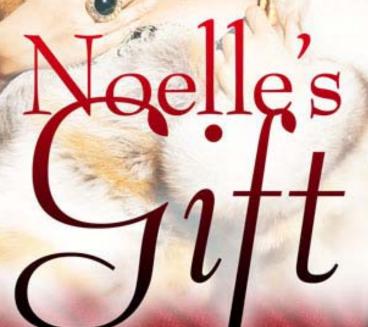
ELLORA'S CAVE Moderne

Shannon Emmel



Merry Kinkmas

Noelle's Gift

Shannon Emmel

Months of therapy go out the window for Noelle when Brad moves back to town. Her super-hot ex has tongues wagging and temperatures rising when he makes his first appearance at the company Christmas party. Everyone is curious about Brad and the rumors surrounding his arrival.

Noelle has all the answers, but can't say a word without risking exposure of their past and her own dirty little secret to friends and coworkers who have no idea what really makes her tick—a fetish for fur…lots of fur.

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



Noelle's Gift

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Dedication

To Herschel, for patiently and bluntly answering my questions about fetishes with a straight face, dragging me to The Fetish Factory for the proper accourtements and offering to escort me to The Fetish Ball to keep me from getting into too much trouble...all in the name of research, of course. *You rrrrrrock!*

To Eric, my love and my muse. You rock my world.

Author Note

Dear Reader,

This is my first foray into the world of fetishes and despite varying opinions on the use of fur, I have to admit, there is nothing in the world like the feel of it on naked flesh. I doubt there's a woman alive who wouldn't love to be wrapped in nothing but the decadence of real fur, if only in her fantasies.

My feeling on that? I can honestly say that no animals were harmed in the writing of this book, so go ahead...indulge yourself in fantasy and I hope you enjoy *Noelle's Gift*.

Best wishes,

Shannon Emmel

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Hugh Hefner: Playboy Enterprises, Inc.

The Grinch: Dr. Seuss Enterprises, Inc.

Chapter One

"I couldn't take my eyes off the bed," Noelle said, recalling every detail of Brad's bedroom. The bed was huge, with the four elaborately carved posts draped from floor to ceiling with miles of deep red velvet. The edges were trimmed in soft white fur that matched the fur of the bed cover. The bedroom was full of dark wood furniture that matched the bed and rich wood paneling covered the walls. The fabrics were all shades of deep red and white with sparkles of silver and gold scattered here and there.

She heard Dr. Graham shift in his chair and recalling that time was running out on her session; she swallowed hard and continued. "The fur...was everywhere. Calling to me, tempting me, making my pulse race and making me wet with desire. Very, *very* wet."

Noelle smoothed an errant auburn curl back behind one ear then reached for the glass of water on the coffee table in front of her, her hand trembling. She took a drink and wished the water was colder, thinking that might have helped douse the fire racing through her, making her cunt ache with need.

Who was she kidding? The glass she held could have been filled with water on the verge of freezing and it wouldn't have cooled her down.

Not one bit.

That, after all, was why she sat where she was at that very minute. Why she'd come here every week for the past year and a half. Dr. Graham had helped her tremendously and until recently, she really believed it was all behind her.

The urges. The shame. Him.

Then, she found out he was back in Pittsburgh and that as of January first, he would officially take over as the new president of Quantum's advertising division. She had worked for the last five of her ten years with the company in that division, yet she

was already considering a transfer to the Philadelphia office to remove any unnecessary temptation from her life.

She needed to keep moving forward, not backward. She glanced at her watch and knew her time was almost up. She had much more she needed to get off her chest before she left.

"Brad was dressed in a long, red velvet robe, trimmed in white ermine and nothing else. I remember thinking, wondering actually, if that was how Hugh Hefner might dress on Christmas Eve. It was July but that didn't make any difference to Brad. As far as he was concerned, every day was Christmas."

Noelle smiled, recalling the perpetual scents of pine and peppermint and holiday cookies that surrounded her at Brad's house but refused to dwell on that particular thought. She needed to get focused and stay focused if she wanted to make it through the evening to come. She cleared her throat and continued, "Anyway, when he pulled me into his arms, it was like being in heaven."

"Don't just brush over the memory, Noelle. Describe it. What part, exactly, felt like being in heaven?" Dr. Graham asked. "You need to try to identify not only the feelings—euphoria, arousal, lust, *love*—but also the triggers. The cause of the feelings."

Noelle paused, making a serious, objective effort to analyze the memory and the feelings she associated with it. What she felt, as well as the who, how, when and why of it.

She'd discovered months ago that her fur fetish stemmed from early childhood experiences of being swaddled in blankets trimmed in soft fur—usually the red and white holiday variety, since she was born on Christmas Eve. She had come to accept that the loss of her parents during adolescence, when her sexual identity was in a formative period, played a role. She understood how that facilitated her association of those early sensual experiences, with being loved and protected, and later transferred those sensations into sexual experiences.

What she still hadn't figured out, was how Brad fit in to the picture or why the sensations were so much more intense with him.

"At the time, I thought it was all about the fur. When he held me close, I felt the fur trim against my cheek and I wanted nothing more than to feel it along my entire body. To bury myself in the sensation and lose myself in him. He slid my dress off my shoulders and it fell to the floor. His fingertips traced the length of my back, the fur skimming my bare flesh all along the way. He took his time lowering me to the bed, but when I felt the fur cover beneath me, the first spasms of pleasure tore at me.

"I tried to stop, to make it last, but Brad knew my weakness and was relentless, running the fur trim of his robe down my throat, across my shoulders and breasts and down my belly. My nipples were as hard as diamonds and my skin was on fire. It was absolutely divine, and it was absolute torture. I felt the tip of his cock brush across my slit and I couldn't take it any longer. I grabbed his buttocks and lifted my hips off the bed, thrusting upward and sheathing him inside me in one motion.

"I heard him moan, almost a growl really, and then there was no holding back for either of us. He pounded hard into me, my body sliding back and forth against the fur cover with every thrust. The sensations all blended together—the fur beneath me, cradling me, and him above me, demanding more with every stroke. When we came, it was together, panting and screaming each other's names."

She felt her nipples harden now, just as they did then, and felt her cunt pulse violently then flood with moisture. She paused as she struggled to keep her voice steady and her recollection of her last night with Brad calm and objective despite being in mid-climax.

"Noelle," Dr. Graham said. "You are telling me about what was an extremely intense, intimate experience with Brad right before he relocated. Obviously, he was aware of your fetish—your weakness, as you put it. He accepted it and indulged your needs without judging you. You have given no indication during our sessions that any of your experiences with Brad were negative, yet you refused to see him or even

communicate with him after that night. It appears that we're back to the original question. Why?"

Shit. So much for moving forward.

"I honestly don't know now what made the experience so intense for me. The fur or Brad. As far as why I haven't seen him or spoken to him since then...that's pretty simple. He left town when his company moved their offices. He was gone two days later, so I really didn't see any point in continuing...whatever it was."

"Hmmm, I see," Dr. Graham said, glancing at the clock on the wall. "I'm afraid our time is up for today, Noelle. Don't forget our next regular appointment falls on Christmas Eve. Unfortunately, I won't be available, so if you'd like to reschedule before that, just give me a call and I'll see what I can do. Otherwise, have a Merry Christmas, and I'll see you again after the first of the year."

"Thank you, Dr. Graham," Noelle replied. She stood, putting on her coat and trying to shake off the arousal that lingered rudely and without regard to her sixty-minute time limit. "I really appreciate your making time for me this afternoon. The holiday party is this evening and now that Brad is back in town and working for the same company I am, I'm sure he'll be there. I can't avoid dealing with this any longer. Hopefully talking it through with you will help me tonight."

"You've made a great deal of progress, but as we've discussed, fetish counseling takes time. You've identified where the sexual urges originate, and I believe that you understand the process, but ultimately, only you can decide what feels right and what is best for you."

Noelle said nothing but simply nodded and slipped out of her therapist's office and into the chilling embrace of the clear, December afternoon.

* * * * *

"I heard it was all very hush-hush, but they negotiated with the new guy for a year to get him here."

"I heard that his last company offered him pretty much anything he wanted to try to get him to stay with them in Boston. They even offered to double his salary, and he still turned them down to come here."

"The story I heard was that money wasn't an issue and that his final decision was made for personal reasons. Apparently, he used to live in Pittsburgh and went to Boston when they moved their corporate headquarters there, but he wasn't happy about it."

Noelle stood at the front of the elevator, fidgeting with the double string of pearls that lay in stark contrast against the pure black of her silk cocktail dress. She stared at the stainless steel door and nervously listened to her coworkers' speculations. She had done everything she could think of to help prepare herself for coming face-to-face with Brad at the party, but dealing with the idle gossip beforehand was not something she had anticipated.

"Noelle, you're awfully quiet. Aren't you the least bit curious about this Merriman guy?"

"Yeah, Noe. The guy is going to be heading up your department. Don't you even want to know what he looks like? I heard he is drop-dead gorgeous and single, so you know what *that* probably means."

"He's gay!" the trio of females said in unison, then dissolved into giggles as the elevator came to a halt.

"No, I'm not curious," Noelle replied without turning around. She did not share their amusement. Instead, she found herself feeling very annoyed as the elevator chimed and the doors slowly slid open. "I have met him, and I'm sure you'll all be relieved to know that he's not gay."

The surprised reactions of her coworkers and any additional questions, if there were any, were immediately squelched as the elevator doors opened completely. The occupants stepped off the elevator and got their first indication that this was definitely not the usual stuffy, and extremely boring, office party.

To everyone's amazement the penthouse conference suite of Quantum's corporate headquarters had been transformed in to a holiday wonderland, complete with animated reindeer hitched to a bigger-than-life-size sleigh. A row of flocked pine trees and giant candy canes, both wrapped in twinkling lights, lined the path from the elevator into the main ballroom. Pint-sized waiters dressed as elves, passed colorful platters of holiday cookies, while full-sized wait staff circulated with champagne and hors d'oeuvres of every kind.

When Noelle saw the room, Brad and everything else was momentarily forgotten. She tried to take it all in. The floors were covered in yards of undulating white that gave the illusion of a blanket of new-fallen snow. The cocktail tables, too, were swathed in white and topped with accents of silver and gold. Other seating areas were staged with electric fireplaces decorated with garland, and stockings hung from their mantles.

As she neared one of those seating areas, Noelle's worst nightmare took hold. In front of every fireplace was a white bearskin rug and across every couch, there was a fur throw. To her utter horror, the white covering nearly everything in sight and giving the impression of snow, was actually fluffy white fur.

That it was all faux fur was irrelevant. The look, the feel and the effect it had on her, was exactly the same. She felt the familiar twinge between her legs begin to build and with it, a sense of panic that one or more of her coworkers would notice and somehow guess her dirty little secret.

She maneuvered through the maze of people and holiday vignettes toward the location of the restrooms, hoping to collect herself before she made her final decision to either try to stick it out, at least for a while, or come up with an excuse to cut and run immediately. She made her way toward a giant Christmas tree, decorated with hundreds of old-fashioned wooden and glass ornaments. A toy train chugged along, winding in between brightly wrapped packages as it circled the base of the tree. Noelle breathed a sigh of relief, knowing it was the last obstacle between her, the hallway leading to the restrooms and a few moments of relative safety.

Her relief was short-lived. She stepped around the tree and ran straight into John Abbott, the company's CEO, surprisingly dressed for the occasion as Santa Claus.

With the CEO, and dressed in a custom-tailored black velvet, fur trimmed suit of his own, complete with matching Santa hat, was the company's newest acquisition, Mr. Brad Merriman.

"Noelle," Mr. Abbott said, with an uncharacteristic twinkle in his eye. "Merry Christmas! Have you been here long?"

"N-no. I just arrived," Noelle replied. She was willing to bet Brad was behind the over-the-top holiday décor. "Merry Christmas to you too. You've certainly outdone yourself with this holiday party. I don't think I've ever seen anything like it."

"Ha ha, you may as well call it what it is—a Christmas party! I know it's not exactly politically correct these days, but I haven't had this much fun in years. And the credit for the idea all goes to this man right here. I'd like you to meet the new president of our advertising division, Brad Merriman. Brad, this is Noelle LeBlanc. She's your senior V.P. and the top producing member of your team, so I'm sure you'll be seeing a lot of her in the future."

"I certainly hope so," Brad said, extending his hand to Noelle.

Noelle took his proffered hand. Her mind barely registered the fact that Mr. Abbot had excused himself to greet other guests, leaving her looking up into blue eyes that never glanced away from hers. It was just as she feared, her pussy pulsed and the old urge to melt into his arms was as strong as ever.

"You're as beautiful as always, Noelle," Brad said quietly. He lifted her hand to his lips, placing a lingering kiss across the back of it before casually skimming her delicately folded fingers along the fur lapel of his suit.

The sound of his voice, the gentle caress of his lips and touch of fur on her fingers, sent her instantly beyond reason and to the brink of ecstasy. She tried to refuse, to pull away, but with another brush of fur across her cheek, she found herself moving toward Brad, instead of away from him.

Without a word, she followed him down the hall, past the restrooms and through the rear access door that opened into the rooftop solarium. As soon as they stepped into the glass enclosure, Brad closed the steel door behind them, pulled her into his arms and kissed her. It felt as if it had been only hours since their last encounter, instead of over a year. His kiss deepened, became more demanding and his tongue tested, teased and sparred with hers.

When the sensual kiss of fur sliding down her bare arm was added to the mix, she made demands of her own, grinding her mound against the heated bulge that strained against the velvet fabric of his pants. She eased back only enough to allow her hand room to loosen his belt, open his trousers and free his swollen cock. She grabbed it and squeezed hard, before lightening her grip and running her hand up and down along the full silken length of him.

She let her hand drop low to cup his balls and gently massage them before again, encircling his shaft and working her way back up. As she neared the head, she squeezed it again, harder than before. She opened her palm and rolled it across the precum droplets, spreading the moisture around the tip before she continued stroking his cock.

She knew this was wrong. She knew it was not helping her move forward. She also knew there was no turning back, and at that moment, she really didn't care. All that mattered, all that felt right, was Brad and having his cock buried inside her.

"Noelle-"

"Don't say it, Brad. Not a word. Just fuck me."

There was no argument and the only sound was a hoarse moan as Brad turned her and, with her back against the door, pushed the hem of the black silk dress past her waist. His hands slid up her legs to the edge of her thigh-high stockings. The fur trim on his sleeve tickled and teased her as he reached into his pocket for a condom and quickly slid it on. Then, he moved the black lace thong away from her slit and replaced it with the head of his cock.

Noelle wrapped her legs around him as he lifted her. He arched his pelvis forward and pulled her downward, ramming his cock into her pussy so hard she gasped. He tried to pull back, but she tightened her legs, pulling him deeper and wanting more. Brad complied, pinning her against the door and pounding his full weight into her with his next thrust.

"Yesss...that's it," she purred. Her fingers clawed their way along his fur lapel, over his shoulders then held tight to the section of slightly longer fur at the back of his collar. "Harder, Brad, *please*. Don't hold back. Fuck me as hard and as fast as you can. Just the way you like it."

"The way we *both* like it," he growled.

Again he complied exactly to her wishes, slamming into her harder and faster and taking her breath away with each stroke.

Her nipples puckered and strained painfully against the confining lace of her bra. She arched against him, raising her full breasts into maximum contact with his chest as he pounded relentlessly into her pussy. The throbbing in her nipples increased and was surpassed only by the agonizing pounding of her clit as she neared her climax.

He claimed her lips in a long, scorching kiss. He released her mouth, and she knew he was almost there. She nuzzled against the soft fur at his neck and with one final, ferocious thrust of his cock, he pushed her over the edge.

She felt him shudder as wave after wave of pleasure washed over her. Her cunt pulsed and contracted around his cock, milking every drop from it. She kept her legs clamped tightly around him, keeping him inside her as he braced his arms against the door to ease his weight away from her.

Together, they drew ragged breaths, locked in contented silence for several minutes before reality set in.

Shit. So much for eighteen months of therapy.

* * * * *

Noelle gave her face a light dusting of powder, but it did little to conceal the freshly fucked flush that still stained creamy white cheeks. She removed the slight smudge of kohl liner from beneath her green eyes and ran slender fingers through her shoulder-length auburn curls. She took one final glance in the ladies' room mirror, silently thanked the makeup gods for smudge-proof lipstick and for only having to add a fresh coat of clear gloss to her kiss-swollen lips.

She took a deep breath and prepared to rejoin the party, hoping that Mr. Abbot had already started with the program, specifically the formal introduction of their new advertising president.

No such luck. Brad was waiting just outside the door to the ladies' lounge.

"I was contemplating coming in after you but decided against it," Brad said, smiling. "If I got you behind closed doors again, I'm afraid we'd both miss my introduction."

"You really didn't have to wait for me, Brad," Noelle said, purposely staying a half step ahead of him on her way down the hall. "I'm a big girl and I'm sure I could have found my way back to the ballroom on my own."

"Oh I'm certain you could have. I was more concerned that you would choose not to and I wouldn't see or hear from you again. At least not until January second, in the office, where you could conveniently continue to avoid me. Except of course in situations where we were surrounded by other people and I wouldn't be able to speak to you alone."

"Well that strategy certainly didn't work very well for me tonight, now, did it?" Noelle said, shaking her head.

"Ha, ha," Brad replied, smoothing the fur on his lapel. "Not so much, no. But then again, this time I was prepared for it."

"You wha—"

"Smile, sweetheart. Here comes Santa Claus."

"Don't call me swee—"

"Brad, I know how anxious you are to get to work, but this is a party," John Abbott said as he approached. "You two will have plenty of time to talk about strategy later. Right now, I want both of you with me for the introductions and to hand out the presents, er, I mean the awards for the advertising division."

"You nearly caught us in the act, John," Brad said, grinning from ear to ear. "Noelle and I were just discussing strategy, and she has some very stimulating ideas that definitely warrant deeper discussion, but you're right. It can wait, because tonight is a night to celebrate."

Chapter Two

"Why aren't you dressed?" Brad asked, handing Noelle a steaming mint mocha latte as she opened her front door. He walked in before she invited him, and more importantly, before she could tell him to go away. "Did you think I was kidding when I said I'd be here to take you to breakfast and then...shopping?"

"Brad, it's six thirty in the morning. Are you out of your mind?"

Noelle closed the door, shook her head and followed Brad into the living room.

"No. It's six thirty in the morning on the last Saturday before Christmas. Only three shopping days left and some of the best sales started an hour ago, so get a move on it."

"We can't do this. I can't do this."

"What? Have breakfast or go shopping?"

"Neither - both!"

He watched admiringly as she walked past him. She looked adorable in red and green flannel pajama bottoms that hung low on her hips and a green tank top that caressed every curve of her full breasts. The thought of replacing the tank top with his hands and mouth made his cock hard with anticipation.

"That's fine by me. I'll be more than happy to take my coat off and stay right here. Love the outfit, by the way. It really shows off your...eyes. The green, that is."

She took a seat in the only armchair in the living room, and he smiled at her attempt to avoid sitting next to him on either the love seat or sofa. He took off his leather jacket and made himself comfortable on the ottoman in front of her chair.

"Brad, what are you doing?" Noelle asked, taking a sip of the latte. "Do you really think you can just waltz back into town and we'll pick up right where we left off?"

"Hmmm, as I recall, I think we already did that. Last night at the party. If we're staying here for a while, I'd be delighted to refresh your memory."

"No! My memory is just fine, thank you."

So was his. Not just his memory of the previous night but of everything that came before. All the time they spent together and the time since he left. Coming back to Pittsburgh was a leap of faith for him. Faith that what they shared was real. Faith that if she couldn't avoid him then it would be just a matter of time before she realized they belonged together. He was prepared to wait it out for as long as it took.

After last night, he was cautiously optimistic that his wait might be considerably shorter than he'd anticipated.

He saw no point in slowing the momentum now and looked around the living room for something soft and furry with which to tempt and tease her. The custom-made fur pillows that were usually scattered on the floor and fur throw that normally lay draped across the end of the sofa were gone. Looking closer he realized there wasn't a bit of fur in sight.

Something else was conspicuously missing from Noelle's home. There was no Christmas tree, nor was there a single Christmas decoration of any kind.

Anywhere.

"Noelle," he said, reaching out and gently caressing her face. "I think it's time you told me what's going on. What's *really* going on?"

"I'm not sure where to begin, Brad."

"Well, for starters, did you report the robbery to the police?"

"What robbery? Who was robbed?" she asked, looking confused.

"Did you get a look at the guy? Was he green and did he have a little dog disguised as a reindeer? The guy is a repeat offender, you know. It's all over the television—there's even a special on tomorrow night."

"What are you talking about?"

"The Grinch," Brad said, smiling and wiggling his eyebrows. "Isn't he the one who came in and stole all of your Christmas decorations?"

She laughed then gave him the first genuine smile he'd seen. He watched her take another sip of the latte then sit the cup on the end table. He waited silently for her answer to his question.

"I haven't felt much like decorating for Christmas. Not since..."

Her voice trailed off leaving him to fill in the blanks. It wasn't difficult.

Not since he left.

Christmas was *his* favorite holiday and he celebrated it all year long. He was the reason there were no Christmas decorations in her home.

He hadn't gotten around to asking about it but knew that somehow the missing fur pieces were also connected to his absence. Now wasn't the time to ask. Now was the time to let her know just how very much he'd missed her and how much he loved her.

This time, there would be no cheating. No fur props. No playful manipulation. This time, she needed to come to him because of him and nothing else.

The first six months they'd been apart were sheer hell. She refused to see him or even take his calls. The last twelve months were spent planning how to get back to Pittsburgh and get her back in his life. The latter was no easy task considering he didn't have a clue as to why she'd shut him out in the first place.

At least that part was starting to make sense.

When his company suddenly moved their headquarters, he had no choice but to go where they went, which was Boston. He thought she understood that when they talked about it and he thought she also understood he would do whatever it took to get back as soon as he could.

Apparently, he was mistaken on both counts. He was determined to correct those mistakes and never make them again.

He leaned forward and kissed her, gently coaxing with his tongue. She tasted of mocha and mint and he wanted to lose himself in her sweetness. He held back, waiting instead for her to return his gentle explorations, letting her deepen the kiss at her own pace.

She parted her lips slightly and sighed as he placed feathery kisses across her lips. He teased her, nibbling playfully at her lower lip, holding back the urge to devour her. He wanted to possess her completely and immediately, to pull her to him and feel her softness against his straining cock. Instead, he waited, retreating slightly and handing her the power to decide whether to come toward him and continue or back away and let the moment pass without fulfillment.

He knew she'd made her decision when she leaned into him, lacing one hand through his dark hair. Without breaking the kiss he stood, taking her with him. Her free hand joined the one already toying with his hair and he responded by encircling her with both arms and cautiously drawing her closer.

She pressed against him and he felt her body surrender, even if perhaps her mind did not quite understand the significance of the action.

He knew and for now, that was all that mattered. Without a word, he picked her up and effortlessly carried her to the bedroom. She nuzzled at his neck, her soft curls brushing his cheek and tickling his nose. He breathed deeply, taking in the scent of her hair, her skin—unable to get enough and wondering how he'd managed all of these months without it. Wondering if he could ever again endure not waking up to her scent, to her warmth...to her.

He reached the bed, but instead of lowering her onto it, he sat at the edge, cradling her in his arms. He hugged her close and took a deep breath.

"Noelle," he said, his voice strained with emotion. "I want you, more than I can possibly say right now, but I need to know if this is what you want. If I am what you want. I need to hear you say it, but more importantly, *you* need to hear you say it. You need to decide if this—if us together—feels right for you."

He tilted her head, brushing her hair back and looking into her eyes. He searched for the answer to the question he feared asking.

"What's it going to be, Noelle? Do I stay, or do you want me to go?"

Noelle wanted to stay strong, to send Brad away, but as soon as she answered the door, she knew in her heart that wasn't going to happen. He had a special talent for putting her at ease and this morning was no exception. He came into her house as though he belonged there, had always been there, and would always be there.

Despite spending the past months telling herself otherwise, that all they had between them was her unnatural fetish, having him there felt as natural to her as breathing. She'd purposely purged her surroundings of everything she associated with him, virtually erasing him from her life.

Yet there he stood, latte in hand like nothing had changed.

She wondered for the first time if anything had really changed. If she had changed. She thought she had. She'd gotten rid of all the furry things that aroused her so easily and resisted her fetish-related urges without a problem. At least until last night, when Brad made sure there was fur everywhere she looked to tempt her.

She tried to convince herself that was the only reason she'd been so aroused and the only reason she melted so willingly into Brad's arms. But here she was again, wet with desire, cradled in his lap and wanting nothing more than to have his cock bare and throbbing inside her, instead of pressing against her backside.

"Stay," she said quietly. "I want you...to stay."

She heard Brad exhale and only then realized he'd held his breath awaiting her answer. He smiled, obviously relieved and pleased at her response. He kissed her gently, as if he feared she might change her mind.

She deepened the kiss and felt his cock flex his approval. She stood but kept him seated with a hand on his shoulder. She pulled the cashmere sweater over his head then

bent to kiss his lips, before tracing featherlight kisses down his neck and across his shoulder. She bent down, removing his shoes and socks and tossing them aside before unfastening his belt and working on the button-fly jeans that stood between her and the bare pulsing heat of his shaft. When the last button gave way she took his hands, pulling him to his feet so she could work the worn denim down past his hips. His heavy shaft, now no longer confined, bobbed happily and brushed against his abdomen.

She playfully pushed him back down on the bed and helped him complete the task of removing his jeans. She pulled her tank top over her head and added it to the pile of clothes on the floor. He cupped a breast in each hand, alternately massaging the creamy globes and rolling open palms across already taut nipples. He pulled her close, laving each rosy bud with his tongue, then sucking greedily and sending fissures of pleasure all the way to her pussy.

She grasped a handful of his hair, pulling his head back. His mouth reluctantly released her breast with a pop. His hands circled around her hips, traveling lower and squeezing her rear cheeks before pulling her pajama bottoms down past her thighs. She wiggled out of them, leaving them in a crumpled pool at her feet.

She stood naked now before him. Running her hands through his hair, she stepped closer. He squeezed her breasts, pinching her nipples and sending ripples of pleasure directly to her cunt. His hands traveled downward, over her hips then back around to the center of her belly. He traced a line from her navel down to the small tuft of neatly cropped auburn-brown curls, pausing to circle her clit with his thumb, before sliding his fingertips along and then into her wet slit.

His thumb never ceased its circular torment of her sensitive nub as he slipped one finger, then two, into her. She spread her legs then lifted one foot to the edge of the bed, spreading her pussy wide to him for further exploration. He forced a third finger into her tight opening and she felt her pussy pulse and her juices begin to flow. She arched her back then flexed her hips forward, alternately pulling away then forcing his fingers deeper inside her, slowly at first then quickening her pace to match the aching need

consuming her. Harder and faster she strained against Brad's skilled fingers, her clit swollen and slick from her dripping cream.

She slowed her rhythm as her pussy walls began contracting. In response Brad picked up his pace, pounding and retreating in time with the pulling of her cunt. His mouth found her nipple, nuzzling at it then latching on and sucking hard. In seconds he sent her over the edge.

She bucked against his hand, thrusting forward then holding tight and letting wave after wave wash over her. With each pulse, she felt her juice flow, dripping in rivulets along her thigh.

Her legs were weak. She reached for his shoulder to steady herself and she eased away from his hand. With both feet firmly on the floor, she hugged him close, combing through his dark hair with trembling fingers. His breathing was ragged and she could feel the heavy thump thump rumbling through his chest.

Brad leaned back then slid to his knees on the floor. He dipped his head to the juncture of her thighs. Like a hummingbird, lapping at her nectar, his tongue darted at the still throbbing bud nestled in the circle of damp curls. She moaned and despite his protests, she gently pushed him away.

The momentary panic and confusion she read in his heavy-lidded eyes was replaced with relief and understanding as she urged him back to his position on the bed. She smiled, coaxing him to move toward the center of the king-sized bed, then to lie back. She spent a few moments simply looking at him, admiring his muscular form, lightly stroking her fingertips over his skin and reacquainting herself with the tiny details she'd tried to wipe from memory. She loved the feel of his skin and the taut muscles beneath. She loved the sounds of pleasure and approval when her fingers touched his most sensitive areas and the joy his responses gave her.

Noelle half straddled him, kissing a path from his belly to his neck and reveling in the light scent of his cologne, now mingled with the heady scent of her own passion. The sensation was intoxication and she wanted more. She kissed her way back down his torso, lingering at his nipples, tasting and teasing until he gasped. She skimmed her breasts down his length and up again, finally brushing one of the puckered tips along his cheek. Brad accepted her invitation, and taking her breasts in his hands, guided each in turn to his mouth. She pulled back, but Brad held tight, sucking harder and squeezing until her cunt throbbed in reply.

She traced her hand down his belly to his cock, stroking its length before giving it a hard squeeze. Brad gasped with pleasure and Noelle took the opportunity to slide down and position herself between his muscular thighs.

"I want you in my mouth, Brad," she said, her voice husky with desire. "I want to taste you."

His cock was hot and hard and the small slit at the apex glistened with beads of thick, clear fluid. The head was broad, its flared edge strained and purple with need. It dipped and danced in anticipation, reaching to meet Noelle's mouth. She licked and teased the shaft before finally circling the sensitive ridge at the top with the end of her tongue. She flicked the very tip, sampling the pre-cum droplets and savoring the moment before she continued.

She took the head first, laving it with her tongue then drawing more of his shaft into her hot, hungry mouth. Slowly, she sucked and stroked and adjusted until she felt him pressing at the back of her throat. She heard Brad moan as she sucked in earnest, moving her head and sliding his cock in and out of her mouth at the same time. One hand stroked the base of his shaft, and the other wrapped around his thigh.

"Noelle, please...I won't last if you—"

She ignored his plea and instead, took his cock deeper, sheathing him nearly to his balls and working her tongue furiously along its length. She felt his hand twist in her hair, holding her fast as he pumped wildly against her mouth. Satisfied that he would not stop, she relaxed and urged him on, kneading his thighs as he pounded into her. His cock slid in and out of her mouth like a piston, gaining momentum and pushing the tip into her throat with every stroke.

She felt his body tense then shudder and with one final thrust, she felt his hot, thick cream pumping down her throat and she took it all. He called her name, spasms vibrating along his legs and still she held him in her mouth, greedily milking him until his last drop was spent.

He stroked her hair and as the final ripples of pleasure faded away, he pulled her up and held her to his chest.

"My god, Noelle," he said, struggling to catch his breath. "You are— That was...not fair."

Noelle nuzzled his neck then snuggled against him and listened as the violent pounding in his chest slowed to frantic then merely rapid. She absently drew circles around his nipples with her fingernail then followed the muscular cut along the center of his abdomen down to his navel and beyond. She toyed with the trimmed nest of dark curls surrounding his still semi-erect shaft. She lightly traced the ridge from his balls to the tip and back, skimming the length over and over again.

His cock felt like warm silk against her fingertips, and she loved the sensation. She also loved how easily Brad responded to her lightest touch, and how even now his cock nodded and flexed and had already gone from semi to fully erect.

"Hmmm, I guess I must not have done a very good job because you look like you're ready to go...again."

"Oh I'm nowhere near finished with you," Brad said, rolling her onto her back and leaning over her, smiling. "I'll never be finished with you, my sweet, Noelle. Trust me..."

She wanted to trust him, to believe that he would never be finished, never go away. Never leave her alone. Not again.

But how *could* she believe him?

He'd already left her once and how could she trust *him* to stay when everyone she ever loved – beginning with her parents – went away and never came back?

She couldn't hide and she couldn't pretend she didn't care. That she didn't need him. That she didn't...love...him. Noelle felt the tears begin to well and knew there was no stopping it.

"Noelle, sweetheart," Brad said, gently brushing the tears away. "What is it? Please tell me what I did. I promise I'll do whatever it takes to make it right, but please, don't shut me out again."

"Y-you left. I-I thought you...that you wouldn't come back."

"Noelle, it was short notice but we discussed all of this as soon as I found out about the move. I never wanted to leave, but at the time, I really didn't have another choice. Immediate and indefinite unemployment wasn't really a viable option. I'm sorry I had to go, but I said I'd be back. I promised you and I always keep my promises."

"B-but...you were gone. I d-didn't know..."

"Didn't know what, Noelle? You didn't know being away from you was pure hell for me? Imagine that," Brad said, frustration evident in his voice. "Maybe if you would have taken my calls or at least returned them, you might have figured it out. Or maybe, if you'd have made the time to see me when I flew back here the dozen or so times I tried to find out what was wrong that might have helped too!

"Geez, Noelle! You shut me out without a word and I still did everything in my power to get back to you as soon as I could...because I love you. I'm here. How much more proof do you want? What else do I need to do for you to give me a chance? To give us a chance?"

She looked into Brad's eyes and saw only truth...and love. She finally understood what Dr. Graham had been trying to get her to recognize all along. She knew the answer to the real question.

Why?

She'd spent months associating her feelings for Brad with her fetish and believing that the fetish was the source of her arousal and her pain. It hadn't occurred to her that the intensity of her arousal came from her feelings for Brad and not the fetish or that her

pain came from thinking he was never coming back, despite what he said. She simply wasn't ready to accept it. Until now.

"Brad, you didn't do anything wrong," Noelle said. "I was the problem. I thought there was something wrong with me and I spent a small fortune on a shrink to try to sort it all out. I kept telling myself my fetish was the problem, that you left because of it, but I see now it was something else altogether. I didn't want to admit my feelings for you or how deeply your leaving affected me. On some level I was convinced that you left because of me...and you wouldn't come back."

"How could you think I wouldn't be back? I love you, Noelle. Don't you know that?"

"Yes, but—" Noelle paused, hesitant to explain what she herself was only beginning to understand. "M-my parents loved me too...they went out shopping for my birthday and they didn't come back. They couldn't...they were killed...because of me."

"Oh geez...Noelle," Brad said tenderly. He kissed her then held her close. "I had no idea you were still carrying that around with you."

"Neither did I," she replied. Noelle lay cradled in his arms, hot tears staining her cheeks as she let go of a lifetime of unspoken fears. It was several minutes before either of them spoke.

"Brad," Noelle said, finally. She propped herself up on her elbow and looked into his eyes. "I am so sorry for everything I've put you through. I wouldn't blame you if you hated me. Not at this point."

"Sweetheart, I love everything about you and I do mean everything."

"Everything...even my sick thing...with fur?"

"Noelle, it's not sick. It's a harmless fetish. Besides what's not to like about it? I love knowing what excites you and I love how you let yourself go and enjoy it. I just consider it an extra way to tease and please you."

"You don't think it's a little crazy?"

"Crazy? You're asking the man who celebrates Christmas all year long and has a bedroom that only Santa Claus would want to sleep in, if *he* thinks *fur* sounds crazy?"

"Hey, hold on. I always loved your bedroom!"

"See, that's what I mean. We're perfect for each other, with or without the extras," Brad said, kissing away the last of her tears.

"I guess so."

"You guess so?"

"Well, I think I should probably talk it over with my therapist first. Especially the fetish part. I've spent all this time thinking sex wasn't as good without it and trying to get over it."

"Well," Brad said, rolling her on to her back and kissing a path from her ear to her breast. His hand squeezed each one gently before continuing down her belly and beyond. "I think I can help you sort that one out now and save you a trip to the shrink."

"And just how—" Noelle's question was forgotten as Brad's mouth closed around her nipple at the exact moment his thumb and forefinger found and pinched her clit.

He toyed with it, circling it with his thumb as his fingers found her opening. He released her nipple, giving both breasts parting kisses before repositioning himself between her thighs. He replaced his thumb with his mouth, alternately flicking her nub with his tongue then gently sucking at it. He deftly worked her cunt, sliding two fingers in just enough and then up, hitting her G-spot exactly and sending her into an instant orgasm.

"Oh my god...Brad!" Noelle cried out, reacting to his touch. She felt her clit throbbing between his lips. She arched against him, caught completely off guard by the unexpected spasms traveling like electricity from her clit into her cunt, shocking and rocking her to her very core. The seconds ticked by, and Brad was relentless, easing up just enough to let her almost catch her breath before continuing his tender assault.

Finally, she eased his head away from her pussy and urged him up. He skimmed her belly with kisses as he made his way to her straining nipples. Noelle sighed with pleasure as he licked and teased them before choosing and latching onto one, sucking hard. He withdrew his fingers from her dripping cunt and reached down to retrieve a condom from his pants on the floor. He slid it on and moistened it with her juices. Without preamble, he plunged into her hard and deep.

He held still for a moment, pressing forward and keeping the juncture of his shaft and his belly in contact with her swollen clit. He ground into her, pressing against her in a circular motion until she was again aching for release.

He withdrew slowly, nearly to the tip then went forward at the same slow and maddening pace. In and out, over and over. Noelle arched and squirmed beneath him. She held his hips, gripping at his ass and trying desperately to pull him into her.

"Brad, please." She didn't have to ask twice.

Brad picked up his pace, still pulling out to nearly the tip, but instead of sliding in slowly, he thrust forward faster and harder with each stroke. He leaned back, pulling her thighs high. She wrapped them around his waist and held tight. He pounded into her hard and deep, his balls slapping against her with every forward thrust.

"Come for me, Noelle," Brad said, hoarsely. "I want you to come with me." $\,$

The moment he spoke Noelle felt her pussy respond. Her cunt contracted violently as Brad called her name. She felt his cock flex and pulse inside her and saw a look of pure satisfaction on his face before he collapsed alongside her.

Chapter Three

Christmas Eve

"Brad, where are we going?" Noelle asked as they passed the sign for Cranberry Township, one of Pittsburgh's most exclusive neighborhoods. "Please tell me we're not going to Mr. Abbott's house. I am so not ready to explain...us."

"Relax. We're not going there and besides I told you he already knows. I wouldn't have taken the job with Quantum if seeing you would have been a problem. You're the reason I came back to Pittsburgh, remember?"

"Yes, I remember," Noelle replied, smiling. "But you still didn't tell me where we're going."

"Oh but I did. I told you it was a surprise, and we're here," he said pointing to a turn just ahead.

Her eyes followed the wrought iron fence that ran along the quiet snow-dusted street to the broad brick columns flanking the driveway. Old-fashioned gaslights, each trimmed with red ribbons and holiday garland, lit the entrance and repeated at the front of the two-story brick house. Brad parked and opened her door. He grabbed her shopping bags out of the back of the car and ushered her to the house.

The front door was bright red and oversized. A massive window, adorned with an equally impressive Christmas wreath, arched above them. To the left of the door was a doorbell and an electronic keypad. Instead of ringing the bell, Brad punched in a code and opened the door.

"Surprise."

"This is *your* house?" Noelle asked.

"I'd prefer to think of it as our house, but technically, yes. It's mine."

"What happened to your old place?" Noelle was a little disappointed at the idea of not seeing Brad's Santa-themed bedroom again.

"I still have it. I rented it out last week. I bought this as soon as I signed my contract with Quantum. I wanted some custom work done on it before I moved in. After you," he said, motioning for her to enter.

The foyer was dark, but Brad flipped a light switch and everything seemed to come alive. A wooden staircase wound gracefully to the upper level, its railings wrapped with fresh pine garland and twinkling lights. Nestled in its curve was a tree that rose above the second floor banister. It was covered in colorful ornaments of every shape and size and an entire Christmas village sparkled and danced beneath it.

"Come on," Brad said, dropping her bags next to the tree then taking her coat and hanging it on the coatrack near the door. "I have a surprise for you in the great room."

He took her hand and led her past the staircase to the next room. The first thing she noticed was another Christmas tree, considerably smaller than the one in the foyer, with packages piled all around. It was situated next to a beautiful fireplace. Her attention went next to the fluffy fur pillows and fur rug in front of the hearth and she felt a little flutter of excitement between her thighs.

Brad turned a knob on the floor next to the hearth and flames roared to life around the ceramic logs in the fireplace. He put his arms around Noelle and kissed her, sending tingles all the way to her toes. She reluctantly allowed him to end the kiss and then he turned her to face the opposite side of the room. It took her a moment to comprehend then she chuckled and shook her head.

Balloons of every color floated with matching ribbons dangling from their bobbing heads. In their midst was a table draped in pink and silver and on it were a dozen or so packages. Each one was wrapped in paper decorated with tiny, brightly colored birthday cakes or balloons or the words "Happy Birthday" in multiple languages. There was also a birthday cake and a bottle of champagne on ice.

"Happy birthday, Noelle," Brad said, standing behind her and kissing her neck. "I wanted to make sure we celebrated your birthday and not just Christmas. How am I doing on that, by the way?"

Noelle turned to face him and answered him with a kiss.

"So which do you want to celebrate first?" Brad asked, looking toward the birthday gifts on one side and then the Christmas gifts on the other.

"Both, hang on a minute." She gave him a quick kiss then retraced her steps to the entry to retrieve her shopping bags. She handed them to Brad when she came back.

"What's this?"

"These are your presents from me."

"When did you—"

"Like you said Saturday morning, there were three shopping days left until Christmas."

"Yes," he said, grinning. "But we didn't go shopping."

"Hmmm. No we never got around to it, did we?" Noelle smiled recalling how they spent most of that day. "But I seemed to have regained my Christmas spirit and went shopping on my own, thank you very much. So how about if I open my birthday presents and then we can each open one of our Christmas presents."

"Looks like there's a lot more than that to open," Brad said looking at the bags and the presents he'd put under the tree for her.

"Yes, but we'll save the rest of them for tomorrow," Noelle said.

"Deal," Brad said, dropping the bags by the tree then taking her hand and seating her on the birthday side of the room. He handed her the first gift then cracked open the champagne.

They laughed and joked as Noelle opened her birthday presents, then kicked off their shoes and settled down by the fireplace. "If you're only going to open one of these tonight, I want it to be this one," Brad said, handing her a small flat box wrapped in gold and decorated with a red velvet ribbon and a spray of holly.

Noelle took the box and opened it to find a large, skeleton-type key, tied with another piece of red velvet ribbon.

"What's this?" she asked.

"Come on," he said, standing and taking her hand. "I'll show you."

He led her back to the staircase, then up the steps and down the hall. There were two oversized wooden doors at the end. He opened the door on the right to the master suite. When she entered, Noelle was relieved to see that his giant four-poster bed made the move to the new house. The room was similar to the old one in many ways but seemed different, softer and somehow brighter, despite all the rich woods and heavy fabrics.

There was still fur all around the room and her body reacted to it immediately. Her cunt throbbed as she turned and kissed Brad, pressing against the growing bulge in his pants. She wanted to feel him on top of her, pounding into her as she lay naked on the white fur bed cover. She took his hand and started toward the bed, but he stopped her.

"Don't you want to know what the key is for?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"Huh?" Noelle still held the key in her hand but had forgotten about it. "Sorry. I got a little...distracted."

"Before I show you what it opens, I have to tell you that I did this before I found out about your therapy. We can change it if you decide that's what you want. I thought you might get tired of my Christmas all year thing. I tried to tone it down a notch and make it a little more appealing for you, but it still looks like *my* room. I want you here with me and to be comfortable, so I had his and her master suites designed. The key is for the door that connects them and we can sleep in whichever one you choose."

Brad pointed to an inconspicuous lock in a door that blended so well into the wood paneling that Noelle wouldn't have noticed it otherwise. She inserted the key and turned it. The latch clicked quietly and the panel door opened without a sound.

Brad flipped the light switch and Noelle gasped. The room had been decorated in a more contemporary manner but in tasteful keeping with the traditional theme of the house. The overall look was softer but not so much on the feminine side that a man wouldn't also be comfortable. The woods and fabrics were a bit lighter, with silks replacing the heavy velvets and tapestries and earthy shades of brown and cream and gold replacing the vibrant reds.

There was a fireplace and Noelle noticed it was double-sided. Like the door, it also connected the two suites. She looked around, realizing that everything in the room reflected her personal taste and style perfectly, including the fur-trimmed accents sprinkled discreetly throughout.

The bed was definitely the focal point of the room, with an upholstered headboard that ran all the way up to the coffered ceiling. Matching silk panels extended from a cornice above the bed to the floor and draped gracefully back to the headboard.

The silk duvet and matching bed skirt were hand-embroidered and a combination of silk and fur pillows were scattered on top. A tufted suede bench served in place of a footboard and a large crystal fox throw casually covered most of the remaining surface of the bed.

She walked over and ran her fingers through the thick fur of the throw, delighting in how its white and black and red strands blended into the ideal blue-gray shade. The feel of it made her hands tremble and when she turned to Brad, tears filled her eyes.

"Oh, Noelle, I'm sorry," Brad said, putting his arms around her. "Let's get you out of here. We'll lock the door and you don't have to come back in here until all of this is gone. You can talk to the decorator yourself and you can make everything exactly how you want it."

"No," Noelle said, pulling away and looking into his eyes. "It's perfect. So perfect that it's like I picked everything out myself."

She kissed him, gently at first then with more urgency as he backed her toward the bed. They were both dressed in casual slacks and sweaters and made quick work of discarding them and stretching out across the fur-covered bed.

It had been a very long time since she'd allowed herself to enjoy the feel of fur on her naked flesh. Not since Brad left. Now he was back and she knew he wouldn't be leaving again.

He knew her. He knew what she wanted and needed.

What she wanted and needed more than anything, was to feel him pulsing inside her, his hard weight bearing down on her from above and the soft cocoon of fur cradling her from beneath.

Brad reached across and pulled the fur throw over her, then used the free edge to tickle and tease her breasts. She arched and wriggled against the fur but wanted more. She laced her hand through his hair and guided him to her breast.

He lifted the fur and squeezed her creamy orbs, rolling her nipples between his fingertips until they puckered. He replaced his hands with his mouth, sucking on the rosy pebbles in turn. He let his free hand travel down her belly to her pussy and the instant he brushed across her clit she purred in delight.

He sucked harder on her nipple and Noelle felt the pull of his mouth all the way to her core. He kept the fur pulled over them and continued his tender assault on both fronts until she could bear it no longer. She pushed the fur away, urging him to mount her. With a growl he paused to pull a condom from the nightstand. He quickly rolled it into place then found her opening and rammed his cock hard and deep in a single motion. Noelle cried out and arched against him, trying to pull him deeper still.

He pressed her down and lifted her legs. She wrapped her thighs around him and he thrust forward then pulled back, sliding her back and forth along the fur, over and over. She stretched her arms out, letting the fur stroke her flesh as he pumped his shaft into her aching cunt. She felt the first spasms start to take her and she moaned with pleasure, releasing the grip of her thighs and allowing Brad a fuller range of motion.

Brad responded by pulling back and thrusting harder and faster, sheathing his cock all the way to his balls with every stroke. Noelle's cunt contracted violently, and the rest of her body trembled. She felt Brad stiffen, then shudder and pound into her with such force she screamed his name. She clutched and pulled at the fur beneath her, riding wave after wave of pleasure as he pumped relentlessly into her pussy.

She felt as if she was drowning and flying at the same time and in that instant she knew this was what was right for her. That here with Brad was where she belonged.

Noelle still struggled to catch her breath as Brad rolled to the side. He pulled the fur up around her and cradled her in his arms. For the first time in a very long time she felt safe and loved and truly content.

Neither of them spoke for several minutes and it was Brad who spoke first.

"Does this mean you *did* like your Christmas present and I *don't* have to call the decorator back out here?"

"Yes," Noelle said, laughing. "I love it and don't you dare change a thing, but that reminds me...the deal was we both could open one gift tonight. You didn't get one yet."

"Oh but I did," he said, kissing her tenderly. "I got the only thing I wanted and the greatest gift you could have possibly given me. You gave me...you."

The End

About the Author

South Florida resident Shannon Emmel prefers Rottweilers to Pomeranians and SUVs to sports cars but admits to owning all of them at one time or another. Her closet has full-length, beaded gowns hanging next to faded jeans and shiny red stilettos sitting alongside hiking boots, so don't be surprised to see her in the grocery store in any or all of the above.

She often wonders if she's eclectic, eccentric or simply suffering from Multiple Personality Disorder. (There *are* drugs for that, right?)

Shannon has been an avid reader since childhood and her tastes run the full gamut from classic literature and poetry to science fiction, fantasy and *anything* supernatural. Consequently, you might find her reading Shakespeare one day, and reading Tarot Cards the next.

She began writing in college at the suggestion of her literature professor and quickly realized it was a creative outlet that allowed her to let both her imagination and her passionate nature run wild. It also provided the perfect venue for exploring things and places that cannot be explained by logic or science.

For Shannon, it's a world of endless possibilities...where the writer makes the rules and anything can happen as long as "The Muses" are willing. Her Muses seem to work overtime and at this point in her life, she says, "I'm an author because I must write. This is my life. This is who I am...this is what brings me joy. If what I do gives pleasure to others or lets them escape from their world into mine for a little while, then I know I'm on the right path."

Shannon welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her <u>author bio page</u> at <u>www.ellorascave.com</u>.

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