thighs, and mons.

The men positioned her bandaged ankle with great care, placing a pillow under it and making sure it was at the very far edge of the bed. Then, while she was still feeling grateful for the care they offered, Grange captured her hands in his and lifted them to the carved bars of the headboard. And then he quickly tied them with a silk scarf.

Alarmed, Carolyn pulled at the restraint.

“Grange,” she said, “I don’t think—”

“Please, baby, don’t think,” he said. “We want to give you as much pleasure as your senses can handle. Even more. We want you to be completely overwhelmed with love.”

Carolyn wasn’t sure how having her hands tied could help with that, but if it came down to an issue of trust, there was no question.

“I trust you,” she said softly. “I trust you both.”

The men exchanged a triumphant glance, and then moved to shed their own clothing. Grange stripped quickly and efficiently, with no

wasted motions as he bared his muscular body and massive, erect cock. He was beside her on the bed almost immediately, with his silver eyes locked on her body, his hot mouth already teasing and tasting her stiff nipples.

Isaac took a bit more time, his smile fierce, eyes hot, lean hips swiveling in a slow grind as he pulled off his shirt and slowly lowered the zipper on his jeans. He reached in, drew out his hard penis and pumped it once, then again, as if he couldn't resist the temptation, while his eyes followed Grange's lips as they traveled unhurriedly down her body.

She moaned. Damn, these men were scorching hot.

Carolyn could feel the heat rising in her blood, sizzling in her searing core. She whimpered again and again, unable to hold back the tiny sounds, the dual stimulation of Grange's touch and Isaac's x-rated performance taking her further than she had been before. When she tried to grab Grange's head to make him hurry on the path to her weeping feminine flesh, she found that the scarf tying her wrists to the headboard and preventing any movement on her part just added yet another dimension to the growing inferno.

She groaned. Every time with these men was better, more exciting than the time before. She would die in these flames!

When Grange finally tongued her pulsing pussy, Isaac groaned and licked his lips, and Carolyn bucked once from a tiny orgasm.

"Oh, please," she begged.

Isaac squeezed his cock once, hard as he came to the head of the bed. He rubbed the salty tip against her begging mouth. She licked and then sucked him deep, straining against her bonds to get closer, to take more.

Grange, his mouth shining with her juices, rose to his knees, fitted the wide, flared head of his erection to her gate, and pushed just enough to lodge there. He stopped right there, burning her, stretching her tight muscles too much and still not enough.

On the razor's edge, she writhed around him, gasping, groaning

around Isaac's cock, trying to capture more of both men.

Isaac obliged immediately, letting her set a swift rhythm with her bobbing head, grunting as she sucked hard at the bottom of each stroke. She was loving every second of this, feeling the power of both her men inside her body at once.

Grange continued to tease her soft pussy, calling forth more wetness, making it ripple and grip at his monster cock.

"I'm—God—I'm not gonna last," Isaac panted, sweat dripping down his face. "I'm gonna—"

Grange responded by shoving all at once, penetrating her desperate pussy in a thick invasion, bumping her cervix, stretching her hard, and holding deep. Carolyn screeched around Isaac's leaping cock, and then swallowed as quickly as she could, trying to keep up with the seemingly endless jets of burning seed.

Grange roared, pumping fast as he came forcefully. His colossal member strafed tender tissues with every rough pass, pushing Carolyn over the yawning precipice into a blinding, screaming freefall. He tensed impossibly, every muscle standing out in relief, until he collapsed on her, utterly spent.

When Carolyn surfaced, it could have been moments or hours later. Her ankle was still on its pillow, Grange was still lying heavily over her, and Isaac was trying to untie her bonds with one hand while his eyes were closed. He finally managed to free her, tossed the silk scarf away, and gently rubbed her reddened skin.

Just as she was starting to drift off, Grange's voice sounded in the room, muffled slightly against her breast. "We're not done yet."

Carolyn snickered a little. It was all she had the energy for.

Isaac groaned happily. "What a way to go."

THE END

<http://www.sirenpublishing.com/lainakenney>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laina Kenney is a classically trained singer/instructor with a regular job and a deep love of the written word. Her family is supportive of (or perhaps just resigned to) a house full of books in every genre, with ancient history and romance taking up the majority of the space. She cheerfully admits to having a bizarre sense of humor and enough shiny accessories for any ten women. One of the greatest joys in her life is exploring the wonder of testosterone, both in prose and in person.

Also by Laina Kenney

Siren Classic: DIG Security 1: *Overheated*

Available at
BOOKSTRAND.COM



Siren Publishing, Inc.
www.SirenPublishing.com