



# Lust Bites

FALLING FOR THE  
OTHER BROTHER

*Devon Rhodes*

A Total-E-Bound Publication



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Falling For the Other Brother

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**Warning:** This book contains sexually explicit content which is only suitable for mature readers. This story has been rated *Total-e-burning*.

**Seasoned Women**

**FALLING FOR THE OTHER BROTHER**

**Devon Rhodes**

## *Dedication*

To my readers, thanks for all your support.

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## Chapter One

A cool waft of air on her shower-warm skin was the only warning Erica received before large hands cupped her bare shoulders. A smile curved her lips, but she didn't react in any other fashion as she was pulled back flush against a hard male body. Or maybe she should say, a hardening male body.

She gave a little wiggle, bringing their bodies in closer alignment as her favourite rain-shower setting softly pelted them from above, with two slightly more forceful jets massaging from each side.

A muscular and extremely tanned arm reached past her to pluck the hand-held shower head from its holder.

"Picked up a little sun? I see you've been working hard."

Trevor's deep responding chuckle reverberated in her ear. "I always make time for play. In the Caribbean especially. And the shoot was on the beach."

A popular and successful fitness model, Trevor did a lot of cover shoots and spreads for various magazines, as well as demonstrations for equipment. It had been one of these demo jobs, evidently staged on a tropical beach, he had just returned from.

"That must've been brutal." Erica gave a shudder, partly from the thought of the unrelenting sun, and partly because, as she watched, Trevor was skimming his hand along her abdomen up to cup her breast. The contrast of her red-head's pale skin with his sun-darkened fingers was startling and extremely erotic.

She felt his shrug. He never complained about the less romantic aspects of his job, but was just happy to be doing what he did. No false modesty or dissembling, he enjoyed using his fit body to make a living.

"It was fine. Not as hot as you might think, just sunny."

Erica turned within his embrace and gave him a lingering welcome-back kiss. She was torn—glad to see him home early but dreading the conversation she had finally psyched herself up to initiate.

But not yet. Like Scarlett, she'd think about that tomorrow.

Firmly turning her mind from anything remotely cerebral, she instead lost herself in the hedonistic sensation of turning her pleasure over to the sexiest man she'd ever known. She knew the moment he sensed her acquiescence. The hands cruising over her slick back slid purposefully down to cup her buttocks. A satisfied hum in his throat was barely audible but somehow captured her focus.

Wanting to cause that sound again, she mirrored the movement of his hands. She could barely make a dent in his muscular ass, even when she gave a hard squeeze. Squeaking as he playfully returned the favour, the teasing evolved into a wet, sensuous game of follow-the-leader that soon had her panting with desire.

Erica was jarred from her reverie as Trevor abruptly ended the exploration and guided her to sit upon the ledge at the back of the walk-in shower. She jolted as her heated body touched the cool tile.

"Wha—"

"Shh. You'll see," Trevor cautioned, smirking as he adjusted the setting on the handheld from shower to pulsing jet.

*Oh my God.* Erica moaned as he directed the spray across her sensitive peaks, twisting as he unrelentingly followed her movements with the almost torturous attention. She breathed a sigh of relief as he moved on, leaving her nipples aching in his wake, and continued upwards to her neck.

This time, her groan was one of utter bliss as she dropped her head forward to accommodate the impromptu massage. "Trev, that's perfect."

"Mmm," he agreed, using the stream to methodically tenderise her chronically tense shoulders into something resembling melty goo.

Just when she'd almost forgotten the sexual tension, he ratcheted it back up by trailing the jet swiftly down her body, glancing across the full slope of her breasts in an almost offhand manner.

He reached down with his free hand to encourage her partially separated thighs farther apart.

Here head snapped up. "Trev..."

"Close your eyes."

She reluctantly obeyed, also allowing her legs to part wantonly as the firm touch of the spray – feeling much like a questing finger – worked its way lower still. Target reached, the pulse hit squarely on her clit, almost sending her flying off the seat. Trevor moved the water back and forth, strumming across her rapidly engorging nub in a random pattern that left her gasping for air.

“Eyes closed.”

She hadn’t realised she’d opened them, hadn’t been able to focus on anything, but willingly followed the directive without delay as the tension coiling within her zoomed past anything bearable.

Tipping over the edge in a supernova of pleasure, she arched and writhed as colours flew behind her lids, coming as hard as she could ever remember. This time, when she squirmed away from the spray, it immediately turned to a gentle, caressing shower.

She sensed Trevor replacing the showerhead then gave herself over to his strength as he gathered her still uncoordinated form to his, his erection pressing unabated against her hip. The water ceased and she finally opened her eyes to meet his heated chocolate gaze.

“Wow,” she breathed, still trying to get her heart rate under control. The exhalation ended on a slight laugh. “I’m so glad I gave you a key.”

“Oh, you can still talk?” he parried. “I must not’ve done my job.” He walked her around the corner of the open shower onto the soft bathmat and grabbed a couple of towels. After drying himself in his normal slap-dash manner, he took his time drying her off, then swept her off her feet and carried her into the bedroom.

“Now, let’s see if I can make you speechless.”

\* \* \* \*

Awake with only her thoughts to keep her company, Erica finally gave up on getting her turbulent thoughts reined in enough to sleep. She slipped carefully from the bed, giving a heavily sleeping Trevor one last fond perusal before stifling a sigh and padding naked to her closet.

She eyed her ‘comfort’ robe and some warm slippers before admitting that it wasn’t just a quick cup of tea she was going downstairs for. Dressing instead in yoga pants and a long-

sleeved tee, she grabbed some wool socks and tucked them in her pocket, then descended to the kitchen to fix her drink. The cool wood floor under her feet reminded her autumn was here, and bitterly, she couldn't help but equate that with her own declining fertility.

*Not much time left.*

Tonight, as always, Trevor had made sure he used protection, driving home the fact that he was not ready for a family. Was adamantly against it. The fleeting thought had occasionally crossed her mind to stop using her own birth control, but only in the depths of her secret hopes. Hope that what she'd found with Trevor would somehow morph from a committed relationship into something more long-term. Hope that she would somehow conceive without having to move on and use the final resort she had resisted for so long. Hope that Trevor would change his mind...before it was too late.

Hope he would give to her what he'd once been willing to give to anyone who chose him.

As she sipped her tea, she punished herself with the memories of her first meeting with Trevor and the hopes she'd once had.

*"I'm telling you, you have no time to lose. Statistics aren't pretty for gals our age." Her friend Rhonnie leant forward and braced her elbows on the table. "If you don't have a friend-with-bennies you can ask to do it, you'll have to do the sperm bank thing."*

*Erica shuddered as she pushed back an errant lock of hair. "It gives me the willies thinking about the kind of guys who donate to something like that. Ego-maniacs with delusions of populating the earth, or guys who can't get dates on their own and live vicariously through the thought of women dosing themselves with their sperm. No thanks!"*

*"Ouch, that's harsh. I was perfectly willing to go that route if Barry hadn't stepped up to the plate. Well, figuratively anyway." Rhonnie's eyes sparkled at her, and Erica found herself giving a reluctant smile at the thought of her lesbian neighbour having actual sex with her gay best friend. "And you're straight. You can get it hand-delivered, so to speak."*

*Erica snorted and irritably flipped her hair back once more before scrounging through her handbag for a clip. It was breezy today in the outdoor cafe they had met for lunch. Finally snagging it, she was about to respond when a deep voice intruded from behind her.*

*"Do you mind if I join you?"*

*She exchanged puzzled looks with Rhonnie, who shrugged. "Sure." Erica indicated the empty chair, forgoing the clip in favour of giving the stranger an appreciative once-over as he sat. They introduced themselves.*

*"I couldn't help overhearing your conversation about sperm donors."*

*"Oh God." Erica closed her eyes as she went beet-red, then kicked Rhonnie under the table as she heard her friend laugh.*

*"It's okay. I just wanted to give you some insight. You see, I've been a donor."*

*Erica's eyes flew open and she again ran her gaze over the gorgeous, muscular man, not missing one positive attribute, from his warm brown eyes, to his naturally wavy, full head of dark brown hair, to his fit form. No glasses either. "You're a sperm donor?" she asked incredulously. A little part of her mind was rubbing its hands together in glee. He's perfect, it whispered to her. Sign me up. For the hand-delivery, please.*

*Rhonnie laughed yet again and Erica shot her an irritated glance. Bad enough she was pregnant – now she was laughing at her? Rhon was so off her calling plan's Top Five.*

*"So I take it you don't fall into either the ego-maniacal or the dateless-loser category?" Rhonnie asked innocently.*

*Wishing the earth would just swallow her up, Erica gritted her teeth and put on a semblance of a self-deprecating smile while she waited for the duo to stop laughing together as if they were the old friends.*

*"Seriously," Rhonnie directed at Trevor, who looked completely at ease with the whole situation. Erica was forced to admire his self-confidence and personable nature. "Why would you ever donate to a sperm bank?"*

*Trevor met the question calmly. "My brother and I were fathered by a donor. And I really have no desire to ever be a parent myself, but I believe in the system, so I thought, why not?"*

*Erica's eyes widened in shock. Trevor's mom had apparently hit the donor jackpot.*

*Rhonnie frowned slightly. "How could you donate if you didn't know your paternal information? That's all protected, right?"*

*He grinned. "Works just fine when it's the same sperm bank."*

*"Which one did you use?" Erica leant forward as Rhonnie asked the million-dollar question.*

*He named one well-known to them both, but then crushed the newly budding germ of a plan in Erica's head by adding, "But I've withdrawn my donations from public use."*

*"Why?" Erica and Rhonnie chorused, and Trevor looked uncomfortable for the first time.*

*"Personal reasons." His tone made it clear there would be no more information forthcoming.*

*After a brief awkward pause, the conversation restarted and Erica found herself relaxing in his company as they turned to more prosaic topics, such as their respective occupations. Trevor gave her an intense once-over when Erica admitted to being an on-air reporter for a major-market network affiliate, but the barrage of questions and fawning she sometimes received never materialised. Instead he only commented that he'd thought she looked familiar, and moved on to question Rhonnie about her own work.*

*When he matter-of-factly revealed his own occupation, Rhonnie immediately pulled out her iPhone and Googled him.*

*"Wow, look at some of the magazines you've scored covers for!"*

*Erica found herself peering over Rhonnie's shoulder at the bounty his currently clothed state only hinted at, and her one-track mind gave her another pointed nudge at the genetics on display.*

*"I have to get going, ladies. Rhonnie," he grasped her hand, "good luck with the rest of your pregnancy." Then he turned to Erica and his smiled increased in wattage. Feeling a bit foolish for her lack of participation in the conversation, she prepared to say goodbye.*

*Instead, Trevor surprised the life out of her by inviting her to dinner the following night.*

Now, five months later, they were dating exclusively and had keys to one another's condos. The sex was amazing, the conversation flowed, and their relationship didn't seem to suffer during each of their frequent absences for work. In fact, Trevor was pretty much perfect in her mind. Except for one major detail.

He laughed at the idea of ever wanting to have kids.

And her biological clock was more like Big Ben right now.

Was it selfish to want to break up with the perfect guy just so she could — what? — search randomly for Mr. Ready-to-be-a-Dad? Of all the crappy timing...

"Tick-tock," she muttered, tears pricking her throat.

## Chapter Two

Erica managed to ignore Trevor's ringtone until it went to voicemail yet again, trying unsuccessfully to tune it out by reviewing her notes for the voiceover she was about to record.

*You are such a coward.*

She was, and she knew it. But for the life of her, she couldn't bring herself to begin the *we're-in-different-places* conversation with Trevor, even though she'd rehearsed it at least a hundred times.

Every time Trevor went out of town on a shoot or publicity gig, she told herself she would break it off as soon as he got home. And every time, she saw that brilliant smile directed at her and wimped out.

Coming up on six months of dating, she could feel herself getting in deeper and deeper. In fact, without the obstacle of her obsession with having a child and his adamant—yet honest, she grudgingly admitted—refusal to go there, she might have even been considering popping the question at this point. They were obviously well-matched despite the age difference, and there was love between them. Not the passionate, dramatic love of cinema, but a steady, pleasing, and somehow more *real* feeling love than she had ever imagined.

Waging an inner war and losing to her curiosity, Erica finally caved and listened to the two-day series of voicemails from Trevor.

*"Hi babe. Been a long day here, and no cell reception where we were, so finally have a chance to check in. Hope you're doing good. I'll call you tomorrow."*

*"Hey, it's me. It's beautiful here, you should really come along with me one of these times. Meanwhile, it looks like I might be home a couple of days early. Something's come up, and luckily the stars aligned and I was able to convince the photographer to wrap my part of the shoot today in one really long day rather than having to hang around until Wednesday. So I'll be seeing you soon. Love you."*

*"Hi. Hope everything's okay. I keep missing you. Anyway, I'm flying stand-by and looks like I'll be getting on this flight, so I'll be home late tonight. Can't wait to see you. I have a surprise for you,*

*too, and also something to ask – something I’ve been thinking about for a while now.”* He cleared his throat. *“So I’ll see you tomorrow.”*

Erica paused with her finger on the key to erase the last message and instead hit replay, listening with growing concern. A surprise? And something to ask?

*Oh crap.* Was *he* going to pop the question?

Breaking into a sudden, sickening sweat, she tried to think of what else he could have possibly meant by that sort of uncharacteristically hesitant mention. Trevor was nothing if not confident. But the nervousness in his voice came through loud and clear. Whatever it was, it was big.

Pulling the Scarlett act again, she firmly turned her mind away from Trevor and back to the job at hand.

\* \* \* \*

After a surprisingly productive day buried in the depths of her to-do list, Erica finally gave up on working when she found herself drifting off for the third time in as many emails. The world outside the windows was dark and her assistant, Miranda, looked bushed.

“Why don’t you head out? I’m wrapping up anyway,” Erica called to Miranda, and received only a half-hearted wave in response. *Youch. She definitely has a Starbucks card coming for putting up with my crap.*

She gathered her things and headed for the door, scrolling through her texts. Nothing from Trevor, so he probably hadn’t landed yet. He was good about letting her know when he was on the ground.

Alone in her car with only her thoughts for company, it was impossible to keep her mind from circling back to the conundrum she found herself in. Suddenly not wanting to go back to her empty condo, she dialled Rhonnie.

“What’s up, girlfriend?” came the greeting over speaker phone.

“Well, I was going to ask if you were working, but the background noise answers that question.” The din of the pub was unmistakable. “You guys busy tonight?”

“Very, but I’ll snag you a table if you’re coming by.”

Erica smiled with gratitude. "Thanks. I'll be there in ten." She sat up a bit straighter in the driver's seat of her Audi. Not sure whether she was using the dinner outing to escape or confront her dilemma, she debated about raising the discussion with Rhonnie up until she actually saw her friend's face and suddenly found herself fighting back tears.

Rhonnie's welcoming smile morphed into a look of concern and she took Erica by the elbow, leading her to a somewhat isolated pub table by an order station. Whispering a drink order to the waiter on the way past, she guided Erica onto one of the stools and immediately sat across from her.

"Okay, spill it. What's wrong?"

"You're busy," Erica hedged, not sure if she wanted to get into it at all, but the sympathetic face was implacable. She took a deep breath. "I'm going to break up with Trevor."

Just the slightest frown was her friend's only reaction as she met her gaze steadily, evidently waiting for more information. Erica found herself telling Rhonnie everything from her realisation of her love for Trevor, his cryptic messages today, to her uncertainty on what to do. But then she shocked both herself and Rhonnie by adding, "I think I'm ready to look at AI with a donor."

The decision seemed to well up out of nowhere, but it felt right, much more so than the pipe dream of trying to magically find the right man she could love *and* who wanted kids, right now.

"That's great, but why do I get the feeling you think Trevor and getting inseminated are mutually exclusive? Have you guys talked about this?"

Erica gratefully accepted the glass of water from the waiter and waited for him to leave before answering. "Not specifically, but he's so young. He's not ready to be a parent, even if the baby's not his. I don't know if he'll ever be, and," she paused, looking down at her fingers toying with the napkin, "I can't start this process knowing he's not going to be there for the end result. And I can't wait." She looked up and met Rhonnie's glistening eyes. "I'm forty-four, Rhon. If I don't do this now, it's not going to happen."

"Maybe he'll surprise you, hon. I think you should tell him what you want to do."

Erica shook her head, frustrated. "Every time the subject has come up, even peripherally, even that first day—you were there," she reminded her friend, "he just clams

up and gets this really set look on his face. Whatever his reasons are, for not wanting to be a dad, for withdrawing his specimens, they are obviously deep and real and not up for discussion." She shrugged resignedly. "I guess more than anything that should tell me we're not right for each other, that he can't just tell me why. He has to know my interest in the topic, but he avoids it like the plague. Always distracts me with sex," she grumped, then met Rhonnie's eyes, and suddenly they were both laughing. "Well, he does," she defended, but chuckled, her mood lightening with the hilarity, even though it felt a bit hysterical on her part.

"I'm going to do it tonight. He'll be back from his trip, and I—" she straightened her shoulders as the certainty of her decision gave her some inner strength, "I can't put it off. It's not fair to either of us, and besides, after his messages today, I think he's getting more serious about me than he should. It's time."

Rhonnie touched her hand comfortingly. "You know I'm here for you. Are you going over now? Do you want some dinner first?"

Erica grimaced. "No, I don't think I can eat." But Rhonnie insisted, and as a compromise, Erica ended up leaving with a wrap in a to-go container.

Pulling into Trevor's condo complex on the waterfront, she found an outdoor guest parking spot and pulled his garage door opener from her sun visor and sighed. Might as well make a clean break, and give him back his keys tonight too. Giving her phone a glance to confirm that, no, he still hadn't called, she debated what to do. Not wanting to spend any extra time hanging out in his condo—somehow it just felt wrong given her decision—she instead found a bench overlooking the water and mechanically ate her sandwich in the dark.

Another half-hour went by and, getting chilled, she finally succumbed to the lure of Trev's warm apartment, letting herself in for the last time. It was quiet and dark, and she flipped on the entry light, then paused, startled, as she reached to hang his key and opener on the halltree hook.

Keys on the entry table. And a pair of black loafers kicked haphazardly to the side.

*He's home?*

Erica froze, now that the moment was upon her. She must have stood there in the hall for ten minutes, fighting with herself on whether to slip out or walk down to his bedroom.

*You are so weak*, she chastised herself as her feet led her down the hall, tracing the path she had walked so many times with the man she was about to say goodbye to.

*What's one last night in his arms? You can talk in the morning.*

Unable to find an acceptable answer to that, she barely paused at the bedroom door, instead walking inside to find Trevor sprawled out on his bed. His suitcase, unopened, was off to one side, and an untidy pile of clothes were at her feet. He'd evidently just stripped and climbed into bed, exhausted. She gaze softened as she looked her fill, wishing it could be different. He was in his customary sleeping position on his stomach, hugging his pillow, sheet covering him just to the hips and one leg cocked up. Trevor didn't snore, but his breathing was audible, heavy and rhythmic.

Not worrying about waking him—he always slept like the dead—Erica took a quick shower to rinse off, then slid into bed next to him. His warm, sleeping scent tickled her nose, and her body began to react, her pussy tingling with anticipation.

*Stop it. Time to sleep, not get off.*

Trevor's shoulders were cool to the touch, so she drew the sheet and comforter up over them both and tucked herself up against him, back to his side. Even with tomorrow's confrontation looming over her, Erica took comfort in his warming presence, and soon felt herself drifting into sleep.

## Chapter Three

Colin was dreaming.

And it was one he was going to hate to wake up from.

The almost-forgotten feeling of blood pooling, tightening his groin was a relief but made it feel almost unbearably sensitive. He could feel every drag and cling of skin on skin as he thrust against the pillowy softness cradling his erection. Sliding his hand, he mapped a curvy, warm form, lost in the sensation of arousal, something he hadn't experienced for so long.

Since the accident.

His libido took a brief dip at that thought, but he shoved it away and continued to explore.

A feminine whisper, "I love you. I want you," brought his rising passion ebbing back almost to reality once again. For what woman could love or want him after what had happened? Now that he was less than a man?

Then moist warmth engulfed his cock, and it drove every thought from his head and he arched into the heady feeling. Hands, petite but strong, anchored his hips, and he had to content himself with small pelvic rocks as he tangled his fingers into silky curls.

"Yes," he groaned, encouraging his phantom lover and she responded by increasing the slow suction along his shaft to sweat-inducing pressure. Pausing at his tip, her tongue glided around his sensitive cap before engulfing him once again.

One hand left his hips, only to grip his straining cock at the base, pumping him in time with the motion of her mouth on him. The other hand slid down the line of his inner thigh, and continued downward. Part of his brain began to protest, but the slight edge of teeth along his shaft seized his whole attention, and he cried out in pleasure.

The sound seemed to echo in the room, and Colin opened his eyes, just as his dream lover — who was *real*, not a dream — cupped his sac.

And gasped in shock.

Her head popped up and he got his first look at his flesh-and-blood bed partner in the dim light of the early morning. Disbelieving brown eyes met his from under tousled auburn waves, and her full lips were parted, slightly puffy from the efforts of her prior attentions.

This observation brought him back to the reality of her hand still grasping his cock—his *erect* cock, wonder of wonders. His eyes slipped past her to see his brother standing at the foot of the bed, cupping his own erection through his pants, a slight smile on his face. Colin's brow rose, but he decided to wait until later to lecture Trev about the weirdness of apparently hiring a hooker for him. The fog of his arousal and jet-lag combined to make it seem like a good idea to disregard all his wonderment—*who is she?* and *thank God, my cock still works!*—and return to the rapidly fading moment.

His head fell back and he thrust into her hand, and for a moment, she reflexively stroked his length.

"Trevor, what on earth happened?" Her voice was cultured and melodic. Not a pro, then.

*And she thinks you're Trev.*

"Your, um... Something's wrong with your balls. I think one's hiding."

Colin's eyes opened as he fought a mirthless snort, and he looked into her concerned face then back at Trevor, whose lips twitched as he reached out to rest his hand on her lower back.

"Erica."

She screamed and scrambled onto Colin's lap, and his arms went automatically around her. She looked back over her shoulder then jolted, shock transmitting itself as every inch of her tensed at once. Erica was Trevor's current girlfriend, Colin remembered from his brother's emails, the one he wanted to move in with. Well, maybe not *girl*. She was definitely all woman.

His eyes roamed downwards, helpless to keep from appreciating her curvy form fully on display. Chivalry was *not* his strong suit at the moment.

"Trev?" she questioned as she looked back and forth between the two men. She carefully separated herself from Colin and drew up the sheet, apparently realising the ball-less wonder wasn't who she thought he was. But hadn't she arrived with Trevor? His travel-fuzzed brain, still back in China, couldn't begin to puzzle this out.

Trevor knee-walked across the bed to cradle her in his arms. "I'm sorry, sweets. I didn't mean to scare you." His gaze met Colin's over the top of her head, and he reached out a hand to briefly clap his brother's shoulder in silent greeting.

The identity of the 'intruder' settled, she gazed frankly at Colin, her sharp eyes examining every facet of his appearance, shaking her head slightly more than once. Her eyes dropped to his lap, and he followed her gaze to his groin, where his rampant erection hadn't yet caught up with the change in programme. The depressingly deflated look of his right ball sac started to do the trick, though, and he sighed as he covered up.

*Ah well. So much for finally getting there.*

Trev spoke into the quiet. "Erica, I know this...is a lot to ask, and I promise I'll explain everything later, but how would you feel about continuing what you were doing?"

Of all the things Trevor could have said just then, that was by far the most unexpected. Erica couldn't see a trace of jealousy on his face, which puzzled her. Maybe she'd misjudged his feelings towards her.

She was facing the other man, obviously Trevor's twin, so she saw the flash of heat followed by his grimace in reaction to Trevor's question. And just before he looked away, she caught a tinge of regret in his eyes. It touched something inside her. Although it wasn't pity she felt just then, it was obvious that something had happened to him, and she paused in empathy, with the automatic denial still on her tongue.

*On her tongue...* She couldn't help but remember the warm weight of him in her mouth, Colin's cries of pleasure, the bitter-sweet taste of his pre-cum hitting her tastebuds. While Trevor had been obviously appreciative when she'd gone down on him, his brother's strong, uninhibited reactions to her efforts had been flattering and arousing.

*His brother. Oh God, what's his name? Colby? Corey? Colin,* she remembered with relief.

And then he was moving away, obviously resigned to leaving the couple in peace, and before she could think any further about the ramifications of her actions, she grabbed his arm to stop his retreat.

His deep brown eyes, so familiar yet different in their depths, flashed to hers, measuring her with a defensive glare. "I'm not a charity case," he growled, but she noticed

with feminine satisfaction he didn't move away, although he could have easily evaded her grasp. And he was still hard.

Her grip turned soothing, and she glanced at Trevor, seeing nothing but encouragement in his expression. No pressure, though. He was obviously going to let her make this decision for herself. She would find out later what his real reason for this was. In fact, he looked smug enough that if she didn't know better, she'd think he'd set her up. But to have arranged to have his brother in his bed and guess that she might come over and crawl in? Nope, no way he could have pulled that off.

She turned back to Colin, still and inscrutable as he waited for her reaction.

*A ménage. Why not?* she thought. *We're all adults, and it's not like it'll be awkward afterwards since Trevor and I are over.* The memory of why she'd come here was a sobering one, and it must have been reflected in her face because both brothers reacted, Trevor with a frown of concern and Colin with renewed determination to leave the bed. She smacked his firm ass with her hand as he began to turn away.

*A charity case, huh?* "No, you're not, but you *are* touchy," she retorted, and both brothers froze. Trevor moved first, his mouth twitching with amusement as she continued. "I don't do pity fucks, either, so it'll work out just fine if we get together."

Colin's jaw dropped, and she took advantage of his cessation of movement to lean forward and press a kiss to his parted lips. For long moments, they were still under her own, and she began to think his pride was going to make this impossible. His eyes searched hers from close proximity then squeezed closed. When his response finally came, it took her breath away.

Almost off-balance anyway with the effort to reach Colin's mouth, it took no effort at all to get her to twist and fall the short distance to the mattress. Taking control of the kiss, Colin landed on top on her and pressed her down into the mattress. His tongue stroked into her mouth with an assurance she immediately responded to.

"God, you taste good," he murmured, and the sound of his voice—so like his brother's—reminded her of the unusual situation she somehow had fallen into. She raised her head to attempt to meet Trevor's eyes, but Colin brought her attention fully back to him by deepening the kiss to a lush, carnal mating.

“Don’t think. Just feel,” he demanded then trailed his lip down her throat, making her arch to encourage his exploration. His hands weren’t still, trailing lightly across her arms, down and back up, then across her collarbone. His mouth had almost met up with his fingertips when he changed direction and licked and bit his way towards the full side of her breast, avoiding the taut peak. Erica groaned her frustration, even as she relished the seduction.

Finally free to look at Trevor, she watched as he bent towards her neck. “Hey,” he whispered against her skin, his breath teasing at her nerve endings while his brother traced her ribs with his tongue. “Thanks for the awesome wake-up – even if it wasn’t me.”

“We’re going to talk about that later, trust me,” she warned without heat, then gasped as Colin and Trevor each latch onto a straining nipple and suckled in unison. “Oh God,” she cried breathlessly. “Have you done this before?”

“Believe it or not, no.” Trevor continued mouthing her breasts as he answered, while Colin shook his head, using the flat of his tongue to tease her peak. When he raked his teeth lightly across the sides, Erica squirmed – and thrust a hand between her own legs. She couldn’t help it. She needed some pressure, something.

“Yeah. That’s hot,” Trevor praised, cupping the back of one knee and pulling it back so she was ruthlessly exposed to their interested gazes as she pleased herself.

“Oh, come on. Two young guys in this bed, I shouldn’t have to be doing this to myself,” she panted in frustration.

As if in response, Colin tested her moist entrance with his fingers then began thrusting inside. He slowly and deliberately jacked his hard, reddened cock in time with his fingering. Meanwhile, Trev arranged himself along her side and alternately soothed and plucked at her nipples while tonguing her ear and neck, seemingly content to let his brother solo.

The combination of Colin’s shallow penetration with her practiced stimulation quickly became too much. He must have sensed her impending implosion because his rhythm became deep and purposeful as he fucked her with his fingers.

“Mmm.” She couldn’t take her eyes off him, watching his face strain as she approached the edge. “Fuck me,” she invited, needing more, wanting that beautiful cock inside her.

“Can I?” Colin’s steady voice had a deep tone to it.

The question seemed to include both she and Trevor, and Trev reached back to the bedside table then handed his brother a condom as she responded, "Oh, hell yes."

Colin made short work of rolling it on and arranging himself at her entrance. He shuddered as he began to push inside and she trembled in desperate response. The feel of his thick length pressing inexorably into her was heavenly, but it was the expression on his face that pushed her to the edge. As if she held everything he'd ever searched for.

Simultaneously striving for the peak and wishing it would never end, she surged with Colin until a particularly hard thrust sent her spiralling over the precipice and into a shattering climax. He rode her through it then stilled, coming with an almost silent groan as he held deep within her. Chest heaving, he braced himself above her, not once having lost eye contact, and she could almost feel a connection snapping into place between them.

Then he smiled.

Colin chuckled as his till-now serious face lifted into a gorgeous grin. Her breath caught, and she couldn't look away, even as she smiled in return, something inside her swelling with an unnamed emotion.

*Oh no. No, no, no, she fruitlessly warned herself. Don't you go falling for the other one now.*

## Chapter Four

This time when Colin awoke, he squinted at the clock but then had a hard time deciphering the shadows. Was it quarter after six in the morning or afternoon? This time of year, it was hard to tell. Rolling onto his back, he caught movement out of the corner of his eye—Trev, shifting around but still sleeping. The whole crazy night suddenly came back to him.

*Sex with Erica.*

Sex period.

Yeah, but with Erica—Trevor's girl. Who was nowhere to be seen.

With a nearly uncontrollable urge to shake Trevor awake to talk, Colin instead took pity on him. Trevor had just gotten back from a long trip too, coming from the other direction. Smiling a little at his comatose brother, he pulled the covers up over him and went in to take a long, hot shower. The night before he had barely rinsed off before collapsing into bed, Trevor having told him his flight would be getting in late and whoever got there first got the bed. After two nearly consecutive year-long stints overseas, having sold his condo before he left for the first year—which given the housing market was probably a good thing—Colin was going to have to bunk in with Trev until he found a new place. Might not be long either, the way Trev had been talking about Erica. He even said he was going to sound her out about moving in together.

Soaping up, Colin shook his head. He just couldn't figure the couple out. By all accounts, Trevor really cared for Erica, even using the word 'love'. But when Colin had teasingly pressed him about committing, Trevor had said they wouldn't work in the long run. And maybe there was something to that. Yes, the brothers had very different personalities, but Colin couldn't imagine sharing a woman he loved with another man, brother or not.

Guilt trip or not.

His hand made the familiar trip down to cup the empty side of his disfigured ball sac, fingertips tracing along the scars. Trevor had nothing to feel guilty about, but Colin could see

it in his eyes, and most of the time, he just let Trev do what made him feel better about it. Offering up his girlfriend was way over the top, though, and it was time this all stopped.

Especially now that they both knew Colin was functioning again. He would never father any children—he ignored the small twinge of regret that thought provoked—but at least he now knew he could have sex again. The thirteen months since the accident had gone by without a full erection, even partial ones fading once they passed a certain point.

Until last night.

No physical cause had ever been found, but the psychologist said it was performance anxiety, a normal by-product of the damage his genitalia had suffered in the accident. The accident Trevor was convinced was his own fault just because he'd been the driver, and because he'd been the one to decide to go home instead of waiting out the rain. If it was anyone's fault, it was Colin's own for not putting the hastily packed tent bag in the back of the truck, instead propping it on the passenger's side floor between his legs. No, it was no one's fault, just hydroplaning, but Colin knew if the situation was reversed, he would be just as likely to cling to guilt.

Bypassing his suitcase, he instead raided Trev's dresser and ended up with a long-sleeved T-shirt and what were likely his own favourite sweatpants. Apparently, Trev had 'borrowed' them. Colin rolled his eyes. *Klepto*.

Trev didn't even move while he rummaged for socks. Checking his phone, Colin found it was morning. A bit early, but he had to start adjusting to the time change sometime. Colin walked out to the kitchen, thinking to have some coffee and maybe try to find a newspaper, then stopped short at the sight of Erica perched on the counter stool, sipping her own steaming cup.

He paused to watch her for a moment before she noticed him. In the soft morning light, she made a pretty—if a bit pensive—sight, gazing at some distant spot out the window, the slightest frown creasing her brow.

Wishing Trevor was here to smooth the way, but not wanting any time to go by before he made sure Erica wasn't having any morning-after regrets, he walked into the room, watching as she became aware of his presence.

She opened her mouth to speak then narrowed her eyes. An unbidden grin came to Colin's face as he realised she was trying to figure out which brother he was.

"Morning, sweets," he teased as he crossed the room to confidently drop a brief kiss on her lips, before turning to make a beeline for the coffeepot.

"Morning, Colin," she returned and smirked as he turned, a bit surprised she got it right so quickly.

"Okay, how'd you know?" He peeked in the fridge. Score—half-and-half. Coffee fixed, he took the other stool.

Erica didn't look uncomfortable. Maybe she wasn't too freaked out about last night, after all. "Trevor quit drinking coffee a few months ago. Said he was tired of having to try to find good coffee on the road." A confirmed and happy addict, Colin shuddered at the thought as she continued, "Plus, I know those are your sweats. He was pretty smug about swiping them, but he never really wore them, just hid them in his drawer."

*I knew it.* "Nice investigative skills. You must be good at your job," he praised, leaning in a bit closer, enjoying her slight flush as she shifted.

She took a big drink of coffee before answering. "To be honest, until you headed to the coffee, I wasn't sure. It's eerie—you look almost exactly alike. Well, with your clothes on," she added in a rush.

Colin felt his smile drop at the reminder of his deformity. "Yeah, I guess it just takes one look below the belt to figure us out now," he muttered bitterly. He turned to go.

"No! Oh no, that's not what I meant. Crap." She hurried to catch him. Not particularly wanting to continue the conversation, manners nevertheless made him stop when her hand tentatively touched his arm.

"I wasn't even thinking about that. Just your builds. You know," her hand stroked his arm soothingly, and Colin found himself enjoying the touch despite his upset, "Trev has to keep up his uber-muscles for his job. Not that you're not built," she hastily added. "Fuck, nothing's coming out right. I'm usually a little more tactful than this."

The swear word had a smile tugging at his lips. "It's okay."

"No, seriously. I sound like an idiot." She was stroking his chest now, standing close, and damned if he wasn't enjoying it. But in the light of day, he had to remember she was Trev's girlfriend. Not his. He took a step back and her hand fell away, as if she too just realised what she was doing.

"Jesus, it's early. What the hell are you two doing up?"

Trevor came around the corner bare-chested—with his ‘uber-muscled’ torso on display—wearing a pair of silk sleep pants Colin had bought for him. Which had been still packed in his suitcase.

“You’re welcome,” he prompted sarcastically, waving a hand to indicate the pants. “Anything else in my stuff you need, just go ahead and help yourself.”

Trevor just smiled wickedly and turned to greet Erica. “Hey, sweets, good morning.” He gave her a lingering kiss, and Colin grew uncomfortable with the display. Why, he didn’t know.

*Yes, you do. Those sweats aren’t the only thing green in here.*

*Relax, it’s just because she’s the first sex you’ve had in over a year.*

Colin thought about that, and it made a sort of sense. Erica was smiling at Trevor and rumpling his bed-tossed hair. They were the couple, and it looked as if they were one that worked. Now that it appeared things were working down there, Colin needed to get out and find someone not taken.

Trevor finally let Erica up for air. “So, what did you think of my surprise?” He gestured to Colin, and Colin choked on the sip he was taking. Erica’s eyes went wide.

“Sleeping with your brother was my surprise? You planned this?” she asked incredulously, while Colin shook his head to negate the idea, feeling relief to hear that Trevor hadn’t set last night up somehow.

“What? No.” Trevor frowned briefly. “I mean, him moving back from Asia and you finally getting to meet him.”

“Oh.” Erica sounded as relieved as Colin felt. “Yes,” she turned a brilliant smile on Colin, “I’m very glad to finally get...to know him.” She trailed off as the meaning hit her. Then the three of them laughed at the double entendre, and it looked to Colin like they might actually escape from the situation without much lingering awkwardness. “Although you could have mentioned he was your twin. You always just said ‘brother’.” She socked his arm with a small fist.

“Ouch,” Trev overreacted playfully. “Well, I really don’t think of him as my twin.”

She raised a sceptical eyebrow, and Colin jumped in. “It’s true. Mom didn’t want us to be known as ‘the twins’, or have people think of us as a unit instead of individuals. So she purposely never used the term ‘twins’, and I guess it carried over.”

"That's smart. She must be a very strong woman. And very lucky to have you both." A tinge of sadness shadowed her eyes, and Colin watched as Trevor stiffened and withdrew. *What the hell? Some sore point there.*

"So!" Erica deliberately diverted the conversation. "If that was the surprise, what was the question? And it better not have been 'do you want to keep doing what you were doing?'" Her words were teasing, but her shoulders betrayed her tension as she awaited Trev's answer.

"Ah. The question." Colin watched Trevor turn up the charm.

"Oh brother," he muttered, then put on an innocent look when the couple turned to look at him. "Don't mind me." He headed to the microwave to warm up his drink.

"Well, with Colin moving back and this place being so small, I thought since we were at each other's places overnight most nights we're in town anyway, I could just move in with you. At least until Colin finds a place."

Colin watched Erica digest this, appearing to struggle to control her expression. "Hey," he chimed in, concerned. "I don't mind sleeping on the couch for a while. It's cool. Really."

Trev gave Colin a warning glance and he could read the intent just fine. *Keep out of it.* "It'll be fun being roomies," his brother encouraged Erica. "So what do you say?"

## Chapter Five

In the end, Erica couldn't do it.

*Damn it.*

"So exactly how is it that you went to go break up with him, and ended up having him move in?"

Glaring at her friend as she put into voice the very question Erica'd been asking herself for weeks now, she gave an unladylike snort and pressed her lips together.

*How?* She wanted to respond. *Because I was so caught off guard by the afterglow of fucking his twin brother that when he asked if he could move in with me so Colin could use his condo, I said, "Sure. That'd be great."*

Apparently coming that hard affected her brain.

"He wanted to let his brother stay in the condo while he looked for a place to live now that he's back state-side," she said instead, dancing around the real question. "And we were sleeping together at one place or another almost every night anyway."

Rhonnie glared back. "Avoidance. Not becoming." She rolled her eyes. "Okay, so if you're not going to talk about that, how about the artificial insemination. Have you chosen a donor yet?"

"No, no yet."

"But you've picked a sperm bank?"

"Uh, no."

"Have you even talked to your fertility specialist? Let me guess. No. Erica," Rhon took her hand, "are you putting this off because of Trevor? Or because you're not ready? Because last I heard, you *were* ready."

"I am. I just—" Erica sighed. "I don't know. Maybe I'm not ready. I thought I was until..."

"Until what?"

*Until I figured out how fickle I can be after meeting Colin.*

"I have to pee," Rhonnie levered her increasing girth up from the table. "So you get a reprieve for now. Just think about it," she tossed back over her shoulder as she swayed towards the bathroom.

Erica had no problems doing just that. It was *all* she'd been thinking about since that night. She had spent a great deal of time with both brothers in the past few weeks and had learnt an uncomfortable truth about herself. While she still loved Trevor, it was Colin to whom she was drawn, with a pull that went well beyond what she could remember from the beginning of her relationship with Trevor. And his more toned down, mature personality meshed more fully with hers and her interests. Whereas Trevor was always on the go and extremely high energy, Colin enjoyed the same quiet pursuits she craved on her time off. Her job was demanding enough—on her time off, she wanted to relax, both physically and mentally.

Dealing with her unexpected attraction to Colin had pulled her focus somewhat from her fertility. It had also spiked a longing for the kind of passionate and companionable relationship she could see as possible with Colin. Which made her leery about taking action on getting inseminated. Because with that longing came the wishful hope she could have the whole package, a partner and fellow parent, in one man.

That man obviously wasn't Trevor.

And unfortunately, it couldn't be Colin either. She had heard the horrific details about his accident from Colin, and privately mourned with him the loss of his fertility, feeling empathy for him, especially at such a young age. At least she still had options. His injury had been effectively a brutal vasectomy. With side effects.

Erica flushed as she recalled the discomfiting and bizarre thank you Colin had offered for their intimate encounter. She couldn't imagine what it must have been like to experience impotence for such a long period as a twenty-six year old.

*And you turned him on to the point where he got past it. Go you.*

She admired how he appeared to have retained his confidence and had a really great attitude about moving forward. But she couldn't help but feel a twist of jealousy at the thought of Colin sleeping with another woman, probably someone gorgeous and young and svelte, like him. *Pretty two-faced of you to begrudge him that, or did you forget you're dating someone else?*

Kind of hard to forget, now that Trevor was sharing her home. But in a way, it had been a good experiment. She knew for certain now that she and Trevor wouldn't work out long-term. But the impetus to break it off eluded her, even though she got a strong vibe that he wouldn't be heartbroken.

*What I need is a sign. A nudge. Something. Anything.*

Frustrated at her lack of decisiveness and angst, she banged her head on the table.

"Hey, hey, don't do that."

The resonant voice hit her libido just as the strong arm pulling her back into a semi-hug made her vibrate with need. "Colin."

"You can tell us apart without even looking. Very impressive." His breath teased in her ear, and she closed her eyes for a moment, swaying towards him, accepting his light kiss on her lips. It clung for a shade too long to be considered strictly platonic, and her eyes popped open as he withdrew. Just a tease, and much less than she wanted, but all she could take under the circumstances.

She watched as he slid into the chair next to her and scooted it close to her. He took her hand, his thumb stroking lightly over the back of hers. Colin was extremely tactile and affectionate, too, much more so than his brother. And she ate it up. Needed it.

Craved it.

*Quit with the comparisons!*

"Aww, you guys are cute." Rhon retook her seat. "Hey, Trevor."

Erica opened her mouth with a rebuttal, but Colin answered first with a mischievous smile. "Hi there. Are you lovely ladies having a nice lunch?"

He looked at Erica, daring her to set the record straight, and she found herself playing along, enjoying the joke. She'd tell Rhonnie any minute now. "Oh yes, and it's getting better every second," she flirted back.

Rhonnie got a determined glint in her eye. "So we were just talking about the two of you moving in together."

"Oh?" Colin questioned, giving Erica a side-long glance. She refused to look his direction, instead glaring at Rhonnie.

"Yep. She was just saying it was kind of temporary until your brother — Colin, right? — finds his own place. How's the search going for him? You must be anxious to get back into your own home."

"Rhon," Erica warned under her breath, but her friend ignored her, and now Colin was picking up the gauntlet.

"Oh, he's narrowing it down, but it might be a little while. We're actually both looking right now, might just end up buying a bigger place together."

This was news to Erica. "Really?" she blurted, then could have kicked herself when both turned to look at her. "I mean, *we* haven't really talked about that." Inwardly, she wondered why Trevor hadn't even mentioned it to her. Was he feeling their relationship was nearing the end as well? Or was she just putting a nefarious spin on it when he probably just forgot to bring it up?

"Well, we're both making much better money now than we did when he bought this place. If we pool our equity, we can expand our search to include some nice places right on the beach."

"Wait a minute. When '*he*' bought the place? Don't you mean, when *you* bought it?" Rhonnie's eyes narrowed, and Erica watched, amused, as Colin flushed at the mistake.

"Damn. See, you guys got me talking. I was never the one who could pull a switch off. Trev's much better at it."

Rhonnie's eyes were huge as she looked back and forth between Erica and Colin, with a pointed glance at their linked hands. "Okaaay. So. Nice to meet you, *Colin*. And you didn't mention they were twins — why?" she aimed at Erica.

To save face, Erica explained the brother versus twins thing the guys' mother had endorsed, and Rhonnie argued that didn't pre-empt sharing the information second-hand. Especially with one's best friend. Colin sat back and seemed to enjoy the ensuing debate, still toying with Erica's hand until Rhonnie brought it into the equation.

"That's another thing," she accused. "The gig is up, so why are you still playing kissy-face with the whole holding hands bit?"

"He's just affectionate that way," Erica explained airily.

"I am," Colin dutifully agreed.

"Affectionate. Huh."

"Needy?" Erica ventured. "Clingy?"

Colin frowned. "Clingy makes me sound like I need a dryer sheet."

"But you didn't debate needy. Case closed." Rhonnie dusted her hands together then reached for her purse. "I can see I'm not going to get anything useful out of you two, so I'm going to work."

Erica glanced at her BlackBerry, which she'd silenced before lunch, and cringed when she saw the time and how many messages had piled up. "Guess I'm off, too."

"I'll walk you," Colin offered Erica, while assisting Rhonnie to her feet.

"Thanks," the women chorused, then rolled their eyes in tandem. "Call you tomorrow," Erica added as Rhonnie slowly made her way through the tables.

"You'd better," she was told with a smile to soften the warning.

She strolled with Colin at her side, his hand hovering on her lower back. The heat radiated from the simple point of contact throughout her body, making her utterly aware of his proximity. Remembering how that hand had felt on her body, she felt her nipples pucker, making her glad she had a jacket on over her blouse. As it was, she had to shrug to adjust the press of her bra against the taut peaks.

They chatted about neutral topics for most of the four-block walk, the conversation only turning personal when they reached the broadcast company's building and Erica indicated her entrance.

"Are you upset to hear that Trevor is planning for this to be temporary? Or relieved?"

Erica couldn't swallow her shock. "You don't beat around the bush, do you?"

Colin simply waited for a response, and the palpable feel of him lingering well inside her personal space was making it hard to think. Her lips parted of their own accord as she willed his to descend, to take the choice away from her and fulfil her growing need for him. But even though his gaze dropped to caress her mouth, Colin didn't make a move to touch her.

Frustrated and a bit horrified with her lack of control, she took a step back. "I'm not upset," she finally answered. "But I can't say I'm relieved either. It's...fine. I like Trevor, and he's easy to live with."

Colin met her gaze steadily. "Erica, I'm hearing 'fine' and 'like' and 'easy' and those are hardly the descriptors I'd expect. Are you in love with him?"

Erica looked away, unable to maintain eye contact. "I shouldn't be having this conversation with you."

"I'm exactly who you should be talking about this with," he countered, and her eyes snapped up to meet his, drawn by the intensity and demand in his voice. "And you know why, don't you, Erica? Now tell me, are you in love with my brother?"

## Chapter Six

Colin knew he was pushing, but he couldn't stop himself. He had to know how she felt, once and for all. If she truly did love Trevor, he would back off. But this past month, getting to know her and be with her, he realised she was the one he'd been searching for, the one he wanted in the forever kind of way.

Now, if he could just get Erica and Trevor to admit they weren't working out.

In a response he didn't expect, hadn't foreseen in all the different ways he'd envisioned when rehearsing this moment, she turned the tables on him. "Are you trying to tell me you want me to love you instead?"

*Wow. What a woman,* he admired, even as he squirmed at being under the microscope, laid out for her dissection. What else could he do, but admit it? "Yes."

Her brow puckered in the way he'd become familiar with. "We've only known each other for a month. Less than that, even. You don't know the first thing about me, about what's important to me."

Relieved at finally getting the chance to make his case, he pressed on. "It's been plenty of time for me to know that we fit in every way possible. We enjoy many of the same things, we have this amazing chemistry between us," he pulled her snugly against him, uncaring of the people around them and the semi-erection now pressed against her stomach, "and I like you." He looked steadily into her eyes as he confessed, "I'm growing to love you."

"Colin—" Erica shook her head, and tried to pull out of his embrace. He reluctantly let her go, but stayed close.

"If you're in love with Trev, I'll be happy for you. Truly. But if you aren't, I want you to give us a chance." Colin then forced himself to wait, heart hammering in his chest. It was a lot to lay out all at once, but when he saw her at the cafe Trev mentioned she liked to lunch at, it had hit him like a semi—he couldn't suppress his feelings for another minute.

She shook her head once more. "I'm sorry, Colin. I just can't."

"Do you love him?" he demanded, feeling control of the moment slipping away.

The sad look on her face was breaking his heart. "No," she whispered.

Hope leapt again. "Then why not? Just give us a chance," he repeated. "I'll wait for you to talk to Trev. I'll even do it for you, with you. Whatever you like."

He watched as her temper flared, her eyes snapping. Or was it fear? "It's not about Trevor. Okay? It's you—you're just not what I'm looking for. It would never work between us."

Feeling that blow almost physically, as though he took a direct hit to his chest, and needing to preserve some of his pride, he took a step back, then another. He nodded brusquely. "Point taken. My mistake."

He turned away, catching out of the corner of his eye her hand as it rose as if to halt his flight. It never made contact, and he walked away, the silence of her lack of reply tolling his ears.

\* \* \* \*

"You're what?" Trevor's shock was written across his face, and it almost immediately morphed into hurt and anger.

"I'm going back to Asia for another year."

"What the hell? You just got back a month ago, and you said you were never leaving the states again. You have plenty of jobs lined up, so many you're turning them down." Trevor raked a hand through his hair, then pushed Colin in frustration, knocking him back a step. "No. You can't go."

"There's nothing holding me here. Might as well make some coin."

"What about me?" Trevor practically shouted and shoved him again, and Colin balled up his fists to keep from shoving back. "And what about Erica?"

Colin inhaled sharply. "What *about* Erica? What does she have to do with anything?"

"You've always been a horrible liar, Col. Everything. She has everything to do with this. Why you think you should go, *and* why you should stay. Don't think I've missed what's been growing between you. I might not be the smart one, but I'm not stupid."

"You have a lot of nerve, implying anything. Erica would never cheat on you, and I would never do that to you either."

Trevor snorted. "I know that. Jesus. I swear it took everything I had in me not to break up with her a month ago and give you guys the green light. But it was too soon, you had to cement the connection. Oh, the vibes were there, but you needed to get to know each other with the pressure off first."

Colin's mind whirled in confusion. "What? What the hell are you talking about?" His eyes narrowed on his brother as an awful suspicion occurred to him. "Did you set up that first night somehow? Getting us in bed together?"

"I wish, but no. That was pure karma. But it came to me while I was watching you that night, watching the connection between you two. You're a much better match for her than me."

Frustration competed with the confusion. "Tell that to her. She flat out rejected any thought of being with me. So it's a moot point either way."

"With me out of the picture, there's only one thing keeping you two apart in her mind. And I know how to fix it. Call your client. Tell them you're not going to China."

"Trev. I have to go. I can't be here, knowing she doesn't want to be with me."

His brother grasped the back on his neck and squeezed reassuringly. "Don't go. I promise I can make this happen. Trust me." Those familiar eyes willed him to believe, and despite his best efforts, Trevor's assurance kindled a flicker of hope in Colin. "Stay. And we'll get Erica for you. Guarantee it."

\* \* \* \*

Erica closed down her laptop and wearily pushed back from her kitchen counter. Trevor was cooking dinner and talking on his Bluetooth with Colin.

"Well, I'm going to be sorry to see you go, jerk, but at least I'll get my own condo back. So, are you going to be living in the same place when you go back?"

*What?* She stomach thudded as it dropped. *Colin was going back to Asia?* Erica had thought he was done working overseas, had vowed never to go so far away from his family again.

"Good thing we didn't buy a place, but maybe next year... I know, I know... No, I'll be in town on Saturday... Sure, I can give you a ride."

*Saturday? Oh God. So soon.*

*What's the matter? You aren't going to get involved with him, remember?*

Erica tried lecturing her soul about the reason for not going there, which just reminded her brain about the excruciating conversation when Colin had bared his heart to her.

And she'd sliced it up and delivered it back with a side of wasabi.

With her own heart as a garnish.

Wanting to throw herself into his arms, heart soaring to hear his pleading for a chance at her love, she'd had to grit her way through her refusal. Her palms still bore the brunt of the encounter where her nails had broken the skin.

Trevor had hung up and was looking at her with a curious expression on his face. She made an effort at control.

"I think it's past time we had a talk, sweets. Come on."

Oh, why did he have to choose now, when her reserves were so low? But she obediently followed him into the living room, and they sat together on the couch overlooking the city view.

"We work well together, but we both know this isn't a grand romance. Right?" He paused as if to gauge her response, and she gave a nod. Relieved that this wasn't going to turn into a scene, she began to relax only to stiffen when Trev continued, "So there's no reason you and Colin can't make this thing between you work."

An involuntary gasp was the only warning she had before the tears began to fall. "Colin isn't... I mean, we're not... We never—" She cut herself off and tried to gather her scattered wits as Trevor pulled her against his side.

"I know you 'never' and you never would as long as the two of us were together. Which is why I'm calling the couple part of us quits. But even though we aren't a couple, I've got your back. Which is why you need to see Colin, and give him a chance."

Erica refused to meet his gaze or respond, her throat aching with the effort of holding her emotions in check.

"There's no reason you shouldn't be with him. I know you think there is, but it's a moot point."

Startled, she found herself arguing back, even though she'd told herself to ignore, ignore, ignore anything to do with Colin. "Even if you think you know why, how can you

say it's not a factor? It *is* a factor. It's not just a silly whim. This is something I've been wanting for a very long time, and..."

"And have you ever checked to see whether Colin would be okay with you using a donor to father a child you could raise together—given him the benefit of the doubt?"

She dropped her eyes guiltily. The answer of course was no.

"You didn't with me either. Oh, you were right in my case." He smirked. "I'm not now, nor will I ever be, ready to be a dad. I like my life just the way it is. But Colin? He's different. I know he wants to have kids. And I suspect a donor—which is incidentally his only option other than adoption now—would be just fine with him.

"Especially if the donor carried the exact same DNA," he concluded with a smug grin, and Erica's heart nearly stopped.

Her mouth worked, but she couldn't pull everything together to make a coherent sentence come out. Suddenly, the best of both worlds was laid in her lap. Did she dare reach out and grab hold?

A horrible thought flashed through her mind. "But he's leaving, moving to Asia! Oh, and he probably hates me after what I said to him."

"All that aside, just answer me one thing. Are you in love with him?"

The question was almost exactly the same one she'd heard from the other brother. But it wasn't *déjà vu* when it came to the answer that tumbled immediately out, straight from her soul.

"Yes."

"Then go to him."

Erica jumped to her feet, the mere suggestion enough to get her in motion. "Where?"

"In your bedroom."

She froze. The faint voice wasn't coming from Trevor. It came from the Bluetooth. Trevor gave her a wink as he pulled it from his ear, then impatiently gestured to the hallway. "Go on. I'll keep dinner warm."

Erica gave Trevor a quick, impulsive hug, and turned to find Colin hadn't waited for her to come to him, even though he could have. Even now, having apparently overheard everything, there was a trace of uncertainty in his eyes as he watched her approach, as if he expected to be rejected again.

The damn tears welled up again, and she catapulted into his arms. Feeling them close around her, she knew with certainty that she was home. Needing to give Colin the same reassurance, she stroked his face, marvelling at the warmth in his brown eyes as he looked down with a faint smile.

"I do love you, and I think I'm in love with you too," she declared, wanting to show him she was willing to put herself out there as he did. "And we need to talk about the having kids thing. I'm... Well, I'm not getting any younger."

"I know," he agreed, and laughed as she smacked his ass. "I don't mind starting trying right away."

She looked at Trevor, who was watching from the couch with a naughty grin. "I think your brother is willing to do the honours, although I'm not sure what changed his mind. He seemed very adamant about not being a donor anymore."

Trevor's grin softened into a smile, but his eyes dropped. "I made that decision after the accident." He looked up at Colin then back at Erica. "With him wanting to have kids but not able to produce sperm anymore, I knew my only donations from that time on would be to his future wife. Although," the wicked glint returned, "I didn't count on being so lucky as to donate in person. Much more enjoyable prospect than the old magazine and cup routine."

"Yeah, well, we'll just keep your enjoyment to the necessary minimum," Colin grumbled, and his jealous tone made both Erica and Trevor smile.

Feeling like the luckiest woman in the world, Erica thought about her future now with a sense of wonderment and expectation. In love with one brother, and loving them both, together they'd grow a family. And no Scarlett act this time. She eyed the hallway to the bedroom then sent an inviting look to both of her men.

No time like the present to get started.

## **About the Author**

Devon started reading and writing at an early age and never looked back. After a creatively-sapping career in the business world, she gratefully took some time off to be at home. At thirty-nine and holding, Devon finally figured out the best way to channel her midlife crisis was to morph from mild-mannered stay-at-home mom to erotic romance writer. She lives in Oregon with her husband and two girls, who are (mostly) understanding of all the time she spends on her laptop, aka the black hole.

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