



BELONGING  
TO *Them*

DALY WAY

BRYNN PAULIN

# *Belonging to Them*

*A Daly Way Story*

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*To the Letter Q and the Number 4*

## Chapter One

“Ma’am, to tell you the truth, I really don’t know how that car got you this far.”

Rayna Halliday bit her lip and listened to the darkly handsome man on the other side of the garage’s service counter as he explained her sedan’s problems in Irish-accented car-speak. She’d stopped for gas in this little dirt farm town two hours ago, and her car had refused to stay running for more than a few minutes afterward. She’d made it three feet before a huge plume of white smoke had billowed from the tailpipe, and the car had sputtered to a teeth-rattling stop.

Fortunately, the gas station was part of the town’s only car repair place, O’Keefe’s Gas and Repair. Two of the men had immediately come outside and offered to take a look. The third, this one with the embroidered nametag proclaiming him to be “Patrick” had given her a voucher and sent her across the street to the town’s diner for coffee and pie while they determined her vehicle’s problem.

She’d known it wasn’t good. She’d been babying the thing for over a week. Stopping to get it fixed just wasn’t a luxury she had.

“The head’s shot,” Patrick said. “Ye have three belts about to bust, your radiator’s leaking, so are the brake lines, your transmission and your oil—in several places. And that’s not the worst, actually. Your fuel well is leaking, as well. Onto your muffler. To tell the truth, you’re lucky ye haven’t blown yourself up. And if ye don’t mind me sayin’, what the hell have ye been doin’? Drivin’ across land mines. Your car’s undercarriage is a wreck.”

She smiled wanly and pushed her hand through her bangs as she sighed. “Well, crap. It shakes like crazy getting to second gear, so you might as well add that.”

“Might have somethin’ to do with the leak,” he said.

Dread balled in her stomach. The bill would be huge. She had the money—it wasn’t that—but accessing it would alert *him* and she hadn’t gotten this far to send up a flag that yelled *here I am!* Unfortunately, she didn’t have much choice.

"How much?" she asked.

"I still have to add it up. Frankly, I wasn't sure you'd want to do all the work on such an old model. Off hand, I can guess close to four."

"Hundred?" That was doable. She had that much with her.

"Thousand."

"Okay..." Well, fuck. She'd driven clear across the country only to tell that rat bastard in North Carolina exactly where she was.

"Since the repairs are so extensive, I'll need to bill for the major parts before the work, then charge incidentals and labor afterward."

"You take MasterCard?" She tapped a red-lacquered nail on the counter until she noticed it was chipped and hid her hand in her pocket. Oh how the pampered had fallen. Oh well. A few more days and she'd be back in the seat of luxury and safe from *him*.

Flipping the card from her wallet, she slid it across the counter at Patrick. Hopefully, they'd get the repairs done quickly and she could get out of here before her jerk ex came trotting after her.

Patrick made a face and twirled the credit card through his fingers as he looked at the machine in front of him. "Um, ma'am, ye have another card? This one's declined."

"What? That can't... Are you sure?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She knew immediately what the problem was. The jackass had messed with her account. Snake. And since he was a bigwig at the bank, he could get away with it even though it wasn't his account. She pulled out her cell phone. Hopefully, she could get someone on the line who was enough under the radar to sort this out.

Flipping open the phone, she glanced at the screen and swore. "God *damn* it! God damn it. God damn his slimy soul to *hell*!" Shaking with anger, she snapped shut the useless thing, cursing a blue stream under her breath at the *invalid SIM card* message she'd read. He'd gotten her phone shut off. That *jerk* had shut off her phone! Reining in the need to start crying, she bit out, "I'll be right back," and slammed out the front door.

Through the mirrored window behind the desk, Jamie O'Keefe watched his brother, Patrick, and the little ball of energy who owned that piece of crap car. She could possibly be the most beautiful woman he'd ever seen. Her glossy brown hair hung in sleek waves to her waist and

her brown eyes flashed as the gravity of her situation settled in. Her mouth-watering curves moved in all the right places as she stomped away and around the building to the back where trees lined the edge of the property. There was no mistaking she was incensed—genuinely shocked and infuriated.

There was also no mistaking she was the most gorgeous thing to ever hit the little berg of Daly. And he wanted her. He wanted her like he'd never wanted a woman. But his days of getting females like her were long over. He might as well give up that dream and forget she'd ever breezed through town.

The door from the waiting area to the garage was open as were the bay doors. As he walked up front, he clearly heard her outraged scream followed by, "Shit! Jackass! Shit!"

Though her distress concerned him, he couldn't help but smile at her apparent belief that going behind the building would shield the entire town from her fit.

"What. Is. *That*?" he laughed.

His cousins, David and Sean, came to the doorway of the garage. Sean wiped his hands on a cloth while David held a Coke in his grimy fingers.

"Yes, what is that?" Sean repeated.

Patrick tapped the woman's credit card on the counter. "I think *she's* a woman running from trouble, and I think she might just be our fifth," he said, dropping into his normal, slightly accented English rather the brogue he tended to use when charming customers.

"No, Trick," Jamie protested, dread settling in his gut. He was mostly feeling normal again. He didn't need to be in a ménage situation with a beautiful woman, his perfect brother and his even more perfect cousins. "Perhaps, she's your *fourth*, but I'm out."

Patrick eyed him, taking in the scarred face and arm Jamie wished he could hide. Mercifully, his brother's eyes didn't fall to his prosthetic leg.

"You're being stupid," Patrick said.

"No. Just no. Why should I open myself up to that?" Jamie demanded as Sean and David wisely returned to the garage.

"Because," Patrick replied. "There isn't a woman in this town who isn't already attached, and if you don't want your cock to shrivel up and fall off, you need to give it some action besides lotion and your hand."

Jamie glared at him and returned to the back office to finish updating the books.



"Jay..." Trick called, following him. He was cut off by the sound of the bell over the door. Safe in the office, Jamie looked through the mirrored window to see the dream woman re-enter the shop. His brother turned and gave him a wink.

Jamie's fist ground into the papers on the desk. Damn him. He was going to do this, and he'd attempt to rope Jamie into it, too. Well, Jamie had news for his older brother. He could force the issue as much as he wanted, but the younger brother wasn't gonna play.

Heat flushed Rayna's cheeks as she walked into the reception area of the garage. She wasn't prone to fits, but this situation had utterly shoved her over the edge.

"I'm sorry," she said. She drew in a breath, forcing back the urge to cry. She'd do that later, in bed, once she found a place to sleep. "I'm just a little overwhelmed. Look, um, I have the money for the repairs. It's just a matter of accessing it. Though at the moment... I don't suppose you have a shop for my cell phone provider in town." She gave the service name and watched in dismay as Patrick slowly shook his head. "I have some cash on me. Do you have a hotel around here?"

"Nearest is in the city, about an hour from here."

"A bed and breakfast? Campground? A cave," she added impatiently when he kept shaking his head. "All right...um. Is there a bank? Somewhere that I can get about forty dollars in quarters? Then a payphone."

"No."

"For Pete's sake! What the hell does this place have?" She held up her hand. "Sorry. Look, um... Is there someone who can drive me and my stuff into the city? Maybe I can get a bus ticket or something there."

"What about your car?"

"I can send you money to fix it then have one of my cousins come and get it."

He crossed his arms on the counter and leaned forward. She swallowed as his deep green eyes studied her. A faint streak of grease colored one cheekbone. Apparently, he'd tried to wipe it off at some point but hadn't gotten it completely. Somehow, it only emphasized his fine bone structure and his black, *black* hair.

Despite her awful situation, her mouth watered. At another time, she might have considered exploring the spark of invitation in his eyes. And man... His navy shop shirt and pants hugged a frame that made her puny, pencil-pushing jerk of an ex look sickly. A little shiver went

through her at the sight of his massive, rough-looking hands spanning his elbows as he rested there.

“Why don’t you stay?” he said simply.

“But there’s nowhere—”

“At our place. We have room. That Victorian over there.”

She turned to glance where he pointed. Room? The place was massive. “You should have a bed and breakfast there,” she murmured, looking back at him.

“No one to run one. My cousins, my brother and I are here most days. There’s four of us O’Keefes.”

“And you’d let me stay with you?” She glanced at the two men who’d joined them. One had blue eyes and an embroidered tag that said “David”. The other, with a tag labeling him as “Sean”, had brown eyes. And man... What did they feed the men around here? They both had similar builds to Patrick, as well as similar looks. They were scruffier, but she guessed that was from working primarily in the garage.

Their hands looked just as rough.

“Of course you can,” Sean replied and David gave a quick nod.

“But there’s a...well, a catch,” Patrick said.

“Okay...” she ventured.

“If you say no, then I’ll arrange a ride for you into the city. But if you say yes, I promise you won’t regret it.”

“Yes, to what?”

Patrick studied her again, and she sensed he was gauging her reaction to whatever he was about to propose. “For whatever reason,” he started, “Daly is a little one-sided on gender.”

“All men,” Sean injected. He shoved Patrick’s shoulder. “Stop being such a girl and just say it. Or I will, if you want.”

Patrick shot him a glare, sighed and refocused on Rayna. “Stay here for a week, free of room and board. We’ll fix your car. But in return, you’ll belong to us for that time.”

Her chin lowered and her head tilted slightly. “Excuse me?”

She couldn’t help the way her gaze flitted from one man’s hands to the next. Three sets of hands. Huge. Rough. Her heart pounded in her chest. What would they feel like running over her skin? Suddenly, her panties were damp, and her womb quivered in anticipation though she was sure she’d heard incorrectly.

“There aren’t any unattached women in Daly,” Patrick said. “Most of the women here are in ménages with two or more men—all committed. We’d surely be obliged if you’d stay with us and be ours for the next week. It will give you time to straighten out this mess that’s happened, and if you insist that it will make you feel better to pay us later for the car, you can. But this isn’t about money or services. It’s really about an incredibly beautiful woman who’s taken our fancy and who we’d like to get to know a whole lot better.”

“And fuck,” Sean muttered, and both Patrick and David shoved him.

Despite the outlandish proposal before her and her utter confusion, she had a hard time containing her smile at their antics. Momentarily. Then the weight of it hit her again, and she picked up with Sean’s simple version of things. “You want me to stay here, with you and...fuck you. All of you?”

Why on earth were her insides jumping in anticipation of the idea? What the hell was up with her? She should be running away as fast as she could—and running was all she could do since she was otherwise completely stuck here.

“Um...yes,” Patrick answered.

“And in return, in payment, you’ll fix my car.”

“No,” David said, speaking for the first time. His voice was so low it raked across her already troubled senses and caused her breath to catch. “No, you’d be our girl. Any guy worth anything would see to it that his girl’s car is fixed so she’s safe—he’d even do it himself if he could. And we can.”

“But no emotional entanglements to hang you up,” Patrick added. “Just fun. And pleasure. None of us are ready for permanent. You can drive away from here in a week with a bunch of memories and an experience none of your girlfriends can match.”

“I need to think,” she said.

“Here,” Patrick said, grabbing another coffee and pie voucher from the business card holder next to the cash register.

She shook her head. “I have some cash. I’ll get my own.”

“Yer a stubborn one, aren’t ye?” Patrick said, noticeably dropping into a deeper accent.

“Don’t you use that brogue with me,” she laughed, the mirth lightening the unease. She still had to think, but it was a relief to know she wasn’t as stunned by this as she’d felt at first blush. In fact, aroused was a far better descriptor than stunned to express how she felt at the moment.

Stepping outside, she let the warmth of the spring day settle into her while her mind rattled about in a muddle.

The O'Keefes wanted her to be their lover for the week...

This small town had a short supply of women...

She looked around, recalling what she knew of this area. Not a lot. That didn't stop her tourism gene from kicking in like a defense mechanism. Back east in North Carolina, she'd been a tourism researcher and had helped tons of businesses and small towns like this one build their revenue through attraction. None had been as small as this one, but that didn't make it completely unsalable.

Rather than going to the diner across the street, she walked toward the edge of town—away from the O'Keefes' Victorian—and noted the town's features.

Small. No, quaint. It was the proverbial one-road town—with no stoplight and no stop signs, but the speed limit on whatever road she'd been on had slowed to twenty-five coming into the stretch. She'd left Highway 212 a while ago and gotten promptly lost. *So...this is off the beaten path*, she mentally catalogued. The diner doubled as a grocery store. Well, less grocery than mercantile. She'd seen quite a mix of general merchandise and food. A bar sat next door.

On further inspection, she saw a few small roads branching from the main road, but there weren't any buildings to be seen. She knew this area was big for ranching. The roads probably led to various spreads and probably branched off several times. Not for the first time, she thanked her stars that she hadn't ended up broken down on one of those.

She made it to the end of the walkway and almost laughed at the lack of structures along the way. A house sat at the end of a small drive across from O'Keefe's. A gas station-garage, a diner-grocery, a bar, a police station and a few other buildings she couldn't identify. Definitely a tourism hub, she decided dryly. The bar pointed to there being more than the handful of people she'd seen. Most must work and live at the outlying ranches.

Turning, she crossed the street and headed back. The bell over the door to the restaurant chimed as she went inside. A optimistic number of tables filled the space. She did a quick count—four tables, four booths along the windows, eight stools along the counter. She took a seat in the booth where she'd sipped coffee earlier.

Resting her chin in her hand, she sighed and studied the gingham curtains lining the top of the window. In the reflection she saw a woman come from the kitchen and head for the table. "Welcome back," the woman said in a cheery voice. "That was quick."

"My car is a disaster," Rayna replied. She shifted to look at the blonde woman who was about her age.

"Cars...they're awful, huh." She held out her hand. "I'm Leena. My guys and I own this place and the bar next door."

Leena waited as if expecting some sort of reaction to "guys" but Rayna wasn't surprised at this point. "Patrick mentioned a severe lack of women around here."

"Severe doesn't begin to cover it. Welcome to Daly. Population one-fifty-nine. Women, seven."

"Holy Pete," Rayna whispered.

Leena sat in the booth across from her and set down her order pad. "You look a little shell shocked, and I did hear you scream a little bit ago. You okay?"

"Well, I'm lost. My car's dead. Really dead. My ex-fiancé has managed to get my cell phone turned off and freeze my bank account. And..." Rayna wasn't sure if she should say, this being a small town and all, but since Leena obviously was involved with more than one man, Rayna supposed it wouldn't appall her. "And Patrick just proposed something to me that I'm not sure I should entertain."

"The O'Keefes are as good as men get," Leena told her. "And don't tell my guys I think so, but geez, they have that rough around the edges vibe that's just *hot*."

Rayna smiled. "I noticed that. I'm Rayna Halliday by the way. It's the big and rough around the edged that caught my attention. And well..." She paused, again wondering if it was okay to speak the truth then decided it was entirely possible she'd never see anyone from this town again after this episode. "Well, I've always kinda wondered. What it would be like. You know?"

"I know, sweetie. I'm not going to try to influence you, because it has to be your decision, but I do hope to see you around again. I get a little lonely for girl talk—company in general." She grinned and slid from the booth. "So...can I get you anything. Another coffee and pie?"

Rayna pressed a hand to her stomach. "Gosh, no. It was great, but I'm good for now. Do you have Diet Coke?"

"Sure thing, sweetie. I'll bring it right over." She looked up as three men came into the diner and slid into seats at the counter. They immediately zeroed in on Rayna and made no pretense about staring.

"New around here?" one asked.

"Please, God, say yes," the youngest of the group, who looked in his early twenties, pleaded. "Say yes and unattached."

Leena, who was now behind the counter, swatted the young man's head with a handful of napkins. "Back off, junior. The O'Keefes'."

"Dang," he muttered then tilted his head at Rayna. "Welcome to Daly, ma'am."

"Thank you," she replied as the others echoed him.

"You even sound pretty," he said. "You sure you want those O'Keefes?"

Rayna smiled and looked down at her table as Leena smacked him. So far, Daly was proving to be a nice place. Even discounting "The O'Keefes" and their proposition, the whole place gave her a sense of welcome she wasn't sure she'd ever felt anywhere. Could she belong here? Patrick said just for fun and pleasure, but... If she wasn't with them, was there something else for her here? Not a job. She'd have to find something in the city, but—

God Lord, what was she thinking. Three hours in town and she was considering making it home? Seriously. The place must have some sort of weird hoodoo magic entrancing visitors to stay.

Or maybe it was the lust inducing men.

She bit her lip and glanced out the window at the service station. Sean and David had rolled her car to a carport beside the building and now were cleaning something in one of the bays. Patrick was sweeping the front porch, his hands looking as if they could easily crack the handle of the broom.

What he didn't understand was that he'd made up her mind with a single word. A word that echoed in the emptiness inside her. It was the one thing she'd always wanted. She hadn't felt with her fiancé who'd made her feel inconsequential until she'd left or her family who'd treated her as insignificant and frankly somewhat stupid or at her job where she'd been considered highly competent but replaceable.

Belonging.

With the way Patrick, David and Sean looked at her... Could she chance that feeling then give it up? A hot prickly sensation crawled up her back and her stomach knotted as she considered saying no and heading into the city.

Leena brought her soft drink and Rayna sipped at it, still watching the men go about their business. A few cars came through and one or more of the O'Keefes would come out, pump gas, check the cars' fluids and air levels—full service station, she noted, adding it to her list of the

town's features. As she observed, the sky started to cloud over, threatening rain. To her surprise, she saw a man leave the back room of the garage. It wasn't any of the three men she'd been staring at. They were still tending various tasks.

This fourth man was as large as the other three, but she couldn't tell more. He was huddled in a black hoodie, his face shrouded in shadows and his hands shoved into the pockets. He headed briskly toward the big Victorian, his gait marred by a pronounced limp.

*My cousins, my brother and I are here most days. There's four of us O'Keefes.*

## *Chapter Two*

Holy Pete, there were four of them, not three. How had she missed that when Patrick had clearly said it? Rayna stared after the man. Something about him with his hobble and hunched shoulders drew her. Her heart jarred in her chest as if it had flipped right over at the sight of him.

"It's going to start pouring. Coming?"

She jumped at the voice near her ear. She'd been so consumed in watching the fourth O'Keefe walking down the street that she hadn't realized Patrick had entered the diner. A glance across the street showed the service station completely closed down.

"I need to pay for my drink," she said as she stood, aware everyone was looking at them, including David and Sean who were now outside the window.

"On me," Leena said. "See ya tomorrow, sweetie?"

Rayna looked up at Patrick. "Yeah, I think so."

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath as he swallowed. A shiver ran through her as he leaned to her ear again. "I promise you won't regret it."

Cupping her head, he whispered his mouth across hers. He smelled of the garage—oil, rubber, cars—but his underlying scent of woods and pure man, tantalized her. The whole mixture set her senses afire, drawing her into a miasma of desire she'd never experienced. On a moan, she parted her lips and allowed him to enter. Mint. Oh Lord... Her arms circled his shoulders as he deepened the kiss, drawing her onto her toes and tight to his body.

"Fuck Trick," one of the men groaned. "Do you hafta flaunt what the rest of us can't have."

"Get a room or something," another heckled. "Leena, you get in that shipment of lube."

She felt Patrick chuckle as he pulled from the kiss, still holding her in his iron embrace. "They're all gonna have wet dreams about you tonight, sweetheart. But not me 'cause I'm gonna have you wet and moaning on my cock."

"Oh God..." she whispered.



“Too much?”

“No. Just nervous. I’ve never...”

Never what? Fucked three or four men in a session? Heck, two was beyond her experience, though truth be told, she’d often closed her eyes when her ex had used a vibrator on her and pretended there was a second guy there—one fucking her while the other sucked at her breasts. It had always turned her on and brought her to orgasm. She’d needed the fantasy. Frankly, he hadn’t been that good.

And now, she’d see her illicit thoughts turn to reality.

“It’ll be okay.” Patrick laced his fingers through hers and pulled her outside. Sean and David each kissed her quickly, deeply, and she was again assailed by the scents of the garage as well as their individual male odors. Overall, intoxicating and seductive mixes.

Sean rushed on ahead of them, to open the house he said, while David’s strong fingers enclosed hers. Her belly fluttered at the feel of his calluses against her smooth palms. She wanted to feel them running over her thighs, her belly, most of all her breasts.

Still, with each step, trepidation tightened her stomach and warred with her arousal. She wanted this, she really did, but she was terrified beyond belief. More terrified than when she’d left home for the first time. Even more terrified than she’d been when she’d snuck out of town in the dead of night to escape her ex, Antonio Martinez Smith, who she’d broken off with eight months ago after he’d thrown her into a wall, punched her, then knocked her to the ground and kicked her. She didn’t buy “I’m sorry”. One time, that was it, and she’d been out of there. But he’d continued to stalk and threaten her.

This was a different terror. This was fear that she was doing something stupid. That she’d get attached and they wouldn’t feel the same. That she’d disappoint them. That she’d get hurt emotionally, even if they tried their best to just make this fun.

Sean held the door open when they reached the house. “Welcome to your temporary castle, milady.” He stepped aside, letting her in, and she suddenly felt a bit like Snow White entering the Seven Dwarves home—except these men weren’t even close to dwarves. The house was just as disastrous, and she smiled, knowing how she’d repay them for fixing her car. Apparently, despite the architecture, the proverbial bachelor pad wasn’t a myth.

“We have to go take showers. Um, make yourself at home,” Patrick said, his tone chagrined as he looked around and apparently saw the room as she did. “Be right back.”

The other two men had disappeared further into the house, and he followed.

Even through the clutter and junk, the design of the house shone through. The front door opened into an enormous entryway with double-width, arching doorways on either side. A large, open staircase curved upward into a balconied second floor where she saw numerous doorways and a second set of stairs, enclosed, leading to the third floor.

To her right lay a spacious sitting room. Its far wall curved outward with a turret-like effect and was entirely brick and glass—mostly glass. It appeared that the men used the space for recreation. Three large couches were grouped in an arc to face a big-screen television and a bank of electronics that spoke of the bachelors' disposable income. The setup of seating and entertainment center in no way dwarfed the room, leaving the area with room to spare.

Distractedly, picked up a few magazines and stacked them neatly on the coffee table centered in front of the couches.

"Excuse the mess," a deep, Irish-tinged voice said from the shadows of the opposite room, startling her since she'd thought she was alone. She spun toward the speaker and saw him leaning against a doorway to one side of what appeared to be a dining room with an oval table large enough to seat at least ten. A faint light behind the man, revealed a kitchen that matched the front areas in size. A dream...

Unfortunately, being illuminated from behind, left the man's face in even deeper shadows than it would have been without. He took a sip from a soft drink can as he regarded her from the darkness of his hoodie.

"You must be the fourth O'Keefe," she said.

"Jamie O'Keefe at your service—except in bed. I won't be joining the four of you."

She almost blurted "why not" but stopped herself before she sounded more wanton than he probably already thought her. "Oh...o-okay."

*Brilliant, Rayna.*

"I'll try to stay out of your way," she told him.

"Sweetness, you're not in my way. I don't know if I've ever seen a more beautiful woman than you. I don't *mind* that you're here. I'm just not sleeping with you."

Disappointment kicked her hard. He was the one she wanted most. She'd felt it since she'd seen him walk down the street. Was it possible to feel such an urgent connection without speaking to a person, without seeing his face? Yet she had, and it was pulsing through her now, telling her she needed him badly.

Her tongue darted across her bottom lip as she tried to force back her desire. Jamie groaned. She looked at him curiously. But he didn't want her, right?

"Are you all right?" she asked.

"Fine," he replied, sounding a bit choked. He took a chug of his drink. Outside, lightning speared across the sky brightening the room, but not enough for her to see him clearly.

Silence fell between them as rain pummeled the ground outside and pinged against the panes of glass in the large, solarium-like windows of the east wall. "The ground's so hard right now, this stuff's gonna be slick as slime."

Rayna nodded.

"I'm gonna go upstairs and make sure you've got clean linens on your bed."

"Thank you." She wanted to go to him, to push back the hoodie and see his face. Her hands fisted as he set his drink on the table and moved past her toward the stairs. When he was even with her, he paused. She heard a tortured sigh and watched his fingers flex.

"Close your eyes," he murmured.

"What?"

"Close your eyes. I'd...I'd like to kiss you. Just once."

She did as he asked, and he traced her bottom lip with his finger.

"Keep them closed," he murmured. His hands splayed over her cheeks then into her hair. His breath feathered across her lips a moment before his mouth covered hers. Electricity zinged through her, and she moaned, pressing into him.

"Jamie," she murmured. She reached for him, but he grabbed her wrists and held them clamped at the small of her back.

"Just let me kiss you," he whispered. He nipped at her bottom lip, pulling it between his teeth then laving it. His mouth pressed over hers again, and his tongue thrust inside. Her entire body trembled for him, and she felt her cream flooding her folds. The other men aroused her, but Jamie enflamed her.

Crazy. Purely crazy. Surely, it was the mystery of him.

Her breathing grew choppy as he kissed her over and over, his mouth completely possessing hers, his hunger evident in the sweeps of his tongue. She groaned, pressing closer even if she couldn't touch him. Her fingers flexed up into his hands where he held her, the excitement of being held captive making her pussy clench. Her breasts were tight and her bra chafed her nipples as she flattened against his chest.

Suddenly, he let go of her hands and she reached for him, but he was gone, already out of her reach.

"I'll see to your bed," he said roughly.

What the...

Confused by his abrupt behavior, she sank onto the couch. Her fingers traced her tingling lips as she listened to his odd gait marching up the stairs. Jamie O'Keefe.

She closed her eyes and leaned back. What a day. Not for the first time, she considered that she probably should have gotten a GPS for this trip. But if she had, she wouldn't have ended up here, about to have the adventure of her life. Besides a GPS couldn't have prevented her car issues or her money issues with her freaking ex. Jerk. Jerk, jerk, jerk!

She was well rid of the underhanded snake. Besides, his kisses had never come close to Patrick or Jamie's. She sighed, her body still buzzing from Jamie's attention. The couch depressed on either side of her legs as someone straddled her, kneeling over her. Hands cupped her face, but she didn't bother opening her eyes as firm lips took hers. She felt others sit and their hands start touching her lightly. Stroking along her arms, her thighs. Taking up her hands and massaging her palms and fingers.

She fought back her immediate impulse to tense. No, this was what she'd agreed to and what she eagerly anticipated. There was no reason to be afraid or show false modesty. They knew she hadn't indulged in this before. On the way over, Patrick had mentioned to Sean and David that they should all go easy. That didn't mean, it seemed, that they'd delay in what they all wanted. She opened her mouth to the man kissing her, envisioning herself the offering to a band of hungry men—and that wasn't so far from true.

Anticipation fogged her mind, drawing her senses to sharp edges. Even the lightest touch made her shiver with need. The callused fingers continued to caress her, and goose bumps raised on her arms. The man kissing her grasped the edge of her T-shirt, pulling it from her jeans. His hands moved beneath and slid across her belly and sides, his scratchy, oh-so-male skin lightly abrading her. Lord, how she trembled to feel that same abrasion rasping over her folds and clit then possessing her channel.

She knew without opening her eyes that Patrick had been the one kissing her, and when he lifted his head and spoke, he confirmed it. "Let's go upstairs. Your room's been freshened. We'll have more space, too. Okay?" he added.

“Yes,” she whispered. Her breathing came in soft huffs as she thought of what was to come.

Her room was the first at the top of the steps and had a queen-sized brass bed parallel to the entry. The blankets had been turned down to the foot. A lamp on the bedside table lent a soft, dreamlike glow to the area.

All three of the men had damp hair from their showers and had only tossed on jeans, leaving their wide chests bare. Their muscled perfection was remarkable in its simplicity. They were built from their daily, hard work not from hours at the gym.

Sean moved in front of her. His brown eyes, darkened with desire, watched her closely as his hands went to the hem of her shirt. Her teeth sank into her bottom lip. This was it. Slowly, she lifted her arms. Fire laced through her. *Touch me*, her body screamed. *Touch me, touch me. Please touch me.*

“Baby, you’re so beautiful,” Patrick whispered behind her. His palms followed the path of the lifting shirt until he reached the edge of her bra. She groaned as he pushed his hands into the cups of her bra from beneath and curved his fingers around her breasts. “Mmm... So firm,” he commented, giving a soft squeeze to the mounds. He pinched her nipples, his breath brushing across her ear. “I can’t wait to taste these.”

“Me either,” Sean said. Hooking his fingers in her bra straps, he guided them toward the bed where David waited. Patrick released her, and climbed onto the mattress to half lean-half lay against the headboard. The other two men moved her to recline between his splayed legs, her back to his chest. Immediately, Patrick’s hands returned to her breasts. Sean and David both removed their jeans, revealing thick thighs and mouth-watering cocks that jutted from thatches of dark hair. Sean sat beside her, leaning in to suck one nipple into his mouth through the lacy fabric while David climbed between her legs.

Slowly, watching her through burning, blue eyes, he opened her jeans. Pausing, he massaged her belly. His hand moved close to the edge of her panties to taunt but never touch until her hips lifted into him, and her eyes were half-lidded with need.

Inch by inch, he drew her pants down her legs then tossed them aside, along with her shoes and socks. His thumbs hooked in her panties, and he dragged them down her thighs, as well. As soon as they were gone, he reached for her pussy and parted her.

“Oh God,” she cried out, already shaking from the touch. Sean bit her nipple and she arched in reaction as a spike of pleasure ran through her. In a daze, she watched David roll on a

condom while Patrick stroked his hands up and down her. There would be few preliminaries. This was it. There was no mistaking how hot and wet she was. Her pussy was dripping with her need.

Her breathing shuddered as the tip of his wide cock pressed to her cunt. Sean kissed her hard, absorbing her scream as David surged forward, filling her completely. She bucked against him, taking as much of his cock as she could. She reached for Sean and wrapped her arms around him as David pummeled her channel. Patrick returned to her breasts and chafed the tips that were damp from Sean's mouth.

All the while her arousal built from their touch and the knowledge that this was only the first cock to fill her tonight. There would be two more. How many times would they take her? How well-used would her pussy be after this night?

She moaned at the forbidden thought. Nice girls shouldn't think that way, but she'd crossed that line. She was a sexual creature bent on as much fucking as she could handle.

David grasped her hips, controlling her wild movements as he thrust in a fast rhythm into her. Patrick reached down and rubbed her clit, his callused finger sending fire cascading through her veins. Sean lifted his head to release her scream as her first release speared through her. In her dimmed vision, she thought she saw Jamie standing in the doorway watching them before Sean again blocked her sight. Just the thought of being observed set her off again, and she convulsed around David's cock. His deep grunt filled the room, then he was gone, leaving her pussy painfully empty.

Sean and Patrick immediately flipped her onto her knees and Sean moved to take her from behind. She saw a wrapper flutter to the floor as she reached for Patrick's jeans to open them. His cock popped out, and she sank her mouth onto it as Sean surged into her. Freaking amazing. She'd left any reservations behind and launched full tilt into the world of ménage.

Patrick's cock tasted so good on her tongue. She sucked and licked in time to Sean's deep thrusts. Oh...so deep. She groaned around the shaft in her mouth, earning a few droplets of pre-cum to whet her palate. She groaned again when David shifted her slightly so he could get to her breast. He drew the peak deep between his lips, pushing the tip against the ridged roof of his mouth. His hand drifted lazily over her belly. He pushed up, intensifying the sensation of Sean's driving cock. She knew he had to feel the other man's pistoning.

She cried out as she convulsed around his shaft.

"Oh yes, baby! Milk me." His fingers dug into her waist. "Yes. Ah..."

With one final slam, she felt his warmth deep inside her, filling the condom. She breathed heavily around Patrick's arousal as she and Sean both froze. Her hands fisted in the sheets. Pleasure ruffled through her, cascading and slowly weakening as if a large rock had been thrown into the pool of her climax. Her toes curled as he shifted slightly and another release spiked into her pussy.

Patrick gently lifted her mouth from his cock. "I want you to ride me."

"I don't know if I have the strength," she confessed.

"You will," he growled, and his forcefulness coiled new desire in her womb. She whimpered and placed her forehead against his chest as Sean pulled free.

David released her breast and moved from beneath her. Tenderly, he lifted her head and kissed her on the lips. "Night, beauty."

"You're going?"

He nodded. "Leaving you to Patrick. And Jamie," he said, jerking his head toward the hallway. She looked toward the door and saw the man who'd enflamed her most standing in the shadows. She knew, no matter what David said, he wouldn't be joining them.

"Come on you," David rasped. He hooked an arm around Sean's neck and kissed him hard. "I want in you bad."

"B-but..." Rayna stuttered.

Sean laughed. "We're totally unrelated, honey. My name's only O'Keefe because of him. I used to be a Brennan—the boy who lived down the street and fell in with his wild ways." He tickled David's belly and David pinched him. The two of them scooped up their clothes and left the room.

"I didn't see that coming," she murmured.

Patrick laughed. "They play both ways, but mostly for the same team. It works in this town. And the rest of us O'Keefes consider Sean as family because he's basically 'married' in. He and David are committed."

"But you're all Irish and you look alike—I mean... Well, I don't know that I actually know what I mean."

He'd shifted so he was partially off the bed and had slipped on protection while they'd spoken. Now, he moved beneath her. He settled her over her cock. The wide head of it brushed her opening, and she slowly sank down the length. She closed her eyes at the intense sensation of his width so deep in her.

“Aye, we’re all immigrants,” he conceded. “Our parents lived near each other in a largely Irish section of Brooklyn. The looks thing is just coincidence and actually, aside from build and hair, they don’t really look that alike.”

“Uh-huh,” she murmured, totally distracted by the feel of him. She rocked a little, angling her clit to rub into his pubis.

“That’s it, sweetness. Doesn’t he feel good inside you,” she heard as Jamie rasped into her ear. He stood behind her, his body pressed to her back, one hand low on her groin and the other on her ass.

“I thought you weren’t gonna play,” she said as he kissed her shoulder.

“Oh man, Rayna. Baby...” Patrick moaned. “Yeah, Jamie, move her.” His hands clamped on her thighs as Jamie pitched against her, jolting her forward as his body rubbed against her back, his hard cock pressing along her ass. He’d opened his hoodie but, some time since he’d come home, had removed his shirt. She groaned at the feel of his warm flesh along her back.

Jamie moved her hair to the side and kissed the back of her neck as she picked up speed and rode Patrick’s cock. Her whole body pulsed. Her eyes closed as she sank into the sensations sizzling over her. Two sets of hands. Two bodies. A mouth sucking possessively at the juncture of her neck and shoulder. Hips bucking upward into her clenching passage.

“You’re so hot,” Jamie whispered. “Even more beautiful in the throes of passion than I imagined. Does it excite you to fuck them all? To know how bad they all wanted you?”

“Yes, baby. Squeeze me,” Patrick moaned. His rough hands scraped along her thighs and yanked her down harder on his cock. “You feel so good.”

She leaned against Jamie, rocking with him as she fucked Patrick. Jamie’s hands came up and cupped her breasts. As he worked his fingers beneath her bra, she realized she’d never taken it off. She’d been so distracted, so taken with what the men were doing to her. Reaching behind her, she released the clasp and felt the weight of her breasts fall into his palms.

His fingers tightened. “Oh, sweetness...”

“Play with my nipples, Jamie,” she begged.

He did, twisting each between his fingers, and her pussy felt as if it might explode with pleasure. She heard Sean and David crying out down the hall, and it triggered reaction in her. She reached back and gripped Jamie’s waist while she thrust hard onto Patrick. Her mouth dropped open on a silent scream, and her whole world suspended, colors flying past her. As she fell forward, over Patrick, she distantly heard Jamie stumble away.



Disappointment threaded through her—not that he hadn't fucked her, but that he'd run away. The gnawing feeling soon disappeared as Patrick ran his hands over her and kissed her shoulder.

"Thank you," he whispered.

In a haze, she let him move her around so he could slip out of her and shift her onto the mattress. He kissed her temple then silently smoothed her hair from her face. She smiled wanly, almost too tired to respond. Her eyes were closed before he left the room.

## *Chapter Three*

When Rayna woke, her stomach growling since she'd skipped dinner, she found that someone had brought her things from the car. Her whole body ached pleasantly when she rolled to the side. Heat flooded through her, prickling up her neck. Goodness, what *had* she done? One thing was sure. It had been remarkable.

Gingerly, she sat up and hugged the blankets to her chest. A hot shower was in order then she'd scrounge up some breakfast—she'd make something for the guys, too.

“Hey, Rayna,” Patrick called as he passed the doorway on his way to the stairs. “We're off to work. Feel free to use the phone to contact your bank and stuff. If you need anything, come over to the garage, otherwise we'll be back about five.”

“O-okay,” she replied.

“Make yourself at home,” he added with a smile. He pulled her door shut and was off before she could reply. A few minutes later, she heard the others pass.

Quickly, she dug toiletries and clothes from her bags then went in search of a shower since there wasn't one attached to her room. As it turned out, it was the door beside her room. Moaning, she let the water cascade over her and ease away the tingly aches from the night before. Her pussy was tender after her exertions and, with a naughty smile, she wondered how it would feel at the end of a week. Well used and needy for more, she decided. Before last night, it had been eight months since she'd been with a man. Would she long for one after the excess of the days to come?

With a chuckle, she reminded herself she had to do more than have sex while she was here. Planning her day, she headed for her room and stopped short when she saw a man beside her bed, her sheet raised to his face. He wore jeans and a button-down white shirt. His build was slighter than Patrick, Sean and David, and his hair was cut in a more businesslike, less shaggy manner.

Even with his back to her, she knew who it was.

"Jamie," she gasped.

His back stiffened, and he froze. Then the sheet dropped from his fingers. He shoved his hands in his pockets but didn't turn. "I thought you'd left with them," he said quietly.

"No. Actually, I thought you went with them."

"I only go in to work on the books a few days a week."

She set her discarded robe and her toiletries on a chair that was near her luggage. Jamie, still hadn't moved. Her brow furrowed as she stared at his rigid back. "Won't you look at me?"

He shook his head. "It's better if I don't."

"Please, I want to see your face and know who's got my nerves all wound up."

Jamie sighed, feeling the weight of her stare on him. She'd hate him, but how could he deny her. She'd see him sometime in the next week anyway. Better now than later when she'd be horrified that she'd let him fuck her in the dark.

Slowly, he turned, presenting his good side first. Watching her, he kept moving. Her intake of breath stabbed through him, as did the way her teeth sank into her bottom lip, but he expected her revulsion and pity.

Instead, she rapidly crossed to him and wrapped her arms around him. She hugged him so tight, he thought perhaps she'd never let go but then, her hands moved up his arms. He cringed slightly when she touched his face.

"No. Don't." She shook her head, her thumbs smoothing his worry lines. "I had no idea..."

"That's the point."

She frowned. "What you must have been through... I can't imagine. It horrifies me. Not because of the scars. But because of what hurt you this badly."

Her compassion gripped his heart, squeezing tightly. Her hand traveled to his chest.

"There are more?" she asked.

He nodded. His hands gripped her waist, fighting the urge to draw her tightly against him. His pulse thudded. God, he wanted to be in this woman, to hold her naked body against him, to fill himself with her gasping breaths.

Her finger traced along the placket of his shirt. She stared intently at the flat, white disks as red tinged her cheeks. "Last night..." she started then took a shuddery breath. "It was awesome. But...do you know what I wanted most?"

“No.”

“I wanted you to fuck me, Jamie. I still do.” She gave a self-depreciating laugh. “You’d think after three cocks, I’d be good to go. But you know how it is when you’re craving something. Whatever else you have just isn’t as satisfying. My problem is it was *someone else* who got me all worked up.”

She bit the side of her lip and looked away. Stunned, he turned her back with two fingers under her chin. If she wanted him, it was certainly what she’d get. His cock flooded to life and pushed against his fly. She wasn’t the only one in need. Hell, he’d barely slept for his desire and knowing she was in the room beside his.

Hungrily, he kissed her.

“Jamie,” she murmured against his lips.

“I love your mouth,” he groaned, darting in for another taste. “I don’t want to share it.”

She pulled back and looked at him, observing him fully, not flinching. He knew what she was doing. She wanted him to realize that the scars didn’t matter to her, that she didn’t think they detracted from him as a man.

But the scars did matter. He knew it. Maybe they didn’t in this brief moment, but they would. Later...

“Then don’t,” she said, taking him by surprise. “Don’t share it. I won’t kiss anyone’s mouth but yours while I’m here.”

He liked the idea of that and kissed her again as if to seal the deal. He tensed slightly as she started to open his shirt. His hands covered hers then slid down to her waist.

“Maybe you should undress first.” He shuffled them toward the bed and he sat on the edge. He wanted to help her out of her clothes but since his ability to kneel was lacking these days.

She smiled slightly, and her fingers stroked over his ridged cheek. “I’m not going to change my mind.” She pulled her T-shirt over her head then tossed it aside. “Seeing you isn’t going to change how I feel—how I felt the moment I saw you. It won’t change what I want.” Her palms slid over her torso, and her eyes drifted to half-mast. “Or how I burn.”

He leaned forward and pressed his lips against her sternum, just above the flimsy fastener of her bra. Backing up slightly, but staying within his arms’ reach, she swiveled her hips. Her fingers played at the closure of her jeans.

"I've never felt this free," she said. Her teeth on her lower lip told of the nerves that still trembled through her.

"But?" he asked.

"But then I remember how...*odd*...this all is, and it makes me—well, I don't know. What would people think if they knew I was with four men last night? And that I'm still yearning for one of them. That I'm not sure I can get enough..."

"Around here, they'd think you're a goddess. Anywhere else doesn't matter." He pulled her forward and down to straddle his legs and she ground against his groin as he feathered his lips over hers. "What happens in Daly stays in Daly."

"I thought that was Vegas."

"They stole it from us."

"Oh yeah?"

He flicked open the button on her jeans. "Oh yeah. And right now, it's just you and me. One man. One woman."

After he helped her to stand again, he lowered her zipper and pushed her pants down her hips while she rested her hands on his shoulders. He knew she'd be able to feel the ridges from his scars through the cotton of his button-down shirt. Her fingers flexed rather than drawing away.

"How?" she asked, as she stepped free of her clothing.

He swallowed momentarily unable to answer as he looked at her clad in mere scraps of black lace that sharply contrasted her creamy white skin. He pulled her forward to straddle him again. His hand immediately slid into her panties, cupping her smooth ass and pulling her pussy tight to his aching cock. Moaning, she ground against him. Her flat belly and breasts brushed against him as she rode up and down the ridge. He suspected the rough placket over his zipper was making contact with her clit through her thin panties.

One of his hands pushed between them and covered her mound. Her wetness enveloped his fingers as he probed her folds, and satisfaction at her arousal triggered a primal response in him he'd thought long dead. She wanted him; there was no question.

Turning, he placed her against the pillows on the rumpled bed. Her long, sable-colored hair tumbled around her head in silken waves. Her eyes were deep, chocolaty pools of trouble. Her pale pink lips parted as she reached for him, and this time, as he leaned over her, he didn't stop her as she moved to open the buttons of his shirt. He braced over her and remained still.

His eyes closed, and he tried to keep his face impassive as he waited for her to see the collision of scars from both burns and the metal that had clawed deep into the left side of his body. The damage hidden by his clothing was far worse than what had been done to his face.

“Oh, Jamie,” she whispered as she pushed open the cloth and shoved it down his arms. She opened his shirt cuffs, and he pulled free. His eyes opened when his upper half was bare, and he almost wished he’d left them shut. Tears brimmed her eyes as she met his gaze with such dismay at what had happened to him. “How?” she asked again.

He shifted to lie beside her, and she cuddled into his arms, not thinking twice about pressing her lips to his chest where scars pulled his nipple to an odd shape.

“I was a photojournalist. You know...that Life magazine, National Geographic, coffee table book kind of stuff. I was in the middle east—wrong place at the wrong time. I was filming a religious festival when a suicide bomber attacked the participants.” He splayed the fingers of his scarred hand. “I was a mess but still very lucky. Nearly a hundred people died.”

Her tongue flicked over his nipple then she kissed his chest again. Her nails dragged along his good side, sending fire through him.

“You have a remarkable attitude,” she said.

“I didn’t for a long time. I still don’t about some things.” Like his chances with a girl like her. He flexed his fingers on her ass. “But I still have my hand. And I have my life. And I can hold you.”

They lay silently for several minutes, chest to chest, two souls meshing. Despite his hold on her rear and their nudity, there wasn’t an overt sexuality to the moment. They comforted one another, though he wasn’t sure yet what had traumatized her. They accepted each other.

Rayna shifted upward and threaded her fingers through his hair. She kissed him hard. “And you can fuck me. You better,” she threatened good-naturedly.

Rolling, he trapped her beneath him. Her legs bracketed his hips. He flexed into her, wishing he’d already removed his pants. “Or else what?” he asked.

“Or I’ll...I’ll march over to the garage, just like this, and start handing out kisses to any man I see.”

“Oh no you won’t.” He kissed her hard, grinding into her until she writhed and moaned. Wriggling beneath him, she removed her panties while he opened the front closure of her bra. His breath caught as her small, perfect breasts fell free. “So beautiful,” he murmured.

She trembled as he ran his thumb over one tip then took the peak between his lips. He sucked deep until she cried out and shook. Her fingers bit into his upper arms, but that was pure bliss in itself, for he knew the pain was due to her own pleasure.

“Oh yes, Jamie,” she moaned. Her pussy flooded as she moved beneath him. She wanted the hard proof of his desire plunging into her. She pushed up into his mouth as his tongue lashed over her nipple, each pass making her cunt clench with the need to be filled by him.

His satyr smile edged up her desire even more as he slid her bra along her arms. With a wicked grin, he tied it around her wrists then re-clasped it around one of the brass rungs of the bed.

“No fair,” she protested even though being tied up for him made her so hot she could barely think.

“Life’s not fair, sweetness,” he growled, his brogue now almost as thick as the one Patrick had put on yesterday. God, she loved the accent on him. “And now you’re all mine. At my mercy.”

She pulled at her wrists, not really trying to get free. “I was all yours before.”

“Perhaps you should know,” he said. “I have a penchant for tyin’ up my woman.”

At the moment, she had a penchant for being tied up by him. Who would have known? She’d never been tied up before, and her body had never responded so strongly to a man before either. Danger lurked inside him—nothing that would physically harm her. No, it was something that could possess her soul.

“I think you should have a penchant for removing your pants,” she said.

“In time,” he promised. Taking his time, he molded her breasts. His fingers pulled the nipples, pinching and twisting to bring her the slightest pain but great bolts of pleasure. Her body vibrated with it, her pulse pounding, her blood burning. Her pussy was so wet, she knew his cock had to be damp with it even through his pants.

“More,” she whispered, breathing heavily.

Ignoring her plea, he abandoned her chest to move downward. His breath was hot on her as his thumbs caught her labia and spread her wide. She screeched as he licked the length of her. She whimpered against the intense laps over and over as he took his time tasting her, dipping inside her channel—barely—and circling her clit. When his lips closed on the needy bud, sucking hard, her hips jerked from the bed. Release rocketed through her.

“Jamie,” she screamed. On and on it went as he suckled ruthlessly on the tiny nub. “Jamie, oh God, please Jamie,” she begged. The clasp of her bra rasped on the brass post that held her as she struggled under her desire. But he wasn’t ready to let up on the tension coiling inside her. Two fingers thrust inside her quivering passage as he nipped at her clit. He rose over her, his fingers never relenting, and made tiny bites up her belly to her breast where his teeth scrapped over one tip.

She bucked against him, needing him and crying out when his hand disappeared from her cunt. A moment later, she groaned in relief as his cock lined up with her opening. Her legs wrapped around him, urging him forward and she felt the fabric of his pants against her thighs. He’d opened his trousers and pushed them down just enough to free himself. Before she could think on it, he surged forward filling her with his thickness and stretching her passage. He didn’t pause for her to adjust—she didn’t want him, too.

Staring into her face with rigid determination in his green eyes, he pistoned in and out of her and claimed her as no one ever had. It didn’t matter who she’d fucked before or who she might after, he was making her his. And she gave herself over to him, glorying in the feel of his possession and the rawness of being bound while he wasn’t fully undressed.

Her climax clawed up on her fast. She arched off the bed and pressed into him as hard as she could, taking him deeply as she could.

“Oh God, Rayna,” he gasped, still driving forward. “So tight... Yes, sweetness...”

He stiffened, and she felt his release pour into her. The heat seemed to flood through her. She groaned, having an overwhelming sense of closeness to him. His head dropped to her shoulder, and he reached up, freeing her. She hugged him, the closeness morphing to protectiveness as he breathed heavily. Her hand smoothed over his back, each ridge of damaged flesh piercing her. She prayed nothing would hurt this man again.

Rising on his elbows, he looked down at her. Gently, he pushed tendrils of hair from her damp face. “Thank you, Rayna.”

She shook her head, smiling and unable to believe he was thanking her. She had no words. Instead, she pulled him down into a kiss she hoped would show exactly what he meant to her.



## *Chapter Four*

“Kelsey, oh thank God,” Rayna said as she dusted the newly cleaned living room and held the O’Keefes’ phone between her shoulder and her ear. “Antonio messed with my accounts. Can you *please* look and see what he did?”

Her friend Kelsey worked at Vangaard Federal where Rayna had her accounts. Rayna’s ex, Antonio, was employed there as well, though at a higher level. Now, Kelsey babbled in Rayna’s ear about everything that had happened since Rayna had left town while Rayna finished dusting and moved into the dining room. When she could fit in a word, Rayna brought her friend up to speed on what was happening—minus the sex.

Through an open door, she could see Jamie working on a computer in the small office beside the kitchen. She had no idea what he was working on. It wasn’t garage paperwork. He’s explained earlier that he went over to the shop and worked on the books a few times a week.

He looked up and smiled, creating a flutter in her belly. They’d made love again after the first time and hadn’t gotten out of bed until nearly noon.

It wasn’t until afterward that Rayna had realized they hadn’t used a condom. She’d been so caught up with him that she hadn’t considered it. At the moment, she couldn’t bring herself to be all that concerned over the oversight. Jamie assure her he was disease-free and it wasn’t her fertile time of month—not that that was foolproof. She’d deal with that later if need be. Right now, all her muddled brain kept circling to was her next time with him.

“Oh, I see what he did,” Kelsey finally said. “He blocked access to your account by marking your cards stolen. I don’t have the access to fix it. I can report the misinformation, but that will leave you without funds for days still. I can also issue you new cards and have them delivered to you.”

“That’s fine. As long as I have them in a few days...”

"He's been by every day, you know. Fishing for information. I won't tell him anything. Don't worry."

Anger knotted the muscles across her shoulders, and she tossed her dust rag on the dining room table. "It doesn't matter what he knows. I'm not going back to him. You'd think after eight months he'd get the hint."

She heard Kelsey sigh on the other end of the line. "I still think he's dangerous. I'm going to bury your contact information so he doesn't find it until you're out of there."

Rayna doubted that would work, but didn't say anything. She didn't know how the Vangaard computer records worked. After finishing with her friend, she hung up then carefully set the phone on the table though the ire tearing through her demanded a good slam. Seething, she stared at the far wall.

How dare that man? How dare he! Trying to control her life, trying to manipulate her into doing exactly what he wanted. He'd seemed so nice when they'd first dated and even until when they'd first gotten engaged. Then he'd changed. She didn't doubt he'd try to track her down, that he'd manhandle her again. And what then? He'd start smacking her around once more? She hadn't taken it before. She wouldn't take it now. But the thought of facing him—

"I'm going for a walk," she said. "I need to stop at the store and get some butter."

"Rayna," Jamie called, concern lacing his tone. She heard his chair roll back as he got up, but she was already out the door.

Last night's rain had tapered to a misty drizzle that clung to her hair as she hurried down the driveway and onto the sidewalk. Leena's store wasn't far enough for Rayna to vent her anger, she decided as she jammed her hands into her pockets. Perhaps she'd walked to the edge of town and circle back.

"Rayna!" Jamie called again, and she heard his slightly unsteady gait as he came down the steps. She turned as he approached.

"I need to walk," she said.

Nodding, he settled a large jacket around her shoulders. His, she decided as his masculine scent rose from the fabric. He flicked open an umbrella to cover them. "I'll walk with you."

"You don't understand..." she murmured, turning into him and resting her forehead against his chest.

His arms came around her. "I understand that someone's hurt you, and you're pissed. I heard you say you weren't going back to him. Are you...married?"

"No, thank heavens. We were engaged when he started showing his true colors. I broke it off, but he's been stalking me and occasionally getting violent. After the last time, the cops tossed him in jail for the night, and I took off. And right now, I'm ticked off that he had the balls to get my cell phone shut off and mess with my bank account."

She felt rather than heard his growl as his arms grew hard around her. She looked into his stony countenance. His jaw locked, and he appeared as if he wanted to say something. Instead, his free hand took hers.

Slowly, they made their way toward Leena's. Neither spoke, their silence a balm to her overwrought nerves. At the store, he kissed her tenderly.

"He's not going to touch you while you're here," Jamie promised.

She nodded, desperately hoping Antonio wouldn't try to follow her. She didn't want Jamie fighting him. And she had no doubt Jamie would.

"I'll be on my way to Oregon before he figures out where I am," she said.

Again, Jamie's lips pressed together as if he wanted to say something. She was quickly getting the feeling he held in comments when he disagreed or had something unpopular to say.

"Jamie...what—"

"I'll be over at the garage," he interrupted. "Come over when you're done here." He grinned then gave her a quick kiss and headed across the street, leaving her with the umbrella. Perplexed, she watched him go. His solid form, only amplified by his limp, endeared her and screamed how strong he was. For an instant, she wished she wouldn't be leaving here so soon, that she could stay and peel away all the layers that comprised Jamie O'Keefe, enigma.

Leena opened the door behind her. "Get in here out of the rain, you. And what have you *done* to Jamie O'Keefe? I haven't seen that man smile in three years. In fact, I've barely seen him in three years. He either stays at home or huddles inside his hoodie. I swear sometimes it's as if he believes he's Quasimodo. People around here won't love him less for a few scars."

Rayna shrugged with a self-conscious smile and closed the umbrella. It was more than a few scars, but they didn't matter to her. "He's a nice guy. I like him."

The other woman led her to the counter. "I think you more than like him," she laughed. "Coffee? I can do the fancy stuff like Starbucks. It was one of my conditions for moving here—not that not getting the equipment would have been a deal breaker, but don't tell my guys."

"My lips are sealed," Rayna laughed, glancing at the syrup rack behind the counter. "I'd love a peppermint mocha."

“Coming right up. You sit yourself down right there, and we’ll talk about Daly.”

For the next twenty minutes, Leena chatted about the people of Daly, the lopsided population and ménage. It was matter-of-fact and not at all gossipy. Just factual. While Rayna digested information about a lifestyle she’d never imagined, Leena collected the butter Rayna had come in for then added it to a grocery bag along with a boxed-up, homemade pie—a welcome to Daly gift. The rest, she insisted, was “on the boys’ account.”

Leena was a whirlwind, Rayna decided as she crossed the street. Smiling, she entered the reception area of the garage. David and Sean were working together in the service area while Patrick was stocking a rack of key chains. Jamie leaned against the counter reading a magazine.

He looked up and smiled as the bell over the door announced her arrival. His hair and clothes were still slightly damp from the rain yet he was absolutely stunning. How could this man have spent so much time hiding away from people?

“Hey, baby,” Patrick said, leaving the rack and heading for her. His hands fell on her waist. He pulled her toward him. “I didn’t think we’d see you until tonight.”

He leaned forward to kiss her, and Rayna suddenly had a hand over her mouth.

“Mine,” Jamie rasped.

Patrick straightened in surprise. A slow grin curved his lips while speculation filled his eyes. “Yours?”

“No one kisses her but me. Right, sweetness?”

She nodded, her whole body going soft at his possessive tone. Her tummy fluttered as she got wet just being near him.

“And sex?” Patrick asked.

“You know I like to share. Sometimes,” Jamie replied. He pressed up behind her, and his hand dropped from her mouth. His palm trailed to her breast. Long fingers found her nipple through her clothes and rolled the sensitive tip. She moaned, squirming at the tremors spiraling down to her folds.

Patrick grasped her ass, lifting her, then ground his groin into hers. Rayna wrapped her legs around him.

“I think it’s time for our lunch break,” he muttered into her neck. He carried her into the work area while Jamie locked the front door then followed. Seeing Rayna, Sean and David each closed the bay doors.

The scent of the garage, never all too arousing before, now spiked her excitement to a higher level. Perhaps it was the unusual venue for sex. With four men. Rayna had never felt as wanton as she did around them with their intense gazes boring into her. Every nerve ending seemed to spring to life.

Patrick set her on her feet, and Jamie pulled her to him. He leaned against her car, resting most of his weight on the door and one foot. He drew her to straddle his leg as he took the lips he'd claimed as his own.

"Her mouth is Jamie's," she heard Patrick say. "The rest of her is ours for the taking."

She lifted her mouth from Jamie's then glanced over her shoulder at Patrick. She raised an eyebrow. "The rest of her is *hers*," she corrected. "You may *borrow* it."

Turning in Jamie's arms, she watched the three men shed the protective mechanic's overalls they'd worn. David and Sean had apparently taken off their shirts earlier because of the humidity of the day. She bit her lip at their wide, sweat-sheened chests. Dropping to her knees, she caught David's belt loops and pulled him close. She kissed his belly, tasting his salty skin, feeling his heat. Her fingers ripped at the closure of his jeans.

Her mouth covered his cock as soon as he popped free.

"Baby..." he breathed, his fingers sinking into her hair. "Oh, yeah baby. Suck me."

"She's so hot," Sean murmured. From the corner of her eye, she saw his pants open and his hand on his cock. Slowly, he jerked up and down in time with her mouth on David. Her tongue traced every ridge of the width between her lips. He groaned as her teeth raked up his length until she sucked hard on his tip.

A shadow blocked the light and she lifted her gaze to see Sean hungrily kissing his lover. She drew harder, determined to claim his cum. She wanted to taste every bit of this man...then Sean...then Patrick.

She felt Patrick kneel behind her. Trapped between the two bodies, she made small needy sounds and almost screamed her relief when Patrick shoved his hand inside her jeans. His fingers slid easily through her slick folds. Her hips undulated with the spikes of electricity as he rubbed her clit with his callused finger.

"Let's move her over by the tires," Sean suggested.

*Tires? Huh?* Her brain was a fog of sensation.

"Good idea," Jamie said. Okay, whatever Jamie said was fine with her.

David gently pulled from her mouth. His thumb brushed over her damp lip. "I'll want more of that in a sec, darlin'."

*Yu-huh.*

Patrick lifted her and carried her toward the back of the garage. Standing her beside two tires that had been stacked one atop the other, he took off her clothes. Gently, he forced her back to her knees and bent her over the wheels. She moaned as she rested on her arms. Her breasts dangled in the well, swinging freely as Patrick adjusted her. The soft nubs on the new tires brushed her bare thighs.

David knelt in front of her. Eagerly, she took his cock and lapped at the shaft. She flicked at the pre-cum that gathered at the tip. His fingers slipped into the hair at the crown of her head while he began to fuck her mouth in earnest.

Peripherally, she saw Sean slip behind David. A few moments later, his fingers dug into David's hips as David leaned slightly forward and rested his arms on the tire walls to either side of Rayna. Patrick moved her back to make room for David to slide in and out of her mouth while Sean fucked him. David groaned deep in his chest as his lover took him, Sean's thrusts propelling David along Rayna's tongue.

A strange fuzzy feeling enveloped her at knowing the pair was letting her in on their relationship. And the two were so hot together, their bodies moving in tandem, it just got her all...*hot.*

Her cream rushed onto her thighs as her arousal flared out of control. She moaned, in need of filling as her empty passage clenched.

Patrick nudged her thighs wide, making her lean more heavily on the tires. Suddenly, a burst of air pulsed over her folds. She trembled both at the chill and the force of it over her tissues. Another powerful whoosh shot against her clit. Sweet lord, he was using the force air pump on her. A loud hissing heralded the air once more. This time was longer as he dragged it along the crease of her ass, the blast licking at her protected skin. She bucked against it. Over and over, he drew the finger of air over her, taunting her flesh, arousing her with the shock of it.

Turning her head slightly—for she couldn't move much with the cock pistoning into her mouth—she saw Jamie still leaning on the car. His pants were open and he stroked his hand up and down his cock as he watched.

"Trick," he rasped. "Fuck her."

Immediately, the air nozzle clattered to the cement ground. Patrick drove deep into her, one hand grasping her thigh, the other flat on the small of her back. And Rayna was lost. A wide cock at either end, someone watching, her body trapped and immobile for all intents. Her pussy flooded, gushing around Patrick and trickling onto her legs as she shook. Her vision grew dim as spasm twisted through her.

"I'm coming," David groaned, warning her a moment before his cum filled her mouth. She swallowed convulsively taking all she could. His forearm muscles bulged as he held himself over her while his lover continued thrusting.

Sean let up for a moment and moved so David leaned over her from the side, still using the tires for support. She watched David's body move, her own jerking at the same pace as Sean and Patrick found the same rhythm. David kissed her back, nipping at her shoulder blades.

"Jamie..." she gasped. "Please..."

He paused and their eyes met. Slowly, he made his way toward them. Awkwardly, he knelt where David had been. "Don't laugh if I can't get up," he chuckled ruefully.

"Never. Jamie...never." Her hand snaked forward and hooked into his waistband. She licked up his shaft then took the generous head between her lips, suckling at his salty pre-cum. She hummed her pleasure as she took him further.

Her fingers clenched, and her whole body tightened as Patrick shoved relentlessly into her cunt and drove her toward another release, larger than the last. It roiled, twisting and gaining power like a cyclone ready to rip her apart, to rip away all the things she thought she knew about relationships.

Her lips tightened on Jamie, determined to take him with her when she cascaded into her orgasm.

"Oh God, Rayna," he gasped, and she let go of her control. His moan sent her over the edge, squeezing Patrick, bucking wildly, clutching David's cock, taking every bit of Jamie's cum. For one blinding moment, she flew out of control. Her whole world spun and skyrocketed.

Breathless, she fell to earth. Her body collapsed against the tires; her mind plummeted to the nether regions of consciousness, barely functioning for the pleasure still vibrating through her.

"Damn..." Patrick swore. He, David and Sean all climbed unsteadily to their feet the Patrick went to dispose of his condom while the other two dressed. She moved to sit on the edge of the tires in front of Jamie, her legs on either side of his hips. Languidly, she kissed him.

"My mouth," he murmured.

“Mmm...” she murmured. Her arm looped behind his neck. “I sure like yours.”

Groaning, she pushed against him. The cotton of his shirt rasped against her nipples and his cock grew hard against her pussy. She leaned back and supported herself on her arms, opening herself and presenting everything to him.

“Fuck me,” she begged.

Jamie didn’t wait. Immediately, he slid deep. His shaft was wider than Patrick’s and forced open her tense channel. Her head dropped back as she cried out for him. She couldn’t get enough. And even as pleasure pierced her deep to her core, fear trembled within her. She could fuck a dozen men, and she’d never be filled until Jamie took her. She’d never be fully complete until Jamie thrust her into her climax. A part of her would always be empty without—

No! How could that be?

*Soul mate...* her mind whispered as she arched against him, her release taking them both into oblivion once more. Their orgasm dampened the tires and wet her quivering thighs.

Breathing heavily, she stared up into Jamie’s green eyes.

She’d heard of soul mates, always scoffed at it as unreal. Was this her fanciful mind playing with her? Or was it something else? Hadn’t she been instantly and unreasonably attracted to him?

“Okay?” he asked.

“I think so.” She smiled. She couldn’t tell him all the odd thoughts racing through her.

He pulled her upright. Shifting, she stood as Patrick came up beside them. As if it were nothing, he helped Jamie to his feet, smacked him on the back in the way guys did then walked away.

Jamie refused to look at her as he closed his pants. Afterward, he glanced around the garage, stared at the ceiling, rubbed a spot of dirt off the hood of her car.

“Jamie...” she whispered. She moved behind him. Her arms slid around his waist and her cheek pressed to his back. “I said never. I meant it.”

He turned to regard her. One side of his mouth drew back. “Sometimes it’s a kick in the teeth to be reminded that I’m not the man I was.”

“You’re enough man for any woman,” she replied. Her hand trailed along his scarred cheek then her lips feathered over his. “And any woman who doesn’t think so isn’t good enough for you.”



## *Chapter Five*

"These are beautiful," Rayna said, considering a set of pictures that hung on the living room wall. She and Jamie were alone. To her surprise, the other three men had retired shortly after dinner. Jamie had laughed at her. *They're not sex fiends*, he'd said. *You're enough to wipe out any man*.

The two of them had settled on the couch to watch a chick flick, though they'd kissed more than watched. As he'd put away the DVD, she'd wandered to the pictures on the back wall. Though he was across the room and didn't look, Jamie knew which ones she spoke of. Candid family photos back dropped by the Rocky Mountains.

"I took those a few years ago," he told her. "A family vacation."

"I recognize the four of you. Who are the other three men?"

"Declan, Miles and Conor, my brothers."

"Good lord, there are five of you?" she murmured, taking in the resemblance no one could deny.

"Yeah. They've moved to the city though. More opportunities. More women."

"With a population of nearly one hundred percent men, I can believe it. You know with a little PR this place could attract single women. Daly, the Mecca of Men."

He snorted. "How would you do that?"

"It's what I do. I'm a tourism researcher. I build plans for businesses and towns to attract people."

Jamie nodded. "Could work in Daly, I guess. If you were here."

He almost kicked himself when the words slipped out. The last thing he wanted to do was to push her. It was way too soon to know what either of them was feeling even if it had been instant and strong.

“Ready for bed?” he asked. She nodded and headed for the stairs. Jamie followed, enjoying the feminine sway of her rear as she moved. Watching her today with the other men had been exquisite torture. So hot. Yet he yearned to put his claim on her. To know he shared but in the end this woman was his.

At her doorway, she paused and turned to him. The others had gone to bed and wouldn’t be coming to her room tonight. Would she send him away?

“You’re coming in?” she asked.

“I’d like to. To hold you,” he added quickly. “I’m not sure your poor pussy could take any more today.”

“I think I can take a lot more than you suspect,” she laughed, pulling him into the room. She shut the door.

“Can I ask you something?” she asked. She walked toward the bed, getting undressed as she moved. He wanted to photograph the smooth line of her back. Earlier he’d been struck by fine movement of muscle in her abdomen. Would she let him capture her on film before she left here?

“Jamie?” she prompted.

“Huh? Oh. Yeah, sure. Ask.”

“You were a million miles away,” she commented.

“Not so far. Just admiring you.”

A faint veil of rose crawled up her neck to her cheeks. She shook her head. “The golden tongue of the Irish.”

He raised a brow. “My tongue can do far more than that. Wanna see?”

“I could be convinced. So...I was wondering...does it bother you when I’m with your cousins and Patrick?”

“No,” he laughed. “It’s...stunning. So hot. And we seem...”

“Connected,” she offered.

Jamie nodded. “Connected. Knowing that’s there, knowing you’ll come to me after, that your mouth is mine, just makes it hotter. Someday, hopefully, I’ll marry. Sean and David won’t ever have a third. They’re content as they are, though they like the occasional woman. I’d always share with them. Knowing my wife was mine, but that they enjoyed her and she’d always be in bed with me afterward would just arouse me more.”

She sat on the bed. “So why don’t you join in?”

He settled beside her. "Three perfect men then me. Would I even have a shot?"

"They're not perfect. And for the record..." She kissed his chin then his mouth. Her tongue slipped over his lips. "First shot."

She straddled him, taking his mouth fully and pushing him backward onto the mattress. She flattened over him. "I'm not a nympho, by the way. I didn't have sex for eight months before coming here, and before that, it was pretty infrequent even though I was engaged. And before Antonio, it was a few years."

"I didn't think you were. You're eager but not all over us all the time. And you blush too prettily." On cue, the flush in her cheeks grew deeper. He nipped at her bottom lip. "Antonio...that's the asshole? The guy who hit you?"

"Yeah."

He turned her so they were on their sides and he could cuddle her against his chest. He closed his eyes and rested his chin on the top of her head, surprised by the strength of the anger that surged through him. Antonio had better not show up in Daly.

"No one will hurt you here," Jamie promised.

He had a feeling the one most in danger of being hurt here was him. He was falling. Hard and fast.

\* \* \* \*

The sun streamed through the window with insidious force as Rayna tried to stay deep in the fuzzy folds of sleep. Waking slowly, she stretched. Jamie's strong arms curled around her and his powerful body pressed to her back. She smiled at the feel of his naked thighs against hers as she stretched. Finally... Finally, he had enough confidence in her to take off his pants.

Turning in his embrace, she kissed his chest and twined her leg through his—

Wait...

She froze then cautiously moved her foot where his left foot should be. So that was it. Would he be horrified that she'd woken before him and discovered what he'd kept secret. Tilting her head, she looked into his face. Jamie stared down at her. Wide awake. Waiting.

"You didn't want to show me?" she asked.

"Freaks some people out."

"Oh Jamie..." she sighed, pained by what he'd gone through and the demons he must still fight. "Not me. It doesn't freak me out. Not that, not the scars." Truth be told, the only thing that freaked her out was the realization she was starting to fall in love with this man. She'd never

believed in love at first sight—and she didn't want it either. She couldn't stay here. She had plans in Oregon. *What plans, Ray? Sitting on your grandmother's couch looking at want ads? And now, sitting on your grandmother's couch and thinking of Jamie?*

She shushed her inner voice and pressed to him again, running her foot along his good leg. The best way to show him this wouldn't stop her affections seemed to be showing him she still wanted him.

"The prosthetic gets uncomfortable. I must have taken it off in the middle of the night while I was still mostly asleep. I wouldn't have if I'd been awake. Not here—"

"Were you intending to hide this the entire time?"

He met her question with silence, and she knew that must have been his plan. She let out an irritated breath.

"I know we haven't known each other long," she told him, "but everything... everything seems to be in fast forward with us. I guess unbridled sex will do that. And, well, after the intimacies we've shared, the connection we both feel, it hurts that you don't trust me."

"Rayna..."

"Haven't I proved over and over that your scars don't change my attraction to you? I can't say it doesn't matter. Of course, it matters! That bomb hurt you. It's something you have to live with. But it doesn't make you less of a man. And it doesn't make me want you less. In fact," she said, kissing his shoulder, "my need for you just seems to be growing."

He pushed her onto her back and rolled over her. His knees worked between hers. "Where have you been all my life?"

"Until about a year ago...leading a somewhat boring existence a thousand miles away." Her fingers outlined his face, tracing his strong lips and cheekbones. Even with the scars partially marring the left side of his countenance, he was a stunning man. Drool-worthy her friend, Kelsey, would say. The injury just managed to make him appear dangerous. A man with a dark history. "Tell me what you're not showing me," she said.

"My leg was more badly damaged than the rest of me. I lost part below the knee."

She nodded. "And now I'm supposed to go running in fear? Revulsion?"

His thighs tightened against hers. "Lord, I hope not. But I don't want pity."

"Hmm...well, pity's a tough thing, isn't it? Would I be a decent human if I didn't feel bad that this has happened to you? Not really. Just be satisfied that it doesn't change how I react to you. If you were as whole as everyone else or any more gorgeous, I'd treat you the same."

"Any more gorgeous?" he laughed.

"Oh shush. You're a good looking man and you know it. Haven't you heard? Women find scars dashing." She shifted, rubbing her pelvis against his. His position had pressed his rigid arousal against her vagina and she wanted him now. Geez, she was slick enough he certainly couldn't miss it as she undulated. Could he? "And..." she breathed. "I, um, think I've adequately recovered from yesterday, Dr. Jamie. Do you think maybe you could make love to me...make me scream?"

He regarded her for a long moment, and she wondered if he was trying to see inside her head. "Scream?" he finally replied. "We might wake up the others."

"They can watch if they'd like." She shrugged, her folds immediately wetter at the prospect. Where had this part of her been hiding all her life? She'd never imagined being with more than one man or having sex with anyone she barely knew or letting someone watch her.

"Mmm, but I want you all to myself this morning."

"Then have me. Just please, please fuck me." Heat rushed into her face and she looked away. *Where* had this woman *come* from?

Jamie kissed along her jaw to her ear as she trembled beneath him. "You blush so nicely," he teased. "Don't be embarrassed. I like that you want me. I like that you want me more than anyone else."

"You can tell?"

"I can tell. So can they. Patrick's rather pleased. Fancies himself quite the matchmaker." He nipped at her shoulder then his mouth travelled over her collarbone and down to her breast. His tongue lashed across her nipple, drawing a long moan. Heat flooded through her, and she arched into his mouth, wanting more pressure, wanting him to draw her deep. Sweet tension knotted inside her as her nipples drew tight, the areolas crinkling from the warmth of his tongue and the cool of the room.

She ran her hands over his back as she shifted restlessly beneath him. He was having nothing of it. His mouth worked over her breast, nipping and pulling at the tip until she was crying out mindlessly.

"You're so sensitive," he murmured, moving to the other nipple. "I bet I could make you come just by doing this to your breasts."

His tongue traced the tan circle of skin and occasionally flicked out to swipe over the tip. He twisted the bud he'd just left, drawing out a needy gasp. Lava seemed to burn through her. It

pooled in her cunt, waiting to incinerate them both. His teeth caught the peak he worked, and she shattered, screaming his name.

Then he was there, driving forcefully into her, parting the folds that clenched from the cataclysm he'd wrought on her. He didn't allow a moment's reprieve as he pistoned in and out of her. Her body clutched at him, and she tumbled headlong into a second more powerful orgasm.

"Jamie!" she screamed. Her pussy turned to liquid around him. She clung to him, her head thrown back on the pillow, and her eyes squeezed shut. One leg curled over his hip as the other locked around his leg. His hand grabbed her thigh while he propped himself up with the other, his cock ever driving. He pressed his face to her neck.

Clinging together, they rocketed up another precipice.

"God, Rayna, you're so tight around me."

"Fuck me harder, Jamie. I want to feel you in me all day."

He moved fast and hard. She met him shove for shove. A strange desperation propelled her. A need for him. A need to show him how special, how arousing, how perfect she found him.

With a deep groan, Jamie stiffened over her and his groin thrust forward one last time, pushing deep as he empty himself.

"Sweetness," he gasped, panting unevenly.

"Mmm..." she mumbled, still caught in the overwhelming sensations of his loving. She hugged him, her cheek to his. Nothing—no one—was like this. Jamie could plug into her soul and give her everything she needed. This was supposed to be one week with no strings. Even with the talk of connection to Jamie, she was still supposed to leave in a few days. How would she be able to do it?

These last days, belonging to the O'Keefes... She'd never fit in so easily. She'd never felt so needed. Or desired. Even by Antonio, but he didn't *desire* her. He wanted to own and subjugate her. She was a thing to him.

"You okay, love?" Jamie murmured, kissing a path along her neck. He slid over to lay beside her then cuddled her close.

There was a big difference between belonging and being owned, she decided as the warm glow of his caring blanketed her. She liked belonging to the O'Keefes—especially to Jamie. Staying here had been the right decision, but it was a decision that would alter the rest of her life. Nothing else would come close. She'd never forget Daly, Wyoming or the special men she'd met here.

\* \* \* \*

“Look at this.”

Sandwiched between David and Jamie in a booth at Leena’s, Rayna looked at the ad Patrick indicated while they waited for their lunches. Jamie’s arm lay behind her shoulders, a casual sign of possession. Still, David played his fingers along her thigh, rousing her rarely dormant desire for these men. She might spend most of her time with Jamie and be emotionally connected to him, but the other three men continued to send her pulse racing—something Jamie didn’t seem to mind.

“Mail order brides? Seriously?” she asked Patrick.

“Might be a way to get women out here,” he said.

Beside him, Sean snorted. “Right and how are you going to introduce the ménage and sharing ideas to the lucky girl?”

Patrick pulled the paper back in front of him and lifted it to peruse the page again. “This isn’t one of those pay for a bride from Romania kind of things. It’s like a dating service. American girls. They come here, check you out, decide if they want to stay—”

“Rayna has a better idea,” Jamie interrupted. “How did you put it, sweetness? Daly, the Mecca of Men?”

“How would that work?” David asked.

She shrugged. “We build a tourism plan. Make Daly desirable to outsiders—especially women who might be looking for a change from the rat races and dead-end dating of the big city. You’d need to implement changes here, but mostly you just need good advertising to the rest of the country. Personally, I’d suggest treating it a lot like a trip to a dude ranch or Club Med. Visitors come in and they stay at O’Keefe’s Bed and Breakfast, but in addition to that, they have an itinerary planned out for them—with free time built in of course.”

Patrick took her hand and kissed her knuckles, shooting a ribbon of arousal through her. “Lady, where have you been all my life? Can I be your first customer?”

The other men laughed.

“This is what she does,” Jamie supplied. “She’s a tourism researcher in North Carolina.”

“And developer by the sound of it,” David added.

“All part of the job,” Rayna murmured.

Patrick set aside his paper. “Do you think it could work?”

"Well, yeah," she said. "The faster the pace gets in cities, the more people are drawn to Smalltown, USA. A certain sector of the population anyway, and that's who you'd key into. Certainly, by the time a good tourism professional finished with Daly, there wouldn't be any place more small town than here. The ultimate secluded destination. And by 'good', I mean someone who'd tweak, not give the place a huge facelift."

"Sounds good to me," Leena replied as she came to the table with their meals. "But where would you start?"

"Usually it has to be presented to a town council."

"That'll be a tough sell," Jamie laughed. "All you'll need to say is 'I have an idea for getting women to come to Daly' and they'd okay the proposal."

"We're not that easy," David retorted, reaching around Rayna to smack Jamie.

"You said O'Keefe's Bed and Breakfast," Sean said.

"Just an example," Rayna replied. "It's a big place, but you guys live there and you'd need someone to run it."

"We couldn't live there?" Sean asked.

"Well sure you could. You have plenty of space. What are there? Ten bedrooms?"

"Yeah, five on the second floor and five on the third," Jamie told her. "Plus we own much of the land surrounding the house and the garage. We can build."

Excited by the prospect, they chatted about the idea for the rest of lunch. Rayna got a glimpse of how friendly—and nosy—people of Daly could be, too. Saturday seemed to be the day for visiting Leena's, and cowboys galore stopped past the table, many of them listening in to the conversations for a spell and giving their opinions. Before he and Sean left to get supplies from the city, David nudged her and laughed that they wouldn't need that meeting after all. The whole of Daly would know about the idea before nightfall and he didn't doubt he'd start getting phone calls to see when the project would start.

"*You* are a big hit," Jamie chuckled as they walked back to the house with Patrick.

"Me?" Rayna asked. "I was just talking. Besides, I have a shoe in. I have a vagina."

"And there wasn't a flaccid cock in the place," Patrick added.

"Geez, Trick," Jamie exclaimed in amusement, giving his brother a shove.

"Just sayin', Jay. Just sayin'."

Rayna shook her head. "You two..."

"But you want us," Patrick teased.



"Mmm...of course. What woman wouldn't want two green eyed, black haired, drool-worthy Irishmen whispering sweet nothings to her in their tantalizing brogues?"

"So we're just sex objects?" Jamie laughed.

"Especially you, Jamie. I respect Patrick."

Patrick hooted. "Yer a cheeky lass, ye are. I like it." He swatted her on the rear with his magazine then gave her a peck on the temple. "Bring some of that cheek to bed tonight, and think about that plan of yours. I want a woman just as special as Jamie's."

Leaving her speechless, he sauntered off to his truck to head out to one of the ranches for his Saturday poker game.

*Just as special as Jamie's?* She turned to the man in question, and he gave her a small smile. "Ignore, Trick," he said. "He's an ass."

"He's sweet, and very cool about your possession of mouth privileges."

"Speaking of..." Jamie said. He leaned in and kissed her lightly. "Yeah, I'm a lucky guy."

"What he said..." she trailed off, shifting uncomfortably.

"About having a special woman. Just ignore him. He was speaking out of turn. Hopefully someday, there will be a woman in my life—someone who's adventurous and will occasionally include the other men in our sex but who's committed to me." He paused, shook his head then sighed. "That's all bullshit."

That startled her, and she stared at him.

"About someday and all that," he said. "I can't deny what's going on between us is special. Neither can you. And I know as soon as you get your car and the bank problems ironed out that you're on your way out of here. But I want you to stay. I know it's fast—"

"Really fast," she murmured. It was true. This *was* all so fast, and she couldn't deny her attraction either.

"Couldn't you consider it? Try us out. Try *me* out." His hand shoved through his hair, and he let out a frustrated sound. "Hell, I don't even know what you're thinking, if I'm totally out of line or even what's your ideal?"

"I thought I knew. But after this week, I'm completely rethinking things." She looked down the street. The mid-afternoon sun shone brightly and a slight breeze sent a burst of dust swirling down the quiet road. Two older gentlemen had come into town, and Leena had set up a table for them on the wide sidewalk outside her place. Rayna almost laughed when she saw they were playing checkers. The local sheriff was in front of the police station washing the building's

windows. Leena's guys, as she called them, were setting up chairs outside the bar, getting ready for Saturday night—and it would be 'hopping' according to Sean.

The police cruiser was parked in front of the police station, but otherwise there were no vehicles and no traffic noises. It was just a lazy day on Main street. So quiet and still and unbelievably peaceful.

And Jamie wanted her to stay here. Could she do that? She'd left everything behind, and she wasn't going *to* anything in Oregon. But...could she stay and live in this town in the middle of nowhere, an hour from anything? Even more, could she live in the sort of relationship he wanted?

There wasn't a doubt in her mind that he wanted her as that woman he described—the one who was his but that he shared. That certainly wasn't the fairytale partnering she'd been raised on. It was different, and despite her tenderness for Jamie, it made her hot. She couldn't help her attraction for the other three.

Lord, she wanted to say yes. Wasn't this what she'd agonized over earlier? The thought that dogged her with every step as her desire grew stronger—that she wanted to stay here with them? And wasn't that a sign? That her need was growing rather than waning. Jamie had wormed his way inside her heart when she hadn't even been looking. Geez, a relationship had been the absolute last thing on her mind.

"And what are you thinking?" Jamie asked quietly. It struck her how strong he was. She'd known—he had to be to deal with what had happened to him—but he had a deeper strength that appeared when he faced possibly unfavorable responses.

"I'm thinking...I'm *very* tempted." She smiled. "Let's go inside and you can tempt me some more. I like when you wander around the house and work in your office without your shirt on."

"Um, sweetness, I don't wander with my shirt off."

"You should."

The phone was ringing when they entered the house. Jamie grabbed it from the table near the door. "Hello... Yeah, just a sec," he said, holding the phone out to her. "For you."

"Hello?"

"Rayna?" Kelsey's frantic voice came over the phone.

Rayna's stomach lurched at the panic in her friend's voice, afraid she already knew. Antonio trouble. "What's wrong, Kels?"

"I got your account straightened out. Management fired him, Ray. This morning. You're not the only one he's done this to. As soon as they heard... They just fired him on the spot. On a

Saturday! Security escorted him to his desk and then to the door. He doesn't know I told them. He thinks it's you, and he's furious. Scary angry, Ray. Like he could kill someone."

Rayna sank into the wall, icy terror dripping through her despite her resolve to stay calm. "He doesn't know where I am."

"He knows. At least, I think he does. He must have been watching your account. Went in and flagged it again right before the bosses called him into a meeting. I think that's what tipped them off. They were watching, too."

She started to shake, and Jamie pulled her into his arms.

"Watch your back," Kelsey warned before they hung up.

"He knows where I'm at," Rayna whispered as she hung up the phone. She pulled from his embrace. "I've gotta get out of here." She was halfway to the stairs before she stopped. "I can't. My car—"

Jamie was beside her immediately and enfolded her in his arms once more. "It's okay. Remember? I promised no one would hurt you here. *No one's* going to touch you."

She nodded her head, but he obviously realized she didn't believe him. Antonio was good at hurting people and not getting caught. Even when cornered, his slick lies got him out of trouble.

"Rayna, listen to me. First, this might be Smalltown USA, but it's also home to a bunch of the most macho, tough guys you might meet. Nothing your ex can toss this way is more than they can and have handled. Second, this *is* Smalltown USA. Antonio's not getting into town without a lot of people noticing—especially if they're on the lookout. You couldn't be safer."

"Great. The nymphomaniac with the psycho ex-fiancé. I sure make an impression."

"Hey," Jamie lifted her chin to look at him, and she blinked back the tears that threatened. "No one thinks that," he said. "I heard several guys today talking about how lucky the O'Keefes are, and how they wish a sweet, pretty girl like you had landed on their doorstep instead of ours."

"That's nice," she replied, still shaking as she held onto him. She wasn't so sure everything would be fine. If she hadn't been terrified of Antonio, she wouldn't have run from town. She wouldn't have been crossing the country to get as far from him as she could. She wouldn't be here.

"Rayna," Jamie pleaded. "You've made me trust you. Now you trust me."

He kissed her nose as her guilt settled in. It wasn't fair of her to refuse the same thing she'd made him give her.

“I’ll try,” she promised. Nonetheless, she knew she’d do anything she needed in order to keep him safe.

## *Chapter Six*

When Jamie was injured, word had spread through Daly like wildfire. He hadn't been able to come home immediately, but the community had gathered around him like a protective hedge. Their energy and support had strengthened him on days when he'd thought he might die. Some had traveled overseas with his brothers to visit him. Some had visited when he'd been strong enough to be transferred to the States. More had visited when he's been moved to the hospital that served Daly and the surrounding communities. Cards and phone calls and small gifts had bolstered him and urged his recovery.

Even deformed as he was now, they accepted him. He was one of theirs. It was outsiders he didn't trust. Outsiders who shied away from him. Outsiders who made him feel self-conscious and doubt his worth.

Rayna had never made him feel that way. She'd accepted him from the first minute. People here didn't trust immediately, but they trusted Rayna. They saw her for the wonderful woman she was. Jamie didn't have a single doubt Daly would rally around her.

After sending her upstairs for a bubble bath—which she protested as a clichéd and sexist method of calming overwrought women—he made a few phone calls. David and Sean immediately turned around to head home and Patrick abandoned his weekly game. The sheriff went on alert.

Jamie knew word would travel. Anyone spending time in town would be on alert for strange cars that were doing more than just getting gas or driving through. This Antonio jerk wouldn't just sneak in. It was impossible.

Relatively sure of Rayna's safety, Jamie checked the locks on the back door and all the ground windows. Once his brother and cousins were home, he locked the front door, wishing they had an alarm system, but in Daly it was just unnecessary.

A few minutes later, Rayna came downstairs wrapped in a fluffy pink robe and smelling of lavender. Jamie pulled her to sit on his lap on the couch. The other men took seats around the room.

"Tell us about Antonio," Jamie urged. "What's he done?"

"We can tell he's a slimebucket," Patrick added. "Otherwise, he wouldn't be terrorizing you by screwing with your bank account access and disconnecting your cell phone."

"He's violent," she confessed. "There were little things I ignored or excused at first. Never physical things he did to me or other people. Just a maniacal streak I didn't recognize. Looking back, I realize he was verbally abusive at times. I didn't recognize that either. I just thought we were arguing. But he was hurtful in the things he said. I felt so stupid when I found out that that's one of the first warnings of an abuser."

Jamie stroked her back. "It's not like they wear signs."

"It was after we got engaged that things escalated. He wanted to script my every move, know where I was at and what I was doing at all times. Sometimes he got rough, but he didn't hurt me. Then one night, he beat the crap out of me. I reported him to the police and broke it off."

"Asshole," Patrick ground out, his fingers white on the arms of the chair where he sat. Sean and David were similarly tense. Jamie just continued to stroke her back. He lowered his forehead to her shoulder so she wouldn't see how enraged he was.

"He kept calling," she told them. "Apologizing, pleading, telling me how awful he felt and how he hadn't meant it. He wanted me back. He was so convincing, but I kept saying no even though I wondered if I was making a mistake. When he couldn't get me to say yes, he got violent again. He stalked me, did little things to make my life inconvenient or to scare me. He broke into my house the day before I left. I called the cops but he still managed to knock me around before they got there. He threatened to hurt me bad. The police called it a domestic dispute and hauled him away, but I knew he'd be out the next day—which I was right about according to Kelsey. So I packed up and ran in the dead of the night. And now he's been fired. I know he's coming here, and I know he intends to do something bad."

"Over my dead body," Jamie growled, finally looking at her and letting her see how serious he was.

"Don't say that," she whispered.

"He's not hurting you," he vowed.

“Damn straight,” Sean said. “Let him bring it on. He can find out what it’s like to have the shit kicked out of him.”

“No,” she protested. “I don’t want him anywhere near any of you. I need to leave. I need to go somewhere where he can’t find me. He’s not going to stop. You might teach him a lesson this one time, but he’ll just regroup and come up with something else. He thinks I’m his, and he’ll be damned if he lets anyone else have me—that’s what he told me.”

Rage clenched in Jamie’s stomach, deeper than any anger he’d felt toward the suicide bomber who’d changed his life. He was on the same page with Sean, and he was sure Patrick and David felt the same.

“Guys like him trip up,” Patrick said. He looked at Jamie. “You called Joe?” he asked, referring to the sheriff.

“Yeah, I called him right away.” Jamie grinned at Rayna. “He wants your friend to get the names of the other women he’s harassed. Do you have a picture?”

“No, but it’s on the web. Some award he won.”

“Joe wants it. He used to be FBI. If there’s dirt to be found on your friend, Antonio, he’ll find it. Joe loves small town life, but trust me, something like this gets his blood going. I think he’d like a little more action, but he’s not willing to go back to the city.”

She gave him a small smile. “I’ll call Kelsey and see what she can get. She seems to know everything that happens at that bank. That’s why I wanted her to help me with this.”

Getting up, she went into the front hallway to call.

“What now?” David asked.

“We keep her safe. That shit’s not gonna take long to surface,” Jamie said.

“Probably tomorrow,” Patrick said. “I wish I had time to call Sim, but he wouldn’t get here fast enough.”

Jamie wished the same. Before taking over the garage, his brother had done a stint in the Navy, and had been a SEAL for years before he retired. He personified the laid-back life, but Jamie knew he kept up his skills. If it wasn’t illegal, Patrick could take down Antonio and bury him in the backyard before anyone was the wiser.

Sim, his ex-dive partner who now wrote books and magazine articles on military history, was planning a move to Daly, but not for a few months.

Rayna returned and handed him a piece of paper with two names on it as well as a web address. “This what he wanted,” she said. “I hope he finds something.”

They all did. Jamie handed the paper to Patrick. "We're going upstairs," he said.

"Can we join you after I take care of this?" Patrick asked. He grinned. "A little diversion?"

Jamie looked at Rayna, and she nodded. "I really want to feel you holding me," she said.

"All of you. Surrounding me."

Mostly, she wanted Jamie but the more arms she had around her the better. She was pretty sure she was falling in love with him, but she cared deeply about the others. She could be with any one of them and be happy. And that amazed her. She'd attained a soul mate and three new best friends in the space of days. She couldn't imagine what it would be like without them in her life—an all too certain possibility for the near future. She'd leave in a few days, if not sooner. She didn't want Antonio coming near any of them.

She bit her lip as she climbed the stairs, Jamie close behind her. Kelsey had told her that he account was cleared up. Rayna had access to her money and could use her credit cards once more. Patrick had reported earlier that her car was running, barely; it still needed major repairs, but it might get it down the road.

By the time, she reached the top of the stairs, a plan had formed in her head. She had tonight with the O'Keefes, but before the sun rose, she'd leave Patrick a check for the work he'd done, write them a note and head for the next city—hopefully she could find it. Once there, she'd get a rental and head for her grandmother's. Antonio wouldn't find her there. Without his bank connections, it would be like a needle in a haystack—or worse. The United States was a big place, and she'd never told him much about her family who didn't quite approve of her taking off for the east coast.

Turning, she faced Jamie, who stood a step down from her. She'd never realized how tall he was. Inches separated their mouths, and she closed the distance. Her lips covered his. Her arms wrapped his shoulders. Slowly, she explored his mouth, tasting the man she wanted forever. She breathed him in, memorized the feel of his tongue against hers. Such longing filled her that she had to squeeze shut her eyes to keep her tears from falling.

As tender need warmed her, she stepped back, her eyes still closed, her arms still around him, her lips still claiming. Jamie moved up beside her and shuffled her toward the bedroom. He pulled off her robe halfway there. By the time they were through the doorway, she'd wrestled off his shirt and had his pants open. At the bed, he shoved down his jeans then sat and pulled them off the rest of the way.



Her eyes now open, she knelt, her gaze on his prosthetic. She thumped it with her knuckles. "Wanna take this off?"

"No. I don't know how much moving I'll do."

"Fair enough." She smiled. "As long as it's not because you're embarrassed for me to see it."

"Nope."

"Good. I'd hate to have to smack you up," she joked, then sobered. It wasn't funny in light of her problem.

"Ray, it's okay," he reassured her, no doubt guessing her thoughts from her expression.

Unable to say anything, she leaned forward and took his erection into her mouth. A low moan rattled through her at the feel of his smooth skin between her lips. Her stomach sucked in, reacting to the instant arousal that spiked to her pussy. Slowly, she took more of him, taking his iron-like shaft as deep into her throat as she could before releasing some suction and moving back toward the head. Her tongue lashed over the head, pressing into the slit that offered her his tantalizing pre-cum.

As if the secretion was an aphrodisiac, her nipples grew tight. Her skin tingled, needing more. Cream flooded her cunt and leaked to her thighs while tiny vibrations trembled through her.

She traced his length with her tongue, descending the shaft once more, faster this time. Jamie groaned, his fingers lacing into her hair as she worked him. Groaning, he leaned back on one hand and gave her leeway to do as she would. She almost grinned. She would have anyway.

More of his pre-cum flooded her tongue, and she knew he must be close to release. She grasped his cock and worked up and down with more speed. Suddenly, she jerked as she felt lips on her back. With great effort, she didn't let the kisses distract her from her effort as they traveled her spine. Peripherally, she saw Sean and David come to either side of her. They kissed her shoulders as each reached beneath her to fondle her breasts. They squeezed and pulled, drawing low moans as she kept at Jamie.

She squeaked as Patrick, who continued kissing her back, moved his hand between her thighs to find her clit. Her rhythm on Jamie faltered as she tried to concentrate despite the illicit sensations running through her. Regaining her pace—barely—she redoubled her efforts until Jamie jolted then cried out. His cum flooded her mouth, and she swallowed quickly to get all she could.

He wiped his thumb over her lip as she looked up at him. "Come up here," he said then caught her under the arms. She quickly climbed onto the bed while he scooted to recline against the headboard. He drew her to lie between his legs, her back pressed to his chest. "I want to hold you while they each fuck you," he told her. "I want to feel you move with them. I want to share each tremor that runs through your body. I want to capture your screams in my mouth."

She almost came just then. She kissed him wildly, needing him to know how hot he made her. She heard the rip of foil then felt one of the men climb between her thighs. Turning, she watched David probe her folds with his cock. She lifted into him, showing him she wanted him. Biting her lip as she smiled, she stared into his blue eyes.

"Yes...David," she moaned as he pushed inside. She reached for him, drawing him forward. She arched into him. Her shoulders slid against Jamie's pecs. David sucked a nipple into his mouth while Jamie cupped her other breast and manipulated the peak.

"Darling, you feel so good," David growled.

She undulated against him, loving the feel of his deep thrusts.

"Oh yeah, fuck him," Jamie murmured in her ear. "Do you know how hot it makes me to feel you taking him?"

A barrage of tremors pulsed through her at his words.

"Come, Rayna," he whispered. "Let me feel you shake as you clench him."

As if ignited by his command, she exploded into climax, screaming as she gushed around David. Her heels dug into the bed as she shoved into him. He grunted, finding his release. She was still convulsing as he moved to the side and his partner thrust into her hard.

"Sean! Oh God!" she gasped. Jamie's knees lifted beside her hips and she felt his renewed arousal pressing into her back.

Sean fucked her as hard as David had, driving her to two more orgasms before he to poured into his condom. David leaned up and kissed Sean as he came. She turned her head, twisting and kissing Jamie.

"Jamie," Patrick said. "Together?"

"Oh yeah," Jamie replied. His mouth feathered over hers and he nipped at her bottom lip.

Sean and David left the bed. Patrick lay down beside Jamie, and Jamie turned Rayna to straddle his brother. Her cunt slid down Patrick's wide cock and she moaned as he invaded her over-sensitized passage. Jamie moved behind her and kissed her spine as his brother had earlier.

She lurched as his cool fingers rubbed over her anus. Looking over her shoulder, she saw him hand a tube back to Sean. His fingertips pressed against her.

With little choked cries, she rode Patrick while Jamie slipped a finger into her. Over and over, he thrust until he finally added a second digit then a third. She sighed when he abandoned his stroking and Patrick slipped free of her, leaving her bereft. She wanted more, so much more.

She startled when Jamie's cock pushed to her back passage then groaned as his tip entered her. Together... This is what they'd meant. When Jamie was fully seated, stretching her as she'd never been stretched before, Patrick again entered her pussy. Her eyes went wide at the shocking sensation of two men inside her at once. She felt as if they were united, one erotic beast bent on pleasure. Her cries echoed in the room as they started to move, one in and one out in a practiced rhythm that blurred her vision.

Jamie banded his arm around her belly, holding her tight to him. Sean and David returned to the bed. They bent in and sucked her breasts. Their hands massaged up and down her thighs. Patrick bucked upward, his hands on her hips. This is what she'd asked for. All of them holding her. All of them surrounding her.

Suddenly, her body exploded out of control, lava flowing through her, her limbs shaking with the fire moving down her veins. She couldn't move, so the men moved her, prolonging her orgasms until she wilted with the exertion, wrung out by the numerous climaxes. Her brain was mush as she hung limply in Jamie's arms. She was only vaguely aware of Patrick's cry as he came, followed almost immediately by Jamie's heat filling her rectum.

She fell forward into the pillows beside Patrick. She couldn't move as each of the men kissed her neck, then left the room—each of the men but Jamie. He sat on the edge of the bed. She heard a clunk then he laid down and pulled her into his arms. She smiled into his chest, weakly kissing his chest.

"I love you, Jamie," she murmured.

His arms tightened. "God, I love you Rayna. I'm so happy you came to me."

Yeah, she thought. She was glad she'd come to him, too.

\* \* \* \*

Jamie was sound asleep when Rayna got up. Regretfully, she glanced at her luggage. There was no taking it with her. Her clothes from earlier lay atop the suitcases and she grabbed them as she passed. She dressed on the way down the stairs. In the dining room, she found her purse.

Quickly, she wrote a note and made out a check for the car repair—at least what she suspected it had cost. She replaced her checkbook, pulled out her keys then shoved them in her pocket. Slinging her bag over her shoulder, she headed for the front door. Once there, she slipped on her shoes.

Sorrow filled her as she paused. Her heart hurt as if it were being gouged from her chest. Why couldn't Antonio just leave her be? Why did she have to find the O'Keefes now when her life was in such shambles? She'd never forget them or this. And Jamie... He was emblazoned on her soul forever. It didn't matter that she'd been in a ménage with him and three other men—there would never be another man for her, whatever the circumstance.

With tears flowing down her cheeks, she stepped outside into the utter stillness of Daly Wyoming. The bar had closed a few hours ago, and all the cowboys had made their ways home. Silence and peace followed and now reigned over the night. The stars shown overhead in a spectacular display she'd never seen elsewhere.

This place was perfect. She would have loved to call it home.

She didn't want to leave. She wanted to stay forever. Glancing up at the house, she reminded herself why she was going. To protect the man she loved and the men for whom she held great affection. She'd rather have forever alone than have any of them hurt. That was the way it had to be.

## *Chapter Seven*

Dread filled Jamie as he woke and discovered Rayna's side of the bed cold. He was downstairs in minutes. His stomach sank when he saw the note and the check on the table. She was gone. He knew that before reading whatever she'd scrawled on the page. His sorrow soon turned to fury when he read the note—the impersonal note of thanks, with an apology for leaving so quickly then the added sentiment that it was for the best.

*Best?* The best for whom? he wondered. How could she just leave? How could she go without even saying goodbye to him? And the danger...

God, if anything happened to her, he didn't know what he'd do.

He was still standing there clutching the note when Patrick came downstairs. "What is— Good lord, man. Underwear? The windows are wide open." He grabbed an afghan off the couch and handed it to Jamie who was still in a stupor.

"She left in the middle of the night," Jamie told his brother.

Had everything she'd said been a lie? No. No, she was doing this to protect him. Jamie knew that as clearly as he knew he had to follow her wherever she'd gone. He couldn't just let her go. But how would he find her?

However he had to.

Determined, he went upstairs to get dressed. When he returned, the sheriff was in the front hall talking to Patrick while Sean and David stood nearby, listening and drinking coffee.

"Jay, you're not gonna believe this," Patrick said.

"What? Is Rayna still here?"

Sadness filled Patrick's eyes as he shook his head. "It's this Antonio guy. That's not even his real name. Joe's been running stuff, and I guess the jerk's real name is Mick. He's wanted for murder and a host of other things."

Jamie's blood ran cold. Murder? Dear lord, he could have killed Ryana—

*God, he can't touch her now. Please don't let him find her.*

"Have you seen anything suspicious?" Joe asked.

They all told him no. After they'd promised to contact him if Mick/Antonio showed up or anything strange happened, Joe left to patrol the town and check out the ranches as he did every morning.

Jamie went into the kitchen to get some coffee. Patrick followed.

"What are you thinking?" Patrick asked.

Jamie just looked at him for a few minutes, then poured the brew into his mug. "I'm thinking I'm an idiot. That she couldn't feel anything for me then take off like this. And I'm thinking she must love me like she said, and that's why she took off. And I'm desperately trying to figure out how I'm going to find her."

"Maybe Joe's contacts..."

He hadn't thought of that. If Joe could find out this Antonio guy was a murderer, surely he could find out where Rayna's family lived. A smile had just curled his lips when a pounding rattled the front door.

"Where is she!" an unfamiliar, male voice bellowed.

He and Patrick looked at one another. "Call 9-1-1," Jamie said, already heading out of the kitchen. This man wasn't leaving this house unless he was in handcuffs.

"What do you want?" he asked coldly as he glared at the man by the front door. Antonio had a weaselly look about him, slick and underhanded, but perhaps that was just Jamie's impression of the man because he hated him on sight. Well, before then truthfully. Any man who'd hit a woman—

"I want my fiancée, scarface," Antonio sneered.

Jamie let the insult slide as he stepped into line with his cousins to block the way. "She's not your fiancée."

"Like hell she's not!"

"What planet are you from, man?" Sean asked. "She broke up with your ass when you kicked the shit outta her. Truthfully, I think she shoulda cut off your dick, but she's too sweet for that. I wouldn't count on that kindness from us."

"Oh, so you're tough guys? A bunch of fags, the lot of you, and one of you is a cripple." He stepped toward Jamie as Patrick joined the line.

"I wouldn't, man," he warned quietly.

"What the hell is your problem?" Antonio demanded. "Just send my bitch down here to me, and we'll be out of your face."

Jamie almost cold-cocked him right then and there. His hand clenched into a fist. A few more minutes and Joe would be here to collect this piece of shit.

"She is not 'your bitch'," Jamie growled. "She's ours. Our *woman*. You got that! She belongs to us now, and you can just go to hell."

"Why you—" He never got any further than that as he lunged at Jamie. Jamie's fist planted in Antonio's nose a second before he was shoved backward by the felon. Jamie reeled, but David caught him just before a sickening crack echoed through the room, followed by Antonio's screech.

"I warned you not to," Patrick rasped. He held the offensive man in a relentless grip, his fingers biting into the arm he'd just broken. Behind them, Joe and Rayna filled the doorway.

"Geez, O'Keefe," Joe sighed, taking custody of the injured man. Jamie only had eyes for Rayna.

She'd come back.

She'd come back. Rayna had made it to Gillette, sobbing the whole way. By the time she'd gotten there, she was sure she'd made a mistake. Jamie said he could protect her, that she would be safe. He'd asked her to trust him. She loved him; shouldn't she believe him?

Not trusting her car to make the trip back, she'd rented a vehicle as soon as the shop had opened. Armed with a GPS and rehearsing apologies, she'd driven back as fast as possible.

Horror had filled her when she'd pulled down Main Street. The sheriff's cruiser was parked in front of the house. Antonio's car was in the drive. No! No, no, no!

She'd screeched to a halt and dashed to the door, heedless of her safety. Joe had held her back when she would have rushed inside. She heard Jamie tell Antonio that she belonged to the O'Keefes.

Her heart raced in her chest. She belonged to them... He still loved her. He could have just told Antonio she was gone and shoved him out the door. Instead, he defended her.

Joe held her back again when Antonio shoved Jamie. Panicked, she fought to get away from the sheriff. She couldn't let Antonio hurt Jamie because of her!

"No," she begged. "Let me—"

The awful crack of bones snapping stopped her, and she stared in horror at the scene. The sheriff suddenly released her, and she dashed forward, intent on getting to Jamie, not caring about anything else. Skirting Patrick and Antonio, she rushed to her man. He crushed her in his embrace. His green eyes flashed with disgruntled relief as he stared at her with such love, she nearly melted right there.

"Don't you ever leave like that again," he growled. "I was so worried about you."

"I won't. I'm sorry." She couldn't. It would be like ripping out her heart a second time. She just couldn't do that. To either of them. Her arms tightened, and she pressed her damp face into his neck. "I love you, Jamie."

"God, Rayna. I love you, too."

Holding each other as if they'd never let go, neither realized the entryway had emptied. Joe had dragged away Antonio; the other men now lounged in the living room pretending not to listen to the lovers.

"Rayna," Jamie said quietly for her ears only. "I want you to stay. With me. I want you to be mine."

"Yours and Patrick's and Sean's and David's?" she whispered.

"No. Mine. Maybe, if you want and if I want, we can share. But mostly, I just want you for myself." He lifted a hand to wipe the tears from her cheeks. "That is if you can live with 'scarface'."

"Don't you say that," she rasped.

"Will you stay with me?"

How could she not? "Yes," she vowed. "There's nowhere else I want to be."

"Whoo hoo!" Patrick whooped from the couch. "This means we'll soon be known as The Mecca for Men! I might get a woman of my own, too."

Rayna ignored him, a little unsure whether she should unleash him on the world—of course she should, she immediately decided. The men of Daly deserved love.

Jamie deserved love. "I didn't get my morning wake up call," she said with a grin.

"And whose fault is that?" Jamie laughed. He guided her away from his family. This morning, there was no sharing. It was just her and Jamie.

"I really am sorry," she said as soon as they were alone in her bedroom.

He nodded. "Get undressed."



She blinked in surprise at his surprisingly flat tone. A little worried, she pulled off her shirt then shoved off her jeans.

“Now, get on the bed.”

“Jamie...”

He crossed his arms and waited.

Her heart fluttering a mile a minute, she complied. She'd hurt him by leaving. She'd make it up to him if this was what he wanted. Carefully, she moved to the center of the bed and arranged herself with her arms at her side, her legs slightly parted, her eyes sending him an open invitation.

He smiled then as he stood at the side of the bed, looking down at her. She saw the love that warmed her, love she wanted to feel for the rest of her life. “No more apologies,” he said.

She bit her lip. “Okay.”

His grin turned feral, and a shiver went through her. Intent was clear in his eyes. She wasn't getting out of this bed any time soon.

“Mine,” he growled. His finger drew over her erect nipple. Her body immediately softened, her sex growing wet for him.

“Always,” she promised. “Always yours, Jamie.” She opened her arms to him, ready for more love than she could probably handle. She hoped he was ready for the same. She might belong to Jamie, but Jamie belonged to her, too.

As he covered her body with his, she whispered a prayer of thanks that she'd broken down here and been introduced to the Daly way. From now on, it was the only way. She couldn't imagine anything more perfect. Small town, unlimited love and a lifetime of pleasure safe in Jamie O'Keefe's arms.

## *About the Author*

When it comes to books and movies, Brynn has one rule: there must be a happy ending. After that one requirement, anything goes. And it just might in her books.

She lives in Michigan with her husband and two children, who love her despite her occasional threats to smite them. They humor her and let her think she's a goddess...as long as she provides homemade chocolate chip cookies on a regular basis. Brynn has conducted workshops at several writers' conferences around the country and enjoys mentoring and meeting new people.

According to Brynn, her writing success can be attributed to an eclectic collection of music, her local road construction crews, a trusty notebook, and of course, her husband, Mr. Inspiration, who puts up with a lot in the name of research.

Brynn loves to talk to her readers and can be found at [www.brynnpaulin.com](http://www.brynnpaulin.com).

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***Two Plus One* by Brynn Paulin**

College math teacher, Briony Swift, lives life on the straight and narrow. After all, one plus one always equals two. But when two of her adult male students visit her office one afternoon, she soon discovers that one plus two might be a new and better equation to explore...

***Body of Art* by Bronwyn Green**

Art professor Seth Granger has two problems—an absentee life drawing models and a case of unrequited lust. Luckily, his troubles have the same answer—his colleague, Dr. Callie Sullivan.

The trick will be getting her out of her clothes and into his studio...and hopefully into his bed. However, she's intent on keeping her mind on her art and ignoring him. Now he just needs to convince her she should be his body of art.

***Sense and Sensuality* by Cara Hart**

Eleanor McLaren leads a subdued life. She hates parties, avoids social interactions, and she cannot talk to men. But within the shell of her timidity lies the heart of a siren. Afraid of her own boldness, she hides her desires. Especially from the man who stars in her dreams of passionate encounters and works in her department.

Eddie Harrington has never lacked for partners in his pleasure games. But for some reason, Eleanor is the one woman he can't get out of his head. She is definitely not the type he usually pursues. Then he sees her at a bar, looking like his wildest fantasy. And one night with her is not going to be enough. The man who never commits just might have met his match—until a mistake from his past forces her to choose between trusting him and walking away.

***Sex Ed* by Mia Watts**

Mina Lasky has a pesky crush on Biology professor, Derek Link. They've worked in tandem in the same University facility long enough that even the sound of his voice makes her hot. It's time to put the fantasy to an end. Mina signs up to be his guinea pig in a female sexuality lab for those on

the doctorate track. She hopes to work Derek out of her system while enjoying some much-needed sexual stimulation.

Dr. Derek Link has been itching to get his hands on the quiet, sexy Chemistry professor. He can't believe his luck when she signs up to be his lab. But one night isn't enough and Mina won't admit they can have something a lot more long term.

And when one of the students recognizes Mina, her heart isn't the only thing on the line. With her career in the hands of a blackmailer, and her heart begging to trust Derek, she's beginning to think the lab was a very bad idea.

## *Handcuffs and Lace*

### **Resplendence Publishing's Erotic Romance Line of Law Enforcement Themed Stories**

#### ***She's Got Balls* by Mia Watts**

What do you do with a “wife” who is more than you can handle?

When the FBI and local law enforcement team up for a mutually beneficial crime-stopping partnership, Rookie Agent Chris Tarpington and Detective Vin Pilk team up to prototype the new alliance. How better to bust a ring of drug dealing suburban housewives than to go undercover—way undercover—as a married couple?

Though Chris reluctantly gets in touch with his feminine side, he quickly finds ways of making his sexy partner squirm. And Vin is definitely squirming, but will he run away from his faux wife, or right into “her” arms?

One thing is for sure: as the investigation heats up, ‘inter-agency cooperation’ will take on a whole new meaning..

#### ***Ticket Me More* by Tia Fanning**

Hailed by the bridal flower world as an artistic genius, Meli works long nights making bouquets for women lucky enough to find love, while she herself lives a life of solitude. She yearns to share her heart and body with someone other than Bob, her *Battery Operated Boyfriend*, but acute shyness keeps her from engaging the “living” world.

However, Meli’s quiet and predictable existence takes an unexpected turn when she is pulled over and ticketed by the most gorgeous cop she has ever encountered—Officer Michael Johnson. Though he doesn’t seem to notice her as anything more than a traffic violation, Meli makes plans to overcome her timid nature and seize the police officer’s attention...using any speed necessary.

#### ***Cuffed and Dangerous* by Bronwyn Green**

When a bounty claim becomes a fight of five against one, Jude Caulfield and Gideon Wells step in to help hunter, Wrenn Saunders, before she’s mortally injured. Wrenn soon learns that three is a good number whether in a fight or in the bedroom. Especially in the bedroom—and that’s just where Jude and Gideon want to keep her.

### ***Stripped* by Celia Kyle**

Sometimes life just required tequila...and vodka...and a shot or two of whiskey for good measure. Jasmine Wright, Jazz to her friends, has reached that point. And now all that liquor is making her clothes fall off—in the middle of the street. Good thing a friendly neighborhood police officer stops to help.

Sheriff Ian Blackwell has loved Jazz since high school and then some. When their relationship burned out so many years ago, he wasn't sure he would recover. Now he's getting a second chance, and he won't Jazz slip away from him this time. He has her naked and at his mercy, and he's going to keep her that way. Forever.

### ***Search Me Baby, One More Time* by Melinda Barron**

Wren Thornberry's life isn't going according to plan. She let her father talk her out of marrying Bryan Stockard, the man she loves, and moved halfway around the world. Now she's back home in Texas, babysitting her grandmother while grandma and her boy-toy work through their list of sexual exploits, making themselves the talk of the town.

But what Wren doesn't know is that things in her hometown are about to heat up even more, and it will have nothing to do with her grandmother. It seems that Bryan Stockard is still around, he wants to get back into Wren's life—by any means necessary, and now he has just the tools to do it: a police uniform, handcuffs, and the authority to make Wren *assume the position*.

### ***Going Commando* by Catherine Chernow**

Bounty hunter Shyra Lawrence listens to her favorite radio station one morning where the DJ's are discussing "going commando" —*a.k.a.* wearing no undies. Captivated by their conversation, she decides to shed her panties in favor of the freedom that wearing no underwear brings.

Enthusiastic, Shyra sends an email to her best friend, Donna, detailing the delights of panty-freedom, but unbeknownst to Shyra, she's hit the send key...to the wrong email addy!

When Derek Grayson opens his emails that morning, he discovers that his #1 employee and top bounty hunter has sent him an erotic, enticing message about going commando. Derek has always been polite, professional, and so damned attracted to Shyra that it's almost painful. Working day in and day out with voluptuous woman has sent Derek's hormones into overdrive on more than one occasion.

Now, Shyra's shed her panties and Derek's got all he can do to contain his lust when she announces that she's... GOING COMMANDO.

## Also Available from Resplendence Publishing

### ***Faery Surprising* by Mia Watts**

Flora Harper isn't amused when her faery "gift" transports her in the middle of a self-induced orgasm to a professional football locker room after practice. The fact that it's the team she works for, and their new quarterback, Ian Tate, wants to finish what she's started, flies in the face of the non-fraternization policy.

Ian has been traded to a rival city so he catch a blackmailer red-handed. Time is against him, as are the number of injuries he's had in his career. It sounds like a great deal, except filming the Public Relations specialist in a sexually compromising position leaves a sour taste in his mouth. When he discovers that the PR person is emotionally distant, hard-on inducing Flora, getting a whole lot closer to her feels so incredibly right...until she finds out why he's really on the team.

### ***Just Right* by Bronwyn Green**

When Department of Natural Resources officer, Gwendolyn Locke, hits a black bear on the way home from work one night, her entire view of reality changes. She discovers that shape-shifters exist, and she's just become Goldilocks to three gorgeous, very aroused men who also happen to be werebears. Being snowbound has never been so hot.

### ***Oriana and the Three Werebears* by Tia Fanning**

Oriana Ricci has taken over the family business—flying cargo and rich tourists around Alaska's barely inhabited Kodiak Archipelago. When her plane malfunctions and she's forced to make an emergency landing, she finds herself stranded in the middle of a National Wildlife Refuge. With no civilization for miles and no hope of rescue, she thinks all is lost...

Until she stumbles upon the entrance to an underground bunker.

Jack, Jordan, and Jonathan McMathan own and operate a secret intelligence firm contracted by the US Government. Hidden away in an old Cold War spy station located in the middle of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, the brothers are not only able to do their top secret jobs safely without fear of discovery, but are better to protect their other, more personal secret: they have the ability to shift into Kodiak bears.

Like a fairy tale gone bad, the brothers return home to find their lunch tasted—or eaten, their computer chairs adjusted—or broken, and a beautiful blonde sleeping in one of their beds. This situation poses a big problem for the brothers...



Their location is now compromised, but more importantly, what are they to do with the lady?

### ***Their Lady Liberty* by Ann Cory**

There's nothing Liberty likes better than to spend her time with the two men who ignite her body and show her pleasures like no others. She belongs to them both, and doesn't want it any other way.

Brandon and Neil can focus on little else but thoughts of Liberty's hot body and carefree ways, both always dreaming of the next time they be together. As Brandon and Neil see it, there are worse things to be than at the mercy of a sex goddess.

Behind the steamed up windows of Brandon's van, the threesome meet up for an afternoon rendezvous. Here they can love freely, and live out their most decadent fantasies with... *Their Lady Liberty*.

### ***The Elves and I* by Catrina Calloway**

Marni Sands is spoiled, pampered, and has never done a day's work in her life. Arrested for speeding through a small town traffic circle, Marni's defiant attitude makes the judge think long and hard about her punishment. He assigns her 'community service' in Christmas Town, where she's to (*horror of all horrors!*) work with the elves that live there and help them create toys for some very needy children.

Meet Kip, Noel, and Eldan—the three hot, hunky elves assigned to keep Marni in line. She needs a firm hand—on a very luscious part of her beautiful anatomy. It is hard to discipline such a gorgeous human, particularly when she divulges a painful secret, the mystery that has kept her miserable for most of her life.

If tough-love won't work, the elves have only one solution: to turn Marni into a caring elf, capable of holiday cheer, they must make love to her as often as possible. Only then will they be able to convince her that good can triumph over evil, and love really does conquer all.

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