



**SOMETHING TO BE
THANKFUL FOR**

IMARI JADE

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Something to be Thankful For

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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*.

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Imari Jade

Dedication

To the strong and independent women of MFR, New Orleans, Louisiana, who faithfully serve their country five days a week behind the scenes. Thanks for being there.

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Chapter One

"When are you going to face the fact that you two idiots are made for each other?" Abigail Truman, Julianne Richmond's assistant asked, sitting next to her in the V.I.P. viewer's box at the Grammy Awards.

"What are you talking about?"

"You and Cam. The man is purely trying to seduce you with that song."

Julianne turned her eyes back to the stage. Cameron Justice strummed the guitar sensually, like he would caress a woman's body. His eyes were glued to hers. The Grammys would never be the same. "I don't know what you're talking about. It's just a song."

Even as she said the words, she knew they weren't true. Cameron had been giving her signs for months now, which she chose to ignore. Just knowing it made her feel giddy inside, to think someone as young as he could be interested in an old broad like her. When had their relationship turned from singer and promoter to man and woman? She couldn't deny it. There was something there.

"He's just a kid." This was a lie, too. Cameron wasn't a kid anymore. He had grown into a very handsome man, with all that curly blonde hair and soulful blue eyes. His tall, muscular body was draped in his new stage costume...a pair of tight black pants that rode low on his hips and a skin-tight black athletic shirt that showcased his spectacular abs. He topped it all off with a black leather jacket to give him a bad-boy appearance.

The rest of the band was dressed in similar black and red costumes, but designed differently to fit their personality. They played their instruments behind Cameron, giving him the centre stage spotlight, so he could move around with the microphone and sing to the audience who shouted his name and flashed lighters in his honour. Normally, women would toss their underwear at him while he performed, but this was the Grammys and such shenanigans weren't allowed.

Abigail rolled her green eyes from behind her glasses. Abigail was younger than her and far too pretty to hide behind the matronly spectacles. Julianne had tried numerous times to talk her into getting contacts, but Abigail refused because she couldn't stand to put eye

drops in her eyes, let alone lenses. She did look pretty, though, in the long black designer gown she chose to wear. It called attention to her curves, but didn't expose enough cleavage for the paparazzi to call attention to. At least she had taken Julianne's advice and visited the salon for a new hairdo. Long hair was out, and the hairdresser had given Abigail's long brown hair a cute bob.

"Don't give me that. He's thirty-two and not the same little boy you discovered years ago."

"What am I going to do with a thirty-two year old?" Turning forty-two had made her a realist.

"The same thing you'd do with a sixty-year-old man, only he won't need any medication to keep it erect."

Julianne chuckled. Abigail didn't beat around the bush when she had something to say.

"Don't tell me you aren't interested."

"I never said that, but he is my client, and you know I don't mix business with pleasure." But in her heart she wanted to break her own rule, put the business on the back burner and just go wild. She hadn't had a good lay in a long time and she was well overdue.

"So it has nothing to do with the ten-year age difference?"

"It does and it doesn't. I am concerned. The media would have a field day with it. And anyway, he'd have to make the first move."

Abigail nodded towards the stage. "I think he just did. If he gets any raunchier with those hips of his, the police are going to raid this place."

Abigail was right. Cameron was pouring his heart out to her in a song. She raised the binoculars, zeroing in on those hips as they gyrated. Elvis had nothing on this one. She adjusted the view. The tell-tale evidence of his need bulged in the crotch of his too-tight pants. Julianne shivered with need, hoping Abigail didn't notice how turned on she was. She handed the binoculars back to Abigail.

Abigail lifted them to her eyes. "He's aroused." She lowered the binoculars but hung onto them.

Julianne sighed. Cameron and her, together? What a fucked-up situation. "Well, I can't do anything about that. Besides, he'll forget all about me at the after-awards party."

"Are you attending?"

“No. I’m not a glutton for punishment. Erica broke up with him. He’s going to be hitting on every available woman in attendance.”

Just as the group ended the song, a pop rang out through the crowded auditorium.

Julianne sprang to her feet. “What the hell was that? Was it a gunshot?” The crowd surged towards the exits. Another shot sounded.

Abigail grabbed her hand and dragged her out of the booth. “Someone’s shooting up the place.”

Julianne panicked. “We have to get the band out of here!”

The much taller Abigail pulled her along at a fast pace. “What’s going on? Where are you dragging me?”

Abigail stopped to catch her breath. “Didn’t you see it? Cam went down. I think he’s hit.”

The adrenaline kicked in. Julianne took the lead, propelling Abigail down the stairs to the stage entrance. Julianne stumbled forward, ignoring the throng of people and police officers hovering around the band members. She looked down. Cameron lay sprawled on the floor. “No!” Julianne broke away from Abigail and hurried over to him, rudely shoving aside anyone in her path. She dropped to her knees beside him, ignoring the paparazzi snapping pictures of the crime scene.

“Who are you?” a policeman asked as she tried to push in next to the paramedic to get to Cameron.

“I’m his manager.”

A stage hand nodded to the police officer, who finally relented. “She can stay, but get the rest of these people out of here.”

The paramedic took back control of the situation. “You have to let us tend to him.”

Julianne relented. She knew she was in the way, but she refused to leave his side. She looked down. Time had turned back and for a moment, he looked like the young boy who had barged his way into her office so many years ago. Blood stained the front of his costume. The paramedic opened his shirt and Julianne flinched. He had a shoulder wound.

“I think he’s only grazed,” the paramedic said to his partner. “We have to take him to a hospital to be sure.”

Cameron's eyelids fluttered and slowly opened, exposing those extraordinary blue eyes.

Julianne clasped his hand to her heart. *He's alive.*

He smiled weakly at her. "If I knew I'd get this kind of reaction out of you, I'd have got myself shot a long time ago."

Julianne's concern quickly turned to annoyance. "Leave it to you to say a damn fool thing like that. Of course I'm concerned."

"About me, or how this is going to look to the public?"

Julianne frowned at him angrily. "You're such a smart-ass." But in her heart, she was relieved he could still joke about the situation.

Cameron smirked and closed his eyes. The paramedics managed to get his tall, muscular frame onto a gurney. He opened his eyes again. "Don't worry, Julie. I'll be all right. We won't have to cancel any concerts."

Did he think she cared more about making money than him? "Go to hell, Cameron, and don't call me Julie."

Abigail came to her side. "Ignore him. He's delirious from blood loss."

Julianne didn't think so. Cameron always said exactly what came to mind. The paramedics lifted the gurney to lock its legs and rolled it to the stage exit. Julianne watched. "I hope the doctors give him lots of shots, and while they're at it, they can stitch up that wicked little mouth of his."

Abigail patted her shoulder. "No, you don't. You'd die if anything happen to him."

"You're crazy. There are plenty of other young singers out there just waiting to take his place." But deep in her heart, Julianne was afraid Abigail was right.

* * * *

Cameron wasn't in the hospital long enough for anyone to miss him. The bullet had just grazed him, so the doctors patched him up in the emergency room and sent him home to rest. Cameron, being the party animal that he was, ignored the doctor's warning and attended his after-awards party. Julianne spent her time wisely, talking to the police officers

who had captured the shooter and giving statements to the media, especially to one over-zealous reporter who insisted that Cameron was shot by a jealous husband.

Cameron did a lot of foolish things, but he didn't date married women. What he did do was drink too much. The crowd of partiers was gone, leaving her to deal with the cleanup. Maybe she should have stayed away like she planned. Julianne frowned. *He's drunk, disheveled and wallowing in sorrow.* She might have felt sorry for him if she didn't know the true meaning behind his depression. Being dumped by his latest girlfriend had bruised his ego.

Cameron slowly raised his head from the sofa cushion in his den as if finally sensing her presence. His long, curly blond hair lay plastered against his forehead with sweat. It could use a washing and a decent trim. Long-lashed, piercing blue eyes stared angrily at her. If looks could kill, she figured she be dead by now.

"What the hell do you want?"

Julianne wasn't offended because she was used to his surliness. She had seen him at his best and now at his worst. Of course, he had brought this despair upon himself. Too much money, boozing and women was his downfall. Even the members of his band had a hard time dealing with him lately. The fact that he was talented was never a problem. Cameron Justice could sing deep, spirited soul-reaching love songs, head-banging rock, and for those who knew him from the beginning, sultry rhythm and blues.

Looking down at him now, it was hard to believe he was the same person she'd agreed to represent eighteen years ago. He was just fourteen when'd he entered her office with guitar and a song he had penned. His voice knocked her out of her chair, and she signed him to a contract just as soon as she contacted his parents for permission. Had she kicked him out of the door back then, maybe his life would have turned out differently. No, it probably would have been just as screwed up. He was hell-bent on destruction, even back then. He'd got into trouble with the law as a teenager. He'd been caught drinking behind a barn with some other kids when he was supposed to be in school, and later he was reported for vandalizing private property.

"I want you to stop sulking and feeling sorry for yourself, and get your ass in gear."

Cameron raised the shot glass in his hand and hurled it at her head, narrowly missing her. It shattered on the wall behind her.

“Who cares what you want? You work for me.”

Julianne frowned. Fame made some people forget where they came from. “The last time I checked, you worked for me. I am your business manager, as well as the owner of the label you record for.” She stepped closer to the sofa. His long legs dangled over the arm. He was still dressed in his stage costume, and it was bloody and wrinkled beyond repair. His band mates and groupies had long since gone home to sober up, leaving his arrogant ass to wallow in his sorrow over being shot, and dumped by his big-breasted girlfriend. “She’s not worth ruining your career over.”

Cameron moved until he faced her. “You don’t know what you’re talking about.” Even angry, his voice was melodic.

“You’re better off without her.”

Erica was a gold-digger...an opportunist, and not the kind of woman he wanted to take home to meet the family. She was just eye-candy that looked good on the rocker’s arm. His fame kept her in the limelight, got her invited to Hollywood’s hottest parties and events, and it was all good until a couple of days ago when she’d found herself someone younger. Not that Cameron was old. At thirty-two, he was still handsome, had a rock-hard body and his voice had mellowed. His performances still sold out arenas, and lately he was being offered outrageous amounts of money to star in movies.

Julianne’s words brought him abruptly to his feet. His movements were a bit impeded by all the alcohol he had consumed, but he was still a threatening figure as he towered over her.

“You never did like her.”

“My feelings towards her have nothing to do with the situation at hand. You’ve got to get your act together, because you have to meet with Kropopulous later.”

David Kropopulous’s movies were legendary, and he was after Cameron for the lead in his latest World War II epic. Cameron would have to cut his hair and shave. There would be another fight about shearing his signature locks, but he would just have to deal with it.

“Fuck Kropopulous.”

It was the champagne talking. She made a mental note to ban all alcohol at parties she threw for him. No one in his right mind would be cussing out a world-renowned director.

“He only wants me so he can get to you. Everyone knows he is infatuated with you.”

Julianne blushed hotly under the collar. She had heard the rumours, and been privy to the director's forward advances on the few occasions they had dinner to discuss Cameron's future. David was suave, elegant, handsome, married, and not for her.

"Don't think I haven't seen the way he looks at you...undressing you with his eyes."

"You're drunk."

Cameron laughed. "Not as drunk as you think." He pulled her into his arms and planted a wet kiss on her lips.

Julianne pulled away from him with her heart beating wildly in her chest. She was furious with her traitorous body for reacting to his drunken advances. "What's the matter with you?"

"You're the matter with me."

Now, that stumped her. "What do you mean by that?"

"I can't stand it when he looks at you...like he wants to gobble you up, ravish you and make you his. For God's sake, Julianne, he has a wife and kids at home."

"You're crazy. There's nothing going on between David and me. We're just friends."

"I know that. That's one of the problems. You have no love life."

His words stung, but she tried to rise above it. "As far as my love life is concerned...my life is complete. I've got a profitable business, beautiful clothes and good friends."

"And you have to go home to an empty bed every night."

"My sex life is none of your business."

"What sex life? I've known you for eighteen years, and the only man in your life other than me was your husband. Well, he's been dead for years and he's not coming back."

Anger flared in the pit of Julianne's stomach. She raised her hand to slap him, but Cameron caught it in his. "The truth hurts, doesn't it, dear Julianne? You're here trying to buck me up about Erica, and you're still mooning over your dead husband and letting life pass you by."

His grip hurt her hand, but he had her full attention and not for the reason he thought. She was still remembering that kiss. Eyes the colour of robin's eggs stared into hers. "I'm too old for love. I've had my chance, and now it's over."

He pulled her closer to him. "Forty-two isn't old. Look at you. You're beautiful, you have a dancer's figure and a head for business. No wonder David wants you. A man would

be crazy to let you slip away." He lowered his head again and pressed his lips firmly against hers, forcing his tongue in. The kiss was hot and demanding and totally inappropriate.

Julianne pushed away from him, turned and ran towards the door. The last sound she heard was Cameron's laughter behind her.

* * * *

Julianne rushed back into the office that she and Abigail worked in at Cameron's mansion when he was too busy to come into town. "What's wrong with you? You look like you've seen a ghost."

Julianne brushed the tears from her eyes as she turned away from Abigail. She didn't want Abigail to see her that way...hell, she didn't want anyone to see her weak and not in control. Goddamn that Cameron. He could still push her buttons after all these years. "Cameron is being an ass."

Abigail sighed. "And what a great ass he has."

Abigail, like every woman who ever laid eyes on Cameron Justice, wanted him. She wasn't jealous of Abigail's infatuation, though, since she knew Abigail wouldn't act on it. "His ass is not the issue here. He's drunk and being uncooperative."

Abigail eyed her suspiciously. "It's got to be more than that. He's done some pretty foolish things before and he's never made you cry."

Julianne refused to meet the other woman's eyes. She was afraid Abby would see...that she would know the truth. "It's nothing," she lied. "We need to sober him up before he makes the worst mistake of his life. Kropopulous doesn't come knocking at your door every day."

"I'll get the coffee."

Yes, coffee. That would sober him up quickly. "Black and plenty of it."

Abigail disappeared and Julianne regrouped, entered her office and placed a few calls to confirm their meeting with Kropopulous. The door to her office opened fifteen minutes later and Abigail entered, drenched from head to toe.

Julianne sprang to her feet. "What happened? Did he throw the coffee at you?"

Abigail shook her head. "No, it's bath water. He told me to get out and he's screaming for you."

"He's just a spoilt baby."

"He says he's not meeting with Kropopulous until he speaks with you."

"Go dry off. He'll meet with Kropopulous if I have to drag him there by all that glorious hair."

* * * *

Julianne found him submerged in his tub, a huge black marble contraption that reminded her of an Olympic pool. His tanned skin glistened under the fluorescent lighting. Her eyes zeroed in on the wet bandage on his shoulder. She'd bet the doctor told him not to get it wet. His hair had been washed and it curled gently down his back. He had shaved and his eyes were closed. Cameron had the face and voice of an angel and the temper of the devil, but looking at him now, all she saw was raw sexuality surrounded by water. She shuddered, imagining what it would be like to be with him, locked between his powerful thighs while he made love to her.

Cameron opened his eyes. "We haven't finished our conversation."

"So you took it out on poor Abigail."

"It was the only way I could get your attention, and before you say anything, I will apologise to her."

"And you should. You know that woman idolises you. She just came up because I asked her to."

He moved a little in the water. She watched it splash against his chest and slid sensually down his abs, then disappear back into the tub. His eyes met hers when she raised them again. "Would you care to see more?" he asked with a voice so hot and sweet, it could melt butter.

"I..." She was at a loss for words. Fear kept her grounded to the spot where she stood. What would happen if he stood up? Would she shield her eyes, or brazenly take it all in? She might be forty-two, but she was still a woman.

"You're not afraid of me, are you?"

"No, and I don't think this conversation is appropriate." Of course, she was lying. She was very, very afraid of him and herself. The man oozed sexuality in everything he did. She hadn't seen him naked before, but she knew he would be powerfully built and knew how to please a woman. "What did you want to talk about?"

He swam towards her. "About us."

Julianne backed away. "There is no us, except for a business relationship."

"But there could be more if you'd loosen up."

"I'm loose. God, what am I saying? This isn't about me. This has to do with you and an opportunity you're about to miss because you're upset about your breakup with Erica."

"You're got it all wrong. I'm not upset about Erica. I couldn't care less about her. I'm upset about you."

Julianne looked down at him, not quite understanding. "Upset about me? What did I do?"

"It's not what you've done. It's how I feel about you...have always felt about you." He stepped out of the tub, revealing his body to her.

Julianne gasped. It was far better than she'd imagined. It was a conglomeration of muscles, curves and flat planes. "Okay, back up, what are you talking about?"

He stopped right in front of her until all she saw was the fine blond hair on his chest. "Let me put this bluntly. I'm interested in you and not in the client/manager way, but in the biblical sense."

Julianne laughed nervously. "You're joking, right?"

He pulled her into his arms, pressing his body into hers. "I'm afraid not."

She tried not to notice, but he was clearly aroused. "But I'm old enough to be..."

"My lover." He picked her up in his arms, carried her out of the bathroom and into his bedroom, and laid her gently on the bed. "I'm going to make love to you, Julianne, and show you what you've been missing all these years."

Chapter Two

The kiss Cameron placed on Julianne's lips, once he undressed her, woke up something inside her that had been buried so long. All the things he had said about her were true. Since her husband's death she had been hiding, protecting her heart and her emotions from the public's scrutiny.

Cameron ended the kiss and released her hair from the pins, spreading it out on the pillows. "I like it this way," he said with an impish smile. He lowered his head again, this time moving down to kiss her breasts gently, rolling his tongue around her nipples. They sprang to life, pert like they used to be when she was in her twenties. Her stomach clenched as he sucked the thickening areoles until they expanded.

He lifted his head. "You're so beautiful." His eyes looked smoky blue at the moment, dusted by pale blond lashes that made him look young. But there was nothing innocent about the way he moved down her stomach with his lips. They were soft and warm and made her damp between her legs. "You smell so good." He went lower. Her legs automatically locked as she realised what he was about to do. "Don't fight me on this, Julie," he said hoarsely as he stroked the auburn hair that covered her pubic mound.

He was about to go down on her...something no man had ever done before, not even her husband. It scared her, not knowing what to expect or how to react.

"Just relax," he murmured.

That was easy for him to say.

His lips were on her mound, kissing it gently at first, and then separating the tender folds with his tongue. Cameron slid further down until he was flat on his stomach. He lifted her bottom, spreading her legs apart. "You're beautiful down here. You have nothing to worry about."

But she did worry. Aging must have changed her, and probably not in a positive way. "Ooh," she moaned as his tongue moved in. She cupped the sides of his head in her hands, trying to gain some control of the situation. But Cameron continued unmercifully, going at her like there was no tomorrow, licking and caressing her with his fingers and tongue until

finally her body gave up the battle and surrendered to the onslaught. Her bottom shook in his hands, her legs trembling uncontrollably as her orgasm surged through her body. How long had it been since she'd felt release like this? Too long.

Cameron rose, not allowing her to catch her breath or change her mind. He started kissing her again, caressing her and exploring her body with his hands until she couldn't think straight. She kissed him back, following suit with her own hands on his body, grasping his firm buttocks and pulling him down on her until his skin made contact with hers.

"I've dreamed of this forever," he muttered as he kissed the top of her head. He didn't seem offended that she touched him. In fact, he moved her hands further down so she could really touch him and see how much her being there meant to him. He was big and thick and ripe in her palm. "Yes, touch me." He rolled over onto his back so she could access him better. He was still virile and potent at thirty-two; her late husband had needed sexual enhancers to stay erect by the age of forty. She had a feeling Cameron would need no such help.

Her fingers took control, stroking and bringing him to life. She looked up to see if she were pleasing him. His eyes were closed and there was a big smile on his face. She wanted to suck him, but she didn't have the nerve. She didn't want to offend him...to take liberties just because he felt sorry she was old and lonely. She wasn't a fool. She knew exactly what was going on. By tomorrow, they would both regret what they'd done.

Cameron moved his hand down to hers and took the choice away. He pushed her down on the pillows and burrowed his way between her legs, entering her missionary-style. He was gentle at first, trying to get the feel, but before long, he was in deep. "Mmm," he said as he moved his slim hips around. "You're tighter than I expected."

"Is that a bad thing?"

He chuckled. "No, darling, it's a very good thing." He pulled out slowly and sank back in. "And you're so warm, I could stay inside you forever."

They were just words to her. Words she knew he didn't really mean. How could he? He'd probably said the same things to Erica. Julianne tried to block the younger woman's image from her mind. She had to be crazy to think Cameron preferred her over the much-younger woman. They were both alone now and feeling very sorry for themselves, so she planned to milk the moment for all it was worth.

"I need to be in deeper," he whispered as he released her. "Let me take you from behind."

"By behind, do you mean anally?"

Cameron chuckled. "You're not ready for that right now. No, I think we'll both accomplish more doing it doggie-style."

He had her on her hands and knees before she could respond. He straddled her hips, locking her legs in place so she couldn't use them to escape, and he entered her again.

"Oh!" The new position definitely had its advantages. She forgot all about worrying if he would think her ass was too flabby. His penis went straight through her, rubbing her walls as he sensually moved his hips to and fro. And then he showed her how to separate the men from the boys as his hips took control, sending his penis in and out so quickly, she had to grab the mattress for support. She came again before she knew what hit her. "Ooh," she gushed as she shook. He didn't pause, battering her furiously until he took her over the top again.

"You're multi-orgasmic," he said as he continued to ride her roughly. "I've never had a woman who could do that before."

It all came crashing down on her again. Why did he have to mention the others? Just once, she wanted to feel special, and he had to go and ruin it by mentioning all the women he'd been with.

He groaned inarticulately as he came deep inside of her. Then he kissed the back of her neck and pulled her closer into his embrace.

At last, Cameron pulled out and flopped down next to her, exhausted, on his back. He was asleep before his head hit the pillow. Julianne gently rose from the bed, upset because she had been so foolish.

"Where are you going?" he asked groggily. So he wasn't quite asleep yet.

"To shower," she replied. "This was nice, but we've got a meeting in less than two hours."

He scowled. "Is that all you have to say and think about after what we just did?"

"It was a mistake, Cameron. You're drunk, and I just got caught up in the moment. We both know it would never work out between the two of us."

He didn't say a word after that. He just turned his back, let her go. Maybe it was better that way.

* * * *

He had sobered up enough and on time for their meeting with Kropopulous, and even though he charmed the pants off everyone there, Julianne could tell Cameron was distracted. He signed the contract, they had had lunch together, and then the two of them rode in the limousine back to his mansion.

Nothing of the earlier incident was mentioned. She wanted to say something to him...to apologise for what she had said to him earlier, but he didn't give her a chance. He just walked bent-shouldered into his mansion and disappeared behind the door. Julianne walked slowly towards her car, got in, drove out of the gates of the mansion and headed home.

* * * *

There was nothing worse than the sound of footsteps echoing on the ceramic tile to let her know she was alone. What had happened to her life? Julianne wondered as she walked through the empty palatial mansion she owned. She and Robert used to open their home to poets, actors and singers, and gave the most splendid parties. But since his untimely death, the partying had ended and the reality that he was never coming back had finally sunk in.

Julianne walked past the formal dining room where the royalty of the rock and roll industry had once dined. She paused in the doorway, remembering the time when Cameron and his band mate Nelson penned their top-of-the-chart hit 'Sunny Girl' on a couple of napkins while everyone else dined. She remembered reprimanding him for being rude and ignoring the other guests. Of course, she felt quite foolish when the song made it to the top of the charts and sold millions of CDs. Maybe Abigail was right. Maybe she was the one who was behind the times.

Julianne walked away from the door and headed for her room, trying to forget the past and think about the future. All the clients she represented were doing well, Cameron had just signed the deal of a lifetime, so what did she have to complain about? She was just about to get comfortable and watch some of the shows she had taped when the phone rang. "Hello?"

"What did you do to Cameron?" Abigail demanded.

"What do you mean? I haven't done anything to him. He was just fine a couple of hours ago when I left him at his mansion."

"Well, he's not fine now. In fact, he's gone. I stopped at the mansion to deliver some fan mail and to drop off his clothes I picked up at the tailor's."

It took a little while for it to register. "What do you mean, gone?"

"Gone, packed up his things, and split. One of the maids called me. She said Cameron was having one of his tirades, cussing both Kropopulous and you. The next thing she knew, he was throwing clothes into a suitcase, swearing to leave Los Angeles and never return. He hopped into a taxi and he just left."

Julianne's heart sank. "And no one tried to stop him?"

Abigail cursed.

"No need to be crude, Abby. I know what he's like when he's upset, but I swear I don't know what set him off this time."

"Are you sure? What happened with Kropopulous?"

"Nothing, really. Cameron arrived on time and sober. They talked, Cameron signed the contract and then we rode back to his mansion."

"What did the two of you talk about in the limousine?"

Abigail was trying to pin everything on her. Granted, the two of them had had some world-class arguments in the past. But this time, she was innocent. Wasn't she? "Not much. In fact, he didn't say anything."

"And you didn't find that odd?"

"Not in particular."

"Not in particular? When was the last time Cameron Justice went silent about anything? The man is totally outspoken."

"Well, not this time. Anyway, we don't have time for this. We need to find him."

"I've got people checking out his usual haunts," Abigail told her.

"That's a start." He was probably off somewhere sulking, and she was sure he would come home as soon as he got over whatever he was upset about. She firmly tamped down the idea that she might have anything to do with it.

Two days passed without a word from him, and at last Julianne began to worry. The media found out about his disappearance and was really playing it up big and proper. They bombarded her office with phone calls and visits, and fans were littering their properties with flowers, balloons and stuffed animals, as if he were dead.

“Can you think of anywhere he might have gone?” Abigail asked on the fourth day after a candle-light vigil formed on the lawn outside of the music studio.

Of course, she had an idea. There was only one place for him to go...a place that only a choice few knew about. Cameron Justice had gone home.

Chapter Three

I have to be out of my head, Julianne thought as she manoeuvred her car through the Pocono Mountains. No one in her right mind would agree to drive thousands of miles to hunt for a man who didn't want to be found, yet here she was. So far, her GPS hadn't failed her, taking her from Los Angeles, California to Pennsylvania, and she hoped it wouldn't fail her now. Her heart beat erratically in her chest as the roadway began to wind and ascend. The high altitude made her ears clog and even though it was cold outside, nerves made her sweat like a horse.

"Why did I listen to Abigail?" she asked as the car continued to climb. Did she really need Cameron in her life that badly? *Of course you do*, a little voice said in her head. Abigail claimed she was taking her stress and frustration out on everyone else around her, now that he had disappeared. She didn't think so, no matter what they said. She just needed to make sure he was okay.

The road stopped winding and her car levelled. Julianne's heartbeat returned to normal as soon as she arrived on the outskirts of Kidder Township. She stopped a moment to gasp at the scenery. It was like something out of the pages of a tourist magazine. A small place with a couple of stores and businesses, and just quaint enough to enjoy a wonderful vacation. It was a small town...much smaller than she was used to. And she could certainly understand now why Cameron had been so excited when he arrived in California eighteen years ago. It must have been quite the culture shock, with all its fast-talking people, bright lights and big buildings.

Julianne continued to drive until she found a gas station. She figured she'd better fill up, since she didn't know if there were another one between there and Cameron's family's home. She made the most out of the stop, using the restroom, getting herself a Pepsi, and picking up a couple of souvenirs for the gang back at the office. A few of them had voiced their opinion about her driving all the way there alone, and others seemed surprised she even bothered, since she and Cameron were always arguing.

That part was true. Cameron was a prodigy, a rocker and now a movie star, but he'd never left his rebellious past behind. They argued about everything...the way he dressed, the way he acted in front of the media, and especially the way he handled his love life. He never kept a woman long, probably because no one could put up with his arrogant ass. He had one of those out-there personalities, always joking and never serious, and always confrontational.

Julianne climbed back into her car after getting directions to the house. Surprisingly enough, the folks at the station knew who he was. Of course, back here he was known as Cameron Jones, a small-town boy who loved to ski and fish and who was always in trouble.

Julianne left the centre of town behind, passing by trees and lakes, until finally finding the gravel road sign marked 'Jones.' She turned off the main street and continued until she found the place...a two-story farmhouse nestled between huge trees. There were a couple of other cars and trucks parked in the winding driveway, which made her a bit nervous. She pulled herself together, grabbed her purse and climbed out of the car. She stood there for several minutes, just looking at the front door, until she found the courage to walk up to it. Julianne knocked, and it was quickly answered by an older woman who must be Cameron's mother.

"Yes, may I help you?"

"Good evening, my name is Julianne Richmond, Cameron's manager."

The older woman adjusted her glasses. "Julianne, is that you?" She opened the door further. "Come on in."

The place felt like home. Warmth filled her the moment she stepped inside the cosy family room. There was nothing glitzy about it. Just basic, solid furniture, decorated with hand-crocheted doilies and scarves. A coffee urn and some cups were on the table, as if they were expecting company. A ceiling fan moved warm air from the radiator around the room, giving the room a toasty feel.

"Is he here?"

"No, not at the moment," his mother said, leading her out of the parlour and into the kitchen. "He's gone fishing and he won't be back until later."

Damn, what was she supposed to do now? She hadn't prepared a backup plan for this. There were three others in the kitchen...a couple of women who were close to

Cameron's mother's age, and a younger woman. The two older ones of them bore a striking resemblance to Cameron. "Oh, I'm sorry. Am I interrupting something?"

One of the women shook her head. "No, we're just cooking. Sit down and join us."

Two women moved over to make room for her. Cameron's mother introduced them.

"This is my sister Ethel, my sister-in-law Janice and my daughter-in-law Karen."

The daughter-in-law was around Julianne's age, but the other two women were in their late sixties. They each were busy preparing a separate dish, and everything smelt heavenly.

"Deloris tells us you've been watching out after our Cam," Ethel replied as she prepared an apple pie shell.

Like Cameron's mother, Ethel was petite and raven-haired. Beneath their aprons, both women were smartly dressed in pantsuits, pearls and were wearing makeup, as if they were going out somewhere.

Julianne nodded. "He's my biggest client."

Ethel laughed. "And probably the biggest pain in your butt. Cam was quite a handful as a child."

Julianne smiled. "He still is. That's the reason I'm here. He left Los Angeles without saying goodbye, or letting me know where he was going."

Deloris put a pan of sweet potatoes into the oven. "He takes after his father in that respect. They'd rather keep their feelings to themselves, instead of talking them out. I swear, that man of mine is so thick-headed at times."

The other three women agreed, each expressing the same opinion about their significant other. That was good. Maybe they could give her a few pointers on how to deal with Cameron. "So, you know what I'm dealing with."

Karen nodded. "Stan's the same way. It's like pulling teeth, trying to get an answer out of him. I have to remember he's still so young. Ten years does make a difference, no matter how cute he is."

"You're older than he is?" It came out of her mouth before she could stop it. Cameron talked about his older brother being married but he never mentioned the age difference between them.

Karen nodded. "He used to come up to my father's store every day after school. He'd just stand there, browsing through magazines and pretending to be reading. It didn't take me

long to figure out he was interested in me. Of course, I knew he was just a teenager, so I ignored him for a couple of years and the next thing I knew, he had grown into a big, strapping man and had graduated from college. He started coming around the store again, and I just couldn't ignore him. He was gorgeous."

Julianne had to agree. She'd met Stan a couple of times and like Cameron, he was adorable.

"So, what happened between the two of you, if you don't mind me asking?" Karen said.

Normally, she would have felt embarrassed to discuss her personal life with complete strangers. But they weren't strangers, really. They were more like family, since she and Cam were close. "Everything happened so fast...the Grammy Awards ceremony and then the shooting."

"What shooting?" Deloris asked.

Julianne clasped her hand against her mouth, upset that she had let the cat slip out of the bag. Ooh, that man. "He didn't tell you, did he? Some nutcase shot at Cameron while he and his band performed on stage during the Grammys." Strange, now that she thought about it, why hadn't any of his family been in Los Angeles for Cameron's big night? Didn't folks in this town watch television? It was all over the news. Looking back now, she realised they very seldom came to see him, or took part in any aspect of his life since he left home. So, it was understandable why he didn't tell them he'd been shot. "He was just grazed, and the police caught the shooter."

"Thank God," Deloris said, sitting down suddenly and passing a shaking hand over her brow. "I'd hate to think some lunatic with a gun was still gunning for him. Do they know why?"

"Not yet. It was just a crazy fan, I suppose. We haven't heard from the police. Anyway, after Cam left the hospital, he went to a party and got drunk. We got into an argument, and we said some pretty nasty things to each other. The next day, he signed a multi-million dollar movie deal and the next thing I knew, he'd left Los Angeles."

Janice finally spoke. "What did the two of you have a fight about?"

Julianne lowered her head. Funny, why was that the only sentence she picked up on? "It was over something silly."

Ethel put the apple mixture into the pie shell. "Silly or not, it upset him enough to come home."

She couldn't tell them the real reason behind the argument.

Deloris poured her a cup of tea and placed it before her. "It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the argument has something to do with your relationship." She went back to what she was doing. The other three women's eyes were trained on her, waiting for a response.

"Our working relationship is fine."

Deloris chuckled. "That's not the relationship I'm speaking of."

"Oh, we don't have that type of relationship. Cameron and I are just friends."

Deloris laughed. "It's apparent to me you're more than friends. What other reason would make you drive all the way here from California alone to find him? Cameron has been in love with you since he was a teen. I don't know why you haven't noticed. All he does is talk about you."

The other two women nodded.

"I didn't know. He never said anything until..." Her thoughts drifted off. The blush deepened when she realised they were still staring at her.

"So, he finally grew enough balls to tell you how he feels about you, and you turned him down?"

"Not exactly. I would never do anything to hurt him, but you must be aware there's a considerable age difference between us. All these years, I've considered him a younger brother."

Ethel spoke up. "So what if you're older than him? If you love him, it doesn't matter, and it's not like you're robbing the cradle. Cam is a grown man and gorgeous."

Julianne didn't think she could be more embarrassed. "Yes, I've noticed, but it's not good to mix business with pleasure."

Deloris smirked. "Says who?"

Julianne frowned. This wasn't going well, and besides, Ethel had a point.

"The two of you need to work this out. Don't let a little age difference stand in the way of your happiness."

Julianne sipped her tea. Maybe they were right. Maybe she had been too rash in letting him go. "So, you see my dilemma."

"Talk to Cam. Age is only a small obstacle. We've all gone through the same thing. I'm older than my husband, and so are Ethel and Janice."

Somehow, that wasn't comforting to know. Was Cameron interested in her just because she was older? Was it a mother-complex thing with him? "I'll try, but sometimes talking to him is like talking to a brick wall."

The four women laughed and agreed.

There was a noise outside the house. It sounded like a truck.

"Here's your chance," Deloris said. "Cam's home."

Chapter Four

Julianne's heart missed a beat the minute Cameron walked into the kitchen, accompanied by two other men who must be Stanley and his father, Caleb. She saw a lot of Deloris in Cameron, but it was obvious he looked more like his father. They shared the same build, curly blond hair and blue eyes, and could easily pass for brothers except for the age difference. All three men were dressed in denims and plaid shirts. Stanley carried a line of fish over to the sink before coming to join them.

"It's Julianne." He pulled her into his arms for a big bear hug. "Cam didn't tell us you were coming." Stan's hair was dark like his mother's, but those blue eyes were undeniably a gift from his father.

"That's because I didn't know anything about it."

Julianne caught the betrayed look in Cameron's eyes just as Stanley let her loose, giving her a friendly peck on the cheek. "What is my idiot brother talking about?"

Their mother answered for her. "She came all the way here to surprise Cameron."

Stanley smiled. "That's your car outside?"

Julianne nodded. "It's a rental."

"Why didn't you let me know you were coming?" Stan persisted. "I would have picked you up at the airport."

Karen rose and kissed her husband on the cheek. "That's because Julianne didn't fly in. She drove all the way here from California."

Cameron looked angry. "That was a damn foolish stunt."

Caleb marched over and got between her and Cameron. He shook Julianne's hand. "I'm the father of this idiot."

"Nice to finally meet you, Mr. Jones."

"Call me Caleb." He spun her around. "Let me have a look at you. Cameron didn't tell me you were so pretty."

Cameron rolled his eyes at the ceiling, obviously used to his father's innocent flirting.

Julianne sat back down. "Cameron doesn't talk much about anything."

Cameron washed his hands and dried them on a towel. "Why are you here, Julianne?"

Stanley nudged him. "Obviously, she's here to see you."

Cameron ignored his younger brother, who was now at the sink, helping their mother clean the fish.

"Then, she made a trip for nothing."

"Ignore him," Caleb said. "I don't know where he picked up that attitude."

Cameron walked over and peered down at her. "Why don't you tell everyone the real reason you're here?" He turned to his mother. "She didn't come for a friendly visit. I've extended the invitation often enough. It must have something to do with business. I've probably missed some photo-shoot or something. That's all she cares about."

Julianne sprang to her feet. "That's not true. I was worried about you. Abigail said you just packed your things and left."

"I needed time to think. Things were happening pretty fast."

Deloris stepped forward. "Why didn't you tell us you got shot?"

"Huh?" Caleb said. "What does she mean?"

Julianne grabbed Cameron's injured arm and he shook her off, obviously still in pain. "A crazed fan shot at him during his Grammy Awards performance."

"It's just a graze. I didn't feel the need to tell anyone, since it was so minor."

Caleb turned on him. "Minor or not, you're still my son. I shouldn't have to read about your life in a tabloid."

Julianne sighed. Okay, there was some friction there, and just as she suspected, Cameron hadn't told his family about the Grammys. He could be such an ass.

"I don't want to worry you guys."

"We're your family," Caleb said. "It's our job to worry."

Cameron grabbed Julianne's hand and pulled her roughly out of the kitchen. "We need to talk."

Julianne waved to the others and before she knew it, she was outside. Night time had arrived.

Cameron stopped abruptly and turned to face her. "Why are you here?"

"I've come to bring you back to Los Angeles."

He walked away, picking up a rock and throwing it across a field. "I'm not going back."

Julianne marched over to him. "What do you mean, you're not going back? You just signed a contract with Kropopulous; you have a band that needs to rehearse with you, and numerous other engagements."

Cameron took her hand and pulled her over to the truck, opened the door and pushed her in. He walked around to the other side.

"Where are we going?"

"To my place, where we can talk in private. My family is a bit nosy, in case you haven't noticed."

"Your family is concerned about you."

He didn't respond, just drove up the road a couple of miles and then stopped in front of a charming cabin in the woods. He exited and helped her out, then walked her up the stairs and opened the door.

Julianne stepped inside and looked around once he'd turned on the lights. It was rustic and homey, and nothing like his mansion in Los Angeles. He led her into a small parlour and offered her a seat. Julianne sat down in a comfortable chair while he lit a fire in the fireplace. "This is nice."

"I bought it a couple of years ago when our neighbours moved out. It's both close to home, and far enough away for some privacy. I plan to enlarge it when I get some free time."

"Why didn't you tell me you needed a vacation? I'm your manager. You can talk to me."

"No, I can't. You don't understand what it's like for me...a small town boy in a big whale of a town. Sometimes, it gets so overwhelming."

"But you're one of the most famous rockers in the world."

"What good is all of that when I have no one to come home to in the evening? I don't care about the money or the fame. I'm lonely."

At that moment, she finally saw the real Cameron Justice.

* * * *

"Running away isn't the answer to your problems."

It was his turn to go on the defensive. "I didn't run away."

"What would you call it?"

He looked her over. She looked different...more relaxed. Her hair hung down in a long ponytail, there was no makeup on her face, and she wore jeans. He never knew she owned any jeans. He wanted her just as much now as ever, even though she'd ignored his 'lonely' comment and gone for the throat. He enjoyed the way her eyes lit up when she was angry. "Taking a break. I needed to get away for a couple of days before filming begins."

"Abby said you just took your stuff and left. She never said anything about you going on a break."

"Since when do I have to report my whereabouts to her? I'm a grown man."

"With responsibilities. There are hundreds of people depending on you in Los Angeles. Going on an unscheduled vacation is so, so..."

"Like me?"

"Yes."

"You know very well why I left. I needed time to think about what happened between us."

"What is there to think about?"

"You rejected me."

She flushed. "You were drunk, therefore not in a sane frame of mind to be making life-changing decisions."

Cameron shook his head. "Whatever. Would you like something to drink?"

"A soda, if you have it."

He left for a moment to retrieve the drinks. He opted for a cola too, since alcohol had got him in this predicament in the first place. He returned to the parlour and found her walking around, admiring pictures of his family. "Is this Stanley?"

He walked over to her and handed her the soda, then looked down at the picture. "Yes, that's Stan in high school."

"Cute. Karen told me he started flirting with her around that time."

He put the picture back in place. "They married right after he graduated from college."

"Do they have any kids?"

"Two, and I know where you're going with this. I understand that your biological clock is ticking. That doesn't matter to me."

"You're saying that right now, but somewhere in the future you're going to hold that against me."

He pulled her to him, almost making her spill the drink. "The only thing I want to hold against you right now is me." It had only been a week, but he'd missed her. He lowered his lips to hers, surprised she wasn't fighting him. She just melted in his arms. He broke the kiss. "Why are you suddenly so receptive?"

Julianne rubbed her body against his. "Make up your mind. Either you want me or you don't."

No more words needed to be said. Cameron swept her up in his arms and carried her into the bedroom. He didn't say anything as Julianne helped him get out of his clothes, as well as her own. He watched in fascination as she easily slipped out of her jeans, immodest and unashamed. Her underwear was pretty, pink and practical, and moulded to her shapely curves. At forty-two, her body was still tight and as compact as any younger woman he'd ever been with, devoid of stretch marks and middle-aged spread. Her legs were well-formed, like a dancer's. She wasn't fashion model-skinny, but full-figured, like a woman who ate what she wanted and enjoyed every bit of it. He lowered his head and captured one of her pink nipples between his lips.

Julianne moaned. That was all the encouragement he needed. He moved up to her lips again, kissing her deeply. Julianne kissed him back passionately. "I want you so bad," he murmured.

Julianne wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him down on her. "Prove it."

Before he knew it, he was buried inside her, praying the moment would last.

Chapter Five

"You're back!"

Abigail nearly choked her to death with an impetuous hug when Julianne entered the office. "Yes. I am."

"Did you bring Cameron back with you?"

"Yes."

"Did he put up much of a struggle?"

Julianne shrugged. "Yes, but I expected it."

Abigail released her. "Well, at least he's back. Kropopulous has been ringing the phone off the hook. He wants to meet with you on Friday."

"That's tomorrow."

Abigail nodded. "I had the feeling you'd be back by then."

Julianne put her purse on her desk. "Am I that predictable?"

"I wouldn't say predictable, but I know what you're like when you have your mind set on something." She paused. "So, have you and Cameron made up?"

Julianne pretended to be interested in the mail on her desk. "You can say that."

"Did you sleep with him?"

Julianne blushed.

"Ooh, you did."

"Let's not make a public announcement about it."

Abigail plopped down in a chair. "Well, how was it?"

Julianne lifted her eyes. "Magical."

"I knew it would be, and look at you. You're glowing."

"That has nothing to do with the sex. That's from being in the mountains and eating fresh fish and vegetables."

"You ate a vegetable?"

Julianne nodded. "I helped cook some, too. All the women in Cameron's family help out at meal time."

"So, you're a part of the family now?"

"No. Nothing has changed. I'm still Cameron's manager."

"And his lover."

"Nope. It was just one night, and it will never happen again."

"Says you."

"I mean it. I did what I had to do to get him back here."

Abigail gasped. Julianne turned away so she didn't have to see the look on Abigail's face. "You mean, you used your feminine wiles on him just to get him back to Los Angeles?"

"It was either that or handcuff him and drag him back here, screaming and hollering. The man was holed up in a cabin. He wore plaid shirts, and he fished."

"Cam in plaid? Did he look like a rugged lumberjack?"

"No, he looked like a sexy rugged lumberjack, but that's not the point. He's here, and hopefully he'll stay here."

"Since I'm being nosy, what did he say when he saw you?"

Julianne snorted. "He said, what are you doing here?"

"Not romantic."

"Not in the least. He was mad as hell for a moment, but then we began to get along. The next thing I knew, we were on a plane back home."

"I thought you rented a car?"

"I did, but Cameron wouldn't be caught dead travelling back with me through the mountains. For some reason, he doesn't trust my driving."

Abigail laughed. "I've ridden with you, remember? You drive like a maniac."

"I do not," Julianne protested. "Anyway, I better let everyone know I'm back. I can't have my clients think I've deserted them."

Abigail handed her a pink message slip. "You better call Kropopulous first."

Julianne frowned. "The man is an irritant."

"Yes, but he's a genius. He's going to make Cameron famous."

"Cameron is already famous. I just have to keep the two of them from killing each other."

Abigail looked at her questioningly.

"He thinks Kropopulous has this thing for me."

"Does he?"

"I don't know...probably, but I'm not interested in him. The man is married, and I don't do married men."

"You don't do any men, which is what makes this more interesting than I expected. All of a sudden, you're a hot commodity."

"I'd rather be the manager of a hot movie star."

"Julie, the world doesn't revolve around money and notoriety."

"Yes, it does. The more money you have in this town, the more respect you get."

Abigail shuddered. "Stop me if I'm wrong, but weren't you from a very rich family?"

"Yes, but what does that have to do with anything? I know I don't have to work another day in my life if I don't want to, but there's something about earning my own way that makes me sleep better at night."

"What would your parents think of this life you've chosen for yourself?"

Her parents were dead now, so their opinions didn't matter. "My father would be all for it, but my mother would be afraid I'd end up in some scandal and embarrass her."

"What kind of scandal can you possibly be entangled in? You barely leave this office."

"I could be involved with a married director, or maybe I could be the love interest of a much younger rocker."

Abigail headed towards the door. "Stick with Cameron. He's the lesser of the two evils."

* * * *

Cameron sat in his den, wondering how he had allowed Julianne talk him into returning to Los Angeles. When he left a week ago, he had sworn he would never return, but here he was sitting alone, nursing his second drink and as out of sync as he had been before he left. It wasn't like him to let a pretty face get the best of him. The only positive news he'd received since he returned was that the police were certain they had the right suspect in custody in the shooting, and that he had acted alone. The man confessed he snapped out of frustration after losing his job, and he didn't even know who Cameron was. That eased

Cameron's mind slightly, knowing he hadn't been a target and had just got innocently caught up in the crime.

He looked at the manila folder on the coffee table. It contained the contract he had signed with Kropopulous. It wasn't a secret he didn't like the man, but he had to admit signing with him had been a great business move. He loved singing dearly, but he needed a break after so many years. He'd still record with the band, but he was through with touring for a while. He'd been all over the world, and all it had done for him was make him very wealthy, and very alone.

The telephone rang. Cameron reached over and answered it. It was David Kropopulous, inviting him to a party on Saturday. "I'll have to check my calendar." Cameron shuffled some papers. "Yes, I can make it. I'll see you then." He hung up the phone. Damn, the last thing he wanted to do was socialise with the man. But he'd agreed to attend the party because he knew Julianne would insist, telling him it would be good for his career.

He wondered if he should call her. He checked the time. It was early, and she was probably still up. He reached for the phone again and dialed her number.

Julianne answered on the first ring. "Hello?"

"This is Cam."

"Yes, I recognised the number on the caller I.D. Is anything wrong?"

He frowned. "Does something have to be wrong for me to call?"

"When was the last time you called just to talk?"

Cam rolled his eyes, as if she could see them. "Listen, I was calling to let you know that Kropopulous invited me to his place for a party on Saturday. I accepted, since I think it's a good business move."

Julianne gasped. "You actually agreed?"

"Yes, I've been known to make an intelligent decision without your help."

Julianne giggled. "When?"

"Don't make me sorry for calling you."

"No, I'm only teasing. Yes, I think you should go, and by the way, he called me, too. I told him I'd think about it. He also told me to bring Abby. I haven't told her yet, since I haven't decided if I'm going to attend."

He scowled. It hadn't occurred to him she might not go. "You mean you didn't accept?"

"Not exactly. I didn't want to do anything to jeopardise our new relationship."

"We have a relationship?"

"Well, we have something. I'll call it a relationship until I find a better term for it."

"Why would you think attending Kropopulous's party would jeopardise our relationship?"

"Because you're jealous of him."

"I am not. The man is obviously infatuated with you. On second thought, don't come to the party. Then I won't see him do something to you, and I won't get mad and trash the place."

"I hope you're joking."

He chuckled. "I am. I wish I could see the expression on your face."

"No, you don't."

Cameron laughed. "You never could take a joke. Listen. I promise to be on my best behaviour." He paused. "I think you should reconsider coming. It would be nice to have a friendly face there."

There was a pause. "Okay, I'll come, but under one condition."

"What's the condition?"

"That you don't get drunk and tear out of the place."

Cameron sighed. "Don't worry. I promise."

"Well, okay. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Can't I see you tonight?"

"It's late."

"It's not that late."

"I'm tired. It was a long plane ride home."

"What if I promise to give you a back rub?"

Julianne hesitated. "Well, I do have a knot in my shoulder blade."

"I'm on my way." Cameron hung up, grabbed his keys and flew out of the mansion before she had a chance to change her mind.

* * * *

David Kropopulous was everything a woman could want in a man...handsome, debonair, intelligent, and rich. Yet, he was also some things most women didn't want...married, a father of two, a womaniser and a perfectionist. Julianne had barely made it into the mansion when he spotted her. He immediately left his wife Debra's side and hurried over to her. He was dressed in a white tuxedo that showed off his broad shoulders. Surprisingly enough, at fifty-five he still had a full head of black hair that he wore stylishly cut to show off his alluring Greek features.

"Julianne, what a lovely surprise." He threw his arms around her and kissed her on both cheeks.

The look on Debra's face as she neared was enough to let Julianne know the woman saw her as a threat. Slightly older than her, Debra Kropopulous was dressed beautifully in a light blue designer gown that showed off her thin frame. She was once the toast of the high fashion runway, but marrying David and having two kids had brought her career to a screeching halt. Her long red hair was pulled back into a severe bun, allowing a glimpse of her perfect pale face. There wasn't enough makeup in Hollywood to hide the worry lines around her eyes and mouth, no doubt caused by David's excessive flirting. Debra inched to her husband's side once he finally let go of Julianne.

"Thanks for inviting me." She smoothed her strapless gold gown, and then turned to face the woman. "You must be Mrs. Kropopulous. Your husband has told me so much about you."

The woman extended her hand for a shake. "That's surprising. Usually, he just talks about his work. Sometimes I think he forgets I'm alive."

David pulled his wife closer and kissed her on the forehead. "Nonsense, how can I forget the mother of my children?"

Julianne tried to hide her reactions from the two of them. Their marriage was in trouble, but they were both trying their best not to let it show. "You have a lovely home."

"Would you care to see the rest of it?" David asked.

"Maybe later. I think I need to go in and mingle. You've invited a few of my clients, and I need to see how they're doing."

David nodded. "Has Justice arrived yet?"

Julianne scanned the room. "No, I don't think so, but he told me he'd be here."

Debra perked up. "Cameron Justice, the rocker?"

Julianne nodded. It was the first real smile Debra had displayed since Julianne had arrived. "Yes, he's one of my clients. Didn't David tell you?"

"No."

David chuckled innocently. "That's because he's one of my wife's favourite singers. I wanted to surprise her. She has all his CDs, and I have to admit I'm a bit jealous."

Debra ignored her husband. "Tell me, is he as gorgeous in person as he is on television?"

"Oh, yeah. He's totally hot."

Debra fanned herself with her hand. "I think I might faint."

David watched the two of them curiously.

"Is he okay? I mean, I heard someone shot him."

"He's fine," Julianne assured her. "It was just a graze."

"Great, I can't wait to meet him."

Something clutched at Julianne's heart. Was she jealous that this other woman was interested in Cameron? Didn't Debra and David have a son in his late twenties?

"My wife is such a fan. If he wasn't young enough to be her son, I'd be jealous."

"What does age have to do with anything?" Debra asked, still scanning the room for Cameron. "You make it sound like I have one foot in the grave."

It was the perfect time for her to make an exit. "I'll make sure to bring him over and introduce the two of you when he arrives." Julianne caught Abigail's eye and hurried over to her.

"You look like you've just seen a ghost." Abigail was all dolled up in a pale pink designer gown that showed off her well-maintained figure. Still a beauty at thirty-five, Julianne's dark-haired assistant's height and spectacular build did justice to strapless number. Her adoring husband Pierre stood near her, keeping the wolves at bay.

Pierre kissed her on the cheek, very French-like and sweet.

"Nope, just met David's wife. The woman has a thing for Cameron."

"So?"

"So. She's nearly sixty."

Abigail signaled for a waiter as he passed and secured three drinks for them. "And?"

"And she shouldn't have a thing for a man young enough to be her son."

"A woman in her fifties is in the prime of her life," Pierre chipped in as he sipped his drink. "Where I'm from, a young man would be honoured if an older, more experienced woman took an interest in him."

Julianne smiled at him. He was French and from the place where love was invented. Of course, he wouldn't have a problem with the age difference.

"When two people are in love, age doesn't matter," Pierre continued.

"Well, I suppose you're right, but she's married and the mother of two grown children."

Pierre raised an eyebrow. "Are you jealous?"

"No, don't be silly."

Abigail giggled. "Yes, she's jealous."

Julianne ignored her. "I wonder where he is."

"Being fashionably late."

A ruckus at the door drew her attention away from Abigail. A surge of young women ran across the huge ballroom. Big bodyguards barricaded the entrance.

Abigail put her drink down on a tray. "What's happening?"

Julianne shrugged her shoulders. "Must be someone famous. You know how these parties are with celebrities popping in."

A sea of people parted and a man emerged, dressed in a black tuxedo with a blood-red shirt. Julianne squinted so she could make out who it was.

"That's Cameron," Abigail announced. "Oh, my God, he's cut his hair."

Julianne stared harder. It was him, and he looked gorgeous...like a movie star. Her panties dampened at the sight. "He looks...hot."

Abigail giggled. "And he's coming your way."

The guards kept the crowd at bay as he neared. Unfortunately, Kropopulous intercepted him before he made it over to her.

"Let's go save him," she said to Abigail. "Before Debra can get her fangs into him."

"You go with her," Pierre replied with a chuckle. "I'll stay here and watch from a safe distance."

Julianne put her drink down and hauled Abigail behind her.

"She's not going to eat him."

"I'm not going to give her the chance."

"Look who finally made it," David said as he pried his wife's hands off Cameron's arm.

Cameron spun around. His eyes travelled over her body from head to toe. "Julianne. You look sensational."

"She sure does," Abigail said once she caught her breath. "Gold is so her colour."

Julianne blushed under his scrutiny. She looked him over. The new haircut made him look distinguished and mature. "Your hair looks great."

Cameron ran his hand through his short blond hair. "Do you like it? The barber went wild."

Julianne nodded. "It lets those baby blues shine through."

"Eventually, he would have had to cut it for the movie, anyway," David said. "There were no long-haired pilots in those days."

Debra reattached herself to Cameron's arm. "You're going to be in one of my husband's movies?"

Cameron nodded. "I signed the contract a few days ago."

Debra gushed. "I can't wait to tell my friends. They're going to be so jealous I actually know you."

Julianne smirked. Maybe fashion models didn't age. Debra was like some teen meeting her first celebrity. David just stood by, taking it all in for a moment. Then he turned his attention to Julianne.

"Why don't we let Cameron get acquainted with his public while you and I discuss business?" He grabbed her arm and led her away.

Julianne looked back. Cameron didn't look pleased, even though he kept talking to Debra and Abigail.

"Now we can talk about us, since my wife is occupied." He led her to a dance floor amidst a crowd of other people.

Julianne didn't feel threatened, since she was sure he wouldn't try anything with other people around. She was wrong. His hands were on her ass before the dance ended. Julianne, never one to make a scene, politely pushed his hands away.

"What's wrong?"

Julianne rolled her eyes. "What do you think? You're groping me."

"Just a little harmless flirting. You're a very sexy and desirable woman. It's hard for a man to keep his hands off you."

"Well, please try a little harder. You're a married father of two and your wife is staring at us."

David chuckled. "Would it be okay if I wasn't a married father of two, or my wife wasn't staring?"

"No. You have to learn to control your urges if we hope to get through the shooting of this movie."

"Ah, now I see. You're afraid Justice won't be cooperative if I mess with his lady love."

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Look at the way he watches...like he wants to kill me. That's the passion I want for my movie. Women will flock to see him. We'll make a lot of money."

David turned her around so she could see. "Oh, oh." She'd seen that look before. "It's not nice to tease your future meal ticket."

"So I was right. There is something between the two of you."

"No, he's just my client."

"You lie, Julianne. He doesn't look at you like you're his manager. He has the look of a lover."

"Think what you like. Now, let's get down to it. When is all this filming going to happen?"

"We start in two weeks."

"So soon?"

"It's been in the making for months. It's not easy finding the perfect location and getting permits. Once the big stuff is out of the way, then we call in the actors. Is that going to be a problem?"

"No. Cameron doesn't have a concert coming up for a while. He'll be there."

The music ended and they walked back to the rest of their group. Pierre had relented and gone to his wife's side, while Cameron signed autographs for his adoring fans. Dinner was served shortly afterwards, which meant they had to change rooms. David seated her on

one side of him and he put his wife on the other. Cameron sat to Debra's right, looking amused.

Later, Julianne and Cameron finally had a chance to be alone out in the garden when David went off to talk to some of his other guests.

Cameron pulled her to him. "I've wanted to hold you like this all night."

Julianne backed away. "Maybe we shouldn't."

"What's wrong?"

"It might not be good for your image."

He pulled her close. "What image? All I know is I want to kiss you now." He lowered his lips to hers.

Julianne melted into his arms, even though she knew it wasn't a good idea, and she kissed him back. But the last thing she wanted was to get in-between him and his growing popularity. She broke the kiss, despite the fact she so desperately loved being so close to him.

"What was so important that Kropopulous had to take you away? And by the way, I saw him put his hands on your butt."

Julianne bristled. "He wanted to talk about the movie. Shooting starts in two weeks."

"Two weeks?"

"Yeah. I said the same thing. As for his hands, I hope you saw I promptly removed them."

"Do you want me to beat up the creep?"

"No. It wouldn't look good. Anyway, what took you so long to get here?" She led him over to a bench.

"I got mobbed."

"What?"

"It's like someone told the world I'd be attending this party. I stepped out of my house and there were dozens of women lining the driveway. Cars followed the limousine all the way here. You should have seen it. It was like I had just ended a concert. Luckily, my driver had sense enough to call and get me some security. Hell, there's even media outside snapping pictures."

Julianne remembered the ruckus when he arrived. "You think Kropopulous had something to do with it?"

"It's a possibility. Call it free publicity."

"How do you feel about it?"

"I don't like that side of the business. I know these people buy my records, but I like my privacy." He pulled her closer and nuzzled her neck. "I don't want anyone peeping in my window while I'm doing wild and lascivious things to you."

Julianne chuckled. "I don't think you have to worry about that. Your mansion is up a very steep hill, and only a fool would attempt to look through your bedroom window."

"I have an idea. How's about you and me leaving the party and going back to my place to experiment?"

Julianne looked around. "How can we leave without seeming rude?"

"Rude is my middle name, remember? We showed up, ate his food and socialised. I think we've done all we were expected to do." He took her hand and lifted her from the bench.

"What if he wants to talk to you?"

"Then, he has to make an appointment with my manager. Right now, I'm game for some under-the-sheet manoeuvres."

Julianne blushed and followed him, wondering how they could sneak out of the house without being noticed. Life was never easy. They made it out the door and ran smack dab into the arms of the waiting paparazzi and a flock of fans. Ten minutes later, the two limousines zoomed through the quiet Los Angeles neighbourhood. Julianne's driver pulled over on the side of the road. Julianne got out and hopped into Cam's car. Her driver left, and Cam's driver headed to his mansion. An hour later, she was immersed in a hot tub, being lovingly bathed by a very turned-on rock singer.

Chapter Six

"Have you heard from Cameron?" Abigail asked Julianne as she entered the office carrying two steaming hot cups of coffee and a box of doughnuts. She placed one cup in front of Julianne and kept the other. She sat down and placed napkins in front of both of them.

Julianne selected a crème-filled doughnut. "Not lately." He had been in Germany on a shoot for two months, and communications between them were scarce. He had left shortly after the Christmas holidays.

"You look awful."

Julianne stopped chewing. Abigail could be so blunt.

"Are you sick?"

Julianne shrugged. "I don't know. I woke up feeling like crap yesterday, and I still feel crappy today."

"Maybe you're coming down with the flu. You need to take better care of yourself."

Besides being her assistant, Abigail was also a nag. "Maybe you're right." She didn't have a fever or the sniffles. Her stomach felt queasy, as if she'd eaten something that didn't agree with her. It didn't stop her from devouring the doughnuts, though. "I'll make a doctor's appointment later."

"Make sure you do. I can't have you giving me any germs."

Julianne chuckled. "You're probably contaminated already." She selected another pastry. "These things are so good."

"And so fattening." Abigail took another one. "I could eat these all day."

"Eating a dozen of these won't make you fat, but I bet I'll gain a pound or two. The older I get, the harder it is for me to lose the weight." She wanted another doughnut, but fought the temptation. "I need to go on a diet. I think I've gained five pounds in the last month, with all the parties and socialising."

Abigail put her doughnut down. "Five pounds?"

Julianne nodded. "Everything I own is getting tight. Maybe I should try aerobics."

"Maybe you should try a pregnancy kit."

Julianne's heart shot to the bottom of her shoes. "Huh?"

"Maybe you're pregnant. You have all the symptoms."

Julianne laughed nervously. "No way. I'm forty-two years old."

"And you still have a period."

"Get out of here! What would I do with a baby?"

"The same thing all other mothers do."

Julianne reached for another donut. "I'm not pregnant. I just have an eating disorder."

"Cameron is going to flip."

Julianne stopped eating and dropped the donut.

"What's wrong?"

"I think I'm going to be sick." She hopped off the chair and ran down the hall to the executive restroom. Moments later she returned, feeling like someone had snatched the rug out from under her.

"I've already made the appointment for you. It's tomorrow morning at nine."

"I am not pregnant," Julianne insisted. Her stomach rumbled and she ran out of the room again.

* * * *

"What am I going to do?" Julianne dangled a prescription for prenatal vitamins from her fingers.

Abigail took the prescription from her and handed it to the pharmacist. "You're going to survive."

"I won't for long once Cameron finds out."

Abigail led her hysterical friend over to a chair. "Have you ever discussed having kids with him?"

"No. Why would I?"

"Then, how do you know he doesn't want any?"

"I'll be sixty-one by the time this baby graduates from high school."

"Just look at it in a positive way. When this child has a child, you'll be too old to babysit."

"Not helping. I'll probably be dead by then."

"Plenty of women have babies later in life, especially movie actresses and models."

"Of which I am neither. I'm a rock manager and promoter. I handle bad boy bands. Oh, my life is so going to change." She moaned and dropped her head into her hands.

Abigail patted her shoulder. "In a good way. It's time you settled down and took some time off. It isn't healthy, hopping on tour buses and travelling around so much."

"It's my livelihood."

"You're already rich. Now is the time to enjoy some of that money."

She groaned. "The media is going to have a field day when they find out. Look what they did with those photos of Cameron and me leaving Kropopulous's party."

"You survived that."

"I can just see it now. Old biddy gets pregnant by hot young rocker."

"It could be worse. Old biddy gets pregnant by hot young rocker who doesn't love her."

Julianne giggled between sobs. "You're so cruel."

The pharmacist called Julianne's name and Abigail got up and paid for the prescription. She handed the bag to Julianne. "It's time to go home and figure out what you're going to say to Cameron."

"He won't be home for months. He's still on the shoot."

"I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but he called earlier while you were in the examination room. They're moving faster than they expected. He'll be home in three weeks."

"Three weeks?" Julianne screamed as Abigail led her out of the drug store. "That doesn't give me much time to prepare. I hope I don't gain any more weight."

* * * *

Julianne sat in front of her television, dressed in a pair of pyjamas and eating a pint of orange sherbet while waiting for the entertainment news show to begin. She'd got word a reporter was doing a feature on Cameron, and she would be less than a manager if she missed it. After watching a few minutes of scandalous stories, the show went to commercial. Julianne got up and went to use the toilet and then hurried back. She turned up the sound as

the story on Cameron began. She reached over, grabbed a chocolate chip cookie from a plate and bit into it.

Cameron appeared on the screen, looking a bit scruffy with a beard and moustache and dressed in a pair of jeans and a plaid shirt. His gorgeous hair was hidden beneath a cap. The cameraman had captured him coming through an airport lobby, dragging a suitcase with one hand and holding the hand of a dark-haired beauty with the other. Julianne stopped in mid-chew. "Who the hell is that?"

She never heard anything else except the woman's name, Misty something-or-other and the words, 'Cameron Justice's newest girlfriend'. She looked down at her expanding belly, feeling like a fool, and very angry. While she was in Los Angeles trying to hide her middle under bigger clothes, he was in Germany rubbing bellies with some big-breasted hottie.

Her telephone rang. "Hello?" It was Abigail.

"Now, don't jump to conclusions."

"Oh, I'm not. I can see it for myself."

"It's just a news report. It could be a publicity stunt."

"It didn't look that way to me. He looked embarrassed to be caught on camera, but there was no doubt he was holding her hand."

"Don't do anything foolish."

"Give me more credit than that, Abby."

"Don't kill him."

"That, more than likely, would be out of my control."

"When is he due back?"

"Tomorrow, I think."

"Then, take the rest of the night to calm yourself and figure out what you're going to do."

Julianne scowled. "He just made the decision for me. There's no way I'm having this baby."

"You're not thinking rationally. Of course you're having this baby. You're nearly four months pregnant."

"I don't care," she whispered, trying to stifle a sob. "There's no way I can do this on my own."

“Don’t give up. Talk to Cameron first and then decide.”

Julianne promised she would and got off the phone. She reached for her pint of sherbet and finished it off, and then stormed off to her bedroom. She’d talk to him, all right. And after she talked to him, she was going to kill him.

Chapter Seven

Cameron tossed his suitcases into a closet in the downstairs foyer and then walked into the kitchen to fix himself something to eat. He was tired and had had a long flight back to the United States, and all he wanted to do was eat and relax. He opened the refrigerator and smiled. Abigail had stocked it with a variety of sandwich meats and microwaveable meals. There was fresh lettuce and tomatoes sliced the way he like them in containers, and his favourite mayonnaise and brown mustard sat next to them. He retrieved the fixings and placed them on the counter next to a loaf of freshly baked bread. He turned on a portable television and listened to the news while he prepared himself a Dagwood-style sandwich. Once he finished, he grabbed a bottle of cold beer from the refrigerator and a bag of plain chips to accompany the meal. He hopped up on a barstool next at the kitchen island. He had missed the regular news, but was in time for the entertainment news show.

Cameron bit into the sandwich, chewed and adjusted the volume on the television. The breaking story was about him. Cameron nearly choked as he watched himself leaving an airport in Germany with his co-star Misty Jupiter. He remembered that day. Misty hadn't been feeling well and he was seeing her on and off the plane to make sure she'd be okay. Her husband Ramon was meeting her, and they were flying off to visit his folks in New York. The reporters had startled them when they exited, and hadn't given them a chance to explain. He hadn't thought about it much, since he hadn't realised it would make headlines or the news in America.

Boy, was he wrong. He hoped Julianne was asleep and not watching. Damn, and he'd planned to call her just as soon as he took a bath and got comfortable. "Maybe I shouldn't," he muttered. He finished the sandwich, ran upstairs and took a shower. He opted instead to go over to her home and beg for mercy. If he grovelled enough, he might pull it off.

* * * *

Cameron knew she'd be mad, but he didn't expect a vase to come flying past his head when he entered Julianne's mansion. "Wait, I can explain, Julie."

"No, you can't, and stop calling me Julie."

She was dressed in a pair of royal blue silk pyjamas and barefoot. Her breasts jiggled beneath the fine material, large and in charge. Boy, he didn't know how much he'd missed her until she'd opened that door, breathing fire. Luckily for him, Abigail had called him on his cell-phone before he reached the mansion and told him Julianne had seen the newscast. He explained what had happened with Misty, and Abigail understood. But he wasn't sleeping with Abigail, and Abigail didn't have Julianne's fiery temper.

Julianne looked around for something else to pitch. Her eyes landed on an expensive decanter.

"Don't!" Cameron shouted. "That thing cost a fortune."

Julianne looked at it and put it down. She opted instead for a glass ashtray. It narrowly missed him.

"Will you calm down and let me explain?"

"What's to explain, Cam? I saw it with my own eyes. You've been cheating on me with some big-breasted bitch."

"No, I haven't. Misty is my co-star in the movie, and to be fair, your breasts are bigger than hers."

"How do you know that unless you've been under her bra?"

Cameron shook his head. He didn't know she cared enough to be so upset. "I'm not having an affair with Misty. She got sick on the plane and I was helping her out of the airport. God, she was about to pass out. I couldn't let her wander around like that."

Julianne leaned against the sofa. "Sure, tell me another one."

"Her husband was waiting for her when we landed. I turned her over to him." She was beautiful, even in over-sized pyjamas. Her auburn hair had grown longer and her face was fuller.

"Please believe me, Julie. I would never cheat on you."

Julianne stomped past him and walked to the kitchen. He followed at a safe distance, hoping there were no vases in the vicinity. He sat down at the bar while she poured herself a glass of milk. Funny, he'd never seen her drink milk before. She finished off the glass and

wiped away a milk moustache. Then, she flopped down in a chair at the table, looking tired and still pissed. "You say you'd never cheat, but how can I be sure some pretty young thing won't come along and tempt you?"

"You can't, and neither can I, for that matter. All I know is since we've been together, I've never even looked at another woman."

Julianne reached for a banana and peeled it, still not saying a word to him. The sight of her gently putting the tip of the banana in her mouth drove him crazy. His penis stirred. It had been months since they'd been together, and he'd come in his pants if she didn't stop it. She polished off the banana, burped daintily and then stared at him.

"Why didn't you call me more often?"

"We were on location in some pretty far-out places. We could barely get the equipment to function, let alone find a phone signal."

She mumbled something incoherent.

"I've missed you."

"Don't suck up, Cam, I'm still angry."

"Why? I explained what happened. You know how reporters take a story and run with it."

"Yes, you've explained this time, but what about the next? Am I to worry about you every time you leave the country?"

"You just have to trust me." He stepped off the barstool, walked over and put his hands on her shoulders.

Julianne shook them off. "I don't know if I can. Look at you, you're so gorgeous and you smell divine, and you're..."

"Horny as hell."

Julianne rolled her eyes at him. "I'll bet. You probably had a bevy of beautiful young women servicing you from the moment the plane touched down in Germany."

Cameron chuckled. "No, and for a good reason. I knew how you'd react if you found out."

"So, you'd have let them suck on your cock if you didn't think I'd find out?"

"That's low, even for you, Julie. Of course not. I've told you a million times before, I want you and only you." He snatched her up off the seat and pressed her body against his. "I'm hard, and you feel so good, I might come in my pants," he murmured into her ear.

Julianne pulled away from him and headed towards the kitchen door.

"Where are you going?"

"Upstairs. I'm tired and I need to pee."

Cameron followed her out of the kitchen, up the stairs and into her bedroom. He looked around as she slipped into the bathroom to relieve her bladder. She had redecorated and purchased a larger bed. He liked the way she mixed blues, tans and yellows. It gave the room a homier feel. There were even doilies on the dresser...beneath some prescription medicine. Had she been ill while he was away? Julianne came out of the restroom. Funny, she didn't look sick; in fact, she glowed.

"What are you looking at?" She climbed up on the bed.

"You. I was just thinking how beautiful you've grown since I left." He took off his jacket and shoes and climbed on the bed next to her, then pulled her into his arms.

"You're just trying to cheer me up. I've gained a couple of pounds since you left. Abigail keeps bringing donuts to the office."

Cameron chuckled. "The extra weight looks good. I like a woman I can hold onto." He ran his fingers down the front of her pyjama top and began to slip the buttons through the buttonholes. Julianne's bare breasts appeared. He lowered his head. "I missed these." He captured a nipple in his teeth. Was it his imagination, or were her breasts bigger? No, they couldn't be. He released the nipple and looked her over again. Yes, they were bigger...nearly the size of grapefruits. He liked them. He gently lowered her to her back and went back to work on her nipples.

"Ow!"

Cameron released the nipple. "Is something wrong?"

"They're so sensitive."

Drat. It must be close to her time of the month. He wasn't opposed to doing it during that time, but it could get messy. "Are you on your cycle?"

She snorted. "No."

"Good." He lowered his head again, licking the nipples and continuing down her sternum. She was a little fuller in the midsection, too. He'd tease her about it later, once he had satisfied her. He crawled down to her feet and slipped the pyjama bottoms down and off. Her skimpy white panties followed. He removed his shirt before going down on her.

Julianne gasped above him as his tongue entered her. That was a good sign. At least she wasn't fighting him. Julianne relaxed, allowing him the chance to make love to her with his mouth. She tasted so sweet and feminine. The pink hue of her womanhood had darkened and looked rosier than he remembered. He introduced a finger inside of her and Julianne clamped her legs around his head. "I need to breathe, Julie."

"Sorry."

She relaxed again. He worked his finger inside of her. Julie moaned. "Oh, that feels so good. You have magic fingers."

He introduced another one. She got wet quickly. He removed the fingers and lowered his head again, tickling her clitoris with his tongue. "You taste like honey."

Julianne giggled.

He flicked his tongue to bring her clitoris to life. It budded thick beneath its cover. That was the sign he needed. Julianne was aroused. Normally, he would have brought her to climax this way, but he wanted to be deep inside her when she came. He got off the bed long enough to shed his clothes and then crawled between her legs. He was like a randy teen, impatient. He needed to be inside. Cameron raised her right leg and pushed into her. He had his lips pressed against hers before she could gasp again. They sighed together as they found their rhythm.

"Go deeper, Cam," she said as she rolled her hips against him. "I want you so deep."

Cameron complied, pulling out first and sinking back into her with a mighty thrust. Julianne clawed at his back, marking him as hers. He strained, trying not to ejaculate too quickly, but Julianne was working her magic on him. That's what he liked about her. Julianne wasn't shy when it came to sex, and she enjoyed it just as much as he did. Maybe even more, he guessed, by the way she humped against him. "Let me help you out." He slipped out of her, flipped her over and then entered her from behind.

"Oh, God, Cam, I've missed you so much."

She was insatiable. Rocking back on him, she took him in so deeply, it boggled his mind. "I've missed you, too, darling, but if you don't stop grinding so hard against me, I'm going to blow."

Julianne slowed her roll. "Youngster."

Cameron took control, locking his ankles around hers so she couldn't move. He slipped out and then pushed his way back inside her. Julianne's body shook.

"Oh, oh."

He repeated the action. This time, he was rewarded with a gusher.

"Damn, Cam, I'm coming." Her body trembled and shook beneath his.

Cameron continued to stroke her deeply until he felt his own orgasm leave his balls. He trembled and shot deep inside her. Their bodies meshed together and slid down onto the mattress. Cameron kissed the back of her head. "I'm empty." He rolled off her backside and Julianne turned over on her back.

"I'm full," she replied.

Cameron laughed and pulled into her arms. He kissed her on the cheek and then dozed off.

* * * *

Julianne looked down at Cameron's sleeping form as she climbed off the bed to use the toilet. Having to urinate so often was going to put a damper on her lifestyle. Cameron was still snoring peacefully when she returned. She sat down on the rocker and watched him instead of disturbing him. He needed his rest after flying all day. He looked like a little boy as he slept, and it made her wonder if their child would favour him or her. She'd love to have a little boy with Cameron's blond hair and baby blue eyes, and he would be a big one since his father was over six feet tall and ruggedly built. Or, it could be a little girl with her auburn hair and his blue eyes. Of course, she would be spoilt and probably want to play guitar in her father's band.

Julianne continued to watch him long into the night, not quite sure how she was going to find the words to tell him she was pregnant. But if she waited any longer, she wouldn't have to say a word because he'd be able to see it for himself. Tonight, they had made love by

the dim, flickering light of the television. But sooner or later, he'd get a good look at her, see how full her breasts were and see the rise below her navel. She wondered idly when her belly button would poke out of its little cushiony hole.

"What are you doing?"

Julianne looked over. Cameron was looking at her. "Watching you sleep."

"Is my snoring keeping you awake?"

"No, it's not so bad. I just can't sleep."

"Are you still angry at me?"

"No."

"Then, come back to bed."

Julianne rose and walked back over to the bed. Cameron watched with interested eyes. He lifted the covers. He was hard again. Smiling, Julianne climbed atop him and sank down on his penis. This time, the sex was slowly and endearing. He was harder and thicker than the previous time.

"Your body is so warm." Cam brought himself up to a seated position while she rode him.

Julianne wrapped her arms around his neck and lowered her head to kiss him. His lips were soft and tender. His tongue parted her lips, and darted inside to explore. Sweat rolled from both their bodies as they moved slowly and erotically to the pace of their hearts. An orgasm roared from deep inside her, but wouldn't come up to the surface. She panted as he ran his hands up and down her back. He cupped her buttocks and drew her in closer, then used his hands to move her lower body up and down on his length. "I've never been this hard before. You bring out the best in me."

"Ah." That was close. She went back to kissing him.

"I love you, Julie."

"Huh? Ooh." She lost her concentration.

"I said I love you."

"I love you, too." She tightened her pelvic muscles and drew him in deeper. His admission touched her deeply.

"No, I really mean it." He rolled her over on her back and began pumping his hips quickly.

Julianne held on for dear life as he unleashed his lust on her. "Oh, Julie, marry me." His body shook as he raised her legs and plunged inside her one last time.

Julianne's body opened not only to receive his cum, but to orgasm as well. "Have you lost your mind?"

Cameron rode out the orgasm and then pulled out of her, panting deeply. "No, why would you ask that?"

"You just proposed to me during orgasm."

He stroked her cheek. "That's when it came to me. At that moment, I knew I want to share the rest of my life with you."

Julianne nestled down next to him. "Maybe you'll change your mind after I tell you something."

"What can you possibly tell me that would make me change my mind?"

Julianne rose up on an elbow and looked at him. "I'm pregnant, and you're going to be a father."

Chapter Eight

Abigail was wrong about Cameron Justice never being silent about anything. Cameron was knocked speechless, and for a very long time. "You're what?" he sputtered at last.

"Pregnant."

He jumped out of the bed and turned on the light. "Seriously?"

Julianne nodded. "We're going to have a baby."

He jumped up on the bed and did a little dance. Then, he flopped down beside her and pulled her into his arms.

"Should I take that little dance routine as a sign that you're excited?"

"You bet. You've made me the happiest man in the world." He kissed her. "How do you know? Have you been to a doctor?"

"Yes. Abigail dragged me to one a couple of months ago."

"You've known that long? Why didn't you call me and tell me?"

"Because I was afraid."

"Afraid of what?"

"That you wouldn't be happy about the baby."

"God, I knew there was something different about you when I saw you. Your hair is so thick and long, and your body is rocking." He stroked one of her breasts. "I knew they were larger."

"I'm afraid they're going to get bigger, along with the rest of me."

Cameron lowered his mouth to her belly and kissed it. "You're showing. How come I didn't notice that before?"

"Because you were too busy ducking vases and ashtrays."

He sat up, but kept his hands on her belly. "You said you found out a couple of months ago. I've been gone nearly three months. That would make you..."

"Four months pregnant. I think it happened the first time we were together."

"What did you do when you found out?"

Julie grinned. "I cried hysterically. Abby has been wonderful through all of this. She makes sure I eat, and drink plenty of milk. She even takes me for walks."

"She'll be the godmother. I insist."

"Our entire life is about to change," she warned him.

"For the better. I can't wait to tell my folks! They've been waiting years to hear this type of news from me."

"Your folks? Oh, my god, what will they think? They'll know we've been intimate."

Cameron chuckled. "My folks have known for years how I feel about you. They've probably figured out that we've made love by now. I think they suspected when we returned from my cabin. I had a big, stupid grin on my face."

Julianne punched him on the arm. "I bet they did. No wonder they didn't fuss when we drove away."

"I think we need to fly home and tell them."

"Yes."

"Yes, you think it's a good idea?"

"No. Yes, I'll marry you."

Cameron pushed her down on the mattress and kissed her. "You'll never regret it, Julie. I'll make you a good husband, and I will cherish every moment we have together."

* * * *

"He proposed to you?" Abigail stared down at the diamond ring on Julianne's finger.

"Yes, we were right in the middle of the hottest sex in the world, and the next thing I knew, he proposed."

"Ooh, I'm so excited for you. Have you told him about the baby yet?"

"Yes, and he's ecstatic."

"I told you he would be. When's the big day?"

"In a month or so. We're flying to his home to tell his parents, and then we'll have a little ceremony there. You will come, won't you?"

Abigail hugged her again. "Of course I will."

"Good. Then you can be my matron of honour, as well as the baby's godmother. Cameron insists on it."

"I'm so excited for you. When did he have time to buy a ring?"

Julianne giggled. "This morning. We were at the jeweller's door when it opened."

"It's gorgeous."

"He wanted to buy me something bigger, but I refused. I've never seen him so excited."

"So, you still think age matters?"

"No, not anymore." She shook her head. "We make each other happy."

"See, I told you. Age is just a number."

Cameron entered the room and Abigail bounded over and hugged him. "Congratulations, Daddy."

Cameron picked her up and swung her around. Abigail giggled like a little girl. Then, he lowered her gently to her feet. "We're going to have a baby. Can you believe it?"

"Yes. I took her to the doctor. She sobbed when she found out."

Cameron chuckled. "Just be thankful for that. She pitched a vase at my head last night."

"Lucky for you, she missed. I wouldn't want to be the one to explain to the media how you got banged up."

Julianne interrupted them. "Speaking of the media, how are we going to break it to them?"

"We won't," Cameron said. "If they find out, fine. I don't think they'll follow us to Kidder Township."

"Have you told Kropopulous yet?" Abigail asked.

"No. He'll find out like everyone else. We'll have a nice, private little wedding, followed by a small reception."

"Are you two going on a honeymoon?"

Julianne shrugged. "I don't think that's necessary. We're going to be in Kidder Township in a home Cam owns there. It's private and quaint."

"Pierre and I went to Disney World. He was like a great big kid."

"When are the two of you going to start a family?" Cameron asked.

"Two months after you."

Julianne screamed. "You're pregnant?"

Abigail nodded. "I've been eating donuts in bed every night. Pierre is so excited. He wanted to tell you right away, but I wanted to wait until you told Cameron."

Julianne hugged her best friend. "They'll have play dates."

Abigail squealed. "We get to shop at Baby Gap!"

Chapter Nine

Julianne made a beautiful bride. After the ceremony, Cameron stood in the corner of the sanctuary with his brother and several other male relatives, while the womenfolk giggled and talked with Julianne. Her dress had been created for her by one of her designer friends in London. It was short, and did a fair job of hiding her growing abdomen. His mother had been crying since they told her about the baby, and it didn't appear she'd stop any time soon. His father had given Cameron one of those long, fatherly talks about loving and caring for a family, and his brother had thrown him one hell of a bachelor's party where he and Pierre got astoundingly drunk. Both of them had sobered up in time to watch Julianne walk down the aisle of the church he grew up attending. The church was filled to capacity with friends and neighbours he'd known all his life, and a few of Julianne's she'd decided to share her secret with.

They were both surprised to find the media and newspaper people waiting when they stepped outside the church. They decided to ignore them and not make a scene, but it was hard to ignore the helicopters flying overhead and the hundreds of camera flashes going off in their faces everywhere they turned. They barely made it into the high school gymnasium for the wedding reception before another horde of cameramen arrived.

They had one dance, cut the cake, and then went their separate ways. The women of his family didn't give Julianne a minute's peace, telling her tales about his childhood, and giving her advice on child-rearing. If she were upset, Julianne had too much class to let it show. But he had a feeling she appreciated the kind words and advice, since she didn't have any family of her own. He planned to change all that. They were both still young, so he figured they were up to making another baby or two. He'd discuss it with her later, after she'd left the hospital and was back on her feet.

He looked forward to the next four months. His mother was trying to talk her into having natural childbirth, but Julianne informed them she'd ask for drugs the moment her water broke. Cameron grinned. He planned to be right there to cut the cord.

Julianne looked over at him and smiled. He wondered if she had read his mind. Then, he looked down at his watch. In less than two hours, they'd be on their honeymoon. The womenfolk had cleaned up his place, and he couldn't wait to pick her up in his arms and carry her over the threshold, strip her naked and make love to her.

His cell phone rang. It was Kropopulous. "Yes, it's true," Cameron said to the inevitable question. "Yes, she's going to have a baby. No, that doesn't mean she's still on the market. In fact, I just married her." Cameron disconnected. He decided not to tell Julianne about that little conversation. It was best to let her think that Kropopulous still didn't know about the marriage or the baby.

Julianne walked over to him once she got away from his relatives. "I feel like dancing, Mr. Jones."

Cameron bowed. "My pleasure, Mrs. Jones." He motioned for his band to play something. They chose a fast number, so he could demonstrate his fancy dance steps.

Julianne giggled as she tried to keep up with him. "Those hips are lethal."

"You should see them without the pants." He pulled her into his arms. "I love you, Julie."

"I love you too, Cam, and I've never been happier." She let her hands slide down to his hips. "Just so long as you remember that these—and everything they're attached to—are mine."

"No problem," he murmured into her ear. "You are all the woman I'll ever want." And he swept her out onto the dance floor and into happily ever after.

About the Author

Imari Jade was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. She is the mother of three grown sons and six grandchildren. Imari has been writing over twenty years. When the kids were younger she wrote and sold humorous articles on child-rearing and later turned to penning short stories, particularly horror. Then one day she decided to try romance. Her first erotic novel 'A Christmas to Remember' was published by Star Dust Press and Imari never looked back. Currently Imari writes for several publishers including Midnight Showcase Fiction, Sugar and Spice Press, Eternal Press and Carnal Desires Publishing and has just signed on with Moongypsy Press. She is also looking forward to a good writing relationship with Total-E-bound and getting to know the readers and fans.

Imari is an avid romance reader. Her favourite genre is paranormal romance and she has a thing for vampires and werewolves. She is a Buffy the Vampire Slayer fanatic and was totally depressed when the series ended. When she's not reading or writing Imari spends her time watching Japanese anime. The romantic ones are her favourite and she's also has a pretty extensive collection she hopes to pass down to her grandchildren.

Email: imarijade@yahoo.com

Imari loves to hear from readers. You can find her contact information, website and author biography at <http://www.total-e-bound.com>.

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